

OAKDALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
***Character + Community + Commitment =
Successful Learners***

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School Mascot . . . the Oakdale Owl

School Colors . . . Burgundy and Blue

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Dear Oakdale Friends and Families,

Greetings! We look forward to a year full of new learning for both students and staff. There have been a few changes at Oakdale Elementary School (OES); however, one thing that has not changed is our focus upon stretching each individual student to reach their full potential. We believe in challenging our students to become successful learners by holding students to a high standard in both academic and character development as well as self-monitoring their own learning. Our mission statement of **Character + Community + Commitment = Successful Learners** supports this endeavor.

This year one of our focuses, along with FCPS, is to continue building strong two-way communication between the school, families and the community. One way this will be facilitated is through disseminating materials on research-based curricula and practices that address the needs of schools and parents of children in all grade levels. The PTA and the staff are working collaboratively to provide family "education" nights that will address this.

Throughout the school year, various opportunities will be available for dialogue to occur between the school, families and community members. The PTA newsletter and **Other Exciting Stuff** will provide details on these events. You may also receive information via email by signing up at <http://schools.medianext.com/fred/oakdalees/start.html> In addition, the administration has an "Open door" policy (schedule permitting).

As you read through this handbook and the FCPS Calendar, many important issues and questions are addressed. If you should need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

We look forward to an exciting and productive year.

Elizabeth Little
Principal

Kimberly Haugh
Assistant Principal

Oakdale Elementary School

Vision

Education is the foundation of our community. The Oakdale Elementary community educates its students to become caring, respectful and responsible citizens and family members. Our commitment to this vision will result in successful learners.

Students look forward to and attend school each day. "They take full advantage of the rigorous academic curricula and strive to develop their talents. They utilize the power of technology to explore a world of new ideas and information. They acquire the knowledge and skills to achieve and the confidence to succeed." (FCPS VISION) Students are then prepared to access the wide choice of opportunities found in secondary education.

Through community involvement and inspirational teaching, the students of OES will become productive and conscientious citizens in a global society.

Mission

Character + Community + Commitment = Successful Learners

Oakdale Elementary School Fact Sheet

Oakdale Elementary School is located in the eastern end of Frederick County, approximately 6 miles east of Frederick City. Nestled in the middle of rolling hills, Oakdale students enjoy playing on three grass play fields (including one baseball diamond) and one hard surface area. The 71,700 square foot building has a capacity of 466 students. OES is a restricted school because our student body exceeds the designated capacity. Oakdale Elementary shares a campus with Oakdale Middle School, each school separated from the other by a small trout stream. An OES Outdoor Environmental Habitat has been developed here for classroom use.

OES is situated on a historic site, which was part of an original land grant from King Charles II. This property was located on the Old National Pike, a well-traveled colonial thoroughfare leading from Baltimore to western Maryland. The Delauter home, still located next to our site, was once an inn and stable, providing a welcome stop as travelers made their way west. The original home was built in 1791 and was named "Oakdale" because of the line of oak trees, which flanked the drive to the house.

As one of Frederick's newer elementary schools, OES has several special features. There is an expanded parks/recreation community gym, which will allow the opportunity for consistent after-school use by the community. As Oakdale Elementary and Middle share a campus, collaborative activities are undertaken which involve students from both schools. Staff use data projection systems, and all rooms have data, voice, and video drops so that in-house and Internet communications are available. Students are able to use their classroom PC's and also have access to two PC Computer Labs. We are the first elementary school to have hallway lockers for the students, thus increasing the amount of space available in our classrooms.

The building itself looks a bit like a backward "L" with the classroom wing being on two floors. The first floor houses ten classrooms including the Computer Lab, kindergarten, resource, art, music rooms, cafetorium and gymnasium. The second floor contains another nine classrooms along with a computer lab. Portables are also located on the school's site.

The **OES PTA** officers for the 2007-2008 school year are:

- ◆ **Heidi Riordan, President**
- ◆ **Tina Gamble 1st Vice President**
- ◆ **Roberta Chomiak 2nd Vice President**
- ◆ **Shelly Orzechowski Secretary**
- ◆ **Kristin Santoroski Treasurer**



FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Vision

Education is the foundation of our community. The Frederick County public school system educates its students to become caring, respectful, and responsible citizens and family members.

Students look forward to school each day. They take full advantage of the rigorous academic curricula and strive to develop their talents. They utilize the power of technology to explore a world of new ideas and information. They acquire the knowledge and skills to achieve and the confidence to succeed, and are rewarded with a wide choice of offers from higher education and employers.

