

D. Newlin Fell Elementary School

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STUDENT/FAMILY HANDBOOK

2023 – 2024 School Year



Dr. Tony Watlington Sr., Superintendent

Omahr Ashe, Principal

D. Newlin Fell Elementary School

Student/Family Handbook

2023-2024 School Year

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Welcome to D. Newlin Fell School, home of Fell Falcons and one of the top K – 8 Elementary Schools in the School District of Philadelphia! The D. Newlin Fell School is a historic school building located in the East Oregon neighborhood of South Philadelphia. We are a neighborhood school that serves students from various backgrounds in grades kindergarten through eight. Our culturally and linguistically diverse student population creates a rich, multicultural school community where Asian, Latino, Arabic, African-American and Caucasian children live tolerance and respect on a daily basis.

At D. Newlin Fell School, the subject area teachers are full-time and highly qualified. Most of our staff members have over ten years of teaching experience and have taught at our school for just as many years. The extensive expertise and experience among our staff members promote mentoring, cross-collaboration and teamwork throughout our school.

In addition to the regular education classes, we provide our students with the following:

- Art, Dance, Computer & Physical Education Classes
- Interactive Whiteboards & Chromebooks in all K – 8 Classrooms
- Blended Instruction, including Online Adaptive Programs
- Mentally Gifted Program, Special Education Services & ESOL Services
- Instrumental Music & Performing Arts Program
- Scrabble Team
- Scripps Spelling Bee
- PIAA Middle Years Sports – Golf, Basketball, Baseball, Softball, Track & Field
- Cheerleading Team
- Science Fair
- Love of Literacy Week
- Multicultural Celebrations (Hispanic Heritage Month, Chinese New Year, Black History Month, Multicultural/Asian-American History Month)
- Talent Show
- Bike to School Event
- Annual Field Day

Further, we always stay on the cutting edge of educational practices in order to best serve our students. This atmosphere of ongoing learning generates an energetic, rigorous learning environment and an unparalleled educational experience for all our students!

Omafr Ashe, Principal

VISION STATEMENT

Our **vision** at D. Newlin Fell Elementary School is to ensure that our students become 21st century learners by meeting or exceeding grade level requirements in all subjects.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our **mission** at D. Newlin Fell Elementary School is to prepare students to become successful lifelong learners and responsible citizens who can contribute in a positive manner to a rapidly changing global society.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES

Fell has a School-based Teacher Leader (SBTL), Mrs. Murzyn. Mrs. Murzyn will support teachers with the implementation of their instructional program, conduct professional development sessions and provide academic coaching to staff members. In addition to her coaching role, she will provide small group interventions to low performing/at-risk students and serve as the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Point Person for Academics.

Fell has a Special Education (SPED) Team that includes Mrs. Maiorano (SPECM), Mrs. Passarello (LS), Mrs. Bonanno (LS), Mr. Coleman (ES), and Mrs. Rios (AS). Our Special Education Team provides instructional services to students whose needs have been identified through testing and evaluation by a licensed school psychologist.

Students who qualify for speech services, also receive specialized instruction from a Speech and Language Pathologist/Therapist who provides students with extra-support and instruction based on their individual needs. Therapy for students with hearing impairment and/or orthopedic challenges are also available as well.

Fell has an ESOL Team, that includes, Mrs. Sosangelis (K-2), Mrs. Busch (3/5), Mrs. Rohland (4/7) and Mrs. Vendetti (6/8). Our ESOL Team provides culturally and linguistically instruction, designed to meet the cultural backgrounds and English language proficiency levels of the English learners that attend our school.

All Academic Support Teachers (SPED & ESOL) also help the classroom teachers implement the core curriculum in literacy and math as well as provide support services to struggling students. The classroom teacher refers students experiencing academic, attendance or behavioral problems to the school's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) team. Students' academic, attendance or behavioral challenges are first discussed

at grade group meetings where intervention strategies are identified and an action plan is initiated.

