

Policies that make The Phoenix School function smoothly

Beginning of the Day

Doors open at 7:30 am.

Everyone needs to arrive by 7:50 am every day. **Please be on time.** It is very hard for partnerships to get started when one partner has not yet arrived.

Kids come in and hang up their name tag under the **'I am here today'** sign.

Then they put their backpacks and clothes in their lockers, take out their lunches and put them in the top section of their lockers. Kids find their partner and together read the signboard. Then they go to their clean-up areas to take down chairs and get ready for the morning.

End of the Day/Dismissal:

PK-2nd graders are dismissed at 3:00 pm on MTWThF unless they stay for the after-school course or homework. 3rd/4th graders are dismissed at 3:00 on MTThF and at 4:30 on Wednesday. 6-8th graders are dismissed at 3:00 on MF and at 4:30 on TWTh.

Teachers will bring all kids outside the Main Entrance for dismissal. Kids are expected to say 'good-bye' to a teacher as they leave so we know they have left safely.

Extended Day Classes for grades 3 – 8

3rd/-4th graders have class on Wednesdays until 4:30 pm beginning on September 15th.

Grades 6-8 have classes on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays until 4:30 pm beginning on Sept. 14.

Kids go to snack and drink at 3:00 pm and then to class.

After-School Course or Homework

Kids staying for after-school course and/or homework go to snack at 3:00 -- this is included in the fee. They have a choice of juice or milk and a variety of healthy snacks: cereal and milk, yogurt, fruit, applesauce, peanuts, pretzels, etc.

Everyone spends the first 20-30 minutes doing his or her 'homework' with help and supervision of a teacher. Then the PK-2nds go to a 30-minute hands-on course taught by one of the older kids on a topic he/she has researched. The course ends at 4:25 pm followed by clean-up. Obviously everyone is expected to help clean-up before leaving.

Kids are expected to bring their homework home for you to see. This is to keep you informed about what your child/ren is/are doing and to assist you in writing in the Homework Book. Please talk with them about it, but don't worry about making corrections. We'll pick up on that during check-in the next day.

All kids who stay will still need to read aloud to someone at home (or be read to – if younger) every night.

3rd-8th graders who stay on non-class days have supervised homework until 4:30 pm. Then, if their pick-up has not arrived, everyone reads or continues homework if applicable until pick-up by 5:00 pm. On class days (TWTh) some kids start homework at 4:30 pm, get picked up at 5:00 pm and then finish at home.

We expect all kids to be picked up by 5:00pm. Like other schools after a brief grace period there will be a \$10 late fee for every 15 minutes a parent is late unless special arrangements have been made. Please remember that it is a long day for kids who arrive at 7:30 am. It is very hard for kids who are not picked up on time, particularly when it happens to them frequently. Also, 5:00 to 6:00 pm is often important administrative time for B2, and we need this time free of kids.

Inclement Weather

The Phoenix School will be listed on TV and online, Channel 5 (WCRB) and Channel 7 (WHDH). Or you can call the school where we will post a message as early as possible.

If your town is cancelled, but Phoenix is in session, and you can't get your child/ren to school safely, kids should plan to do regular schoolwork, a choice study, or snow studies at home. It will be considered a school day unless Phoenix cancels. Kids should bring the evidence of their work to school the next day.

Health and Wellness

Annual Physical examinations:

The Phoenix School requires a current (within 1 year) annual physical examination report and immunization record for each school year.

We recommend that you make several copies of your child's annual physical exam and immunization record because summer and sports programs require a current physical as well. Please submit your child's physical to Phoenix following each appointment so that all records remain current. Thank you.

In accordance with the law, Massachusetts independent schools are required to communicate the following to parents: The Phoenix School does not conduct health exams that the state requires for all public school students.. The school therefore recommends that parents consult with their health care provider to ensure that these exams are carried out for your children.

School Nurse

The Phoenix School does not have a school nurse on staff. With a signed permission slip, a designated faculty member will administer all medications including over-the-counter medications that need to be administered during school hours. All medications must be given directly to a faculty member in their **current original prescription containers along with the parental consent for administration form**. They may not be kept in backpacks or lunch boxes/bags.

Children requiring an inhaler or epipen should keep one in their backpack, and a back-up one in the Health Office.

Parents will be notified when medication or a first aid procedure has been given in school.

Emergency Procedures: In the event of a health emergency a faculty member will administer immediate first aid care and arrange for transportation to the appropriate health care facility by car or ambulance as indicated. We will notify parents as soon as possible.

If parents cannot be contacted, we will use the Emergency Card signed by parent/guardian that gives permission to the medical personnel to order x-rays, routine tests, treatment, to release any records necessary for insurance purposes and to provide or arrange necessary related transportation for the child.

