

Providence Elementary School 2019-20



PARENT HANDBOOK 2019-20

Address

3616 Jermantown Road
Fairfax, VA 22030

Attendance Line

703-460-4444
ProvidenceES.Attendance@fcps.edu

Cafeteria

703-460-4421

Health Room

703-460-4410

Main Office

703-460-4400

FAX

703-460-4497

SACC

703-460-4460

Website

www.fcps.edu/ProvidenceES

Notes From Providence

Welcome to Providence Elementary School (PES). This *Parent Handbook* contains basic information about school policies, practices and procedures. Much of this is copied directly from FCPS regulations and guidelines. These rules and policies are outlined with one goal in mind. We will work to keep your child(ren) safe, healthy, happy, while they are learning at school.

You can also find this handbook and other information about our school on the PES website. We will also send information by email, by text message, and by phone this year. Please help us by keeping your contact information current with the main office. For information changes or other questions, please call the office.

SCHOOL HOURS

8:40 A.M. to 3:25 P.M. Monday - Friday

Students should arrive at 8:30 A.M. to be in their seats at 8:40 A.M. School doors are locked and we do not have supervision for students prior to 8:20 A.M.

INCLEMENT WEATHER - SCHOOL HOURS

TWO-HOUR DELAY SCHEDULE

10:40 A.M. to 3:25 P.M. Monday - Friday
Students should arrive at 10:30 A.M. to be in their seats at 10:40 A.M. We do not have supervision for students available prior to these times.

Information and announcements about FCPS school delays and emergency closings during the school day are available on Apple Channel 21, www.fcps.edu, and local TV and radio. You will also receive emergency and urgent information through the FCPS "e-notify" system. For further school interest information, please subscribe to the FCPS "[News You Choose](#)" you will receive an email test announcement.

2019—2020 SCHOOL YEAR

August 26	School Begins
August 30	Student Holiday
September 2	Labor Day-Student Holiday
October 14	Columbus Day; Student Holiday
November 1	First Grading Period Ends
November 4-5	Parent Conferences Student Holiday
November 27-29	Thanksgiving Break
Dec. 23-Jan. 3	Winter Break
January 20	MLK Jr.'s Birthday; Student Holiday
January 24	Second Grading Period Ends
January 27-28	Student Holidays
February 17	Presidents' Day; Student Holiday
March 3	Student Holiday
April 3	Third Grading Period Ends
April 6-10	Spring Break; Student Holiday
April 13	Student Holiday
May 25	Memorial Day; Student Holiday
June 12	Last Day of School Students Released 3 Hours Early

Dates for specific Providence events are announced through newsletters, the PES website, Facebook, and Twitter throughout the year.

SCHOOL SPIRIT

Our school mascot is a panther, and our colors are red, white & blue. Spirit wear can be purchased through the PTA: www.ptaprovidence.org

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Principal – Dan Phillips
Assistant Principal— Sharon Hickey
Assistant Principal – Janice Suitte
Administrative Assistant – Barbara King
Student Registration - Aggie Buckley
Office Assistant - Jill Urban
Office Assistant – Beth Donohue
Office Assistant – Monica Tatis-Phan
Health Room Aide – Fatima Ataba
Cafeteria Manager – Mei Tsui

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ATTENDANCE/ARRIVAL TIME

Virginia law requires regular school attendance by every child and places the responsibility for attendance upon the parent/guardian. Parents are requested to notify the school office by either calling the school attendance line (703) 460-4444, emailing ProvidenceES.Attendance@fcps.edu, or sending a note prior to when a child is to be absent or tardy. If your child is absent due to illness, please indicate the type of illness in your phone call, email, or note.

Students are tardy if they arrive at school after opening time (8:40 A.M.) and parents must come into the office to sign students prior to going to the classrooms. PLEASE NOTE: STUDENTS MAY NOT ARRIVE AT SCHOOL BEFORE 8:20 A.M. Supervision is **not** provided before 8:20 A.M.

When students are absent or tardy, our office staff will note whether the absences/tardy was excused or unexcused in the attendance record.

