

PARENT HANDBOOK 2023-2024



**170 Dalton Road
Chelmsford, MA 01824
978-251-5188**

CPS 2023 – 2024 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

AUGUST

23-24 New Staff Orientation
28 No School Staff Orientation
29 Grades 1 – 9 ONLY
Kindergarten Orientation
30 All Students

AUGUST Student Days: 3

AUGUST 2023

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

SEPTEMBER 2023

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

SEPTEMBER

1 No School
4 No School (Labor Day)
20 Half Day (Professional Day)

SEPTEMBER Student Days: 19

OCTOBER

9 No School (Columbus Day)
19 Half Day (Professional Day)

OCTOBER Student Days: 21

OCTOBER 2023

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

NOVEMBER 2023

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

NOVEMBER

7 No School (Full Prof. Day)
10 No School (Veteran's Day)
15 Half Day **ELEM. & MS ONLY**
22 Early Release (Thanksgiving Recess)
23 No School (Thanksgiving)
24 No School

NOVEMBER Student Days: 18

DECEMBER

7 Half Day (Professional Day)
25 December Recess

DECEMBER Student Days: 16

DECEMBER 2023

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

JANUARY 2024

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

JANUARY

2 School Re-opens
9 Half Day (Professional Day)
15 No School (Martin Luther King Day)

JANUARY Student Days: 21

FEBRUARY

8 Half-Day (Professional Day)
19 February Recess
26 School Re-opens

FEBRUARY Student Days: 16

FEBRUARY 2024

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

MARCH 2024

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

MARCH

5 Half Day (Professional Day)
29 No School (Good Friday)

MARCH Student Days: 20

APRIL

2 Half-Day (Professional Day)
15 April Recess
22 School Re-opens

APRIL Student Days: 17

APRIL 2024

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

MAY 2024

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

MAY

27 No School (Memorial Day)

MAY Student Days: 22

JUNE

19 Juneteenth
20 Last Day for Students (Half Day)
21 Last Day for Staff (Half Day)

JUNE Student Days: 13

JUNE 2024

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

Total Student Days: 186

Additional Staff Days: 2.5

(Total Includes Six Provisional Snow Days)

■ Professional Development
■ Last day Students June 20
Last day Staff June 21

Major Religious & Cultural Holidays

Rosh Hashanah*	September 15-17, 2023
Yom Kippur*	September 24-25, 2023
Sukkot*	September 29- Oct. 6, 2023
Diwali	November 12, 2023
Chanukah*	December 7-15, 2023
Christmas	December 25, 2023
Kwanzaa	December 26, 2023 -Jan. 1, 2024
Chinese New Year	February 10, 2024
Passover*	April 22-30, 2024
Good Friday	March 29, 2024
Easter	March 31, 2024
Orthodox Easter	May 5, 2024
Ramadan	March 10 – April 9, 2024
Eid al-Fitr	April 9-10, 2024
Shavuot*	June 11-13, 2024

**All Jewish holidays begin at sundown on the evening prior to the day of the holiday.*

The following policies apply to students celebrating the holidays noted above:

- Homework and projects will not be assigned to students observing religious holidays. Teachers shall not schedule tests for those students celebrating observed religious holidays. Students will not be expected to complete daily homework assigned the evening before, or the day of the religious holiday. Assignments and tests should be made up in a time span that is reasonable to both students and teachers (SC Policy 6314.01).
- Observance of a religious holiday shall be viewed as valid justification for student absence, late homework/project submission and delayed testing. It is the responsibility of the student's parent/guardian to notify the principal/dean/teacher of these dates at the beginning of the school year. In addition, the student shall notify the teacher(s) of the observance date no later than two weeks in advance or as soon as practical (SC Policy 6314.01).

Scheduled Staff Professional Development Days

Wednesday September 20, 2023	Student Half Day
Thursday October 19, 2023	Student Half Day
Tuesday November 7, 2023	Student NO School Day
Thursday December 7, 2023	Student Half Day
Tuesday January 9, 2024	Student Half Day
Thursday February 8, 2024	Student Half Day
Tuesday March 5, 2024	Student Half Day
Tuesday April 2, 2024	Student Half Day

Wednesday November 15, 2023
Student Half Day – Elementary and Middle Schools Only

Starting and Dismissal Schedule

School	Start	Dismissal	Early Dismissal
Chelmsford High	7:19 a.m.	1:52 p.m.	10:25 a.m.
McCarthy Middle	8:10 a.m.	2:30 p.m.	11:00 a.m.
Parker Middle	8:20 a.m.	2:40 p.m.	11:10 a.m.
Byam Elem.	8:59 a.m.	3:18 p.m.	11:45 a.m.
Center Elem.	8:59 a.m.	3:18 p.m.	11:45 a.m.
Harrington Elem.	8:59 a.m.	3:18 p.m.	11:45 a.m.
South Row Elem.	8:59 a.m.	3:18 p.m.	11:45 a.m.
CHIPS Program	8:15 a.m.	10:45 a.m.	AM Session
	12:00 p.m.	2:30 p.m.	PM Session

- Note: Please take notice McCarthy and Parker Middle School start and dismissal times changed slightly based upon the middle school grade level realignment.