In the absence of the Principal, Mrs. Sosangelis serves as the Teacher-In-Charge. Mrs. Bruno serves as the School Counselor and handles all social-emotional concerns, accessing resources (i.e. uniform vouchers, school supplies, etc...) and the overall well-being of our students. We also have a School Climate Manager, Mrs. Fischer and School Resource Officer who handles all safety, attendance and behavioral issues arising in our school community.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC INSTRUCTION

Fell has two (2) instrumental music teachers for wind and string instruments who provide our students with individual and small group lessons on a weekly basis. Beginning in the third grade, parents receive a letter inviting them to sign their children up for the instrumental music program. Fell students who play an instrument, may also participate in the All-City Middle School Orchestra each school year. Students must demonstrate good behavior and maintain high levels of academic achievement in order to qualify for our instrumental music program.

DANCE & PERFORMING ARTS INSTRUCTION

Fell has a Dance and Performing Arts specialist class for students. Students will have the opportunity to express themselves and share their diverse cultural background through dance and other expressive arts. Students will receive weekly instruction with this new program.

NON-ACADEMIC SERVICES

Fell has a full-time counselor, Mrs. Bruno. Aside from meeting with children individually and in small groups, the counselor meets with parents/guardians to discuss problems that have a direct impact on the education of their child/children. Mrs. Bruno can help families navigate various resources and identify outside agencies that support families throughout the school year.

Fell has a full-time School Climate Manager, Mrs. Fischer. The School Climate Manager will work with all stakeholders of the school community to ensure a safe learning environment for our students and staff members. The School Climate Manager will also serve as the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Point Person for Attendance & Behavior.

Fell has a full-time Nurse, Mrs. Sickel. Nurse Sickel is a Registered Nurse (RN), and provides full-time health and nursing services to students five days a week. In addition to consulting with parents and staff about the particular needs of students, Nurse Sickel dispenses prescription medication on the days she is at our school, and conducts vision and hearing screenings throughout the school year.

INSTRUCTIONAL SCHEDULE

Master Bell Schedule

Our regular schedule is as follows:

<u>Staff reports</u>	8:50 AM	
<u>Class Room Pick Up</u>	9:00 AM	
<u>Homeroom</u>	9:00 AM – 9:30 AM	
<u>First Period</u>	9:30 AM – 10:15 AM	
<u>Second Period</u>	10:15 AM – 11:00 AM	
<u>Third Period</u>	11:00 AM – 11:45 AM	
<u>Fourth Period</u>	11:45 AM – 12:30 PM	
<u>Fifth Period</u>	12:30 PM – 1:15 PM	
<u>Sixth Period</u>	1:15 PM – 2:00 PM	
<u>Seventh Period</u>	2:00 PM – 2:45 PM	
<u>Eighth Period</u>	2:45 PM – 3:39 PM	
<u>Dismissal</u>	3:39 PM	
 <u>First Lunch</u>	11:00 AM – 11:45 AM	<i>Grades K-2</i>
<u>Second Lunch</u>	11:45 AM – 12:30 PM	<i>Grades 3-4</i>
<u>Third Lunch</u>	12:30 PM – 1:15 PM	<i>Grades 5-6</i>
<u>Fourth Lunch</u>	1:15 PM – 2:00 PM	<i>Grades 7-8</i>

Early Dismissal/Half-Day Schedule

Students are dismissed at 12:39 PM

<u>First Lunch</u>	10:30 AM – 11:00 AM	<i>Grades K-2</i>
<u>Second Lunch</u>	11:00 AM – 11:30 AM	<i>Grades 3-4</i>
<u>Third Lunch</u>	11:30 AM – 12:00 PM	<i>Grades 5-6</i>
<u>Fourth Lunch</u>	12:00 PM – 12:30 PM	<i>Grades 7-8</i>

Note: Fourth lunch teachers will assist with dismissal.

GRADING GUIDELINES

Fell implements a standards-driven curriculum with aligned assessments in all content areas. The grading guidelines rely upon evidence of student assessment data, classroom-based data and observations made by classroom teachers. For further guidance on instruction and district's grading guidelines, please refer to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction at <https://www.philasd.org/curriculum/curriculum-and-instruction/marking-guidelines/>.