[Regulation 2234](#) defines excused and unexcused absences. Reasons for **unexcused** absences and tardiness include, but are not limited to, family and/or student vacations; childcare situations; non-school related activities; missing the bus; oversleeping; missing a ride; car trouble; traffic; weather conditions; working on homework/project; and studying for a test; or parent/guardian's fault. Family vacations should be scheduled as to not conflict with the school calendar. Teachers are not required to provide assignments in advance of the absences, but may do so at their discretion. **Five consecutive absences either excused or unexcused require a doctors note upon return. In accordance with regulation 2234, students with five unexcused absences will be referred to the attendance officer.**



BAND, STRINGS & CHORUS

Like all Fairfax County elementary schools, we offer (optional) elective music programs (Band, Strings, & Chorus) during the school day. Strings is open to 4th, 5th, and 6th graders. Band and Chorus are open to 5th and 6th graders. With parent permission, students may choose to join either band or strings, and the teachers will work with each student to determine their instrument if they are a beginner. Teachers can also direct parents to sources that rent and sell instruments. Instrument instruction occurs once per week during the normal "specials" time (block of time each day dedicated to PE, art and music). Band and Strings students will attend one general music class and one instrument class each week.

Students who are not in Band or Strings would attend two general music classes each week. Students and parents who sign up for Band and Strings should realize the significant commitment to practicing at home that will come with placement in this program. Behavior issues may prevent a student from continuing in these programs.

Chorus class occurs weekly and is an opportunity for students to develop their vocal instrument. There is also a commitment to practicing at home. This program does involve a pull-out from class. Some makeup work may be required of students who go to chorus. Behavior issues may prevent a student from continuing in this program.

BICYCLES AT SCHOOL



We encourage students to ride bicycles to school. We have a bike rack right off of the walkway leading to the front door where students may lock their bikes. The law requires that children up to the age of sixteen wear a bike helmet and obey traffic laws. Students should walk their bikes when on school property and lock their bike securely on the bicycle rack. FCPS is not responsible for the possible loss of personal property including bicycles. Any parent may make the decision to allow his/her child to ride a bicycle to school and should determine the appropriate route. School administration does not have door to door responsibility for students while they are on their way to and from school.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Although a birthday party for any one student is not permitted in the classroom, parents or guardians may bring cupcakes or other individually packaged treats as a snack to share on your child's birthday, you must coordinate this with your child's teacher prior to the event in order to avoid disruption to the instructional program of all the students. Only treats as described above are acceptable. Students will have permission to pass their birthday treats to their classmates at lunch in the café. Gift bags, flowers, balloons and sodas will not be passed out. This is to preserve our learning time.

We will not deliver party invitations in the classroom unless every classmate is invited. We appreciate your cooperation.

BUS RIDERS

The right of students to ride on school buses is conditional, based on their good behavior and observance of the following rules and regulations.



These rules were established to maintain the safety of all students as they travel to and from school.

Any student who violates any of these rules will be reported and runs the risk of having his/her bus privileges suspended.

- Students shall obey the driver who is fully in charge.
- Students shall obey and respect the directions of patrols on duty. Patrols will report all safety violations.
- Students must be on time. The bus cannot wait for those who are not on time or stop once the bus has pulled away from the stop.
- Students shall respect the rights of others and refrain from bothering other students in any way or using loud voices.
- Students are prohibited from bringing toys, live animals, or oversized items that would block the aisle, cause loss of passenger seat space, or obstruct the driver's view.
- Students may not change their seats once they are seated on the bus. They may not move about when the bus is moving. They may not put their hands, arms, or any object out of the windows or throw anything out the window.
- Students may not eat or exchange food on the bus. **NO GUM** is allowed on buses.
- Students who treat others poorly, make any marks on the

bus, windows or seats will be suspended from bus riding immediately and will be responsible to pay for the damages that occur.

- When at the bus stop, students must stand on the sidewalk or the side of the road, out of the way of traffic. At no time should students cross or play on private property. Transportation passes cannot be issued for students to ride a bus they would not normally ride.

Kindergarten students will not be dropped off at a bus stop unless there is an adult there to meet them. If there is no adult, the bus will return the student to the school, and must be picked up right away.

If a student is riding a bus from a child-care arrangement and not the home address, a *Request for Exception to Ride* Form must be completed and approved before the child may ride the bus. This form is available in the office and will not be processed by the FCPS Department of Transportation until after October 1st; therefore, other arrangements must be made until a decision is made on your request.

CAFÉ INFORMATION

Our café will serve breakfast beginning Thursday, August 29 at 8:20, and lunch from the 1st day of school, Monday, August 26. Please visit the [Food Services](#) website for more detailed pricing information.

