

PONCA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Ponca & Jackson Elementary Schools 2006-2007

School Information

<i>School Name:</i>	Ponca Elementary School	Jackson Elementary School
<i>School Address:</i>	505 3 rd Street, P.O. Box 568 Ponca, Nebraska 68770	223 N John St. P.O. Box 67 Jackson, Nebraska, 68743
<i>Phone Numbers</i>	(402) 755-2241	(402) 632-4276
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<i>Web Page</i>	www.poncaschool.org	www.poncaschool.org

Ponca Elementary Classroom Teachers

Kindergarten	Mrs. Carla Dickens	cdickens@esu1.org
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1 st Grade	Mrs. JoAnn Todd	jtodd@esu1.org
	Mrs. Trish Swetnam	tswetnam@esu1.org
2 nd Grade	Mrs. Mary Husen	mhusen@esu1.org
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3 rd Grade	Ms. Gail Wierda	gwierda@esu1.org
4 th Grade	Mr. John Stroud	jstroud@esu1.org
5 th Grade	Mrs. LaRita Stewart	lstewart@esu1.org
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Support Instructional Staff:

Resource:	Mrs. Lindsay Burrell	lburrell@esu1.org
Speech:	Mrs. Carol Conrad	cconrad@esu1.org
Nurse:	Mrs. Sheila Herfel	sherfel@esu1.org
Title I:	Ms. Pat Leslie	pleslie@esu1.org
Music:	Mrs. Kari Peterson	kpeterso@esu1.org
P.E.	Mr. Bob Hayes, Mr. Troy Evans	
Band:	Ms. Amy Hansen	agesche@esu1.org
Guidance:	Mrs. Cindy Anderson	cianders@esu1.org
Principal:	Mr. William F. Thompson	billthom@esu1.org

Teacher Assistants:

Mrs. Nikki Carnell, Mrs. Lisa Hohenstein, Mrs. Sandy Jensen,
Mrs. Patti Boyle, Mrs. Joan Taylor

Ponca Public Schools

Elementary Information

2006-2007

Dear Parents:

Welcome to the 2006/2007 school year. We're very happy that you and your children are a part of Ponca Public School system. The following items are presented for your information and guidance during the coming year. This information is a combination of administrative regulations, past practices, common sense, and concerns for the safety and well-being of all students. At both Jackson and Ponca Elementary Schools, each classroom teacher will establish rules for expected behavior in the classrooms, on the playground, in the building hallways, and other student areas and activities. Our expectations for student behavior place an emphasis on respect for others and respect for property. We believe that everyone deserves to be treated with dignity, expectations affect performance, and everyone deserves a safe learning environment. We know that you have the same expectations for your children and we will keep you informed of your child's growth in social skills, responsibility, and performance in the classroom.

Areas of Interest and Importance:

A. Student Conduct:

- Students are expected to be prepared and conduct themselves in a manner that would be a credit to themselves and to the school.
- Such behavior as yelling and running in the halls, foul, discourteous speech, unsportsmanlike conduct at play, fighting, and destruction of school property will not be tolerated and are grounds for disciplinary action.
- In the classroom, disciplinary problems are the responsibility of the teacher. On the playground, it is handled by the teacher or person assigned to playground supervision.
- Discipline problems with which the teacher feels unable to cope should be referred to the Principal. The use of suspension, expulsion and mandatory reassignment are provided for in the Nebraska statutes and may be resorted to if the situation warrants.
- Students are expected to use school equipment and playground equipment in the fashion for which they are designed. Willful and/or malicious destruction of any school property can result in suspension.
- **Students who bully other students verbally or physically will be dealt with severely. Name calling, threats, teasing, intimidating, or other forms of abuse will not be tolerated.**

- B. Visitors/Student Releases:** For the safety and security of students, faculty and staff, the following procedures will be in effect.

Visitors to Ponca Public School buildings must first report to the Administrative Office upon entering either the secondary or elementary buildings. Once in the office, you will be asked to sign in, and then issued a Visitor's Pass, if you wish to visit a classroom. We will not send parents to the classrooms or to the playground to pick up their children, unless they have signed in at the office and have been issued the Visitor's Pass. Teachers and playground supervisors should not be put into a position to determine the validity of a request to release a student. That will be done from the office. When a parent comes to the office to pick up their child, office personnel will contact the teacher to release that student to the office. If a parent, or other adult, enters the building and goes to a classroom, or to the playground or other area of the school to pick up a child, school personnel have been instructed to direct that person to the office.

