



**Chapel District Elementary School
Student Handbook
11430 Cordova Road
Cordova, MD 21625
410-822-2391**

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

Welcome to the 2010-2011 school year at Chapel District Elementary School. The staff is eager to begin working with your child(ren). Parents/guardians are encouraged to become actively involved in their child's education. One way to become involved is to carefully read the information presented in this handbook. It should help answer any questions that you may have about what happens at Chapel District Elementary on a daily basis. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the school. This assignment planner has been provided, with funding from the PTO, for your child to keep throughout the year. We look forward to a exciting school year!

Sincerely,
Staff of Chapel District Elementary

Mission Statement

Each student will learn, grow, and succeed

Chapel District Elementary School students, staff and families strive for excellence.

Beliefs

1. Learning is the chief priority for the school.
2. Students' learning needs must be the primary focus of all school decisions.
3. Students learn best when they are actively engaged in the learning process and have appropriate opportunities for success.
4. Curriculum and instructional practices should incorporate a variety of learning activities to accommodate differences in learning needs and styles.
5. Each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs.
6. A student's self esteem is enhanced by positive relationships and mutual respect among students and staff.
7. A safe and physically comfortable environment promotes student learning.
8. Teachers, administrators, parents/guardians, and the community share the responsibility for advancing the school mission.
9. The commitment to continuous improvement is imperative to enable students to become confident, self-directed, lifelong learners.

School Programs and Services

Before and After School Care Child care services are available for students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. Care is provided on regular weekdays (including when school is not in session) from 6:45 am until 6:00 pm. Contact Critchlow-Adkins Child Care at 410-822-6293 for more information.

Breakfast/Lunch Program Breakfast and lunch are available daily for students. Free and reduced breakfast and lunch are available for those students who qualify. A form is mailed home during the summer. Forms are also available in the school office.

Talbot County Public School's Food and Nutrition Service makes use of a computerized lunch Express Card System. Parents/guardians can prepay any amount on their child(ren)'s account and the amount of each day's purchase is deducted from the balance. The computer tracks the balance and parents/guardians are notified when the balance is low.

Parents/guardians can also view their child's lunch account online. Parents/guardians are able to view their student's account history and make an online payment to their child's account. For all online transactions parents/guardians will need their student's nine digit ID number (found on report cards). Please visit the TCPS website (www.talbotschools.org) to make use of this service.

Prices for the 2010-2011 school year are:

Student Breakfast	\$1.00
Reduced Breakfast	\$0.30
Student Lunch	\$1.75
Reduced Lunch	\$0.40
Milk	\$0.40
Ice Cream	\$0.65-\$1.05

NOTE: These prices are subject to change. Please check the menu for actual prices.

Character Counts! Chapel District Elementary participates in a character education program for elementary school children. A community volunteer called a **Character Coach** visits each classroom once and week for fifteen minutes. The coaches present lessons that instruct students in the six pillars of Character: **Caring, Trustworthiness, Fairness, Respect, Citizenship and Responsibility**. If you are interested in become a Character Coach, please contact the School Counselor at 410-822-2391.

Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) The Chapel District PTO works with the teachers, Principal and School Manager to organize activities and additional educational opportunities for the students. They are divided into committees to organize PTO events. They are always looking for parent volunteers willing to chair a committee or help with events. Consider joining the PTO. Additional information can be found on the PTO website (www.chapeldistrictpto.com).

School Counseling Program The counseling program is available to help students, parents/guardians, and teachers develop positive learning experiences. The program consists of a variety of services and activities, including individual and group counseling, parent/guardian and teacher consultation, group guidance, information services, and referral assistance to other programs and services in the community.

Volunteers Volunteers are welcome at Chapel District Elementary. Those interested in volunteering should contact the Volunteer Coordinator to learn how they can become more involved.

School Expectations and Routines

Expectations To help provide a safe and orderly environment at CDES, a set of school-wide rules called “Chapel CHAMP” have been established. The rules are:

Choose to follow directions

Have respect for everyone and everything

All students keep self to self

Make your time count

Positive attitude at all times

Please take time to discuss these rules with students and point out why rules are important.

