

The New School

The New School staff and administration are pleased to have your child enrolled this school year. We thank you for trusting us to care for and educate your child. We will do our best to provide all our students with a positive learning experience this school year.

The New School was founded as a non-profit corporation in 1971 by a group of parents, teachers, and other Fayetteville residents who wished to establish Nursery School and Kindergarten programs offering the best possible educational advantages for preschool children. In 1991, the Board of Directors approved an expansion of our program to include elementary grades., and in 2001, the Board of Directors approved another expansion of our program to include middle school.

The New School is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors consisting of current and former New School parents. The Board takes ultimate responsibility for the fiscal management of our organization and, through their efforts each year, they insure that The New School has sufficient financial resources to support and enhance the quality of our programs and facilities.

Mission

The New School, an independent school, is dedicated to inspiring a love of learning and empowering students to reach their potential for academic achievement, creativity, and citizenship.

The New School is committed to:

- Building confidence and a positive sense of self in every child;
- Instilling respect for others, beginning with respect for oneself;
- Creating an environment that encourages inquiry and initiative;
- Partnering teachers and parents in the educational process;
- Maintaining a low student-teacher ratio;
- Providing enrichment and discovery beyond the traditional curriculum;
- Setting academic standards that challenge each student to excel and
- Supporting and developing the highest quality of professional staff.

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School Schedule

7:15	School Opens
8:00	Breakfast Service Begins
8:30	K-7 Classtime Begins
11:00	Lunch Service Begins
12:30	End of Half-Day Preschool
3:00	K-2 Academic School Day Ends/ After School Program Begins
3:30	3-7 Academic School Day Ends/ After School Program Begins
5:30	School Closes

The New School Approach to Childhood Education

The New School's goal is to create an educational community that promotes social and emotional growth, intellectual enrichment, and creative and academic success for children. Our daily program is designed to give each child:

- opportunities to develop social skills with careful direction and guidance
- experiences in the arts to foster creativity and self-expression
- opportunities to develop academic skills through individualized and group instruction

At The New School, we emphasize the social skills and concerns that help children develop a sense of responsibility to others in the community. Interaction with other students in supervised work and play situations helps the child develop social skills. One of the most important aspects of our program is the guidance we provide our students.

In our preschool program, we strive to stimulate a child's intellectual development by providing opportunities for exploration and self-discovery as well as teacher-directed activities. A balance between free choice and structured activities is needed to accommodate the different attention spans, interest levels, and learning styles of our children.

In our elementary and middle school programs, we strive to insure that every student experiences success in school. With limited class sizes and an individualized approach, we strive to help each child develop a love of learning, a sense of confidence, a strong academic foundation, and a healthy, organized approach to academic endeavor.

At The New School we work to promote a sense of community in which each child can feel connected and valued. We help children learn to work and play together by promoting kindness, cooperation, and respect for others.

Guidance and Discipline

We feel that guidance and discipline are extremely important. Our strongest efforts toward helping children develop appropriate behaviors are: 1) providing a well-organized school day with activities which are interesting and rewarding to the children, 2) using positive direction and guidance to encourage good behavior, 3) removing the child from the group or activity and using direct counseling techniques to help children learn strategies for conflict resolution and positive social interaction.

The guidance and counseling program at The New School is an integrated service supporting individuals, groups, and the school at large. As such, the guidance and counseling program aims to support children in a manner most appropriate within the school setting. This support is offered through classroom guidance activities, small group experiences, consultation with teachers and parents, and individual meetings with students when appropriate.

P a r e n t C o m m u n i c a t i o n

Your child's lead teacher is the closest to your child, therefore providing consistent support and attention. Although several other teachers and staff members will spend time with your child each day, the lead teacher is the one who will have the best insight into your child's adjustment to school.

Communications between parents and their child's lead teacher are essential. Preschool teachers' daily schedules are arranged so that each teacher will be at the school until closing at least one day per week, providing an important opportunity for contact with parents. Please familiarize yourself with the late day schedule in order to know which day(s) you can expect to see your child's teacher. Preschool teachers send out a Daily Note informing parents of their child's chosen activities for that day. In addition, notes are sent home each Friday describing weekly class activities.

