



# PADONIA INTERNATIONAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK



## WELCOME

Welcome to Padonia International Elementary School. We hope that your experience at Padonia will be enriching, productive, and collaborative as we work together to promote the academic, social, and emotional growth of your student. This handbook will provide helpful information about our school.

## MISSION

The Padonia International Elementary School professional learning community is dedicated to providing a quality, comprehensive educational program designed to address the needs of a diverse student population. We commit ourselves to promoting understanding, appreciation, and respect for cultural diversity and learning.

## PADONIA SCHOOL PLEDGE

As a proud member of Team Padonia, I will...  
Respect myself and my community.  
Be responsible for what I say and do.  
Be an active learner.  
Make safe choices.

## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

SCHOOL OFFICE: 410-887-7646  
SCHOOL FAX: 410-887-7647  
SCHOOL NURSE: 410-667-6068  
PAL CENTER: 410-887-7709

## IMPORTANT WEBSITES

BCPS WEBSITE [www.bcps.org](http://www.bcps.org)  
PADONIA WEBSITE <http://padoniaes.bcps.org/>

## **The School Day**

### **ARRIVAL**

All students enter the building or classrooms at 8:30 A.M. Those students eating breakfast enter the building at 8:25 A.M. They go directly to the cafeteria then proceed, with their breakfast, to their classrooms. Parents are requested to leave children at the school doors and not accompany them into the classrooms. If your child is absent or late, please provide a note stating the reason.

### **DISMISSAL**

Dismissal begins at 3:15 pm. Bus riders and students being picked up by after school vans exit from the main lobby to their transportation. At 3:20 p.m., students attending Play Centers are dismissed to the cafeteria and all remaining students are dismissed from the same door which they entered to begin the academic day. Students will be dismissed to parents, older siblings, or persons listed on the enrollment paperwork (see EARLY DISMISSAL for more information).

### **BUS TRANSPORTATION**

Children living more than a mile away are entitled to ride a school bus. Bus routes are established by the Office of Transportation. Information about the bus routes and stops are available in the school office. Please have your child at the assigned stop a few minutes early and be patient, especially at the beginning of the school year. Children are permitted to ride ONLY on their assigned bus and may get off ONLY at their assigned stop.

Specific bus riding rules are published by the Office of Transportation. They are also posted on the bus and are reviewed by the school. Parents and children should familiarize themselves with the rules.

### **WALKERS**

Children living less than one mile from school walk to school. Crossing guards are posted at the intersection of Greenside Drive and Cranbrook Road and the intersection of Galloway Road and Greenside Drive. Walkers leave the building through the same doors as they entered. Children should be reminded that they are to NEVER walk through the school parking lot. They are to cross Greenside Dr. at the crosswalk only. ***Students are not permitted to cross Greenside Dr. even with an adult unless they are at the crosswalk at Galloway Rd. Our priority is safety for all.***

### **CAR RIDERS**

CARS MAY NOT ENTER THE FRONT CIRCLE during the hours of 8:00-9:00 A.M. and 3:00-3:30 P.M. Please drive slowly and be mindful of traffic signs. Please be considerate of these traffic rules; we love all of our children and we want to keep them safe.

Please note the parking lot is for staff members only. Please park on the roads adjoining the school property. Pay attention to traffic signs to know where parking is permitted. There is no visitor parking in the school driveway.

### **PLAY CENTERS**

This is a fee-based program for before and after school care which is run by a private contractor. It is held in the cafeteria daily. Please contact the Play Centers office for details (410-296-4880).

### **SCHEDULE (General)**

- 8:25 A.M.: Students eating breakfast enter the building and go to the cafeteria.  
Breakfast is served until 8:45 A.M.
- 8:30 A.M.: Students enter the building.
- 8:40 A.M.: Announcements begin
- 8:45 A.M.: Instruction begins- Anyone arriving after 8:45 A.M. must report to the office.
- 11:15 A.M.: Morning Pre-K and half-day classes are dismissed
- 12:45 pm: Afternoon Pre-K and half-day classes begin
- 3:15 pm: Dismissal for all students or extra-curricular activities begin
- 4:00 pm: School office closes

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

Sometimes schools do not open, open late, or close early because of bad weather conditions. Sometimes schools close because of other unforeseen emergencies (e.g. power failure). Emergency changes to the schedule are announced over local television and radio stations and posted on the BCPS website ([www.bcps.org](http://www.bcps.org)). Listen for news concerning BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS before sending a child to school on inclement weather days. Information regarding changes in the school schedule can also be determined by calling 410-887-5555. Please note: Padonia is **not** in the Hereford Zone. Parents may register with School's Out ([www.schoolsout.com](http://www.schoolsout.com)) for email or text message alerts for changes in the school system's schedule.