CHIPS NO SCHOOL DAYS 2023-2024

September 1, 2023

September 4, 2023

September 20, 2023

October 9, 2023

October 19, 2023

November 7, 2023

November 10, 2023

November 15, 2023

November 22-24, 2023

December 7, 2023

December 25, 2023-January 1, 2024

January 9, 2024

January 15, 2024

February 8, 2024

February 19-23, 2024

March 5, 2024

March 29, 2024

April 2, 2024

April 15-19, 2024

May 27, 2024

June 19, 2024

*2 Hour delayed openings due to weather or other emergency= **NO AM CHIPS**

*Unexpected Early dismissals due to weather or emergency= **NO PM CHIPS**

Closings, two-hour delays and early dismissals due to weather or other emergency will be communicated via ConnectEd (phone call/email).

Please be sure to keep office informed of changes to phone #s/emails.

CHIPS STAFF LIST AND EMAIL REFERENCE CHART 2023/2024

170 DALTON ROAD, 01824

Ph: 978-251-5188

Fax: 978-926-2418

Staff	Contact info
Megan McGuirk- Preschool Coordinator	978-251-5188 option 2, mcguirkm@chelmsford.k12.ma.us
Beth Donahue-Office Secretary	978-251-5188 option 1, donahueb@chelmsford.k12.ma.us
Kristen Lynch-Registered Nurse	978-251-5188 option 3, lynchk@chelmsford.k12.ma.us
Absence Line	978-251-5188 option 0 chipsattendance@chelmsford.k12.ma.us
Teachers/Classroom	Email Contact info
Mary Ellen Forty/2	fortym@chelmsford.k12.ma.us
Abby Berry/3	berrya@chelmsford.k12.ma.us
Lauren Nicolosi/4	nicolosil@chelmsford.k12.ma.us
Amelia Hennig/5	henniga@chelmsford.k12.ma.us
Christina Burns/6	burnsc@chelmsford.k12.ma.us
Lauren Scott/7	scottl@chelmsford.k12.ma.us
Alicia Giannotti/8	giannottia@chelmsford.k12.ma.us
Lynn Raney/9	raneyl@chelmsford.k12.ma.us
Specialists	Email Contact info
Elizabeth Barrett/Speech & Language Pathologist	barrette@chelmsford.k12.ma.us
Erica Doak/Speech & Language Pathologist	doake@chelmsford.k12.ma.us
Melanie Mazares/Physical Therapist	mazaresm@chelmsford.k12.ma.us
Lisa Martin/Occupational Therapist	martinl@chelmsford.k12.ma.us
Lisa Morris/Occupational Therapist	morrisl@chelmsford.k12.ma.us
Beth Deschenes/BCBA	deschenesb@chelmsford.k12.ma.us
Social Worker	

TUITION PAYMENTS and POLICY

The annual tuition is \$1200 for the 2-day program, \$1750 for the 3-day program, and \$2300 for the 4-day program. Tuition is billed in ten equal payments September through June.

It is expected that your child is enrolled for the full school year. There are no adjustments in the monthly tuition if your child is sick or does not attend for other reasons such as trips, family vacations, etc.

If your child is out of school for more than 10 consecutive school days, they will be automatically unenrolled from CHIPS. (This does not apply to medically excused absences.)

Tuition is due on the first (1st) day of the month. You may pay by check or money order (make checks out to Town of Chelmsford). You may also pay online by credit/debit card. The CHIPS office will send you a link to set up an account to pay online by credit/debit card if you choose once you have registered and enrolled your child. **Please note that we do not accept cash payments.**

Please pay your child's tuition promptly. Non-payment may result in your child's removal from the CHIPS program.

CHIPS DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

*AM session drop-off is at 8:05.

AM pick-up is at 10:45.

*PM drop-off is at 11:50.

PM pick-up is at 2:30.

CAR DROP OFF

- **Please remain in your car.**
- Your child needs to remain buckled in his car or her car seat until a staff member approaches the car. If your child's seat is on the street side, please consider moving it to the sidewalk side to make this process run as smoothly as possible.
- A **CHIPS staff member** will unbuckle your child and take him/her out of the car for school. Please do **NOT** unbuckle your child, as you cannot be sure that the line has stopped completely.