Formal conferences for parents of Pre-School students will be scheduled twice during the school year, once each semester. Conferences are also available at any time upon parents' request, or if your child's teacher feels a conference is needed. In-depth discussions concerning your child must be planned for times when the teacher is not scheduled to supervise children.

At the beginning of each Fall semester, teachers and parents of students in grades K-7 will meet for a pre-academic conference to discuss the upcoming school year. Parents will also be asked to attend a Fall and Spring conference to review report cards and to discuss their child's adjustment and performance at school as well as an exit conference at the end of the year. Elementary and Middle School teachers are available for special conferences at any time throughout the year.

Report cards for students in grades K-7 will be presented every nine weeks. Progress reports are issued mid-way between each nine weeks grading period. Each of these reports are provided to give parents insight into students' performance.

Parents are welcome at any time during the school day for observation or for drop off /pick up. We request that parents avoid disrupting their child's day or the class routine unnecessarily. Children adjust best when they arrive at school before structured activities begin. Most children do not do well when they arrive at nap-time.

P a r e n t I n v o l v e m e n t

When a student enters The New School, the entire family becomes a part of the school community. To encourage family involvement, parents are given various opportunities in the classroom. Parents are encouraged to volunteer to visit at a pre-arranged time to do something special with the group.

Parents might do one of the following for their child's class:

- show souvenirs and photographs from an interesting trip they have taken,
- conduct an art, craft or cooking project,
- describe the work they do,
- bring in a friend from another country,
- demonstrate a skill or talent,
- or even just come in and read a favorite book.

Parents are often needed as extra adults when class groups take trips outside of school. Parent volunteers are essential to help faculty members provide safe, educational, and enjoyable field trips and we appreciate parents' willingness to help. Please refer to the Field Trip Procedures for Parent Volunteers in the policy section of the handbook for guidelines to contribute to a safe and educational trip for all of our students. Teachers will inform parents when field trips are scheduled and will provide opportunities for parents to sign-up to help.

F u n d r a i s i n g

Parents are also encouraged to volunteer with school events such as the "Children's Run" and "La Fiesta Grande" dinner and auction. The success of these fundraisers, which are critical to our program, is due to the tremendous support we have had from parents in the past.

Parental involvement also includes the financial support of the school and its facilities. This includes not only tuition, but support for the Annual Fund and special Capital Campaign programs, as family circumstances allow. Proceeds from each of these fundraising projects goes directly to enhance the quality of the educational environment we provide our students.

A d j u s t m e n t t o S c h o o l

Many preschool children, and even some elementary students, will have difficulty separating from the parent who brings them to school. Usually, this is very short-lived and the child adjusts to the day's activities once the parents leave. If separation anxiety is prolonged or extreme, we will discuss with the parent the best approach to take. There are many different ways to handle separation anxiety and the approach depends on several variables, unique to each child. The following general hints may be helpful:

- Children adjust better to being at school when their arrivals and departures are on a regular, consistent schedule.
- Children who usually separate from their parents willingly may show some separation anxiety after a disruption in their attendance (It sometimes takes a few days to readjust to school after staying home for an illness.)
- Children who arrive after activities have begun will miss the special time we have for welcoming each child into the school day. Children who arrive late are often self-conscious and reluctant to separate from parents and enter the group. Please familiarize yourself with your child's class routine and try to schedule an arrival time which is comfortable for your child.
- If a child is having separation problems, the best plan of action is to stick with a consistent routine. Teachers can only help with separation problems when children are at school on a regular basis.

A c c r e d i t a t i o n

In 2009, The New School received full accreditation by the Independent School Association of Central States (ISACS). This accreditation validates, in a highly visible fashion, that The New School's internal expectations also meet more public, national accountability standards.

The school became a member of ISACS in 2004 and began the accreditation process in 2006. Through the careful evaluation of our program, we identified the school's strengths, defined our aspirations for improvement, and determined the direction of future development.

In the spring of 2008, the ISACS Accreditation Visiting Team evaluated all aspects of our school, including the board, faculty, students, curriculum, and facilities. The process revealed positive findings, especially regarding our positive interactions with students and the students' enthusiasm towards learning.

