



***New Castle Elementary School
Parent and Student Handbook
2017-2018***



We will Go Above and Beyond the Call of Duty to
Ensure That Every Student is Successful Everyday!

903 Delaware Street
New Castle, DE 19720
Phone: 302-323-2880
Fax: 302-323-2897

Principal: Nneka M. Jones





School Information

School Address	903 Delaware Street New Castle, Delaware 19720
Main Office Phone	(302) 323-2880
Nurse's Office	(302) 323-2888
Cafeteria Manager	(302) 323-2891
Family Support Therapist	(302) 323-2886
Fax Number	(302) 323-2897
School Website	http://www.colonialschooldistrict.org/schools/newcastle/

District Information

Colonial School District	318 E. Basin Road New Castle, Delaware 19720
District Office Phone Number	(302) 323-2700
Transportation Office Phone Number	(302) 323-2851



8:15 a.m. Doors Open *
8:32 a.m. Classroom instruction begins
3:14 p.m. Dismissal

*** Students will be permitted to enter the building at 8:15 a.m.**

Prior to that time, there is no adult supervision. Please do not allow your child to arrive at school too early. If you are in need of before or after care, the Bear/Glasgow YMCA offers childcare options on site at New Castle Elementary. For details and information about the program, you can call the YMCA at (302) 836-YMCA.

The Colonial School District Vision and Mission

Vision:

The Colonial School District will be an innovative leader in academic excellence providing students with positive and appropriate learning experiences delivered by well trained, empowered staff.

Mission:

The Colonial School District provides high quality education to all students to become well-rounded, contributing members of society by offering a comprehensive academic program in a safe and nurturing environment conducive to learning. Colonial fosters a strong sense of community by building partnerships between its employees, the students, their families, businesses and other constituencies.

Values, Principles and Beliefs:

- 1. Student learning is a priority. We believe that every student can learn and we will provide support so they can achieve their fullest potential.*
- 2. Value diversity. We value, respect and embrace differences.*
- 3. Open and inviting. We believe in creating and maintaining an open and inviting atmosphere.*
- 4. Employee dedication and integrity. Our employees are dedicated and perform with the utmost integrity.*
- 5. Civility and respect. We expect civility, positive, respectful and dignified behavior of all stakeholders. Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated.*
- 6. Shared accountability. Students, parents, school personnel, school board and community share in the accountability for the success of our students.*
- 7. Financially responsible. We are stewards of our finances and are fiscally responsible.*
- 8. High quality facilities. We maintain our facilities and operations to enhance the learning environment. Everyone will treat our facilities and resources with respect.*

New Castle Elementary School Vision and Mission

Vision:

New Castle Elementary is dedicated to ensuring that all students achieve academic success.

Mission:

New Castle Elementary is committed to making every student career and college ready by providing rigorous instruction driven by the Common Core Standards and the needs of individual students with high expectations. We will create and support an environment in which all students and adults are welcomed, respected, and trusted to do what is best for children while accepting cultural differences and fostering self-esteem.

New Castle Elementary School is a Leader In Me School. The leader in me is a process that follows the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People created by Steven Covey. Read below for a brief summary of each habit.

Habit 1: Be Proactive

We're in charge. We choose the scripts by which to live our lives. Use this self-awareness to be proactive and take responsibility for your choices. The first habit that Covey discusses is being proactive. What distinguishes us as humans from all other animals is our inherent ability to examine our own character, to decide how to view ourselves and our situations, to control our own effectiveness. Put simply: **In order to be effective, one must be proactive**. Reactive people take a passive stance - they believe that the world is happening to them. They say things like:

"There's nothing I can do."
"That's just the way I am."

They think the problem is "out there" - but that thought is the problem. Reactivity becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, and reactive people feel increasingly victimized and out of control. Proactive people, however, recognize that they have responsibility - or "**response-ability**."

Habit 2: Begin With the End in Mind

Start with a clear destination in mind. Covey says we can use our imagination to develop a vision of what we want to become and use our conscience to decide what values will guide us. Most of us find it rather easy to busy ourselves. We work hard to achieve victories - promotions, higher income, more recognition. But we don't often stop to evaluate the meaning behind this busyness, behind these victories - **we don't ask ourselves if these things that we focus on so intently are what really matter to us**. Habit 2 suggests that, in everything we do, we should begin with the end in mind. Start with a clear destination. That way, we can make sure the steps we're taking are in the right direction.

