Administrative Staff

Ashland Ridge Elementary School
Mark Moss, Principal
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Ankeny, IA 50023
965-9594

Crocker Elementary School
Dr. Tom Muhlenbruck, Principal
2910 SW Applewood Street
Ankeny, Iowa 50023
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East Elementary School
Andrew Burg, Principal
710 SE Third Street
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Northeast Elementary School
Laura Ryan, Principal
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Northwest Elementary School
Travis Busby, Principal
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Prairie Trail Elementary School
Ben Muller, Principal
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Ankeny, Iowa 50023
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Rock Creek Elementary School
Al Neppl, Principal
3800 NW Abilene Road
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Southeast Elementary School
Tara Owen, Principal
1005 SE Trilein Drive
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Terrace Elementary School
Matt Dunsbergen, Principal
310 NW School Street
Ankeny, Iowa 50023
965-9670

Westwood Elementary School
Joel Martin, Principal
2920 NW Ninth Street
Ankeny, Iowa 50023
965-9690
Welcome to Ankeny Schools!

The beginning of school is an important event in the life of a child. A strong start helps assure continued progress and further success.

The Ankeny kindergarten program has been planned to stimulate the total growth of the child: academically, physically, socially, and emotionally. We know that each child is unique, and we strive to ensure that your child experiences self-fulfillment and builds a positive self-concept.

Mutual understanding and confidence between the home and school are essential to the happiness and academic growth of the kindergarten child.

This booklet has been prepared by the Ankeny Community School District to provide information about kindergarten and to help make your child's adjustment to school life a successful and happy one. It is supplemental to the Ankeny Schools Elementary Parent/Student Handbook, which you should review when your student brings it home at the beginning of the school year.

Our sincere desire is that a lasting and enjoyable partnership between home and school will flourish as we share in the educational experiences of your child.

What is Kindergarten?

The primary goals of kindergarten are to build a foundation of learning using developmentally appropriate practices and to build a positive attitude toward school. It is a time for establishing the academic foundation to support your child's learning in the years to follow. Kindergarten should give children experiences that engage their innate curiosity and involve them in appropriate physical movement, social interactions, use of language, and creative activities. Children experience literacy, writing, math, science, and social studies concepts through classroom activities.

School Information

Who may come to kindergarten?

As established by state regulations, a child may enter kindergarten if his/her fifth birthday is on or before September 15 of the current school year.

Supplies

A list of recommended supplies will be provided at registration and is available on our district website at www.ankenyschools.org.

Attendance

Attending school regularly and on time is very important. Your child's interests and progress will be maintained through his/her participation in each day's learning experiences.

Parents should call the school prior to 8:00 a.m. if there is an absence. Please notify the school in advance of any anticipated absence.

Assisting in Your Child's Education

You can help in your child's education a number of ways. It is important that you:

- Read to your child.
- Present a positive attitude about school to your child.
- Teach your child to be independent in caring for his or her personal needs, such as how to:
  - tie shoes and hood
  - zip or button clothes
  - use the bathroom independently
- Provide opportunities for your child to develop fine motor skills by encouraging the use of scissors, crayons, pencils, and glue.
- Involve your child in gross motor activities such as throwing, catching, running, jumping, climbing, etc.
- Teach your child his/her full name, address, and telephone number.
- Teach your child the appropriate communication for wants and needs.
Lunch and Snacks

The Ankeny Community School District provides a well-balanced hot lunch that parents may choose to purchase. If you send your child’s lunch from home, we ask that you also consider good nutrition. During lunchtime each day, students will be provided many opportunities to practice good manners and social skills.