In conjunction with the ISACS accreditation, our school was also accredited by the Arkansas Nonpublic Schools Accrediting Association (ANSAA). By becoming accredited through ISACS and ANSAA, The New School has made an ongoing commitment to quality education and to continuous efforts toward school improvement.

The New School Preschool is licensed by the Arkansas Division of Child Care Early Childhood Education Quality Approval System. Preschool and Kindergarten are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). In addition, our elementary and preschool programs have met the standards for certification by the Child Care Licensing System. Licensing Specialists conduct frequent inspections to monitor our school and specialists are authorized to inspect our facility, review our files, and interview staff and children as needed to determine our level of compliance with these regulations. Our compliance forms are available for review by parents upon request.

We need parents' full cooperation to insure that we can maintain total compliance with licensing regulations. Please note the following areas in which parents must comply with State Regulations.

C h i l d r e n ' s R e c o r d s

We must have a complete file on each child updated annually at enrollment time. All required emergency information, addresses, phone numbers, and parent signatures must be completed by parents. Immunization records must also be kept up-to-date and verification must be provided. Each child is also required to have a copy of his/her birth certificate on file. Parents must be conscientious about updating their child's file when addresses or phone numbers change.

Students in preschool through Kindergarten should have a well-child physical assessment form on file with the school. Your physician will provide you with this form during your annual physical.

Entering and Leaving the School

Regulations require that we keep a parents' sign-in / sign-out chart for each day, complete with times of each child's arrival and departure. We need parents to help us comply with this regulation as follows:

- Preschool parents must accompany their child into the building and sign-in each morning.
- Elementary & Middle School students may enter and initial their own arrival times.
- All parents are required to enter and sign-out their child each day.
- If **anyone** other than a child's parents will be picking up a child, the parent must notify the school office.
- Children are not allowed to leave the building unaccompanied. Please do not allow your child to go out the front door unless you are with him/her.
- Please do not leave preschool children unattended in your car in our parking area.
- Please be at the school no later than 5:30 p.m. each day to pick up your child.
- Children who are on a half-day schedule need to be picked up by 12:30 p.m.
- Parents need to be careful to keep their child under their control once they have taken the child from staff supervision. All children need to observe school rules even after their parents have arrived.
- Divorced or separated parents should work out their visitation arrangements without involving school personnel. School staff is not authorized to enforce custody and/or visitation agreements. We cannot deny parents access to their child without a specific restraining order.

School Security

The Fayetteville Police Dept. personnel have surveyed the school building and grounds and have assisted the staff on developing emergency procedures. For our students' protection, parents and visitors should enter through the school's main entrance. All other entrances to the school have been secured.

Anyone other than parents must have authorization and identification to pick up a child. Parents may designate continuous authorization for pick-up on their child's registration form kept on file in the school office; however, even those with prior authorization **must** sign in at the front desk before picking up a child. Parents may also authorize release for an individual to pick up their child by signing the "Authorization for Release" at the front desk.

All visitors to the school need to sign in at the front desk and must wear a visitor badge while on the premises.

Screening of Employees

The New School conducts criminal background checks through the Arkansas State Police on all employees. Employees who have not lived in the State of Arkansas for the past six years are also screened through the FBI. Background checks are also conducted through the State Child Abuse Registry for all employees.

Illness at School

To protect children from the spread of communicable diseases, state regulations require that children with any of the following symptoms not be allowed to attend school:

<u>Fever</u>	Any child with an oral temperature of 101
<u>Diarrhea</u>	Three (3) or more watery stools in a 24 hour period
<u>Vomiting</u>	Vomiting on two or more occasions within the past 24 hours
<u>Rash</u>	Body rashes, not obviously associated with diapering, heat or allergic reactions to medications
<u>Sore Throat</u>	If associated with fever or swollen glands in the neck
<u>Strep Throat</u>	If your child has been diagnosed with strep throat, he/she will need to be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school
<u>Head Lice</u>	Any student with head lice may not return to school until all nits and live bugs have been removed from the scalp and hair shaft. After delousing, the child will be checked by office staff for any nits or live bugs before the child joins the group in the classroom

If a child displays any of the above symptoms while at school, we are required to contact parents to pick up their child. If a child is without any of these symptoms, but still appears ill and unable to participate in the group's activities, we will notify parents that their child is not feeling well.