Arrival The doors of the school open at 8:45 am. Students who ride the bus to school will be dropped off in front of the school. **Car riders can be dropped off between 8:45 am and 9:05 am at the main entrance on the side of the school. Students will be marked tardy after 9:05 am.** PM Pre-K students should arrive at **1:00 pm**.

Dismissal At 3:40 pm, car riders are dismissed to the cafeteria. Parents/guardians may pick up students at the side of the school. Students will be dismissed by a staff member when a parent is there to pick up the child. **Do not park and walk over to the car rider area to pick up your child.**

Bus riders are dismissed at 3:50. As buses arrive, they will be loaded and allowed to leave.

NOTE: Students are not permitted to ride any other bus except the one to which they have been assigned unless a note is sent to school stating the student’s full name, the bus they are ride, the location where they will be dropped off and the reason for the change in bus.

NOTE: Students who usually ride the bus home from school must bring in a note if they are to be a car rider. Parents/guardians may only call the school to have their child be a car rider if it becomes necessary during the day.

Discipline Good discipline is essential so that learning may occur. School-wide rules have been developed and students are expected to follow them. It is very important that each student abide by these rules. The classroom teachers handle most discipline concerns. Home contact (note, phone call, conference, etc.) is required before students are referred to the principal unless noted below.

Serious disciplinary concerns are immediately referred to the principal. The following serious infractions may result in suspension/expulsion:

1. Fighting
2. Insubordination/Disrespect
3. Vandalism

4. Bringing look-alikes (toy guns, knives, pills, mace, etc.) to school
5. Possession or use of drugs, alcohol, and/or tobacco products
6. Bringing illegal weapons (guns, knives, matches, mace, etc.) to school
7. Verbal threats
8. Sexual Harassment
9. Pulling the fire alarm
10. Bringing beepers and/or cell phones to school

Bus Rules Riding the school bus is a privilege. Student misbehavior on school buses is a violation of safety procedures and will not be tolerated. The bus driver is in charge of the bus and students are expected to follow the directions of the driver as they would a teacher in school. They are also expected to follow the same rules for behavior on the bus as they are in school. Each student is responsible for his/her own behavior. The following rules must be adhered to or a student will lose his/her privilege of riding the bus.

1. Be courteous.
2. Stay in your seat.
3. Keep all body parts inside the bus.
4. Keep the bus clean.
5. Keep talking at a low level. There should be no yelling or shouting.
6. Do not eat or drink on the bus.
7. Do not fight on the bus.
8. Do not smoke on the bus.
9. Do not vandalize the bus.
10. Do not bring skateboards or balloons on the bus.
11. Do not use profane language on the bus.

The Supervisor of Transportation can provide information on bus routes and pick up and return times. The phone number for Transportation is 410-822-9537.

Class Parties/Activities/Picnics

1. All holiday-themed activities will be decided on by grade level teams and approved by the Principal. Teachers will contact room parents/guardians to assist with setting up these activities.
2. Parents/guardians may drop off a snack to celebrate their child's birthday. However, no birthday parties are permitted during school hours. **Snacks will be given out in the cafeteria during lunchtime.**

Field Trips

1. Field trips are to be an extension of the learning process and are directly related to instructional objectives.
2. Parents/guardians must give individual student permission. Permission letters will go home with the student.
3. All students are expected to follow school rules while on field trips. Students who do not follow rules will be referred to the Principal's office. These students may be denied the privilege of participating in field trips for the remainder of the year.
4. School buses will be used as the mode of transportation, unless otherwise decided upon by the Principal, School Manager or Supervisor of Transportation.

Field Trip Chaperones

1. The number of chaperones will be determined by the teacher and/or the Supervisor of Transportation.
2. Each teacher will use his/her own discretion in selecting chaperones.
3. Each chaperone should maintain order in his/her group and should notify the teacher immediately if students are not complying with school rules.
4. **No younger siblings are permitted to attend the field trip.**
5. **All chaperones selected must ride with the students.**

Lost and Found Parents/guardians should periodically check the Lost and Found for items that belong to their child(ren). Items not claimed will be donated to a local charity at the end of the school year.

Parent/Teacher Communication and Conferences Parent/teacher communication is encouraged and can be made through personal contact, phone calls, email or notes in the student's agenda book. There will be scheduled conference days during the school year. Please consult the TCPS school calendar for dates. However, parents/guardians may arrange a conference with any school personnel by making a request through the school secretary.

