

Black Rock School
Thomaston Center School
Parent/Student Handbook
2010-2011

Black Rock School
57 Branch Rd.
Thomaston, CT 06787
Telephone: 860-283-3040
Fax: 860-283-3043

Thomaston Center School
1 Thomas Ave.
Thomaston, CT 06787
Telephone: 860-283-3036
Fax: 860-283-3048

Website: www.thomastonschools.org

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BOARD OF EDUCATION

Laurie Barrett, Chair
Joanne Gilland
Steve Cantania

Laura Rieley
Beth Keutzer, Vice Chair
Deborah April, Secretary

Holly Herbert
Lucy Santopietro, Treasurer
George Counter

Board meetings are scheduled for 7:00 pm on the second Monday of each month and are held at the Thomaston Town Hall, Meeting Room One.

2010 School Year Dates

Monday August 9, 2010
Monday, September 13, 2010
Monday, October 18, 2010
Monday, November 8, 2010
Monday, December 13, 2010

Check www.thomastonschools.org for 2011 meeting dates.

CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

Thomaston Public Schools
158 Main Street, Level 6
P.O. Box 166
Thomaston, CT 06787

Telephone Number: (860) 283-4796
(860) 283-9513
Fax Number: (860) 283-6708

	Telephone Extension	
Lynda Mitchell	Ext. 252 lmitchell@thomastonschools.org	Superintendent
Patricia George	Ext. 252	Administrative Asst.
Christine St. Denis	Ext. 250	Benefits Adm. Asst.

Susan Laone	Ext. 254	Business Manager
Sharon Martino	Ext. 255	Payroll/Bookkeeper
Patricia Horbal	Ext. 251	Accounts Payable/Bookkeeper
Timothy Polowy	(860) 283-3036 Ext. 310 tpolowy@thomastonschools.org	Computer Technician
Debbie Sanford	(860) 283-3030 Ext. 116 dsanford@thomastonschools.org	Computer Technician

PUPIL SERVICES

Thomaston Center
1 Thomas Avenue
Thomaston, Connecticut 06787

Telephone Number: (860) 283-3050
Fax Number: (860) 283-3051

Mrs. Nancy Schnyer	(860) 283-3050 nschnyer@thomastonschools.org	Director
Mrs. Sarah Morehouse	(860) 283-3036 Ext. 204 smorehouse@thomastonschools.org	School Psychologist
Mrs. Helen Guerrero	(860) 283-3050 Ext. 306 hguerrera@thomastonschools.org	Secretary
Mrs. Nancy Verno	(860) 283-3050 Ext. 305 nverno@thomastonschools.org	Secretary

FACULTY AND STAFF

THOMASTON CENTER SCHOOL

Thomaston Center School
1 Thomas Avenue
P.O. Box 166
Thomaston, Connecticut 06787

Telephone Number: (860) 283-3036
Nurse's Office: (860) 283-3038
Fax Number: (860) 283-3048

Position		Room	Voice Mail #	Email
Principal:	Mrs. Anne Uberti	Office		auberti@thomastonschools.org
Asst. Principal	Mrs. Alisha Lyons	Office		alyons@thomastonschools.org
Grade 4:	Mrs. Nanette Maturi	114	114	nmaturi@thomastonschools.org
Team Leader	Mr. William Dwan	115	115	bdwan@thomastonschools.org
	Mrs. Marcia Czellecz	116	116	mczellecz@thomastonschools.org
	Mrs. Karen DePalma	117	117	kdepalma@thomastonschools.org
Grade 5:	Mr. Robert McMahon	207	207	rmcmahon@thomastonschools.org
Team Leader Head Teacher	Mrs. Creigh Krin	213	213	ckrin@thomastonschools.org
	Mrs. Melissa Bragg	215	215	mbragg@thomastonschools.org
	Mrs. Vanessa Therrien	216	216	vtherrien@thomastonschools.org
Grade 6:	Mr. Brian Grabherr	104	104	bgrabherr@thomastonschools.org

	Mrs. Joyce Knowlton	20	120	jknowlton@thomastonschools.org
Team Leader	Mrs. Gail Lascko	22	122	glascko@thomastonschools.org
	Mrs. Margaret Protzmann	23	123	pprotzmann@thomastonschools.org
Special Ed:	Mrs. Sharon Machin	19	190	smachin@thomastonschools.org
Prog. Spec.	Mrs. Kathy Valla	205	205	kvalla@thomastonschools.org
	Ms. Tricia Zubrowski	105	105	tzubrowski@thomastonschools.org
Unified Arts:				
Tech Ed.	Mr. Douglas Craig	200	199	dcraig@thomastonschools.org
Art	Mrs. Nancy Killelea	13	130	nkillelea@thomastonschools.org
Music	Miss Lindsay Krin	12	111	lkrin@thomastonschools.org
P.E.	Mr. Anthony Sirianni	Gym	360	asirianni@thomastonschools.org
Support Staff:				
School Nurse	Mrs. Diane Aniki	Nurse	303	daniki@thomastonschools.org
Speech	TBA	206	206	
Math	Mrs. Tammy Hocienda	208	208	thocienda@thomastonschools.org
Reading	Mrs. Corinne Wong	105	105	cwong@thomastonschools.org
Secretaries:				
Principal Sec.	Mrs. Marsha Potter	Office	300	mpotter@thomastonschools.org
Asst.	Mrs. Cynthia Hax	Office	301	chax@thomastonschools.org
Para-professionals:				
Teaching Asst.	Mrs. Linda DeBellis		170	ldebells@thomastonschools.org
Teaching Asst.	Mrs. Julie Han Duggan		174	jduggan@thomastonschools.org
Teaching Asst.	Mrs. Cynthia Goscinski		179	cgoscinski@thomastonschools.org
Teaching Asst.	Mrs. Alison Gracy		180	agracy@thomastonschools.org
Teaching Asst.	Mrs. Shadia Hamzy		172	shamzy@thomastonschools.org
Teaching Asst.	Mrs. Darlene Hellerich		171	dhellerich@thomastonschools.org
Lunch Room	Mrs. Carol Hanson		N/a	chanson@thomastonschools.org
Lunch/Teach Asst.	Mrs. Diana Martinik		176	dmartinik@thomastonschools.org
Lunch Room	Mrs. Debra Daigle		N/a	ddaigle@thomastonschools.org
Food Service:				
Head Cook	Mrs. Marilyn Banche	Cafe	132	mbanche@thomastonschools.org
Assistant Cook	Mrs. Pamela Rinkus	Cafe	131	prinkus@thomastonschools.org
Cafeteria Staff	Mrs. Victoria Dumond	Cafe	177	
Custodial Staff:				
Head Custodian	Mr. George Newsome		140	gnewsome@thomastonschools.org
Custodian	Mr. Francis McCarthy		135	fmccarthy@thomastonschools.org
Custodian	Mr. Steven Turner		134	sturner@thomastonschools.org

