

**UNION RIDGE SCHOOL DISTRICT 86**



**2018-2019**

**EARLY CHILDHOOD**

**&**

**KINDERGARTEN HANDBOOK**

## About Our School

Union Ridge, founded in 1876, is a single school Pre-K through 8th grade elementary district serving the communities of Harwood Heights, and portions of Norridge. Our K-8 curriculum includes advanced programs, gifted classes, and special needs support services allowing for development of the whole child.

## Mission Statement

The mission of Union Ridge School, a caring, diverse, educational community is to foster excellence in academic, physical, and aesthetic, as well as social and emotional development within a nurturing environment for all children, and in partnership with families and community members, so that all children achieve their full potential in becoming responsible and productive citizens.

## Values

We believe that:

- All people can become productive members of society.
- Learning is a life-long process.
- All children can learn.
- All members of our community share the responsibility for success in learning for all children.
- A quality education fosters life-long learning.
- A quality education provides challenging, progressive, and innovative opportunities for all children
- Union Ridge School plays a vital role in contributing to the successful development of the community.
- Quality education for all students comes through open communication and trust among educators, parents/guardians, and community.
- Mutual respect and trust are essential for building productive human relationships.

## Board of Education

Mrs. Helen Pissios, President

Mrs. Frances Perna

Mrs. Jolanta Klopotoski, Vice President

Mr. Demetrios Styliaras

Mr. Andy Clemente, Secretary

Mrs. Selena Giannakaris

Mr. Robert Hesslau

## Administration

Mr. Michael Maguire, Superintendent

Ms. Julie Mensik, Principal

## Board of Education Meetings

Board of Education meetings are held the third Thursday of the month in the Union Ridge School conference room. Meeting dates are posted at the main entrance to the school and on the Union Ridge School website at [www.urs86.org](http://www.urs86.org) listed under “Board of Education.”

## Early Childhood Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

### Early Childhood Arrival A.M.

Students will assemble at 9:05 a.m. by the north parking lot door (Gym entrance) at the rear of the school. Parents must remain in their car during arrival/dismissal. Your child will be picked up and/or brought to your car by a teacher or teacher aide. After your child is placed in your car, please move your car forward and pull over along or in front of the guard rails to seatbelt your child into your vehicle.

### Early Childhood Arrival P.M.

Students arriving by car should be dropped off by the north parking lot door (GYM entrance) at the rear of the school. They will enter the building at 1:00 p.m. Students who are walking will assemble at the southeast entrance of the school by the flagpole at 1:00 p.m.

### Late Arrivals

All Early Childhood Students arriving when a teacher or an aide is not present, or after (9:05 for ECAM) or (1:00 for ECPM) must enter through the main office doors on Carl Cassata.

### Early Childhood Dismissal

All Early Childhood A.M. and P.M. students are dismissed from the north parking lot door (Gym entrance) at the rear of the building.

## Kindergarten Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

### Kindergarten Arrival

Kindergarten students who walk or are dropped off by car need to enter with a teacher at the north parking lot (rear Gym entrance) between 8:45 and 8:55 a.m. **(After 8:55 a.m. Kindergarten students will need to be taken to the front office by a parent or guardian.)**

### Kindergarten Dismissal

Kindergarten students are dismissed at 2:35 p.m. from the north parking lot door (rear Gym entrance). Students and parents who walk must enter and exit through the playground area. A teacher will escort students who are picked up by car to their cars in the drive through. Drivers should remain in line, in their cars until it is their turn to move to the Gym entrance.

### Late Pickups

Any student not picked up within ten (10) minutes of dismissal time will be brought to the office where they may be picked up. Note: Kindergarten classes remain in session until 2:30 p.m.; at that time students prepare for dismissal. It is unlikely that they will be outside until at least 2:40 p.m. arriving to pick up students before 2:30 results in unnecessary traffic problems.

## Student Pick-up Authorization Form

You will be asked to complete a pick-up authorization form for your child. This form will indicate those people allowed to pick up your child from school as designated by you. PLEASE complete this form, as we will not release your child to ANYONE other than those indicated on the form. Both parents must sign the form! If you need to add or drop names on the form, you must put it in writing to your child's teacher. New people will have to show identification to the teacher before a child is released. Please be patient with us as it takes time for us to get to know faces and vehicles.

## Traffic Safety

Parents may use the drive-through system to drop off and pick up students. Cars may enter the parking lot at the north driveway, follow arrows to the gate, drop off students, and exit through the south driveway. Supervision is provided for students when they are dropped off and picked up this way. There are no provisions for parking in the lot, as it is filled by staff and visitor's vehicles. Please do not stop in the line except when picking up your child at the gate/entrance. If you wish to meet your children at the door, park elsewhere other than the lot and walk to the door where they are to be dismissed. Older siblings may be picked up at the parking lot door, if you inform the children to meet you there with your preschooler in the afternoon. Students and parents are not permitted to walk through the parking lot. Please understand and respect this, as it is a matter of safety.

