

KINDERGARTEN ROUNDUP 2011

PARENT HANDBOOK



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Welcome to Oak Hill Elementary

Dear Parents,

On behalf of the Oak Hill Elementary Parent Teacher Association (OHEPTA), we welcome you to Kindergarten Roundup 2011!

This handbook was created especially for you. It addresses the many questions you may have as parents of new kindergartners. Reading through this information will help ease your transition and create a successful kindergarten entry for your child.

While this handbook does not replace the abundance of information provided by AISD, we hope it will serve as a starting point for you to find information and answers to your most immediate questions. If you still have questions after reviewing this handbook, please reach out to us at newparents@ohepta.org. We are happy to help!

We wish you and your child all the best this coming school year!

Sincerely,
The members of the OHEPTA Welcoming Committee

About Oak Hill Elementary

Oak Hill Elementary (OHE) was established in 1974, with the stated mission of preparing each child for life and challenging each child to achieve. Children in grades pre-kindergarten through 5th grade are taught in a loving, structured and stimulating environment. When your child enters Oak Hill Elementary, you can be assured that they will be nurtured in both academic and social areas, with a focus on a well-rounded curriculum that sets them up for a lifetime of learning.

Why Oak Hill Elementary?

Oak Hill Elementary exists to:

- Prepare each child for life
- Challenge each child to achieve

We believe in:

- Respect for self and others
- Respect for diversity and cultural differences
- Fostering a love of learning in our children
- Challenging each child to achieve his or her full potential

Oak Hill Elementary has a committed staff of teachers and administrators who focus on both academics and social aspects of learning. OHE provides opportunities for all students to reach their highest potential, while respecting the needs and interests of each student.

Oak Hill Elementary is also known for having outstanding parent and community involvement; many of the great programs that occur at OHE are parent-led and managed. It's the interaction of the community and the involvement of many that truly makes the school special.

Classes and Teachers

- For the 2011-12 school year, we are currently budgeted for six kindergarten classes, with the possibility of more if there is additional enrollment over the summer.
- The class size for kindergarten is limited to a maximum of 24 children per class.
- Our teachers are provided with a state-adopted program that integrates the areas of language arts, math, social studies, science, technology, health, art, music and physical education (PE), as well as a strong literacy program.
- Your child will be assigned a primary teacher along with "Special Areas" teachers. These teachers teach PE, music and art.
- In kindergarten, the curriculum is set by the State of Texas, however the teachers do have some freedom to develop some extra curriculum based on the interests and strengths of their classes.
- In any given year, while your child is learning the core subject areas, he/she will also participate in a variety of other fun activities such as the 100th Day of School Celebration, Fun Field Days, holiday parties and school plays.

Progress in your kindergarten

- Kindergarten is a year of learning and independence. You will likely be amazed at how far your 5 year old comes in a year's time.
- In kindergarten, the children will learn the basics of math, the fundamentals of reading, science, social studies, health and most importantly, the importance of curiosity and exploration.
- While the teachers guide much of the curriculum, the children are encouraged and expected to perform their tasks on their own in a set timeframe. This will get them ready for subsequent grades.
- Teachers will communicate with parents on a weekly basis with the 'Take Home Folder'. This folder contains the week's learning, behavior information, classroom reports and your child's completed work.
- Report cards will be sent home every nine weeks.
- OHE teachers can be reached at any time if you have concerns or questions about your child. You will be provided with a phone number and email address that reaches the classroom directly. Please note: be patient with response times as the teachers are busy teaching our children! Faculty email and phone numbers can be found on the OHE website.

Curriculum Overview

On a typical day in kindergarten, your child will engage in a variety of different tasks to help them learn. All teachers are required to teach the TEKS but are allowed professional discretion. Based on the needs of their class and their assessments of the needs of the children in their class during the current year, teachers adjust accordingly. You will find specific curriculum expectations at: <http://www.austinschools.org/curriculum/>

- **Language Arts** – Integrating reading, writing, speaking and listening to support the development of active literacy
- **Integrated Math** – Counting and comparing, graphing, creating patterns, estimating, critical thinking and problem solving with reading and writing incorporated into these activities.
- **Social Studies** – History, geography, civic and economic understanding are taught through research and discussion.
- **Science** – Examining, exploring, comparing, classifying and describing helps children build on their natural curiosity about the world and how it works.
- **Play** – Helps children develop thoughts and concepts through investigation, exploration, cooperation, communication and social skills.