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Worhunsy School Transportation	Phone: (860) 283-0922 Fax: (860) 283-2118	Website: worhunsy@adelphia.net
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Welcome

Welcome to Black Rock and Thomaston Center Schools. We encourage you to take the time to review information pertaining to the schools where Thomaston children spend their elementary years.

Black Rock School serves the youngest of our students from their entry to school in pre-kindergarten or kindergarten through third grade. The faculty and staff of Black Rock strive to make each student feel safe and nurtured as they grow and develop as learners. At Black Rock School, a special emphasis is placed on creating a love of literacy as students' progress during their time here from being emerging readers and writers to independently reading books and writing stories. In mathematics, students are encouraged to think flexibly as they gain confidence in their understanding of how numbers work. Each grade studies a variety of topics in science and social studies to help students better understand the world in which they live.

As students enter fourth grade, they move on to Thomaston Center School where they are exposed to an increasingly challenging curricula through sixth grade. In language arts, teachers work with students to further increase their passion and proficiency for reading and writing. Through our mathematics program, students are encouraged to develop the skills of problem-solving, communication and reasoning that will enable them to apply mathematical concepts to the real world. Social studies concepts are explored through a variety of topics, and scientific thinking is deepened through participation in several inquiry-based projects.

In both schools, the principles of citizenship are promoted. Faculty and staff plan a variety of events throughout the year to allow our young people to be involved in their school community and the community at large. Within the school walls, a climate of respect and kindness is maintained so that all students feel safe, welcome and supported during their time in each building. Of utmost importance to the success of our students is a strong home-school connection. The Parent-Teacher Association is supported by parents in both schools and sponsors programs, school and family activities, and fundraisers throughout the year.

Again, welcome to what promises to be an exciting and learning-filled year in both schools!

Anne Uberti
Principal

Alisha Lyons
Assistant Principal

GENERAL INFORMATION

<u>School</u>	<u>Regular Day</u>	<u>Early Dismissal</u>	<u>Delayed Opening</u>
Black Rock Elementary	Start: 8:30 a.m. End: 2:50 a.m.	12:45 p.m.	Pre-K 1: No school Pre-K 2: 12:15 p.m. K-3: in class by 9:50 a.m.
Center School	Start: 8:30 a.m. End: 2:50 a.m.	12:45 p.m.	4-6: in homeroom by 10:00 a.m.

SCHOOL HOURS FOR BLACK ROCK AND CENTER SCHOOL:

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Black Rock School

Walkers and students arriving to school by car should not arrive before 8:10 a.m. because there is no supervision available. **For the safety of all students, we remind parents that school doors will be locked until 8:10 a.m. when staff is present to supervise students.** If your schedule does not allow your child to arrive after 8:10 a.m. you must make other childcare arrangements.

This year there will be a new procedure in place for dropping off students in the morning. Parents who would like to drop off their children should enter the **Route 6 parking lot**, and follow the flow of traffic to the sidewalk area where students may be dropped off. A staff member will be on duty at this entrance beginning at 8:10 a.m. to direct students into the building and to their respective classrooms. If you would prefer to personally escort your child in, you may park in this lot and walk your child in through the same entrance. **In order to limit cross over traffic near buses, do not use the bus driveway and do not park in front of the school. If you park in the lot near the front of the building, you will not be able to exit until all of the buses have departed.** Please park only in designated areas with parking signs. The Thomaston Police circulate the area and cars parked in restricted areas will be ticketed.

Parents picking up their children at dismissal must also park in the Route 6 parking lot and come in through the entrance located there. A staff member will be on duty to sign children out. Students will be dismissed for pickup at 2:45 p.m. Do not attempt to pick up children from bus lines or from their classrooms.

Staff members will escort bus students to their buses. Please note that the bus policy prohibits dropping off kindergarten children unless there is an adult waiting for them. If no adult is present at the bus stop, kindergarten children will be returned to school; and parents will be contacted by telephone.

Students who arrive to school after 8:30 a.m. are tardy and must report directly to the school office. Students in school for less than 3 hours and 10 minutes have not completed the state requirements regarding minimum hours of attendance and will be counted as absent for the entire day.

Students scheduled for pick-up must bring a note to school letting the teacher know that they will be picked up. If a student is to be picked up on a regular basis, a note stating what that schedule is should be sent to the teacher once. If a change is made to that schedule, a note must be sent to the teacher indicating that change. We will always follow a student's standing dismissal procedure unless a written note informs us of alternate plans. Likewise, students who need to ride a bus to a different destination than usual must have a written note allowing us to make the change.

