STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024

Kent Elementary School

Cougars are Respectful, Responsible, Resourceful & Proud

Dear KES Families,

We are thrilled to welcome you and your child to Kent Elementary School this school year! This handbook is designed to provide you with important information about our school. Please take the time to read through it carefully, and feel free to reach out to our staff if you have any questions or concerns.

Kent Elementary School
1091 Route 52 Carmel, NY 10512
Phone: (845) 225-5029
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1. Principal's Welcome Message

Dear Kent Elementary School Families,

Welcome back to another exciting school year! We hope this letter finds you and your loved ones in good health and high spirits. As summer draws to a close, we are eagerly preparing to welcome your children back to a year filled with growth, learning, and new adventures.

We are thrilled to announce that the first day of school for 1st to 4th graders will be on Tuesday, September 5th. Our dedicated staff is ready to create a safe and enriching environment for every student. We have been hard at work enhancing our curriculum, updating our facilities, and planning a variety of engaging activities to ensure that this academic year is both enjoyable and educational.

Our Commitment to Safety:

The health and safety of our students, staff, and families remain our top priority. We work closely with local health and safety authorities to create a secure environment throughout the school year. Our staff is excited to continue a schoolwide PBIS program, “KES ROARS!” in which we teach values that are aligned to Respect, Responsibility and Safety. We also work as grade level teams alongside our support staff of a school psychologist and social worker to ensure we monitor every student’s social emotional wellbeing. As a learning community, we recognize the importance of understanding emotions and teaching the different strategies to handle daily social interactions among peers and adults.

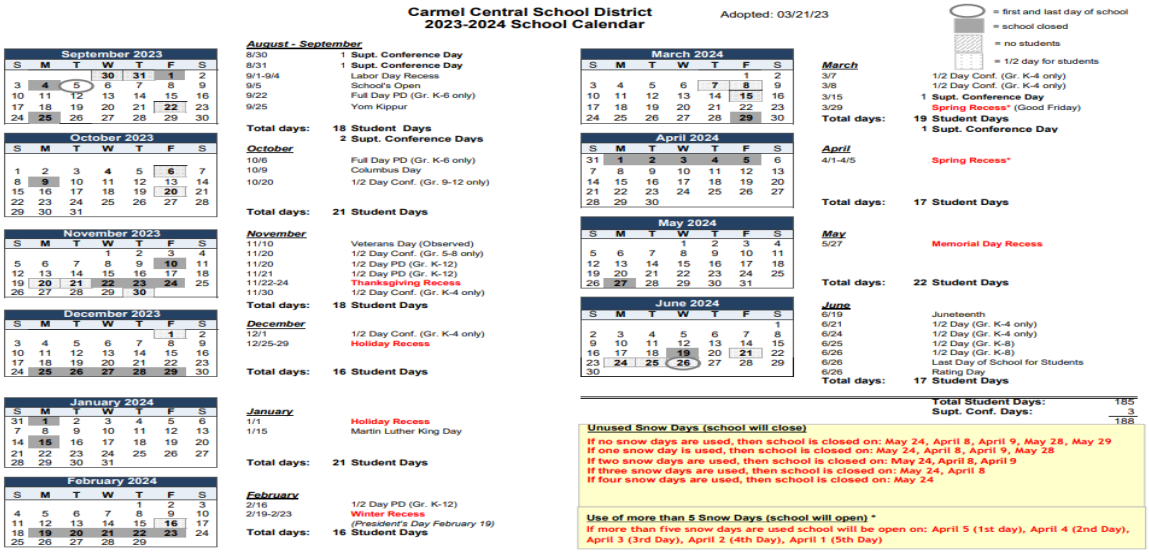
Exciting Academic Updates for 2023-2024:

This year we introduce our new ELA curriculum, Core Knowledge Language Arts, which will enrich student learning and align our practices to the Science of Reading.

Each day, our school will take part in a WIN period, (what I need), during which students will be provided with intervention or enrichment in ELA and Math according to their own ability levels.

We will continue our Weekly Principal Newsletters in which we update our families on the interesting happenings and important information for KES.