Please have contingency plans worked out in advance for such occasions and make sure that your child's file indicates other friends or relatives who could pick up your child if needed.

Medicines

State Regulations require that medications shall be given to children only with signed, written parental permission. Permission shall contain:

- date
- drug name
- time
- dosage

In addition to the written permission, please follow these guidelines for medication:

- medicine has to be in the original container
- medicine has to have a current expiration date
- medicine label must have the child's name
- dosages greater than specified on the label shall not be given

Medicines can be given to children at 12:00 noon and 4:00 p.m. If your child needs medicine, please follow these guidelines:

- If your child is in the Two-Year Olds' class downstairs, you will need to sign the medicine chart on the bulletin board in your child's class area. All medicines must be labeled and placed in a locked box or in the kitchen refrigerator.

- If your child is in a preschool or elementary class, you will need to sign the medication chart on the sign-in table. All medicines must be given to office personnel to place in the refrigerator or locked cabinet.

School Policies

Student Handbook

We ask all parents of students in Kindergarten through 7th grade to review the student handbook distributed at the beginning of the school year to familiarize themselves with our elementary and middle school policies and procedures.

Child Nutrition Program

The New School provides breakfast, lunch and snacks for all of our students. We have an excellent dietary staff who are dedicated to providing enjoyable meals for all our children.

All preschool students participate in our breakfast and lunch programs, which meet the nutritional requirements of The Arkansas Division of Child Care and the Federal Child Nutrition Program. Students with special dietary restrictions need a physician's statement authorizing us to withhold certain foods from the child's diet. Students with extensive dietary restrictions may need to bring their own lunch.

Students in grades K-7 may choose to eat the lunch provided by the school or they may bring their own lunch. An optional salad bar is available to students in grades 3-7. The salad bar offers a variety of items from each food group and our staff insures that students' selections of food items meets the Child Nutrition Program guidelines.

Lunches brought to school must include items from each of the basic food groups: protein, fruit or vegetable, and bread. Milk is provided by the school in order to meet regulations. Parents may not bring "fast food" or carbonated drinks to school for lunch. If a parent chooses to take his/her child off campus for lunch, please finish all food and drinks before returning to the classroom.

Children who are vegetarians will be served a modified menu at The New School which meets the meal patterns required by the Child Nutrition Program.

We make every effort to serve meals that are appealing to children. There are several components to each meal offering a variety of items. We try to encourage children to eat, and we try to make meal time a pleasant social experience for each child.

Peanut Allergies/Policy

We have several students who are severely allergic to peanuts, and any contact with peanuts or peanut products could prove dangerous. No peanut products are served in our food program, and no food items containing peanut products should be brought to school as treats for any class.

In the cafeteria, the tables along the outside wall are designated as “peanut tables” for elementary students who bring peanut products in lunches from home. Students with peanut allergies can be seated at any of the other tables without risking contact with peanut products.

Students who bring peanut products for lunch must keep those foods in their lunch box until meal time.

Class Placement

In arranging class placement each year, teachers and administrators create class lists with careful consideration given to students academic and behavioral strengths. Previous years’ teachers make recommendations in regard to students who work well together, and students who make work better when separated. We work to create class lists that are balanced in terms of gender, diversity, new/returning students, and academic and behavioral strengths.

Due to all these considerations, it is difficult to accommodate parents’ requests for class placement. Therefore, our Board of Directors implemented a policy that states that the faculty and administration will make all class placement decisions, and that we will not be able to accept parents’ requests for class placement. All class placement decisions will be made with interest, care, and concern.

Tuition Payments

Preschool tuition for the school year is divided into 12 equal monthly payments beginning August 1st. Elementary tuition for the school year is divided into 10 equal monthly payments, August 1 through May 1. Tuition may be paid through pre-authorized automatic payment through a credit card or bank draft. Pre-authorized monthly payments through a credit card will be debited on the 1st day of the month and automatic bank drafts on the 3rd day of each month. Payments can be terminated in the case of child’s withdrawal. A full monthly payment is owed if a child attends any part of a month.

Parents of half-day preschool students may arrange for their child to stay any afternoon by signing the “Extra Afternoon List” for that day. The “Extra Afternoon List” will be located on the sign-in table. Parents may also call the school during the morning and request that the office sign their child up on the “Extra Afternoon List.” Fees for extra afternoons may be paid each day or can be billed on a monthly basis.