Habit 3: Put First Things First

In order to manage ourselves effectively, we must put first things first. We must have the discipline to prioritize our day-to-day actions based on what is most important, not what is most urgent. In Habit 2, we discussed the importance of determining our values and understanding what it is we are setting out to achieve. Habit 3 is all about actually going after these goals, and executing on our priorities on a day-to-day, moment-to-moment basis. In order to maintain the discipline and the focus to stay on track toward our goals, we need to have the willpower to do something when we don't want to do it. We need to act according to our values rather than our desires or impulses at any given moment.



Habit 4: Think Win-Win

In order to establish effective interdependent relationships, we must commit to creating Win-Win situations that are mutually beneficial and satisfying to each party. Covey explains that there are six paradigms of human interaction:

- 1. Win-Win:** Both people win. Agreements or solutions are mutually beneficial and satisfying to both parties.
- 2. Win-Lose:** “If I win, you lose.” Win-Lose people are prone to use position, power, credentials, and personality to get their way.
- 3. Lose-Win:** “I lose, you win.” Lose-Win people are quick to please and appease, and seek strength from popularity or acceptance.
- 4. Lose-Lose:** Both people lose. When two Win-Lose people get together - that is, when two determined, stubborn, ego-invested individuals interact - the result will be Lose-Lose.
- 5. Win:** People with the Win mentality don't necessarily want someone else to lose - that's irrelevant. What matters is that they get what they want.
- 6. Win-Win or No Deal:** If you can't reach an agreement that is mutually beneficial, there is no deal.

The best option is to create Win-Win situations. With Win-Lose, or Lose-Win, one person appears to get what he wants for the moment, but the results will negatively impact the relationship between those two people going forward. **The Win-Win or No Deal option is important to use as a backup.** When we have No Deal as an option in our mind, it liberates us from needing to manipulate people and push our own agenda. We can be open and really try to understand the underlying issues.

Habit 5: Seek First to Understand the to be Understood

Before we can offer advice, suggest solutions, or effectively interact with another person in any way, we must seek to deeply understand them and their perspective through empathic listening. Let's say you go to an optometrist and tell him that you've been having trouble seeing clearly, and he takes off his glasses, hands them to you and says, “here, try these - they've been working for me for years!” So you put them on, but it only makes the problem worse. What are the chances you'd go back to that optometrist? Yet in our everyday interactions with others, we do the same thing. **We prescribe a solution before we diagnose the problem.** We don't seek to deeply understand the problem first. Habit 5 says that we must seek first to understand, then to be understood. In order to seek to understand, we must learn to listen.

Habit 6: Synergize

By understanding and valuing the differences in another person's perspective, we have the opportunity to create synergy, which allows us to uncover new possibilities through openness and creativity.

Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw

To be effective, we must devote the time to renewing ourselves physically, spiritually, mentally, and socially. Continuous renewal allows us to synergistically increase our ability to practice each habit.

Habit 7 is focused around renewal, or taking time to “sharpen the saw.” It surrounds all of the other habits and makes each one possible by preserving and enhancing your greatest asset - yourself.



Making the Grade!



New Castle Elementary has “Super Star” teachers. They consistently attend professional development and college courses to stay abreast of learning strategies/techniques to provide the best instruction for students. To check teacher credentials visit: <https://deeds.doe.k12.de.us>. Click on “Find an Educator” and type in the teacher’s first and last name.



Specials



Certified specialists in art, music, technology and physical education instruct students in all grades. Specialists make a conscious effort to incorporate academic standards into their daily lessons. This helps to reinforce skills introduced within the regular classroom setting. Students will attend Specials at least once a week with the exception of Physical Education (twice a week).





Extra - Curricular Activities

Band/Chorus

Students who are performing well in both academics and behavior can participate in band or chorus. Students who join the band (4th and 5th graders) or chorus (3rd, 4th, and 5th graders) are offered group lessons. The band and chorus will perform in concerts each year. They will also perform at various school functions and assemblies. Students receive information about both the band and choral programs towards the beginning of the school year. Participation may be limited due to scheduling and staffing.

