

 PARENT NEWSLETTER

 Summer 2016

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

Welcome to a new school year! This newsletter includes our Handbook and information you need for a successful start to the school year. Your child’s safety is our utmost consideration and we need everyone’s help and participation in order for this to happen.

**Student Arrival/Pick Up**

This is our **Traffic Flow Plan** (see map enclosed). The plan was developed by a committee of parents, staff, and community agencies. Please help us keep our students safe. The plan is for the hours of 7:35 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

* **Drop off or Pick up. At the start and end of the school day, everyone should use the north doors on 7th Street. During the school day, come through the vestibule.**
	+ **7th Street** (and cut-out) in front of the school is for **Drop Off/Pick Up only**. **There is absolutely no parking allowed on the 7th Street cutout.** Drivers need to stay in their cars. Students may enter school through the 7th Street door.
	+ **Johnson Street** (north of school) next to the school is for **Drop Off/Pick Up only**. Drivers need to stay in their cars. There is **No Parking** there except for those needing the Handicap space.
* **Morning entrance.**
	+ There will be one door open before school, the 7th Street Main Entrance door.
* **Bus Lane.**
	+ **Adams Street** (south of school) next to the school is the **Bus Lane only**. **No parking or drop off.**
* **Parking.**
	+ **8th Street** (east of school) has **parking** on both sides of the street.
	+ Surrounding the school there is **parking** on all four of the streets on the side of the street which is not next to the school.
* **No Parking areas are designated by the city and could result in a traffic ticket.**

**First Day of School**

* Grades K-5: **Thursday, September 1st**

**School Hours for K-5**

* **There is no before school playground time. K-5 students may arrive at 7:35 a.m. for an optional Breakfast or time to talk to their friends. All K-5 students will first meet in the breakfast room until the first bell rings.**
* 8:00 a.m. – Beginning Bell (the time to head from breakfast room to classroom)
* 11:45 a.m. on Wednesdays, End of School Day
* 3:15 p.m. – End of School Day on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays

**Surround Care**

Y Surround Care is available beginning at 6:30 A.M. in the gym/breakfast room. After school enrollment is available as well. Registration forms are available at the Y or call the YMCA at 608-782-9622 for more information. Prior registration with the Y is required before attending.

**Boys and Girls Club**

The Boys and Girls Club program is available for K-5 students from 3:15-5:30 with an early SOTA I afternoon program beginning at 12:10 on Wednesdays only. See Boys and Girls Club at Open House for applications and information or call 789-8461. All applications must be submitted directly to Boys & Girls Club.

**Class/Homeroom for K-5**

Please note that the homeroom number and teacher that your child has is listed online on family access. If you would like your log-in and password for family access, call the school office.

**Early Release Dates**

There are eight early release dates on the SOTA calendar this year. They are all on Fridays. On these dates kindergarten through fifth grade will be dismissed two hours early which is 1:15 p.m. The dates are marked on the school calendar as “E”.

**Parent Teacher Conferences!**

Parent Teacher Conference dates for next year will be as listed. Mark your calendars!

 Monday, October 17 Noon to 8:00 p.m.

 Thursday, October 20 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Monday, March 13 Noon to 8:00 p.m.

Thursday, March 16 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

**Open House**

Please mark your calendars to come to our school Open House on Tuesday, August 30th, from 5:30-6:30!

Parents should complete the online paperwork prior to Open House. (The online paperwork takes the place of paper packets sent during the summer and directions can be found on our SOTA 1 web page.)

**Joint Parent Governance/SOTA Steering Committee/Parent Volunteers**

The SOTA I Charter defines Joint Parent Governance in the following way. “The SOTA I Steering Committee is an interactive teacher/parent led group.  The main objective of the committee is to promote parental involvement in building the partnership between parents, school, and the community in educating our children.  The group also works to facilitate communication between parents and the staff in order to promote parental involvement in the decision making process.”

We are grateful to be in partnership with our parent volunteers. They have worked to raise funds, have participated on committees, have volunteered to help teachers, and continue to do wonderful things to support our school. Thank you, so much.

We look forward to a great year full of excitement and learning!