Non-Payment Policy

The enrollment of a student with account balances past due may be suspended or terminated. The school's Finance Committee will review payment histories of accounts more than 30 days past due for determination. Students with accounts more than 60 days past due may not register for subsequent school years or for summer sessions. Students with accounts 60 days past due from the Fall semester will not be allowed to continue attendance for the Spring semester unless arrangements for payment have been made through the school's attorney.

Admission and Dismissal

The New School admits children of any race, color, or national origin. Children with special educational, emotional, or social needs, and children with special physical handicaps or developmental disabilities will be considered on an individual basis.

Prior to enrollment, parents should report special problems to the Director and provide our staff with the results of any previous developmental / educational assessments. Previous school records and teacher recommendations are required prior to the admission of new elementary and middle school students. Prior grades, achievement test scores, conduct reports and attendance records will be taken under consideration for admission.

If, after admission, a child proves to be disruptive, injures other children, or has difficulty functioning within the structure of our program, staff will notify parents and a plan of action will be developed and implemented. Thereafter, if the difficulties cannot be resolved, staff will recommend withdrawal. Alternatives for more appropriate placement or treatment will be explored.

If, after a child's admission, the parent causes undue hardship to the staff or unreasonable distraction from teacher's regular duties, the staff will ask for resolution of the problem. Thereafter, if parental needs cannot be met, staff will recommend withdrawal of the child. Alternatives for more appropriate placement will be explored.

Change in Registration

If a parent wishes to add days to their child's attendance schedule, they should first consult with the Preschool Director to determine availability. Your child will be placed on the waiting list for that day if no openings exist. If a parent of a part-time student wishes to drop days, they should inform the Preschool Director to change their registration. If a parent of a full-time student wishes to drop days, the child will be moved to a part-time class when space becomes available.

Solicitations

Our Board of Directors has asked that we not distribute materials for other organizations, businesses, or events. We can not participate in business promotions even if a portion of the proceeds are dedicated to the school.

The school will distribute sports and activity materials from other non-profit programs. Example: Cub Scouts, Brownies, The Boys and Girls Club, Arkansas Athletes Outreach, The Soccer Association.

F u n d R a i s i n g

The New School is a non-profit organization which is committed to aligning our development program with the school's mission and vision. All fundraising activities exist to solely benefit the school's mission and long range plans. The New School encourages private support as a means for maintaining educational excellence and enhancing the quality of our enrichment programs.

To maximize the opportunity for success, and to ensure our organization's priorities are properly represented and unduplicated, all fund raising efforts at The New School will be coordinated through the development office, the development committee, and ultimately the Board of Directors.

This includes, but is not limited to, capital and endowment campaigns, funding for special events, projects surrounding particular classrooms or groups of students, and all school wide fundraising activities.

Proposal Guidelines for all efforts are available in the front office and should be completed and returned to the Development Office. This office will forward the proposal to the Development Committee. The committee will review and request any additional information or changes before providing a recommendation to The New School Board of Directors for consideration.

Fund raising proposals are to be submitted to the Office of Development and proposals will be reviewed once each semester. For spring events, the proposals should be submitted by October 15th and by April 15th for fall events. Emergency fund raising requests received during the school year will be reviewed as necessary.

S n o w D a y s

The New School will close on days the Fayetteville Public Schools are closed for bad weather. Parents can listen to local TV or radio stations for school closings. If weather becomes bad during the day and public schools close, we will remain open until all students have been picked up. We do ask parents to make an effort to pick up their children early, so that we may release staff to pick up children or drive home.

B i r t h d a y s

Because of the number of birthdays during our school year, we maintain a policy on birthday activities during school hours. Birthday activities are strictly voluntary, and we do not want anyone to feel obligated to include the school in birthday activities.

Parents may bring refreshments and/or party favors to school. A cake, cupcakes or cookies can be brought to serve on your child's birthday. If parties are held outside the school during school hours, please invite the whole class. Children's feelings are hurt when some children leave for a party while others are not invited. Please help us in welcoming new members of the school community by inviting them to parties.