How you can become involved

There are a variety of ways that parents can become highly involved in OHE.

- **In the classroom:** Most teachers welcome and appreciate parent volunteers. With as much as they have on their plates, it is welcome help to have parents assemble class supplies, read to the kids, or other helpful tasks for the children and teachers. If you'd like to help, contact your child's Room Parent (parent of a child in the class) or ask the teacher.
- **Parent Teacher Association:** The Oak Hill Elementary Parent Teacher Association (OHEPTA) is a great way to get involved, and to truly become a part of OHE and shape the future of the school. Joining this Association allows you to choose from a variety of ways to get involved including fundraising opportunities, teacher appreciation opportunities, and numerous committees that need help, time and support.

Sample Kindergarten Schedule for 2011 – 2012

7:10 – 7:30 Students arriving by bus or parent drop-off go to the Cafeteria in Main Building

7:30 – 7:45 Students arrive and put away backpacks, folders, snacks & lunch/lunch money

7:45 Tardy bell rings

7:45 Pledges and announcements

7:45 – 8:00 Morning message and calendar

8:00 – 9:00 Math

- Review Concept
- Large Group
- Student Product
- Small Group & Math Stations

9:00 – 9:10 Snack and Restroom

9:40 – 10:10 Literacy Centers and Guided Reading

10:10 – 10:30 Outside Playground/WOW

10:30 – 11:15 Writing

11:15 – 11:45 Lunch

11:45 – 12:15 Science

- Physical Science/Environmental/Life/Physics

12:15 – 1:00 Special Area: Art, Music or PE

1:00 – 1:30 Independent Reading/Tutorials

1:30 – 2:15 Work Stations

- Phonological awareness
- Word study
- Oral language development
- Science
- Social Studies

2:15 – 2:45 Read aloud storytime

2:45 Dismissal bell

- Teachers supervise students to buses, parent pick-up or afterschool programs

Weekly Offerings

Library: Kindergarten students visit the Library with their class for a curriculum-based lesson with Librarian Ms. Underwood. They check out books and learn Library organization during the year.

Computer Lab: Students work in the lab on age-appropriate lessons in phonics, reading, keyboarding and more. Computers are also used daily in the classroom.

Guest Reader: Ms. Jodi visits classes at Oak Hill as our most animated storyteller bringing seasonal books, puppets and songs to engage students.

Young at Heart: On Tuesdays students read with Young at Heart volunteers, mostly retirees, for valuable additional one-on-one reading time.

Important Dates and Contact Information

Important Dates to Remember

First Day of School **Monday, August 22, 2011**

Meet the Teacher Night **Date TBD** (usually the Friday before the first day of school)

- Please check the AISD or Oak Hill Elementary website a week or two before the first class day.
- Parents and new students will meet their teacher and other students in their class.

Back To School Night **September, 2011 (Date TBD)**

- Parents will meet their child's teacher to discuss the curriculum and the teacher's pedagogy.

Helpful Websites

OHE PTA Website www.ohepta.org

- Includes a calendar of events, highlights of the week, Principal's blog, student news, and other important facts and information

Eagle Eye Newsletters <http://www.ohepta.org/Newsletters.html>

- Weekly updates and happenings from around OHE

Austin ISD Website <http://www.austinisd.org>

- Helpful information about the entire AISD school system, the teachers and the community

Bus Stop Finder <http://www.austinisd.org/schools/bus/>

- Information about bus stop locations and times for your area

Contact Information: School and Bus Information

Address: 6101 Patton Ranch Road

Phone: 414-2336 (Main) or 414-5161 (Annex)

OHE Principal	Dr. Cathryn Mitchell	cmitchel@austinisd.org
OHE Assistant Principal	Peggye McDonald	pamcdona@austinisd.org
Front Office Staff	Pat Fishel	pfishel@austinisd.org
Student Services	Naomi Sanchez	nsanchez@austinisd.org
Health Assistant	Christina Lavalliere	christina.lavalliere@austinisd.org
School Counselor	Candi Caporal	candi.caporal@austinisd.org
School Bus Transportation (School Bus Finder):		http://www.austinisd.org/schools/bus/ Phone: 414-0238 Fax: 414-0385

Frequently Asked Questions

What is special about Oak Hill Elementary (OHE)?

