



SOMERSET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK 2021-2022



WELCOME!

Welcome to Somerset Elementary School and to the 2021-2022 school year! Please take the time to carefully read our school handbook to be informed about the current school year. The first portion of this handbook is elementary specific and is meant to communicate the information family members need to know about the elementary school. The second section of this handbook is for the entire Somerset School District. This will also prove to be a valuable source of information to you. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions regarding what is or is not covered in this handbook. I look forward to partnering with you to make your student's time at Somerset Elementary School a successful one.

Pamela Phillippi, Principal of Somerset Elementary School
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WHO WE ARE

Somerset Elementary School provides full day instruction for students from kindergarten through 4th grade. Students receive sequential, developmentally appropriate instruction in the core subject areas of reading, language arts, mathematics, science and social studies as well as music, art, and physical education. They have regular access to the library/media center and computer lab. We are committed to providing a safe and respectful learning community for all students by helping students develop their academic, social, and emotional skills in a learning environment that is developmentally responsive to their strengths and needs.

Somerset Elementary has a 1/2 day Junior Kindergarten program for four year old children and students who are supported by an IEP receive services through our 1/2 day early childhood program that supports three year olds who have been identified with a disability. Somerset Elementary supports and provides programming to support all learners including students for whom English is a second language, students supported by an IEP and students who have been identified as gifted and talented. Before and after school care is available through Spartan Kids Club. Please contact Leslie Thomas at 247-3311 ext. 584 if interested in Spartan Kids Club, which also includes JK Wrap Around-our all day junior kindergarten program. _____

OUR SCHOOL DAY

All students should arrive at school between 7:50 and 8:00 am and enter the building at the door nearest to their drop off location. Doors are automatically unlocked during arrival time and locked once school begins. Parent drop off students will enter any of the doors in the front of the building. Bus riders will enter the door near the bus drop off area. Students should hang up backpacks and outer garments, and be **ready for class to begin at 8:00 am.** Students **must not** be dropped off before **7:50 am** unless they are enrolled in Spartan Kids Club. **The school day ends at 3:00 pm.** Bus students will be dismissed at that time. Students who are walking or being picked up will be dismissed and available for pick-up at 3:05 pm. If you are picking your child up after school, **do not** go to the classroom. Please wait in the designated parking area, at the front of the building entrance, and pull forward. School staff will accompany students to the pick-up area. **Parents should not park in the lot on the north side of the school to drop off children in the morning or pick them up at the end of the school day as it is now the bus zone. If you are walking your child to the sidewalk please honor the crosswalk in front of the school.**

SCHOOL HOURS

Office Hours	7:30 am - 4:00 pm	
Kindergarten – Grade 4	8:00 am - 3:00 pm	
Early Childhood	8:00 am - 10:40 am	
Junior Kindergarten	8:00 am - 10:40 am	Morning Session
	12:20 pm - 3:00 pm	Afternoon Session

Somerset Elementary School Information A to Z

ACCIDENTS

In the event of a serious accident at school, the parents or guardians will be called, or if necessary, the emergency number on Infinite Campus is called. In case neither parent can be contacted, school authorities will attempt to take necessary steps to assure the welfare of the child, including calling 911 if the situation deems necessary. Students are encouraged to report all cases of injury immediately, no matter how minor, to their teacher or the health care provider.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NOTICES

Announcements will be given daily over the intercom system, weekly in *The Spartan Scoop* district newsletter and via Infinite Campus School Messenger as needed. Announcement requests may be presented to the principal. Notices/posters must receive the principal's permission before they are posted anywhere in the building. Approved fliers home are sent via School Messenger on Fridays or posted in *The Spartan Scoop*.

APPOINTMENTS, LATE ARRIVALS, EARLY DEPARTURES

All students arriving after 8:00 am, or leaving before regular dismissal, **must** check in or out through the school office. To ensure safety and decrease classroom interruptions, parents/guardians must come to the office and sign your child out. We will contact the child's teacher and have him/her sent to the office. Please do not go to the classroom. No child will be allowed to leave directly from the playground. Because of the effect upon your child's learning program, we encourage you to schedule doctor, dentist, and other appointments outside of school hours whenever possible. However, we will honor a parent's request to release his/her child for these appointments.

ASSESSMENTS

Assessing students is an ongoing process at Somerset Elementary. Because children react differently to various assessments and testing situations, it is important to use a variety of methods and types of assessments to get an accurate picture of the child's progress. In addition to the teacher designed assessments, standardized tests are given to all children in grades K-4, annually. The results of these tests are available to parents.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES/POLICY

Attending school each and every day is critical to the educational success of our students. When a student misses classes the learning that occurred while they were out cannot be replicated. Because of this, the following procedures/policy is designed to encourage students to be in school.