	<u>Breakfast</u>	<u>Lunch</u>
Elementary Students (K-6)	\$1.75	\$3.00
Reduced-Price Meals	No charge	No Charge
Milk, 1/2 Pint	\$0.60	\$0.60

You may wish to deposit money into your child's account to avoid bringing money back and forth from home and school. Each child will have a specific PIN number that they enter when purchasing food. Parents wishing to deposit money into this account may do so online at www.myschoolbucks.com, during Open House, or money may be given to your child's teacher to be delivered to the cafeteria in the morning **before the lunchtime lines begin**. Checks should be made payable to "Providence Food and Nutrition Services" with your child's name and teacher's name written on the front of the check. When your child's lunch account is nearly depleted, you will receive an automated phone message informing you of the current balance and the need to add money to the account ASAP. Families of students who do not buy lunch regularly will not receive this call if they carry a low balance.

If your child is bringing his/her lunch, **please print your child's name on the lunch box or paper bag. Please do not send glass containers). Please do not bring lunch from fast food restaurants for your child to eat in the cafeteria.** Parents are always invited to eat lunch with their child(ren). All parents must sign in at the front office before meeting their child in the cafeteria.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SCHOOL AND HOME

Expect to see a yellow or white "Tuesday Communicator Envelope" from your child's teacher in your child's backpack every Tuesday. This "Tuesday Folder" will contain important written

communication from the school (flyers, class work, tests, etc.). The envelope must be signed and returned the following day. The school sign in front of the building will also post upcoming information such as PTA meetings, concerts, etc. Each month, we will send through email (News You Choose) a principal newsletter that includes school information, but we will also send flyers and reminders weekly in the Tuesday Folders. You may call your child's teacher, but please know that the phone will go directly to voicemail during the school day. Given the demands of teaching their classes, we expect that you give teachers 24 hours to return your call. You may find that email is faster. All staff members emails are on the PES website. In addition, we encourage you to sign up for News You Choose at: https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/VAEDUFCPS/subscriber/new?qsp=VAEDUFCPS_1 to receive information about specific schools and topics you choose as well as community outreach messages. We highly encourage all PES families to "Like" our *Facebook* page and to follow us on Twitter which is updated almost daily with reminders, pictures, and other posts that will keep you connected to PES. Link to our *Facebook and Twitter* page from the PES website.

DISMISSAL ARRANGEMENTS

Please send advanced written notice to the office if changes need to be made to your child's normal dismissal arrangements. For play dates, the parents of both students involved must send a notice to the office prior to the date of the change and no bus transportation will be provided.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES & TECHNOLOGY

FCPS is committed and assisting, students and staff members in creating a 21st century learning environment. To support this progress Providence has 1:1 laptops available in grades three through six. Kindergarten, first and second graders have computers & iPads available in their classrooms. Students, with classroom teacher approval, students may use their personal devices (smartphones, laptops, netbooks, tablets, etc.) to access internet and collaborate with others during the school day. FCPS is not responsible for loss or damage of students' device. There is no insurance to cover loss of personal property. Students are required to store personal devices in their backpack during the school day, and can only use them with teacher permission. Regulation 2601 states disciplinary action may be taken if a student uses any electronic device in any way that violates the FCPS Acceptable Use Policy or the directions of the school.

TOYS

Students are **not** permitted to bring balls, yo-yos, collection cards, handheld game consoles, and other toys or electronic devices to school. They will be confiscated and returned to a parent or to the student on the last day of school. This rule applies while riding the bus and waiting at the bus stop. In addition, skateboards and heelers are not permitted on school grounds. Fidget spinners are considered toys unless parents and teacher have discussed the need for a student to use one in school.

EMERGENCY CARE CARD

The purpose of the Emergency Care Card is to locate the parent/guardian of a child in the event of illness or emergency. **WE MUST BE ABLE TO LOCATE YOU AT ALL TIMES DURING SCHOOL DAY.** Any change in the information that you provided on the card since the beginning of the year should be sent to the office as soon as possible (moving, new job, new phone number, new babysitter, etc.). Please list the phone numbers of two emergency contacts who will know where you are for emergency calls and who may pick up your child when he/she is ill and you are unable to pick up your child.

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOLS

Late openings, early closing, or the cancellation of school due to inclement weather (ice, snow, excessive heat, etc.) will be made by the Superintendent's Office by 5:30 a.m. when possible and announced via local radio and television stations as well as through the FCPS website and "Keep In-Touch" email notification system. **PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL FOR THIS INFORMATION.** Providence receives this information in the same manner that is available to all families (via the FCPS email, radio, television or FCPS websites).

