

Mount Pleasant
Elementary School
Parent and Student A-Z Handbook



Constructed 1924

Renovated 1987

The Mt. Pleasant staff stands united in the pursuit of high academic achievement and exemplary citizenship for all students. Positive attitudes, dedication and a love of children are at the heart of our school culture.

Jacqueline Okonak
Principal

**10 Manchester Street
Nashua, NH 03064
603-966-2400**

Sarah Caouette
Assistant Principal

The following is a guide to FAQs that families may have about our school. A comprehensive elementary school district handbook is available at (www.nashua.edu).

A

Agendas: Our school provides students in grades 3-5 with agendas that students use to record daily homework assignments, etc. Please check your child's agenda daily.

Animals: Any domestic animals (pets) brought to school when school is in session must remain outside the school building and on a leash. Pets may not be handled by the students.

Arrival/Morning Drop-Off Procedure: Children should *not* arrive prior to 8:00 AM, as there is no supervision before that time. (School hours are 8:15 – 2:40)

- o Option 1 Walkers:
 - Students are asked to walk around the school to the playground where they can wait for the 8:00 bell to ring. At this time teachers will arrive on the playground to escort their students into the building. For the safety of the Mt. Pleasant students, please do not cut through the building to get to the school yard.
 - If your child arrives after 8:00 AM, they should enter the building through the front door and go directly to their classroom on their own.
 - If your child arrives after 8:15 AM, you will need to sign them in at the Main Office and they will receive a tardy slip.
- o Option 2: Drop Off:
 - The drop off lane is on Abbott Street (near the sidewalk). This will be for parent drop off. Parents, please do not get out of your cars. Teach your child to exit the side of the vehicle facing the school and staff will take it from there.
 - Please refrain from hand-held cell phone use which may prompt driver distractibility.

Afternoon Dismissal/Pick-up Procedure: Our school's dismissal time is 2:40 PM.

- o OPTION 1: WALKERS
 - For our students who walk home, parents need only to inform the teacher and those students will be walked out to the playground at 2:40 by their teachers to a designated area. Parents can greet their children in the same spot they dropped them off in the morning. (If students are walking home without an adult, let the teacher know this as well)
- o Option 2: BUS and Afterschool Programs
 - The three spots in front of the school (marked by signage) will be for BUSES ONLY. Please do not park in these spots.

Afterschool Program- 21st Century: The 21st Century initiative is the only federal funding dedicated exclusively to afterschool programs. The aim of this program is to provide affordable, safe, and secure academic after school programming that offers homework club, tutoring, arts, science, recreation and many other opportunities. You may register on the school district website.

Attendance/Absences: To report an absence, please call the school and leave a message @ 966-2400. Families who have not called the school by 8:30AM will receive an automated message indicating the child is not in attendance. The school is required by law to address issues of chronic absence and tardiness. Parents will receive written notice if the number of absences/tardies reaches the criteria for concern. The Nashua School District's full attendance policy is available on its website. A student who is absent from school may not participate in after-school activities.

B

Badges: Staff, visitors, volunteers and substitute teachers are to wear a badge while on school property.

Behavior/Student Conduct: At Mt. Pleasant School, we set high expectations for excellent behavior. We strive to create an atmosphere of respect and caring for one another. The students are made aware of these expectations and

are expected to follow the established rules set for them. We are very proud of the efforts put forth at our school fostering an atmosphere where students are able to develop their potential academically, socially, and emotionally.

Birthdays: In alignment with district policy and practice, personal communications such as party invitations are not permitted for distribution at school. Please do not send in trinket bags or other gift items. See more under “Food Safe Schools” (page 4).

Building Security: For the safety of students and staff, all building doors are locked. For service please ring the bell located on the wall to the right of our main door. For security purposes, once admitted, do not hold the door for others behind you.

C

Cell Phones/ Electronic devices: Use of or display of cell phones or electronic devices by students is not allowed during the academic day. Cell phones will be confiscated if students are using a cell phone at school and a parent will be required to come to school to pick it up. This would be the same for Smart watches as well.

Change in Student’s Regular Dismissal Procedure: Students must provide teachers a note if there is going to be any change to his/her ordinary dismissal plans. If not, we will send the student home via regular dismissal procedure.

Class Placement: Class lists are created considering a variety of factors such as ability, needs, social dynamics, and gender. Parent requests for specific teachers are not accepted.

Conferences: Parent/Teacher conferences are held in November and throughout the year as needed. Please reach out to your child’s teacher at any time if you feel you would like an additional meeting.

Contact Information: Be sure contact information is updated if a change occurs in your phone number, email address, or persons authorized for pick-up.

Curriculum: The Common Core State Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need to be college and career ready. <http://www.corestandards.org/>. Please consult the curriculum tab on the district website for additional information.