**\*\*Please do not call the school: it is crucial that the school lines remain open.**

### **DELAYED OPENING PROCEDURES**

In the event of a delayed opening, breakfast will not be served. Play Centers will **not** be available before school. Students will enter the building through their same designated entrance.

## **EARLY CLOSING PROCEDURES**

In the event of an early school closing, due to an emergency, or for reasons as stated in the Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) calendar, the following applies:

**If school closes two or three hours early:** lunch will be served to grades K-5. All bus riders will go home on the regular afternoon bus. Parents or authorized adults should collect morning pre-kindergarten students at the normal dismissal time of 11:15 A.M. *There will be no bus transportation for the 11:15 A.M. dismissal for preschool and pre-kindergarteners.* Afternoon pre-kindergarten will be cancelled.

**If school closes one hour early:** lunch will be served as usual, and all bus students will ride home on their regular afternoon bus, including preschool and pre-kindergarteners.

**Playcenters will not be available after school in the event of an emergency early dismissal.**

## **Services**

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

A full-time school nurse provides first-aid and dispenses all medications. She can be reached at **410-667-6068**. The following required health forms are available from the nurse or school office:

- 1. Immunization Forms:** Records of immunizations are legally required by the State of Maryland and are necessary for every child to start school. Contact the school office for details.
- 2. Health Inventory Forms:** One page to be completed by parents, and one by the child's doctor.
- 3. Consent for Discretionary Medication:** At the beginning of the school year, parents receive a form listing medications supplied by the BCPS Department of Health, which are available for occasional use at the nurse's discretion (e.g. Tylenol for headache, throat lozenges, etc.). In order for a child to receive over-the-counter medications, parents must signify their consent by signing and returning this form.
- 4. Prescription Medication:** A doctor's order must be completed by the prescribing physician if any medication sent from home has to be administered at school. This applies to both prescription and over-the-counter medications. All medication must be brought to the school nurse in the original pharmacy package.

Please remember, students should not be sent to school if they have any signs of illness (fever, sore throat, inflamed eyes, rash, nausea, etc.). Students must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.

## **HEARING AND VISION SCREENING**

Once a year, a technician comes to school to administer hearing and vision screening tests. Students new to BCPS, as well as kindergarten, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are routinely screened. At the request of parents, guardians, or teachers, other students can also be tested at this time.

## **Operational Information**

### **STUDENT ENROLLMENT FORMS**

At the beginning of the school year, every student brings home a form which must be verified or updated and returned to school immediately. This form provides the office and school nurse with your address, home and work phone numbers, places of employment, and other emergency information. Each child in your family **must** have emergency information forms on file at school. For families with custody concerns, the school office needs to be advised of the details.

### **BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE**

As stated in the school pledge, being kind, honest, safe, and respectful are the expectations of student behavior in school, traveling to and from home, and on field trips.

The administration and faculty are very aware of parental concerns about student behavior, discipline and security. At the beginning of the school year, each student receives the BCPS Student Behavior Handbook. This outlines BCPS policies and procedures for safety and expectations of student behavior. It also describes the disciplinary measures that go into effect if students disobey the rules. Students have a presentation from the administration, and then bring the handbook home to read with parents. **Parents/guardians and students are required to sign and return the last page of the booklet, indicating their understanding of the behavior code.**

### **CRISIS MANAGEMENT**

In the event of a crisis, a well-organized and rehearsed plan is implemented. At the beginning of the school year, each student will bring home an Enrollment Form that must be verified or updated and returned to school immediately. It is vital that all emergency information forms be completed and updated so that in the event of a crisis, the school will be able to notify parents/guardians in a timely manner.

### **FIRE DRILLS**

School-wide fire drills are practiced once a month on a random schedule. Other safety drills (500 ft. evacuation, lock down, and safe weather) are practiced on a random schedule throughout the school year.

