

# A.J. SMITH ELEMENTARY



## UNION SPRINGS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

*Home of the Wolves*

---

# HANDBOOK 2024-25



## **SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

---

Our mission at Union Springs is to provide the opportunity for all students to reach their maximum educational potential and to foster positive growth in social and emotional behavior and attitude. We believe that these goals can be attained by the cooperation of all those directly related to the school – most importantly the students, as well as parents, teachers, administration, Board of Education, community, and all available support services. The teachers and administrators of Union Springs Schools believe that ALL students should learn and achieve mastery of basic grade level skills, regardless of family background, previous academic performance, social/economic status, race, or gender. This Mission Statement will be subject to yearly review by the faculty.

### **NOTICE**

Unique and unforeseen circumstances encountered will be reviewed and determinations, regarding expectations or procedures, will be made within the spirit and intent of the section under review. All expectations and procedures contained within this handbook are subject to further evaluation by the building Principal.

## **THE PURPOSE OF A.J. SMITH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

---

The staff at A.J. Smith Elementary School believes that each child is unique and deserves to be recognized and educated as such. We believe that all students can learn and achieve mastery of basic grade-level skills. We will provide an educational setting in which each student has the opportunity to achieve growth commensurate with ability. It is our school's purpose to educate all students to high levels of academic performance while fostering growth in social, emotional, and physical behaviors and attitudes. We accept the responsibility of teaching all students so that they can attain their maximum educational potential, thus enabling them to become productive, happy, contributing members of society.

### **Mission Statement**

The Union Springs Central School District is an organized body (composed of students, parents, staff, and community members) that nurtures all learning and recognizes individual differences in a challenging environment. ALL MEMBERS positively and respectfully encourage one another to succeed, inspiring pride in accomplishments. With everyone ultimately responsible for his or her life-long learning and behavior, the pursuit of excellence is our mission.

## **ELEMENTARY STUDENTS RIGHTS AND EXPECTATIONS**

---

The teachers and staff of the Union Springs Central School District want our students to be successful learners. We respect your right to an education that will help you become a contributing member of our community and society.

- You have the right to learn in a safe school setting.
- It is expected that you will practice safe behavior and that you will be respectful of others in your school.
- You have the right to be respected as a unique individual. Your family, culture, language and value will be honored. You have the right to express your individual identity without fear that others will not accept you or value your choices as a student.

- It is expected that your differences as a student make you an important part of your school. It is expected that no student will be bullied, criticized or excluded because of their race, gender, religion, socio-economic status or individual beliefs.
- You have the right to speak up for others when you see that they are being treated in an unfair and/or unsafe manner.
- It is expected that you will treat others the way you would like to be treated.
- It is expected that daily learning experiences are geared to your specific strengths and needs.

---

## **ACADEMIC INTERVENTION SERVICES**

---

Our school provides Academic Intervention Services (AIS) for students who are in need of extra support. Staff organizes the extra instruction for ELA and Math (K-4). Students receive AIS based on benchmark assessments, teacher recommendation and/or scores from state assessments that are below benchmark levels. A complete district plan is available upon request or by visiting [www.unionspringscsd.org](http://www.unionspringscsd.org).

---

## **ALLERGIES**

---

A.J. Smith has several students within the building who have allergies to various food items; nuts, eggs, dairy, etc. Please be cognizant of these allergies when sending in snacks as well as packing lunches. Classroom teachers will share with families if a student allergy is present in the classroom.

---

## **ATTENDANCE**

---

### **General Info**

Research shows that students who attend school regularly are more successful and have better self-esteem. Also, New York State Compulsory Education Law states that school age minors (age 6-16) must attend school regularly as prescribed where the student resides. Therefore, student attendance is closely monitored. Students should only be absent on days that they are not feeling well. Families should organize family vacations during school vacations so that valuable learning time is not lost.

The following are legal reasons for being absent from school:

- (1) Personal illness;
- (2) Illness in family;
- (3) Quarantine in the home;
- (4) Death of relative;
- (5) Observance of a religious holiday;
- (6) Impassable roads

Please note that family vacations, missing the bus, oversleeping, or lack of a babysitter do not fall in the excused category.

Notification (note, phone call, email) is required for any absence or tardiness. If a student is absent from school, the parent or guardian assumes responsibility for his/her whereabouts. The school district must obtain an excuse from the parent or guardian, signed by them stating the student's name, dates and days absent from school, and the reason for the absence.

After having a serious illness, head lice, scabies, or a communicable disease, students must report to the school nurse upon returning to the building. The nurse will verify that no traces of illness remain.

### **Arrival**

While it is highly recommended that students ride the bus, parents may choose to drive their child(ren) to school each day. Parents are asked not to enter the bus loop until all buses have unloaded. After the buses have pulled away, parents may enter the bus loop where a school staff member will greet you and supervise your child(ren) while they enter the building. Arrival time for parents who drive their child(ren) will be 8:50 - 8:55am.

**Students should NOT be dropped off or arrive before 8:45am, as there is no supervision.**

If a student arrives after 8:55am, they are considered tardy and must sign in at the MAIN OFFICE.

## ATTENDANCE (CONTINUED)

---

### Dismissal

If you chose to pick your child up at the end of the school day, please send a note in to the teacher **or call the main office prior to 2:30 pm. Dismissal for students is at 3:25 pm.**

Parents who wish to pick up their child(ren), or students walking home, will do so after buses have loaded and have departed the bus loop. Similar to the morning arrival routine, parents will pull up in the bus loop and students will be escorted to their parents' vehicle. **Parents will not be allowed to enter the building to pick their child up during dismissal time.**

**Please write a note for the main office if your child is a permanent pick-up or if your child will walk home from school.** Children will not be released to someone who is not on their approved pick-up list without permission from the parent/guardian. For your child's safety, we may ask to see a form of identification.

### Release of Students during School Hours

Every effort should be made to make doctor, dentist, and other appointments before or after school hours. Time lost with the teacher can never totally be made up! If this is impossible, students must bring a note to school on the morning of the appointment signed by their parent/guardian stating the date, time and reason to be excused. This note should be presented to the student's homeroom teacher when they arrive at school that morning. Students arriving at school late from appointments must bring an excuse with them and should first report to the main office so they can be removed from the daily absence report.