****Please remember to put your car in park when a staff member comes to your car at drop off.**

WALK-UP DROP OFF

- We strongly encourage walk ups. The whole process will be faster if you can park and walk up to the building.
- Park in a designated parking space, **not along the curb where others are waiting to have their child disembark**, and turn off your car.
- Walk your child to the staff at the right side door.
- Staff will bring your child inside.

We ask that you do not release your child's hand until a CHIPS staff member is holding your child's hand.

CAR PICK-UP

- Please enter the school driveway on the left of the building and drive slowly (10 mph) around the building to the right side. Line up along the curb **BEHIND THE BUSES**.
- Put your number up as soon as you enter the line and keep it visible. Please leave it hanging even after staff write your number down. The staff member delivering your child/ren to you also needs to see it. Please make sure the whole number is visible.
- Please stay in your car until you see your child approaching the car with a staff member. We cannot pull up the next group of cars if parents are already out of their cars and waiting on the sidewalk. It is your responsibility to buckle your child into his/her car seat.

WALK UP PICK-UP

- Park in a designated parking space, **not along the curb where others are waiting to pick their children up**, and turn off your car.
- Form a line at the right side CHIPS door.
- Please bring your child's number with you to the pick up line and keep it visible while waiting in line.
- A staff member will bring your child out to you.
- Please hold your child's hand as you walk to your car.

HELPFUL PICK-UP REMINDERS

- Please remember that dismissal is not the time for parent teacher conferences. You may always email or call your child's teacher if you need information.
- If you find that your child is having trouble getting settled into his/her car seat at dismissal, please park and choose the walk up option. This way you will have plenty of time to get your child settled without the stress of holding up the line of cars.
- ***Please be on time!*** It can be very distressing for students when nobody is there for them at pickup.
- Children may be removed from the program if excessive late pick-ups occur during the school year.

IMPORTANT:

Drivers must follow MA state laws and

1. **WAIT BEHIND BUSES WHEN RED LIGHTS ARE FLASHING.**
2. **USE PROPERLY INSTALLED AND REGULATED CAR SEAT.**

When buses are parked and lights are not flashing, drivers may SLOWLY PASS BUSES AT 5 MPH.

IF SOMEONE ELSE IS PICKING UP YOUR CHILD:

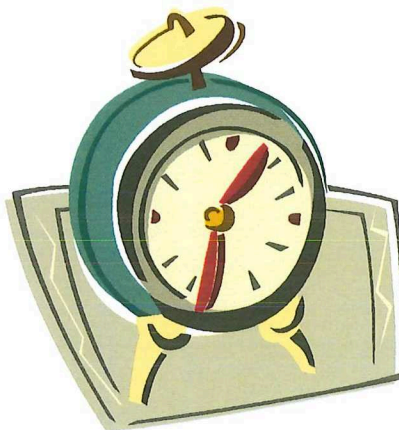
You must have sent in a note prior or emailed your child's teacher or the secretary with the person's name, and we will ask for an ID/license when the person comes.



We live in New England! Please be considerate to staff working outside in often cold, windy, and inclement weather and get your child in or out as quickly as possible but drive slowly!!!

PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR CAR WHILE YOU ARE WAITING; WE ARE A NO IDLING ZONE. BUSES HAVE A 5 MINUTE IDLE ALLOWANCE; CARS DO NOT.





PROCEDURES FOR TARDINESS, DISMISSALS AND ABSENCES

Tardiness (After 8:15 or 12:00):

Please park in a designated space and bring your child into the building through the **CHIPS side door**. You must **PARK** and accompany your child into the building once the doors are closed.

Please sign your child in at the **CHIPS office**.

A staff member will bring your child to his /her classroom.

→Exit the building from the side door.

Dismissals:

Please notify the teacher or office if your child needs to be dismissed early. Come to the CHIPS office to sign your child out. The secretary will call your child to the office.

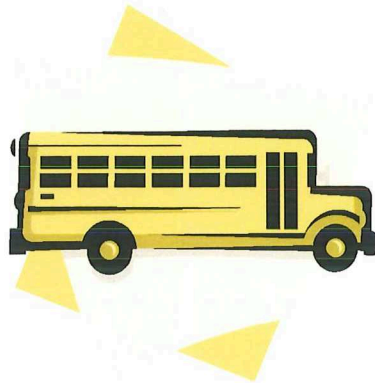
Absences:

Please notify the CHIPS office if your child will not be attending school.