Visiting School

Please feel free to visit your child’s room at any time except during the first and last weeks of school. A call/note to the teacher 24 hours in advance of the visit is appreciated so schedules can be coordinated. Please hold your visit to thirty (30) minutes in order to not interfere with instructional time. Part of a morning or afternoon is best. Lunch is considered part of the instructional day. Lunchtime visits are encouraged as well, but we do ask you limit your visit to eating rather than recess time. Please do not expect a conference with your child’s teacher when class is in session. Minors and students unaccompanied by adults are not permitted to visit any elementary school. All visitors must report to the office immediately upon their arrival to the building. Please bring your driver’s license when you visit in order to obtain a visitor’s badge. We will use our computerized check-in system and you will be given a name badge to wear.

Kindergarten Curriculum

The Ankeny Community School District follows the Iowa Core standards. Iowa Core encompasses clear and consistent expectations for what students should know and be able to do from kindergarten through 12th grade. Academic standards are important because they help ensure that all students are prepared for success in college and the workforce. Standards provide an important first step — a clear road map for learning for teachers, parents, and students. This guide provides a brief overview of what your kindergarten student should learn by the end of their first year of school.

Literacy

In kindergarten your child will be working on:

- Naming upper-and lower-case letters, matching those letters with their sounds, and printing them.
- Comparing the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories, such as fairy tales and folktales.
  - Retelling familiar stories and talking about stories read to them using details from the text.
  - Using a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to describe an event, including his or her reaction to what happened.
- Stating an opinion or preference about a topic or book in writing (e.g., my favorite book is...).
- Taking part in classroom conversations and following rules for discussions (e.g., learning to listen to others and taking turns when speaking).
- Speaking clearly to express thoughts, feelings, and ideas, including descriptions of familiar people, places, things, and events.
- Asking and answering questions about key details in stories or other information read aloud.
- Understanding and using question words (e.g., who, what, where, when, why, how) in discussions.
- Learning to recognize, spell, and properly use grammatical words that hold the language together (e.g., a, the, to, of, from, I, is, are).

The literacy block is structured to include both whole group and small group instruction. During this time students will critically read, write, speak, listen, and view as they engage in authentic learning experiences. Whole group and small group reading instruction, includes the use of fiction and nonfiction texts to introduce the big ideas, concepts, comprehension skills and strategies, and vocabulary. Small group instruction allows for additional reading and instruction at the student’s level. Additionally during this time students have opportunities to apply their learning through independent practice activities. Your involvement in reading with your child at home helps reinforce instruction from the classroom, cultivate a love of reading, and build critical reading habits they will need as they progress.

Math

Children arrive in kindergarten with widely varying levels of knowledge in math. By the end of the year, your child must
have some important foundations in place, including the ability to count objects, add and subtract small numbers, and use addition and subtraction to solve word problems.

Over the course of the year, your child will do many hands-on activities related to a range of mathematical topics including counting, numeration, measurement, geometry, patterns, sorting, data collecting, and calculator use. Classroom routines such as keeping track of the days of school, helping with attendance, and observing and graphing weather and temperature give children real-life opportunities to develop and refine mathematics skills and become “math thinkers.” Your involvement in your child’s ongoing mathematics experiences will help him or her develop lasting excitement, confidence, and competence in math!

Science

Your child has a natural interest in almost everything around him or her and often pushes, pulls, and transforms objects in their daily interactions to see what happens. These inquiries allow children to better understand how things work and behave in their world and to see the results of their actions.

Science standards align to three strands of science: earth, life, and physical science. A key component of the science curriculum is scientific inquiry. With teacher support and guidance, students engage in hands-on exploration of scientific concepts through inquiry.

Social Studies

During kindergarten, the relationships in students’ lives with their families, friends, teachers, and neighbors will be explored. With hands-on activities, students will learn that people live differently in different places. Students will also learn how they can solve problems with others through talking and listening, thinking of solutions, and agreeing on a plan to solve the problem. Your child will learn what a community is through the ideals of responsible citizenship and his or her place in a community. Children will become detectives of history by comparing life in communities from long ago to today. Your child will discover how his or her individual traits may be the same or different from others and how the decisions we make individually can impact others in a broader sense.