In the event the parent or guardian cannot be reached in an emergency, permission is given to the physician to secure and administer treatment, including hospitalization.

Student Illness

If your child has a contagious illness, we expect you to keep your child at home. Please notify the school so that we can alert parents to be on the lookout. If you are not sure whether or not to send your child to school if he or she appears ill, here are some guidelines to consider:

A child with a fever should remain at home until a normal temperature has been maintained for 24 hours.

A child on antibiotics may return to school after 24-48 hours. This should include children being treated for conditions such as strep throat or 'pink eye' -- conjunctivitis.

A child with diarrhea or vomiting should remain at home if an episode has occurred within 12 hours of the start of the school day.

A child with active cold symptoms -- persistent cough or a large amount of nasal drainage -- may benefit from an additional day of rest.

H1N1 (Swine Flu) Guidelines

We will be in touch with the Salem Board of Health should H1N1 become an issue this year and will then communicate any relevant information.

Head Lice

Every year or so, the head lice situation pops up, particularly after the summer camp season. If we see any indication of head lice, we will ask you to come and pick up your child and treat your child's condition with an over-the-counter lice treatment followed by careful combing with a nit comb to remove all dead lice and nits. A child may return to school once his/her hair is free of nits and lice, subject to a school head check. A second treatment must be done seven days after the first treatment.

Recommendations now vary as to whether or not bedding, toys, hats, etc. need to be washed or bagged and put away for several weeks. Check online or with your pediatrician for further instructions.

* Please take a quick check of your child's head before school begins, especially if they have been in camp all summer.

School Supplies:

The Phoenix School provides all the school supplies a student generally needs: clipboard, a pencil a week, artist-quality art supplies (magic markers, Pentels, colored pencils, watercolors), Fiskar scissors, glue, tape, journals, paper, books, etc.

We expect students to keep track of their belongings and have them available to use every school day.

School supplies may go home to be used for homework, but they MUST be returned the next day. For some, it may be necessary to have a 'pack the backpack' routine at the end of homework in order to make sure that school materials come back to school the next day.

Lost supplies must be replaced promptly at the same level as the ones that were lost and at a cost designated by the school.

We recommend that children pay for their lost supplies through doing chores around the house, from their piggy bank, or some other source so that they learn to take responsibility for their actions.

Pentel Markers \$12 - \$15 - \$25 depending on grade level
Derwent watercolor pencils\$12 - \$25 - \$38 depending on grade level
Fiskar scissors \$5 - \$7 depending on grade level

Dress for school: Come dressed to learn, not to be distracting:

Although we do not have a formal dress code, we expect Phoenix kids to come to school dressed in a way that reflects the serious learners that they are. It's sometimes hard for kids to understand that what they wear to school has an impact, positive or negative, on their schoolwork and social interactions, but we have seen it over and over again. This is why we have defined school dress the way we have. We feel it still leaves room for personal expression, which we recognize as important, especially for middle-schoolers.

Neat and clean clothes without rips or holes.

Casual, comfortable, and washable clothes--We may get dirty.

Camouflage clothes are not appropriate for school. Experience has shown us that they sometimes tend to cause a change in behavior, and not for the better.

Tops may not have images that advertise or advocate smoking, alcohol, groups preaching violence, gang behavior, or things that might be scary to younger children.

We all wear **sneakers** to school -- they are much more practical and safe for the things we do. If your child doesn't tie his/her shoes yet, please consider Velcro, or use homework time for learning how to tie. Now that this is 'big school,' we want young kids to be as independent as they can be--it's part of their 'power.'

Hats or other headgear (except for medical/dental purposes) may not be worn in school. When we are out in the sun for long periods of times, however, kids may need a hat with a wide brim all the way around, a water bottle, and sun block -- good things to keep in a backpack. In fact, a wide brimmed hat should be part of every Phoenix kid's wardrobe for trips.

Girls wear pants/shorts/skortis except on Dress-Up Days so they can sit on the floor, mess around with materials, play soccer, climb playground equipment, explore tide pools..... who knows! Pants may not be skintight; shorts may not be too short.

Girls' tops may not be form-fitting nor show underwear or the midriff. Test: If when you raise your arms, your midriff shows, then the top is best saved for weekend wear, not school.

Boys wear pants or shorts that do not hang low on the hips, show underwear, or drag along the ground.

Clothes to save for home:

Clothes that show underwear or midriff

T-shirts with images that advertise or advocate smoking, alcohol, intolerance, gang behavior, violence--bloody skulls-type

Shoes with heels or slippery soles, open-toe sandals. It's hard to go out spontaneously to play or explore when our feet slip out of our shoes at the wrong times.

Footwear that do not stay on a child's feet. It is really dangerous to be running around the playground with shoes that fall off and might cause someone to trip and twist an ankle. For this reason we may not allow a child to play sports if he/she is not wearing proper footgear.