Additionally, all students are required to be instructed in all core content areas including the Arts (Visual Arts, Music, Theater, and Dance), Health Education, and Physical Education during the school year. In some cases, schools are not able to provide these subjects during a given term. If a classroom teacher does not provide the Arts, Health Education, or Physical Education, then no grade will be given during that particular Term.

Marking Guidelines, Kindergarten

In Kindergarten, students' "pre-reading" skills are assessed using STAR. The assessments consist of Letter Naming, Letter Sounds, Phoneme Segmentation, and Receptive Nonsense Words. These assessments, along with instructional routines and activities, contribute to the grades for Listening, Speaking, Concepts of Print, and Comprehension as listed on the report card. These skills are assessed using the Kindergarten Marking Guidelines scale listed below.

Kindergarten Marking Guidelines
O – Outstanding (100-90): The student understands all skills and concepts taught during the specific cycle and can demonstrate understanding with little or no teacher support. The student's progress consistently demonstrates mastery of grade level standards and consistently meets or exceeds grade level goals and objectives.
S – Satisfactory (89-75): The student understands most skills and concepts taught during the specific cycle and can demonstrate understanding with average teacher support. The student's progress demonstrates proficiency in most grade level standards and steady progress towards achieving grade level goals and objectives.
N – Needs Improvement (74-50): The student understands few skills and concepts taught during the specific cycle and can demonstrate some understanding with intensive teacher support. The student demonstrates limited progress in grade level standards and requires strong support and consistent teacher reinforcement to achieve grade level goals and objectives.
NG – No Grade: Content Not Taught

Marking Guidelines, Grades 1- 8

The Alphanumeric Equivalency Chart below reflects the numeric mark assigned to each letter grade and is applied to all subject areas:

Numeric scores for all content areas should be converted into the following letter grades:	
	100-90 = A
	89-80 = B
	79-70 = C
	69-60 = D
	59-50 = F

Notes:

- Students whose final average falls below a 60 will receive an “F” on the final report card.
- Universal Screening Assessments are not a part of the report card grade. They are used as formative assessments to guide instruction.
- 8th grade courses counting as a HS course: Algebra 1. Students should pass with a “C” or higher and score proficient on Algebra I Keystone.
- Students participation in Online Adaptive Programs are not a part of the report card grade. However, it should be considered as support and progress monitoring of students' performance on tasks aligned to the curriculum.

SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Admission to Fell

Parents/guardians registering children at Fell must provide proof of residency (lease, utility bill), valid photo-ID, child’s birth certificate, and current medical/immunization records. Families living outside of the school boundaries for Fell School must be end dated on the Student Information System (SIS) at their neighborhood school and follow the requirements established by the SDP Office of Enrollment. Please note that children who live outside of the school boundaries are admitted to the school only if space exists at the various grade levels after neighborhood children have enrolled.

Parents/guardians who move outside Fell boundaries must notify the school. You will be dropped from Fell’s enrollment and registered at your new school at the end of the school year.

Daily Morning Line Up

Children can report to the schoolyard by 8:30 AM. Supervision is available at that time. Breakfast is served from 8:30 AM – 8:55 AM. We encourage all students to eat breakfast (the most important meal of the day). Children who participate in the breakfast program can report to the school cafeteria at 8:30 AM. The school day officially begins at 9:00 AM. Any students arriving after this time are considered late.

At 9:00 AM, students in grades 3 & 4 will line up in the lunchroom (PTA room), students in grades K, 1, 2, 5, 6, and 7 are expected to be in the auditorium. Our 8th grade students proceed directly to the 3rd floor at 8:50 AM. Students have assigned seats in the auditorium and in the PTA room. If a student arrives after 9:00 AM, he/she must come in through the main entrance and receive a late note in order to be admitted to class.