Thomaston Center School

Walkers and students arriving to school by car should not arrive before 8:10 a.m. because there is no supervision available. **For the safety of all students, we remind parents that school doors will be locked until 8:05 a.m. when staff is present to supervise students.** If your schedule does not allow your child to arrive after 8:05 a.m., you must make other childcare arrangements.

Walkers and students arriving to school by car should enter through the main entrance. Students arriving between 8:05 a.m. and 8:20 a.m., should report to the cafeteria. Following the 8:20 a.m. bell, students will visit their lockers and report to their homeroom. All students must be in homeroom by 8:30 a.m. or they will be considered tardy.

Students who arrive to school after 8:30 a.m. are tardy and must report directly to the school office to obtain a late pass before going to class. Students must be in school for a minimum of 3 hours and 10 minutes or they will be charged with an absence.

Students scheduled for pick-up must bring a note to school letting the teacher know that they will be picked up. If a student is to be picked up on a regular basis, a note stating what that schedule is should be sent to the teacher once. If a change is made to that schedule, a note must be sent to the teacher indicating that change. We will always follow a student's standing dismissal procedure unless a written note informs us of alternate plans. Likewise, students who need to ride a bus to a different destination than usual must have a written note allowing us to make the change.

Walkers and students being picked up by car will be dismissed through the main entrance beginning at 2:50 p.m. A staff member will monitor the dismissal of students at this location.

Some students may bike to school. In this instance, all riders should be wearing helmets; and since the school assumes no responsibility for personal property of students, it is highly recommended that students lock the bikes on the rack outside the main entrance.

Early Dismissal at Black Rock and Center School

Please limit requests for early pickup to unavoidable situations such as a doctor or dentist appointment. In such cases, parents must send written notification on the day of the early pickup. If the person picking up the student is someone other than a parent, the pickup person must be identified in the parent’s note and must show identification to school personnel before the child will be released. Parents or designees must report to the office to pick up students. All children leaving the school prior to the regular dismissal time must be signed out in the office.

Please refrain from taking your child out of school during the lunch period. The schedule of lunches is as follows:

Black Rock School

Kindergarten 10:55 – 11:39 a.m.
First Grade 10:55 – 11:39 a.m.
Second Grade 11:41 – 12:25 p.m.
Third Grade 12:27 – 1:11 p.m.

Center School

Fourth Grade 11:41 – 12:25 p.m.
Fifth Grade 12:27 – 1:11 p.m.
Sixth Grade 10:55 – 11:39 a.m.

Attendance

When a child is absent, the parent MUST call the school to report the absence before 9:15. All absences must be verified. If a call is not received, school personnel will call home or work to determine why the student is not in school. Do not email or fax the school regarding absences.

Black Rock School860-283-3040
Thomaston Center School, Nurse’s Office.....860-283-3038

Advance notice should be given for all absences other than illness. Students are required to make up work missed during an absence. Parents may request makeup work on the third day of absence, and teachers will leave work in the office for pickup. Teachers are not required to prepare work in advance for absences.

According to Connecticut State Law, parents and guardians of children of elementary age must ensure that those children attend school regularly, unless they are receiving instruction elsewhere. Absences are considered excused for the following reasons: a medical reason, a funeral or death of a family member, a religious holiday, a serious family emergency or, in limited circumstances with approval from the principal, a special activity.

Students having four (4) unexcused absences in one month or ten (10) unexcused absences in a school year will be considered truant. Within ten days of determining that a student is truant, school personnel will schedule and hold a meeting with parents or guardians of the student to review and evaluate the reasons for the truancy. If parents or guardians fail to attend such meeting or refuse to cooperate with the school in attempting to solve the truancy problem, the matter will be referred to the Superintendent of Schools for further measures.

Vacations

We strongly urge families to plan vacations around the school schedule whenever possible. Despite makeup work, the experience of being in the classroom cannot be duplicated. If you find that you have no option but to take your child out of school for an extended period, please keep the following information in mind:

- The Connecticut Mastery Test is administered annually to all 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th graders during the first two weeks of March. Please avoid this time.
- Send in written notification in advance of the absence.
- Teachers are not obligated to provide makeup work in advance of a vacation.
- Upon return to school, each teacher will provide students with a folder of essential work missed. Assignments should be completed daily. As work is completed, it should be brought in to school for the teacher to review.
- Any missed assessments will be given once the teacher feels the child has adequately mastered the material.

Makeup Work

Students are expected to makeup work missed during an absence.

The following general guidelines outline the procedure to be used in making up work:

- If a student is going to be out of school for one or two days, then makeup work will be given to the student by the teacher upon his/her return to school.
- If a student is going to be absent for three or more days, parents are encouraged to pick up work for the student. Parents should contact the office the day before they wish to pick up work and teachers will leave materials for pickup in the office by the end of the next school day.
- In general, work will be sent home for no more than one week at a time. Teachers may use their discretion in deciding what work is essential to be made up.
- Any missed assessments will be given once the teacher feels the child has adequately mastered the material.
- Teachers are not required to prepare work in advance of an absence.

Cancellations, Delays and Early Dismissals

There are three types of schedule adjustments due to inclement weather: school closings, delayed openings (90 minutes), or early dismissals (12:45 p.m.) School closings, delays, and early dismissals will be broadcast on the following stations:

Television: Channel (5) WZBG; Channel (3) WFSB; Channel (30) WVIT; Channel (8) WTNH

Radio: WTIC AM (1080); WWCO AM (1240); WRCH RM (100.5) WDRC FM (102.9); WTIC FM (96.5); WZMX FM (93.7)

Radio Websites: <http://www.drcfm.com> & <http://www.talkofconnecticut.com>

Cell Phones, Electronics, Toys and Sporting Goods

Students are prohibited from possessing a cell phone on school property, on school transportation, or while attending a school-sponsored activity on or off school property.