## No Parking Areas

Parking and waiting is prohibited along Carl Cassata Lane and Oak Park Avenue, as specified by signs. Street parking is available west of the school building on the south side of Carl Cassata Lane. Police will be enforcing posted regulations from the start of the school year. Please do not park in the student drop-off area at the west entrance. We need to keep these areas moving. Parking in front of the school and waiting makes this very difficult.

## School Bus Zone

Only school buses are permitted to stop directly in front of the school. This lane must be kept clear for buses as they arrive and depart. Please do not attempt to park or stop in the bus zone at any time on school days.

## Crossing Carl Cassata Lane

All students will be directed to cross Carl Cassata Lane at the intersection of Carl Cassata and Newcastle. Please instruct your children to cross only at this corner where they are protected by stop signs. The school will not permit children to cross the street except at this intersection in order to protect their safety.

## Clothing

Children should be dressed in durable, comfortable play clothes so that they can play freely and not worry about ruining clothes by spilling paint, juice, etc. (ALL EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDENTS MUST BRING A LABELED SET OF EXTRA CLOTHING IN A ZIP LOCK BAG FOR EMERGENCIES.) Each item should be labeled and placed in a bag for

classroom storage. A shirt, pants, underwear, shoes, and socks will be sufficient. All outside clothing such as coats, hats, sweaters, and especially boots, should be labeled with the child's name so that misplaced items can be returned to the proper owner. We will be going outside whenever the weather permits. Children should be dressed appropriately for the weather. Umbrellas used on rainy days should be left with a parent upon entrance to the building.

### Emergency Information

Emergency information must be on file prior to each student's first day of school. Current, complete emergency information is very important. Accidents are to be reported as soon as possible on the proper form available in the office. If a student is involved in an accident at school, only emergency first aid will be provided. School employees will not make medical decisions. Paramedics will be called for serious emergencies when time is vital; every effort will be made to contact parents/guardians regarding an accident at school.

**(It is extremely important to notify the school office if emergency names, phone numbers, or your child's health condition change at any time during the school year.)**

### Early Childhood Snack

Snack is a center in our classroom. Milk and a variety of healthy snack items are available each day. If your child is lactose intolerant, please provide a doctor's note to allow you to provide water for him/her as needed. Please make sure that the school nurse and your child's classroom teacher are aware of any food allergies your child may have.

### Illness

If your child is sick PLEASE keep him or her at home. Germs travel fast, especially at this age, and both your child and fellow students will be more comfortable if sick children remain at home. A child should be fever free, without medication, for 24 hours before returning to school. Please contact the school office at 708-867-5822 in the morning if your child will be absent.

### Breakfast/Lunch Program

Cold breakfast and hot lunch programs are available to the Kindergarten Extended Day program beginning in October. Students may bring their lunch from home or order breakfast and/or hot lunch in advance. Soft drinks and carryout lunches from McDonald's, Burger King, etc. are not permitted in the lunchroom. Milk may be purchased daily or ordered in advance as well. Breakfasts and/or hot lunches are ordered a month in advance. Menus and order forms are sent home in your child's backpack each month. Payment in cash, or checks made out to Union Ridge School, must be returned to the school office in an envelope with the order form by the date indicated on the form. A credit will be issued to you if your child is absent on a day breakfast/lunch is ordered. Your child may be eligible for free or reduced priced lunches or milk. Please contact the school office for more information. **Please Note:** [There is a \$25.00 fee for each returned check.]

## Parents/Guardians Welcomed

Parents/guardians are an integral part of our program. We encourage you to participate in your child's school experience. There will be opportunities for you to participate on field trips and in the classroom. We would appreciate hearing all questions, concerns, and comments regarding our program. This will enable us to better serve the needs of our children. Please refer to the "Visitors" section for school access procedures.

## Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences

### Early Childhood

Formal conferences will be scheduled any time a parent, guardian, or teacher expresses concern about a particular child. During scheduled conference days you will be provided with an opportunity to interact with your child in the classroom, or have a formal conference with the classroom teacher.

### Kindergarten

You and your child will be invited to attend two scheduled conferences during the school year. We will use this time to discuss your child's school experience. Please make every effort to attend. You may request a conference with your child's teacher at any time throughout the year.

### Physical, Dental, and Vision Examinations

The State of Illinois holds school districts responsible for maintaining student, health, and immunization records and is directed to exclude pupils not in compliance with the law.

### Early Childhood Students

All new students entering the early childhood program must have a current physical examination recorded on the required medical form, including immunizations on file before entering school.

### Kindergarten Students

All students entering Kindergarten are required to have certifiable evidence of immunizations, as well as physical, dental, and vision examinations recorded on the required medical forms before entering school. Printable copies of medical forms are available on the Nurse's page at the Union Ridge School District website [www.urs86.org](http://www.urs86.org) listed under the Health Requirements and Forms tab.

