

SWANSON ELEMENTARY

507 N. Gulkana St.

Palmer, Alaska 99645

Phone (907) 861-5300 Fax (907) 861-5380

Mary Kate Johnston, Principal



I HAVE RECEIVED THE SWANSON HANDBOOK AND TRANSPORTATION
RULES AND WILL DISCUSS THEM WITH MY CHILD.

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Student Name: _____

Grade: _____

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS COVER SHEET

THANK YOU

2015-2016 Staff

Principal

Mary Kate Johnston

Kindergarten

Patrick Robinson, Chair

Joshua Clayton

Karen Don

Robyn Reich

Julie Ross

Aaron Schaff

1st Grade

Amber Charles, Chair

Kim Brown

Kathy Maupin

Mary Schaff

Leigh Ann Woodall

2nd Grade

Becky Bell, Chair

Asdis Derouen

Marissa Gordon

Dawn Robinson

Angela Souhrada

Cindy Tardiff

Music

Paula Berg

PE

Terrence Bradley

Library

Kim Evans

Literacy Coach

Victoria Flint

T1 Tutor/Advisor

Esther Reem

Nurse

Sonja Mack

Nutrition

Lisa Johnson

OT

Patrice Lecso

Nolan King, COTA\L

PT

Jamie Evans

Special Ed. Teachers

Kelleigh Orthmann, Behavior Specialist

Peggy Lee, Preschool

Jeanie Lombard, Preschool

Jen Parker, Intensive Resource

Justin Paddleford, Resource

Christine Woyce, Intensive Resource

Assistants

Lorraine Derner

Ginny Goldman

Cheryl Gordon

Nina Gundlach

Kim Lolley

Kristie Lyman

Beth Reichel

Rhona Taylor

Darci Topp

Katherine Watanabe

Mark Webb

Diane Wilson

ELL

Valeria Kopsack

Psychologist

Allison Barneich

Speech

Rebecca O'Neal, PreK

Kate Mohr, K-2

Lin Mitchell, SLPA

Office Staff

Jodi Rogness, Administrative Secretary

Molly Johnson, Secretary/Registrar

Theresa Wilde, Records Specialist

Custodian

Brittany Blakeman, Day Custodian

Dona Roehl, Night Custodian

Vacant, Night Custodian

Monitors

Heather Gerrits

Karen Meier

Michele Olson

Military & Family Life Counselor

Pauline Richards

SWANSON VISION STATEMENT

To create a joyful, child – centered, learning environment where students, staff, and parents are excited and dedicated to learning and where teaching is relevant, purposeful, and creative.



SWANSON MISSION STATEMENT

To provide the best possible primary education for our children based on the most current educational research and practices available.

Matanuska Susitna Borough

Swanson Elementary

609 N. Gulkana Street

Palmer, Alaska 99645

Phone 861-5300

www.matsuk12.us/swe

Dear Parents:

Welcome to Swanson Elementary School. We hope all of you will become acquainted with us at your earliest convenience and become involved in your child's school.

We will be letting you know about upcoming events, P.T.A. meetings, and important activities. Your involvement means a great deal to us, and to your child.

We at Swanson School have accepted the challenge of contributing to the development of your child's educational, social and physical needs, so that he/she may achieve to his/her full potential and become a well-rounded citizen. Please take the time to review the policies and information included in this handbook with your child. If you have any questions or concerns throughout the year, please discuss them with your child's teacher, or the principal.

Come visit us at any time. We welcome your involvement, and want to make this school year one your child will always remember.

Sincerely,
Swanson Elementary Staff

SWANSON ELEMENTARY

507 N. Gulkana St.

Palmer, Alaska 99645

Phone (907) 861-5300 Fax (907) 861-5380

Mary Kate Johnston, Principal

August 18, 2015

Dear Parents,

MSBSD is committed to teaching all students. In our efforts to do this, each school uses a Response to Instruction/Intervention (RTI) process. RTI provides high quality, research-proven instruction and intervention based on individual student needs.

When working in the RTI framework teachers use assessment data to frequently monitor progress of students in order to make decisions about what and how to teach children. RTI creates an education system that focuses on success for all learners. During the course of the school year, if your child needs additional help to meet learning goals, small group instruction will be provided.

At three times during the year we conduct universal screening and use this information to identify students who need additional instruction. Teachers also use data to accelerate students who are ready to advance their knowledge. MSBSD is committed to ensuring each student makes significant academic progress in our schools. If you have any questions about your child's instruction, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Mary Kate Johnston, Principal

PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Report cards are sent home at the end of each quarter. They should be reviewed by parents immediately. Any questions should be directed to the teacher. End of quarter dates are indicated on our yearly calendar.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL TIME

Children should not arrive at school prior to 9:05 a.m. because there is no supervision before that time. The instructional day begins at 9:15 a.m.

At dismissal time, 3:45 p.m., children are to leave the school grounds immediately unless they have written permission to attend a prearranged, after school or community school activity. Once on a bus a student will not be released to anyone without the permission of a school official. Contact the person on bus duty for assistance.

If you must pick up your child before the regular dismissal time, please stop at the office to request an early release. **IF YOU HAVE A NON-FAMILY MEMBER PICK-UP YOUR CHILD, THE SCHOOL MUST BE NOTIFIED, and picture I.D. will be required.**

ATTENDANCE

Please send a note if your child is absent from school. We recognize our students for good attendance, and appreciate your support in getting them here on time.

PLEASE NOTE:

9:25 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. - TARDY

9:46 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. - 1/2 DAY ABSENT

11:45 a.m. or later - FULL DAY ABSENT

If your student leaves before 1:15 p.m. they are considered 1/2 DAY ABSENT.

BICYCLES, SKATEBOARDS, ROLLERBLADES

Students may ride their bicycles to school except when streets are icy or snow covered. Bicycles are not to be ridden on the playground, or sidewalks, and are to be parked only in the bicycle racks. Students are strongly encouraged to wear bicycle helmets for their own personal safety. We request that you provide a padlock for your child's bike. BICYCLE SAFETY RULES MUST BE OBSERVED. Anyone who fails to observe these rules will be restricted from bringing bicycles to school. NO ROLLERBLADES OR SKATEBOARDS WILL BE PERMITTED.

BUS PASSES

If a student is going home with a friend, arrangements must be made in advance with a signed note from the parent authorizing the child to ride a different bus or getting off at another stop on the same route. Students will not be allowed to call home for a bus pass unless there is an emergency. For unexpected changes in plans, parents may request a bus pass for their child over the phone.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBER

It is extremely important that the office be notified immediately in the case of telephone or address changes. Our ability to contact parents in case of emergency depends on the accuracy of this information.

CONFIDENTIALITY

It is our policy to not give out phone numbers and addresses for students or staff. Many of our students have earned special awards or are involved in activities that could be reported in the newspaper or newsletter. If you do not wish to have your child's name or picture released, please complete a restriction form at the office.

CONFERENCES

Our goal is to maintain positive communications between home and school. We invite you to call the office to set up an appointment whenever you feel it is necessary to have a conference with a teacher.

DRUG FREE SCHOOLS

Students have a right to attend school in an environment conducive to learning. Since drug, alcohol and tobacco use is illegal, contagious and interferes with both effective learning and the healthy development of children and adolescents, the school has a fundamental legal and ethical obligation to prevent drug use and to maintain a drug-free educational environment.

In compliance with U.S.P.L. 101-226 (Drug Free Schools and Community Act, 1989), the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District will not tolerate the possession, selling, use or influence of tobacco, alcohol and other illegal and harmful drugs, (illicit drugs, non-therapeutic use of prescribed drugs, misuse of solvents and other dangerous substances) in the schools, on school grounds or during school sponsored activities including athletic events, dances, field trips, etc.

While drug, alcohol and tobacco use is dangerous in all segments of American society, it poses a special risk to young people by denying the opportunity to develop physically and psychologically. To this end, the district is committed to drug-free schools and intends to send an absolute and clear message that alcohol, drug and tobacco use is illegal and will not be allowed in the Matanuska-Susitna School District or during school sponsored events and activities.

HEALTH

In the event your child suffers from one of the several minor communicable diseases, the general symptoms of the disease must be cleared up to the satisfaction of the school nurse and/or Principal before a child can be sent back to school.

Medication that is prescribed will be given at school by the nurse. A form that has been completed and signed by the parent must be on file in the nurse's office. This form covers only the school year in which it is completed.

All medications must be brought to the nurse's office as soon as the student arrives at school. Any medication sent to school without proper identification will not be given. Medication must be in the original container from the pharmacy with the pharmacist's complete label. Whenever an accident or illness occurs of a serious nature, we do everything within our power to contact the parents. If this is in vain, we will notify your emergency number, or your doctor, if you have one listed. Please be sure to keep all contact numbers current. In case of minor illness, we have the child lie down and notify the parent if he becomes worse. Under NO circumstances do we send a child home unless the parent or person listed as the emergency contact gives permission.

Medication that is prescribed three (3) times a day can be given before the student comes to school, after school and again at bedtime.

Medication that is prescribed four (4) times a day will be given at school by the nurse. A form that has been completed and signed by the parent must be in the nurse's office. This form covers only the school year in which it is completed and is available from the secretaries or nurse.

We ask your cooperation as we are primarily concerned with the safety of your child.

LIBRARY

At Swanson Elementary, we strive to make the library a place children want to come by providing a warm and inviting environment. Our program encourages children to read for recreating and increased knowledge.

Weekly classroom visits provide a time for book checkout and library instruction. Kindergarten and first grade students may check out one book at a time and second graders may check out two. Library books are due back each week at library time though students may exchange books more often. Replacement value is charged for lost or damaged books. Library instruction exposes students to a core of books, various types of literature and various forms of storytelling. Children are taught the library skills necessary to say they can find materials in the library.

The library is open for students, teachers and parents to use and visit during the school day.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost clothing will be placed in the lost and found boxes. Articles not picked up after one quarter (nine weeks) may be donated to charity. We would suggest that parents take the time to periodically check our lost and found. Frequently, children do not even realize they have misplaced personal items.

LUNCH/BREAKFAST PROGRAM

A hot lunch program and a breakfast program will be available to the students beginning the first day of school. Students should bring their checks to the lunch room when they first arrive at school in the morning. Lunch room hours are 8:45-1:30. Milk and juice are available for purchase at lunchtime. If your child prefers to bring a cold lunch, please put his/her name and room number on the lunch pail or sack. Applications for free and reduced lunches are available at the office.

Students are allowed to charge lunch for one day only. After one charge, a token lunch will be given to a student. We will see that your child has something to eat, but an attempt will be made to contact you. PLEASE HELP YOUR CHILD BY PURCHASING LUNCH IN ADVANCE.

MONEY

We discourage students from carrying large sums of money to school. If there is no other alternative, please send money in a sealed envelope labeled with the child's name,

teacher, and purpose on the outside, and request that the envelope be handed to your child's teacher immediately upon arrival at school.

PETS

We ask your cooperation in keeping pets at home. Because of the unpredictability of animals around children, it often becomes necessary to notify the animal shelter.

PLAYGROUND RULES

1. Follow adult directions within 3 seconds. Respond to Whistle immediately. 1 whistle means "freeze and look". 3 whistles mean "line up now".
2. Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.
3. Play in the correct area.
4. Use equipment correctly.
5. Use kind, clean language.

PTA

The Swanson - Sherrod PTA serves the children and parents of both schools. The PTA meets once a month. They alternate the meetings between Swanson and Sherrod. Parents are encouraged to join the PTA. At the beginning of each school year, we have a membership drive; however, we invite you to join at any time. Our very active PTA has provided funds for many worthwhile programs.

Officers & Committee Chairpersons:

President - Cindy Rosenberg

Vice-Presidents:

 Sherrod - Kelli Riggs-Anderson

 Swanson - Dan Fettes

Treasurer - Delta Fettes

Secretary - Misty Kastar

RECESS

Recess is a very important part of the day and it is School District policy that children attend recess and P.E. They may be excused only with a doctor's note. If you feel your child is too sick to attend recess, we ask that you please do not send your child to school. Thank you for your cooperation.

When sending your child to school, we urge you to dress him/her according to the weather conditions. The children are expected to play outside at recess if the temperature or the chill factor is above -10 degrees. The child should be comfortable and protected from inclement weather. Please don't underestimate the importance of proper

footwear, especially in cold and wet weather. Boots, hats, and gloves are extremely important.

REGISTRATION

Registration is online at www.matsuk12.us . Please provide to the school-

1. Current immunization record (required by Law).
2. Previous school records and/or address for obtaining.
3. Certified birth certificate for students entering our school for the first time.
4. All required registration paperwork generated from the online registration process.
5. Any papers related to special custody arrangements.

REQUEST FOR CHANGE OF STUDENT PLACEMENT

There are times when a parent or guardian feels a change of teacher assignments might be appropriate for their child. Every attempt will be made to resolve the concerns before a change is made. If a parent believes a change might be in the best interest of their child, the following are the steps that are necessary.

Parents need to meet with the classroom teacher and discuss their concerns. Many times parents are hearing one side of the story. By meeting with the teacher, it allows everyone to have a clear picture of concerns. It also allows the teacher and parent to see if situations can be changed before more drastic measures are taken. It is also advisable that during this meeting some time should be arranged for parents or guardians to come in and observe the class first hand.

Although we realize there are times and situations where a move is appropriate, we also believe that young people need to learn to work with all types of people and personalities. Life is learning to function in all types of situations.

After the parent/teacher meeting, if a reasonable amount of time passes and the situation does not seem to improve, parents and or teacher should request a meeting with the Principal. This meeting will be set up at the convenience of all parties and shall be to discuss steps taken to date to resolve problems, options, and parent or teacher recommendations. This meeting may also include other school district specialists who might be of service in solving various situations.

If it is decided that a move is in the best interest of the child, it will be the Principal's sole discretion as to

where the student is placed. Parents will have no option at this time for teacher requests.

REWARDS/CONSEQUENCES

Swanson students are encouraged and rewarded for positive and responsible behavior in a variety of ways: Verbal praise, classroom reward plans, special reading time, good attendance certificates, lunch with the Principal, elevator rides and chance tickets.

Student consequences may include:

Verbal warning, time out in the classroom, time out in the office, loss of recess or other privileges, in-school alternate placement, out of school suspension.

SCHOOL-WIDE EXPECTATIONS - ALL SWANSON STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO:

Respect Yourself! Respect Others! Respect Property!

Show your Swanson pride by:

1. Treating others kindly.
2. Speaking nicely to others.
3. Following directions the first time they are given.
4. Walking while in the building.
5. Taking good care of everything around you.

*We expect hats to be removed while inside the school building.

SCHOOL BUS DISCIPLINE POLICY

One of the items that we send home with the children during the first days of school is a copy of the school district's bus discipline policy. We expect all students to follow this policy to ensure the health and safety of the children when they are riding the buses. We emphasize self-discipline and responsibility on the part of the students. We will not tolerate individuals who cannot comply with that philosophy at the expense of the health and safety of other children. Please discuss the bus rules with your child. After reading the policy, if you have any questions, feel free to call or come to the school and discuss it.

SCHOOL INSURANCE

As a courtesy to you, health and accident insurance is available for a very reasonable rate. Information can be obtained at our school office.

SPECIAL EDUCATION RESOURCE PROGRAM

The Resource Room program is dedicated to the concept that not all children learn in the same way. Some children, despite average to above-average intelligence, have special needs that are better served by special education assistance (Public Law 94-142). This criteria helps us distinguish students that have unique learning programs from those that merely need extra drill and practice. Learning disabled students benefit from individualized instruction from the resource teacher as well as placement in their regular classroom.

Each child receiving special education instruction from the resource teacher has an individual education program (I.E.P.) written for him/her. In this written plan, goals for the child's education have been clearly spelled out. A child study team (CST) comprised of the parents plus at least two of the following staff members - classroom teacher, resource teacher, school psychologist, principal and speech therapist - work together to ensure that it is relevant to the student's needs. The parents may request that the CST meet at any time they feel there is a need for program clarification, assessment or change.

Students have been selected for enrollment in the resource program via a district wide procedure requiring that parents be informed that their child may be encountering some problems in the learning situation at school. Parents are then asked for their written consent to test and evaluation the child. This testing may be done by the school psychologist, resource teacher and/or speech therapist and is clearly indicated on the permission for assessment form the parents are asked to sign. Test results are always shared with parents when they meet with members of the CST. During a CST, a decision is made regarding the advisability of enrolling a student in the resource program.

Instructional time spent in the resource room varies according to the needs of the learning disabled student. Parents are always welcome to visit our resource room.

Please call the school office to confer with our resource room teachers if you have concerns or questions.

The Mat-Su Borough School District has developed a comprehensive publication which details Special Services available in the District. You may obtain a copy of this publication, "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About

Special Education and Didn't Know Whom to Ask?, from the resource teacher.

STAFF FEEDBACK FORMS

Feedback forms are available for community, parent, and student use. Sample forms are included in our handbook. These forms are intended to provide constructive feedback to members of our school staff. They are based upon the Alaska State Standards for Teachers and Administrators.

STUDENT DRESS

We ask parents to send their children to school dressed appropriately and modestly so that they are not distracted from the educational process. The best guide for determining proper dress is common sense. What may be acceptable at home is not necessarily acceptable in a public setting. In helping our students to learn this, Swanson has established certain expectations for our students.

1. Shoes will be worn by all students. Boots are necessary during the cold winter months, and during muddy conditions.
2. APPROPRIATE dresses, skirts, and shorts may be worn. Short shorts or short skirts are NOT acceptable.
3. Shorts, jogging shorts, tights, or other sporting uniform type clothing will not be permitted unless worn beneath other acceptable clothing.
4. Any clothing making reference to alcohol, drugs, sex, or tobacco is not acceptable.
5. Hats, gloves, boots, and snow pants are necessary in winter conditions.

STUDENT MESSAGES

We request the cooperation of both students and parents in minimizing messages to students during the school day. We will accept important telephone messages for students from parents only. Except in cases of emergency, student messages will be delivered just before dismissal at 3:25 p.m. We request your cooperation and understanding in helping us teach your child responsibility and the consequences resulting. Please be sure your child has all permission/bus slips and lunch money resulting when leaving for school.

TOYS AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

Students may not bring toys and electronic equipment to school without prior teacher approval because these items can be easily damaged or stolen. This includes such items as: headphones, radios, games, trucks, stuffed animals,

etc. They will be confiscated and released only to the parents. All selling or trading of personal items is prohibited without teacher approval.

VISITS

You are welcome to visit the classroom at any time. Please let the office know that you are visiting and obtain a pass before continuing on to the classroom. Parents are encouraged to spend volunteer time in their child's classroom. The teachers welcome the help, and the children are proud to have their parents spend time around the school. Please see your child's teacher to set up a time to volunteer your help.

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

We encourage all interested members to come visit us. We not only like visitors, WE LOVE VOLUNTEERS! Parents have made Swanson Elementary what it is through your suggestions and help. Our policy requires that you notify the staff member in writing and pre-arrange the visits to the classroom. If the teacher/staff reports that the educational setting has been disrupted by a parent, observer or volunteer, the Principal reserves the right to end the visits. Parents must sign in at the office and put on a visitor's sticker before entering classrooms. Parents must also return to the office and sign out so that we know you have exited the building.

WEAPONS

Students may not possess firearms or explosive devices on school property or while participating in school sponsored events at any time or under any circumstances. Students may not possess other types of WEAPONS or REPLICAS of any types of weapons on school property or while participating in a school sponsored event, unless permission to do so is obtained from an administrator or from a teacher authorized to give that permission.

WITHDRAWAL

If during the school year, it becomes necessary to withdraw your child from Swanson Elementary, we would like to have a couple of days notice to coordinate the check out procedure to ensure a smooth transition between Swanson and the child's next school. **STUDENTS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO REGISTER AT ANOTHER DISTRICT SCHOOL without properly withdrawing from their current school first.** Students who miss 10 consecutive days of school will be automatically withdrawn.