If a student is found using a cell phone during the school day, they will be referred to the office. The consequence for such behavior will be confiscation of the phone. The phone will only be returned after a meeting with the parent and the student. Repeated offenses may result in further disciplinary action.

It is strongly suggested that students not bring other electronics, toys or sporting goods to school unless arranged with a teacher. The school staff is not responsible for lost or stolen items. If students bring such things to school in their backpack, it should be understood that there is not much that can be done if items go missing.

Change of Address/Phone/Email

Please notify the office immediately in writing of any change in address, phone or email.

Class Placement

Each class will be a heterogeneous group taking into consideration the academic level, work habits, general behaviors, social/emotional composition, gender, and any other special needs of students. Prior to placement team meetings, parents will be given an opportunity to submit written requests describing the classroom environment in which their child would best be suited. Specific information regarding this option will be sent home in May and may be taken into account when the placement team meets. Classroom placement for grades 1-4 is printed on the last report card in June. Students in grades 5 & 6 will receive a schedule in August that will inform them of their teachers.

Daily Schedule

The Thomaston Center School's daily schedule is as follows:

Homeroom: 8:30 – 8:35 a.m.
Period 1: 8:30 – 9:21 a.m.

Period 2:	9:23 – 10:07 a.m.
Period 3:	10:09 – 10:53 a.m.
Period 4:	10:55 – 11:39 a.m. – Grade 6 – Recess & Lunch
Period 5:	11:41 – 12:25 p.m. – Grade 4 – Recess & Lunch
Period 6:	12:27 – 1:11 p.m. – Grade 5 – Recess & Lunch
Period 7:	1:13 – 1:57 p.m.
Period 8:	1:59 – 2:43 p.m.
Homeroom:	2:45 – 2:50 p.m.

Dress Code

Children should come to school appropriately dressed based on climate, safety, and age. Hats are not to be worn during the school day except during morning arrival and dismissal. Articles of clothing and accessories displaying obscenities, profanity, or other inappropriate messages are not permitted. Halters, spaghetti straps and shirts exposing the midriff are not permitted. Short skirts and short shorts are not permitted. Shoes should be comfortable yet sturdy. Avoid heels, loose sandals, and flip-flops as they present a safety hazard. Sneakers with ties or Velcro are required in order to participate in gym. Proper dress during inclement weather is imperative, since students will be going outside for recess provided the temperature is at least 30 degrees Fahrenheit, and it is not raining.

Field Trips

Field trip experiences are an extension of student learning and are related to each grade level's curricula. Every attempt will be made to ensure all students participate in field trips and the denial of participation for the purposes of punishment will be discouraged. In circumstances when a student's participation in a field trip may pose a safety risk, the principal will contact the parent(s) to discuss alternate arrangements. Occasionally, there may be a cost associated with the field trip. If there are financial hardships that would prevent your child from participating, please contact the school principal by phone, email or written note. No child will be excluded from a field trip for such reason.

Forgotten Items

If a student forgets an item, he/she may phone home. The office will call the classroom teacher to notify the student once the item arrives.

Homework Policy

Homework presents an opportunity for parents to become involved in their child's learning. Children need to know that their parents think homework is important. You can support your child by setting a regular time and place for completing homework. The homework area should be free of distractions and contain the items necessary for doing the work. The best way for you to encourage your child to do their homework is to show that you are interested in what they are doing and learning.

Homework is regularly assigned by teachers of all grade levels to reinforce learning, extend learning or to prepare for an upcoming topic. Homework can help teach children to work independently, to take responsibility and to exercise self-discipline among other things.

Homework is typically assigned Monday through Thursday and is not assigned over weekends or holidays except for make-up work or long-term project assignments. General guidelines follow, but vary with individual teachers.

Kindergarten – not regularly assigned.
Grade One – 15 minutes twice per week
Grade Two – 20 minutes three times per week.
Grade Three – 20 minutes (3 times per week).
Grade Four – 30 minutes (4 times per week).
Grade Five – 50 minutes daily
Grade Six- 60 minutes daily

It is expected that assigned homework will take no longer than the above time allotments. If the child is spending significantly longer time periods than the above, please contact the teacher.

Students will be expected to complete all homework assignments and to turn them in on time. In many cases, homework will be counted towards the overall grade. Homework is also used as an informal assessment so that the teacher can monitor whether the students have grasped the material taught.

Internet

Parents of students must sign an Internet use form prior to students being allowed access to the Internet in school.

Lost and Found

Lost and Found boxes are located at both schools. Parents are requested to place the child's name in all of his/her outer clothing, mittens, boots and lunch boxes. If your child has lost an item, please have him/her check the Lost and Found. The Lost and Found box will be emptied periodically throughout the year and unclaimed items donated to charity.

Lunch/Snack

Children have the option of purchasing a school lunch or bringing a lunch from home. Note that there is no microwave available to students to cook or reheat lunch. Milk is also available for purchase each day. Information regarding the payment process for purchasing lunches is made available at the beginning of the year. Parents are expected to keep track of the amount of lunches for which they have paid in advance. Checks are to be made payable to Thomaston Lunch Program. No charges are allowed if a student does not have money to pay for lunch. Instead, a basic lunch will be provided and a note will be sent home with your child to alert you to the situation.

A choice of lunches will be available each day. Menus will be sent home monthly and are also available on the school website: www.thomastonschools.org.

