

Neill Elementary School



2019-2020

Information Guide for Students and Families



WELCOME TO THE 2019 - 2020 SCHOOL YEAR

As the Principal of Neill Elementary School, I look forward to seeing each and every one of you throughout the school year. As a staff, we are excited to welcome the children and families to the 2019 - 2020 school year. At Neill Elementary School we believe it is a privilege to have your child at our school. We realize and appreciate how precious your child is and recognize our responsibilities in helping your child develop to his or her full potential.

The following pages are intended as reminders for school procedures at Neill as well as information about our PTA. We believe that our students are most successful when we work in partnership with you. Our goal is to make this information guide a useful reference for your family. It is organized in alphabetical order based upon topic. Please use this guide throughout the year to help you navigate the school year

Thank you for your part in making Neill the wonderful school community that it is. It is our pleasure to work with you to make this year the best yet!

It is essential that we continue to learn about how we can best serve our families. I welcome you to connect with me any time during the school year. Please contact me to set up an appointment or stop in any time the school office is open. I can be reached at amy_ohern@rdale.org or 763-504-7401.

Wishing you the very best,

**Amy O'Hern
Neill Elementary Principal**

FINGERTIP FACTS

Office Phone Number 763-504-7400
Principal's Office 763-504-7401
Fax Number 763-504-7409
Absence Line 763-504-7410
Health Office 763-504-7405
Kitchen 763-504-7407
Adventure Club 763-504-7415
Grade Levels: Pre-K through Grade 5
School Logo: Roadrunner
School Hours: 9:15 – 3:45
Web Site: www.ene.rdale.org
Address: 6600 Medicine Lake Road
Crystal, MN 55427

ADVENTURE CLUB

Adventure Club is a before- and after-school childcare program for elementary students, which is conveniently located at Neill Elementary. For more information please call 763-504-7415.

ARRIVAL TIME

If your child does not ride the bus, please plan his or her arrival time to be no earlier than 9:10 a.m. The front doors will be locked until that time. Classes begin at 9:15 a.m.

Preschool Program: 9:15 a.m.- 11:50 a.m. & 1:10 p.m.-3:45 p.m

ATTENDANCE

Schools are responsible for teaching your child, but we can't do our job if your child is absent. A child who misses a day of school also misses a day of learning that might never be replaced. You can help by making school a top priority. By building the habit of daily attendance, you help your child see that school is important.



Minnesota school attendance laws require children to attend school regularly. The only excused absence from school is for student illness or because of a death in the family. When your child is absent from school, send a written note with your child when he or she returns to school. The child should give the note to the teacher. When students arrive late, **they must be accompanied to the Main Office before** going to their classroom. If your child is **absent** from school, please call **763-504-7410**. Please give the following information:

- Name of student
- Grade

- Name of teacher and/or room number
- Length of and reason for absence

On occasion, you may have to take your child out of classes for a short period of time or before the end of the school day. Please send a note with your child notifying the classroom teacher ahead of time. At pick-up time come to the office and ask the secretary to send for your child. No child will be allowed to leave her or his classroom early without clearance from the school office. Students are expected to make up all work missed as a result of lateness and or absences. If your child will be absent due for some reason other than illness, parents should contact the school office and your child's teacher prior to the absence.

The Hennepin County “Be At School” Truancy Program is followed by the Robbinsdale Schools.

3 unexcused absences:

Letter sent to parent/guardian from the school

6 unexcused absences:

Hennepin County contacts parents to attend parent group meeting

9 unexcused absences:

Hennepin County CCA worker will be assigned

15 unexcused absences:

Report is sent to Child Protection Services

For more information on the Hennepin County “Be At School” program, please visit:

<https://www.hennepinattorney.org/prevention/students-youth/be-at-school>

BIKE SAFETY

Children in grades **three through five** are allowed to ride bicycles to school with parent permission and as long as safety procedures are followed. The school assumes no responsibility for damages or stolen bicycles. All bicycles should be locked. Students in

grades kindergarten through second grade may NOT ride bicycles to school.

BIRTHDAYS

Neill follows the Hennepin County and Robbinsdale District Wellness Plan. Therefore, we do not allow birthday treats during the school day for health, well-being, and learning of each child. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to join us for a school lunch on their student's birthday instead or a book may be donated to the library in the child's name.