For parties to be held away from the school, we ask that you mail invitations to each child's home. Please do not put invitations in children's tubs; they easily get lost or fail to be picked up in time for the child to attend. Address lists are available at any time in the school office.

M e s s a g e s & G i f t s

Every effort is made to prevent interruptions of the individual class periods. Messages taken for students may be delayed until a break period. We also ask parents to restrain from delivering flowers, balloons, gifts and favors to the school. If items are delivered to the school, the student will be notified. The student may come to the office to look at the item and then pick it up at the end of the day.

E l e m e n t a r y F i e l d T r i p R e g u l a t i o n s

In most situations, a bus will be used to transport students to and from field trip locations. Parents who attend field trips should drive their own vehicles instead of riding the bus, which will help insure that all children have a seat with a seat belt. Due to state regulations, parents may transport their own children on field trips, but may not transport other children.

Parents who volunteer for field trips should help in the supervision of all students as directed by the classroom teacher. Volunteers should help walk students to and from venues, guide them through the educational sites and help maintain positive discipline. It is important that the volunteer maintain a supervisory role during the field trip. Because of volunteer's supervisory responsibilities on field trips, we ask parents to not bring siblings.

S c h o o l P a r t i e s

All school parties should be held under the direction of the lead teacher. Generally, parties are held for Winter Holiday and Valentine's Day. We ask that the following guidelines be observed to provide the least classroom disruption:

- Parties are to be scheduled for no more than an hour.
- Rotating snack and craft centers are suggested for effective classroom management.
- All parties are to be of a secular nature.
- Time should be provided to clean room before children are dismissed.

For grades 1-7, teachers and staff will plan an end-of-the-year field day for students. Parents may volunteer for that event.

Parking Lot Management

A drop-off lane is designated with yellow striping at the front of the main building. This lane is to be used only for parents to drop-off elementary students who can enter the building on their own. Parents who plan to enter the building should not park in the drop-off lane between 7:30 and 8:30 a.m. The drop-off lane is an important part of our effort to control traffic congestion in the early morning. We ask that parents comply with our request to keep the lane open for drop-offs.

At the Walker Annex, the drop off lane is indicated by “One Way” signs. When students are dropped off in the morning, we ask that they exit on the passenger side of the car and use the sidewalk to enter the building. If parents are planning on entering the building, we ask that they park in designated spaces.

Special Requests

There are many ways in which you can facilitate the smooth operation of The New School’s daily routine. Please help us make your child’s experience at school more enjoyable by taking note of the following suggestions.

- Please do not let your child bring toys including guns and swords, food, or gum to school. Books, records, or science specimens can be brought to share. Transitional objects (stuffed animals, blankets) can be brought and kept in the child’s tub until nap time. Elementary and Middle School students do not need distracting items in their desks.
- Preschool parents, please dress your child in clothes that you do not mind getting dirty. Also, it is helpful to choose clothes that your child can handle easily for toileting. We go outside even on cold days, so be sure your child is dressed appropriately. Labeling jackets and sweaters will help us keep track of them. Please do not send your child to school wearing cowboy boots, cleats, or capes.
- Preschool children need a change of clothes in their tubs at all times! Put the change of clothes in a sack with the child’s name on it. Remember to bring clothes appropriate to the season.
- If your child needs to stay indoors, his/her name must be placed on the “Insider’s Chart” at the front desk. Please make this request only when necessary because of illness. Some children may ask parents to sign them up to stay inside when a special friend is having to stay inside. However, we cannot provide adequate staff to handle large groups of children staying inside when their class is at recess. We feel that a well child needs some time outside everyday, weather permitting.
- We are not able to accept children on a drop-in basis. In order to stay within the guidelines of the number of students in attendance and to follow state licensing requirements for registration and immunizations records, we cannot allow your child to bring relatives or friends to visit in his/her classroom as a drop-in student.

- It is very important for you to check your child's file at the end of each day for important notices from the teacher or the office. Our main line of communication with parents are notes that are placed in the students' file.
- Please do not let your child bring movies from home. Movie and media time for each class is limited, and teachers need to select the types and lengths of videos that work best for their age group and class schedule. Teachers are trying to enforce our policy prohibiting movies or cartoons that are too violent, too frightening, or otherwise not suitable for each age group.