Free and Reduced Lunch Program guidelines and applications will be sent home with each child at the start of the school year and are available throughout the year in the office.

Cost of lunch including milk	\$2.50
Cost of milk only	.40

Some grade levels have a brief morning snack. When preparing your child's snack and/or lunch, be sure to make healthy choices. Soda and candy are not allowed in school. For the safety of all students, do not send metal silverware, knives of any kind, or glass containers to school.

Please be aware that many students have food allergies, some severe. Therefore, some classrooms are designated "nut free zones". It is imperative that students in these classrooms do not bring products with nuts into school.

When sending snacks in for your child's *class*, please include a list of ingredients that will be reviewed by the school nurse to be sure that the snack is safe for all students. Thomaston Board of Education policy states that when sending in a class snack, a healthy option must be provided in addition to a dessert-type snack.

Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)

Teachers and parents of children enrolled in the Thomaston Public School System are invited to become involved in the worthwhile activities of the P.T. A. Meetings are monthly and will be announced. Please join us! Your support is appreciated and welcomed! You can contact the PTA at www.thomastonpta@hotmail.com.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are regularly scheduled in November. Additional conferences may be scheduled at a mutually agreeable time during the year by contacting your child's teacher. Parent requests for conferences will be honored at any time during the year. A telephone call should be made to set up an appointment. We encourage active communication between parents/guardians and classroom teachers. Please call the teacher first with concerns about classroom issues.

Party Invitations

Social acceptance among peers plays a critical role in building self-esteem with elementary age school children. Discovering a child has been omitted from a social event – birthdays, sleepovers, parties, etc. – even if inadvertently, can have a devastating effect on children in this age group. Therefore, we request that parents not have the teacher or children distribute party invitations during school.

Parent Advisory Council

Preceding the monthly PTA meeting, the principal and/or assistant principal of both schools will hold a meeting to discuss what's happening in our schools and answer parent questions or hear parent concerns. This meeting is open to all parents and guardians of students enrolled at either school.

Report Cards/Grades

Report cards in grades 1-6 are issued four times each year. In kindergarten, report cards are issued three times a year, with a parent-teacher conference replacing what would be the first report card. Each grade's marking system reflects the developmental needs of the child at that age.

Grades of students in grades 4-6 will be available this year online through PowerSchool, our new student information system. PowerSchool is expected to be up and running by October 1st. Parents will be notified when they can access PowerSchool.

Student Activities

Student activities are scheduled throughout the year. Occasionally, there is a cost to families associated with these activities. No student will be excluded from a school-sponsored activity in cases of financial hardship. Please contact the principal if you need assistance or additional information.

Telephone Use

Unnecessary telephone use during the day will be discouraged. Students and parents are expected to have after school plans set before reporting to school. If you need to contact your child unexpectedly during the day, please call the office and leave a message that will be delivered to him or her.

Textbooks

Books assigned to the student are his/her responsibility. Students will be assessed a fee for replacement costs of lost or damaged books.

Text (new).....	full cost
Text (2-3 years old).....	40% of cost
Text (damaged).....	\$10.00
Text (4 years or older).....	20% of full cost
Workbook (new).....	Full cost
Workbook (older).....	20% of full cost

Visitors

Parents and visitors are welcomed and encouraged to visit our schools. Arrangements for visits must be made in advance with the teachers. Parents may not wander halls, disrupt classrooms or interrupt teachers during class or school time. Appointments must be made with teachers by note, email or phone. School doors will be locked throughout the school day. When visiting, please press the "CALL" button located at the main entrance. A staff member will buzz you in and you may proceed directly to the office to sign in and receive a visitor pass. Visitors must also sign out prior to leaving the building.

Volunteers

Volunteers help in various ways at Black Rock and Thomaston Center School. They may provide an extra pair of hands during class activities, listen to children read, or work with an individual child to reinforce learning skills. Volunteers work under teacher supervision at all times. If you would like to volunteer, please contact your child's teacher.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Classroom/Common Areas

Each classroom teacher establishes a set of rules that will help to provide an atmosphere of mutual respect and concern. Classroom teachers maintain positive behavioral support strategies in managing their classrooms. If a routine discipline situation does arise, the classroom teacher will work with the student or students to resolve the problem, and will contact parents if necessary. If the discipline problem is serious or continuous, the principal may become involved along with the parents.

Consequences may include any of the following depending upon the severity of the infraction:

- Verbal warning
- Loss of classroom privilege
- Reassignment of task
- Removal from activity
- Parent contact and involvement
- Parent/Teacher or Parent/Teacher/Administrator conference
- Replacement/reimbursement for damaged property
- Compensatory work by the student for damaged property
- Expressing verbally or in written form the effects of the misbehavior and a future plan of action

In School Suspension /Out of School Suspension

A student may be suspended internally or externally or recommended to the School Board for an expulsion hearing for conduct which is seriously disruptive to the educational process or conduct which endangers people or property. During suspension, a student will be excluded from all school-sponsored activities. Suspension can be imposed for behaviors occurring on school property, school transportation, and any school-sponsored event. In the event of an illegal act, the police will be notified.

Weapons or harmful materials will not be tolerated in school. Any student found with such items will be subject to consequences, which could range from suspension to expulsion.

Expulsion

Expulsion is a long-term exclusion from school and is used only for extremely serious offenses. The school district is subject to all laws and statutes concerning expulsion that are made by the State of Connecticut. The School Board will expel students based on state statutes, district policy, and administrative recommendation.

The law states that the School Board may expel “any pupil whose conduct endangers persons or property or is seriously disruptive of the educational process.” This conduct includes the sale or distribution of illegal drugs. The law also requires the School Board to begin expulsion proceedings if it has reason to believe that a student possessed a firearm or deadly weapon as identified by state law on school grounds.