BUS SERVICE

Riding the bus is a privilege that can be revoked if a student does not cooperate and follow bus safety guidelines. Because transporting children on a bus is serious business with potential dangers, we firmly enforce bus regulations. Parents will be notified of serious violations. A conference with parent, bus driver, principal and student may be held in cases of repeated misbehavior.

For a safe and enjoyable ride to and from school, children should be reminded frequently about the rules for good behavior on the bus:

- Remain seated until the bus stops.
- Keep hands and feet off other children.
- Use quiet voices.
- Follow directions of the bus drivers.
- Enter and leave the bus in an orderly manner.

Certain musical instruments may be carried but must be placed on the student's lap or vertically on the floor between the seat rows and held between or beside the legs.

Students are not allowed to ride a bus other than their assigned bus or to get off at a different stop unless a written request is

received from the parent/guardian. Students who receive a bus behavior report are given one warning – then they may be suspended from riding the bus from 1-10 days. Parents must transport suspended students. Absences due to lack of transportation for suspended students is unexcused.

CHECKS

Except for small amounts, payment by check is preferred. Unless otherwise indicated, all checks should be made payable to Independent School District 281 or Neill Elementary School. Please include your child's full name in the memo section.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones and other hand-held electronics are not allowed in school. If you request your child to carry a phone please instruct them to turn it off and leave it in their backpack during the day. If phones, iPods, etc. are seen or heard in school, they will be turned in to the office and returned to the student at the end of the day. If a phone is taken a second time, a parent/guardian will need to claim it in the office.



CONFERENCES

Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring. The purpose of fall conferences is to provide an opportunity for the parent/guardian and teacher to share information about the child and to develop goals. The purpose of the Spring Conference is to inform the parent of the child's success in school and review the child's goals. In addition, parents or teachers may request special conferences at any other time of the year.



How to Help Your Child Progress in School

There are many ways in which the home can help directly and indirectly to ensure the best educational progress for each child.

- A growing child must have plenty of good food to supply energy for work and play. A wholesome and adequate breakfast is particularly important.
- A growing body needs plenty of rest. Children ages six-nine need 10 to 12 hours of sleep. Children ages nine-eleven need 10 to 11 hours of sleep. You may want to avoid situations that tend to over stimulate or excite your child before the child retires for the night.
- The home is an environment that provides love, confidence, understanding and the feeling of security for the child.
- Demonstrate to your child a genuine interest in his or her school and school activities.
- Help your child with homework by providing a workspace.

CUSTODY

In cases where parents are separated or divorced and one parent has legal custody of a child, the school must have a copy of the court order that determines custody and visitation rights. The school must have legal documentation in order to comply with any limiting court order. State and federal data privacy laws recognize the right of a natural parent, regardless of child custody, to have access to the school records of his or her child. A non-custodial, natural parent may arrange to review the school record of his or her child. According to district policy, a request form to withhold information will be supplied upon request.

COMMUNICATION

Open communication between home and school is critical to your child's success. Conferences, open houses, progress reports, weekly packets, school flyers and newsletters are some of the formal ways we use to keep you informed about your child's school experiences.

Please check your child's backpack regularly for notes. Please keep us informed. A dated, signed note sent to your child's teacher is required in the following circumstances:

- Your child is going to someone else's home after school.
- If your child has a need to stay in during recess or to miss physical education class you will need to provide a note from the doctor.
- Your child will leave school early, or will leave and return during the day.
- Your child will have a different plan the usual routine, for example usually riding the bus but you have decided to pick up one day. We cannot depend on the child's word that there is a change of plan from the usual routine and will send them on their bus unless you have called or sent a note.



DARE (*Drug Awareness Resistance Education*) Grade 5 Only:

The DARE program is a nationally recognized cooperative effort of local law enforcement agencies and schools to help students learn to make good choices about all types of drugs. A Crystal police officer will join our staff one day each week. Every fifth grader will have 10 class sessions with the officer who has been trained to work with preadolescents, as they become aware of the dangers of drugs. Students will study and explore ways to cope with peer pressure and other factors that influence their decisions. A graduation ceremony is held for all participants at the end of this program.

DISCIPLINE

At Neill Elementary School we want to be proud of our students because we know they will conduct themselves appropriately, showing pride in themselves and their school. The staff at our school has the goal of establishing an atmosphere throughout the school in which children will feel safe, secure and happy, and in addition, have maximum opportunities to learn.