The "urban" approach to student safety and building security has been to lock most exterior doors, employ security personnel, and lock-down school buildings. Those may seem a bit extreme for the small rural communities in which we live. This is not a question of trusting parents that we know, and not trusting those that we don't. We don't know all of the backgrounds and situations that exist with some of our students. We do not want to put a child in a situation that may be inappropriate. This is a matter of student safety and security. ---- Your cooperation would be most welcome concerning this matter.

- C. Child Custody Matters:** In most cases, when parents are divorced, both parents retain parental rights. If you have a court order that limits the rights of one parent in matters such as custody or visitation, please bring a copy to the office for our files. Unless your court order is on file with the District, we must provide equal rights to both parents.
- D. Child Abuse and Neglect:** Schools, including all employees, have a moral duty and responsibility to report all **suspected** cases of child abuse. A person who has reason to believe that a child has been abused **must report** such information to the **Department of Human Services**.
- E. Emergency Names and Phone Numbers:** Accidents do happen at school and it is not always possible to know the exact extent of a student injury or illness until after x-rays or an examination by a doctor. When an accident occurs or a student becomes ill, the nurse or other school personnel will attempt to notify parents. A student is never sent home unless arrangements are made with the parents or other authorized persons identified on the student's emergency card. Please complete the form attached to this informational letter and return it to us as soon as possible. An emergency name and number are very important when parents are not available.

F. Attendance: The alarming growth in the number of missing children makes the communication between parent and school that much more important. The administrators of the Ponca Public School District request that parents call the school when your children are going to be absent. When absences are caused by illness or injury, the parents should phone between **7:30** and **8:15**a.m. to the center that the student attends. If we do not receive a call and a student is absent, we will attempt to make certain that the parent is aware of his/her student's absence.

Nebraska state law and Ponca school board policy require that we monitor the attendance of each student and that absences do not exceed five (5) days per quarter for elementary students. In the event of habitual truancies, we are required to notify the county attorney of such excessive absences and it is the decision of the county attorney to file charges against the student/parent/guardian for this violation of the law.

Listed below are guidelines for student arrival to school and absence from school:

TARDY: Late arrival to school or class up until 9:30a.m. will be considered tardy.

ABSENT ONE-HALF DAY: A student will be counted absent one-half day if he/she arrives at school after 9:30a.m., or leaves school prior to 2:00p.m. Please keep this in mind when scheduling appointments.

G. The School Day: Students will be allowed to enter the building at **8:15**, so we would ask that students **NOT ARRIVE AT SCHOOL BEFORE 8:10**. At Ponca Elementary, the school day starts begins at **8:25**. ---- At Ponca Elementary, **town students** will be dismissed at **3:25**, allowed to get materials from their lockers, and leave the building. **Bus riders** will be dismissed at **3:30**. Buses depart each afternoon at approximately **3:35**.

H. Bus Routes: The District operates bus routes on rural paved and gravel roads to pick up students who live outside of Ponca and Jackson. A danger exists when the bus makes a stop on the road and sits waiting for the student(s). To reduce the possibility of any accident, we ask that students riding the bus, be at the bus stop, when the bus arrives. It is dangerous for all concerned when the bus has to wait for extended periods for the student, and if the student fails to appear. For this reason, we ask that parents call the school when your children will not be riding the bus. District busses are equipped with radios so that messages can be transferred to the bus driver.

I. Voice Mail Service: As a convenience for parents, the District provides a voice mail service. If you need to call early to report your child's absence for the day, or if your child will not be riding the bus, you may call and leave a message on the voice mail service. The number to call is **755-7011**.

J. Report Cards and Parent Teacher Conferences: Report cards are issued every nine weeks with progress reports provided to parents at the mid-point of each quarter. Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held following the first and third quarter. These conferences are an important part of the home/school communication process. The purpose of the conference is to share information and work together to help the student. Elementary parents will be notified of their scheduled conference time. **PLEASE DO NOT BRING CHILDREN TO CONFERENCES.**

Informal conferences may be arranged with your child's teacher at any time convenient to both parents and teacher. Teachers are available to parents between **8:00 to 8:15am** and **3:30 to 4:00pm** when school is in session. At other times, by appointment.