Outstanding applicants compete to join our system. Employees enjoy the respect of students and the community, opportunities for professional growth, and recognition for their contributions to our system. They value each student and create a learning climate where students can reach for their dreams.

Parents, public officials, businesses and citizens actively support our commitment to challenge all students to achieve their potential. The Board of Education and school system staff embraces the community's contributions and are responsible stewards of its resources.

Parents choose to send their children to our schools. Businesses and families move to Frederick County because of our schools. Other school systems emulate us.

-- Adopted August 1998 by the Board of Education

Strategic Goals

The Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS) will establish an environment that capitalizes on all children's natural curiosity, nurtures their desire to learn, and respects their individual learning styles.

1. All students will demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to meet graduation standards and achieve their potential.
2. All schools will be safe and inviting, with a climate that fosters learning and character development.
3. All employees will be highly qualified, motivated and effective.
4. All sectors of the community will be engaged in the education of our children.
5. FCPS will advocate for adequate resources to achieve these goals and manage these resources in a publicly accountable and cost-effective manner.

SECTION I: It's Academic!



Curriculum

The Oakdale Elementary School staff is committed to teaching for quality learning for all of our students. Our students will be held accountable for learning a set of essential objectives for each content area. These objectives target important skills that your children will need in real life and determine what is taught in the classroom.

Grouping

In elementary schools, students are placed in heterogeneous (mixed ability) settings for most of the day. Within these settings, children have the opportunity to work and mix in various grouping structures for a variety of purposes. Our goal is for students to receive a healthy balance of classroom groupings that are appropriate to the task. These can include total class, cooperative, heterogeneous, homogeneous (same ability), and individual groupings.

Teachers have the flexibility to accomplish essential objectives using the combination of grouping structures which best help students master the essential curriculum. When making grouping determinations for reading and math, teachers consider the following:

- ❑ Classroom performance
- ❑ Performance on county developed assessments
- ❑ State and National assessment results
- ❑ Other information provided by specialists
- ❑ Parental information
- ❑ Social interactions
- ❑ Work habits
- ❑ Emotional factors

Organizing for Instruction

Classroom teachers will be responsible for all subjects with supplemental assistance from other professionals, including instructional assistants, the media specialist, reading teacher, speech therapist, special education, targeted intervention, learning language support, and enrichment teachers.

Art along with vocal and instrumental music will provide fine arts experiences, which will expand upon various concepts being introduced in the classroom. Physical education will also be scheduled regularly. Activities will be provided which help to develop strong, healthy bodies and a sense of fair play as well as to increase levels of physical fitness.



Instruction will be delivered by a teacher who considers the learning potential, rate, style, and setting for each individual student. To meet students' different needs, teachers will use a variety of techniques and methods so that all children will experience success. Students will be assigned to homerooms in a heterogeneous (mixed ability) grouping and will receive language arts and math instruction in a variety of flexible grouping situations. Students' performances are consistently monitored and periodically reevaluated to guide instruction and to provide placement information.

Homework

Homework is a necessary part of the learning experience. It provides opportunities for . . .

Practice- The student refines and strengthens skills previously taught in class through drill of simple applications, reading, and writing.



Preparation- The completion of this type of assignment makes the next day's lesson more meaningful and easier to master. Reading and familiarization with facts and ideas characterize this type of homework.

Extension- The application of skills and concepts to more complicated situations is the purpose of this type of homework, as it requires using higher level thinking skills, problem solving, and the use of abstract ideas. Short essays and reports are examples.

Integration- Successful completion of the assignment requires coordinating and combining several skills and concepts. This requires more time and a greater variety of resources. Research and projects are examples.

The frequency and duration of homework for elementary students is as follows:

Grades 1 and 2generally a maximum of 15 minutes per night, Monday through Thursday

Grade 3generally a maximum of 30 minutes per night, Monday through Thursday

Grades 4 and 5generally a maximum of 45 minutes per night, Monday through Thursday

It's recommended that homework not be given on weekends and holidays.

Homework Suggestions for Families

- ❑ Encourage and support your child, but your child should complete the assignments with minimal assistance.
- ❑ Set and maintain a daily homework time.
- ❑ Provide the space, time, and materials needed to complete assignments.
- ❑ Monitor assignments through the Assignment Planner,
- ❑ Plan an order of study. For example, save the most enjoyable study until last, plan breaks, and use a timer to break difficult tasks into chunks.
- ❑ Response to homework is welcomed. Communicate this through the Assignment Planner.