Parents desiring early release of their child following special school events should direct such a request to the office. Classroom teachers are not authorized to release children without office approval. We will only release a child to his or her parents or guardian unless we have the parents/guardians written permission to release the child to someone else. We will release a child to either parent unless we have specific **legal** documentation on file indicating otherwise. (See "Legal/Custody Issues"). All communication and release of students will be handled in the MAIN OFFICE.

### Early Dismissal

During the school year, there will be selected dates for half days. Dismissal procedures are the same as full days. Written notification should be provided for any transportation changes.

### Emergency Closing Information

If, in the judgment of the Superintendent, it is in the best interests of the health and safety of the children to cancel school, this will be done. It is of EXTREME importance that you instruct your children about what they are to do if school is canceled, delayed, or dismissed BEFORE the regular hour. Notice of school sessions being cancelled or delayed will be broadcast on television stations. A computerized system (School Messenger) may be used to communicate important information.

## ATTENDANCE (CONTINUED)

### Emergency Closing Information

WSTM-TV (Ch. 3)      WTVH-TV (Ch. 5)  
 WSYR-TV (Ch. 9)      YNN News 10 Now

School will be in session if you do not hear otherwise on one of these stations. Please DO NOT call the regular school telephone number to find out if school is in session. Information will also be available on our district website, [www.unionspringscsd.org](http://www.unionspringscsd.org).

It is most important that the school have an "Emergency School Closing" form on file for every student. These are sent home in June each year for the following school year. This form directs us where to deliver your child in case of an emergency closing. Be sure your child is thoroughly familiar with where he/she is expected to go if such an emergency does take place. If, during the school year, you need to make a change in where your child is to go, please notify the school as soon as possible.

Not only bad weather causes school closings. A particular situation in one of our buildings may require that it be closed while others remain open. In the event the building is not safe to re-enter, staff and students will follow evacuation procedures. This means that everyone is transported to a separate, nearby location until the school is deemed safe to re-enter. **Parents should not come to pick up their child(ren) until the decision has been made to close school early!** Teachers will have all emergency contact information with them and students will only be released to people who appear on the student's sign out sheet. **Please be sure to keep your emergency contact information up-to-date throughout the entire year!**

## BIRTHDAYS

Students are allowed to recognize their birthdays during the school year. Children whose birthdays occur during the summer months may have a day to celebrate their "unbirthday." Please give your child's teacher advance notice if you are sending in a treat for your child's birthday. Besides food items, pencils and/or erasers would be acceptable items to offer as a birthday "treat." All birthday treats must be store bought due to allergies and safety rules. Please be cognizant of birthday treats that student may be allergic to. Please check with the classroom teacher prior to sending a snack or treat into classrooms. A healthy snack is always the best choice of all. Parents wishing to drop off a birthday item should bring them to the main office. For safety and security reasons parents are not allowed to go to the classrooms during the school day.

Parents wishing to drop off items for students should bring them to the office. For safety and security reasons please **DO NOT go directly to the classroom!** As you know, we want to encourage parents to visit our school, but we are also working to reduce classroom interruptions and are planning ahead to ensure the safety of our students.

### Birthday Party Invitations

Many of our students bring invitations to school asking their friends to attend various types of parties. If many children in a classroom were given an invitation in school and your child was not, the pain he/she would feel is obvious. For this reason, invitations should not be distributed in school unless ALL children in a classroom are to be invited. Please be aware, the school is not allowed to give out student addresses.

## **BUILDING USE REQUESTS**

---

Any group wishing to use school facilities for an activity must first obtain approval. Building Use Request forms are available at the A.J. Smith Elementary School main office.

## **BUS POLICIES**

---

### **Student Responsibilities and Guidelines**

The Union Springs Central School District students will be expected to accept certain responsibilities in return for the privilege of riding the school bus.

- Please understand that your child may lose his/her riding privilege if he/she fails to follow the rules and regulations for bus riders. These are outlined and explained as follows:
- The student is expected to be on time at the bus stop. It is recommended students be ready 10 minutes prior to bus time.
- The student is expected to go to the correct stop and ride only the bus to which they have been assigned.
- Students should respect other people's property and stay off lawns and gardens.
- Students should stay safely out of the road while waiting, and line up with other students when the bus arrives.
- Students should be courteous to others by not crowding or pushing and by helping younger children.

Students boarding the bus should go immediately to available seats and sit down facing the front with their belongings in their laps. Once seated, students should not change seats unless instructed to by the bus driver. It must be understood that the driver is in complete charge. The student must listen to and obey the driver's instructions. The driver is to be treated with the same respect given to teachers, principals, and parents. With your cooperation, and your child's, all children will have a safe and enjoyable ride to and from school.

### **Child Care Transportation**

If your child will need to be transported to or from a location other than your home, a "Request for Transportation - Child Care" form must be completed in advance. This form must be signed by both the parent and the child care provider. You may obtain one from the Transportation Supervisor at (315) 889-5036 or the main office at (315) 889-4170.

## BUS POLICIES (CONTINUED)

### Bus Passes

In those cases where parents must request that their child be transported to a destination other than their home for a particular day, a written note is to be sent to school, in advance, to be processed by the office. Please do not send notes on post-its or small notes, 8 ½ x 11 paper would be preferred.

The note must include the following info:


- Date
- Date of change
- New destination (name and address)
- Bus number or name (if known)
- Signature of parent/guardian

This is for your child's protection and your own peace of mind. Below is a sample note requesting a bus pass and a sample of the actual pass that your child will receive to ride a bus other than his/her regular bus. Unexpected bus requests should be phoned to the office prior to 12:00 pm to allow us time to verify the request and issue a bus pass before departure.