### **SCHOOL GROUNDS**

The school grounds are open to the public outside of school hours. All school playground equipment is open for use with adult supervision after school hours. Please do not allow children to play unsupervised at any time.

### **VISITORS**

For security purposes, **ALL** visitors must report directly to the office to sign in and obtain a **visitor's pass**. In the interests of everyone in the building, please observe this rule. If you would like to visit the classroom, please contact your child's teacher or an administrator to schedule the visit 24 hours in advance.

**AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK** is another wonderful opportunity to visit your child's classroom and observe instruction in progress.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

Padonia has a strong tradition of parent and community involvement. There are many opportunities to volunteer. These include, but are not limited to:

- Volunteering to help with a PTA organized event.
- Donating goods, services, or time to school activities.
- Helping teachers with curriculum-related activities in the classroom (vary by grade level).
- Helping at class special events (picnics, seasonal activities, field day).
- Being a room parent: organizing class events, making phone calls, coordinating volunteers from the class for PTA activities, etc..
- Clerical/administrative work for teachers (making copies, laminating, etc.).
- Reading to students during lunch or other times.
- Chaperoning field trips.
- Assisting Community Club activities.

A sign-up form listing all volunteer opportunities is distributed by the PTA during the first month of school. If you need further information about how you can be more involved in your child's school life, please contact your child's teacher. All volunteers are required to register in the school office and print a visitor badge each time they come in the building.

If you plan to volunteer at any time, it is important to attend a Volunteer Training Session, held at various times throughout the year. For the safety of all students, **all volunteers are required to complete an application including a background check each year.**

### **CALENDARS**

BCPS distributes a county-wide "calendar and information booklet" at the beginning of the school year. Updates are published with the school newsletters and on the school website as necessary. A monthly calendar of school activities will appear in the school e-newsletter.

## NEWSLETTERS

A Thursday Folder will be sent home each week with all students. Please check your child's take-home bag each week for the Thursday Folder. It will contain up-to-date information about the school and community as well as important events, school closings and activities. Parents are requested to sign this folder weekly. You will also receive monthly e-newsletters from the school.

## REPORT CARDS

Report cards are sent home four times a year (grades 1-5). The "instructional code" used on the report cards varies with the grade level of the child—first and second grades do not use an A,B,C marking scale. (See calendars or newsletters for report card distribution dates.)

## PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Communication between parents and teachers is critical. During the year, there will be at least one conference day scheduled for parents to discuss their child's progress with teachers. However, at any time during the school year, parents may call or send a note to the teacher to arrange an appointment. Teachers are unable to conduct 'drop-in' conferences as this can be disruptive to the instructional program and will not provide sufficient time for effective communication.

## SCHOOL OFFICE

The office is one of the busiest places in our school! Ms. Rodriguez , Ms. Burros, Ms. Lehto, and Ms. DiDonato are excited to work with our families. In the office, you can:

- Update the information form with **emergency information** for your child. Please make sure that this form is completed and updated. If your contact information changes during the school year, please call the school and request a new form.
- Send a note if your child is to leave school early. You must go to the school office to sign out and meet your child. Please do NOT go to the classroom.
- Drop off a forgotten item. If your child **forgets something** necessary for school that day, it should be dropped off to the office and NOT in the classroom (please make sure items are clearly labeled).
- Submit money for the school lunch account. Forms for the school lunch account are available in the office and monies can be submitted.
- Request paperwork if your child is transferring or withdrawing from the school. Please allow at least 48 hours for the completion of paperwork.
- Provide important information, such as a change in dismissal. Please try to call between 9 A.M and 2 P.M. Please limit this only to emergencies. Students will not be called from class for phone messages.

## CAFETERIA

Rules and procedures for the cafeteria are reviewed with students at the beginning of the school year. However, the following information should be read carefully:

- Please complete \*\*\*\* form for eligibility for the Free and Reduced Price Meals Program.
- A pre-paid debit account is available to all children to buy food in the cafeteria. This eliminates the need to carry cash. Debit account forms are sent home at the beginning of the year and reminders to add additional funds are sent home as needed. Students access their accounts using a personal identification code assigned by the Office of Food and Nutrition.
- Breakfast is served in the cafeteria each morning at 8:25 and ends at 8:45.
- Children may bring a packed lunch from home or purchase a lunch, drink, or snacks in the cafeteria. Kindergarten students are not permitted to purchase a snack.
- If a child's lunch is left at home, it can be dropped off to the office. **Please remember to label the lunch with your child's name in a visible location.**

## BIRTHDAYS

Student birthdays are announced on the intercom. You may select to send in an activity for the class or a book for the class library as a gift to celebrate your child's birthday. Food should not be sent to school for birthdays.

