

2024-25 Employee Handbook



Peru Elementary School District 124

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2024-25 Employee Handbook

Peru Elementary School District 124

I. Preface

The material covered within the 2024-25 Peru Elementary School District 124 Employee Handbook is intended as a method of communicating to current faculty and staff regarding district information, rules and regulations and is not intended to either enlarge or diminish any Board policy, administrative regulation or collective bargaining agreement. Material contained herein may therefore be superseded by such Board policy, administrative regulation, collective bargaining agreement or changes in state or federal law.

The front section is intended to provide district-wide information that is applicable to all or most employees in the district. The following section is provided specific to the building level, and is generally targeted to teaching faculty.

Any information contained in this staff handbook is subject to unilateral revision or elimination from time to time, but generally at the beginning of each school term. No information in this document shall be viewed as an offer, expressed or implied or as a guarantee of any employment of any duration.

The district – regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status and disability – shall practice equal employment opportunity and treatment if the employee, with or without reasonable accommodation, is able to perform the essential functions of the position.

Any specific questions related to the 2024-25 Employee Handbook should be addressed to the district office at 1800 Church Street, Peru, Illinois 61354, or by contacting me at 815-223-1111 or by email at jcraven@perued.net.

Richard J. Craven, Superintendent

II. Employee Acceptance Receipt

By signing the Employee Acceptance, I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the 2024-25 Peru Elementary School District 124 Employee Handbook.

Name

Primary Building Assignment

Signature

Date of Signature

After receipt of the handbook, this receipt should be signed and returned to the office of the building principal.

III. Building and District Contact Information

Northview Elementary School - Sara McDonald, Principal
Heather Baker, Assistant Principal
2100 Plum Street, Peru, Illinois 61354
(815) 223-1111 x3

Parkside Middle School – Brent Ziegler, Principal
Wes Miller, Assistant Principal
1800 Church Street, Peru, Illinois 61354
(815) 223-1111 x4

Peru Elementary School District 124 – Richard J. Craven, Superintendent
Kim Evans, Director of Student Support Services
1800 Church Street, Peru, Illinois 61354
(815) 223-1111 x5

IV. District Mission Statement

Preparing our students to learn, grow and reach their greatest potential.

V. Our Beliefs and Values

As part of its Strategic Plan, the Board of Education has adopted the following beliefs, which are weighed in planning, decision-making and in the employment and supervision of staff.

- ✓ Children are why we are here, and their education, safety and well-being must always come first.
- ✓ There is no replacement for high expectations, and we must expect our students to achieve to the best of their individual ability.
- ✓ All children can learn – even if not at the same pace or in the same way – and show constant growth.
- ✓ Reading, literacy and mathematics are the foundations of learning, academic excellence and are the keys to maximizing future success.
- ✓ Effective education is a partnership among schools, parents, families and our local community.
- ✓ Fiscal responsibility is critical to ensuring that we continue to provide our students with the highest quality educational programs and instruction.

VI. District Strategic Plan

Every highly effective business and organization has a specific plan for continuous improvement and ongoing success, and public schools should be no different. The Board of Education has adopted the detailed *District Strategic Plan* which can be located at www.perued.net under District and District 124 Strategic Plan.