### Playground

The playground and equipment are reserved for Union Ridge School students during school hours, 8:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Early Childhood and kindergarten students who have been dismissed from school and other community members are free to use the playground during non-school hours after 3:45 p.m. Staff members will ask visitors to leave the playground during school hours. This policy is in place for the safety and security of our students.

## Stay Informed

Weekly school flyers, handouts, and general school information is provided on-line at Union Ridge School's "Digital Backpack" available on our website [www.urs86.org](http://www.urs86.org) listed on the first page as "Download Digital Backpack." Parents/guardians of Early Childhood and Kindergarten students please check your child's backpack daily for important information regarding upcoming classroom activities, field trips, workshops, etc. This practice keeps you informed and prepared to participate with your child in upcoming special events and activities.

## Toilet Training

All children must be toilet trained upon entering the program. No diapers or Pull-Ups may be worn. We will deal with occasional "wet" accidents by assisting the child in changing clothes. We, however, cannot change or cleanup a bowel movement accident. Parents will be called to change their child if he or she has a "messy" accident.

## Visitors

Visitors to the school are encouraged, as we wish to enlist parents/guardians as partners in education. Please arrange visits in advance with your child's teacher. If you wish to set a conference with the teacher, please call and leave that message. The teacher will return your call as soon as possible. All visitors must sign in at the school office and receive a visitor's pass. To reach the Mall area, please walk downstairs through the lunchroom so as not to disturb other classes in session. Remember to return your visitor's pass and sign out at the office when leaving the school. After the first few days of school, parents are requested to drop off their children at the door and refrain from entering the building with strollers and younger siblings. An important aspect of our program is adjusting to the school environment.

## Goals

We believe that a high quality program promotes the physical, social emotional and cognitive development of young children within a safe and nurturing environment. A quality program also addresses and responds to the needs of the family. Our curriculum is planned to meet the different needs, interests, and development levels of students ages 3-6.

Experiences are provided that meet a child's needs and stimulate learning in all developmental areas - physical, social, emotional, and intellectual. Each child is a unique person with an individual pattern and timing-growth and development.

Curriculum is designed so that interaction is responsive to individual differences and interests.

Different levels of ability, development, and learning styles are expected, accepted and used to select appropriate activities.

Interactions and activities are designed to develop children's self-esteem and positive feeling towards learning.

Teachers prepare the environment for children to learn through active exploration with adults, other children, and materials. Children select many of their own activities from among a variety of learning centers including dramatic play, blocks, science, math, games and puzzles, books, recordings, art and music.

Children work individually or in small, informal groups.

Children participate in concrete learning activities with materials and people relevant to their own life experiences.

Teachers move among groups and individuals to facilitate a child's involvement with materials and activities by asking questions, offering suggestions, or adding more complex materials or ideas to a situation.

Teachers accept that there is often more than one right answer. Teachers recognize that children learn from self-directed problem solving and experimentation.

Teachers facilitate the development of self-control in children by using positive guidance techniques such as modeling and encouraging expected behavior, redirecting children to a more acceptable activity, and setting clear limits. The teacher's expectations match and respect children's developing capabilities.

Children have many opportunities to develop social skills such as cooperating, helping, negotiating, and talking with the person involved to solve interpersonal problems. Teachers facilitate the development of these positive social skill at all times.

Children have many opportunities to see how reading and writing are useful before they are instructed in letter names, sounds, and word identification. Basic skills develop when they are meaningful to children. An abundance of these types of activities is provided to develop language and literacy through meaningful experiences: listening to and reading stories and poems; taking field trips; dictating stories; seeing classroom charts and other print in use; participating in dramatic play and other experiences requiring communication; talking informally with other children and adults; and experimenting with writing by drawing, copying, and inventing their own spelling.

Children develop understanding of concepts about themselves, others, and the world around them through observation, interacting with people and real objects, and seeking solutions to concrete problems. Learning about math, science, social studies, health, and other content areas are all integrated through meaningful activities. Examples of these are when children build with blocks, measure sand, water or ingredients for cooking, observe changes in the environment, work with wood and tools, sort objects for a purpose, observe animals, plants, water wheels and gears, sing and listen to music from various cultures, and draw, paint and work with clay. Routines are followed that help children keep themselves healthy and safe.

Children have daily opportunities to use large muscles, including running, jumping, and balancing. Outdoor activity is planned daily so children can develop large muscle skills, learn about outdoor environments, and express themselves freely and loudly.

Children have daily opportunities to develop small muscle skills through play activities such as pegboards, puzzles, painting, cutting, and other similar activities.

Children have daily opportunities for aesthetic expression and appreciation through art and music. Children experiment and enjoy various forms of music. A variety of art media is available for creative expression, such as easel and finger painting and clay.

Children's natural curiosity and desire to make sense of their world are used to motivate them to become involved in learning activities.

Teachers work in partnership with parents, communicating regularly to build mutual understanding and greater consistency for children.