PROVIDENCE COMMUNITY EVENTS

Providence ES has many great events for our students and their families. We host a Family Heritage Night in the fall, where families teach each other about their cultures and share food. Students may give performances that highlight their heritage as well. We hold a special Thanksgiving Lunch during school in November where our families often eat side by side. We also hold a STEAM Family Night where students and parents can participate in a multitude of fun learning activities using technology, science, engineering skills and mathematical reasoning. In April the community comes out to work together in our courtyard for "Service Saturday," where we plant and transplant trees, build structures to support our diverse gardens, prepare to raise crops, etc.

Our PTA holds many incredible events, including a Bingo Night, Dance and Fun Fair. These events require volunteer participation in order to happen. Some require a small cost, and are limited to current Providence students. See the PTA website for more information or for contact information so that you can volunteer!

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) provides a comprehensive, sequential Family Life Education (FLE) program for students. The FLE program is designed to provide students with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to make healthy, responsible, respectful, and life-enhancing decisions related to human growth and development, relationships, substance abuse, and emotional and social health. Parents/guardians may choose to opt **out** their child of all or part of the Family Life Education program. Students opted out are provided with non-punitive alternative instruction, and every effort is made to foster respect for family choices. Detailed information about grade level programs can be accessed at <http://www.fcps.edu/is/hpe/fle.shtml>. If you want to opt out your child of

any or all FLE instruction, please download the opt out form, fill in the appropriate information, and return it to your child's teacher by **October 1, 2019**. Program questions may be addressed by contacting Elizabeth Payne, FCPS Health and Physical Education Coordinator at 571-423-4550.

INTERIMS & PROGRESS REPORTS

The school year is divided up into four quarters, each lasting approximately 9 weeks. A progress report for each student is sent home at the end of each quarter. This progress report contains information for each subject area taught and levels for citizenship and study skills. We will send home this report in the Tuesday Folder. All parents need to sign the official envelope that the progress report comes in. Send the envelope back with your child. You may keep the progress report. All elementary schools in FCPS use a progress report that does not include traditional letter grades, but instead provides very specific info on achievement in key areas for each subject. You may access info on this system [here](#).

Interims are reports to parents that may be sent home at the half-way point of each quarter. At Providence, all teachers will send home an interim during the first quarter, even if the child is making great progress. Only students who need to work toward improvement and those who request an interim will have one sent home during the 2nd, 3rd and 4th quarters. Always sign your child's interim and return it to school ASAP so that the teacher knows that you've received it.

(Specific dates for interims and progress reports will be publicized on our website.) Look for interims in your child's Tuesday Folder.

KISS AND RIDE SAFETY PROCEDURES

See appendix for map and K&R procedures.

LOST AND FOUND

Please label your child's jacket, coat, book bags, lunch box, etc., with a permanent marker to avoid these items from becoming lost. Students who lose items at school should check the Lost and Found. Lost & Found items NOT claimed will be donated.

MEDICATION

We are not permitted to administer any medication (including aspirin, etc.) unless a parent has filled out a "Medical Permission Form" which may be obtained in the clinic. To protect the safety of all students. **STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BRING MEDICATION OF ANY KIND (PRESCRIPTION OR NON-PRESCRIPTION) TO SCHOOL. PARENTS MUST BRING ALL MEDICATION TO SCHOOL.** Any questions may be directed to the school clinic aide at 703-460-4410.



PATROLS

Selected students in good academic and behavioral standing in grades 5 and 6 serve as safety patrols. They work with a patrol sponsor on staff to help students during arrival and dismissal. Student safety patrols may have a regular "post" in the school building, on the bus or at the bus stops, or at Kiss & Ride. The process for patrol selection includes a student's statement of

interest with parental consent for consideration, recommendations from teachers and bus drivers, and a review of progress reports and discipline history. In the event that we have too many patrol candidates for limited positions and both candidates have equally excellent progress reports, we would defer that post to the older student. Patrol applications are made available to all 4th and 5th grade students in May for the next school year.

SCA

Our Student Council consists of all of our students. They are represented by classroom representatives and an elected board of upper-grade students. The SCA reps and board meet monthly with staff sponsors to plan student events such as Spirit Day themes and service learning projects, and to advise us ways to make Providence a better place.

SECURITY PRECAUTIONS

We welcome parents and visitors to Providence. Like all Fairfax County Schools, for security purposes, external doors are always locked. Visitors must ring the door bell at Door #1 to gain access. Next, all visitors must report directly to the main office and sign in before visiting anyone or any part of the building. A visitor's identification sticker will be provided in the office. We ask that you help us by directing and/or reporting anyone to the office who is not wearing a visitor sticker.