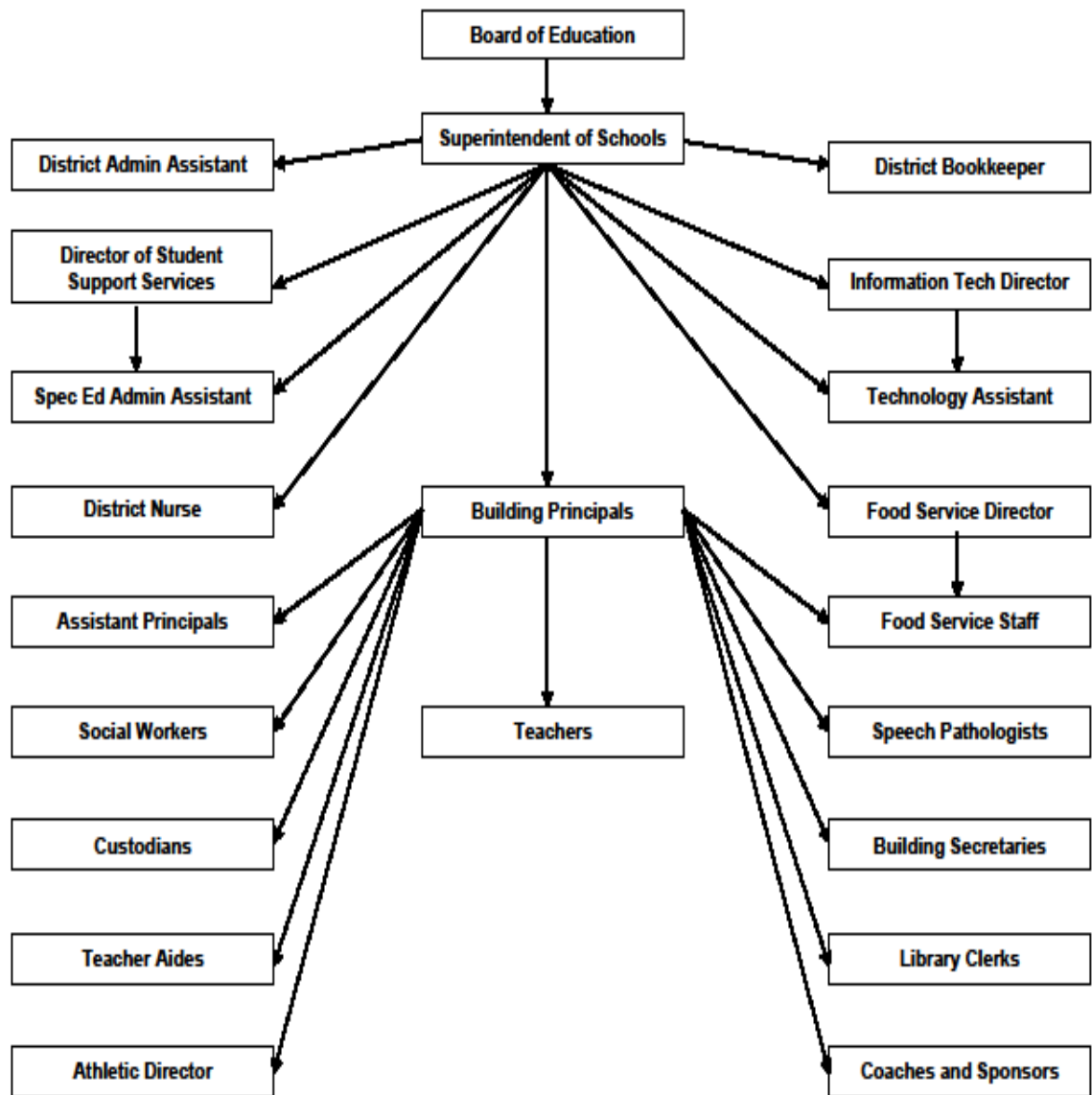
VII. District Organizational Chart

The chart on the following page is developed in compliance with Board Policy 3:30 and applicable law. The District Organizational Chart simply indicates the channels of authority and reporting relationships for school personnel. Any questions should be addressed to the district office.

Peru Elementary School District 124 Organizational Chart

Updated 7-15-22

In compliance with Board Policy 3:30, following is the District Organizational Chart indicating the channels of authority and reporting relationships for school personnel. Placement on the chart is not an indication of importance or status of a particular position; rather, relationships of authority are indicated by arrows. Any questions about this chart should be directed to the Superintendent.



VIII. Absences

Employees are required to be at their respective work assignments as indicated in their respective collective bargaining agreements or individual employee agreements, and according to the schedule of each particular building. Employees who must leave the building during the day are required to notify the building secretary or principal.

Calling in Sick

Employees who require a substitute due to illness or other last minute emergencies such as a death in the family are to call Bethany Tinkler at 815-608-4039. Please call between 5:30 and 7:00 a.m. or no later than 10:00 p.m. if calling the evening prior. Please do not text your request for a sub. If there is no answer, leave a voicemail message. Employees must provide a reason for the absence.

Pre-Arranged Absences

Permission for pre-arranged absences (including medical appointments, professional leave, personal leave, bereavement leave, jury duty and vacation) is sought through the approval of the building principal, followed by the superintendent. This is submitted through the Employee Portal Request Center on TeacherEase. Once leave is approved, a confirmation email will be sent and any necessary substitutes will be arranged. All staff returning from an absence lasting more than three days must provide the district office with documentation from a physician to return to work.