D

Delayed Opening/Snow Days: Due to weather conditions, the Superintendent may call a delayed opening or snow day. You will be notified via our Parent Alert System, local television and the district website. Should a delayed opening occur, students should not arrive at school before 10:00AM as there will be no adult supervision. If your child rides a bus, pick-up times will be two hours later than your normal pick-up time.

Donors Choose: www.donorschoose.org is an opportunity whereby anyone can support teachers’ requests for wanted items.

Dress Code: Clothing should not be distractible to the education of others and should not make others feel uncomfortable. Clothing should be neat and clean. Sneakers are required for PE class.

E

Early Release Days: During the 2024-2025 school year, teachers will be engaged in professional development activities. To facilitate these activities, students will be released early on the following school days.

October 23, December 11, March 19, April 16, May 21

English Language Learners (ELL): Students for whom English is not their primary or singular language are administered an ACCESS assessment yearly. Qualifying students receive ELL support from a teacher certified in that area.

Emergency Preparedness: The school district will make every effort to notify parents immediately of emergencies via our Parent Alert System. Every school has a safety plan that would be activated for potential or actual threats, natural disasters, building emergencies, etc. It is unlikely we would release students prior to normal dismissal time, as our primary concern is always with young children being left home without supervision. In the event we would ever need to be evacuated to another building, parents would be informed through a variety of means including television and Parent Alert System. Emergency drills will be practiced as part of our regular safety routines. Parents should always have their contact information in the office up to date, including home, work, cell, and emergency numbers (permission for your child to leave with several identified neighbors, for example), email, etc. We will never dismiss a child without proper authorization from a parent and/or legal guardian. In the case of an actual emergency, please do not call the school. The lines must be open for essential communication. Please do not come to the school. Allow the school staff to supervise emergency procedures efficiently and work with emergency personnel in the city. Click [Emergency Preparedness Brochure for Parents.pdf \(nashua.edu\)](#) for more information. In case of emergency, announcements will be aired on WMUR and through the parent link. You may also call the district line at 603-966-1000.

eNews: eNews publishes district news and upcoming events. Click www.nashua.edu/events/EnewsReq to sign up to receive eNews.

F

Family Trips/Vacations: The Nashua School District encourages parents to make every attempt to schedule family vacations/trips on non-school days. This is not always possible. Please be aware that after 15 days of absenteeism, students will be removed from enrollment. Upon return, students may be reenrolled. School administrators will not be able to guarantee that children will be reassigned to the same classroom teacher nor will classroom teachers provide students with work prior to their absence.

Food Safe School: Guidelines of the National School Lunch and Breakfast program went into effect in recent years requiring schools to serve more nutritious meals. This entails providing children with more vegetables, fruits, whole grains and low-fat dairy products. It also limits the amount of carbs and proteins offered. Any food provided to students in our schools must meet or exceed the standards set forth in this policy. For this reason as well as for the **safety** of our students and staff with significant food allergies, families are asked NOT to send in food for distribution in the classroom. Please save birthday treats, etc. for home celebrations.

H

Health: Children who feel ill should remain home. One should be fever-, diarrhea-, and vomit-free for at least 24 hours before returning to school. A nurse is available to handle any issues that arise during the day. She may administer prescribed medications only after the doctor signs a prescription giving permission. All medications to be administered by the health office must be in their original, labeled container and be brought directly to the nurse's office along with the doctor's orders for administration. Children may not have any medication in their possession.

Homework: Homework reinforces knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom and is a means of establishing good study habits. Below is a homework guideline:

*Gr. K-2: Not to exceed, on average, 20 minutes

*Gr. 3-4: Not to exceed, on average, 40 minutes

*Gr. 5: Not to exceed, on average, 60 minutes

Hours: The school hours are 8:15am-2:40pm. Drop off begins at 8:00am.

I

Insurance Program: For information on pupil insurance plan visit [Professional Insurance Administrator | Insurance Specialists, Inc. \(isi1959.com\)](#)

L

Lunch/Breakfast: Each grade level has a designated lunch time followed by recess. Students have options within our school lunch program. Milk is available for purchase for those students who choose to bring their lunch from home. The kitchen staff serves an entrée for the day as well as sandwich or yogurt offerings. A monthly lunch menu is sent home to families at the end of each month or you may view on the Nashua.edu website. Parents may

purchase any number of meals by adding money to an account. For families with financial needs, applications for free and reduced lunch are sent home at the beginning of the year and are available at any time throughout the year. This information is also available at <http://www.nashua.edu/about-us/departments/food-services> located on the district website. Breakfast is served from 8:00-8:30AM for those seeking this option. Please call the kitchen directly at 966-2410 with any questions about the food service program.

M

Mascot: Our school's mascot is Moe the Moose.