October 5, 2016

Please allow Mary Jones to ride the bus to Susie Brown's house on 52 Martin Rd (dinosaur bus) after school today, October 5<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you,  
Mrs. Sandra Jones



**Bus Pass**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Bus \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ has permission to ride your afternoon trip to \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Building Principal

### Bus Rules

We expect that children will behave as good citizens so that their trip to school will be both pleasant and safe. The rules of good behavior include:

- Remain seated with seatbelt fastened for the duration of the trip.
- No animals on the bus.
- Keep legs and feet out of the aisles.
- No glass containers on the bus.
- Keep head and arms inside the bus when windows are open.
- Maintain acceptable self-control:
- No throwing objects from the bus windows.
- NO FIGHTING -- WITH FISTS OR WORDS
- Keep the bus clean.
- NO YELLING OR USING LOUD VOICES
- No eating or drinking on the bus.
- NO OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE

## **BUS POLICIES (CONTINUED)**

---

### **Bus Discipline**

MOST of our children behave appropriately on our buses. However, misbehavior does occur, though it is most typically dealt with in one or more of the following ways by the bus driver:

- Reprimand or talk to
- Reminding about the rules
- Temporary change in seating
- Assignment of a permanent seat
- Communication with the parent(s) or guardian by note, informal conversation, or by telephone

In those rare occasions when a child does not correct his/her own behavior, bus drivers are expected to submit a Transportation Conduct Report to the Transportation Supervisor. The consequences, as adopted by the Union Springs Board of Education are as follows:

**REPORT #1** — The building principal will meet with the student to review the expectations of bus citizenship. The student will receive a warning and the parents will receive a copy of the conduct report.

**FUTURE REPORTS** -- The building principal will again meet with the student to review the expectations of bus citizenship. The student may receive additional consequences, depending upon the severity of the situation. These consequences will follow a progressive continuum, similar to in-school consequences. These can include:

- Phone call to parent
- Behavior plan for the bus
- Temporary revocation of school privileges
- Consequences at home
- Lunch detention
- Office detention
- Bus suspension, 1-5 days
- In-school suspension, 1-5 days

Chronic and severe discipline problems will be referred to the Superintendent for long-term suspension. During the period of any suspension, it becomes the responsibility of the parents/guardians to transport the student to and from school.

If you have concerns about your child's behavior on the bus, please feel free to contact the bus driver, Mrs. LaDouce or Mrs. Andrea Lang, Transportation Supervisor, at (315) 889-5036.

### **Extracurricular Activity Transportation**

Our district provides transportation for students involved in extracurricular activities. The Late bus arrives at the school at 4:50 pm and shuttles students to the High School for the 5:00 pm run home.



## CAFETERIA

---

Breakfast is offered to students upon arrival at school each morning. Breakfast is provided from 8:45 – 8:55 am. Children who bring their own lunches may purchase milk. **Please note, we are unable to warm up lunches in the microwave. Please send cold lunches.**

Free or reduced price lunches and breakfasts are available to those families who meet certain federal requirements. If you have any questions, please contact the district Food Services Director, Kathy Smith at (315) 889-4120.

The following general rules are aimed at improving behavior in the cafeteria. The goal is to provide a pleasant environment in which children can eat their meal and relax while talking with one another. Therefore, behavior in the cafeteria should be no different than a family meal at home. Lunchroom monitors oversee the children's 30-minute lunch period. Students are expected to be respectful, responsible, and safe.

**During the lunch time, it is expected that students will:**

1. Always walk.
2. Carry tray with both hands.
3. Stay seated with belly to the table.
4. Eat/touch his/her own food.
5. Clean up after themselves.
6. Get what is needed while in line.
7. Raise a hand for help.
8. Use level 2 voice while eating.
9. Give personal space.
10. Use good manners.

## CHANGES IN STUDENT INFORMATION

---

If there is a change in address, telephone number, day care provider, emergency contact person, etc. please notify the school office as soon as possible.

If you are leaving our school district, please contact our office to inform us of the last day of school. When you register your child in his/her new school, we will receive contact from the school pertaining to a transfer of student records.

## CHARACTER EDUCATION

---

Our Character Education program involves both formal and informal work with students. It is our goal to help students recognize and implement the core values of Respect, Responsibility, and Safety in their daily interactions through the use P.B.I.S (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports). PBIS seeks to teach students appropriate behavior using targeted lessons and practice. Our K-4 PBIS motto is "W O W" which stands for the "Way of the Wolf" using the phrases; Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Safe!

## CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

---

Section 413 of the Child Protective Services Act requires school officials to report cases of alleged child abuse or neglect. The Cayuga County Child Protection Services will meet with the student if a case is reported and accepted.

## CHILD CUSTODY ISSUES

---

If there are legal custody issues involving your child(ren), the office MUST have a copy of the court orders currently in effect. This helps avoid any potential problems/questions that may arise.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

The Union Springs School District Code of Conduct lists a range of consequences related to student discipline. All students are held to the tenants in the Code of Conduct. Please refer to the complete Code of Conduct found on the district webpage: [www.unionspringscsd.org](http://www.unionspringscsd.org). At the Elementary level, response to student conduct and disciplinary issues takes place in a graduated manner when appropriate. The school recognizes that while inappropriate student behavior must be addressed, it is equally important to examine and resolve the factors causing the behavior. With this goal in mind it is important for staff members and parents to join together in an effort to quickly identify and intervene in situations involving poor conduct.

The following is a list of unacceptable behaviors, actions, and attitudes with disciplinary consequences:

### Personal Property

- Students may not bring to school or have any items that are unsafe, illegal, or dangerous (e.g. knives, sharp objects, fireworks, matches, lighters, etc.). Toy weapons are also not allowed.
- The use of cell phones for any purpose is strictly prohibited during the instructional day. Cell phones are permitted for emergency use only before 8:55 a.m. and after 3:10 p.m. If a student needs to make an emergency call from school during the instructional day the call should be placed by the school secretary from the main office. If a parent/guardian needs to get in touch with a student in an emergency, the call should be routed through the main office, and our secretary can assist you. We strongly encourage cell phones and all electronics to be left at home. If, however, they are brought to school, all electronic devices, including cell phones, should be off and put in a student's bag during the school day.
- Students may not smoke, vape, or chew tobacco on school grounds.
- Students may not possess or use illegal substances and/or objects.
- Students may not steal or intentionally damage someone else's property.