IX. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Please contact the district office with questions or procedures regarding the request of leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). All staff returning from FMLA leave must provide the district office with documentation from a physician to return to work.

X. Acceptable Use Policy

All employees are required to sign annually and remain in full compliance with the district's Acceptable Use Policy, which can be located at www.perued.net under Staff Resources.

XI. Cell Phone Use During Work Hours

It is not acceptable for school personnel to use cell phones or other electronic devices for personal use, including talking, texting, or non-educational internet access, during times of student supervision or responsibility, or during faculty, staff or committee meetings. In the event of a personal need to access messages or make calls during the work day, please limit this communication to break, lunch or planning time. Please remember that your family members should maintain your school building's number as the primary contact number in the event of an emergency during work hours.

Also, employees need to be aware of the law as it pertains to talking on cell phones while driving in school zones when children are present. Talking on cell phones in school zones is strictly prohibited, and this includes the times most employees report to and leave work.

XII. District Email and Communications

District and building administrators utilize email as the primary mode of written communication with staff. It is expected that all staff access on a regular basis the email accounts provided by the school district. Any use of the district's network and web access is subject to the terms of the district's employee Acceptable Use Policy, as explained in Section X. Along with their name, position and basic contact information, employees are asked to include the following statement in the signature of their email account:

This email and any files transmitted with it may contain confidential and legally privileged information. It is intended solely for the addressee(s). If you are not the intended recipient, you may not disclose, copy, distribute, read or use any of this information. If you received this communication in error, please contact the sender immediately, permanently delete this email from your system and destroy any hard copy of this or any related files.

XIII. Technology Support

Staff in need of non-emergency technology assistance or support should email help@perued.net with the location and an explanation of the assistance or services required.

XIV. Accidents and Injuries to Students

Any student accidents or injuries occurring on district property or during the course of school-sponsored activities, including field trips and other events, are to be reported to the principal's office immediately. Do not move a student with a head injury, a back injury, a foot or leg injury.

Whether or not medical attention is required, a completed accident report form must be submitted to the school principal within 24 hours or the next scheduled district workday, as appropriate. In all cases, any student injuries must be reported to parents. All accidents/incidents will be promptly investigated and corrective measures implemented as appropriate.

XV. Accidents and Injuries to Employees

Every effort should be made at work to practice safety and follow procedures and policies to ensure the safety and well-being of all students and staff. In the event it is necessary, employees are protected on the job with workers' compensation insurance. Employees who have an accident in the performance of work-related duties must report this immediately to the school office and as necessary, contact Company Nurse at 855-720-0241. Further information is on our website under Staff Resources, Injury Reporting.

XVI. Mandated Reporter Requirements

All school district employees are mandated reporters of child abuse or neglect under the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act. Per state law and Board policy, any District employee who suspects or receives knowledge that a student may be an abused or neglected child or, for a student aged 18 through 21, an abused or neglected individual with a disability, shall immediately:

(1) report or cause a report to be made to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services on its Child Abuse Hotline 800-25-ABUSE or 217-524-2606, and (2) follow any additional directions given by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services to complete a report. The employee shall also promptly notify the superintendent or building principal that a report has been made. All District employees shall sign the Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status form provided by the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) and the superintendent or designee shall ensure that the signed forms are retained.

Any District employee who discovers child pornography on electronic and information technology equipment shall immediately report it to local law enforcement, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's CyberTipline 800-843-5678, or online at www.cybertipline.com. The superintendent or building principal shall also be promptly notified of the discovery and that a report has been made.

All mandated reporters shall review any State Board of Education materials detailing the information that is necessary to enable notification to DCFS of an alleged incident of sexual abuse, and materials developed by the Department of Children and Family Services and distributed in the school building under Section 7 of the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, at least once annually.

XVII. Emergency and Crisis Response Plans

The safety and welfare of our students and staff is always our greatest priority. Each building maintains an updated Emergency and Crisis Response Plan and Team. This is developed in conjunction with the district's annual review of safety and crisis plans, protocols, procedures and school safety drills report as required by Public Act 98-0048, and in cooperation with our local emergency service providers.