Once inside, a staff member will escort the student to the classroom. ***PARENTS AND/OR GUARDIANS CANNOT ESCORT STUDENTS TO THE CLASSROOM – NO EXCEPTIONS!***

Afternoon Dismissal

Dismissal is at 3:39 PM. Parents must wait in the schoolyard for their children. Students in Rooms 100, 103, 104 and 107 are dismissed from the auditorium. Students in Rooms 201, 203, 204, 300, 301, 302, 304 and 310 exit the building on the 9th Street yard side. Children in rooms 106, 108, 207, 208, 209, 305, 306, 307, 308 and 309 exit the building on the Hutchinson Street side of the yard. Students in rooms 102 & 202 will exit through the main entrance and go onto their assigned school bus.

Early Dismissals

The school requires that parents/guardians schedule doctor's appointments after school hours. A note or appointment card should be brought to the office to verify that you do have a doctor's appointment. In the event that the student must leave school early, a parent/guardian must sign the child out in the office, have a photo ID, and be on the Emergency Contact Form. Repeated early dismissals interrupt the teaching and learning process. **No Early Dismissals will be granted after 3:15 PM– No exceptions.**

Lateness

Children who enter the building after 9:00 AM are considered late. They must obtain a late note from the assistant on the first floor. After three unexcused lateness's, parents will be notified and your child may receive an after-school detention or other consequence. Repeated lateness keeps a child from perfect attendance and from receiving Attendance and/or Citizenship Awards. Lateness is recorded on the student's attendance record and becomes part of the permanent record.

Absences

Children are expected to bring a note when they are absent from school. The note should state the child's complete name, the dates of the absence and the reason for it. The note should be brought to school upon the student's return. In the event of excessive absences when the school is not informed of the reason, the school counselor will call the parent/guardian and take measures to remedy the situation. Parents/guardians are referred to Truancy Court when children are repeatedly absent or show a pattern of absences (Fridays and Mondays for example) and there is no medically documented reason for it.

School Uniform Policy

The Fell School uniform consists of –

Navy Blue Top (i.e. blouse, polo shirt or button up shirt)

Tan Bottom (i.e. dress pants, slacks, dress and/or skirt)

Please note that students may not come to school in jeans, shorts, tank tops or t-shirts. **Gym uniforms are mandatory** (gym uniforms can be purchased in the main office daily from 9:00 AM – 9:30 AM). Navy sweats are permitted on gym days.

Children who are not in school uniform cannot remain in the classroom. They are sent to the main office to wait for you to bring the uniform. Repeated violations will not be tolerated.

Cell Phone/Electronic Device Policy

All cell phones and earbuds are strictly prohibited during the school day (9:00 – 3:39). This includes lunch/recess.

The following consequences will be implemented and enforced:

- One verbal warning will be issued to the student. If the student doesn't comply, then
- Parents/guardians will be notified, the phone will be confiscated and it will be your responsibility to claim from the Main Office.
- For those repeat offenders, a before/after school detention and/or a one-day suspension will be levied.

Student Privileges Policy

We encourage all Fell students to participate in extra-curricular activities, school-wide celebrations/events, class trips and graduation ceremonies (8th Grade). These privileges may be taken away if students do not maintain high levels of excellence in all domains: academics, attendance and/or behavior. With that said, your child should come to school every day, on time, dressed appropriately, prepared to learn and ready for the school day. Students must also show responsibility in their behaviors and actions as they conduct themselves within and outside our school building.

School-wide Initiatives

Students that come to school every day, on time, dressed in the school uniform will be awarded a free dress down day, the first Tuesday of each month. It will be notated on the monthly calendar as – **Perfect Attendance Tuesday**. If your child meets these requirements, a letter will be sent home to you by the homeroom teacher.

Additionally, our School Climate Manager & School Counselor implements various school-wide attendance competitions throughout the school year. Classrooms that reach a **daily attendance rate of 95% or higher** will earn a chance to win a prize for their classroom. Prizes include, ice cream, a pizza party, classroom movie & popcorn, homework passes and more!!!

Remember, we need every student here every day, on time. No excuses!