Sincerely,

Steve Michaels

Principal

**SOTA HANDBOOK**, **2016-2017**



ABSENCES

For safety reasons, parent/guardians are asked to call school at 789-7695 before 9:00 A.M. if your child is absent or tardy due to an appointment, etc. An excused tardy or absence is due to a scheduled doctor or dentist appointment or an illness and has been phoned in by the parent or guardian. Examples of an unexcused absence due to late arrivals are missing a ride, the car not starting, or oversleeping. Please keep in mind if a student arrives at school after 9:30 a.m., they are considered to be absent for a ½ day with the absence being recorded as excused or unexcused. A student must report to the office for a pass if they are late arriving at school.

If a student must leave school during the day, their parent/guardian must report to the office to sign the student out of school. The secretary will notify the student and teacher. Parent/guardian should not go directly to the classroom without stopping in the office during the regular school day.

ARRIVAL/PICK UP

* **K-5 students** may arrive at school at **7:35 a.m**.
* Students who are **walking** – Students should enter the school through the 7th Street main entrance or the playground north entrance.
* Students who are **riding the bus** - The busses will be dropping off or picking up students on Adams Street (the street on the south end of school). No cars are allowed in the bus lane.
* Students **arriving by car**. – The Traffic Flow Plan is as follows and is for the hours of 7:35 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
	+ There will be one door open before school, the 7th Street Main Entrance door
	+ **7th Street** (and cut-out) in front of the school is for **Drop Off/Pick Up only**. Drivers need to stay in their cars. Students may enter school through the 7th Street door. There is **No Parking** there.
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	+ **Adams Street** (south of school) next to the school is the **Bus Lane only**. **No parking or drop off.**
	+ **8th Street** (east of school) has **parking** on both sides of the street.
	+ Surrounding the school there is **parking** on all four of the streets on the side of the street which is not next to the school.
	+ The No Parking areas are designated by the city and could result in a traffic ticket.

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Hamilton/SOTA is a site for the Boys and Girls Club for Kindergarten through 2nd grade students and the Mathy site for 3rd thru 5th grade students (these students get on the after school bus to Mathy on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday). The hours are 3:15 - 5:30. There is an “early afternoon” program on Wednesdays for SOTA I students beginning at 12:10. Students who attend the “early afternoon” program will eat lunch at 11:45, after which they will be walked to the Amie Mathy Center by Boys and Girls Club personnel. A registration form must be on file with the Boys and Girls Club before students may attend. Forms can be obtained through the school or by calling the Boys and Girls Club office, 789-8461 and must be turned in directly to the Boys & Girls Club.

BREAKFAST

Breakfast is served between 7:35 A.M. and 8:00 A.M, $ 1.50/day per student. Reduced Rate, $.30/day.

BUS INFORMATION

Bus route information is available through First Student by calling them at (608) 881-6370.

CLOTHING POLICY

Students are expected to dress appropriately for school. Any clothing or clothing accessories that create a distraction to learning or that have the potential to create a safety concern are not allowed in school. Clothing depicting alcohol, drugs, obscene language, sexual permissiveness or violence is prohibited as are bare midriff shirts, strapless halters and other revealing tops, skirts or pants. Students wearing this type of clothing will be asked to change clothes or cover up the offensive clothing.

COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Students are not allowed to bring electronic devices, pagers, walkie talkies, tablets, portable CD players, etc. to school, except by special permission. All personal devices including cell phones must remain off and out of sight at school.

LATEX-CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENT

Our school is designated as a latex-controlled elementary school. Materials that contain high concentrations of latex, such as most balloons, are prohibited. If you have questions regarding any product or material you may wish to bring to the school, please contact the office before bringing the item into the school.

MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

If your child needs medication at school during the 2016-2017 school year, please follow these guidelines:

*PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION*

* Need written consent from both parent and physician.
* Must be in a current, properly labeled prescription bottle.

Students may not carry medications in school. Exception: Asthmas inhalers may be carried with appropriate written consent from physician.

*NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION*

* Need written consent from parent indicating the exact instructions for administration such as name of drug, amount to be given, and how often it can be given.
* Must be in its original container.