XVIII. Professional Development Travel Guidelines

With the plan of enhancing professional growth of our staff as a whole, the district generally has no more than one or two staff members attend the same conference, unless other arrangements are necessary as outlined below. Attendance at a variety of professional development activities and having those individuals come back and share with their team, grade level, building or district staff what was gained professionally is not only more efficient from an economic perspective, but will also help provide our staff access to the greatest array of opportunities in a profession that is changing quickly and facing unprecedented challenges. Also, as much as is reasonable, the district limits overnight travel to maintain as much funding as possible for actual professional development.

Unless otherwise arranged, specific guidelines are as follows:

1. There will be a limit of one night of overnight hotel stay per year. Additional nights are the responsibility of the individual traveling.
2. There will be a two school day professional travel limit per year.
3. No more than two teachers per grade level or team will attend the same conference at the same time. For grade levels or teams with five members, up to three may attend the same conference.
4. If there is a specific school or district-related goal and/or district initiative that the administration believes warrants sending specific staff or a team to a conference or activity to assist in achieving these goals, then exceptions to the above guidelines may be approved by administration.
5. Any exceptions to these guidelines must be approved in advance by the superintendent.

Professional Travel Reimbursement

All employees must receive prior approval for professional travel (see Section VIII for pre-arranged absences) and submit expenses and itemized receipts through the Professional Travel Reimbursement Request form, which can be located at www.perued.net under Staff Resources.

Expense Policy and Maximum Reimbursements

Employee expenses exceeding limits require Board action for approval. Itemized receipts must be submitted for reimbursement and alcoholic beverages cannot be reimbursed. Maximum meal and other reimbursements are as follows:

- Breakfast \$18.00, Lunch \$20.00, Dinner \$36.00
- Car Mileage – IRS Standard Rate
- Car Rental, Air, Bus or Rail Travel – Lowest Rate or Coach Class
- Gratuities, Parking, Taxis – Actual Rate (when necessary)
- Lodging Location Maximum (pre-approval for number of nights required):
 - Downstate and Other Areas – Conference Rate up to \$175.00
 - Chicago Suburban Area – Conference Rate up to \$200.00
 - Chicago Metro Area – Conference Rate up to \$225.00

XIX. Purchasing with District Funds

Prior administrative approval must be obtained on the appropriate documentation prior to the expenditure of district funds. There are no exceptions to this policy. Procedures for ordering and purchasing will be provided in writing to staff as needed.

XX. Tuition Reimbursement Request

Teaching faculty must acquire prior approval for graduate tuition reimbursement, per the teacher contract. This process is completed through the Tuition Reimbursement Request form, which can also be located at www.perued.net under Staff Resources.

XXI. Alarm System

Most employees are provided with a code for the building alarm system. Please make certain that you are fully aware of the process and procedures for entering and leaving the building during evenings, weekends and holidays. When entering before anyone else is in the building or when you are the last one to leave the building, you must deactivate or activate the alarm system and indicate your presence or departure at the entrance according to your building's procedures.

XXII. Animals in the Classroom

For student safety and liability reasons, animals are not allowed on school property before, during, or after school, except in the case of a service animal accompanying a student or other individual with a documented disability. This rule may be temporarily waived by the building principals in the case of an educational opportunity for students, provided that (a) the animal is appropriately housed, humanely cared for, and properly handled, and (b) students will not be exposed to a dangerous animal or an unhealthy environment.

XXIII. 403(b) Retirement Program

District employees are eligible to save money for retirement through the district's 403(b) program, which is administered through Hometown National Bank and BPAS. The contact person at Hometown is Retirement Specialist Tammy Humpage. She can best be reached at 815-220-2226 or by email at thumpage@myhtnb.com. Questions can be directed to the district office and enrollment can take place at any time.

XXIV. Workers' Compensation

The district carries workers' compensation insurance for the protection of all employees against injuries sustained in the course of duty. An employee, absent because of illness or accident, which is compensable under the Workers' Compensation Act of the State of Illinois, may elect: (1) to retain available sick leave, or (2) to utilize available sick leave in conjunction with workers' compensation and receive from the Board the amount equal to the difference between the amount due the employee from the workers' compensation insurance and the employee's regular pay, in which case the employee will be charged one-third of a sick leave day for each day of workers' compensation.