Specials Schedule

All kindergarten students will receive instruction in music, art, physical education, guidance, library science, and technology each week; referred to as “specials.”

Report Cards and Conferences

Twice during the school year parents will be invited to conference with teachers. Each conference time will be 20 minutes in length. Conferences will focus on the child’s progress towards meeting end of the year grade-level standards. For more information about the Ankeny Community School District’s teaching and learning curriculum and standards, please visit our website at www.ankenyschools.org.

Health

Required medical documents such as immunization record, dental and vision screen should be submitted prior to the first day of school to your neighborhood elementary school nurse. To read more about the required health documents and locate the forms, please visit the district website, www.ankenyschools.org under Parents> Enrolling Your Student >Enrollment Requirements>Immunizations and Health Screenings.

Please inform your child’s teacher and school nurse if your child has any health problems which might affect her/his success in school, has any change in his/her medical condition or history, or if your child contracts a communicable disease.

School Nurse

The primary mission of the school nurse is to remove health barriers to learning. If a student becomes ill or injured during the day, the teacher will excuse the student from class to go to the nurse’s or principal’s office. If it is necessary for a student to go home, the parents/guardians will be contacted and arrangements will be made. No student will be sent home until prior arrangements have been made.

Administration of Medication to Students

It may be necessary for students to take medication during the school day. All medication must be brought to the nurse’s office, where it will be stored in a locked cupboard.
All medication, including prescription and nonprescription medication, must be in the original container in which it was purchased and must be accompanied by written authorization from the parents/guardians. The written authorization must include the following information: student’s name, name of medication, dosage (amount) of medication to be administered, and date and time for the medication to be administered. A Permission for Administration of Medication form is available at www.ankenyschools.org. No medication will be administered at school except in compliance with Board Policy #504.32 - Administration of Medications to Students.

**Mandatory Blood Lead Screening**

Iowa law requires all children entering kindergarten to be tested for lead poisoning. Please contact your health care provider or the Polk County Health Department at 286-3798 to schedule your child’s blood level test.

**Immunizations**

The Iowa Immunization Law requires parents to vaccinate their children against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, rubella, Hepatitis B, and varicella (chickenpox) as a condition of enrollment in any elementary school in Iowa, including home school and dual enrolled students. Parents/guardians must submit an Iowa Department of Public Health Certificate of Immunization to the school nurse. It is the parents’ responsibility to see that this certificate of immunizations is completed and signed.

Students who have not provided a certificate with at least one set of all required immunizations to the school nurse will not be allowed to start on the first day of school. If a complete record of all immunizations required is not provided by the first day of school, the student will need an Iowa Department Public Health Provisional Certificate of Enrollment. This certificate will expire in 60 days. Your child must be completely immunized during this time. Once the 60 days has expired, your child will be excluded from school until the immunizations are complete.

If you will not be able to provide a complete immunization record for your child, it is imperative that you contact your child’s school nurse on or before the first day of school.

**Polio (PV)**

Four doses with at least one dose received on or after child’s fourth birthday.

**Diphtheria/Pertussis/Tetanus (DPT):**

Five doses with at least one dose of the vaccine received on or after child’s fourth birthday.

**Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)**

Two doses of vaccine, the first dose shall have been received on or after 12 months of age; the second dose shall have been received no less than 28 days after the first dose.

**Hepatitis B**

Three doses required. Minimum spacing between dose #1 and dose #2 is four weeks. Minimum spacing between dose #2 and dose #3 is eight weeks. Minimum spacing between dose #1 and dose #3 is 16 weeks. The child must be six months of age before they can receive dose #3.

**Varicella (Chickenpox)**

Two doses, the first dose should be given on or after 12 months of age; second dose at least three months from the first dose or the child has a reliable history of natural disease.

**Fevers and Flu**

Keep sick children at home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever without using fever-reducing drugs. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may become infected.