Email: chipsattendance@chelmsford.k12.ma.us

OR

Phone 978-251-5188, option 0



FOR PARENTS OF STUDENTS WHO TAKE THE BUS

**IF YOUR CHILD IS GOING TO BE ABSENT YOU MUST CALL
NORTH READING TRANSPORTATION AT 978-323-0101 ext. 6 TO
NOTIFY THEM.**

**LIKEWISE, IF YOUR CHILD IS NOT GOING HOME ON THE BUS,
YOU MUST NOTIFY NORTH READING TRANSPORTATION.**

You must be home when the bus picks up your child and when the bus drops
off your child.

Chelmsford Public Schools can only transport children within the boundaries
of the town.

If you need to change your bus needs at any time during the school year, you
must call Beth Donahue in the CHIPS Office @978-251-5188, option 1,
who will notify the bus company. NRT does not take direct requests from
parents.

HEALTH POLICIES (per the Chelmsford Public Schools):

We recommend that children do not come to school if they appear to be ill. It is advisable to keep your child home if s/he has a sore throat, severe cold, rash, fever, vomiting, and/or diarrhea. Your child **needs to stay home** if s/he has any of the following:

- **Strep throat-** if you suspect that your child has strep throat and until s/he either has had a negative throat culture or has been on antibiotics and fever free for a full 24 hours.
- **A fever of over 100-** may return to school when s/he is fever free for 24 hours without medication (e.g. Advil or Tylenol)
- **Vomiting and/or diarrhea-** may return to school 24 hours after his/her last vomiting and/or diarrhea episode.
- **Red or pink itchy eyes with crusty and/or green/yellow drainage-** may return to school the day after s/he is examined by a physician and treatment has begun.
- **Head lice-** a student will be sent home from school if live lice are found and an information sheet will be provided. A student may return to school after being treated and the School Nurse confirms that no live lice are present.
- **A rash of unknown cause-** may return to school when doctor authorizes.
- **COVID-19-** Please do not send your child to school if they have COVID-like symptoms.

If your child is too ill to remain in school, the nurse will call the parent/guardian and/or emergency contact numbers for dismissal.

BIRTHDAYS

We love to celebrate birthdays! However, school district policy prohibits celebrating with food.

We encourage parents to donate a book to your child's classroom library in honor of their child's birthday.

NO BALLOONS allowed in school due to safety and latex allergies.

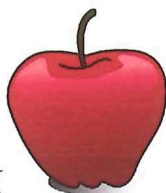
Out-of-school party policy - District policy prohibits giving out children's names and addresses. You may use the PTO Directory as a resource. Also, distribution of party invitations at school is prohibited unless the entire class is invited.

HELPFUL TIPS:



BACKPACK

Children need a backpack each day labeled with his/her name. The bag should be large enough to hold an 8" x 11.5" folder. Announcements, art work, notes, and papers come home through the backpacks.



SNACK

Please send your child with a healthy snack and drink each day. Please send drinks in juice boxes or leak-proof containers. Snacks may be sent in the child's backpack or small separate container or bag. **We have numerous children with peanut/nut allergies. Consequently, we ask parents to send nut-/peanut-free snacks. Please, no hard candy and no soda.**



PLAYGROUND AND MOVEMENT

For the safety of the children, we ask that children wear sneakers or closed toe shoes with a strap on the back. If your child wears snow or rain boots, please send in appropriate shoes. Please dress your child so that they are comfortable to move freely.



CONFERENCES AND REPORT CARDS:

Report cards are distributed twice a year (Feb. and June). Conferences are held once a year (February). However, you may request a conference at any time by contacting your child's teacher or a therapist.

Volunteer Opportunities

- **CHIPS PTO**—Opportunities are available to help at an event (such as Open House or Touch a Truck) or chairing a sub-committee. Please contact the CHIPS PTO President @ PTO.CHIPS@gmail.com for more information.



PHOTO OPT OUT FORM

During the course of the school year, there are times when photographs and/or videos will be taken of/from students during school activities. Occasionally, the pictures may be used for CHIPS events, website, programs and/or other media purposes.

Please sign below if you do **NOT** give your consent for CHIPS to use photographs and/or videos of/from (student name) _____ for press releases or other media purposes.

Parent/Guardian Name (print) _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____



CHIPS PTO DIRECTORY OPT-OUT

Dear CHIPS Family,

Each year, the CHIPS Parent Teacher Organization works with our school secretary to put together a directory so that families can connect outside of school. This is a great resource for setting up playdates, birthday celebrations, carpooling, and the like.

Information in the directory includes your child's name, parent/guardian names, phone numbers, and email addresses. The directory is shared only with CHIPS families.

If you would like to opt out of having your family's information published in the directory, please complete this form and return it to school with your child.

I wish to opt of having my student's information published in the CHIPS PTO Directory:

Student Name: _____

Parent Name (Print): _____

Signature: _____

Please return via your child's backpack by Friday, September 29, 2023