XXV. TRS Supplemental Savings Plan

Eligible TRS members can now enroll in the new 457(b) Supplemental Savings Plan (SSP). SSP is an optional savings plan that allows you to dedicate a portion of every paycheck to a 457(b) deferred compensation plan administered by Voya Financial. For more information, members may call the TRS SSP Service Center at 844-877-4572 (844-TRS-457B).

XXVI. Tobacco Free Environment

Under no circumstances are employees or anyone else allowed to smoke on any part of school district property. This is strictly prohibited by state law and Board policy.

XXVII. 2024-25 School District Calendar

The last page is the 2024-25 school district calendar, which is also located at www.perued.net under Calendar. To avoid schedule conflicts, please refer to this when planning trips and appointments that are best scheduled outside of your normal work days and times.

XXVIII. Building Specific Information

After the calendar, the following pages include information specific to each building and mostly to teaching faculty.

XXIX. Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; Board Policy 5:120

Professional and appropriate employee conduct are important Board goals that impact the quality of a safe learning environment and the school community, increasing students' ability to learn and the District's ability to educate. To protect students from sexual misconduct by employees, and employees from the appearance of impropriety, State law also recognizes the importance for District employees to constantly maintain professional and appropriate relationships with students by following established expectations and guidelines for employee-student boundaries. Many breaches of employee-student boundaries do not rise to the level of criminal behavior but do pose a potential risk to student safety and impact the quality of a safe learning environment. Repeated violations of employee-student boundaries may indicate the grooming of a student for sexual abuse. As bystanders, employees may know of concerning behaviors that no one else is aware of, so their training on: (1) preventing, recognizing, reporting, and responding to child sexual abuse and grooming behavior; (2) this policy; and (3) federal and state reporting requirements is essential to maintaining the Board's goal of professional and appropriate conduct.

The Superintendent or designee shall identify employee conduct standards that define appropriate employee-student boundaries, provide training about them, and monitor the District's employees for violations of employee-student boundaries. The employee conduct standards will require that, at a minimum;

1. Employees who are governed by the Code of Ethics for Illinois Educators, adopted by the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE), will comply with its incorporation by reference into this policy.
2. Employees are trained on educator ethics, child abuse, grooming behaviors, and employee/student boundary violations as required by law and policies 2:265, Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure; 4:165, Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors; 5:90, Abused and Neglected Child Reporting; and 5:100, Staff Development Program.
3. Employees. Maintain professional relationships with students, including maintaining employee-student boundaries based upon students' ages, grade levels, and developmental levels and following District-established guidelines for specific situations, including but not limited to: a. Transporting a student; b. Taking or possessing a photo or video of a student; and 5:120 Page 2 or 5 c. Meeting with a student or contacting a student outside of employee's professional role.
4. Employees report prohibited behaviors and/or boundary violations pursuant to Board policies 2:260, Uniform Grievance Procedure; 2:265, Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure; and 5:90, Abused and Neglected Child Reporting.

5. Discipline up to and including dismissal will occur for any employee who violates an employee conduct standard or engages in any of the following: a. Violates expectations and guidelines for employee-student boundaries. b. Sexually harasses a student. c. Willfully or negligently fails to follow reporting requirements of the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (325 ILCS 5/), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq.), or the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (20 U.S.C. §7926).d. Engages in grooming as defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-25. e. Engages in grooming behaviors. Prohibited grooming behavior include, at a minimum, sexual misconduct. Sexual misconduct is any act, including but not limited to, any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication or physical activity, by an employee with direct contact with a student, that is directed toward or with a student to establish a romantic or sexual relationship with the student. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- i. A sexual or romantic invitation.
- ii. Dating or soliciting a date.
- iii. Engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog.
- iv. Making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a student.
- v. Self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature.
- vi. A sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with a student.



