

# TAYLOR

SUSAN ODELL TAYLOR SCHOOL

## PARENT HANDBOOK

2018-2019 Academic Year





Topics are listed in alphabetical order to assist with the navigation of the Handbook.

## After School Enrichment

After school enrichment programs are generally offered in the fall, winter and spring. Program and registration information is available on our website.

## Alternate Pick Up Form

Families who allow people other than parents to pick their children up from school will need to complete an Alternate Pick Up Form. People on the form will be asked to provide a photo ID at the time of pick up.

## Annual Events

### Back to School Picnic | All Families

New and returning families share a potluck dinner to kick-off the upcoming school year.

### Parent Information Night | PreK - 8<sup>th</sup> grade

This evening is an opportunity to spend time in your child's classroom and learn about the teacher's goals and plans for the year. Parent-teacher-student communication strategies will also be discussed.

### Fall Family Fun Day | PreK - 8<sup>th</sup> grade

On a Saturday in October, families enjoy fall and friendship at a local farm.

### Harvest Breakfast | Prekindergarten and Kindergarten, School Day Event for families

Prekindergarten and Kindergarten students and their families join together in the Pinewoods Common Room for food, music, and fellowship.

### Family Craft Night | PreK - 8<sup>th</sup> grade

An evening celebrating your child's giving spirit with crafts-making and refreshments.

### Warm Wishes Sharing Dishes | 1<sup>st</sup> grade - 8<sup>th</sup> grade, School Day Event for families

Students prepare a simple lunch to share with their families and friends in the Aggie on the Sage Campus. Students also make cards and food to share with those in need in the Troy community.

### Family Tubing Day | PreK - 8<sup>th</sup> grade

Enjoy a day of tubing at Willard Mountain!

### **Math and a Muffin** | PreK - 4<sup>th</sup> grade, School Day Event for families

A fun and informative morning designed for families to play math games and explore math concepts together. After math games, all enjoy muffins as a morning snack!

### **Flight Trampoline Night** | PreK - 8<sup>th</sup> grade

Families gather for an evening of active fun!

### **Pajama Read-In Day** | PreK - 8<sup>th</sup> grade, School Day Event for students

This day is a Taylor School tradition with tons of reading fun. Students are encouraged to wear pajamas and bring in a favorite book for a school wide “read-in.” The school serves “breakfast for lunch” in keeping with our theme.

### **St. Jude Math-A-Thon** | Kindergarten - 8<sup>th</sup> grade

This school-day event is a service learning project where students get excited about math and helping others. All proceeds benefit St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital.

### **On-line Auction Fundraiser**

The annual online auction takes place in April. Area businesses generously donate items to the auction. Participants can purchase fabulous items and support the school.

### **Arts Festival** | PreK - 8<sup>th</sup> grade

Student artwork and projects are on display throughout the Pinewoods Campus. Collaborative art experiences allow everyone to get creative!

### **School Plays** | Kindergarten - 8<sup>th</sup> grade, School Day Event for families

Students in each class meet the challenges of providing a performance that is sure to delight.

### **Talent Share** | Kindergarten - 8<sup>th</sup> grade

Pinewoods Campus: Students share their talents during Morning Meetings in May and June.  
Sage Campus: Students share their talents during a show in the Aggie.

### **Field Day** | PreK - 8<sup>th</sup> grade, School Day Event for students

Pinewoods Campus: Students engage in friendly games of competition and enjoy a hot dog lunch.  
Sage Campus: Students travel to Prospect Park for a day of competitive games, food, and fun.

### **Quilt Auction** | Fundraiser

In June, we auction off beautiful quilts featuring squares created by our students. The quilts are sewn by Nancy Maynard (Susan Odell Taylor’s sister) and all proceeds benefit the Financial Aid Fund.

### **Celebration** | Fundraiser

The Celebration is a social gathering for adults. We celebrate the students and the school while raising funds to support two of our most important programs, financial aid and the arts.

### **Moving Up Ceremony and End of Year Picnic** | All Families

A celebration of another successful school year, followed by a picnic at Prospect Park in Troy.