Do not send children to school if they are sick. Children who are determined to be sick while at school will be sent home. In addition, please educate your student that if they begin to feel sick at school, they should tell their teacher and contact the school nurse immediately. It is important that you are prepared to pick up your child as soon as possible, if notified of illness by the school. This is imperative to help ensure the health of other students and staff.

Consider getting a flu vaccination. The Centers
for Disease Control (CDC) and other health organizations recommend seasonal flu vaccinations to help avoid or reduce the severity of symptoms of the flu.

**Screenings**

Two screenings are organized and completed annually by the Ankeny school nurses. Vision screenings are completed for all students in kindergarten through third grade. Kindergarten boys are screened for color perception. Heartland Area Education Agency staff completes hearing screenings annually for students in preschool through fifth grade. Parents will be notified only if there is a concern regarding the results of the screening. **Please notify the school nurse if you do not want your child to participate in the screenings.**

**Dental Screening**

Iowa law requires children to have a record of dental screening on file at their school. The screening needs to be recorded on the Iowa Department of Public Health Certificate of Dental Screening, which can be found on www.ankenschools.org. Screening for all enrolling kindergarten students is valid from age three years to four months after enrollment date.

**Before and After-School Program**

The Ankeny Community School District offers a safe, fun, high-quality, fee-based Before and After-School Enrichment Program for students in grades K-5. The Before and After-School Program is funded through participating parent-paid fees and is operated at eight of the district’s ten elementary schools on regularly scheduled school days. The before-school program opens at 6:30 a.m. The after-school program opens immediately following the regular school day and closes at 6:00 p.m. The program also offers full-day, theme-based enrichment camps on no-school days, winter and spring break, and throughout the summer.

The Before and After-School Program provides students with a high-quality academically-enriching, safe, and fun before and after school experience. Students engage in daily recreation, homework lab and hands-on enrichment labs geared toward helping students increase academic success, character development, and build life skills. The program is governed by the Iowa Department of Human Services and provides a supervised environment that carries over PBIS expectations and promotes educational competence, physical and social development, and community and family engagement.

Before-school program participants have the opportunity to purchase breakfast through the district Nutrition Services Program; a nutritious snack is provided in the after-school program.

For more information, including program-specific procedures, enrollment contract options and to learn more about registration and tuition, visit the Before and After-School Program website at www.ankenschools.org/basp.

The minimum Before and After-School Program site enrollment must be 30 students. The program manager will make every effort to ensure student enrollment is met. However, if minimum program enrollment is not met, it may be necessary to close the low enrollment site and combine with a neighboring program site. In such situations, parents will be notified in writing with as much advance notice as possible.

**Parent and Community Involvement**

**Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)**

Each elementary has a Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) and each building has its own officers. Meetings and projects are held according to each building’s needs. PTOs wishing to raise money for the building are asked to refer to the guidelines in Board Policy #1004.60 on the district website at School Board >> Policies >> Series 1000.

Many parents/guardians help carry out the projects throughout the year. We hope you will become active in your PTO; this is an important link between the home and school to benefit your child.

**School Board Meetings**

The Ankeny Community School District’s Board of Directors are elected at large for four-year voluntary terms. The Board of Education follows a governance model. In this process, the Board gives direction to the school district as to their priorities and goals, and the administration then develops the best procedures and practices to fulfill those goals.

The Board invites you to attend its meetings. They normally meet on the first and third Monday of the month. The meetings are open to the public and held in the Board Room at
306 SW School Street. For a complete list of school board meeting dates, please visit our website at www.ankenyschools.org.

Board meetings follow an agenda prepared by the Superintendent. If you have an item of concern you would like placed on the agenda, call the superintendent’s office at 965-9600 before noon the Friday prior to the board meeting. Under Iowa’s Open Meeting Law, items cannot be added to the agenda within 24 hours of a meeting. Additions to the agenda are at the discretion of the Board. Action may not be taken on items not on the agenda. For more information, please refer to Board Policy #213.00.