Assessments



During the school year, regular assessments will be given in all subject areas in order to give feedback and guidance for instruction. We consistently monitor and observe our children as they master county identified curricular objectives appropriate to their level. Art, music, and physical education criterion referenced tests are given to certain identified grades as well.

The Maryland State Department of Education monitors the progress of school systems through a state-mandated assessment taken by 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders. This test, the Maryland State Assessment (MSA), gives both individual student and total group scores and is given each spring. Grade 2 will be administered the Stanford Achievement Test. This will be given each spring as well.

Reading Incentives and Programs



Children become good readers only by doing lots of it! We encourage and promote our youngsters' enthusiasm for reading by implementing school-wide reading programs. The Literacy Committee, composed of staff and parents, will establish such programs. In addition, our Enrichment Teacher involves selected students using a wide variety of activities including learning lunches and specialized research projects.

Other reading activities and programs will be planned, and we look forward to working with our families on these!

Technology

Today our society is in the midst of a global transformation made possible by the development of digital telecommunication networks. When paired with the power of advanced computers, these networks enable individuals throughout the world to share almost unlimited amounts of information--text, data, images, video, and sound. Oakdale students will have the opportunity to experience the power of technology, not as a gimmick or game, but as a tool appropriately used to enhance their learning.

A multimedia center, consisting of a laptop computer, VCR, and a LCD projector with camera will be the hub of each classroom. This center permits teachers to project graphics, text, video, data, and 3-D objects in real-time during instruction. Each classroom will be fully equipped with video, data, and voice drops, and students will have 2 PCs with a printer available for their classroom use. Our computer labs are outfitted with PC's and printers so students can use the lab for reading, writing, research, skill practice and assessment. Lab assignments will be directly linked to classroom instruction. Our school-based User Support Specialist will provide both technical and instructional guidance and assistance with our technology component.

School Improvement

The School Improvement Team (SIT) at Oakdale Elementary will be composed of the administration, staff members, and parents. This team will be responsible for establishing school direction and monitors student achievement. A School Improvement Plan (SIP) is developed and revised annually. This Plan is available upon request.

Parent Advisory

The Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meets monthly to focus upon the School Improvement Plan, particularly the community involvement goal. All members of the community are welcome to attend. Watch for the dates, which are listed on **Other Exciting Stuff**.

SECTION 2: At Your Service!



Before and After-School Programs

Each year several before and after-school activities and programs are planned. Many of these are planned in collaboration with the Oakdale PTA and can vary from year to year. In the past, such activities have included foreign language opportunities, the Challenge 24 Math Club, Hands-On Science classes, chorus, dance, and scouting programs. Oakdale Elementary will hold a Science Fair, and we encourage our students to submit their science project to Frederick County's annual Science Fair.

CASS (Community Agency School Services)

The CASS program provides support for families in the Linganore feeder area of Frederick County. CASS works closely with schools, agencies, and the community to help families obtain such services as individual and family counseling, social services, health care, family recreation, in-home assistance, and academic support. If faced with a difficult situation, and you are interested in contacting our CASS worker, please contact the school for further information or call the Linganore High Area CASS office directly at 240-236-5512.

Childcare

This year, the Frederick County YMCA will operate a before and after-school day care center at Oakdale Elementary School. Information can be obtained by calling 301-663-5131. Additional childcare information is available by calling Childcare Choices at 301-695-4508.

Cultural Arts Programs

Please join us for any or all of the performances that will be planned and coordinated by the PTA. Careful attention is given to all grade levels and areas of interest when planning these programs. Programs are selected to coordinate with and support Frederick County initiatives. Advance notice of programs will be sent home during the year.

Health Program

Oakdale's Health Technician will be in the building every day and will perform under the direction of a Frederick County Health Department registered nurse. S/He will provide the following services:

- Administer medication
- Provide health care and monitor the health room
- Chart each student's visits
- Monitor immunization records
- Perform head checks for Pediculosis control

Care in the health room is limited to cleaning with soap and water and applying a bandage. In the event your child has a serious injury, a persistent illness, or an elevation of temperature at school, you will be contacted by telephone. Families are considered to have primary responsibility for their child's health. ***In view of this, it is imperative that we always have your current, correct address and phone number, and an emergency name and number in the event you cannot be reached. PLEASE KEEP THIS CURRENT and notify us of any changes in address and/or phone number. Unlisted numbers will be held in strict confidence.***

Usually when children are sick enough to stay home, they are not able to do school work. However, if you desire work for your child, please request work by calling the school and leaving a message for the classroom teacher to gather together any work for you to pick up. Generally, a 24-hour turn around time is required. Reading with your child and reviewing number facts are appropriate activities to do with your ill child as well.