## Before and Aftercare

Beforecare is offered on school days to students at the Pinewoods Campus from 7:30 – 8:30 am for \$10.00/day. Aftercare is offered on school days from 3:30 - 6:00pm for \$12.00/day. There are reduced cost childcare package plans for students who use before and/or aftercare on a full time basis. There is a \$25.00 charge per family if students are picked up after 6:00pm.

Before and aftercare are not available when school is cancelled due to weather.

Occasional all-day childcare is offered for \$50.00/day.

Aftercare/Beforecare bills are sent out at the end of each month. Failure to pay an aftercare or beforecare bill within 30 days will result in a late payment charge of \$25.00.

## Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays are very important to young children. Your child is welcome to bring a birthday snack to share with her/his class during snack or lunchtime. Peanut-free finger foods such as cookies or cupcakes are most appropriate. Cakes, candles, or birthday favors may not be brought into school. Please discuss your plans with your child's teacher ahead of time.

Please note: Young children are very aware of impending parties. Please mail invitations rather than deliver them in school. You can help allay hurt feelings by encouraging your child not to discuss party plans at school.

## Cell Phones

Students are not permitted to use cell phones during the school day. If a communication need arises, a teacher or staff member will provide assistance. Students who have cell phones must keep their phones in their lockers during school hours.

## Clothing/Backpacks/Hats

In our active, hands-on environment, the children will be engaging in daily experiences with art, music, science experiments, the playground, and gym. They need to be free to paint, dance, and run without being confined by the clothes they wear to school. The children will do best in comfortable, functional clothing and sturdy shoes. "Party" shoes, flip flops and sandals are discouraged, as they are not safe for active play.

Each child needs to have a labeled shoebox containing a complete change of clothes. Parents need to replace clothing that is sent home, as well as make seasonal changes. Additional hats and mittens can be kept in the child's cubby/locker. All outerwear should be marked with the child's name. Please, no umbrellas or scarves for safety reasons.

Your child will need a backpack or canvas bag every day, even if there is nothing to pack in the morning. Frequently there are things to send home at the end of the day and it is difficult for the children to manage loose items. Please be sure to check your child's backpack or home folder every night for communications from teacher or school.

Hats/hoods are not allowed in the classrooms during the school day.

## Conferences

Formal conferences are scheduled in November and March. Please see the annual calendar for conference week dates. We believe that communication between home and school is an important element of a child's education. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers at any time during the school year.

## Field Trips

Field trips present engaging learning opportunities for our students. A permission form with the date, cost, and details of the field trip will be sent home for each field trip. Students are required to wear their purple Taylor School shirts on all field trips unless specified. Parents who are planning to transport students are required to fill out a driver abstract form so that a safe driver check can be performed through the New York State Department of Motor Vehicle. Please note- Students on the Sage Campus walk throughout the city of Troy as part of their school experience and a permission form is not required.

## Fundraising

The cost of educating our students surpasses the revenue raised through tuition. In order to cover this gap, the Taylor School has two major fundraising efforts each year, the Annual Fund campaign in the fall and the Celebration in the spring.

### Annual Fund

Contributions to the Annual Fund directly support the school's operating budget for curriculum, classroom supplies, and enrichment – anything that impacts the students' learning experience.

Donors to the Annual Fund represent the broader Susan Odell Taylor School community of parents and grandparents of current students and alums, alumni, trustees, teachers, staff, corporations, and friends of the school. We promote the Annual Fund from November through December, but welcome contributions and pledge payments any time.

Your gift can be made by check or credit card. You can establish a weekly, monthly, or quarterly payment schedule through our secure online donation page. Go to Giving at [taylorschool.org](http://taylorschool.org) and click on the "Make a Donation" button. If you would like assistance, please contact us at 518-274-4994 or [office@taylorschool.org](mailto:office@taylorschool.org).

### Celebration

The Celebration is a social gathering for adults. We celebrate the students and their work while raising funds to support two of our most important programs, financial aid and the arts.