School Improvement Advisory Council (SIAC)

Cooperation and communication among staff members, students, and community is a goal of the Ankeny Community Schools. For this purpose, the district has a School Improvement Advisory Council (SIAC) that is appointed by the Board of Education. The School Improvement Advisory Committee (SIAC) is a liaison group which provides parents, community members, staff members, and students the ability to provide input into decision-making of the district. The word “advisory” is definitive; that is, to test ideas without final decision-making authority. Parents of each attendance center will be given an opportunity to apply for selection, prior to the end of the school year, for next year’s SIAC. The term of office for all SIAC members will be a commitment of at least one year.

Volunteer Program

Ankeny Community Schools welcomes and appreciates our adult volunteers. By using volunteers, the district is able to offer greater educational services and learning opportunities for the youth in our community. Any parent or community member wishing to volunteer in the building or chaperone a field trip or dance will be asked to complete the forms within the Volunteer Handbook, which is available on the district website. Volunteers are subject to a criminal background check and the district reserves the right to restrict volunteers as a result of that check. A background check generally takes approximately two weeks to complete. It is not feasible to process a background check on the same day as the event.

Safety Tips

• Teach your child his/her full name, telephone number, and address.
  • Send your child to school at the same time other children are on their way - **not too early and not too late**.
  • If your child walks to school, show him or her where to cross the street. Cross only at corners or where crossing guards are provided. Teach the meaning of all traffic signals.
  • If your child will ride a school bus, teach the importance of remaining seated and following directions of the school bus driver, as well as other bus policies and procedures (found at www.ankenyschools.org).
  • Explain to your child that he or she should go straight home from school.
  • Tell your child not to accept rides with strangers or even talk to strangers.
  • Please send a note to the teacher when transportation plans are changed.

Parents’/Guardians’ Roles in Emergencies

Providing a safe place for students to learn and grow is one of the most important responsibilities of any school system. Along with school officials, teachers and staff, school families play a critical role in preventing and responding to school emergencies. This information is intended to provide parents and guardians with the steps you can take before, during and after an emergency.

Before an Emergency

**Prevention:** Parents and community members play an important role in keeping our schools safe. You can be our eyes and ears by reporting any issues, concerns, or rumors related to safety to school or law enforcement officials. Two hot line numbers are answered 24/7:
  • Unity Point Health – (515) 244-1000
  • Mercy Franklin Center – (515) 271-6111

You can also help by following and supporting all security measures when you visit one of our buildings. This includes signing in and out at the school office and wearing a visitor’s badge at all times while in the building.
You also can help by following and supporting all security measures when you visit one of our school buildings. This includes bringing your driver’s license the first time you visit in order to obtain a visitor’s badge. For all following visits, we will use our computerized check-in system and you will be given a name badge to wear. Please regularly update emergency and contact telephone numbers and information with your school to ensure you receive information and updates during emergency situations. It is also important to update information on who can legally pick up your student.

**Contact Information** - Another of the most important steps that parents can take prior to an emergency is to ensure their contact information is updated regularly in the district’s Infinite Campus system. This is the system that provides e-mail and phone numbers to the district’s rapid-contact notification system. Please regularly update emergency and contact telephone numbers, e-mail addresses and other information with your school to ensure you receive information and updates during emergency situations.

It is also important to review and update information regarding who can legally pick-up your child during an emergency. Once this information is on file, you should ensure that those people are aware they have been listed as your “emergency contacts,” and that they may receive messages via phone and/or e-mail during an emergency, weather early out, or other situation.

More information about the district’s Blackboard Connect system and what contact information it uses in various situations, visit the district website at www.ankeny schools.org > Departments > Communications > Closing and Delay Information.

If your child is on medication, be sure the school has at least a two-day supply.