Our positive approach to school-wide discipline:

- Is consistent with reinforcement theory
- Have simple rules
- Is to build a sense of community pride
- Helps students identify specific positive behaviors
- Increases students' positive self-esteem
- Increases the number of positive teacher comments
- Generates a positive climate
- Helps kids feel good about their choices!

Neill Elementary School behavior guidelines are:

- BE RESPECTFUL**
- BE RESPONSIBLE**

Students who demonstrate respectful and responsible behavior will receive special recognition and rewards from school personnel.

Please review the 2019 - 2020 Student Handbook Rights and Responsibilities. There are paper copies available in the office. The booklet can be found on the www.rdale.org website. Parents and students need to know what the district expectations are for students' rights, responsibilities, behavior and consequences for inappropriate actions. Please sign the card enclosed with the Discipline Policies booklet and return it to the classroom teacher.



DRESS AND GROOMING

We would like parental support of appropriate dress for students. Dress appropriately for special events, gym days and for outside recess on cold weather days. No inappropriate wording, symbols or language will be permitted on clothing worn to school. (This includes T-shirts with questionable or double meaning messages.) Please remember that gym shoes must be worn to physical education class.

EARLY ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

For the welfare and safety of all students, we request that students not arrive at school any earlier than necessary. This is especially important for children who walk to school or are dropped off by parents. **Students should not arrive before 9:10.** There is no supervision prior to this time.

EMERGENCY FILE

Every child enrolled at Neill Elementary School has an emergency information file. This is our first reference in case we need to contact you regarding your child. **If information on file changes during the school year, for example, telephone numbers or places of employment, please inform the school office.**

FIELD TRIPS

Field Trips for students are planned to enrich and supplement the educational program. Because of the costs for transportation and admission, parents may be asked to contribute toward the expenses involved. Written permission from the parent or guardian must be received by the teacher for a student to participate.

FIRE DRILL/LOCKDOWN/TORNADO PROCEDURES

State law requires schools to have 11 emergency drills each school year. If an emergency does occur, students must act immediately. Students may not have time to put on coats or jackets. Everyone in the building, including visitors and volunteers, must leave or take cover.

FINES (Textbooks Lost or Destroyed)

The school will charge an appropriate replacement fee for textbooks, workbooks or library books lost or destroyed by students.

GYM SHOES

Gym shoes must be worn to gym class. Please ensure your child's safety by checking with your child on gym day for proper clothing. If a child is not going to participate in physical education classes, he or she must bring a note from home and/or your doctor. An excuse from participation in classes will be honored for one day if children bring a note from parents. However, a doctor's note is required for being excused for one week or more. Even if excused from class participation, however, students still must report to physical education classes.

HEALTH SERVICES

A registered nurse and/or health education assistant are on duty daily at Neill. The nurse is available for consultations with parents, if needed. Please alert the school nurse or teacher if your

child has a particular health problem that may affect the child's learning or functioning at school. When a child develops a fever or other symptoms of illness or receives a significant injury, the parent or other person listed as the emergency contact will be notified. It is the parent's responsibility to provide transportation home for the child. The child should be picked up as soon as possible.

HOMEWORK

It is the students' responsibility to complete the homework assignment carefully and according to the instructions given by the teacher. It is important students read 20 minutes every night. This includes children being read to.

LOST AND FOUND

Please check the Lost and Found periodically for misplaced articles of clothing or school supplies. All items in the "Lost and Found" are removed and disposed of periodically. Storage space is very limited.

LUNCH AND BREAKFAST

Breakfast, lunch and a healthy snack are available for all students in our school. Breakfast is served daily from 9:10 a.m. to 9:20 a.m and charged according to qualification; free and reduced lunch students receive a free breakfast. Lunch may be purchased from the school or brought in from home. Snack is free to all students at Meadow Lake and is served in the classrooms. Meals should be pre-paid so that students don't carry a negative account balance. Menus are located on rdale.org.

2019 - 2020 Elementary Meal Prices

Breakfast	\$1.40
Reduced – price Breakfast	FREE
Kindergarten - Breakfast	FREE

Lunch	\$2.60
Reduced – price Lunch	FREE
Milk	\$.50
Juice	\$.40
Adult Breakfast	\$2.00
Adult Lunch	\$4.10

- Pop/Carbonated drinks are not allowed at lunch
- Food may not be shared
- Big bags of chips are NOT allowed at lunch

MEDICATIONS and ILLNESS

Immunization and Physical Examinations

District 281 recommends physical examinations for elementary students prior to kindergarten and fourth grade. Forms are available from the health office.