Toy guns and weapons, army-type camouflage clothes--We stress the peaceful side of life at Phoenix.

Dress up days will be announced on the school calendar and via newsletter, Facebook. or Twitter.

Girls may wear dresses on that day if they wish. Boys usually wear collar shirts, shirt and tie, jacket, shirt and sweater. It's fun to get dressed up once in a while.

Hair needs to be out of a child's eyes. Bangs should be cut above the eyebrows. Long hair should have a way to keep it from covering eyes. Just as with dress, kids' hair should reflect that they have come to school to learn, not to hide their face or look 'cool.'

School Lunches:

School lunches should be nutritious. Save sugar foods, sugar-added juices, sodas, and sports drinks for home. It is in as much your best interest as ours to establish healthy eating habits while kids are young.

Pack things that you know your child will eat, and an appropriate amount.

If you do not order milk/juice from school, please send juice boxes or sugar-free drinks in plastic bottles or a thermos. Glass bottles break.

Pack lunches in a cloth/plastic lunch bag if possible. BE SURE IT IS MARKED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME! Put in a blue ice pack if you are afraid of spoilage. A plastic/metal lunch box is OK, but takes up more space in a backpack and is heavier to carry. Coolers are too big for school.

Provide your own spoons, forks, and napkins please. We don't keep a supply for kids to use at lunch, unless they have purchased school lunch.

Think about what your child can manage by him/herself. Many flip-top containers are really hard for little kids to handle independently and the tab often snaps off. For hard-to-peel skins, please cut into sections at home.

Lunches from home need to be cold --there are no facilities for kids to heat up lunch items.

We do not allow kids to trade lunch items. We feel that what you pack is what you want your child to eat. Also, trading lunches is most often done for the wrong reasons: to win friends, scared to say no to a big kid, or to get food moms/ dads do not want their kids to eat.

Try checking labels with your child/ren. If sugar-related ingredients are one of the first three items, please save it for home.

Purchased School Lunch option:

Our School Lunch Program on Mondays-Thursdays is provided by Ken Rothwell's Custom Catering; Friday Lunch is Mande's Pizza Day. We try very hard to offer nutritious options plus salad, vegetables, and fruits every day. We are pleased at how many kids have expanded their tastes in food.

Lunch costs \$5.00. per day. There are no refunds for absences because lunches will already have been ordered.

Parents receive a lunch menu every two weeks. Circle the days you want to order school lunch and return the form with a check or cash.

Forms must be returned on time because we place our orders two weeks in advance.

Forms must include payment and be returned to school on time or we will not place your order.

We count on every family to follow these procedures.

If you plan to order lunches every day, a more automatic system may be set up with Barbara.

Traveling School Lunches:

There may be times when we are 'on the road' for lunch. For these field-study trips it is important that lunches more easily fit inside our backpacks.

Pack lunch in disposable bag and use disposable containers so that we don't have to carry anything home again. NAME on bag.

Think LIGHT when you pack the lunch. Your child will have to carry it along with all the necessary school supplies.

Pack a disposable juice box for a drink. If you ordered the school's milk/juice, kids need to remember to pick up a juice box from the cooler -- or send one in from home that day.

Monthly Birthday Party in School:

On the last school day of each month (or one defined in the School Calendar) we will have our Monthly Birthday Party for everyone who has a birthday in that month.

The birthday kids contribute the cupcakes for their month.

Divide 30 by the number of birthday kids to see how many cupcakes you will need to send in for your child's month.

For kids whose birthdays are in June, July, and August, we have a Summer Sundae Party on the last day of school. Summer birthday kids each contribute \$3.00 to cover the costs.

Birthday Parties outside of School:

We ask that invitations for birthday parties and other events held out of the school day not be distributed in school, that kids not be picked up from school for parties, nor bring their gifts to school. There is nothing more devastating to the kids who did not get invited than to see gifts in lockers or watch everyone else happily go off together.

We strongly recommend that you invite only kids close to your child in age. There is no reason to invite the whole school or siblings. Although we operate as a very supportive community in school, sometimes it is different when kids of different ages with different expectations are at the same social event. What's right for a younger kid might not interest an older kid, and visa versa. This may also be true of siblings.

Birthday parties are challenging enough to oversee, so please make your life easier by having the same age range and interests. It will also be easier for the kids to know what would be appropriate behavior.

Play Dates:

We ask that play dates be made by phone, the night before or sooner, and not on the sidewalk at school. This tremendously impacts others who are not invited over, or parents with busy schedules who are trying to avoid a difficult confrontation -- no one likes to say 'No.'.

We also ask kids not to arrange play dates during school--for the same reason. We are a very small school, so such social matters can have a negative impact on the cohesiveness of the whole school community.