Cafeteria

It is expected that students will use polite dining manners when eating in the school cafeteria. The following guidelines will be in place during lunch time:

- Sit at assigned tables.
- Remain seated until asked to line up.
- Speak in a normal tone of voice.
- Be silent when lights are turned off.
- Clean table areas and throw litter away when trash bin is brought to tables.
- Refrain from running in the cafeteria.
- Use the lavatory before or after recess.

Disciplinary consequences for inappropriate lunch behavior will be handled in the same manner as classroom behavior lapses.

Recess

Both schools will be implementing recess before lunch this year. Students will have an approximately 20-minute recess preceding lunch. There have been many studies documenting the benefits of having recess before lunch including:

- Calmer students in the cafeteria results in fewer discipline problems
- Students retuning to classroom calmer and ready to work immediately
- Students consuming more food results in improved nutrition and less waste

In the interest of health and safety, hand sanitizer will be provided to students as they reenter the building for lunch.

Bus

Proper student behavior on the bus will help ensure the safety of everyone.

The bus driver has immediate authority over students at all times that they are on his/her bus. The bus driver is fully occupied driving the bus and being alert to traffic, pedestrians and other hazards.

Therefore, it is particularly important that children abide by the following rules when on the bus:

- Students must remain seated and facing front while the bus is in motion. While the bus is at rest, students may change seats only with the permission of the driver.
- Conduct on the bus should be substantially the same as classroom conduct.

- No indecent or profane language shall be permitted on the bus nor shall there be any shouting.
- Unnecessary talking with the driver is prohibited.
- The throwing of any object on or out of the bus is specifically prohibited.
- Students must not at any time extend their arms or heads out of the bus window.
- Bus windows shall not be opened without the consent of the driver.
- Students shall assist in keeping the bus clean, sanitary and orderly and shall refrain from abusing the bus, its cushions, or other equipment.
- Upon entering or leaving the bus, students shall avoid crowding or in any way disturbing others.
- No student shall leave the bus without permission from proper school authorities, except at his or her designated stop.
- Students shall enter and leave the bus only by the front door except in case of emergency.
- When seated, students must at all times keep their feet out of the aisles of the bus.

When a complaint is received from a bus driver concerning a discipline problem, the following procedure shall be utilized:

1. The administrator shall discuss the problem with the student. At that time a review of proper behavior will be discussed and a reminder given concerning the consequences of repeated acts.
2. Should a second complaint be made, the administrator will again discuss the situation with the student. The parents will be notified of the problem and informed that continued misbehavior may result in a suspension of bus privileges.
3. A third complaint will result in official notification of parents and could involve suspension of bus privileges. Transportation during the period of suspension shall be the responsibility of the parents.

In cases where the offense is of such gravity as to endanger the safety and/or well being of other occupants of the bus, the above procedure may be disregarded and immediate suspension will be invoked. In all cases, due process procedures shall be followed as described in District Policy.

Bullying:

According to Public Act 08-160, “bullying” means any overt acts by a student or group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the other student while on school grounds, at a school-sponsored activity, or on a school bus, which acts are committed more than once against any student during the school year. Bullying outside of the school setting may be addressed if it has a direct and negative impact on a student’s academic performance or safety in school.

Examples of bullying behavior may include:

- Physical violence and/or attacks.
- Verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, including taunts based on ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or other protected and/or individual characteristics.
- Threats and intimidation (through words and/or gestures).
- Extortion or stealing of money and/or possessions.
- Cyber-bully/ harassment that occurs through use of the Internet.

Prevention and Intervention Strategies:

- Black Rock and Center School will research and select a common positive behavior support system to be implemented at both schools in the near future to promote safe school climate.
- Adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom and other specific areas where bullying is likely to occur is mandatory.
- Individual interventions for perpetrators and targets of bullying will be determined on a case-by-case basis and may include counseling and/or discipline.
- The faculty of both schools will participate in Second Step training in September to address bullying; further training will be provided once a positive behavior support model is adopted.
- Classroom teachers will implement Second Step as a bullying prevention curriculum in kindergarten through sixth grade according to a mandated schedule.
- Parent involvement in bullying prevention will be promoted through individual or team participation in meetings, training, and individual interventions.

Reporting Procedure:

1. As soon as a student feels that he/she has been bullied, he or she should make a verbal or written complaint to the appropriate school personnel, or the principal or his/her designee. A student or parent may elect to make an anonymous report. The principal or his/her designee will investigate all written complaints of bullying; anonymous reports will be reviewed.
2. In the written complaint, the complainant should state the following:
 - Name of the complainant
 - Date of the complaint
 - Date of the alleged bullying
 - Name or names of the bully(s)
 - Location where such bullying occurred
 - Detailed statement of the circumstances constituting the alleged bullying
3. Any student who makes an oral complaint of bullying to any of the above-mentioned personnel will be provided a copy of this policy and will be instructed to make a written complaint pursuant to the above procedure.
4. The principal and/or designee will notify both the parents of the perpetrator and the targeted student when there have been verified acts of bullying committed by their child.
5. If possible, within five (5) working days of receipt of the complaint, the principal or designee handling the complaint shall commence an effective, thorough, objective and complete investigation of the complaint. The investigator shall consult with all individuals reasonably believed to have relevant information, including the complainant and the alleged bully, any witnesses to the conduct, and victims of similar conduct that the investigator reasonably believes may exist. The investigation shall be free of stereotypical assumptions about either party. The investigation shall be carried on discreetly, so that confidentiality is maintained insofar as possible while still conducting an effective and thorough investigation. Throughout the entire investigative process, the due process rights of the alleged bully will be upheld.
6. The investigator shall make a written report summarizing the results of the investigation and proposed disposition of the matter.