### Dress Code

The Union Springs School District and the Board of Education recognize that each student's mode of dress and grooming is a manifestation of personal style and individual preference. Student dress and personal appearance is and always has been the responsibility of each student and their parents or guardians. Student dress reflects the quality of the school. Our schools take pride in the appearance of our students. The Board will not interfere with the right of students and their parents to make decisions regarding their appearance, except when their choice affects the educational process of the schools.

The Superintendent designates the principal as the arbiter of student dress and grooming in his/her building to ensure the regulations below are enforced:

- To promote the health and safety of student body, footwear must be worn at all times. Open-toed shoes are NOT allowed at outdoor recess or in physical education classes.
- Teachers of special classes or activities such as physical education, may regulate students' dress when appropriate for health, safety or educational reasons.
- Students may not wear clothing (includes accessories; hats, jewelry, belts, backpacks, outerwear) that causes either a disruption or interference with the educational process or discipline in the school.

## CODE OF CONDUCT (CONTINUED)

---

### Dress Code (Continued)

- Additional clothing not permitted include short and/or tight shorts and skirts, strapless tops, and bare midriff shirts. All clothing must fit appropriately.
- Students may not wear clothing (includes accessories; hats, jewelry, belts, backpacks, outerwear) which promotes the use of alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco or which pose a health or safety hazard to that student or to the student body.
- Clothing (includes accessories; hats, jewelry, belts, backpacks, outerwear) may not be lewd or offensive.
- Students may not wear hats, headgear or head coverings (except for medical or religious reasons) in the classroom (K-5 only).
- Clothing (includes accessories; hats, jewelry, belts, backpacks, outerwear) may not advocate racial, religious or other forms of prejudice or otherwise infringe upon the rights of others.
- In those instances of student dress which are contrary to health and safety standards, or are deemed distracting to the educational process, the administration reserves the right to decide on individual cases and take remedial action consistent with the school's disciplinary.

### Cafeteria

- Students must follow directions given by the cafeteria monitors.
- Students must remain in their seats while eating unless given permission to move.
- Students must not take food and drink from the cafeteria without permission.
- Students must not throw food. They must leave their eating area clean.

### Bathrooms

- Students are to use bathrooms, wash hands, and return to class without unnecessary delay.

### Attitude and Behavior

- Students are expected to follow requests made of them by any school personnel.
- Students are expected to use courteous and appropriate language. Students must be respectful to others.
- Students are expected to act in an attentive (non-disruptive) manner during instructional time.

### School Property

- Students may not purposely damage, deface or misuse any school property.
- Students are required to walk on the sidewalk when entering or leaving the school. Students are to enter the building by the front entrance of the building.
- Students may not pick up stones, snow, and/or rocks that could result in personal injury and/or damage to property.

### Hallways

- Students are to line up quietly with no pushing or shoving. They are to move along with their class, staying in line.
- Students are required to walk in the hallway without disturbing other students and/or classes.

## CODE OF CONDUCT (CONTINUED)

---

### Physical Contact Threats

Students are not permitted to fight, push, shove, hit, bite and/or threaten to harm others.

### Honest and Respect

Students are expected to act in an honest manner. Cheating and/or copying will not be tolerated. Andrew J Smith Elementary School seeks to maintain a safe, supportive learning environment for all students and promotes respect and dignity throughout the school year. Students are expected to show respect to all students, staff, and adults on school property and during school functions.

## ELECTRONIC DEVICES

---

Student possession and/or use of cell phones, handheld games, music players, and similar personally-owned devices are prohibited unless pre-approved by the teacher for an educational purpose. Students who bring in personally-owned electronics do so at their own risk, as these items may be lost or stolen and not returned. It is in the best interest of the student/family to keep all personally-owned electronic devices home. All cell phones must be turned off and put away in school and on the bus from 8:00 am – 4:30 pm, unless there is a school emergency or a student's safety is in jeopardy.

## EMAILING TEACHERS

---

The quickest way to contact your child's teacher is through e-mail. Although parents are always welcome to call school to speak with their child's teacher, we do not put calls through to classrooms during student instruction times. If you call the office we will make sure your child's teacher gets a message to contact you when they can. E-mail is often the most efficient way to reach your child's teacher or a member of our faculty and staff. You can reach any teacher via e-mail by using the teacher's first initial and last name followed by @unionspringscsd.org (example: Jane Smith can be reached at [jsmith@unionspringscsd.org](mailto:jsmith@unionspringscsd.org)). A staff directory is also on the school's website. If you have any questions about the e-mail address of a teacher or support staff member please contact our main office (315) 889-4170 or check the district website for assistance. <https://www.unionspringscsd.org>.

## EMERGENCY DRILLS/LOCKDOWN/EVACUATION

---

The school is mandated by the state to have twelve evacuation drills during the school year (eight in the fall and four in the spring), with four of the drills being lockdowns. Additional Emergency Evacuation drills may be held (in cooperation with local law enforcement and safety advisors.) These are done randomly without prior notification to staff or students.

At the sound of the alarm, students (supervised by staff) will leave the building by the route posted in each room. Students are to remain silent, follow directions, and leave the building as quickly as possible. Visitors are required to participate during a drill.

## FIELD TRIPS

---

Field trips are conducted for educational purposes. Parents will be notified at least 24 hours in advance of any field trip by the teacher in charge. Permission slips are required for all field trips. Participation in field trips is based on the demonstrated ability of each student to behave responsibly and to represent the school in a positive manner. Field trips are part of the child's school day and not a family activity. Most field trips are paid for by the school. However, there are some trips in which the students will be asked to provide payment.

## FUND RAISING

---

Fund raising is not permitted within the school unless authorized by the principal. No selling should occur in school or on the bus. Students who wish to make sales to school staff should do so outside of school.