Guidance/Family Support Therapy



The Colonial School District has made a commitment to offering students access to certified guidance counselors in each school. Counselors assist classroom teachers in developing ideas for instruction during the year to help children acquire decision-making skills and positive self-esteem. Small groups of students who have similar challenges such as: ill parents, divorce, new family members, etc. will meet with the counselor to deal with specific topics. Also, the counselor will be available for individual meetings with students who need the assistance of an adult in order to deal with personal issues.





The District Calendar

The Colonial School District distributes a calendar showing dates of school closings, concerts, programs, parent conferences, etc. Please keep this calendar in a location that assists you in knowing upcoming events.

Website/Facebook

New Castle Elementary School has a website and Facebook page that is updated periodically.

<http://www.colonialschooldistrict.org/schools/newcastle/>

Weekly Phones Message

A weekly message will be made every Sunday during the school year with information regarding school events for the week. Please ensure that all telephone numbers are updated for proper notification.

Attendance

We are very proud of the attendance record of the students of New Castle. We have found that those students who have good attendance patterns also have good academic records. At New Castle, learning is often a hands-on experience and cannot always be made up. If, illness or family emergencies occur and your child must stay home, the student must bring a written excuse. **10 unexcused absences will result in an open truancy case.**

The following reasons are recognized as valid excuses for an absence:

- Illness of the student
- Medical diagnosis and/or treatment
- Death in the immediate family or of a close family friend.
- Contagious disease in the home of the child subject to regulation of the Division of Public Health, Department of Health and Social Services
- Legal business
- Suspension from school
- Observance of religious holidays
- Authorized school-sponsored activities

Arriving Early

Students may enter the New Castle building at 8:15 a.m. Classroom instruction begins at 8:32. Students may not be in the lobby BEFORE 8:15 a.m.

Late Arrival

Homeroom begins promptly at 8:40 a.m. **If your child is late for school, he/she must be brought into the office by his/her parent/guardian and recorded as present.** A pass will be issued to admit the child to class. EACH LATENESS IMPACTS YOUR CHILD'S INSTRUCTION. 8 Tardies equals 1 unexcused absence. 10 unexcused absences will result in an open truancy case.

Early Dismissal

We discourage early dismissals because CHILDREN MISS INSTRUCTION whenever they are not in class. If you must take your child out of school prior to the end of the school day, we ask that you send a note in the morning. Upon your arrival at the school, report to the office where you will be asked to sign your child out. **Do not go to the child's classroom.** (Teachers have been instructed to release children only when they are called to the office.) Students will be allowed to leave the building with parents/legal guardians ONLY. If it is necessary to have a neighbor or relative pick up your child, a note signed by the parent/legal guardian is required. This is for the protection of all students and families. **No parent will be permitted to remove a student from class after 2:45 p.m.** **Parents will be required to wait in the car rider line.** Please bring ID.

Special Note

Whether absent, late, or dismissed early, your child is responsible for any work he/ she misses. Your child should go to the teacher and request missed assignments.

Emergency Procedures

We pride ourselves on the safe and secure atmosphere of New Castle Elementary School. One reason this exists is because we have emergency drills to teach children what to do in case of a natural disaster or fire. In addition students will have 2 lockdown drills a year. Fire drills, lockdown and bus evacuation drills are held regularly throughout the year. Please remind your child to always listen carefully to adults during any drill.



Special Notices

New Castle's PTO frequently publishes fliers and notices of special events. Again, this is something your child will bring home. Make sure that they know how important these notes are to you. Have a special place where he/she should put such items.

Teacher Notices

Teachers inform students and parents of events specific to their classroom or grade level (field trips, assemblies, classroom plays, etc.). Also, teachers often write notes specifically about your child. These may have to do with academic work, behavior, physical health, etc. Again, we ask that you

have a place where your child can leave such information so you are sure to receive it and check agenda books daily.

Emergency Information

Weather conditions and unexpected events sometimes necessitate the closing of school, opening delays, or causes early dismissals. If school is cancelled, it will be announced over local radio stations: WDEL (1150), WAMS (1380), WILM (1450), WJBR (99.5), and WSTW (93.7). **Please do not call the school.** Simply **listen** for any announcement regarding “Colonial School District”. In addition, you will receive a telephone call from the district if possible.