## ATTENDANCE

In accordance with state laws, students are required to attend school for 180 days as outlined on the BCPS calendar. Please make every attempt to see that your child is in school each day from 8:30-3:15. Students learn more when they are in school. Please note the following:

- **Absence**  
An absence is excused only in cases of illness, quarantine, death in the family, impassable roads, religious holidays, or other lawful circumstances. Upon returning to school a note should be sent to the teacher giving the date(s) and reason for the absence. Teachers are not obliged to provide home-study or homework for an unlawful absentee. Please call the school office if you need to discuss a prolonged absence with an administrator or teacher.
- **Tardiness**  
Children who enter the building after 8:45 A.M are considered tardy. Any student arriving late is required to sign-in at the school office with a note explaining the reason for the late arrival.
- **Early Dismissal**  
In the event that an early dismissal is unavoidable, please send in a note stating the reason, date, and time you will be picking up your child. Parents must report to the school office to sign-out their child. If someone other than the parent is picking up a child, they will be asked to provide identification.

## **CELL PHONES**

The Baltimore County Public Schools Student Handbook states that the use of any wireless communication device during regular instructional school hours is a Category I offense and may result in suspension. If a child has a cell phone, it must be turned off and stored in a locker or book bag during school hours and while the student is transported on a school bus. The school is not responsible for a lost or stolen cell phone.

## **CURRICULUM**

The curriculum taught at Padonia is set by the Baltimore County Board of Education (BCPS) Board of Educators. A snapshot copy of the curriculum for each grade level will be distributed at “Back-to-School Night” in the fall.

Special area classes are scheduled for kindergarten through fifth grades with instructors certified in their fields. The special area classes at Padonia are:

- Art
- Library/Media
- Instrumental Music (Fourth Grade only)
- Vocal Music
- Physical Education

## **DRESS**

While there is no formal dress code at Padonia, children should be dressed appropriately for safety, modesty, personal hygiene, climate, and consideration of others. Hats are to be removed in the building. Sneakers, tennis shoes, or gym shoes (not sandals or dress shoes) and appropriate clothing should be worn on PE days. In addition, flip-flops are not to be worn by students as they pose a safety concern at recess.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Each grade level may have at least one field trip during the school year. For each trip a permission slip will be sent home for parent/guardian signature. The slip must be signed and returned in order for your child to attend the trip. Please send in any money required as soon as possible (if cash is being sent, it must be for the exact amount). Teachers will ask for adult chaperones as needed.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Please mark all of your child’s belongings clearly and check the lost and found located near the cafeteria often. All unclaimed items may be donated periodically to local charities.

## **SCHOOL PICTURES**

Twice during the school year, during the fall and spring, a photographer comes to school to take individual pictures. Class photos are taken in the spring. Purchase of school

pictures is optional. *If you choose not to purchase the pictures, the complete package must be returned to school.*

### **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

The school provides textbooks and instructional materials. A list of individual school supplies each child will need for the upcoming school year is sent home with the Back-to-School letter. This list is also available in the office, from your child's teacher, or on the school website. Please replenish supplies as needed throughout the school year.

### **PARENT-TEACHER-ASSOCIATION (PTA)**

The PTA acts as an advocate for all children and strives to foster closer relations between the home, the community, and the school. The Padonia PTA supports these ideals and funds many supplementary enrichment programs and activities, such as assemblies, technology equipment, and teacher reimbursements.

The PTA conducts fundraising events to support school programs and activities. Fundraising events vary from year to year and may include: Fall Festival, Movie Nights, Box Top collections, Book Fair, and Race for Education.

### **PTA MEMBERSHIP**

Padonia's PTA encourages all families to join the organization and participate in some aspect of its activities. A donation drive is conducted every year. All PTA members are invited to attend (and vote) at monthly PTA meetings. Details of meetings and all other PTA events are listed in monthly newsletters.