- Oak Hill Elementary exists to prepare each child for life, and challenges children to achieve their full potential. This is the school's stated mission, and we use this statement as a guide in planning and teaching each child.
- Since 1974, this school has been serving the Oak Hill community with regard to each child's uniqueness, respect for diversity, and a belief that we should foster a lifelong love of learning.
- Our community, our teachers, and our parents make Oak Hill Elementary the great school that it is today. We encourage you to become an integral part of the school to continue our 37-year tradition of excellence in education.

When is the first day of school?

Monday, August 22nd, 2011

What are the school hours?

- School doors open at 7:10 AM, with instructional time beginning promptly at 7:45 AM.
- The children are dismissed at 2:45 PM.

What are my options for transportation?

- Students can be transported by either: parent drop-off/pick-up, AISD buses, after-school program buses or day care buses.
- Your child's teacher will ask you how your child will get home at the Meet the Teacher night. This information is essential so that your child will be placed in the correct area (bus, parent-pick up, etc) at dismissal time. If there is a change in how your child returns home from school, please write a note to the teacher informing him/her of the change.
- Parents, whose child is registered at OHE, will receive a notification in August regarding bus pick up and drop off time and location.
- You can also check bus schedules and routes at: <http://www.austinisd.org/schools/bus/>

How are teachers chosen for the children?

- For entering kindergartners, parents are encouraged to complete a form to help the school better understand your child (this form will be available at Kindergarten Round Up or through the OHE office).
- Children are placed with teachers using this parent input, with care to create well-balanced classes of children who may work and learn well together.
- For subsequent grades, children are placed in classes based on a combination of parent input and teacher feedback. The strengths and developmental opportunities of each child are also taken into consideration.

When will I find out who my child's teacher will be?

- You will receive a post card from your child's teacher in the week preceding the first day of school and along with an introduction and welcome, they will give you more information about Meet the Teacher night.

How will I know my child is progressing?

- On a weekly basis, teachers will send home documentation in your child's 'Take Home Folder'. This documentation not only talks about how your child is progressing with his/her lessons, but will also give you information about their behavior. Classroom events and needs are often included, too.
- Detailed report cards will be sent home every nine weeks.
- Each family will be invited (and is expected) to have a conference with their child's teacher in the fall. In this conference, you will be given a full report on your child's progress, and you will set goals for your child for the coming months.
- Another conference in the spring will be offered, and strongly encouraged if your child is having any difficulties.
- Parents and students are welcome to request a conference at ANY time, and we strongly encourage you to initiate a conversation with your child's teacher whenever the need arises.

What is the dress code at OHE?

- There is no school uniform at OHE. The school does adhere to the AISD dress code.
- Students should wear clothing that is appropriate to the school setting, and is also suitable for PE and outdoor activities. Students work hard and play hard, participate in outdoor activities and run the track everyday.
- Children should wear tennis shoes to school everyday as the children play outside and run the track everyday. In addition, children who are not wearing tennis shoes on P.E. day will not be allowed to participate in P.E.

How does my child buy lunch?

- Students can choose to bring their lunch from home or purchase a cafeteria tray.
- To purchase lunch, put money in an envelope that has your child's name, teacher's name, amount of money, and date on it. Checks are not accepted. You may purchase several meals in advance to avoid sending money daily.
- A lunch menu for several weeks at a time is sent home with your child.
- The cost of lunch is \$2.10.
- If parents want to join their child for lunch in the cafeteria, the cost of an adult lunch is \$3.00.
- Parents can also use MyLunchMoney.com website to prepay lunch and keep track of lunches purchased. Even if choosing to send money in an envelope to school,

MyLunchMoney.com is useful to check your child's account balance periodically and receive low-balance notifications. Go to mylunchmoney.com for more details.

What is the discipline policy at OHE?

- The goal in our discipline policy is to ensure an optimal learning environment for all students.
- We strive to develop confidence, self-control, and high expectations in each student.
- When challenging situations do occur (e.g., bullying), we discipline with dignity and provide natural consequences established in each class and grade level.
- Additionally, we recognize good student behavior through a variety of incentives (progress and reward charts, Eagle of the Day, weekly treasure box goodies, "Reward Fridays", etc)
- All parents will receive the Oak Hill Code of Conduct and AISD Student Code of Conduct when school starts.

What types of after-school care programs are available at OHE?

OHE has two established after-school care programs:

- Extend-A-Care offers an after-school service on the OHE campus in which the children have time to work on homework, and are then engaged in a variety of games and learning activities. (Phone: 472-9402)
- Creativity Club, through the Dougherty Arts Center, is another on-site (OHE) after school program that focuses on creative dramatics, arts and movement. (Phone: 397-1453)
- In addition, several local day care centers serve our school and offer pick-up service from OHE. The student services office has a complete list of those centers available.

What type of homework requirements can I expect my child to have?

- OHE uses homework assignments to reinforce the curriculum in each classroom.
- Homework varies by class and teacher, but all homework is based on the appropriate age and grade level of the students.
- At OHE, we believe that parent involvement is essential for maximum learning. Please consider actively involving yourself in your child's schoolwork and homework.

How can I get more information about current events at OHE?

- **Principal's Blog** – On a regular basis, Dr. Mitchell will write in her blog about the various OHE events that have recently occurred in and around the school. Sign up through the OHE PTA website.
- **Eagle Eye e-Newsletter** – Sent to your email address each week, this online newsletter provides upcoming events and happenings from around OHE.

Tips to Prepare Your Child for Kindergarten

Kindergarten is a huge and exciting step for our children. Here are a few ways you can make this transition easier and fun for your child.

During the summer before school starts:

Discuss Kindergarten

- In the weeks before school begins, discuss kindergarten with your child. Express enthusiasm and excitement at all he or she is going to learn.
- Try to evoke responses from your child to see how she may be feeling so you can respond to that appropriately.
- Make kindergarten something exciting to look forward to, versus something to fear.

Set Up Play dates

- Set up some regular play dates with your child's future classmates – these are often organized within your neighborhood and even at Roundup. Be sure to look for or ask if for a sign-up sheet at Roundup so that you can express your interest in either organizing or participating in these play dates.
- When your child walks into class on the first day, she'll see some familiar faces - her new friends!

Consider pre-ordering school supplies

- Oak Hill Elementary PTA offers the opportunity to pre-order your child's school supplies for prices equal to those of most retail stores.
- Ordering supplies will ensure that you have the correct supplies on the first day of school and save you a lot of time hunting for the right sizes, colors and quantities.
- Your child's supplies will be packaged and ready for you at Meet the Teacher night.

Start a schedule

- Kindergarten starts bright and early and proves to be a long day for most children.
- Getting on a good schedule including an earlier bedtime and wake time will allow your child an easier transition to the 7:45 start time at Oak Hill Elementary.

Attend Meet the Teacher Night

- Meet the Teacher night occurs a few days before the start of school.
- You and your child will meet the child's teacher and the other parents and students from your class. This is a great time for your child to become familiar with their classroom, too.

The First Day

Pack the night before

- Agreeing on clothes and setting them out the night before, packing your child's lunch and backpack – all these steps will make for a smoother entry to school.

Prepare a hearty breakfast

- Avoid sugary foods that may cause your child to fall into a mid-morning slump.
- Breakfast is also available at the school from 7:25 – 7:40.

Pack a favorite lunch

- Consider packing your child's lunch for the first week or two of school to help them get used to a scheduled lunch.
- Preparing your child's favorite foods will ensure that they will eat during the day and have more energy for learning.

Help your child get oriented

- Try to drive your child to school on the first day if possible, even if you plan on using alternative transportation later on.
- Walk into the classroom, greet the teacher, and reintroduce your child. Point out your child's cubby, coat hook, nearest bathroom, etc and make sure they feel knowledgeable and comfortable with their surroundings.

Say Goodbye

- Make your goodbye cheerful and brief. Don't come back after you have already said goodbye and don't slip out of the room unnoticed. Some children like a goodbye ritual, such as two hugs or a secret wave from the window.
- Remind your child when you will return and be sure you are on time picking them up.

Oak Hill Elementary Parent Teacher Association 2011 Volunteer Opportunities

The Oak Hill Elementary Parent Teacher Association (OHEPTA) is comprised of a group of dedicated parents who work in conjunction with the school to develop extracurricular programs and activities.

The OHEPTA is a great way to get involved in your child's school, and to truly become a part of OHE and shape the future of the school. Joining the PTA allows you to choose from a variety of ways to get involved including fundraising opportunities, teacher appreciation opportunities, and numerous committees that need help, time and support.

If you are interested in learning more about OHEPTA, please go to: WWW.OHEPTA.ORG

There are also several programs run by the school that require volunteers, including book fair, picture day, vision and hearing testing and Field Days.

OHEPTA volunteer opportunities include:

ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

This committee, comprised of teacher representatives from each grade level and the PTA President, works with the Assistant Principal in planning and implementing the Science Fair as well as various other enrichment programs (puppet shows, dance company program, etc).

BOOK FAIR/PICTURE DAY/VISION AND HEARING SCREENING

Help with all activities related to these events, including set-up and clean up.

CARNIVAL/SILENT AUCTION

Work with classrooms to assign booth assignments, select food vendors, and organize games and volunteers. Solicit businesses and individuals to donate goods and services to be auctioned off at the Silent Auction.

DIRECTORY

Gathers information prepares data file, prints and sells school directory.

FIELD DAYS

Helps the PE teacher to plan and organize the annual field days in late spring.

FUNDRAISING

Helps organize fundraising activities, including our No Hassle Fundraiser, community events and Spirit Nights.

GROUNDNS

Works to improve and enhance the school campus.

KINDERGARTEN ROUNDUP

Coordinate Prospective Parent Open House and Kindergarten Roundup events to welcome and inform new students and parents.

MEMBERSHIP

Helps with school-wide PTA Membership Drive in the fall and spring, also keeps the membership lists up-to-date.

PROJECTS & GOALS

Works with a committee (parents, teachers and the principal) to review, consider and ultimately decide funding for teacher/school requests.

PUBLICITY

Coordinates the publicity of various school events, student or teacher awards, and other noteworthy happenings.

READING PROGRAMS

Coordinates Drop and Swap and Summer Reading Program.

READING TUTORS

We have two different programs that involves volunteers helping small groups of children with their reading skills. We have the SOARING reading program and our Reading Rangers.

REFLECTIONS

Prepares and distributes Reflections packets to students. Arranges for entry judging, facilitates entries that advance to higher levels of competition, communicates with parents of participants, and publicizes results to the school.

REFUNDING

Collects "box tops", ink cartridges etc. for refunds from the companies.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Helps order supplies in the spring and distributes supplies prior to the first day of school.

TEACHER APPRECIATION

Plans and implements 4-5 teacher luncheons, and coordinates other teacher appreciation activities.

TRANSLATING

Translates (into Spanish) the PTA newsletter/calendar and various PTA communications throughout the year.

T- SHIRTS

Coordinates design, production, sales and distribution of Oak Hill Elementary T-shirts.

WORKSHOP

Helps with the weekly Wednesday morning workshop doing jobs requested by teachers (copying, laminating, making die-cut shapes and letters, etc.)

YEARBOOK

Working with the publisher, coordinates the production of school yearbook. Solicits photos from teachers and parents and completes the page layouts. Handles the sale and distribution of the yearbook to students.

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