Prescribed Medications: To dispense these at school, we must have

- ✓ WRITTEN PARENTAL CONSENT (Part I/Authorization to Administer Prescribed Medication Form)
- ✓ PHYSICIAN'S STATEMENT (Part II/Authorization to Administer Prescribed Medication Form)
- ✓ PRESCRIPTION BOTTLE with LABEL

All medication must be brought to the office by an adult. **Children should never have any drug in their possession on a school bus or on school grounds.**

Any dosage changes must have written notification from the attending physician. Authorization to Administer Prescribed Medication forms are available in the school office. Most Frederick County physicians also keep these in their offices. It is a good idea to have your doctor complete one of these forms when s/he prescribes the medication. We request that you administer the first day's dosage of any new medication in case there are any side effects.

Non-Prescription Medications: These will not be dispensed unless a physician has completed the Authorization forms for that purpose. Classroom teachers are prohibited from dispensing medication.

Health Screening: Students in kindergarten and grade 4 will receive hearing and vision screenings as mandated by Maryland State Law. Notices will be sent to you prior to the screening. If further medical examinations are indicated by the screening, you will be notified immediately.

Emergency Situations: In the event of an emergency that requires immediate medical attention beyond what we can do at the school level, you will be notified immediately, and we will make arrangements to transport your child to Frederick Memorial Hospital's Emergency Room. If you have not arrived at the school prior to transportation of your child to the hospital, an administrator or their designee will accompany your youngster to the Emergency Room and wait with him/her until your arrival.

Special Health Situations: If your child has any special health conditions (asthma, diabetes, allergic reactions, etc.), please contact our Health Technician with specific details and treatment directions. This information will be shared with the appropriate staff by the Health Technician.

Lost and Found

To help alleviate the problem of lost articles, please put your child's name on lunch boxes, book bags, clothing, and outerwear. If your child loses something, we'll have him/her check the Lost and Found in the front office. If items are not claimed within a reasonable amount of time, they will be donated to a charity organization.

Lunch Program and Prices

All children should either bring a lunch from home or buy a lunch from the cafeteria. The charge for lunch for elementary children is \$1.85, and reduced lunch is \$.40. Prepaid lunches may be purchased (minimum of 3) from the cafeteria manager.

If children do not wish to buy a lunch, they may bring their own lunches and drink or can buy a half-pint of white, low-fat white, strawberry, or chocolate milk. Ice cream and other snacks can be purchased if you wish. Ice cream will not be sold to a student in place of lunch. If you do not want your child to use prepaid lunch money for snacks, simply indicate this when you send in your check or cash to the cafeteria. **IF YOUR CHILD HAS FOOD ALLERGIES, PLEASE LET THE SCHOOL KNOW.** Because of this, students are asked to not share lunches or food.

Children, on occasion, may need to charge a lunch. They will be able to do so for one lunch, and a charge slip will be sent home that day. Please pay this charge as soon as possible. Should a student need to make a second charge without the first charge being paid, s/he will be given a bologna or peanut butter sandwich and milk.

Families are always welcome to join us for lunch! We enjoy having you share the noontime meal with us. Breakfast is also served from 8:45 - 9:05, and the cost is \$1.10 and \$.30 for a reduced breakfast. Menus will be sent home, and each day's school menu is on channel 18 as well.

Parks and Recreation

Oakdale Elementary School and the Frederick County Recreation Department have entered a joint agreement for the purpose of sharing recreational facilities. This agreement permits the community to utilize school facilities when the school is not in session. The county, therefore, will schedule after-hour use of the gymnasium and all outdoor fields. If you would like to take advantage of Oakdale's recreation facilities, please contact the Frederick County Recreation Department for further information.



Peer Mediators

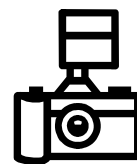
Peer mediators help students solve problems in a calm, peaceful way. Student mediators are nominated by the staff and are trained and supervised by the guidance counselor.