- **Parent/Guardian Responsibility**
 - If your child is absent, it is your responsibility to contact the Elementary School prior to the absence (pre-arranged) or on the day of the absence (illness related).
 - Communication to the SES office regarding your child's absence can be done via a phone call, email, written note or in person.
 - Text messages will **NOT** be accepted to excuse absences.
 - Failure to provide this information within two days of your child's absence will result in the absence being categorized as "Unexcused" and could result in your child being truant.
 - You may contact the Somerset Elementary School attendance secretary at 715-247-3311, ext. 601, by email at jgingras@somerset.k12.wi.us, or in person at the Elementary School.
- **Tardiness**
 - All students are expected to be in class by 8:00 a.m. each school day. Students who arrive between 8:01-8:30 am are considered tardy. Students arriving after 8:30 am are considered absent.
 - When a student is late to school they must check in at the office and receive a pass to go to class. They may not report directly to class without a pass from the office.
 - Choosing to excuse a tardy to school will count as one parent excuse day.

- **Parent Excused Days**
 - According to Wisconsin state law, “A parent may excuse their son/daughter for all or part of ten (10) school days for any reason that the parent chooses.”
 - A student may be excused by a parent from school no more than ten (10) school days per school year.
 - If a student is absent for any part of a school day, this will count as a parent excuse day used. If students leave during the day they are marked absent up until 2:45 pm. Attendance marks are updated in Infinite Campus. Attendance is reviewed by the school pupil service team at least monthly. Letters regarding student attendance will come home at that time for students who have missed a significant amount of time. A meeting may be requested to help improve attendance.
 - In order to use a parent excuse day, a parent/guardian must notify the Somerset Elementary School office attendance secretary via telephone, email, a written note or in person (with the required information listed above) within two (2) school days of the absence.
 - Failure to notify the Elementary School office within three (3) school days will result in the absence to school being counted as unexcused and subject to truancy.
- **Professional’s Notes**
 - Somerset Elementary School will honor professional’s notes excusing absences provided to the school within two school days of the absence. Somerset Elementary School will not honor professional notes which are unsigned or without a date of service.
 - A note of excuse will be accepted from the following professionals: licensed physicians, dentists/orthodontists, chiropractors, optometrists/ophthalmologists, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, certified practice nurses, licensed clinical counselors, licensed psychologists, licensed social workers, attorneys, clerk of courts, and judges.
 - Absences being excused by a professional’s note will not be considered a parent excuse day.

BREAKFAST

Somerset provides a breakfast meal for students. This is charged to the same account as their lunch. Breakfast is served beginning at 7:50 am until 8:00 a.m.

CHANGES IN THE DAY

Please plan how your child will end his/her school day before they leave home in the morning. If you must make a change, be sure to contact the school **before 2:00 pm** to be sure there is time for the necessary notification. Please note: leaving a voice message does not confirm your message has been received.

CLASSROOM INTERRUPTIONS

Studies show that the amount of time a student is on task is a significant fact in school effectiveness. We will make every effort to keep students on task in a meaningful learning experience. When a classroom is interrupted, the students are distracted and taken off task. You can help us by observing the following:

1. If students forget their lunch or homework, bring it to the office properly identified. PLEASE **DO NOT** take it directly to the classroom while class is in session.
2. Avoid giving last minute instructions to students about where to go after school. If the message is delivered over the intercom, the child’s classroom is disrupted by the message and concentration is broken.

COMPUTER CARTS

Computer Carts are available for classroom and individual student use Students are to use these devices for schoolwork. The devices are also used for interventions as well as state and local assessments.

CONCERTS/CLASS PROGRAMS

Traditionally a grade level concert occurs for students in JK through 4th grade at Somerset Elementary once each year. The performances will be held at 6:00 in the evening in the multipurpose room (MPR) at Somerset High School.

DEVICES, TOYS AND GAMES

Students may not bring trading cards, toys or games from home, except as pre-approved for a specific event. They are strongly discouraged from bringing electronic devices. These items are often expensive and the elementary school has cubbies, not secure lockers. Many students bring cell phones and electronic devices to use on their bus ride to and from school. Children are not allowed to carry these items with them during the day. While we encourage all students to be honest, there is no way to be sure these expensive items will be safe. The school will not be responsible for items that are lost or stolen. Children who bring them do so at their own risk. The privilege to

bring devices for the bus may be revoked if a student cannot adhere to teacher directives in the classroom or if administration determines that a student is not using the device in a way that aligns with SES expectations.

ENTERING THE SCHOOL/HALLWAY POLICY

In the interest of student and staff safety, all school doors are locked throughout the school day. The vestibule is open from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm. In the vestibule, press the button and inform the office member the reason for your visit. They will then “buzz” you into the office. Student safety is a priority in the Somerset School District. Please check in at the office when entering the school. Student supervision and instruction requires the teacher’s undivided attention. If you want to speak with your child’s teacher please make an appointment. Do not just “drop in” and expect your child’s teacher to stop instruction or supervision for a conversation. Please follow this procedure prior to the school day starting as the teachers are preparing for instruction.