## GYM EXCUSE

---

Parents may write an excuse from gym class and recess for up to one week where there is a suspected health problem. A doctor's excuse is required for periods exceeding one week. An excuse from gym also excuses a student from recess activities.

## HEALTH SERVICES

---

### School Nurse

The school nurse is very important in providing emergency first-aid care to the children and in communicating with parents about their child's health. It is important, therefore, that the school have a current home phone and work phone number for one or both parents. If a situation exists whereby neither parent is available during the day, the school nurse should be contacted to have parents complete forms authorizing emergency treatment or an acceptable alternate arrangement. The child's well-being is at stake.

If your child has a medical problem, the school nurse should be made aware of the problem (e.g., bee sting allergies, seizures, asthma, etc.)

If a child is out sick and diagnosed as having a communicable disease (e.g., lice, chicken pox, pink eye, etc.) parents should notify the nurse ASAP.

The nurse keeps up-to-date health records including height, weight, vision, hearing, and teeth defects. She also assists the school physician and records the routine health examinations of all new entrants to school; the children receiving CSE services; the children in grades PK, K, 1st, 3rd, and 5th (students who have not had a physical by their family physician). If parents have any health related information which would be a factor in their child's school experience, they should contact the nurse to update the health record. If you do not wish to have the school physician perform a physical on your child, one must be done by your own physician and the results sent to the school nurse prior to October 1.

## HEALTH SERVICES (CONTINUED)

### Accidents

Safety is our number one priority, however, accidents will happen, and it is important that the school nurse and the office know where to contact parents in an emergency. PLEASE BE SURE TO KEEP PARENT HOME OR WORK PHONE NUMBERS UP-TO-DATE.

Accidents sometimes happen and are not noticed by staff. Children must report all injuries or accidents at once to their teachers. Appropriate treatment, parent notification and completion of accident reports can then occur. Injuries requiring medical treatment are covered FIRST under the PARENT'S medical insurance program then, if appropriate/applicable, by the School District's accident insurance. Specific questions in this event are handled through the School District Business Office, (315) 889-4157.

### Immunizations

All students entering Pre-K and Kindergarten must be immunized against Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, Measles, Mumps and Rubella, Hepatitis B, and Varicella. Physicians administering such immunizing agents are required to provide a certificate of immunization to the parent. A note or letter from the parent is NOT acceptable. If a student has not been properly immunized within 14 school days of admittance, the child will NOT be allowed to remain in school. The following immunizations are required:

IMMUNIZATION	PRE-K	KINDERGARTEN
DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis)	4 doses	4 to 5 doses
Polio	3 doses	3 to 5 doses
MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)	1 dose	2 doses
Hepatitis B	3 doses	3 doses
Varicella (or proof of active disease)	1 dose	2 doses
Haemophilus Influenzae	1 to 4 doses	
Pneumococcal Conjugate	1 to 4 doses	

**Within 2 weeks of 11th birthday/ or to enter 6th grade:**

Tdap	1 dose
------	--------

**The New York State Public Health Law, Section 2146, further states:**

1. "... if a physician will testify or certify that administering the vaccine to a specific youngster is detrimental to his/her health under the present condition, he/she may be excused."

### Medical Emergencies

In the case of emergency medical attention, a student will typically be transported to Auburn Memorial Hospital via ambulance. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible. For medical problems that do not require an ambulance, parents or guardians will be contacted. The district carries a blanket insurance package that provides only secondary insurance coverage for students. Your own family insurance must provide the primary coverage.

### Medications

New York State regulations and school policy state that school nurses may not dispense any medication, including over-the-counter drugs (cough drops, cough syrup, aspirin, etc.) to students UNLESS THERE IS A WRITTEN REQUEST FROM THE PARENTS AND WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM THE PHYSICIAN. The note from the physician should state the dosage, frequency, duration, and name of the medication. Parents must bring in medication to avoid the possibility of other children using it, or the parent may give the medication to the bus driver. MEDICATION IS NEVER TRANSPORTED BY THE CHILD. Medications must be in the original bottle and remain in school.

## HOMework

---

Homework for young children should help them develop good study habits, foster positive attitudes toward school, and communicate to them that learning should take place at home as well as at school. Homework can have a positive impact on character development and can serve as an additional link between the school and home. Homework assignments keep parents informed about what a child is learning at school. Research indicates that study skills are widely recognized as one of the keys to successful learning. The most effective way to achieve a high level of study skills for all students is through a partnership between the school and home. Homework expectations vary by grade level based on needs of students. If you have questions about the homework policy of your child's teacher we encourage you to contact them via e-mail or call to set up a parent/teacher conference.

If a student is ill, suspended, or for some other reason not in school, teachers will prepare homework for an absent child if the school is contacted in advance.

## MUSIC OPPORTUNITIES

---

Fourth and fifth grade students will have the opportunity to participate in lessons and band as well as chorus. A parent meeting will take place early in the fall of each school year to explain the above opportunities for students. Third grade students will have the opportunity to explore a variety of musical instruments to participate in lessons with the following year.

## PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

---

The parent/teacher conference gives you an excellent opportunity to become better acquainted with the school and the teachers. It is important that you and the teacher share your child's needs. These conferences are one of the most effective means of evaluating the pupil's progress. **All parents should plan to attend these conferences.**

At the end of marking period one, it is the expectation of each parent to meet their child(ren)'s teacher to review and receive the first quarter report card. In the spring the teacher may request a conference if they feel it is necessary. Parents or teachers may request a conference at any time during the school year. A conference can be arranged by sending a note to your child's teacher or by calling the school office.

The teacher workday is 8:15 am - 3:45 pm. Except when working with students or attending meetings, the 8:15 - 8:40 am time period is when members of the teaching staff are most likely to be available to accept phone calls. Classes will not be interrupted for teachers to take a phone call. Written and email communications are encouraged.

## PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

---

Parents are encouraged to join and actively participate in the Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO). The activities planned each year benefit children and help promote programs of interest and benefit to both parents and teachers. The PTO generally meets the first Wednesday of each month.