2024-25 School District Calendar

Peru Elementary School District 124

Approved 12/20/2023

JULY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

0 Student Attendance Days (0)

AUGUST

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19 I	20 I	21 E	22 E	23 E	24
25	26 E	27 E	28 E	29 E	30 E	31

8 Student Attendance Days (8)

SEPTEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2 H	3	4	5	6 E	7
8	9	10	11	12	13 E	14
15	16	17	18	19	20 E	21
22	23	24	25	26	27 E	28
29	30					

20 Student Attendance Days (28)

OCTOBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4 E	5
6	7	8	9	10	11 I	12
13	14 H	15	16	17	18 E	19
20	21	22	23	24	25 E	26
27	28	29	30	31 N		

21 Student Attendance Days (49)

NOVEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1 E	2
3	4	5 X	6	7	8 E	9
10	11	12	13	14	15 E	16
17	18	19	20	21 P	22 E	23
24	25 P	26 E	27 X	28 H	29 X	30

17 Student Attendance Days (66)

DECEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6 E	7
8	9	10	11	12	13 E	14
15	16	17	18	19	20 E	21
22	23 X	24 X	25 X	26 X	27 X	28
29	30 X	31 X				

15 Student Attendance Days (81)

IMPORTANT DATES

Every Friday

Staff Development Days

Early 1:50, 2:05 p.m. Dismissal

August 19-20

Teacher Institute Days, No School

August 21-23, 26-30

Early 1:50, 2:05 p.m. Dismissal

September 2

Labor Day, No School

September 27

Mid-Trimester Progress Reports

October 11

Teacher Institute Day, No School

October 14

Columbus Day, No School

October 31

Noon 11:55, 12:00 Dismissal

School Improvement Day

November 1

End of 1st Trimester

November 5

Election Day- State Holiday, No School

November 21

Noon 11:55, 12:00 p.m. Dismissal

Parent-Teacher Conferences 1:00 - 7:00 p.m.

November 25

Early 1:50, 2:05 p.m. Dismissal

Parent-Teacher Conferences 2:30 - 7:00 p.m.

November 26

Early 1:50; 2:05 p.m. Dismissal

November 27 - 29

Thanksgiving Break, No School

December 23 - January 3

Winter Break, No School

January 6

Teacher Institute Day, No School

January 10

Mid-Trimester Progress Reports

January 20

Martin Luther King Holiday, No School

February 14

End of 2nd Trimester

February 17

Presidents Day, No School

February 21

Report Cards Issued

March 14

Noon 11:55, 12:00 Dismissal

School Improvement Day

April 11

Mid-Trimester Progress Reports

April 14-21

Spring Break, No School

May 26

Memorial Day, No School

May 29

Noon 11:55, 12:00 Dismissal

Last School Day, Report Cards Issued

May 30, June 2-5

Reserve/Emergency Weather Days

JANUARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1 X	2 X	3 X	4
5	6 I	7	8	9	10 E	11
12	13	14	15	16	17 E	18
19	20 H	21	22	23	24 E	25
26	27	28	29	30	31 E	

18 Student Attendance Days (99)

FEBRUARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7 E	8
9	10	11	12	13	14 E	15
16	17 H	18	19	20	21 E	22
23	24	25	26	27	28 E	

19 Student Attendance Days (118)

MARCH

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7 E	8
9	10	11	12	13	14 N	15
16	17	18	19	20	21 E	22
23	24	25	26	27	28 E	29
30	31					

21 Student Attendance Days (139)

APRIL

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4 E	5
6	7	8	9	10	11 E	12
13	14 X	15 X	16 X	17 X	18 X	19
20	21 X	22	23	24	25 E	26
27	28	29	30			

16 Student Attendance Days (155)

MAY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2 E	3
4	5	6	7	8	9 E	10
11	12	13	14	15	16 E	17
18	19	20	21	22	23 E	24
25	26 H	27	28	29 N	30 R	31

20 Student Attendance Days (175)

JUNE

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2 R	3 R	4 R	5 R	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

0 Student Attendance Days (175)

Calendar Legend

Bold	Student Attendance Days
E	Early 1:50, 2:05 Dismissal Schedule
N	Noon 11:55, 12:00 Dismissal Schedule
P	Parent-Teacher Conferences (see schedule in center)

I	Institute Day - No School
H	School Holiday - No School
X	Not in Attendance - No School
R	Reserve/Emergency Day

Student Attendance Schedules

Parkside (5-8)

8:20 a.m. - 3:05 p.m.

Regular Dismissal

8:20 a.m. - 1:50 p.m.

Early Dismissal

Northview (K-4)

8:45 a.m. - 3:20 p.m.

8:45 a.m. - 2:05 p.m.