HEALTH CARE

A licensed school nurse is on staff during school hours. He/she checks the injuries and illnesses of our children. In accordance with the Wisconsin Division of Health Administration Rule H49.01, the school may send students home from school for health reasons. If a student is sent home with a fever or illness they are not to return to school for 72 hours. State law requires that all students entering a Wisconsin elementary school for the first time have a series of immunizations and the school needs a record of these. The requirements can be waived if a properly signed medical or religious exemption is filed with the school. Please see the health care office for a complete list of required immunizations or an exemption form. Additional health care information can be found on our elementary school website under the health care office tab.

ILLNESS

Students who are ill should not come to school. Do not give them aspirin or Tylenol to reduce fever and then send them to school. Any students complaining of illness and/or running a temperature of 100.0 degrees or above may be sent home at the discretion of the district nurse or other appropriate school personnel. Students leaving school must be accompanied by an adult. A parent or someone designated by the parent is expected to pick up an ill child when called. Pupils are not permitted to stay indoors during recess time, except at their teacher’s request, or with a written notice from a physician.

INFINITE CAMPUS

You can access your student’s attendance, lunch account and behavior through Infinite Campus Parent Portal. When you are registered in Infinite Campus you are also notified of school closings. You can also change/update your contact information through the portal. If you have not yet accessed the Parent Portal of Infinite Campus please contact the office and they can provide you with your activation key.

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

Students may check out materials at any time during LMC hours. Teachers will allow students to visit the LMC at various times during the day for check-out. If your child has finished reading an LMC book, please send it back to school with your child and encourage him/her to ask their teacher to visit the library. All materials will be checked-out to students for one week. There is no fine for overdue materials; however, check-out privileges can be suspended until all overdue materials are returned. If a material is lost or damaged beyond repair, the replacement value will be asked of the student’s parent or guardian so the item can be promptly replaced. LMC privileges may be affected by inappropriate use of the LMC or its materials.

MEDIA OPT-OUT

If you do not want your child(ren)’s image used by the media (television, newspaper, web, school publications and/or displays), please print and complete the media opt-out form located on the school district website under Families/Information/Opt Out Forms and turn in the completed form to your child(ren)’s teacher.

NEWSLETTER

The Spartan Scoop highlights happenings at the elementary school and throughout the entire district. It will provide parents with updates on upcoming events such as field trips, programs, and so on. It is sent electronically every Friday. The *Spartan Scoop* is also available via the district webpage. Additional school information may be sent via school messenger as necessary.

PARENT PICK-UP OF STUDENTS

Parents picking up their child during the school day should:

- 1) Wait in the office.
- 2) Meet their child in the office.
- 3) Sign out the child before leaving.
- 4) Office staff will page the child to the office so they can meet their parent.

Parents picking up a child at the end of the day should meet their child at the front entrance if traveling by car. The dismissal time is 3:00 pm. Please do not attempt to park in the north parking lot; this area must be kept clear for bus traffic. Students will exit the building from the door closest to their classroom and meet you at the front curb. Please pull as far forward as you possibly can to accommodate other vehicles picking up students.

PARENT QUESTIONS

Do you have a question about school? Did your child come home and say something that concerned you? If you have a question about anything at school, we **encourage** you to ask about it immediately. Please telephone, e-mail or stop in and the office staff or principal can help you or set up an appointment to meet with your child's teacher. Getting more information is usually the first step in resolving any issue or concern that may arise. When getting that information, please be respectful. We model respectful behavior for our students, we require it from them, and expect it from all adults who come to our building.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Conferences between the parent(s)/guardian and the student's teacher(s) are scheduled twice per year; in October and February. Information regarding conferences will be sent home with students prior to conference dates. Additional conferences may be scheduled at the request of either adult.

PARTIES

If you wish to send treats (birthdays, holidays, etc.) they must be prepackaged (no homemade treats allowed), please contact the teacher in advance. We encourage nutritious snacks. To avoid hurt feelings, please do not have children distribute invitations at school for private parties. Sending flowers or balloons to school is not allowed. If the school receives deliveries of these items, they will remain in the office until the end of the school day at which time your child may pick them up.

PEANUT/NUT FREE CLASSROOM GUIDELINES

Somerset Elementary School may determine a peanut/nut free classroom is appropriate on an individual basis when presented with evidence of a life-threatening allergy from a qualified physician and upon the request of the parent/guardian:

1. All food eaten in a peanut/nut free classroom should not contain peanuts or nuts.
2. The classroom teacher will send a letter home to all parents in the classroom explaining that any snacks brought into the classroom throughout the year must be nut free.
3. Any food brought into the classroom must have a complete ingredient label and must be prepackaged (no homemade treats allowed), or it will not be served to any students in the classroom. Home baked or bakery bought foods will not be allowed.
4. A Peanut/Nut Free Classroom poster should be posted in the classroom and should include a copy of the Guidelines for a Peanut/Nut Free Classroom
5. Students in this classroom should wash their hands with soap and water upon the return from lunch or recess. This will be made a part of the daily routine.
6. There will be a nut free table in the lunchroom.