In past years, the PTO has donated computer software, purchased playground equipment, sponsored assembly programs, back to school picnics, walk-a-thons, BINGO night, and book fairs. Their regular meetings have included presentations on such topics as the mathematics and reading curriculum, being a successful parent, handicapped awareness and dealing with the problems of alcohol and drug abuse.

Your attendance and participation is both invited and needed! A program for the year and a directory of officers will be published by the PTO early in the school year.

All parents of children in grades PreK-5 are considered to be PTO members.

## PLAYGROUND RULES

Our playground rules are intended to make the playground a safe and fun place for all the children.

- We walk on the wood chips.
- We use the equipment correctly.
- We wait our turn.
- We play safely.
- We use kind words.
- We wear only closed toed shoes on the wood chips and playground equipment.
- Use of the playground may be limited during the winter due to snow/ice.
- Most importantly...we have fun!

## REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued three times each year. The first report card is given to parents on parent conference day in November. The remaining two report cards are sent home with students after each 12-13 week period. **Please take time to review the report card with your child, and then sign and return the report card envelope to school promptly.** An ongoing dialogue between parent and teacher should clarify any area of concern regarding the progress of a child. Teachers will not be called from classes to discuss parent questions. You may call the school, however, to arrange a mutually convenient time for a conference or return call from the teacher.

## RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI)

Response to Intervention (RtI) is the practice of providing high-quality instruction/intervention matched to student needs and using learning rate over time and level of performance to make educational decisions about an individual student. (NASDSE, 2006) Each day educators make important decisions about students' educational programs, including decisions as to whether a student who is struggling to meet the standards set for all students might need changes in the nature of early intervention and instruction or might have a learning disability. This decision as to whether a student has a learning disability must be based on extensive and accurate information that leads to the determination that the student's learning difficulties are not the result of the instructional program or approach. RtI is an effective and instructionally relevant process to inform these decisions. RtI begins with high quality research-based instruction in the general education setting provided by the general education teacher. Instruction is matched to student need through provision of differentiated instruction in the core curriculum and supplemental intervention delivered in a multi-tier format with increasing levels of intensity and targeted focus of instruction. Students who are not making desired progress will receive supplemental intervention (this may include Academic Services like Leveled Literacy Intervention, math fact strategies, and/or behavior plans). A team of staff members (BIT – Building Intervention Team) meet to problem solve collaboratively with the student's teacher(s). If the student continues to not make sufficient progress after receiving the most intensive level of instructional intervention, it may be determined that a referral for a comprehensive evaluation to determine eligibility for special education is needed.



# SCHOOL BEHAVIOR

---

## Expectations

The Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) emphasizes the creation and maintenance of a positive learning environment for all students. In addition, the Dignity Act requires the development of measured, balanced, and age-appropriate responses to the discrimination and harassment of students by students and/or employees on school property, including school functions, with remedies and procedures focusing on intervention and education. Our complete policies can be accessed in any administrative office (Dignity For All Students policy #7555; Code of Conduct policy #3410; Civility, Citizenship and Character Education policy #8234).

This school year, we will be implementing a positive behavior system titled PBIS. PBIS stands for Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports and is a building-wide philosophy designed to apply evidence based strategies to:

- Increase academic performance
- Increase student safety
- Decrease problem behavior
- Establish positive school culture

PBIS is a school-wide framework for preventing, reducing, and replacing problem behaviors. Its purpose is to explicitly teach positive appropriate behaviors. It is based on the understanding that behavior is learned and therefore, can be taught.

As part of the PBIS system, teachers and support staff at A.J. Smith Elementary School have designed mini lessons that will help TEACH positive behaviors and expectations throughout the building. Our motto is be safe, be respectful, be responsible.

Parents are an important part of the PBIS implementation. We encourage parents to use the same expectations and rules used in school. This common language creates consistency and a unified support system for expected behavior. Parents are asked to discuss the common rules and expectations with their child(ren). Families are encouraged to post the rules and expectations for easy reference. Children thrive when they have consistent and predictable expectations.

PBIS Home Checklist – a few ways to support at home

- Ask your child about his/her day
- Review making wise choices
- Ask your child how they modeled positive behavior
- Discuss ways your child used PBIS to solve a problem
- Use encouraging words at home to support positive behaviors

## SCHOOL BEHAVIOR (CONTINUED)

---

**We expect our students to behave in the following manner:**

1. Students will show courtesy towards each other both physically and socially.
2. Students will show courtesy to all adults regardless of position.
3. Students will use appropriate language at all times.
4. Students will use appropriate manners at all times.
5. Students will walk in the hall and conduct themselves in an orderly manner.
6. Students will abide by all classroom rules established by the teacher.
7. Students will show good sportsmanship at all school events.
8. Students will report all unusual occurrences to their teacher.
9. Students will do their very best on all school related work.
10. Students will respect other's property and possessions.

Since children are growing and learning, they may stray from these guidelines. When this happens the teacher or other staff member will remind the student of what our expectations are. If a child consistently refuses to follow the guidelines, they may lose a classroom privilege.

If a student's behavior does not improve, the principal or teacher will notify the parent. It is important to note that we want to work closely with you, the parent. Our intent is the improvement of a student's behavior. A conference will be scheduled with the teacher and/or principal to devise a plan to deal with and correct the problem in as positive a fashion as possible.

For severe behavior problems, it may be necessary for the principal to suspend a student for up to five days. If this occurs, the parent will be notified in writing within one day. A conference may be requested by the parent. Suspensions of more than five days require a Superintendent's Hearing.

As mentioned, our students are well-behaved and we are proud of the good citizenship that they consistently demonstrate. It is important that our students help maintain the safety and security of our schools. Any student and/or parent who believes that s/he is knowledgeable of any possible Code infringements (i.e. anyone being subjected to bullying/cyber-bullying behavior, know of a weapon), should promptly report the behavior to any staff member or the building principal.

## **Bullying**

The Dignity Act emphasizes the creation and maintenance of a positive learning environment for all students and prohibits discrimination and harassment of students on school property or at school functions by any student and/or employee. Behaviors that create a hostile environment by conduct, with or without physical contact and/or verbal threats, as well as intimidation or abuse of such a severe nature that educational performance is unreasonably and substantially interfered with are strictly prohibited. The Dignity Act also requires the development of age-appropriate responses to discrimination and harassment of students by students and/or employees.