### Other Fundraisers

The annual online auction takes place in April. Area businesses generously donate items to the auction. Participants can purchase fabulous items and support the school.

In June, we auction off beautiful quilts featuring squares created by our students. The quilts are sewn by Nancy Maynard (Susan Odell Taylor's sister) and all proceeds benefit the Financial Aid Fund.

### Elizabeth Odell Leadership Society

The Elizabeth Odell Leadership Society was created to honor Betty Odell (mother of Susan Odell Taylor) and to give special recognition to members of our community who have made a significant investment in the school's mission and academic excellence. Their belief in the Susan Odell Taylor

School and the impact of our mission is an inspiration to others. Recognition within the Elizabeth Odell Leadership Society is based on total giving each fiscal year at the following levels:

Groundbreaker | \$1000 +

Catalyst | \$2000 +

Exemplar | \$5000 +

Sustainers | (recurring monthly gift)

## Health Regulations

Each child is required to have on file a current and complete health record signed by a physician and parent. New York State law requires that the immunization record be completed and on file within two weeks of the start of school.

Please keep children home from school if they are not able to play outside, have a cold or fever, or a communicable disease. We cannot guarantee that there will be an adult available to supervise a recuperating child during recess.

Please contact the school if your child is absent. Sick children should stay home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever without the use of fever-reducing drugs. A child with a severe cough should stay home. Keeping sick children at home will help us reduce the number of people who may get sick.

In the event that your child is identified as sick at school, we will contact you and request that you pick up your child within the hour. Please make a family plan to be prepared for this possibility.

## Homework

Students in first through eighth grade will be given homework that is in keeping with the age/grade level of the students. The number and type of assignments will be influenced by the curriculum and the needs of the student, and will vary at the discretion of the classroom teacher. Homework can fulfill a variety of purposes, such as: reinforcement of skills, extension of classroom learning, enrichment of academics, and the development of productive study habits.

Homework also provides a structure for regular teacher, parent, and student dialogue. Parents should review homework assignments with their children, giving support and guidance as needed.

It is important that your child's homework experience be a positive one. If you have concerns about homework, please contact your child's teacher.

## Infection Prevention

The school has procedures to reduce the risk of children spreading illnesses to each other. They are to teach children to:

-  Wash their hands often with soap and water
-  Avoid sharing personal items like drinks, food or unwashed utensils
-  Cover up their coughs or sneezes using the elbow, arm or sleeve instead of the hand when a tissue is unavailable
-  Properly dispose of tissues
-  Use foam soap dispensers at all sink areas

## Lice Policy

The American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Association of School Nurses discourage “no-nit” policies and believe a child should not be excluded from school because of head lice. If your child has head lice, check with your child’s doctor to obtain a treatment plan and begin treatment as soon as possible. We request that you notify the school so that we can monitor the presence of head lice in the school.

## Lunch

Each child should bring in a lunch that includes a drink (unless ordering milk, available at the Pinewoods Campus only). We ask that you try to send in containers and/or packaging that your child can manage independently. It is recommended that you send a cloth napkin in your child’s lunch box for use as a placemat. This allows us to better control food allergies and limits messes.

Lunch is available for purchase on Wednesdays (pizza) and Fridays (grab bag lunch). A monthly ordering calendar will be sent home.

If a child arrives at school without a lunch, cheerios and milk will be provided.

## Medications

All medications dispensed at the school, including over-the-counter medication, require an order from your child’s doctor with specific dosage instructions. For prescription medication, please ask your child’s doctor to order medication in separate containers for home and school. An adult should deliver all medications to the school. Children cannot self-administer medication. Please contact Mariann Haggerty to set up a care plan if you are planning on the school dispensing medication.

## Milk

Milk is available for snack and/or lunch on our Pinewoods Campus through an annual milk program. A registration form for the milk program is distributed at the beginning of the school year.

## Open Classrooms

Open Classrooms are an informal opportunity for parents to visit our classrooms. Students, teachers, and parents talk, share, and enjoy each other’s company while experiencing the wonderful happenings in our classrooms.