Even with all the above steps in place, we cannot guarantee a 100% nut free environment. In addition to the steps above, we believe in the importance of building awareness within the student to prevent any issues.

PERSONAL PROPERTY AT SCHOOL

Students frequently have similar personal items. To prevent confusion, **coats, book bags and other personal articles should be clearly labeled.** The school has a lost and found location in the commons. If you lose something, check first with your child's teacher, then check the lost and found. Please claim lost items promptly. All unclaimed articles will be donated to clothing collection agencies monthly. Students are not permitted to bring trading cards or other toys and games from home, except for a specific purpose that has been pre-approved by their teacher. Please do not allow your child to bring cash to school, other than what is needed for a specific purpose.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students are required to participate in physical education classes. A written statement from the parent/guardian may be provided to the physical education teacher to excuse a student from **one day** of class only. **A doctor's statement is needed for any longer period of time.** All students will need a pair of non-marking tennis shoes, to be left at school, for physical education class.

PLAYGROUND

Students receive time to be on the playground for recess each day, except during inclement weather. Students receive 30-40 minutes of recess each day. **While on the playground,** as everywhere at school, **students are expected to play safely, act responsibly, and treat others with respect.** They should wear clothing appropriate for the weather, follow the directions of the playground supervisors and report problems with other students or equipment immediately. No student should leave the playground without the permission of the supervisor. Skateboards, rollerblades, and sporting equipment from home are not permitted on the playground, except as pre-approved for a specific event.

RECESS AND COLD WEATHER

During winter months, students will have outdoor recess daily and should be dressed appropriately for outdoor play. They should always have hats, boots, and mittens to cover all extremities. In the event of actual or wind-chill temperature, at recess time, of 0 degrees or lower, students will be required to stay indoors. This will be closely monitored and announced to students as conditions change. Our official weather site is www.weather.com. This is the site we use to determine temperature/wind chill readings.

SCHOOL WIDE EXPECTATIONS

At SES we strive to build a positive school culture and community based on the belief that the continual teaching, modeling and reinforcement of positive behaviors will support children and reduce discipline problems; thus promoting a climate of greater productivity, safety and learning. At Somerset Elementary School there are school-wide expectations that apply to student behavior at all times. Students are expected to:

- **Be Kind**
- **Be Respectful**
- **Be Safe**
- **Be your Best**

It is our hope that all students will abide by these expectations at all times, as they are the rules of good citizenship. Much of the focus of the elementary school discipline plan will be directed toward helping students to learn, understand, and live by these rules.

Our plan is based on children learning how to control their own behavior. Decision making and self regulation is taught just as reading and mathematics are taught. A plan is not a punishment, but an opportunity for good decision making and growth. Children are encouraged to think about the consequences of their behaviors and fix and learn from their mistakes while maintaining their dignity.

When children have made a poor choice, they are expected to work with an adult to:

- Acknowledge what they have done
- Apologize for their behavior
- Fix it or repair the relationship through the use of an apology or action
- Learn from the situation so the poor choice is not repeated

*Depending on the nature of the behavior, any of these steps may be passed for immediate action on the situation in compliance with district and state policy.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR FORMS

If a staff member sends a child to the office due to a major behavior issue, an office referral form will be completed and the student will meet with a member of the school behavior team (principal, behavior coach, guidance counselor or school psychologist) Parents and guardians will be contacted by a team member. If you have any questions regarding the behavior incident, please contact the principal.

TELEPHONE CALLS

Teacher's telephones will be turned off during instructional times. Feel free to leave a voice message but do not expect teachers to answer telephones while they are teaching. If you leave a voice message do not assume the teacher has been able to hear it before the 3:00 pm end of school day.

WATER BOTTLE USAGE

Students are encouraged to bring labeled water bottles to Somerset Elementary School and to use them during the day. Somerset Elementary School has two water fountains equipped to fill water bottles. Students must follow classroom and school rules with their water bottles and use them in a responsible fashion. At this time drinking fountains will not be available for student use.

WELLNESS/SNACKS/LUNCHES

Student wellness is very important to the Somerset School District. We work hard to provide healthy breakfasts and lunches for students. Please consider sending a healthy, individually packaged (no homemade treats allowed) treat to school for a student's birthday. Students are allowed to have healthy and nutritious snacks at school and classes take regular snack breaks. They are strongly discouraged from bringing pop, candy, gum, etc. at any time.