Music Program: General music instruction occurs in Grades K-5. Chorus and Instrumental Lessons are available for students in Grades 4 and 5. Strings lessons are available for students in Grades 3, 4, and 5. Contact our music teacher, Mrs. Wellman wellmana@nashua.edu for information.

O

Open House: Open House is held each Fall. The goal of Open House is to familiarize parents with curriculum, expectations and procedures in each classroom and grade level. This night is for *parents only* and is not a conference night.

P

Parent Alert System: We utilize the telephone/email system to communicate with parents regarding district and school messages.

Parking: When conducting school business (i.e. dismissing early, checking in tardy students) please park in one of street parking spots on Manchester Street, French Street, and Mt. Pleasant Street. No parking is available on the school grounds. Please be aware and respectful of the No Parking signs posted around the neighborhood. Please do not block neighbors' driveways.

Photographs: School pictures are taken in the fall and spring by an outside photographer contracted by the District. Purchase of these photos is optional. *A separate but important note: during school functions/events, parents may only photograph their own children. For example, if chaperoning a field trip, one may only take pictures of his/her own child.*

PTO: The PTO meets the first Wednesday of every month and welcomes all parents/guardians. They sponsor a variety of activities throughout the year. They also hold fundraisers in support of field trips, classroom needs, recess equipment, children's programming, technology initiatives, etc. Join the Facebook group at www.facebook.com/mtplesantPTOnashua Their email is mountppto@gmail.com

Your participation in the PTO is needed and welcomed.

R

Recess: Outdoor recess is held unless the temperature falls below 15 degrees (factoring windchill) or the weather is inclement. Students are required to go outside unless the nurse has a doctor's note on file indicating it is not advisable.

Report Cards/Progress Reports: Your child is evaluated based on his/her individual progress toward meeting end-of-year grade level standards. Report cards are presented to all students on a trimester calendar. Progress reports will be given to all students in the first trimester. Progress reports are presented at the teacher's discretion in Trimester 2 and Trimester 3 if there has been a significant change from the previous report card.

S

Snack: Each classroom has a designated snack time when students are able to eat a small snack brought from home. Due to the high number of children and adults with food allergies we request that students not share snacks. Mt. Pleasant participates in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable (FFV) program. All children have access to these snacks.

Supplies: Welcome letters with class placement will be e-mailed to families in mid- to late August. Supplies will be provided to students. If you want to go "Back to School" shopping, there is always a need for the basics such as pencils, markers, crayons, white board markers, tissues, cleaning wipes, etc.

T

Tardy/Early Dismissal: Please ring the bell and someone will assist you. You will need to come to the office to sign your child in or out.

Telephone: Students should not use the school telephone unless there is an emergency (forgotten homework, instruments, sneakers, etc, are not emergencies). Also, teachers may not be interrupted while teaching. Teachers will return messages upon their earliest availability.

Title One: The Title One program is a federally funded program that provides support for language arts and math instruction. Mt. Pleasant School's Title One Program is designed to enhance learning for students in grades K-5. The Title One instructors work to assure that each child has the individual support he or she needs to grow as a student in reading, writing and math. The instruction will not replace classroom instruction but will supplement it. Children may receive support for the entire school year or just for periods of time when they are experiencing difficulty.

V

Volunteers / Visitors: **Your children love to see you involved and so do we! The PTO is always looking for volunteers throughout the year for their events. All volunteers must complete a Volunteer Assurance Form, sign in and out of the building, wear proper identification, and remain in the area(s) of the building necessary to perform assigned duties. Designated volunteers are those who work independently, without direct supervision of staff, to assist students. These volunteers must complete an additional form available in the Mt. Pleasant office, and be fingerprinted at District office (free of charge).** Parent volunteers are always welcome at Mt. Pleasant School. There are many opportunities for parents to help out. You can volunteer in the library, photocopying for teachers, helping out at school wide events, and many other jobs. You can contact the PTO or your child's teacher to see how you can help out in the school or classroom. Please do not hesitate to come in and inquire about volunteer jobs. There is plenty for parents to do.

Your active participation in the education of your child is one of the most valuable things you can give your child. Please get involved, take part in their homework, show an interest in the work they bring home, attend school functions, and consider volunteering or joining the PTO. By taking part in school activities and showing a genuine interest in what your child is learning gives the message that you believe education is important.

W

Withdrawals: Parents are required to inform the school should there be a change of address so that any proper forms may be promptly processed.

X

X (Twitter): Follow us @mtpleasantel.

Y

Yearbook: Each year a school yearbook is published. Forms for purchase are sent home in the spring.

Thank you for taking the time to familiarize yourself with some of the routines and practices of Mount Pleasant Elementary School. We look forward to working with your child and family throughout the school year. Should you have any additional questions that cannot be answered through the resources provided here, please contact the school office (966-2400).