K. Homework: Work assignments outside the classroom shall be for the purpose of enrichment, review, and reinforcement of the principles taught that day, or completion of daily class assignment not completed in a timely manner. Homework should not be disciplinary in nature. Homework assignments will be made at the discretion of the individual teacher. Assignments are due on time and on the date assigned. They should be finished neatly. Any assignment not meeting requirements will not be accepted. Parents and teachers realize that all children differ; one might have more homework than another. Parental involvement in their child's homework experiences will greatly enhance their child's learning environment.

L. District Testing Programs: The ITBS (Iowa Tests of Basic Skills) will be administered to grades 1-6 during the second semester of each school year. The purpose of such testing is to measure the academic growth of each child from year to year and to provide a profile of the student's academic strengths and weaknesses. Nebraska State Standard Tests are also given to grades 2-6.

Children will be tested for special services after the Teacher Assistance Team (TAT) has recommended the student for further evaluation. Each child referred will be assessed by the appropriate specialist/s. With this information, the child's team will determine if the child qualifies for services. If services are appropriate for the child, he/she will have goals written in a plan that the team will follow for one year.

M. Elementary Guidance Program: The elementary school guidance program is part of the total school program and compliments learning in the classroom. It is child-centered, preventative, developmental, and encourages students' social, emotional, and personal growth.

The goal of elementary guidance in the classroom is to provide students with opportunities to learn and practice effective communication skills, friendship building techniques, drug/alcohol resistance skills, personal strengths and talents, effective study skills, character education skills, safety skills, and planning for the future by goal setting and obtaining information about careers. In addition, students learn about the role of the guidance counselor in the school setting.

Parents, students, and teachers/administrators can request the counselor to meet with a student. Individual and group counseling sessions can be scheduled where topics that could be addressed include: helping children cope with difficult and /or unchangeable life events, giving children the opportunity to share their feelings and concerns, teaching and developing communication, problem-solving, and decision-making skills, and building self-esteem and confidence.

The school counselor consults with parents and/or teachers to help promote student success. The counselor intervenes in conflict, crisis, and emergency situations. They also help build tolerance and appreciation of persons of all ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students are given the opportunity to be members, representatives, and officers of the elementary student council. Through this innovative program, students utilize parliamentary procedure, and are involved in a number of school and community service projects.

N. Chain of Command: Complaints & Suggestions: When there is a situation or matter that arises where the parent wishes to notify the school regarding a specific problem, concern, or question, we believe the correct process to follow to resolve matters or to have questions answered is as follows:

1. Teacher – Parent contact.
2. Teacher – Parent – Principal meeting.
3. Teacher – Parent- Principal – Superintendent meeting.

Parental complaints must be addressed before classes start (8:00 – 8:25) or after the School day (3:30 – 4:00).

O. Student Management System: The Ponca Public Schools has a computerized program that allows parents to use their home computers to review their child's progress in each classroom.

P. Student Dress Guidelines: How a student dresses for school has an impact on how he/she acts. Therefore, we ask that students wear neat and appropriate clothes to school. Examples of inappropriate clothes would be attire which advertises or supports the use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco, which has any sexual connotation, which is derogatory or offensive, or dress or grooming styles which are immodest. **Hats or caps are not suitable in the building.** Hats, scarves, bandanas, or any head covering may not be worn in the building during school or school activities. Shorts may be worn throughout the school year. Shoes must be worn at all times. Shoes that mark the floors may not be worn indoors, they must have white soles or be marked "non-marking" soles. We feel it is important for students to participate in recess activities that will be held outside during most days. Please send boots, gloves, hats, and warm winter coats with your child during the winter season. Parents will sometimes ask that students not go outside during recess. We would ask that this be done in a very limited basis due to supervision and scheduling difficulties.

Q. Emergency school closing: When inclement weather, or some other factor, makes it necessary to close school, the same procedures will be followed as in previous years for weather-related school cancellations. A phone call is made to a central number in Sioux City and the information is released from there to the radio and television stations throughout the area. Information is also available online. The website for this information is: <http://closings.siouxland.com>

Due to the number of young children in our school as well as the number of working parents in our district, we will only dismiss school early if absolutely necessary. Please discuss with your children where they are to go and procedures to follow if school is dismissed early.