Safety Patrol

Selected 5th grade students will be able to participate in our Safety Patrol. These students will be trained and supervised by our guidance counselor to promote and monitor hall and building safety. One of their jobs will be to monitor door and hallway stations. Another job will be for them to assist with afternoon bus dismissal. In addition, patrols may create safety posters and other safety presentations to younger students. We look at this as a real opportunity to demonstrate exemplary Character Counts! traits.

School Pictures and Yearbook

During the school year, Oakdale contracts with a professional photographer to take both group and individual pictures. Individual pictures will be taken in the fall. Individual and group pictures are in the spring. The school receives a percentage of income from the sales. This money is used for a variety of needed materials not provided for in any other budget area. A yearbook will be published each year and will be available for sale in the late spring. Purchase of pictures and yearbooks is optional.



School Store and Prepackaged Supply Kits

Our school store will be in the front lobby and will be open from 8:45-9:05 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. General school supplies such as pencils, paper, glue, folders, etc. will be sold at a reasonable cost. Our Assignment Planners will also be available for \$4.50 each and OES water bottles can be purchased. School supply lists have been sent home and are available in the front office. **IMPORTANT: PLEASE-NO CARRYALLS ON WHEELS** as they do not fit in our lockers. Our 5th and possibly 4th graders will staff the store, and this will provide a perfect opportunity to practice real life math skills!

Families have a chance to get a head start on purchasing those items requested by each grade as part of their school supply list by purchasing most of these supplies in a prepackaged kit. These kits are assembled by a vendor and are offered thru the PTA at competitive prices.

Student Accident Insurance

For a small premium, a family may enroll each child in an accident insurance plan. This plan covers the student to and from school, while school is in session, and during any school activity. An application form with complete information will be sent home with each child the first week of school.

Summer Success

Summer Success is an exciting summer program offered to elementary children each morning for several weeks in the summer. This program targets students who have not passed grade level language arts and math assessments. Transportation is provided, and registration forms will be distributed in the spring.

SECTION 3: The Oakdale Way!



Arrival and Dismissal

Classes begin promptly at 9:10 AM. Students should arrive no earlier than 8:45 AM and no later than 9:10 AM. Do not bring children before 8:45, as there is no adult supervision available before this time. Car riders will be dismissed at 3:45 PM, and bus riders will begin their dismissal at 3:45 PM.

ARRIVAL:

CAR RIDERS: Car riders are to be dropped off at the second front entrance. Drivers should remain in their cars and wait in line as children are unloaded. Our staff will be on hand to open car doors and greet youngsters. **THE FRONT PARKING LOT CANNOT BE USED TO UNLOAD CHILDREN.** This would create an extremely dangerous situation. If you need to park in this lot, please find a parking space and walk with your child into the building.

BUS RIDERS: Bus riders will be dropped off in the morning at the school's side entrance and enter through the cafeteria. There will be a staff member on duty here to greet and monitor our students.

LATE ARRIVALS: Those children who arrive after 9:15 AM should be dropped off at the first front entrance as they need to report to the office to get a Late Pass before going to class.

DISMISSAL:

CAR RIDERS: Car riders will be called down to wait in the hallway near the second front entrance. Drivers should pull their cars up to the end of the front driveway, remain in their cars, and wait in line. At this time, a staff member will start at the beginning of the car line and identify the child (ren) who are to ride in that car. Staff will then escort those youngsters out to their cars. As cars leave, the other cars will move up and staff will call and escort children out to their cars. **THE FRONT PARKING LOT CANNOT BE USED TO LOAD CHILDREN.** Again, this would create an extremely dangerous situation. If you need to park in this lot, please find a parking space and come into the building.



SPECIAL SITUATIONS:

- ❑ If you need to change the way your child normally comes home, we request the change in writing. If you have an appointment or errand at school and want your child to ride home with you, please come into the office and sign him/her out on the Dismissal Sheet and notify the front office staff. Then proceed to the car rider line.
- ❑ If students are to go home with someone other than a parent/guardian, we must have a note stating this. No child will be allowed to leave school with anyone other than a parent or guardian unless written permission is presented to the office. The individual with whom the child leaves must sign out in the office. Because we have your child's safety as a priority, we may ask for picture identification from individuals if we don't recognize him/her. If written permission and/or identification is not provided, we may refuse to allow your child to leave with this person. Again, this is for your child's safety.
- ❑ If a student is going to another student's home after school and rides the bus or is a car rider, we must have a note from BOTH families involved. Make arrangements with your

child before they leave for school as to what they are to do at dismissal. A note to the teacher helps to eliminate confusion.