Bullying of a student by another student is strictly prohibited on school property (in buildings, on buses, or at school sponsored events on or off campus). Bullying (physical, verbal, or psychological) is defined as a variety of negative acts carried out repeatedly over time. It involves a real or perceived imbalance of power with a more powerful child or group attacking those who are less powerful.

Cyber-bullying is deliberately harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening or terrorizing another person via e-mail, instant messaging, blogs, chat rooms, cell phones, gaming systems, social media websites, or any other electronic means. Cyber-bullying that occurs on or off campus is strictly prohibited.

## **Weapons**

No person on school premises may have in his/her possession any rifle, shotgun, pistol, revolver, other firearm, ammunition, explosives, knives, dangerous chemicals, or any object which is not necessary for school activities and which could be used as an instrument to inflict bodily harm. This includes any "look-alikes" which school or law enforcement personnel could perceive as real.

---

# **SCHOOL COUNSELING**

---

Elementary age children are at the beginning stages of learning about academics, classroom rules and expectations and friendship interactions. They are developing an understanding of themselves and those around them as they interact in the school environment. These interactions create a wide range of emotions that the student must process and learn to display in acceptable school behavior. This is a great time of learning as the children are beginning to develop friendships, values and character, work ethic, confidence in their abilities, and personal independence. Our elementary school counseling program is imperative for students to continue to learn, grow and adjust to changes in the world around them. The school social worker, MOST Counselors, and school psychologists assist students in developing readiness skills for social/emotional development, career awareness and exploration, bully prevention, and academic development. These counselors help remove obstacles for each child that impedes their ability to be successful in the school setting.

Our school counseling program provides specific instructional, preventative, and intervention experiences that enable each child to proceed in life with preparatory skills necessary to achieve their goals. The elementary counseling program benefits from strong collaboration and connections with classroom teachers, parents, community members, administration and professionals. The leadership provided by our student support team can help facilitate connections that create worlds of opportunities that the child previously thought unattainable.

## SCHOOL PROPERTY

---

### Supplies

The “tools of the trade” for boys and girls in school are books, pencils and paper. The school district does provide textbooks, workbooks, and library books for student use. Reasonable care of district-owned books is expected. The students and their parents are responsible for such care and will be charged for damaged or lost books issued to them.

On a day-to-day basis students will need their own pencils or pens and notebooks and/or paper necessary to carry out daily class activities and assignments. Specially lined composition paper, art paper and other special materials are provided by the school. Each grade level communicates their expectations of student-provided material early in the school year.

### Miscellaneous

Skateboarding and rollerblading/skating are not allowed on school property.

## SITE-BASED TEAM

---

This representative group of stakeholders is composed of certified staff members, support staff members, the building principal, parents and community members who work together for the ultimate purpose of improving our schools. It was formed as part of the district’s response to the Shared Decision Making requirement in the New York State Compact for Learning. Meetings are held once per month and are open to the public. Specific dates and times can be obtained by contacting the building principal.

## STATE ASSESSMENT

---

The Union Springs School District will be administering the New York State’s Grades 3-8 Assessments in all elementary and middle schools as per state regulation.

The District has received inquiries regarding the “opt out” or test refusal movement, and as such, would like to share the following information with you prior to the start of the testing period. Please carefully review and consider the information below:

- As always, students who do take the assessments should be encouraged to do their best without any additional pressure. Union Springs’ students are expected to try their best every day. These testing events are no different.
- Students should not concern themselves with the thought of any consequences to themselves, their teachers, or their school, when taking state assessments. They should just demonstrate their capabilities.
- A test cannot be coded as a refusal once it has been started. If a student begins a state assessment, he or she will receive a score, even if he/she subsequently refuses to take the remainder of the test. A test that is started but not completed due to refusal, will receive a low score which is considered by the New York State Education Department to be a valid test score.

## TECHNOLOGY: COMPUTER NETWORKS & STUDENT DEVICES (CONTINUED)

- There is absolutely no penalty for students who refuse to take the state assessments. State performance data is included when making placement decisions although such decisions can be made using other performance data from the classroom in the absence of state data.
- In recent years, the State of New York instituted some changes regarding state assessments as a result of parent feedback. These changes included:
  - Greater involvement of educators in the test development process
  - A decrease in the number of test questions students were asked to answer
  - A shift to untimed testing; so students could work at their own pace
  - A new testing vendor. Questar Assessment has replaced Pearson and is responsible for the construction of test forms and guidance materials.
- Students who refuse the test(s) should bring appropriate reading materials to school on testing days.

## TECHNOLOGY: COMPUTER NETWORKS & STUDENT DEVICES

Students have the right to use designated computer resources owned by the Union Springs Central School District for educational purposes.

- Refrain from using anonymous sites to pose embarrassing questions or harmful remarks.
- Refrain from communicating with or accessing internet websites that endorse violence, hate, illegal or libelous material. (Note: This description is not meant to prohibit materials that are used for educational purposes and supported by a teacher or classroom requirement).
- Record, send post, email, text or upload video digital pictures/photos of another person only with explicit permission from that person
- If permission is granted to post a picture (see above), it needs to be used in a way that the person granting the permission intended and it cannot be altered in any way (such as photo-shopping) without permission of that person.

All computer resources, including files maintained on hard drives and servers, remain in the possession and control of the USCSD. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy rights in any information or communications created or accessed using the District's electronic media and services. The section above applies to all electronic devices and computer networks. Included are all school sponsored events that take place on and off school property, even during non-school hours.

### Students Have the Right and Responsibility:

#### 1) To respect and protect the privacy of others and to have their privacy protected

- Use only assigned accounts and passwords and don't share your passwords.
- Use, view or copy only authorized passwords, data or networks.
- Log into districts systems using ONLY your name and accessing ONLY your files.
- Read, delete, copy or modify only your own electronic mail or files.
- Disclose names, personal contact information or any other private or personal information about yourself only and think carefully about what you are disclosing about yourself.