A Special Note:



It is imperative that parents who are not home during the day make arrangements for their children in case of delayed opening of school, early dismissal or school closing. Your child will need to know where to go in event of an emergency. If early dismissals would cause your child to be sent home a different way, please write a note to your child's teacher.

How will you know about your child's progress?

Parent Visits – Parents are always welcome at New Castle Elementary School. We encourage you to visit your child's classroom but it must be scheduled with the classroom teacher. Make arrangements by simply contacting the teacher. The first time you enter you will have to provide an ID to scan for criminal background check with the RAPTOR system.

Additionally, you are welcome to all our assemblies and programs. Announcements will come home in advance of these events. We do ask that **no matter how frequently you visit, always come to the office first, sign in and obtain your visitor badge.**

Parent-Teacher Conference – The Colonial School District schedules two opportunities for parent-teacher conferences. During these conferences, your child will discuss his/her academic, social, emotional and physical progress at school. Also, a parent may request a conference with a teacher (only) at any time during the year by contacting the school and scheduling a date and time. Telephone conferences are very effective for minor concerns or when it is impossible for the parent to come to the school. We ask that you keep teachers informed of a telephone number that allows them quick access to you. **If you have any questions, call your child's teacher first.** If more information or assistance is needed, contact the main office. Your concerns will always be addressed.

Notes – Communication specific to your child’s progress is often found on notes written directly to you or written on assignments your child has completed. Teachers also frequently ask that work be signed by a parent and returned to school to confirm that the parent is getting a profile of his/her child’s academic progress. Likewise, a note from a parent to a teacher makes that teacher aware of your interest.

***A child develops in many ways – socially, emotionally
mentally, physically, and creatively.
Children vary in their rate of development.
Some mature faster than others.***





Overview of Programs and Approaches

Teachers at New Castle Elementary instruct students according to the Common Core State Standards and Grade Level Expectations. In addition, instructional experiences for our students are based on the Colonial School District Board Adopted Curriculum.

Language Arts

A variety of resources are employed depending on the needs of the students. Teachers create lessons that align with the Common Core State Standards and all types of children's literature. Literature is used across all subject areas to help students connect information through the use of reading and writing skills. Language Arts is a tool used for learning and integrating all subject areas.

Mathematics

Scott Foresman Investigations in Number, Data, and Space curriculum is utilized as the core of our mathematics instruction. Students participate in activities that promote problem solving, reasoning, communicating mathematically, and making mathematical connections. Some areas of focus are probability, patterns, number relationships, measurement, computation, geometry, and algebra.

Science

FOSS science kits provide students with a hands-on approach to learning different scientific concepts. Some units at various grade levels include: Trees, Soils, Organisms, Electricity, Water, and Ecosystems.

Social Studies

Through the use of the Harcourt Brace Social Studies series and district created units, students develop skills and knowledge in the area of history, geography, civics, and economics.

School-wide Title One

New Castle Elementary is a “School-wide Title One” learning institution. This allows us to be more flexible in providing reading assistance to a variety of students. Parent involvement is a key factor in the success of all of our students. At Open House parents will review and sign the Parent Compact. This compact discusses the responsibilities of the school and parent.

Students are also supported through Response to Intervention, which provides intense instruction for students struggling academically in the areas of Reading and Math. The tiers are as follows:

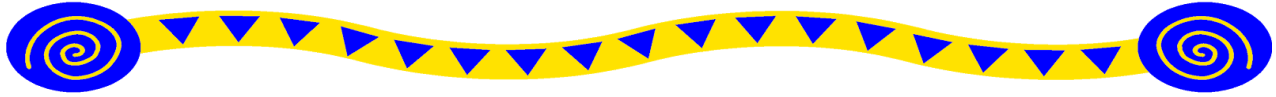
Tier 1: Student On or Above Grade Level

Tier 2: Students Near Grade Level

Tier 3: Students Well Below Grade Level

Students will fluidly move through the tiers as needed.





Your Child's Health

The Colonial School District has a full time registered nurse in each school. All decisions regarding health issues are based upon the State of Delaware and Colonial School District Policies and Procedures.