STUDENT DRESS

FCPS respects students' right to express themselves in the way they dress. It is important, however, that their appearance is appropriate for a K-12 school setting. As outlined in the dress code, any clothing that interferes with or disrupts the educational environment is unacceptable. Clothing with language or images that are vulgar, discriminatory, or obscene; or clothing that promotes illegal or violent conduct, such as gang symbols, the unlawful use of weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or drug paraphernalia; or clothing that contains threats is prohibited. At PES, no hats are worn inside the building. We expect that students will dress appropriately for Physical Education class which requires that they wear sneakers. Flip flops are not safe footwear and shoes with wheels are not permitted. More information about the dress code can be viewed online at <https://www.fcps.edu/index.php/policies-and-regulations> regulation number 2613.

STUDENT ILLNESS

Please help us to safeguard the health of your child as well as the health of all the children at school by adhering to the following guidelines:

DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL IF HE/SHE:

- has vomited at home or on the way to school
- has a temperature that is above normal (98.6 is usually normal)
- has symptoms of pink eye (conjunctivitis) or any other communicable disease
- has an unidentified rash

Children will be sent home for any of the above conditions. Students who are observed with any of the above-mentioned health concerns will need to be taken home until they are well and/or no longer have symptoms of a communicable condition. Providence takes every effort to ensure a safe and clean learning environment for your children. To prevent the spread of head lice, please inspect your children's heads on a routine basis and notify the school if you suspect your child may have lice. If a student misses 5 consecutive days due to illness, a doctor's note must be provided.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

With student rights come the responsibilities of students to behave in ways that will not infringe on the rights of other students. All PES students are taught the Fairfax County Public Schools' *Student Rights & Responsibilities* in September and again in the mid-year. Your family will receive a written copy of these rules, and are reminded of them throughout the school year. Teachers and administrators will act to make sure students learn appropriate behaviors and also to make sure other students are kept safe. These actions can include counseling, phone calls or letters to parents, conferences, individual behavior plans, removal from class, alternative instructional placements, suspension from school for up to ten days or, in the most extreme cases, expulsion from all Fairfax County Public Schools. Parents are expected to provide support and guidance when their children are disciplined.

TEXTBOOKS/CALCULATORS

Students are responsible for lost or damaged textbooks, computers, and calculators in their care. Parents/Guardians are expected to pay replacement cost for such items (Fairfax County Public School Regulation 5922) if lost or damaged.

SCHOOL TELEPHONE USE BY STUDENTS

Students are only permitted to use the school phone for urgent matters. If lunches, books, homework, etc. are left at home, please bring the item to the office and we will give it to the child at an appropriate time. This will prevent interruptions to classroom instruction. If you need to reach your child during the day, we will get a message to him/her. We will only interrupt instructional time for emergencies.

VANDALISM

Deliberate and malicious damage to school property shall be paid for by the student(s) responsible for the damage or by his or her parents or guardians, in accordance with Sections

8.01-43 and 8.01-44 of the Code of Virginia and Fairfax County Public Schools Regulation 73.06.4.

VISITING SCHOOL

When visiting school during school hours, parents must always show identification, sign in at the front office, and wear a visitor's sticker. This is to ensure the safety of all children. Even parents who volunteer regularly must adhere to this procedure. Parents are invited to have lunch with their children during their child's regular lunch time, and must sign-in. Visiting classrooms outside of a special event (class play, class party, etc.) requires an appointment with teachers and administration. Parents wishing to observe a classroom must make arrangements with the administration and a 20 minute-time limit will be enforced. This is to negate potential disruptions to learning for all students in the class.

VOLUNTEERING

One of the best things about Providence is our strong group of parent volunteers! At the teacher's request, parents may volunteer to help in their child's classroom. Younger siblings/non-school aged children should not accompany volunteers. Staff members and the PTA may also request for volunteers for school-wide events. Please sign in and out at the front office whenever you volunteer.

WALKERS

If your student will be walking to school, please know that Fairfax County Public Schools states that parents are responsible for selecting their children's walking routes to and from home. Parents are also responsible for providing supervision that is appropriate for the student's age, the student's maturity, and conditions on the route. We want to make certain that all students arrive at school and home safely, so it is important that all WALKERS obey crossing guards, walk on sidewalks when able, and walk directly to and from school.

We hope you found this Parent Handbook helpful. Thanks for doing your part to make our a school safe and happy place to learn!