*CHANGES IN MEDICATION ORDER*

* When changes in the original medication order occur, they must be sent to school in writing by parent and/or doctor if necessary.

All medications must immediately be brought to the office. For the safety of all students and the community, we request that an adult bring the medicine. Please contact us if you have any questions or if we can be of any assistance.

MEAL PRICES FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

Breakfast: $ 1.50/day Reduced Rate $ .30/day

 Lunch: $ 2.65/day Reduced Rate $ .40/day

 Cold lunch milk: $ .50

All payments should be in an envelope labeled with your child's name, room number, and amount. You should have money in your child's account at all times.

Breakfast is served between 7:35 A.M. and 8:00 A.M. You will have received an application for free or reduced meals from the School District of La Crosse this July. Please complete it and return it as soon as possible. The application must be processed in order to start receiving meals at a free or reduced status and must be submitted yearly. If you do not receive an application, they are available in the school office or call 789-7625. (Note: Meal applications must be completed each school year).

**Milk Substitutions in School Meals**

USDA has recently changed regulations in our school meals program that will have an impact on some families.School nutrition programs can no longer substitute juice for milk. We are now required to provide an exact nutritional equivalent of milk. This change in requirements helps ensure that students receive adequate calcium and other key nutrients found in milk.

For students who cannot digest milk, Lactaid – a milk product without the troublesome milk sugar lactose — will be offered. Lactaid milk will be substituted free of charge if for diet reasons your child cannot consume milk. Parents must submit a doctor statement for this service.

This ruling does not apply to students *with* disabilities that affect major life functions. If your child has a disability, please contact your school’s cook manager or the school nutrition office at 608-789-7625. We must have a special diet form completed that must be signed by your physician notating the diagnosis or medical condition that requires the student to have a milk substitute.

**OPEN HOUSE - TUESDAY, August 30th, 5:30-6:30 p.m.**

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Toys, trading cards, skateboards, scooters, roller blades, and video games are among the items not allowed in school. These items not only become a distraction and a safety concern, but are frequently targets for theft and misuse. The staff may confiscate any item that is threatening or disruptive to the school setting. Most confiscated items will be returned only to a parent/guardian. Items may be brought to school for demonstration or sharing activities only with the prior consent of the teacher. The school has no insurance covering personal belongings of the students. Please write your name on all of your child’s belongings, especially book bags and coats. Cell phones must be turned off and out of site at school.

PICTURE DAY

This year's student pictures will be taken by Lifetouch Studios and is scheduled for Friday, September 23rd. Information on package sizes and costs will be posted on the SOTA 1 web site at a later date.

#### PARENT VOLUNTEERS

If you would like to volunteer at school, please stop in the school office to pick up the Volunteer Service Form. This district-wide form must be completed and turned into the office at least 5 days prior to the date you would like to volunteer so that it may be processed. The volunteer form is good for the current school year only and must be completed each school year.

 All volunteers and visitors must wear a school identification tag during regular school hours.

 All volunteers must register in the office each time they volunteer.

 All volunteers need to be familiar with safety tips and must adhere to confidentiality expectations.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Walking and biking to school are healthy ways to commute to school. A crossing guard is located at the intersection of 7th and Johnson. Bike racks are located outside of the main entrance on 7th street and on the north end of the playground. Hamilton/SOTA is a participant in the Safe Routes to School Program.

Pedestrian Safety Rules:

Use the crosswalks

Obey the crossing guard

Never cross between parked cars where you cannot be seen

Look both ways before crossing

Bike Safety Rules:

Please wear a helmet

Stop at stop signs

Look both ways before crossing

Walk bikes on the playground

#### SCHOOL SUPPLY LIST FOR 2016-2017

The school supply list is enclosed for your convenience. Please remember to write your child’s initials on their book bag.

STUDENT CODE OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All students must adhere to the School District of La Crosse Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities.

SURROUND CARE

Y Surround Care is available beginning at 6:30 A.M. in the gym/breakfast room and after school in room 211. Registration forms are available at the Y or call the Y at 783-9622 for more information. Prior registration with the Y is required before attending.

VISITOR IDENTIFICATION

During regular school hours all visitors (even regular volunteers) must first report to the school office to identify themselves, sign in, state the nature of their visit, and obtain an identification tag. Visitors may need to enter via the vestibule during the school day as all doors are locked while school is in session.