Minnesota law requires that every child entering school must show evidence of adequate immunizations. This includes five doses of DPT (diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis), four doses of polio; Hepatitis B and one dose of MMR (measles, mumps and rubella). If your child is not properly immunized, the nurse will notify you.

Vision and Hearing Screening

Each fall all students are screened for vision and hearing problems and referred for medical evaluation if necessary.

Medications

Medication will be given only with written authorization from the child's physician and written permission from the parents. Forms are available in the health office for this purpose. Medications sent to school must come in labeled pharmacy bottles. If you know your child will need to take medication at school, ask your pharmacist for a duplicate bottle. **Over-the-counter medications**

will not be administered without written authorization from the child's physician. All medication brought to school must be brought in by an adult and must be kept in the health office.

Inhalers must be kept in the health office unless special arrangements are made between the nurse and parents.

Although regular attendance at school is of utmost importance, we suggest that you not send your child if he or she has a rash, fever, upset stomach, severe cold, undiagnosed red eyes or sore throat. The health office has a pamphlet for parents entitled *Is My Child Well Enough To Go To School?*

If you do not have the pamphlet and would like to receive one, contact the school nurse at 504-7405.

When Your Child Becomes Ill or Injured at School

When a child develops a fever or other symptoms of illness or receives a significant injury, the parent or other person listed on the emergency card will be notified. Please make sure that the information we have on file is current. **It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that the school has current phone numbers and can provide transportation home for the child. The child should be picked up as soon as possible.**

PATROLS

Students act as safety patrols at arrival and dismissal times at designated crossings.



These patrols will be at the designated crossing from 9:05-9:20 a.m. and again at 3:35-3:55 p.m. Please make sure that your children are at the crossings at the appropriate times so that the safety patrols may help them cross safely.

PARENT PORTAL

Parent Portal/Schoology is another communication tool for parents and guardians. These systems allow parents to receive information from schools quickly and conveniently. Updates from the principal are often sent via email using the messenger or parent portal system. For information on how to get signed up for Parent Portal go to the district website at www.rdale.org and click on the parent tab then scroll down to Parent Portal. Please visit the Robbinsdale School District website (www.rdale.org) and use the Parent Tab dropdown to register or receive help with the Parent Portal.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Research shows that when parents get involved in their child's school, that child does better in school. You may contact your child's teacher and coordinate volunteer opportunities in or to help the classroom or you may contact our PTA and volunteer through them for the many school events. Parents must be pre-approved to volunteer in the classroom and must present a valid ID when checking in for the volunteer position.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

Neill has an active Parent Teacher Association (PTA). Every parent is encouraged to actively participate in this organization. The PTA council usually meets on the first Tuesday of each month in the Staff Lounge from 6:15-7:30 p.m. All parents are invited and welcome to attend.

The PTA meeting dates are:

September 10, 2019, October 1, 2019, November 5, 2019, December 3, 2019, January 7, 2020, February 4, 2020, March 4, 2020 and April 4, 2020, May 5, 2020, June 10, 2020.

RECESS AND PLAYGROUND

The goal of the playground supervisors and teachers is to provide a place for students to be outdoors, have fun and enjoy being with friends. This also needs to be a safe environment. Please remember that at any one time approximately 100 students may be playing outside, so following the rules and being appropriately dressed is important.

Playground Recess:

- Students will respect each other and the possessions of others. They will not bully, swear, tease or call others names, nor will they hit, push or trip other students.
- The school will provide balls and equipment for play. Students may not bring balls from home. They may not throw non-game items such as rocks, sand or snow.
- Students may play soccer, kickball or touch football. Students who are physically aggressive during play will be removed from games.
- Electronic devices, toys, trading or playing cards from home are not permitted. These items do not endorse physical activity, cannot be kept safely at school, and would create disruptions in the classroom and on the playground.

Indoor Recess: An announcement will be made when there will be indoor recess. Indoor recess is usually in the classroom and is supervised by the playground staff.

Outdoor Recess: Students will be outside for recess unless it is raining, the true temperature is 0 degrees or colder, the wind chill is -10 degrees or colder, or the play area is deemed to be unsafe due to icy or wet conditions. Students should wear clothing that is comfortable for participating in physical activity and is appropriate for weather conditions. Students are expected to go outside unless we have inclement weather or they have a staff

member's permission to remain indoors. Once outside, students may not re-enter the building or go "out-of-bounds" without permission of a playground supervisor.