Parking During school hours, please avoid parking in the bus zone. Designated visitor and handicapped parking areas are provided. Other parking spaces are also available.

Phone/Messages School phones are used for business purposes and may be used by students only in cases of emergencies. Messages may be left on the answering machine before or after hours and during holidays.

Quiet Sign Students are taught to put their forefinger and thumb together to make the "ok" signal. When they see an adult holding his/her arm up with that signal, it means the students' hands, feet and mouths immediately become silent. They should also hold up their own quiet signal. When all students are quiet, a thank you will be given and hands can go down. Students should then wait for directions from the adult.

Administrative Policies and Procedures

Address Information At the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians will be asked to provide emergency information to the school office. This information will assist school personnel in locating parents/guardians in case of an emergency, illness or injury. Throughout the school year, parents/guardians are asked to notify the main office if there is a change (address, telephone, babysitter, emergency contact) in this information. School personnel may not give out address/telephone information to other parents/guardians or students for any reason.

Before a change of address can be made, parents/guardians must provide school personnel with new proof of residency information. Acceptable proof of residence include electric or gas bill, lease or contract, or property tax bill with the name of the parent and the new address.

Attendance Written excuses for absences are required on the day the student returns to school. A doctor's note is required when a student is absent three or more consecutive days. After 15 days, an unlawful absence cannot be changed to a lawful absence. If your child is excessively absent, he/she may require a doctor's note for each absence.

Absence Criteria for K – Grade 5 Students

Present for a full day = student is present for four or more hours of the school day

Present for a half day = student is present for two hours but less than four hours of the school day

Six (6) unlawful tardies (1 minute to 120 minutes) = 1 unlawful absence

Vacations will not be considered excused absences. Please consult the school calendar when scheduling vacations.

Bullying Bullying, harassment, or intimidation means intentional conduct, including verbal, physical, or written conduct, or an intentional electronic communication, that:

- (I) creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, or with a student's physical or psychological well-being and is:
 - 1. motivated by an actual or a perceived personal characteristic including race, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry, physical attribute, socioeconomic status, familial status, or physical or mental ability or disability; or
 - 2. threatening or seriously intimidating; and
- (II)
 - 1. occurs on school property, at a school activity or event, or on a school bus; or
 - 2. substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school. Electronic communication means a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including a telephone, cellular phone, computer, or pager.

If a student is being bullied, parents/guardians/guardians should report the incident to the Principal immediately. Copies of the Bullying Reporting Form were mailed to all parents/guardians/guardians and are also available on the TCPS website at the following web address:

www.tcps.k12.md.us/personnel/student-services.html

Grading

Grades Pre-K - 2

Grading during the early learning years is based on developmental criteria, which incorporates social, psychological, physical, intellectual, and academic areas.

Grading-Grades 3 - 5

Letter grades are used to report student achievement as follows:

89.5% - 100%	Excellent	A
79.5% - 89.4%	Mastery	B
69.5% - 79.4%	Acceptable	C
69.4% or below	Unsatisfactory	U

NOTE: The TCPS Grading Policy is currently being revised. Parents/guardians will be informed when the new policy is approved by the Board of Education.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

1. As parents/guardians and students, you have rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well as state and local regulations concerning student records, their access, release, and confidentiality.
2. Student records are maintained by school staff or a party acting on behalf of the school. Parents/guardians (custodial and noncustodial) and eligible students have the right to review, inspect, and obtain copies of the student records within 45 days from when the school or school system receives a request. Parents/guardians and eligible students are asked to submit a written request to the principal and identify the records to be inspected. The principal/designee will notify the parent and eligible student as to the time and place to review the records. If parents/guardians request copies of the student's records, a fee may be charged.
3. Parents/guardians, guardians or an eligible student may request that a student record be amended if they believe that the information in the record is inaccurate, misleading or violates the privacy rights of the student. A written request to the principal identifying the part of the record they wish to be changed and why it is misleading or inaccurate must be made. If the record is not amended, the parent or eligible student will be advised of their rights to a hearing and the process to follow in order to request one.
4. The parent or guardian of a student or the eligible student shall provide a signed and dated written consent form before an educational agency or institution discloses personally identifiable information from the student's records. There are situations where prior consent for disclosure is not required such as disclosure to other school officials who have a legitimate educational interest. A school official is someone employed by the school system, such as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); or a person or company who the school system has contracted to perform work for them. A legitimate educational interest means that the official needs to review the student record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility.
5. Student records contain personally identifiable information about the student including the Directory Information. In Talbot County, Directory Information includes the student's legal name and grade. Directory information may be disclosed without consent. If a parent, guardian or eligible student does not want to have those items designated as Directory Information released, they must make this request in writing to the principal by September 30, of each school year.
6. Parents/guardians or eligible students who wish to review further information concerning student records should refer to Policy JO in the Talbot County Public Schools Policy Manual. Any questions or a request to have this notification translated into primary or home language should be addressed to the principal of the school in which the student is enrolled.