R. Immunizations and Health Practices: Nebraska State Law requires a certificate of immunization for attendance at any Nebraska school. A revised immunization law has been passed by the Nebraska legislature that makes immunization waivers much harder to obtain. The **ONLY REASONS** a student in Nebraska can have a waiver of immunization on file are:

1. For a medical reason (Forms are available at the school for your physician to Sign).
2. Religious reasons: If this is the case, you will need to request a special waiver from the school and then it will have to be notarized.

We are required by state law to have your child's immunization records on file the first day of school or your child will not be allowed to attend school.

Please keep your child out of school if he/she has, or you suspect he/she has, a temperature or potentially infectious or contagious condition. Please inform the school if your child has an infectious condition or illness (chicken pox, head lice, pink eye, etc.) Students returning to school after an absence due to a contagious condition may be required to provide a doctor's statement concerning the student's condition and fitness. A child with head lice will be dismissed from school to a parent or guardian. The child will not be allowed back in school for a period of 24 hours from treatment.

S. Medication: Laws have been enacted that limit the school's ability to dispense medicine. We cannot administer any medicine to students without proper authorization by parents. Forms are available at the school for that purpose. Notes from parents can be sent with precise information to include the following: type medicine; quantity included; amount per dose; how often and under what circumstances it should be given to the child; and what length of time the medication is to be administered. Please include the student's name and provide a parent's signature to the note. Prescription drugs must be in the original container with the pharmacist's label containing directions for administration. A staff member will administer all medications and all administrations will be documented. If you should have additional question, please contact the school nurse.

T. Lunch: The District's hot lunch program offers a nutritionally balanced lunch with milk to all students in grades K-6. The current price for lunch is **\$1.50** daily. Students may purchase extra half-pint of milk for **\$.25**. Students choosing to bring a lunch from home may also purchase milk at school. Students may bring beverages from home with their lunch, although soda pop is not allowed. Students in grades 4-6 will be allowed to purchase ice cream for **\$.50** after their having eaten their lunch.

The District participates in the National School Lunch Program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, to provide free or reduced price meals to eligible students. Eligibility for this program is based on income guidelines provided by the USDA. The issues of privacy and confidentiality of personal applicant information is strictly maintained. **Applications for free and reduced price lunches are available throughout the school year to all students.**

"In Accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: **USDA Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave. S.W., Washington D.C. 20250-9410.** Or Call: **(202)720-5964.**"

"USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

U. Drug-Free Environment: We are committed to being a Drug-Free Zone at Ponca Public Schools. Seizure of any type of drug on school grounds or at any school sponsored will result in immediate disciplinary action.

V. Emergency Drills: The District will conduct emergency drills, to include fire, tornado, and bus evacuation, in compliance with Nebraska State Laws.

W. Guns and Weapons Policy: All students who enter the Ponca Public School system have the right to be safe and free of harm or threat from guns, knives, and other dangerous weapons. The District will exercise the right, and uphold its responsibility, to discipline those students who choose to make our school environment unsafe. The knowing and intentional possession, use, or transmission of a firearm or other dangerous weapon at school, at a school sponsored event or during a school event off school grounds will result in disciplinary action, up to, and including, expulsion from school.

Knives of any type or size are never permissible at school, at school-sponsored events, or during an event off school grounds. The student will be sent to the office and the knife will be confiscated and not returned to the student. Any student in the possession of a knife at school faces the possibility of being suspended or expelled as determined by the Board of Education.

Ponca Public School
Elementary Emergency Information Form
2006/2007

Student _____ Grade _____

Teacher _____

Parent Name(s) _____

Home Address _____

Email Address _____

City _____ Home Phone _____

Place(s) of Employment _____

Business Phones (_____) / (_____)

Person to contact if parents are not available:

Name _____ Phone(_____)

Relationship(friend, neighbor, relative) _____

Please indicate any allergies (including asthma) your child has for which he/she is receiving treatment.

Is there other information about your child you would like us to know?

Parent Signature _____ Date _____