- ❑ If you need to pick up your child during the school day, you must report to the office. No child will ever be dismissed directly from the classroom. Please do not call the school and ask to have your child waiting in the office for pick up during the school day, as this is against school policy. We will call your child down when you arrive.
- ❑ Make sure your child knows the "game plan" to use in the event school closes early.

Please do not call teachers to hold a phone conference or stop in to talk about an issue from 8:45 - 9:10 AM. This time is for teachers to use to finish up details for the day's activities as well as to provide a little extra time to work with youngsters as needed. Instead, in order to give you the time and attention warranted, please schedule a time to chat. All our staff will have voice and email, so feel free to leave messages using either of these.

Attendance

School law requires all children to be in school each day. The school year consists of 180 regularly scheduled school days (*see the Calendar Handbook*). **The school day is from 9:10 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.**

Regular attendance is vital for a successful school experience. Statistics show that student achievement is directly related to attendance. Encourage your child to take pride in their attendance. If your child is reluctant to attend, please contact the school's guidance counselor so we can address any problems together.

Written Excuses: Maryland law requires a written excuse when a child is absent from school, late to school, or leaves school early. A note stating the reason for the absence or lateness is required within **two days** of the child's return to school and must contain the date and reason of absence, and the parent's/guardian's signature. Without this information, the absence is classified as an unlawful (unexcused) absence. A written excuse from the physician is required when a child is unable to participate in physical education class. A written note is needed from the family when a child is unable to go outside for recess.

Vacations: The Board of Education realizes that occasionally families may need to take a trip with their children during school. Students who take a trip with their families will be excused **no more than twice during a year for a maximum of five days.**

Administrative approval is required prior to the vacation.

Notification of Excessive Absences: Families of students accumulating excessive absences will be notified routinely by letter. Students with five or more unlawful absences in a term or with fifteen cumulative absences will be notified at the close of quarterly terms. With continued absences, a doctor's verification may be required for additional days accrued.

Dress Code

Students have the responsibility to dress and groom themselves in a manner that is safe, healthy, non-disruptive, and appropriate to elementary classroom and school procedures. Clothing should

not depict activities or situations of violence, advertise alcoholic beverages or drugs, and should provide adequate covering. If a student wears an article of clothing that is inappropriate, s/he may be asked to turn his/her shirt inside out, to wear a shirt/shorts provided by the school, and/or call home for a change of clothing. Students will be asked to hang all outerwear in their lockers. Hats and scarves are not to be worn in the building except on special, announced occasions.

Emergency Closings and Delays

Occasionally, inclement weather or other safety or health conditions require us to delay or close all or some schools. This decision involves careful evaluation of a variety of factors in a compressed time period. Decisions are generally made by 5:30 AM for morning closings and delays and, whenever possible, by 11:30 AM for early closings. FCPS notifies over 30 local and regional TV and radio stations in these situations. For the fastest, most reliable information, check the following:



- ❑ TV: Cable Channel 18
- ❑ Radio: WAFY 103.1 FM, WFMD 930 AM, WFRE 99.9 FM, WTHU 1450 AM
- ❑ Internet: FindOutFirst@fcps.org

For safety reasons, pre-arrange your emergency back-up care for your child in the event schools close unexpectedly. Teach your child what to do in case you are not at home when school closes, and note the name and number of someone nearby who is usually available when you're not at home on the Emergency Card.

Partial Closings and Delays: Occasionally, only portions of the school system will be closed or delayed. Announcements may include the term "feeder" along with the name of a high school. This means that all schools within that particular feeder system are affected. Oakdale Elementary is part of the Linganore feeder system.

Parties

Two parties are held each year: Team leaders will determine when these will be, and this information will come home in September. Homeroom volunteers in cooperation with the classroom teacher will plan and coordinate snacks as well as several games and/or crafts. Homeroom volunteers will solicit donations from families near party dates.



Birthday celebrations - Some of our students have life threatening allergies to certain foods. As a result, each class will send home a list of "approved treats" in the fall. If you wish, you can send in treats from the list to distribute **during lunchtime**. If an item is sent in that is NOT on the approved list, then it will NOT be distributed. In order to avoid hurt feelings, we also ask that you provide enough of the food item so no child in the class is left out. **Please select items from the approved list for the safety of all of our students.**

Along this line, STUDENTS SHOULD NOT DISTRIBUTE INVITATIONS TO PRIVATE PARTIES AT SCHOOL. These should be mailed directly from home. Student addresses are not available through the office or classroom teacher. If you wish to access these, you can receive a copy of the school directory when you join the PTA.

SECTION 4: Can We Talk?



We at Oakdale Elementary School are committed to maintaining open lines of communication. Families are encouraged to contact teachers and staff to discuss any items or concerns. Teachers are on duty from 8:45 until 4:15 each day, but their times of availability differ. ***Please keep in mind that during arrival and dismissal times, teachers are actively involved with students and preparation of lessons.*** In addition, teachers are directly engaged in instruction throughout the day. Consequently, we ask that you not interrupt the teachers or the students during the school day. Instead, call, send a note, or email, and teachers will be glad to get in touch with you!

Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are held twice during the school year to discuss your child's progress in achieving the essential curriculum in each subject. Other items of interest and concern may be discussed as well. During the conference, you will have an opportunity to examine samples of work to determine your youngster's strengths and needs. You may provide input and ask questions concerning your child's program too. Refer to the school calendar in the county handbook for dates.

Additional conferences with your child's teachers may be held at the request of either the family or the teacher at any time to discuss any problems that directly affect your child's school performance. Please contact the school to arrange such a conference. If an interpreter is required for conferences, please notify the school at least one week prior to the conference so we can make the appropriate arrangements. Active involvement in your child's education will lead to school success!

Electronic Communication

Each of our staff has voice and email at the school. Please feel free to access these avenues of communication should they be viable options for you! Our school profile and web site can be accessed at www.fcps.org.

You may also sign up for OES Find Out First an electronic information system. Information will be sent to you via email if you sign up at <http://schools.medianext.com/fred/oakdalees/start.html>

Newsletters, Planners, and Thursdays



Thursdays will be our Take-Home Day when all written information, flyers, and newsletters will be sent home. So make sure you check those backpacks EVERY night but especially on Thursdays! Daily Assignment Planners will be coming home every night as students' assignments and other notes from the teacher will be written in these. Do make a habit of asking to see the Planner every night to help your youngster get started on any homework. Feel free to write any questions or items in the Planner as the teacher is to check these each day as well and can respond to your comments right there in the Planner. Quarterly newsletters from each grade/teacher will be coming home and will keep you informed of the units of study and other important classroom events and activities. Pertinent information and calendar updates will be sent home monthly.

Reporting Systems

Report cards will be sent home at the end of the four grading periods, which are in November, February, April, and June. Your child's teacher may also send home an interim report between the report card dates. These interims indicate areas of strength and/or weakness, need for improvement, or unsatisfactory work issues. You will be asked to sign the interim and return it to the teacher.

Student Information Card

Your child will bring home 2 Student Information Cards for you to complete. **BE SURE WE HAVE CURRENT INFORMATION INCLUDING WORK ADDRESSES, PHONE NUMBERS, AND THREE EMERGENCY NUMBERS IN CASE YOU CANNOT BE REACHED. PLEASE KEEP US UPDATED ON THIS INFORMATION THROUGHOUT THE YEAR!**



If your child is in day care, be sure to indicate that information on the card. If you move or change jobs, please notify the office. If there are any custody arrangements, the school will need a copy of any pertinent court documents.

FCPS students are sometimes asked to be photographed or videotaped, to have their name released for electronic communication, or to display their work for community or promotional purposes. The Information Card will have an area for you to give your permission or deny permission for your child to participate in these activities. Note that FCPS cannot control these media activities at events that are open to the public.

SECTION 5: Safe and Sound

Character Counts!

Character Counts! is a nationally recognized program to help children make ethical decisions guided by respect for others and personal responsibility. It is about character development---how you behave when no one is looking! Oakdale joins other Frederick County schools in emphasizing the Character Counts! Pillars of ***trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship.***



Evacuation Drills

To prepare the children for evacuation of the building in case of fire or other emergency situations, a minimum of 10 drills will be held each year. These drills will not all be held on pleasant, sunny days as we want our youngsters to be comfortable with leaving the building in all types of situations. Because of this, each class will also practice evacuation drills on their own, without the fire drill alarm sounding.

We are a two-story building with an elevator servicing the second floor. Both stairways are designated "safe havens" and meet fire code in that these areas become sealed off when activated by the fire alarm. Because they are constructed with special fire safety insulation in the walls, individuals are safe from fire and smoke for up to two hours in these areas. All fire and emergency personnel are instructed to attend to these areas first.

Two bus evacuation drills are held each year, one in the fall and one in the spring. In addition, FCPS and OES have developed emergency guidelines, and we have provided staff development to the OES staff on these. A variety of other drills may occur throughout the school year.

Items Not Permitted In School

1. Valuable personal possessions
2. Portable video and audio equipment
3. Chewing gum
4. Toys
5. Tobacco products--Smoking is not allowed at ANY time on school property.
6. Alcohol is prohibited on all school property.
7. Weapons or look-alike weapons are prohibited on all school property.
8. Drugs are prohibited on all school property.
9. Athletic equipment
10. No decals or decorations are to be affixed or placed on student lockers.



Some personal possessions may be brought to school with prior permission of school staff.

School Security Issues

As previously stated, for the safety of your child, our policy will be to release a child only to a parent, guardian, or other authorized person listed on your Emergency Card. Again, we may ask for picture identification before releasing youngsters in order to ensure your child's safety. The principal must approve exceptions to this policy. We ask that you use the sign-out register when you check your child out early.

After 9:15 AM, all doors to the building will be locked except for the first front entrance. This and other specific school security and safety procedures are addressed in both the Frederick County handbook containing school security and safety procedures and in the Oakdale Emergency Plan. Please know that even though certain procedures may seem annoying and/or time consuming, they are in place only for the sole purpose of establishing as safe an environment as we can for your youngster!

You Can Help At Home

Teach your child to be safe by following these guidelines:

- Be sure your child knows and can tell his/her full name, address, phone number, and parents' names.
- Choose the safest route to and from the bus stop. Walk the path together several times.
- Discuss appropriate bus stop and bus behavior.
- Make sure your child knows the "game plan" in case schools close unexpectedly or you are unable to pick your child up on time. Let the school know this plan.
- Teach your child to never talk to someone s/he doesn't know well.



OES Standards and Consequences

One goal of our School Improvement Plan is to provide a safe and orderly environment for teaching and learning. In order for this to happen, it is expected that students follow certain standards and show respect to all of the Oakdale community--staff, visitors, and each other. The staff has adopted the following **Oakdale School Expectations**, and you will see these posters displayed in each room and throughout the building. We will work with our youngsters to foster understanding and internalization of these as well as the Character Counts! Pillars to build caring, responsible youngsters.

We build a caring community by . . .



- √ **telling the truth.**
- √ **following directions.**
- √ **letting others learn.**
- √ **respecting others.**
- √ **respecting property.**



School staff will use the following strategies to promote appropriate behaviors:

- Positive reinforcement
- Rewards and incentives
- Problem solving
- Individual behavior plans
- Individual and class recognition
- Home contacts
- Team interventions
- Quiet timeout periods

In situations where a student's inappropriate behavior is infringing on the rights of others by creating an unsafe learning environment, an Office Referral may be written. An administrator will

investigate the situation and determine the appropriate action. (See the Calendar Handbook for detailed information). The family will be contacted and/or a copy of the office referral will be sent home and must be returned.

Discipline for Off-Campus Activities: Students can be disciplined for off-campus activities where there is a reasonable belief that the health and/or safety of others in school could be in danger or that school operations or activities may be disrupted.

Visiting the School

As you know, the need for security has become more essential during the past few years. All staff members at Oakdale wear identification badges. So that all adults are clearly identified, you are asked to report to the office before going through the school. At that time, you'll be asked to sign in and wear an identification badge. Again, because our teachers are responsible for your youngsters' safety and instruction from 8:45 to 3:45, they will be unable to have you visit or conference with you without prearranging this. We ask that you contact your child's teacher to set up a mutually convenient time to visit or conference.

Infants and Toddlers: While we love and welcome toddlers and infants, there are some situations and events when it is best to leave the little ones at home due to safety and instructional reasons. Volunteering, helping with classroom events, meetings and certain cultural arts programs would be times when you will want to leave your toddler or infant at home. In addition, please do not allow your toddler or infant to participate in recess with school-aged children on the playground or blacktop area.

Volunteers

Volunteers are invited to work with our teachers and students in many ways. Some may want to work in the classrooms, do clerical tasks, tutor students, help in the media center, or work at home. Volunteering is a fantastic way to make a difference in a student's life, so please consider this opportunity! We will be sending home a form for you to complete if you're interested in becoming a volunteer. The school will be setting up a special orientation session in early September that all volunteers will need to attend prior to beginning work in the school. At this time we will provide information regarding curriculum, the management of children, simple reading and math activities to use, and school and volunteer procedures. We gratefully accept any time you can offer and look forward to seeing you at school!