School Calendar (Click to see larger)



Carmel Central School District
2023-2024 School Calendar

Adopted: 03/21/23

= first and last day of school
= school closed
= no students
= 1/2 day for students

September 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

October 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

November 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

December 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

January 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

February 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

March 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

April 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

May 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

June 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

August - September		
8/30	1	**Supt. Conference Day**
8/31	1	**Supt. Conference Day**
9/1-9/4		Labor Day Recess
9/5		School's Open
9/22		Full Day PD (Gr. K-6 only)
9/25		Yom Kippur
Total days:	**18**	**Student Days**
	2	**Supt. Conference Days**
October		
10/6		Full Day PD (Gr. K-6 only)
10/9		Columbus Day
10/20		1/2 Day Conf. (Gr. 9-12 only)
Total days:	**21**	**Student Days**
November		
11/10		Veterans Day (Observed)
11/20		1/2 Day Conf. (Gr. 5-8 only)
11/20		1/2 Day PD (Gr. K-12)
11/21		1/2 Day PD (Gr. K-12)
11/22-24		**Thanksgiving Recess**
11/30		1/2 Day Conf. (Gr. K-4 only)
Total days:	**18**	**Student Days**
December		
12/1		1/2 Day Conf. (Gr. K-4 only)
12/25-29		**Holiday Recess**
Total days:	**16**	**Student Days**
January		
1/1		**Holiday Recess**
1/15		Martin Luther King Day
Total days:	**21**	**Student Days**
February		
2/16		1/2 Day PD (Gr. K-12)
2/19-2/23		**Winter Recess**
		(President's Day February 19)
Total days:	**16**	**Student Days**

March		
3/7		1/2 Day Conf. (Gr. K-4 only)
3/8		1/2 Day Conf. (Gr. K-4 only)
3/15	1	**Supt. Conference Day**
3/29		**Spring Recess*** (Good Friday)
Total days:	**19**	**Student Days**
	1	**Supt. Conference Day**
April		
4/1-4/5		**Spring Recess***
Total days:	**17**	**Student Days**
May		
5/27		**Memorial Day Recess**
Total days:	**22**	**Student Days**
June		
6/19		Juneteenth
6/21		1/2 Day (Gr. K-4 only)
6/24		1/2 Day (Gr. K-4 only)
6/25		1/2 Day (Gr. K-8)
6/26		1/2 Day (Gr. K-8)
6/26		Last Day of School for Students
6/26		Rating Day
Total days:	**17**	**Student Days**

Total Student Days:	185
Supt. Conf. Days:	3
	188

Unused Snow Days (school will close)

If no snow days are used, then school is closed on: May 24, April 8, April 9, May 28, May 29
If one snow day is used, then school is closed on: May 24, April 8, April 9, May 28
If two snow days are used, then school is closed on: May 24, April 8, April 9
If three snow days are used, then school is closed on: May 24, April 8
If four snow days are used, then school is closed on: May 24

Use of more than 5 Snow Days (school will open) *

If more than five snow days are used school will be open on: April 5 (1st day), April 4 (2nd Day), April 3 (3rd Day), April 2 (4th Day), April 1 (5th Day)

*NOTE: Spring Recess is subject to change so be sure to not make irrevocable plans for this time.

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2. School Hours, Arrival and Dismissal

School begins promptly at 9:00am. Student drop off begins at 8:50 in our front parking lot, staff will be there to help escort your children out of your vehicle. We would like to remind our families that drive to school, to please be prompt each morning. Instruction begins as soon as our students enter the classroom so late arrivals can interfere with your children's learning. Pick up at the end of the day begins at 3:25 in our cafeteria. You may arrive at 3:20. Please enter through the side doors, you must bring ID with you and the adult picking up must be listed as a contact in our system.

Pick-up Procedures

Parent Pick up begins at 3:20. If you need to excuse your child from school before the end of the day, please make sure you do so **before 2:50pm.** We will not allow pick-ups between 2:50 and 3:20. If your student needs to leave school early, please send in a note to their teacher and ensure you arrive at our school **before 2:50pm.**

If you plan to pick up, you must send a note in with your child. If you are picking up every day, or only on specific days, please detail that in the note. Please do NOT pick up your child early unless there are extenuating circumstances. This disrupts the learning environment. From 2:50 – 3:25 there will be no early pickups unless it is an emergency as the school day ends at 3:25pm.

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3. Communication and Parental Involvement

Get Involved:

Our Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) plays a vital role in enhancing the school experience for our students. We encourage you to join the PTO and participate in its activities and initiatives. Your involvement strengthens our school community and supports our shared mission of providing the best education for our students.

Communication:
Kent Elementary School makes a strong effort to communicate with each member of our school family in a variety of ways. Look for information about our school:

1. The Parent Square App
2. Principal and classroom newsletters
3. in district e-mail
4. CCSD App

Additional letters from the district office, principal, PTO or teacher will be sent home with your child as needed. Please check your child's book bag daily for important communications from school.