Emergency Card - Every student must have a completed, **up-to-date** emergency card on file in the nurse's office by the end of the first week of school. The child's parent and/or legal guardian must sign this emergency card. If information changes during the year (phone numbers, emergency contacts, etc.), it is the responsibility of the parent to call the nurse to make the school aware of the change.

Dismissal Due to Illness –If it is deemed that your child is unable to remain at school due to illness or injury, the nurse will call the numbers given on the emergency card. Please give names and numbers of people who can come and pick up your child if it is necessary. Your child will not be allowed to ride home on the bus if he/she has any type of contagious disease.

Medication – The nurse is the only person authorized to administer medications in school. If a prescription drug is to be given to your child during the school day, it must be sent to school in its original container with a note from the parent stating when the next dose is to be given. The note must have a parent signature.

Physical Examinations – All students new to the Colonial School District must have a physical examination. The form may be obtained from the nurse or the main office.

Illness – If your child is ill, do not send him/her to school. Staying home will quicken his/her recovery as well as assure that other students do not become ill. If your child should become sick at school or develop a temperature of 100 degrees or higher, the parent or person named on the emergency card will be called to come and get the child. A child should remain home until he/she is fever free for 24 hours. You will always be contacted by the nurse if your child does not appear to act as he/she usually does.

Communicable Diseases – Children may not be in school if they have any condition that is contagious ("catchy"). Examples include: head lice, pinkeye, ringworm, impetigo, scabies, chicken pox, etc. If your child develops a condition that is contagious, he/she may not ride the bus. Children with these conditions may be required to have a doctor's note to be readmitted to school as deemed by the nurse

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

One of the important educational objectives of New Castle Elementary School is the development of individual student responsibility. In order to help students develop this trait and to preserve classroom time for instruction, the students are responsible for bringing to school all items; such as homework, money, lunches, and rainwear necessary to meet his/her needs for the day.

Proper Dress

Children need to be clean and comfortable in order to learn. As clothing is selected each day, please make sure it is appropriate for sitting, working, and playing. For safety reasons, we discourage any type of shoe that exposes the toes of children or doesn't stay totally on the foot (for example: flip flops). A student not wearing appropriate shoes will not be permitted to participate in P.E. class or recess. Clothing that is inappropriate for a school setting, such as shirts having offensive language or symbols, will not be permitted. A parent will be contacted to bring the child an alternate outfit. **Heelies or any shoes with wheels, are not permitted in school.** If a student wears this type of footwear to school, a parent will need to bring in a replacement pair of shoes.



Homework

The purpose of homework is to give the child extra exposure and experience with skills that were taught in class or to have the child relate what is taught with their everyday world. Parents should designate a time and a place for homework and keep it consistent. This will truly make a difference in the child's progress.



School Supplies

School supplies are to be purchased by the student's family. Please mark all of your child's personal materials with his/her name. **Children are responsible for any school supplies issued to them or any damage that they cause to instructional materials or other school district property.** The full replacement cost of any lost or damaged items, including library books, textbooks, and other instructional supplies, will be the responsibility of the child's parent/guardian. Report cards will be marked at the end of each semester if a child has an unmet financial obligation to the school cafeteria or for lost or damaged books or materials. The parent or guardian will receive written notification about the obligation prior to the end of the semester.



REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued **two times a year**. At scheduled conferences, teachers will review assignments/assessments and discuss the academic progress of students' relative to the common core state standards. If you have a concern at any time about your child's progress, please contact his/ her teacher for a conference. All report cards are mailed to the child's home address.

PROGRESSING and RETENTION : A child may be progressing or retained at the end of the school year. This decision is made by a school –based team that takes many factors into consideration, including report card grades and State Test scores.

Grades

Kindergarten - Second Grades

The Colonial School District will be changing the grading policy for students in grades K-2 this school year. More information will be communicated later in the fall.