**Drills**. We practice all kinds of drills on a regular basis.  As I tell students, "We practice these drills so that we'll know what to do if we ever have an emergency."  A.L.I.C.E. is a little different in this regard.  Our staff will continue to be trained in this.  Our message to students, however is the same as it's always been, "We need to be silent so that we can follow the adult directions."  In an A.L.I.C.E emergency, students will follow the directions of the adult in charge (and it could be different depending on their location).

 Mr. Michaels, Principal

August 2, 2016

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Providing a safe and secure learning environment for students is of paramount importance to the School District of La Crosse. Over the past 7 years, we have taken significant steps to enhance the physical safety and security in our school buildings.

Even with all of these improvements, it is still necessary to prepare for the potential threat of a violent intruder. The U.S. Department of Education has recommended that school districts implement a protocol that provide more options than traditional lockdown to students and staff when facing threat or harm from a violent intruder.

"To prepare, our district has been training staff on a new age response protocol called ALICE that enhances traditional lockdown procedures. The ALICE protocol is explained to students in an age appropriate manner and empowers staff to exercise options based on real-time information gathered during the incident. This enhanced protocol does not dictate to staff or students how they should react, but merely provides options for actions besides a “hide and hope” strategy offered by traditional lockdown. ALICE techniques are utilized by law enforcement across the country and are in line with recommendations from multiple federal, state and local education and law enforcement agencies.

The acronym ALICE is a non-sequential acronym to help staff remember options that stands for:

**Alert**: Get the word out using clear concise language and describe the location of the event.

**Lockdown**: Lockdown students in secure areas if evacuation in not an option. Enhance traditional lockdown by barricading.

**Inform**: Keeping the staff and students informed continually allows for good decision making.

**Counter**: As a last resort if the intruder enters the room, distract, confuse and gain control.

**Evacuate**: Reduce the number of potential targets for the intruder by evacuating the building to a predetermined rally point off of school grounds.

Additional information regarding the ALICE protocol can be found at <http://www.alicetraining.com>. Informational meetings for parents on the ALICE protocol will be held on the following dates and times:

* August 25 @ 6 PM – Central High School Auditorium
* August 31 @ 6 PM – Logan High School Auditorium

Sincerely,



Jason Showen

District Safety Coordinator

**SCHOOL GARDEN UPDATE**



Our school garden at Hamilton/SOTA has been growing and thriving over the summer, thanks to great summer weather, good rains and most importantly our amazing volunteers! Thank you to families, community members, interns and teachers for spending time in the garden this summer, watering, weeding and harvesting! You are appreciated!

There have been so many things growing in the garden: kale, lettuce, spinach, cabbage, cucumbers, basil, tomatoes, peppers, edible flowers and ground cherries, to name a few. Volunteers have been able to harvest and take some produce home, but we also have been able to provide produce to the free summer lunch program in the district, as well as to our school cafeteria and classroom snacks!



Thank you to the many individuals and organizations and businesses that have helped to expand and improve our garden this year: Mayo Clinic Health System-Franciscan Healthcare, La Crosse Education Foundation, Gundersen Health System, ReNew La Crosse, UW-L Student Chapter-Habitat for Humanity, Coulee Region Ecoscapes, School District Buildings and Grounds and School Nutrition Departments, SOTA Steering Committee, Hamilton PTO, as well as the amazing school administration, teachers, staff and students!

GROW La Crosse will continue to provide lesson programming during the months of September-November, as well as provide garden maintenance/troubleshooting and volunteer coordination.

**Save the Date!**

 **Fall Festival on the Farm**

Saturday, September 24th 2-7 p.m.

Deep Roots Community Farm

Early Bird Adult Tickets: $8 ($10 after September 15th)

Early Bird Child Tickets: $4 ($5 after September 15th)

If you are interested in more information on the school garden, volunteering or other opportunities through GROW La Crosse, contact Kari Braley at 404-643-4777 or kari@growlacrosse.org or visit the website at [www.growlacrosse.org](http://www.growlacrosse.org).

Thank you to our corporate sponsor:

