



THE COUGAR CONNECTION BACK TO SCHOOL NEWS

August 2022

Dear Cornell Elementary Families,

Welcome to the 22-23 school year! Believe it or not we will be starting another fantastic school year in just a few weeks. The entire Cornell Elementary School staff is excited to welcome you back to school. It is a pleasure to join Okemos Public Schools and the Cornell team this fall as your new Principal! We have enrolled many new students this summer, so there will be plenty of new friendships forming at Cornell! Cornell has been experiencing a significant increase in enrollment over the past several years. We are beginning this year with approximately **465** students, and we will continue to have four classrooms of every grade.

Listed below is important information that will help you get off to a smooth start.

Enjoy the remainder of summer vacation!

Warmest Regards,

Tracy Ojerio, Principal

IMPORTANT LINKS (click below)

[Bus Schedules](#)

[District Calendar](#)

[Suggested Classroom Supply Lists](#)

[Lunch Menus](#)

OPEN HOUSE

Families are invited to our **Open House** this **Thursday, August 18th from 5:00-6:30pm**. We strongly encourage families to walk to Open House if you live nearby, as parking may be a challenge.

Suggested Attendance: 5:00-5:45pm: students whose last name begins with A-M
 5:45-6:30pm: students whose last name begins with N-Z

This will be an opportunity for parents and students to meet the teacher and see the classroom prior to the first day. Hopefully this will put some of those first day jitters to rest! Please note that this event is

not intended to be an opportunity to conference about specific student needs/issues. Please arrange another time to talk with the teacher if there is something specific that needs to be shared.

START OF SCHOOL

The first day of school, **Tuesday, August 23rd** is a **HALF-DAY**. **Dismissal** will be at **12:00pm**. There is **NO SCHOOL on Friday, September 2nd and Monday, September 5th** for the Labor Day holiday.

2022-2023 CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Kindergarten:	Katie Casson, Amy Petersburg, Kris Schoen, Vanessa Stephens
1 st Grade:	Ashleigh Fesko, Erin Gutierrez, Lisa Hall, Christina Schuesler
2 nd Grade:	Ashley Andersen, Molly Hughey, Megan Malkus, Alana Pignataro
3 rd Grade:	Gracie DeLadurantaye, Kendra Hixson, Breanne Mason, Andrea Tousignant
4 th Grade:	Jamie Coy, Jen Harnick, Lindsey Price, Tena Sinila

STAFFING UPDATES

- As you may recall, Mrs. Price is expecting a baby this fall, and she will be on leave until mid-November. We are very fortunate to have an outstanding guest teacher, Mrs. Godette, who will be teaching her class while she is on leave. Mrs. Godette is excited to join the Cornell staff and she will be a great addition to the 4th grade team this fall.
- Molly Hughey will be on leave until mid-November. We are very fortunate to have an outstanding guest teacher, who will be leading her class while she is on leave. Mrs. Julia Shutt is excited to rejoin the Cornell staff and 2nd grade team!
- We are welcoming the following staff members to Cornell this school year:
 - Ms. Kelly Chase, K-4 Music Teacher
 - Mrs. Lisa Hall, 1st Grade Teacher
 - Ms. Taylor Itsell-Olsen, Special Education Resource Teacher (½ time)
 - Mrs. Niki Mann, Student Support Advisor (SSA)

We are happy to have each of these amazing people join our Cornell Staff!

SCHOOL HOURS - 8:50am-3:45pm

Half-day dismissals - 12:00pm / Early Release Day dismissals – 1:50pm

DAILY SCHEDULE

8:30-8:45am	Breakfast (optional) served in the Multi-purpose Room beginning on Aug. 24th
8:40am	Students may begin to arrive at school
8:45am	Bell rings and students go to their classrooms
8:50am	School starts – students arriving after the 8:50 are marked tardy
3:45pm	Dismissal - It is important that children are picked up from school on time .

PROCEDURES FOR ARRIVAL

All students who arrive before the 8:45am bell wait outdoors for school to begin. We only allow students who are participating in the breakfast program & members of the safety patrol to arrive at **8:30am**.

- Walkers will line up on the blacktop in the back of the school building.
- Car Riders will line up in the front of the school.
- Bus Riders will line up by the gym door (3).

Staff members will assist until students have learned this procedure. **Students and parents are not permitted to visit classrooms or other areas prior to the first bell** since this is an important time for teachers to prepare for the day of instruction.

CURRICULUM NIGHTS

At Curriculum Night, teachers present information about grade level curriculum, classroom procedures and other information that you'll need to know. This will be a virtual parent event this Fall. Teachers will share links to connect to content & recorded videos for each grade level in September.

LUNCH ACCOUNT INFORMATION

Our breakfast and lunch programs will begin on the first full day of school, August 24th. No meals are served on the half-day, August 23rd.

Your child may bring a lunch from home or purchase a hot lunch at school. The cost of a full-priced **hot lunch is \$3.25 and breakfast is \$2.00**. Monthly menus can be found on our [Food Services website](#) or by downloading the Nutrislice App. Information on how to pay for your child's lunches online is available on our website ([click here](#)) or you can send payments to school in a sealed envelope **with your child's name clearly written**. If you want to deposit money into the account online, you will need to get your child's school ID# by **sending an email with your child's name** to nisreen.abulibdeh@okemosk12.net or jennifer.darjes@okemosk12.net. We will email your child's ID# to you.

LUNCH SUPERVISORS NEEDED

We may need Lunch Supervisors for our lunch program. Our supervisors, who are typically parents at our school, can work a couple of days or all five days a week. The hours are approximately 11:15am-1:35pm. If you would like more information, please contact Nisreen Abulibdeh at nisreen.abulibdeh@okemosk12.net.

STUDENT INFO & EMERGENCY CONTACTS FOR RETURNING FAMILIES - IMPORTANT!

We are using an online system for parents to verify/update student information and emergency contact information. Each returning family will receive an email with a link that allows you to access and update your information. If you do not receive that email, please check all email accounts of parents/guardians in your family. **We need all families to verify/update your information right away so we can reach you if needed!**

CARLINE PROCEDURES (same as last year)

Below are the procedures we need all drivers to use during drop off and pick up at school. **PLEASE READ CAREFULLY AND SHARE WITH ALL DRIVERS WHO TRANSPORT YOUR CHILD.**

**PLEASE HAVE A SIGN WITH YOUR CHILD'S LAST NAME ON IT
VISIBLE IN YOUR CAR WINDOW EACH DAY ALL YEAR!**

Form Two Lanes in Our Parking Lot

- All cars loop counter-clockwise around our parking lot before passing in front of our school to pick up/drop off children near our front doors.

- Cars **form two lanes** when pulling into our parking lot, stay in two lanes as they loop around, and **merge back into one lane** when leaving our parking lot to proceed down the driveway in front of our school. It is very important that drivers **take turns** allowing each lane to merge back into one lane (using the zipper method) before driving in front of our school.

Dropping Off in Front of the School in the AM

- Pull your vehicle as far ahead in front of our school as possible before letting your child out. This makes room for others behind you to move up. Do not stop in front of the main doors if you are able to pull farther ahead. Parents should not exit the car.
- Always have your children exit through the **passenger side** of your car.
- Cars may depart immediately using the left lane to exit. Please look carefully before pulling out to ensure the lane is clear.
- **No student drop offs before 8:40am.** There is no supervision and our doors are locked.
- Parents are more than welcome to park in our lot and walk your child to the back of the school.

Picking Up in Front of the School at Dismissal

- All students being picked up by car will come to the sidewalk in front of the building at 3:45pm, and staff members will supervise them. Kindergartners and K teachers stand separately in a group at the start of the carline. Older siblings of Ks should stand with the K group.
- **Every car must have a sign with your child's last name in large, black letters.** Hold this up as you approach the waiting area so your child can be called.
- Pull your vehicle as far ahead as possible before stopping to load your child. This makes room for others behind you to move up. Do not exit your vehicle or leave it unattended while in the carline.
- All children must enter through the **passenger side** of your car.
- As soon as your child is secured in your vehicle, proceed carefully to the left lane to exit.
- Parents need to be on time (3:45pm) when picking up your child at the end of the day.

Other Carline Details

- Please do not park in the left lane in front of our school 25 minutes before dismissal or arrival times. This lane must be passable for our buses.
- **Parents may not use the small parking lot on the south side of our school** during pick up and drop off times for the safety of our walkers who cross there.
- Parents can park in our north lot to meet your child in front of our school at dismissal, but parked cars may be unable to leave while our carline is still in place. When you exit your parking space, you must join the carline in a counter-clockwise direction.
- Students are not permitted to walk into the parking lot to meet a ride without an adult.
- Please consider turning your car off while waiting for PM carline to begin. Cornell is proud to be designated as a Green School!