Family-Teacher Collaboration:

At Kent Elementary School, we strongly believe in the power of collaboration between family and teachers. Open communication is key to your child's success, and we encourage you to stay engaged in your child's education. Throughout the year, there will be opportunities to meet with teachers, attend conferences, and participate in school events. In September we will communicate to all families how they can participate at their children's grade level by using Grade Level Parent Pathways.

Parent Square App:

This unified communications platform is designed to keep parents and guardians informed and encourage greater engagement and connection with CCSD. It provides a safe way for district administrators, school principals, teachers, staff, parents, and students to*:

- · Send and receive school and class information (in their designated home language)
- · Share pictures and files
- · See calendar items.
- · Sign up to volunteer.
- · Schedule parent-teacher conferences
- · and much more . . . all in one centralized place!

While you do not need to create/register an account to receive updates and communications, if you would like to access all available features, please use the following steps to create your account:

1. 1. Visit https://www.parentsquare.com/signin
2. 1. Under Sign Up/Create Password, enter Email or Cell Phone Number. You must use the same email/phone you provided to your school.
3. 1. Click Go.
4. 1. If the email/phone matches the information in ParentSquare, user receives an account activation email/text to register.

For even more convenience, Parents should download the ParentSquare app (available for free for iOS and Android devices) - scan or click the appropriate QR code from your device to launch the app store. Parent Square accounts are also accessible to GFMS and CHS students

Important Contacts:

Principal: Mike Setaro	845.225.5029
Front Office: Michelle Disque	845.225.5029 ext 301
School Nurse: Lynn Annunziato	845.225.5029 ext 307

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4. Student Attendance

The CCSD recognizes that attendance is a major component of each student's academic success. The Board of Education's Policy governing student attendance requires that you receive and understand a summary of the policy and your role in relation to your child's school attendance. The following information is meant to be helpful toward that end.

- You will be contacted by phone when your child is absent.
- You must provide a note documenting the date(s) and reason for the absence when your child returns to school.
- Unexcused absences may result in disciplinary action consistent with the district's practices.
- Your child's attendance data will be documented on a daily basis and it will be reported to you on the report cards.

Please make every effort to have your child attend school on a daily basis. **Family trips and vacations should be arranged to coincide with scheduled school holidays and vacation periods**. If possible, please make appointments for doctors/dentists other than during school hours.

If you are having difficulty encouraging your child to attend school, please notify your child's teacher or contact the school social worker.
Notify the school if you wish to have a complete copy of the CCSD Attendance Policy.

Board of Education Policy #442
"Parents, guardians and/or other persons having charge, control or custody of a minor between the ages of six and sixteen, are responsible for regular attendance. The school administration is expected to enforce the law."

Tardiness

Students who arrive after 9:10 a.m. are tardy and must sign in at the main office since attendance has already been taken in class. Help your child get a good start to each school day by arriving on time.

Excused Absences

NYS law requires a written excuse or note from home stating the reason for absence which is due on the first day back to school.

According to NYS law, the following are some examples of excused/unexcused absences: sickness, death in the family, impassable roads, religious observances, and doctor's appointments. If we have not heard from you when your child is absent, our District Attendance Office will attempt to call you in order to confirm the absence.

Vacation Trips

Absences due to vacation trips are considered unexcused.

Parents should consult the school calendar prior to making vacation plans. Parents are strongly discouraged from taking their children out of school for family vacations because valuable classroom instruction time can never be replaced by makeup assignments.

When parents decide to take their children out of school for vacations, they must notify the school of their intentions. Because such extended absences are not excused, teachers are not expected to provide make up work or special assignments prior to these vacations. Teachers are not expected to provide special tutoring for those students whose parents take them on vacation during school time.

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5. Health and Safety

SAFETY DRILLS

Each and every day, there is a Putnum County Sheriff School Patrol Officer stationed in our school.

Kent Elementary School students and staff practice a variety of emergency drills during the school year including:

1. Fire Drills (8 per year)
2. Intruder lock-down (2 per year)
3. Sheltering plan (for serious weather emergency) (2 per year)

Health Office

A full-time nurse is employed at Kent Elementary School to ensure the health and safety of every child.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS:

A physical examination must be done **after May 1st** of the school year and is required for grades kindergarten, second, fourth, seventh and tenth, as well as those children who are new to the District. It is desirable to have your own physician perform the medical examination because he/she knows your child best. The school doctor will automatically examine students who do not have the required physical privately in order to comply with the New York State Education Law. The school nurse checks weight, height, vision, hearing and scoliosis annually at school. Parents will be notified promptly of any problem found during an examination.