Create your own family emergency plan. Develop a family communication plan and have a supply kit to sustain you and your family for two to three days. For tips on how to prepare a plan go to www.bereadyiowa.org.

**During an Emergency**

In a school emergency, the first instinct of many parents is to pick up the telephone and start calling their child or school and/or rush to the school and get your children. But the truth is, this only complicates matters from a safety and security standpoint. Parents too close to an incident often hinder rescue attempts of the police and fire officials on the scene. Calling your child’s cell phone may prevent them from hearing important, even life-saving information. Too many parents calling the school and tying-up needed phone lines can hinder efforts to communicate. Students will be able to use cell phones if they need immediate assistance and once they are safe.

The best action parents can take in an emergency is to monitor their phone, e-mail and district website for regular updates and instructions.

- Do not report to your child’s school during emergency situations. Law enforcement officials will not allow entry to the school site during a lockdown or shelter-in-place.
- Avoid calling the school or the district during the emergency.

The best action parents can take in an emergency is to stay close to their phone, e-mail, and the district website to monitor for accurate instructions and regular updates.

**Notification and Communication:** The school district is committed to providing parents and guardians with the latest and most accurate information available. In most cases the district will send brief phone messages or emails via the Blackboard Connect system in an emergency. Parents will be asked to also monitor more extensive official emergency updates at the district’s website. Additional updates will also be sent depending upon the nature of the emergency. In today’s world, it is likely that students will be texting and calling parents immediately. Be aware that information you receive from your child may not always be accurate; ensure the information you are using is official and comes directly from the Ankeny Community School District.

**School Emergency Response Protocols** - A school crisis can take a number of forms including an environmental event, such as a chemical spill or gas leak; a weather emergency, such as a tornado warning; or an intruder in or near the school. The nature of a school crisis dictates whether school officials will put in place a lockdown, shelter-in-place, evacuation, or any combination of two of these protocols, as a means to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students and staff.

**When and Why are Students and Staff Asked to Lockdown, Shelter-In-Place or Evacuate?**

- **Lockdown** — A lockdown is normally in effect when there is a threat inside the school. Students and staff are removed from harm’s way by having them safely located inside secure classrooms or other areas...
inside the school to reduce the risk of being exposed to
the source of potential harm. During lockdowns access
to the building is prohibited.

• **Shelter-in-Place** — Shelter-in-place is instituted when
the threat is outside the school. Students and staff are
secured inside a classroom or other areas inside
the school reducing the risk for exposure
to inclement weather or other potential
harm such as a gas release.

• **Evacuation** — Evacuations are
typically conducted to remove stu-
dents and staff from harms way
by having them safely vacate
the school and reassemble in a
more secure location.

If the school building is evacuated,
how will I be able to locate my
child? - Parents will be directed
to a specific location where they
will be required to show proper
identification. At the reunification site,
school administrators, police and fire
officials account for students and provide
aid to those who need it immediately.
Students are released only to authorized
individuals. If you are a non-custodial parent,
you must be listed with your child’s emergency
contact information as a guardian and show proper
identification.

**After an Emergency**

Monitor your child’s behavior and let the school know if you
think counseling or help is needed. Following a school crisis,
specially trained school and district crisis team members and
social workers are available to provide counseling and outside
referrals to students, staff members and others who may need
it.

**Recovery plans** - Depending on the nature and amount of
damage, school may be moved to a different location. The
district will inform parents of any changes.
Ankeny Community School District does not discriminate based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, military affiliation, socioeconomic status, or familial status.

Inquiries and grievances may be directed to Jenifer Owenson, Chief Human Resources Officer, 306 S.W. School Street, P.O. Box 189, Ankeny, Iowa 50021-0189, (515) 965-9600, jenifer.owenson@ankenyschools.org; or the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, IA, 50319-0201, (515) 281-4121; or the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 500 West Madison Street, Suite 1475, Chicago, IL 60661.