

**Lowell Elementary School
Grade PreK – Grade 5
School Information**

Table of Contents

School Schedule **page 2**

Calendar

Snow Closings and Delayed Openings

School Arrival and Dismissal Procedures **page 3**

School Hours

Morning Drop-Off

Dismissal

Parking on Warren Street

School Absence and Illness **page 4**

Absences

Illness

Before School and Extended Day Programs **page 4**

School Lunch and Morning Snack **page 5**

Instructional Specials **page 5**

Lost and Found **page 5**

Volunteering at School - CORI **page 6**

PTO **page 6**

Have Other Questions? **page 6**

School Schedule

Calendar

A copy of the school calendar can be found on the main Watertown Public School webpage:

<http://www.watertown.k12.ma.us/>

The last day of school is not fixed at the start of the year. State law requires 180 days of instruction, and also requires that any snow days be made-up before June 30th. The yearly school calendar includes 5 snow days (185 days). The exact last day of school is determined by how many snow days are used during the year to reach 180 days.

Snow Closings and Delayed Openings

School closures and delayed openings are:

- Posted on the District's website (www.watertown.k12.ma.us)
- Emailed to parents and staff from the Superintendent's office via the District's email messaging service
- Broadcast to the following stations:
 - WCVB Television (Channel 5)
 - WHDH Television (Channel 7)
 - WFXT Television (Channel 25)
 - WBZ Television (Channel 4)
 - WBZ Radio (AM 1030)

Some television stations provide a free text alert service notifying of closures and delays (e.g., www.fox25boston.com/weather/closing-login).

We post on the above locations as soon as the decision is made. On most occurrences, the decision to open, delay or close is made between 5:30 and 6:00 AM. It is only on rare occasions that conditions are such that a clear decision can be made the night before. In those cases we endeavor to make the decision in time to have it broadcast on the 11:00 PM news.

Please DO NOT CALL the School Department, Police Department, or Fire Department for school cancellation information, as these lines must remain open for emergency situations.

Delayed Openings

A delayed opening may be announced to allow the District and/or Department of Public Works to adequately prepare streets, walkways, and parking lots for safe travel. Delayed openings will be for one (1) hour to two (2) hours after the schools' regular scheduled start times. Before-school programs are cancelled on days with delayed openings. Lunch will be served at the regular time and school will close at the regular time.

Preschool

Preschool classes are cancelled on days of school closure. On days with delayed school openings, AM preschool will be cancelled and PM preschool will begin at the usual time.

Extended Day

Extended Day programs are cancelled on days of school closure. On days with delayed openings, before-school Extended Day programs are canceled and after-school Extended Day programs begin as usual. On occasion, the District may call for an early release or cancel PM and evening activities including after-school Extended Day programs. Please stay attuned to the aforementioned television and radio stations for notifications of PM closures.

School Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

School Hours

Arrival at 8:15 a.m. and dismissal at 2:30 p.m.

Doors open at 8:05 am and close at 8:15.

Dismissal for PreK-K will be the lower level exit doors (face front door on George Street and walk to the right down the hill, doors are by the small park)

Dismissal for grades 1-2 will be the door on the left hand side of the Lowell (Face front door on George street and walk to the left of the building)

Dismissal for grade 3-5 will be the front door (George St)

Morning Drop-Off

Doors open beginning at 8:05am and at 8:15am the doors will close, if you arrive after the doors close you must check in with the front desk administrator.

PreK – parents can walk their child into the classroom through the main door (Lowell Ave).

K-5th – children enter through the door on Lowell Ave for drop off, parents are not allowed to walk in with students at drop off.

Drop and Go

There is a drop and go option, cars are able to drive down Lowell Ave and drop their children off. Cars must pull all the way down and children are to exit on their own. If children aren't able to exit the car and gather their belongings on their own this options is not best suited for you at this time. Cars must not park in the drop and go lane, they must continue moving as this is a very busy time and traffic flow needs to continue.

Breakfast

The cafeteria opens at 7:45 a.m. for breakfast. Free and reduced breakfasts are available to qualifying students.

Applications can be found at <https://sites.google.com/a/watertown.k12.ma.us/dept/food> and are also located on the wall just inside the main doors of the school on a shelf under the office window.

Dismissal

Dismissal, regardless of weather, is at the normal morning drop-off door at 2:30. On early dismissal days (teacher conference days, holidays) dismissal is at 12:15 in the same location. Teachers will ensure that each child is picked up by a parent or other adult. If someone else will be picking up your child, it's helpful to send a note or email to the teacher to let them know.

If you need to have your child released from school early, you must send a note to the classroom teacher or call the office. An authorized adult, after reporting to the school office, must pick up your child. No child will be allowed to leave the school grounds without the authorization of a parent or legal guardian. The adult responsible for the student must sign the child out in the log at the school office.

One Way Streets & Parking

Please be advised that Lowell Ave off of Carrol is a one way street at all times, during school hours there is no entry to Lowell Ave from Carrol. During school hours George Street is one way as well.

The lane in front of the school is for rolling pick-up and drop-off only. If you are planning to walk your child to/from please park on one of the side streets. **Please do not block any driveways.** The parking lot is for school staff only, and should not be used for student drop-off or pick up. The parking spots in front of the main entrance are available for parking.

School Absence and Illness

Absences

If your child is marked absent from school, you will receive an automated phone call letting you know that your child is absent. If your child is absent, no further action is needed. If you receive a call on a day your child is in school, call the office.

If you know in advance that your child will be absent, you may email your child's teacher to coordinate any plans for make-up work. In the case of illness or other unplanned absence, you may also want to email your child's teacher. You do not need to call the office, or report the absence.