MEDICATION:

If a child needs to take medicine during the day, you must submit written orders

from the doctor and a "Medication Permission Form" signed by a parent. It is required that such medications be delivered directly to the school nurse by the parent in the original prescription bottle. This includes over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol or cough medicine.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY FORM:

At the beginning of the school year, parents are asked to fill out an emergency form listing the telephone numbers where each parent can be reached during the school day and two alternate numbers to be called in the event your child becomes ill or injured at school. Please remember to notify the school of any changes during the year. It is also a good idea if you are going to be out of town during the day to make arrangements with someone to be a contact for your child, in case one should be needed.

ACCIDENT OR ILLNESS:

When a child becomes ill or injured in school, he/she is sent to the Health Office. If the school nurse feels that the child is able to remain in school, he/she may be allowed to rest for a short time and then return to class. In case of minor accidents, first aid is given, and the child is sent back to class. When the school nurse determines that the child should not remain in school, the parents are contacted and asked to make arrangements to transport the child home. In case of an emergency and a parent cannot be contacted or cannot pick up the student, an ambulance will have to be called to take them to the hospital.

Kindergarten & First-Grade Parents: Please pack a change of clothes in a zip bag to keep in your child's backpack in case it is needed. Thank you.

Listed below are some helpful guidelines when your child becomes ill during school or is absent due to illness:

a) Students should not return to school after an illness accompanied by fever until their temperature has been normal for 24 hours.
b) Students who are taking antibiotics due to illness may return to school after

24 hours of antibiotic treatment if they are well enough to participate in school activities.

c) Parents are reminded to use discretion when sending their child to school with colds, headaches, or stomach disorders. The child may be exposing others and may not benefit educationally himself/herself.

PEANUT FREE: In order to protect allergic students, we have set up a peanut-free table in the lunchroom for each grade level, if needed. At times if there is a child in the class with a severe peanut allergy, we will ask that food for parties be peanut-free.

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6. School Meal Program

Breakfast, as well as a hot and cold lunch will be available for all students on a daily basis (except half days of attendance). You will receive a new breakfast/lunch menu each month. At this point in time, all regular breakfast and lunch is free for KES Students this year!

If your child wishes to purchase lunch or breakfast, we are using the POS system. This is the easiest way for students to purchase lunch or breakfast. Some key points about the POS system:

Each child has a special PIN # (which is their student ID #) to use each time they make any purchase in the cafeteria. For returning students, the PIN # is the same as last year.
Parents are encouraged to send checks or cash, in any amount, to be deposited in their child's account for their use. Money should be sent in an envelope marked "Cafeteria". Parents should include their child's PIN #. Teachers will arrange to have the envelope sent to the cafeteria.

Special alerts can be placed on the system regarding special diet needs and/or food allergies.

Food Services will never deny a child a lunch; however, if an account has a negative balance, no a la cart purchases are allowed, i.e. dessert and bottled water.

SNACK POLICY
Approximately 3 percent of U.S. children have true immunological food allergies according to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. In an elementary school of 400 students, that equates to a possibility of 12 children with a food allergy, which sometimes can be life-threating. These students are spread out throughout the classes at KPS. Due to that, we need to limit snack to the following items in classrooms where students with food allergies are placed.

1. Pretzels
2. String Cheese
3. Vegetables
4. Raisins, Craisins, Dried Fruit
5. Goldfish Crackers
6. Cereal Bars with no nuts

If there is a snack restriction in your child's class, you will be notified. Snack is an option, not mandatory. If a child brings in any snack other than the snacks listed above, they will be asked to put it in their lunch box until lunch time. We work very hard on keeping the rooms free of any food items, to insure that we have no rodents/insects within the classroom. Each child is responsible for cleaning up after their snack. All students may have a water bottle (and water only) at all times with them.

Closing Remarks

As we embark on this new school year together, we are filled with gratitude for the opportunity to work with your amazing children and support their growth. We look forward to creating memories, fostering friendships, and achieving great academic accomplishments. We are excited to welcome them back to Kent Elementary School and can't wait to see the bright futures they will create.

Sincerely,

Principal Mike Setaro
Kent Elementary School