7. If the student complainant is dissatisfied with the result of the investigation, he or she may file a written appeal to the superintendent, who shall review the investigator's written report, the information collected by the investigator, together with the recommended disposition of the complaint to determine whether the alleged conduct constitutes bullying. The superintendent may also conduct a reasonable investigation, including interviewing the complainant and the alleged bully and any witnesses with relevant information. After completing this review, the superintendent shall respond to the complainant, in writing, as soon as possible. If after a thorough investigation there is reasonable cause to believe that bullying has occurred, the district shall take all reasonable actions to ensure that the harassment ceases and will not recur. Actions taken in response to allegations of bullying will result in disciplinary action. The bully and any other students or employees, if applicable, will be informed that appropriate action shall be taken if further acts of bullying or retaliation occur. If further acts of bullying or retaliation do occur, appropriate actions shall be taken up to and including suspension and/or expulsion from school and referral to the Thomaston Police Department.

HEALTH

Accidents/Illness

If there is any question of your child not feeling well in the morning, please keep him/her at home. If a child has an elevated temperature, he or she should remain home until the temperature has returned to normal and is maintained at normal for 24 hours. Children who are sent home by the nurse for illness and/or elevated temperature should remain at home an additional 24 hours to complete their recovery. Parents must sign their child out from the main office prior to picking up their child in the Health Office. The school nurse, principal, assistant principal or school secretary are the only persons authorized to dismiss a child from school.

Allergies

We ask that all parents be sensitive to common childhood allergies. Some classrooms are designated "nut free zones". It is imperative that all students in any of these classrooms not bring products with nuts into school. Due to latex allergies in both buildings, latex balloons, gloves, and other products are prohibited.

Emergency Cards & Sheets

Cards and sheets are sent home prior to the opening of school or on the first day of school. Please complete and return the emergency information at once. It is extremely important that we receive this information and that it is kept current throughout the school year. The purpose of the emergency information card and sheet is to provide care for your child if you are unavailable. It is important that we have a card and sheet for each of our students.

Part of the emergency card and sheet gives another person the authority to attend to your child if you are unable to be reached. When choosing emergency contacts consider carefully the following:

- Ask the people chosen if they would be willing to assume responsibility for your children in an emergency situation.
- Choose people who will be able and available to take care of your children.
- Choose people who live locally or close by.

- Choose people who either do not work outside of the home or are able to leave work if necessary.
- Let the school know where they can be reached if they expect to be unavailable at any of the routine emergency numbers.
- Recognize that the first consideration in all cases must be the child's welfare.

Be sure to notify the office if there are any changes to emergency information.

Immunizations

Connecticut law mandates that all students be protected by adequate immunization against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, measles, mumps, rubella, hemophilus influenza type B, and any other vaccine required by the schedule for active immunization adopted pursuant to state law (e.g., varicella). Students who have not been adequately immunized will not be admitted to school except in cases where the parent/guardian has provided a certificate from a physician stating that such immunization is medically contraindicated or the parent/guardian presents a statement that such immunization would be contrary to the religious beliefs of the child. Homeless children are entitled to immediate enrollment even if the documentation of immunization is not immediately available.

Infectious/Communicable Illness

If you suspect that your child is ill with something that may be infectious, please do not bring him/her to school to see the school nurse. Please schedule an appointment with your physician. All communicable diseases should be reported to the nurse. These include: STREP THROAT, HEAD LICE, CONJUNCTIVITIS, IMPETIGO, CHICKEN POX, RINGWORM, PINWORMS, etc.

Chicken Pox requires a 6-day exclusion after the appearance of the rash or until all scabs are dry. The child is to report to the school nurse upon return to school.

Any suspicious appearing skin condition should be reported to the nurse. Children with IMPETIGO, RINGWORM and SCABIES are to be excluded from school until they have a doctor's permission to return. Children with HEAD LICE are to be excluded for 24 hours following treatment. In cases of severe infestation, we may require a longer absence.

The school nurse will examine a sore throat. If a sore throat persists for two days or if there is fever with it, the child should be seen by the family physician. If a throat culture shows streptococci, the child should remain at home on medication for 24 hours and be non-symptomatic before returning to school.

Insurance

During the first week of school, children will receive insurance information. Parents should sign the form whether or not they want coverage. Signed forms should be returned to the school as soon as possible. HUSKY Health Insurance Policy – The State of Connecticut sponsors a health insurance program for children that covers basic health and welfare needs. The cost of this program is determined on a sliding scale tied to income guidelines. If your child is not covered by health insurance, please contact the school nurse for further information regarding HUSKY.

Medications

Pursuant to Connecticut State Law, a physician's written order including directions for administration must accompany any medication sent to school. The nurse must also receive the written permission from the parent to administer medication. This law includes both prescription and over-the-counter drugs. The only exception under the law is vitamins. The medication must be brought to school by a parent or other responsible adult and brought home by a parent or other responsible adult. Students are not allowed to keep medication with them in school. The nurse will dispose of any remaining medication brought from home after one week. The medication bottle must be labeled with the name of the student, the name of the doctor, the name of the medication, the date it was ordered and the directions for administration. According to state regulations, students twelve years old may be given Tylenol, Advil and Motrin if permission is given by the parents in writing by checking the appropriate box on the green health form.