Illness

If your child becomes ill during the day, s/he will be sent to the school nurse. The nurse can provide basic first aid, and will assess whether or not a child is well enough to remain in class for the day. If the nurse determines that a child should not remain in class, parents will be called to come in for an early pickup.

Parents of students with allergies or other ongoing health conditions requiring the involvement of school staff should contact the nurse, Ms. Kathy Taverna at 617-923-6475.

Before School and Extended Day Programs

Lowell Extended Day Program (LEDP) has both before school and after school programs open for student enrollment.

The Before School Program begins the first day of school. Your child may be brought to the program starting at 7:15 AM. There will be quiet activities, crafts and games as well as homework time as needed. Children will be escorted to the appropriate lines for the start of the school day.

The Extended Day Program begins right at school dismissal. On special early dismissal days, LEDP begins at 12:15 with one exception: there is never LEDP the Wednesday before Thanksgiving Recess in November. This is always a 12:15 dismissal day with no after school care. Be prepared!

All information, including contacts and registration forms, can be found at the CEDP websites:

<https://sites.google.com/a/watertown.k12.ma.us/dept/extended-day-programs/extendeddaylowell>

If you are interested in signing up for the program, you may contact the Lowell Site Coordinator, Adam Vachon at adam.vachon@watertown.k12.ma.us.

School Lunch and Morning Snack

Each student should bring in a snack each day for their morning snack.

Students can either bring a lunch from home or purchase lunch in the cafeteria. Packed lunches may contain peanuts and/or tree nuts (unless you are directed by your teacher that it should be “nut free”). The school menu and prices can be found on the food menus link on the right of the Watertown Public School web page:

<https://sites.google.com/a/watertown.k12.ma.us/dept/food>

Free and reduced lunches are available to qualifying students. Applications can be found at the above link and will be sent home with each student at the beginning of the school year. **All information is kept confidential.**

Students can pay cash for their meal or use the debit system. Every student is given a unique 4 digit PIN when they start school. When a student purchases lunch, they enter their PIN at checkout and their account is debited the cost of their items. The system automatically adjusts prices for qualifying students when they enter their PIN. Don't worry - teachers have a list of each student's PIN information and help the younger students until they become familiar with the system and memorize their number.

Money can be added by sending a check in your child's school folder made out to “Watertown Food Services” (teachers will pass it along to the cafeteria staff). You may also bring the check, in person, to the cafeteria between 7:45 and 8:15 a.m. A minimum \$10 starting balance is required.

Instructional Specials

Students will have 'specials' each day throughout the week. Teachers will notify families of their class schedule at the beginning of the school year. Gym is held two days per week, and students must wear (or bring) sneakers on these days. Music, Art, and Library/Computer Technology each meet one day per week. Students are able to check out a library book each week. Books should be put in your child's backpack for return on library day the following week. Students who do not bring their books back will not be able to check out additional books until the overdue book is returned.

Lost and Found

Any items left in your child's classroom will be kept by the teacher or put into their cubby/locker in the hallway for students. Any items found elsewhere (hallway, playground, gym, cafeteria, etc.) will be placed in the Lost and Found box. Students or parents may look for items in the Lost and Found box before and after school. Currently the box resides in the cafeteria. By the end of winter this box is a treasure trove of single mittens, sweatshirts, hats, snow pants and boots.

Volunteering at School – CORI

There are many opportunities to volunteer during the year in both your child's class (guest reader, adult helper for holiday parties, etc) and in the main school building (cafeteria helper, library helper, field day activities, etc). Massachusetts requires any adult working inside the school obtain a local police background check to ensure the safety of all students and staff. This process is called CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information). Stop by the main office at any time and bring a front and back copy of your driver's license. The front office administrator will submit the necessary paperwork. Your CORI must be renewed every 3 years.

PTO

Lowell Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is a parent lead group that works directly with the principal and Lowell faculty to improve and enhance the academic and social experience of the students at our school. Money raised by the PTO helps fund enrichment programs and events like authors-in-residence in conjunction with our Literacy night, math enrichment workshop during math night and Science Tellers and Inventor Mentor for Science Night. The PTO purchases supplies for teachers, funds afterschool clubs for each grade and hosts numerous free family events throughout the year. Participation in all PTO fundraisers is completely optional but support is always needed and appreciated.

The PTO officially meets for one hour once per month and open to anyone that wants to attend.

PTO meetings are a great opportunity to hear from Principal Ms. Phelan, and to learn more about upcoming programs, facilities improvements, and more. Also watch for notices in your child's backpack for letting you know of upcoming PTO and school events.

The PTO website is a great resource for the school calendar, upcoming events both district wide and at the Lowell, fundraisers and so much more. The site is updated on a regular basis, you can visit it at <http://www.lowellpto.org>

Fundraisers & Dues

The Lowell PTO holds a number of fundraisers throughout the year that parents can decide to participate in or not. Those fundraisers are dinners where we get a small percentage of the restaurant sales, the annual Spelling Bee, our annual online auction, and Zumbathon. We do not ask children and families to sell items. What we do instead is collect family dues. The money we raise from the dues is used to pay for all of our events, afterschool clubs, teacher supplies, everything we do as an organization. The suggested dues amount is \$25 per child.

There are ways you can help the PTO without spending any additional money. If you shop at Stop and Shop, sending us your rewards number will allow the PTO to receive a percentage of all sales. If you shop amazon, use this link (smile.amazon.com/ch/27-2269413) for your shopping and we will get a percentage of all sales. If you have Box Tops, we hold a number of contests throughout the year, each one is worth \$.10 so we make quite a bit from families that participate.