RELEASE OF STUDENT FROM SCHOOL

For your child's protection, it is our policy not to release a student to anyone other than parents unless we have received a signed and dated note stating the name of the person who has permission to pick up your child. On occasion, you may have to take your child out of classes for a short period of time or before the end of the day. Please come to the office to sign them out and your child will be called to meet you in the office. No child will be allowed to leave the classroom until the teacher has been notified that he/she has been signed out in the office. Please do not go to your child's classroom to pick them up. This creates an unnecessary interruption in instructional time for everyone in the room.

SCHOOL DAY

School hours are 9:25 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Students should not arrive at school until 9:10 a.m. unless they are eating breakfast, which is served starting at 9:00 a.m.

SCHOOL CLOSING

The directive to close schools comes from the office of the superintendent of schools. **WCCO/830 AM** is the station that announces school closings for Robbinsdale Area Schools in the morning before school opens and announces early dismissals due to developing severe weather. Neill Elementary School will not be named. We are included in the announcement about Robbinsdale ISD #281 schools. If there is a question as to the possibility of school being closed, please tune your radio to WCCO. The major local TV stations also run a continuous printout across the bottom of the screen to keep you informed on school closings.

SEVERE WEATHER

Students may be kept in school after regular dismissal time if severe weather poses a danger for them. It is important to make arrangements with friends, neighbors or relatives to care for your child in the event that school must be dismissed early. Make sure your child knows where to go if you are not home.

TELEPHONE CALLS

Students will not be called out of the classroom to take a phone call except in an extreme emergency. Messages may be left for our students before noon to allow teachers the time to relay the message after lunch. After that time it is extremely difficult to relay messages to students. Classrooms will not be interrupted to give reminders to students about prearranged activities. We ask that you find other ways to help your child remember; for example, a note pinned to the child's backpack or school bag.



Student use of the telephone is discouraged. Students will be allowed to use the phone only with an adult's permission. After-school plans should be made prior to leaving home in the morning, with changes given to the teacher in the form of a note from the parent.

TEN-DAY CYCLE

Rotating physical education, music, art and media classes on a 10-day schedule means that no child misses these special activities because of holidays or school closings. You will find the 10-day cycle days marked on each day on the school calendar. The first number denotes week 1 or 2. The second number indicates the day of the cycle. For example, Day 2 is 4th grade orchestra, Day 4 is 5th grade band/orchestra. Students are responsible for knowing when band/orchestra days are and should bring their instruments on their assigned day.

VACATIONS AND VACATION LESSON PLANS

Absences due to family vacations should be arranged in advance with the principal and the classroom teacher.

Constant Contact

In order to improve our communication between school and home, each family will be e-mailed a constant contact newsletter every other Wednesday. Included in this may be: field trip information, information from the principal, information from the School District Office, PTA Newsletter and Calendar, or community information. Because this is our primary form of weekly communication please ensure that the school has your current e-mail address.

DISTRICT 281 NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

District 281 does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or handicap in admission, treatment or access to its programs and activities, or in employment in its programs and activities. The district has designated two individuals to coordinate efforts to comply with federal laws and regulations.

A district representative is designated under Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 (non-discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs and activities, including employment and admission). He/she is responsible for coordinating district efforts to comply with Title IX, including investigation of complaints alleging non-compliance or alleging any actions prohibited by Title IX.

The Director of Special Education is the designated coordinator under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (non-discrimination on the basis of handicap including admission, treatment or access to programs and activities, including employment in its programs or activities). He/she is responsible for coordinating district efforts to comply with Section 504.

Inquiries concerning Title IX and Section 504 may be directed to Student Services and the Director of Special Education at:
Independent School District 281
4148 Winnetka Ave N
New Hope, MN 55427
Telephone number: 763-504-8000

VISITING SCHOOL

Parents are always welcome at Meadow Lake. If you wish to visit a classroom, pre-arrangements must be made with the teacher. Visiting by students from other schools is not permitted. Parents are invited to join their child for lunch once a week. No prior reservation is needed. Parents are not allowed on the playground. When you arrive, please check in at the office with your driver's license or picture ID and pick up a "visitors" badge. We require all visitors to check in to ensure the safety of all children.