Homework:

Homework is an integral part of a Phoenix education. It may be assigned by a teacher or decided by the child. We view homework as a habit -- just like you eat dinner every day, you do homework.

Homework should be a regular time set aside each day, preferably at the same time.

Homework should fill a minimum amount of time (see below) . If your child finishes what the teacher has assigned, then he/she needs to choose something of interest to him/her for the remaining time.

We often call this "Choice" homework and will sometimes assign it.

Choice homework is important because it allows kids to define and follow a personal interest.

Everyone needs to read aloud to someone for 10 minutes every night.

Recommended minimum time each day:

Pre-K -Kindergarten: 15-20 minutes

Grade 1: 20-30 minutes

Grade 2: 30-45 minutes

Grade 3: 30 minutes on Wed. plus reading, 45 min.-1 hour on other days plus reading.

Grade 5-6: 45 min. plus reading on TWTh, 1 1/2 hours on M and on the weekend.

Grade 7-8: 1 hour plus reading on TWTh, 1 1/2 hours on M, 2 hours on the weekend.

Homework should take place in a quiet place, away from the TV and telephone. One of the best places is often in the same room where a parent is reading or doing paperwork.

Once a child has the skills to work independently, homework is his/her responsibility. It is the teacher's chance to see what the child can do on his/her own.

Parents do not have to worry about making sure all the answers are correct. That is our job. We learn more from a child's mistakes than from your right answers.

Younger kids will need more help from you – as the reader, or the secretary who writes down his/her thoughts, etc. Even though you might read your child a math word problem, please don't help in solving the problem. That's the child's job. He/she will get better with experience.

Homework Book:

Kids of all ages are supposed to share their homework with you when it is done, mostly so that you can see the assignments or choices. This includes kids who do their homework at school -- otherwise, how can you keep up with what/how your child is doing?

It is the parents' job to fill in the Homework Book each night **with a comment** (not a list of what your child did) giving us some information we can build on in school the next day. Each piece of information is helpful to us. We strongly recommend that a daily comment becomes part of the homework routine. When homework is done, please sit together and fill out the Homework Book together. Be honest in your comments, ask any questions you have of us in the HW Book. Use it to begin a dialogue with your child and with the teachers. If your child doesn't want you to write down an honest report of how things went, then that is a signal that we all need to sit down and talk. We all work together as a team. At the very least give us enough of a heads-up so we know what to discuss during check-in time in the morning. When we all work together as a team, everyone benefits and feels better.

Reading Aloud EVERY NIGHT regardless of age:

We cannot stress strongly enough the importance of children reading aloud to an adult and asking vocabulary EVERY NIGHT regardless of what level reader or how old the child is. It is always interesting to us that the kids who are most reluctant to do this are the ones who need it the most. Make it fun – ask us your questions – we can give you strategies to use. Some families of older kids read a book together and discuss it. Others read the same book, so they have something to talk about.

Send us your feedback which helps us monitor progress, compare notes on vocabulary, decoding, syllabication, comprehension, reading with expression.

We also encourage a Family Read-Together book that can lead to interesting discussions.

Bullying – Zero Tolerance:

Bullying, including the 'subtle terrorism' of being left out or called names as well as cyber-bullying, is not part of the Mission and Philosophy of The Phoenix School nor is it part of the value systems of Phoenix families. Kids may think whatever they like inside, but what comes out of their mouths or is part of their body language / actions must be respectful and inclusive.

We all need to work together to prevent "subtle bullying" and cyber-bullying from happening. Our kids have to learn how important it is to step up, hard though it may be, and stand up for what is right.

When no one says anything about what is happening and/or won't share the names of people involved, it is impossible for us to take action. If we, as adults, don't step up and make it clear that disrespectful behavior is not acceptable, then who will? Home and school must be on the same team.

Cyber-bullying can be even more insidious because it is not a face-to-face thing and often happens below the adults' radar. Now that Phoenix plans to be much more active on-line, we will be establishing guidelines and expectations for our use of the web. Kids' chat rooms may seem innocent, but they are often the beginning of unkind/inappropriate relationships if they are not monitored.

Internet / Social Networks Safety:

Now that we plan to integrate Web 2.0 tools and global collaborations into our curriculum at all age levels, we are in the process of developing new policies and procedures to make sure our interactions with the outside world are safe. We will be attending a Bullying workshop at the Fay School and one given by the DA's office here in Salem to make sure we are up to speed on the new state law.

We also are interested in hearing your ideas as well as what ways we might help you in determining your internet/social network rules for kids at home. You may want to check out the Common Sense website -- a good website for ideas for parents as well as for schools

Technology is here to stay. We, as adults, have an obligation to help our kids learn to use it safely and sensibly, to help them become the responsible digital citizens. They are already ahead of most of us, but none of us are too old to learn, right?