Lunches

Hot lunches are prepared for students in our cafeteria. All Fell students are eligible for a free lunch. Recess and lunch occur together for all students (45 minutes total, 30 minutes to eat lunch and 15 minutes for recess).

- Kindergarten, first and second grade students (K-2) have a recess/lunch period from 11:00 AM – 11:45 AM.
- Third and fourth grade students (3-4) have a recess/lunch period from 11:45 AM – 12:30 PM.
- Fifth and Sixth grade students (5-6) have a recess/lunch period from 12:30 PM – 1:15 PM.
- Seventh and eighth grade students (6-8) have a recess/lunch period from 1:15 PM to 2:00 PM.

Bus Transportation

Several buses transport students to Fell School. Parents/guardians should know their child's bus route number when calling the school to ask for information. Bus attendants accompany the children on special education routes only. Attendants are authorized along with the driver to issue a bus report should a student engage in behavior that jeopardizes the safety of others. Children may be suspended from the bus for a period of time if they continually misbehave.

Behavior Concerns

The School District of Philadelphia Code of Student Conduct for 2023-2024 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ywy4v0Xb1h552uqgzA6znAXa8TN7xCnp/view?usp=sharing> explains students' rights and responsibilities, as well as levels of offenses and consequences for violations of the Student Code. You may also visit the Office of Students Right and Responsibilities for additional information <https://www.philasd.org/studentrights/>. Fell School follows these procedures and restorative/progressive discipline approach. If warranted before and/or after school detentions may be given to all students whether they ride a bus or not. Suspensions may also be also given to all students, whether a parent/guardian works or not.

The School Counselor is available for individual and small group counseling as well as parent conferences. Fell has also partnered with the Relationships First (RF) Program that lays out the framework to provide a safe community where students can thrive, both academically and socially. Students are given equity of voice to build their school community. They are empowered to be agents of change within their environments. This includes community building circles and restorative conversations to resolve problems. Any questions regarding our district and/or school-wide policies for behavior, discipline, and/or bullying can be directed to our School Climate Manager.

COMMUNICATION

Contacting the Teacher

Parents/guardians should contact the classroom teacher either by a note, email or the phone when they have questions about the academic and social progress of their children. Always leave work and a home phone number when calling the school at (215) 400-8260. Some parents/guardians also choose to send in notes by fax. Fell's fax number is (215) 400-8261. All teachers have e-mail addresses as well. The teacher will give this to you. A list of email addresses will also be part of the Fell School Directory. If you need to schedule an appointment to meet with the teacher, please call the school to make such arrangements. Parents/guardians that come directly to the school without a scheduled appointment will not be given permission to go to directly the classroom while the teacher is providing instruction to students.

Information from the School

A school calendar goes home once a month, class dojo posts and robocalls will be made to inform you of important announcements, emergency closings and upcoming events. For this reason, it is imperative that you keep your contact information up to date each school year. In addition to standard forms of communication, the school sends home invitations for Home & School Meetings, Special Assembly Programs, Family Engagement Workshops and various other parent/guardian interest group meetings. Check your child's homework book for notices and try to maintain contact with the parents/guardians of another child in the same room as your child. You can also visit our school's website at <https://fell.philasd.org/> for up to date news and events.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

Report Card Conferences

Report cards are issued three times a year. **The 1st Marking Period Report Card Conferences are scheduled for November 27th, 2023 (full day). The 2nd Marking Period Report Card Conferences are scheduled for February 1-2, 2024 (half-days). The 3rd Marking Period Report Card Conferences are scheduled for April 4-5, 2024 (half-days).**

On the half-day Report Card Conference dates, children are dismissed at the 12:39 PM so parents/guardians can come to the school at a scheduled time to discuss their child's academic, social and behavioral progress with the classroom teacher. Appointment slips are sent home in advance notifying parents/guardians of the date and time they are expected to meet with the teacher. Parents/guardians unable to meet with the teacher should schedule an alternate date or set up a phone conference.