Authorization forms for medication administration are available in the Health Office. In the absence of the school nurse, the Principal may administer medications. **NO MEDICATION WILL BE ADMINISTERED WITHOUT PROPER AUTHORIZATION.**

School Nurses

School nurses are available from 8:20 a.m. until 2:50 p.m. Health concerns should be addressed with the nurse. The nurse is available for the dispensing of medication during the school day. Students are sent to the school nurse if they become ill at school. Should an emergency arise when the nurse is not in the building, students will report to the office. The school nurse or the office will make all calls for early dismissal or release from school because of illness.

The school nurse will administer first aid if a child becomes ill or injured. No medications will be given without a physician's order. If the situation warrants, the school nurse will contact the parent. If your child tells you that he or she received an injury at school and that it was not reported to the nurse, please inform the nurse as soon as possible. Accident insurance is available to each student; information regarding this coverage is sent home the first week of school. The school cannot be held responsible for injuries occurring outside of school. Students in casts or who require crutches must have a physician's written authorization to attend school and to participate in the full program, including recess.

Students requesting an indoor recess or any excuse from P.E. classes must have a physician's note.

Screenings

Annual vision and auditory screening is done for all children in grades 3-5.

EMERGENCY PLANS

Crisis Management Plan

The Thomaston Public School system has a responsibility to prepare for crisis situations. To ensure your child's safety, we need parents' cooperation. Specific areas requiring a coordinated effort between home and school include:

- Submitting and updating appropriate emergency information to the school office
- Making arrangements for supervision of children during an early or unexpected release from school
- Reading and discussing with your child all handbook information concerning safety procedures
- Signing and returning the signature declarations indicating that you have read all handbook guidelines
- Following appropriate communication procedures
- Routinely counseling your child on safety precautions
- Informing the school office of potential crisis situations and other unsafe conditions
- Attending information programs offered by the school or district concerning safety issues

In case of emergency:

- Police are contacted
- Determination of situation is made (shelter-in-place status)/ (lockdown)
- Evacuation procedure used if necessary, i.e. fire drill procedure
- If necessary, students may be sent to Thomaston Opera House

Fire Drills

Fire drills will be held periodically. Each student is expected to leave the building in an orderly, quiet manner accompanied by the teacher. Each class will form a quiet line away from the building and remain outside until the all-clear signal is given. Evacuation procedures are taught to the children during the first few days of school and practiced throughout the year. We also practice shelter-in-place status/(lockdown).

Student Services

Math Interventionists

Both schools employ teachers who specialize in delivering math instruction. These teachers work with students individually, in small groups and in the classroom setting. They sometimes work with classroom teachers to develop specific teaching strategies that relate to the needs of the class. Specific math assessments are administered to all students periodically. The results of those assessments, along with observations of the classroom teacher, are used to help determine which children may benefit from additional math intervention. Services may also be recommended for students through the Student Consultation Team process. If you have concerns about your child's progress in math, please contact his or her teacher.

Mental Health Services

The school psychologist works with students and their families to make the elementary school years smooth, productive and fun. Referrals for services come from teachers, the Student Consultation Team, the Planning and Placement Team or directly from parents. Services include administration and interpretation of psychological and psycho-educational evaluations; counseling with students on an individual or group basis as a need arises or at a regularly scheduled time, and consultation with parents about issues of concern. The psychologist is available to provide information and referrals for out-of-district resources and work as a liaison with other agencies.

All students are eligible to participate in small group discussions. Some of the topics covered in small group are: responsibility, self-esteem, home issues, and peer-relationships. If parents prefer that a student not participate in counseling or group work with the school psychologist, they need to notify the school in writing. Contact Mrs. Petersen at Black Rock Elementary at 860-283-3040 ext 187 or Sarah Morehouse at Thomaston Center School at 860-283-3036 ext 204.

Reading Specialists

Both schools employ teachers who specialize in delivering reading instruction. These teachers work with students individually, in small groups and in the classroom setting. They sometimes work with classroom teachers to develop specific teaching strategies that relate to the needs of the class. Specific reading assessments are administered to all students periodically. The results of those assessments, along with the observations of the classroom teacher, are used to help determine which children may benefit from additional reading services. Services may also be recommended for students through the Student Consultation Team process. If you have concerns about your child's progress in reading, please contact his or her teacher.

Student Consultation Team

Both schools have Student Consultation Teams (SCT) that meet on a regular basis. The teams meet regularly to assist teachers in employing research-based strategies to use with specific students in their classrooms in an effort to improve student achievement and sometimes behavior. The teams consist of teachers of various grade levels, as well as other specialists employed in the building such as the school psychologist, reading specialist, math interventionist, etc. The SCTs are part of the overall school compliance with the state's Scientific, Research-based Instruction (SRBI)

The team may, among other things:

- Work with the classroom teacher to develop a plan for intervention
- Offer specific strategies to the classroom teacher
- Offer to observe the child in the classroom
- Assist the teacher in monitoring the student's progress during the period of intervention
- Recommend that a formal referral be started

Your child's teacher will notify you if he or she feels that your child might benefit from more intensive interventions than are generally offered in the classroom.

Students with Disabilities

A student who has a disability impacting the ability to learn or function in the school environment may be entitled to special services including reasonable accommodations (Section 504 Plan) and special education (Individualized Education Plan). A 504 Plan outlines the modifications and accommodations that a student with a disability needs in order to participate fully in the programs offered by the school.

Special education is specially designed instruction created to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities. In providing special education to students, the district complies with the requirements of federal and state law. Eligibility for special education is determined by a planning and placement team. Before a child is referred to a planning and placement team, alternative procedures and programs in regular education shall be explored and, where appropriate, implemented. Referrals for special education may be made by school personnel as well as from a student's parents, physician, or social worker.

Parents who have questions about the services available to students with disabilities should contact the Director of Special Services at 860-283-3050.

