

Helen Keller Elementary School Handbook

1505 N. Campbell Rd., Royal Oak, MI 48067

248.542.6500 (main office) 248.542.9227 (FAX) www.royaloakschools.com

This handbook is intended to answer questions and provide information that may be helpful to you and your child. Topics are in alphabetical order. Please visit our web site or telephone the school if you have any concerns or questions not addressed in this handbook.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The Young Oaks Latchkey Program offers comfortable, supervised before and after school care that includes activities which enhance the child's physical, social, and academic growth, and is available from 7-9 AM and 4-6 PM. Enrollment is through the Jane Addams Early Childhood Center (Phone: (248) 288-3220).

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is required by State Law. If your child will be absent, call the Helen Keller Safety Check line at (248) 542-6500, Ext. 3030 to report the absence. The line is in operation 24 hours a day to take your messages. Report your child's name, teacher's name, date and reason for the absence. You may also request homework and pre-order "A" or "B" lunch as part of the message. We ask that you call the Safety Check line by 8:45 the morning of the absence.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

We are happy to announce that there are more parking spaces available this year. There is temporary parking and drop off in the front of the building during posted hours during the school day, and long-term parking available in the southern lot.

It is requested that all adults who are arriving and departing from the school be particularly cautious and mindful of the children and adult pedestrians in the school vicinity at all times. The safety of our entire community depends upon the care and concern of all of us.

Please follow these safety precautions in the parking lot and drop off area.

- South parking lot drop off area - one lane of "drop off and pick up only."
- Pull all the way forward to the end of the lane before dropping off or picking up children.
- Students should enter and exit on the passenger side of the vehicle only.
- Do not exit your vehicle, thus parking in the "drop off and pick up only" lane.

BICYCLES, SKATES, SKATEBOARDS

3rd, 4th and 5th grade students may ride their bikes to school with written parent permission and in observance of established safety guidelines. Written permission must be on file in the main office. The bike must be parked and locked in the bike rack. **Students must wear a helmet.** The bike must be walked while on school property. Bicycles are ridden to school and left in the bike rack at the owner's risk. Skateboards, inline skates and scooters are not allowed on school property. All bikes must have locks.

BREAKFAST PROGRAM

Our Breakfast Program located in the cafeteria begins 35 minutes before the start of the school day and offers students bagels, fresh fruit, cereal as well as a hot breakfast option.

CURRICULUM NIGHT

This fall event provides an opportunity for parents to meet their child's teacher(s) to discuss the goals and objectives of the academic year. Individual conferences are not held on Curriculum Night, nor are children present for this evening. A copy of the Elementary Curriculum for the School District is available in the school office and online at www.royaloakschools.com.

DAILY SCHEDULE

The Helen Keller Elementary daily bell schedule is:

8:40 a.m. . . . first bell; doors open; students admitted to building

8:45 a.m. . . . second bell; morning session begins

11:51 a.m. . . . morning session ends; lunch begins

12:39 p.m. . . . afternoon session begins

3:45 p.m. . . . afternoon dismissal

Children should not arrive at school prior to 8:30 a.m. or 12:39 p.m. Your child cannot adequately be supervised before this time.

EARLY DISMISSAL

On rare occasions, it has been necessary to dismiss school early. It is very important that you establish a procedure for your child to follow in the event that this should occur. Every effort will be made to contact parents of the youngest children. Please do not call the school. All phones are needed to contact as many parents as possible.

In the event of severe weather emergency at dismissal time, children may be held at school until an "all clear" is given or until a parent comes to school to pick up his/her child.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students are allowed to possess electronic communication devices on school property, however, such devices shall not be used during the school day or in a manner that disrupts school activities or events. The electronic device will be confiscated from the student and returned at the end of the day on the first offense; the device will be confiscated and the student's parent/guardian will be required to retrieve the device from the office on the second offense.

LUNCH PROGRAM

The supervised lunch period at Helen Keller Elementary School begins the first full day of school. The classroom teacher takes lunch orders one day in advance. If a child is absent, and a lunch choice for the following day is not left on the Safety Check line, it will not always be possible to obtain the lunch of choice on the day the child returns to school. If school is only in session a half day, lunches for the next full school day are ordered on the last full day of school. Orders will not be placed if you call lunches in on the ½ day for the next school day.

Students are dismissed for lunch at 11:51 a.m. and are expected to be back in their classrooms for the afternoon school session by 12:39 p.m. Lunch options for Helen Keller Elementary students in grades 1-5 are:

- Bring a sack lunch to school. Milk is available for purchase. Please do not send carbonated beverages or beverages with red food dye (as it stains the tables).
- Purchase a hot lunch (free and reduced lunch applications are sent home with all students in September. Additional applications are available at the school office). Monthly menus are sent home with the Friday notes. The monthly menus indicate the cost of a hot lunch and the price of milk.
- Leave the building with a parent/guardian for lunch. You must sign out your child in the office if you will be taking your child out for lunch. If you have made arrangements to take another child and your own child to lunch, a note from the other child's parent must be in the office. **NO CHILD WILL BE ABLE TO LEAVE FOR LUNCH WITH ANOTHER PARENT WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION.**

Students staying at school for lunch must remain at school for the entire lunch period.

STUDENTS LEAVING THE BUILDING FOR LUNCH MUST SCHEDULE THEIR RETURN TO SCHOOL NO EARLIER THAN 12:39 p.m. THEY ARE NOT ALLOWED TO WAIT IN THE BUILDING ENTRANCE, NOR ARE THEY ALLOWED TO GO OUT ONTO THE PLAYGROUND.

Lunch Procedures

The following are rules for the lunch period:

1. Appropriate language is expected at all times.
2. Children must remain in defined areas of the playground and the lunchroom.
3. Food will be handled properly, the eating area cleaned up and trash disposed of properly.
4. Children will avoid causing physical or emotional harm to one another.
5. Children are expected to respond appropriately to directions given by the lunch monitors.
6. Children will enter & exit the cafeteria and the building in a safe and orderly fashion.
7. All equipment that is taken outdoors will be returned to its proper place.

All students are expected to participate in scheduled outdoor recess daily unless a doctor's note is supplied (or indoor recess is called). The doctor's note must specify the length of time that the child may not participate in outdoor recess. Please dress your child for the current weather conditions. Rainy, extremely cold weather or excessively muddy playground conditions may prohibit children from being outdoors for recess. In these circumstances, students will remain indoors for recess.

Discipline

- Inappropriate and/or chronic behavioral incidents during the lunch program will be reported to the principal by the lunchroom monitor. The principal will discuss the report with the child in an attempt to correct the behavior problem.
- If a second report concerning the same type of incident is received, parents will be notified of the behavior problem and possible suspension. The principal will discuss the behavior with the child in a second attempt to correct the problem.

- If a third report of the same type of incident is received, parents will be notified by telephone and in writing of a child's temporary suspension from the program.
- Fighting may result in immediate suspension.
- When behavior is highly disruptive or potentially injurious to self or others, the child may be removed from the lunch program. This would occur after discussion with the child and his/her parent.

The lunch hour is split into two 25-minute segments. One half of the students eat lunch while the other students are outdoors. Bells ring to designate when students switch. During days of inclement weather, the students will remain in the building. Games and quiet activities are held in the classrooms instead of going outside. Lunchroom monitors supervise students in the lunchroom and during recess. The students are supervised at all times.

MEDIA CENTER PROCEDURES

The Helen Keller Elementary Media Center contains a well-developed collection of books for assignments and support of the IB/Primary Years Programme. Students will be given time to come to the Media Center to check out books.

Students are responsible for all library books issued to them during the school year. All lost or damaged books must be paid for. All moneys collected are recorded or paid to the proper fund for replacement purposes.

Students are not allowed to check out books if they have overdue books.

MISSION/VISION OF SCHOOL

The mission of Helen Keller Elementary School is to establish and maintain an educational community that empowers all students to become principled, independent inquirers who are socially responsible global citizens.

PARTIES

School Parties

School District Policy limits the number of class parties to two per year. A “party” is defined as an organized classroom activity involving refreshments, games and/or entertainment. School parties are also limited to the last hour of the day only. At Helen Keller Elementary, the teachers have elected the school parties for the school year to be Halloween and Valentine’s Day. More specific information will be available from the teacher.

Party Invitations

Please do not send party invitations to school for distribution.

Birthday Treats

Occasionally, especially in lower grades, birthday treats are sent to school with children to celebrate this special day with their classmates. If you choose to offer a treat as a celebratory gesture, please keep food allergies in mind and send in just enough for your child’s classroom. Birthday treats are limited to the last 15 minutes of the school day. It will not be necessary to send in additional treats for staff outside of your child’s classroom. Non-edible treats have also become quite popular with children.

Balloons in School

Due to student and staff allergies and difficulties with the HVAC system, balloons are not allowed in the building.

Food Restrictions

If you volunteer to bring food to a school party or event, please be aware of food allergies and food restrictions that may be present. See the teacher for specific guidelines. Please avoid peanuts and peanut products.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

The District schedules Parent-Teacher Conferences three times per year. Conferences may also be arranged with your child’s teacher. Teachers may be contacted by phone, prior to the start of the school day, or by email (last name and first initial @royaloaksschools.com). The goal of any conference is the achievement of a better understanding of the child and his/her learning. Parent involvement is crucial to success at school. Scheduled dates for parent-teacher conferences will be announced at the beginning of the school year, in the school calendar, in the school newsletter, on the school web site and the online school calendar (www.royaloaksschools.com). Parent/guardians may request additional conferences at any time. Conferences should be informal, pleasant, and constructive.

If further questions remain regarding your child’s progress in school after a meeting with the teacher, conferences may be set up between the principal and/or school support personnel. Contact the school office to make these appointments.

PICTURES

School photos are taken in early fall by a professional school photographer. Information is sent home regarding packages and pricing shortly after the school year begins. School yearbooks are often part of one of the paid photo packages. Please check for this information as it comes home. Spring photo packages are also available. These packages are offered as a convenience to families.

Teachers and parent volunteers often take photographs of the children for classroom projects, special school activities or field trip outings. Other photographs may be taken of children at Helen Keller Elementary by photographers who may be at the school for a special event to be publicized. Please inform the teacher if you do not wish for your child to be photographed for any reason.

PLAYGROUND PROCEDURES

Three Essential Agreements govern our playground behavior:

1. We are Respectful – this means appropriate language is expected and students are nice toward one another
2. We are Safe and In Control – this means avoiding physical or emotional harm whether outdoors or indoors, and entering and exiting the cafeteria and building in a safe manner
3. We are Responsible Learners – this means that we learn valuable future lessons from our successes and our mistakes on the playground

SAFETY PATROL/ SAFETY SQUAD

Safety patrol members help children cross the street at designated points surrounding the school. It is important that all children follow the directions of the safety patrol. Parents/guardians can help by constantly reminding their children to follow good pedestrian safety rules. If a problem develops because of a safety patrol member, please contact the school.

The safety patrol schedule is as follows:

Morning 8:30 – 8:45
Afternoon 3:45 - 4:00

Fifth grade students are eligible to become safety patrol members. AAA and the Helen Keller PTA sponsor this program. Fourth grade students are eligible to become service squad members. These students assist with routine classroom procedures under the supervision of a classroom teacher. A Helen Keller staff member coordinates and supervises safety patrol and service squad volunteers.

Fifth grade students who are members of the safety patrol are provided a safety belt and fourth grade service squad students are provided a button to wear as identification. All safety patrol and service squad students are required to wear their belts or buttons while “on-duty.”

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

Parent/Guardian Volunteers and Visitors

Helen Keller Elementary is fortunate to have many volunteers and visitors to our school. We welcome our many volunteers and visitors. All visitors to the building must sign in with the main office and be provided with visitor's pass, which is to be displayed at all times while in the building. All visitors must enter and exit the building using the parking lot doors. Visitors are generally not allowed in classrooms during instructional time. Students will not be released to minors under the age of 18.

Student Visitors

Students from other schools are not allowed to visit Helen Keller Elementary during the school day.

VOLUNTEERING IN THE SCHOOL

Please contact the PTA Volunteer Coordinator for information about volunteering opportunities at Helen Keller Elementary. You may also contact your child's teacher for information as well. Royal Oak School District Policy states appreciation for school volunteers, but does expect that all volunteers working within the school are here to support the educational environment.

PTA

The Helen Keller PTA meets on the second Monday evening of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Media Center. Information concerning membership and activities will be sent home with the students early in the school year. You are encouraged to join the PTA and to participate in PTA functions and projects. The Helen Keller Web site provides a link to the Helen Keller PTA Web site.

WEBSITE

The Helen Keller Web site provides links to the following: Helen Keller Elementary Calendar, Food Menu, IB Information, Map, PTA Web site, Helen Keller Staff, as well as links to News, News archive, and Upcoming Events.

<http://www.royaloakschools.com/portal/keller>