## **Students Have the Right and Responsibility (Continued):**

- When you receive an email message, share it only with permission of the person who sent you the message.
- Act responsibly at all times when using District accounts.

### **2) To respect and protect the integrity, availability, and security of all electronic resources**

- Observe all network security practices as posted
- Abide by the District's filtering software and refrain from bypassing the filtering software. Students have the right to ask permission from a staff member to have the filter software unblocked if the site is needed for educational purposes and the staff member will make that determination.
- Respect data, networks, or other USCSO electronic resources
- Load software onto the district's computers or network only with USCSO administrative permission.
- Comply with District policy and regulations including state, local and federal law regarding the distribution, transmission or downloading of material, information or software.

### **3. To respect and practice the principles of the USCSO community**

- Communicate in ways that are kind and respectful
- Refrain from any communication via any electronic media (email, social networking sites, iPods, cell phones, etc.) that is hurtful towards another person or group of people or/and harms their reputation. This would also include deleting any hurtful correspondence that you receive.
- Communications or forwarded messages must be free of any personal attacks including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
- Wait and think carefully before sending or responding to an angry email.
- Electronic student polling sites are hurtful and disrespectful and must be avoided.
- Communications that use bias language or are discriminatory (such as "that's so gay" or "she's retarded") are hurtful and disrespectful and must be avoided.
- Delete any spam, chain letters or other mass unsolicited mailings.

---

## **THEFT/SEARCH**

School desks, cubbies, and lockers are property of the school and provided for the use and convenience of students. As such, school staff retains access to desks, cubbies and lockers. Cases of theft will be communicated to the parents of students involved to enlist their aid in preventing future occurrence. Theft or damage of property has not been a major problem in our elementary schools. Students are learning "community living". For some, it is their first experience socializing with people other than their family. The values of responsibility, concern for others, and honesty are constantly taught or reinforced. In any occurrence of theft or damage of property, full restitution of the property or its replacement at fair market value is expected. To help reduce incidence of theft, students should not bring unlabeled and/or valuable personal property or large sums of money to school.

## **TOBACCO/SMOKING/VAPING**

---

No student shall use, possess, sell, or distribute tobacco products on school grounds or at school sponsored events. Tobacco advertising is not allowed on school property, grounds, at any school sponsored off-campus event and in all school sponsored publications.

The term “tobacco products” includes, but is not limited to, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, or any smoking paraphernalia.

## **VISITORS**

---

All visitors, defined as everyone except registered students and school district staff, must report to and sign-in at the office where you will obtain a visitor pass. On one hand, we do wish to communicate with you as parents as much as possible. On the other hand, we can't permit interruptions to classes in session. This reduces instructional time and valuable teacher/student contact time.

All persons on school property or attending a school function shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. In addition, all persons on school property or attending a school function are expected to be properly dressed for the purpose they are on school property and to ensure avoidance of any distractions from the learning process.

A complete list of expected behaviors and possible penalties is available in the District Code of Conduct. Visitors should refrain from parking in the front circle, as this space may be needed for emergency vehicles.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

---

Parents/guardians are welcome to serve our school as volunteers in a wide variety of ways.

Volunteers may be needed on field trips, for special classroom events, for special school events, or may be needed in individual classrooms on an occasional or routine basis. All volunteers are required to fill out a district volunteer application form that can be obtained through our main office. Applications should be returned to the main office and are then sent to district office for approval. If you are interested in learning about volunteer opportunities please contact your child's teacher or our main office.

A J Smith also has a very active and supportive Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Please consider attending meetings and supporting the PTO in any way you can. The PTO meets on the first Wednesday of each month with the exception of December. Meetings begin at 5 pm in the cafeteria.

## DISTRICT FACULTY AND STAFF

### District Office – (315) 889-4100

Dr. Jarett Powers, Superintendent of Schools

Valerie Castiglia, Secretary to the Superintendent

### Business Office (315) 889-4106

Mike Wurster, Assistant Superintendent

Teresa Carner, Purchasing Clerk  
(315) 889-4106

### High School – (315) 889-4110

Jason Dentel, High School Principal  
(Grades 9-12)

Lorraine Gibbs, High School Secretary

Nina Darnell, College & Career Counselor  
Julia Cole, School Counselor

Athlea Suslik and Meghan Biter,  
School Nurse – (315) 889-4128

### Middle School – (315) 889-4112

Nora Haldeman, Middle School Principal  
(Grades 5-8)

Mary Riordan, Middle School Secretary

Julie DeWolf, Middle School Counselor

Athlea Suslik and Meghan Biter,  
School Nurses – (315) 889-4128

### A.J. Smith Elementary – (315) 889-4170

Sheila LaDouce, Principal of Special Programs

Penny Ross, Elementary School Secretary  
Lisa Szewczyk, Elementary School Counselor

Jane Bacon and Meghan Biter,  
School Nurses – (315) 889-4172

### Office of Special Education – (315) 889-4117

Dr. Melinda Pritt-Smith, School Psychologist  
& CPSE Chairperson

Renee Munn, CSE Chairperson

### Transportation – (315) 889-5036

Andrea Lang, Transportation Supervisor

### Maintenance / Buildings and Grounds – (315) 889-4122

TBD

# UNION SPRINGS

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

*Home of the Wolves*



### FOLLOW US:

@UnionSpringsCSD  
@UnionSpringsHS  
@UnionSpringsMS  
@UnionSpringsAJ  
@USCSD\_Wolves



@UnionSpringsCSD



### Check out our website!

[www.unionspringscsd.org](http://www.unionspringscsd.org)



Scan to visit our website!



### CONTACT US:

239 Cayuga Street  
Union Springs, NY 13160

Phone: (315) 889-4101  
Fax: (315) 889-4108



Center for Instruction, Technology & Innovation

Email: [cnypr@CitiBoces.org](mailto:cnypr@CitiBoces.org)

[www.citiboces.org/publicrelations](http://www.citiboces.org/publicrelations)