The 4th and last report card for the school year is sent home with students on the last day of school, which is scheduled for June 14, 2024.

School Trips

Teachers take children on a variety of trips throughout the school year. Signed permission slips are required before children are permitted to go. These trips are educationally enriching experiences and we encourage attendance. No child is denied a trip if he/she cannot afford it. Written information should be given to the classroom teacher and the school will pay for the trip. Supervision required for the trip is one adult for every ten students. Parents/guardians are encouraged to volunteer their services. However, the school does not pay for parents. Parents/guardians who accompany teachers are not permitted to bring other siblings on these trips. School insurance only covers the child in the particular class. Moreover, as a volunteer/chaperone who is expected to provide supervision, you must give all of your attention to the children entrusted to you. Please contact your child's classroom teacher for specific information regarding the necessary clearances for volunteering/chaperoning trips.

Extra-Curricular Clubs

Fell has many Extra-Curricular Clubs that meet from late September/October until the end of May. Individual clubs operate on selected days, varying in times from 3:45 PM to 4:45 PM or 5:00 PM. Information is sent home annually in late September/early October about club offerings, grade levels and days available. Participation in these clubs is voluntary and requires a parent/guardian to sign a permission slip. Bus children must have transportation home if they want to attend these clubs.

Safety Patrol

Fell School has a Safety Patrol open to sixth, seventh and eighth grade students. The club stresses responsibility and leadership. Students receive training from the moderators on issues of school safety within and outside of school. Members are expected to be in school by 8:35 AM each morning and remain on post until 3:54 PM each afternoon. Participation in the Safety Patrol also requires parent/guardian permission.

SCHOOL SAFETY PROCEDURES

School Visitor Procedures

For the safety of students and staff, we require parents/guardians to abide by the following:

- All visitors entering the building must show a valid identification prior to being let into the school building.
- All parents/guardians must be "buzzed" into the school building.

- Anyone entering the school building must not allow others visitors to enter behind them. Everyone must be “buzzed” in separately.
- Parents/guardians must sign a visitor book at the entrance and get a visitor’s pass to travel through the building.
- Parents/guardians must have an appointment to go to a classroom and speak with a teacher. As stated above, parents/guardians cannot go directly to the classroom without coming to the office first, presenting a photo ID, signing the visitor book and receiving a visitor’s pass.
- Parents/guardians cannot stay with children in the auditorium during our morning admissions.
- Parents/guardians cannot pick children up at the classroom door at the end of the school day. Parents/guardians must wait outside in the school yard for their children.
- The school will not honor phone requests to change a child’s method of going home at the end of the school day. A parent/guardian must put this information in writing 24 hours before and include a phone number where the office can contact you.
- Confidential student information may not be given over the phone, this is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Be sure you return the Emergency Contact Form for your child so the school has a way of getting in contact with you should an emergency arise. Keep this information accurate and up to date every school year.
- Rehearse with your child what to do if you are not there to pick him/her up on time. Please inform your child that if this happens, he/she should return to the main office, notify the supervising aide and call home. This is where children wait for an adult or older sibling to come pick them up.
- Label your child’s clothing, book bag and all books so items can be returned if lost.
- If you are sending money to school, make sure it is in an envelope with your child’s first/last name and homeroom number on it. The amount should also be on the front of the envelope.
- If your child must take special medication at school, consult with the school nurse and be sure there is always a supply on hand.

- Students having an early dismissal must come to the school office to meet the parent. The parent/guardian must show a photo ID and be listed on the emergency contact information for the child. No exceptions are permitted for early release procedures.

Middle School Safety Checks

For the of students and staff, the district in now requiring safety checks for our Middle School students, Grades 6-8:

- Random screenings may occur throughout the school year.
- Students in Grades 6-8 may be screened using the Scholar Chip machine upon entry into the building.
- The General Entrance Policy for middle schoolers will remain the same.
- All students must comply with the safety checks or disciplinary action will be taken.

Thank you for reading our Student/Family Handbook!

We look forward to yet another great school year of teaching and teaching learning at Fell Elementary!!