Third through Fifth Grades

EP = Exceeds Proficiency

MP = Meets Proficiency

NP = Near Proficiency

BP = Below Proficiency

NG = No Grade

Approaches to Learning

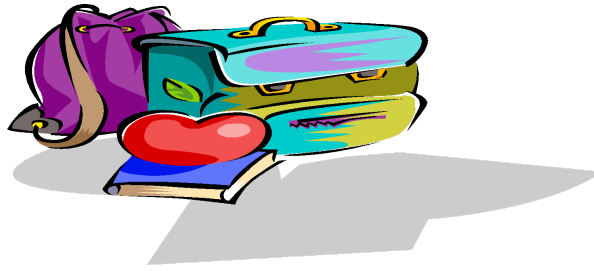
3 = Regularly 2= Sometimes 1= Rarely

Items Not Permitted In School

Toys, iPods, electronic devices, pets, and other items (for example, trading cards, fidget spinners, etc.) that distract children from learning are not allowed in school. If items such as these are seen at school, they will be taken from children and an adult will have to pick them up. If an item reappears, the item will be kept until the end of the school year, when an adult will have to pick it up. If an inappropriate item is brought to school and is then lost or stolen, this is not a situation that school staff will be involved in helping to resolve.

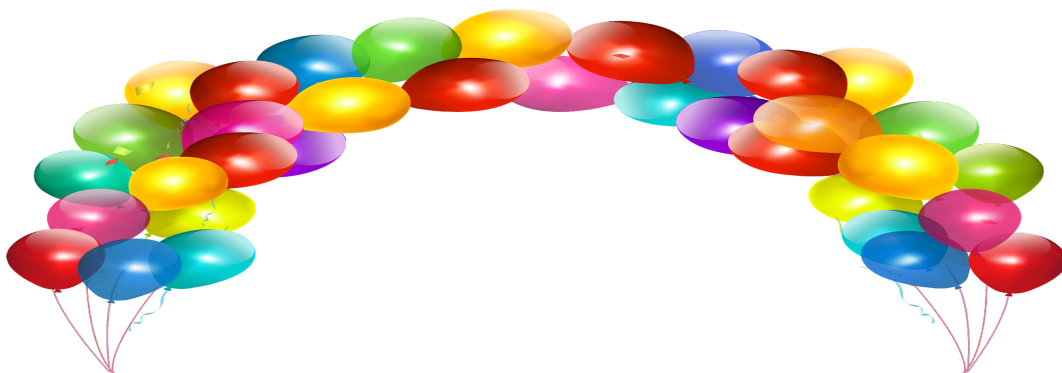
Any item deemed a safety risk will be taken from the child and the parent will be contacted. Title 14, Delaware Code, 4112 requires school personnel to contact police if serious offenses occur. (i.e. carrying weapons - ****even look-alikes or toy weapons**** - and dangerous instruments) The Colonial School District Student Code of Conduct specifies that a student in possession of weapons (**real or look-alike**) be suspended from school and have possible other consequences.

Please help your child make good choices and take time to check the materials your child gathers for school.



Car Rider Line

Students who are car riders will be picked up in the back of the building by the playground. Any person that is in the car rider line must be in a vehicle. Parents/Guardians should not exit their vehicle to escort or retrieve their child.



Birthdays

The Colonial School District's policy #5404 states that no outside food can be served to students during the school day.

If parents would like to celebrate their child's birthday then non-edible items for classmates should be purchased. Examples of these items are: pencils, crayons, coloring books, etc. In addition, items can be purchased through the cafeteria. The cafeteria will need 1week notice on **ALL** orders.

Due to safety and distraction issues, balloons and/or other favors are not permitted in to school, but are kept for home celebrations.



Discipline

The Colonial School District Board of Education has an adopted Student Code of Conduct that applies to all children in the district unless noted in an Individual Educational Plan. A copy of this Code is available on the Colonial School District website and will be sent home to parents upon request. While we review it at school, we would ask that you, as a parent, take some time with your

child to help reinforce the importance of being a good citizen, making good choices and being responsible for his/her behavior.

BULLYING

New Castle Elementary School has 0 tolerance for Bullying. If reported an alleged bullying report will be entered, a full investigation will be completed, parent contacted and consequences assigned as stated the Colonial School District's Code of Conduct. In addition, an official Bullying Report will be completed in E-School, which can be accessed by the Attorney General's Office.

To report bullying please contact Mrs. Jones or Ms. Payne-Miller at 302-323-2880.

Or

Bullying Prevention Contact
Delaware Department of Justice
Bullying Prevention & School Crime Contact (Ombudsperson)
1-800-220-5414