Inclement Weather or Emergency In the event of inclement weather, natural disaster or state of emergency, the Superintendent may deem it necessary to delay school opening, close school early or cancel school. If the decision is made to close early, all schools will usually close two hours earlier than their regularly scheduled dismissal time. Chapel District's early dismissal time is **1:45 pm**.

Schools must leave telephone lines open for calls from the Board of Education and cannot assume responsibility for notifying parents/guardians/guardians of each child if there is an early dismissal. Parents/guardians need to instruct their child(ren) what to do in advance if there should be an early dismissal. They will need to know which bus to ride or who will pick them up from school.

If there is a change in the school schedule, the schedule for Pre-K students will run as follows:

- If there is a 90 minute delay, Pre-K students will attend school. AM Pre-K students will remain in school until 12:50 and will eat lunch before they leave. PM Pre-K students will come to school at their regular time.
- If there is a two hour delay, Prek-K students will not attend school.
- When school is dismissed early, AM Pre-K students will leave at their normal time of 11:35 am. PM Pre-K students will not attend school.

School delay or closing information will be posted on the Talbot County Public Schools website (www.talbotschools.org). Additionally, local television and radio stations will announce school delays and closings. Parents/guardians may also call INFOSTAR at 410-763-9300 ext. 7000.

Medication If a student must receive medication at school, a "Medication Authorization Form" must be filled out and signed by the parent and the doctor. The medication must be in the original container with the student's name on the label and delivered to the school nurse by the parent. Students are not allowed to bring any medication to school. Over the counter medication, such as cough medicine, cough drops, or aspirin, are not allowed without doctor's orders. Parents/guardians may come to school to administer medication to their child(ren).

School Visitors

1. All visitors to the school building must use the front entrance and register in the main office, receive a school visitation sticker and state the reason for the visit. When the visit is complete, visitors should stop back in the main office to sign out.
2. Parents/guardians/Guardians must make an appointment with the classroom teacher with whom they would like to visit. Appointments may be made directly with the classroom teacher.
3. If parents/guardians/guardians wish to observe in a classroom, they must make an appointment with the Principal **in advance**. The Principal must accompany the parent/guardian for the duration of the observation period (not to exceed 45 minutes). Observers must remain silent throughout the visit as not to disrupt the learning process.
4. Parent conferences with the teacher may only be held when the teacher does not have instructional responsibilities. The parent/guardian must have made an appointment prior to the conference.

Student Dress Code Dress that tends to disrupt the class or create a safety hazard will result in a phone call to parents/guardians/guardians asking that they bring in a change of clothes. The following minimum standards of dress will apply to all students.

1. No tank tops, halters, midriffs, or tube tops
2. No clothing with obscene or inappropriate comments or pictures
3. No clothing that depicts drugs, alcohol, cigarettes or violence
4. No clothing that may cause a disruption to the learning environment
5. No gym shorts, short shorts, or cut-offs
6. No clothing with holes
7. No pants worn 2" or more below the waist
8. No skirts or dresses worn more than 6" above the knee
9. No jewelry or accessories that could be viewed as potentially dangerous
10. No flip-flops or heelys

The Talbot County Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability in matters affecting employment, access to educational programs or activities. Persons who have questions about equal opportunity and nondiscrimination, should contact Dan Capozzi, Assistant Superintendent, at 410-822-0330.