## Parent & School Communication

### Pinewoods and Sage Campuses

Contact Mariann Haggerty at 518-274-4994 or [mhaggerty@taylorschool.org](mailto:mhaggerty@taylorschool.org)

### Emergency Communication

The school will notify families through K12 Alerts. All families are required to provide two emergency text/phone numbers.

### B-Notified App

Parents can opt to install the B-Notified App for notifications about classroom news, reminders, and changes in the schedule.

## Website

The Taylor School website, [taylorschool.org](http://taylorschool.org), provides information about school activities, upcoming events, and classroom news.

## E-Communications

Taylor News e-communication will be sent once a month through Constant Contact.

## Faculty

Teachers can be reached by school email. Please contact Mariann Haggerty if there is an immediate need to communicate with a teacher.

Please note: The parent contact list should only be used for school business.

## Parking

### PINEWOODS CAMPUS

#### Spaces in front of the building

Parking is allowed in these spaces except from 8:00 – 8:45 am and 3:00 – 3:45 pm to allow the buses to maneuver through our parking lot in a safe manner.

#### Pedestrian Walkways

There are two pedestrian walkways marked by yellow stripes on either side of the parking lot.

Please use the pedestrian walkways when walking to the building from your parked car. Children are arriving by bike, scooter, or walking should stay in the pedestrian walkways.

#### Auction Winner Parking Space

This space is exclusively for the auction winner's family for a period of one year and should be available at all times for their use.

### SAGE CAMPUS

Parking at the Sage Campus is available on the street or by parking pass in the Russell Sage College lot at 69 River Street, Troy, NY 12180. To obtain a parking pass, please contact Mariann Haggerty at 518- 274-4994 or [mhaggerty@taylorschool.org](mailto:mhaggerty@taylorschool.org).

If a student needs to be dropped off or picked up during the school day, parents can park in the shuttle zone on First Street near the school bus sign for a short period.

During certain special events, Russell Sage College will make the parking lot at 69 River Street available to our families without a parking pass for the duration of the event. We will notify you if an event has no-pass parking available.

## Payments/Billing

Please contact our Business Manager, Jean Fuller, for questions or information at 518-244-6848 or [jfuller@taylorschool.org](mailto:jfuller@taylorschool.org).

## Progress Reports

Progress reports present a comprehensive picture of your child at certain points during the school year. Progress reports are sent by email according to the following schedule:

Prekindergarten: January and June

Kindergarten–8th grade: November, March and June

## School Care Plan for Peanut Allergies

The following outlines the responsibilities that the Susan Odell Taylor School will accept on behalf of a student with a life-threatening allergy to peanuts. It should be understood that while every possible attempt will be made to follow these guidelines, it is impossible for the school to control the environment to the extent that it is “peanut-free.”

The School will educate its community regarding peanut allergies and the seriousness of this condition. Additionally, the faculty and staff will participate in yearly training about the ways to treat reactions to severe/life-threatening allergies.

The student’s care plan will be posted in her/his classroom.

**Pinewoods Campus:** There will be a peanut-controlled table in the cafeteria. The staff will check the lunches of all children who sit at this table for peanut products and ask any children who do have these products in their lunches to sit elsewhere.

**Sage Campus:** A plan for food consumption will be determined by the parents, classroom teacher, and student. The plan will be attached to the student’s care plan.

There will be a strongly enforced rule that there will be no food sharing amongst the children.

The school will not knowingly purchase any foods containing peanuts or peanut by-products.

At school-wide functions where food is sourced from places outside the school, there will be a separate area for foods that are identified as peanut-free. Unless a food is labeled peanut-free, it will be assumed that it could contain peanuts or peanut by-products.

## School Day

### PINEWOODS CAMPUS

8:30 am School Day Begins

3:30 pm Dismissal

All classroom doors open at 8:20 am. Teachers will be in their rooms to welcome students and families at 8:20 am.

The keypad will work prior to 8:20 am. Prior to 8:20 am children must be supervised by the adults who brought them to school. Members of our community are welcome to visit with each other in the entrance hall while waiting for classrooms to open.

Children who ride the bus and arrive before 8:20 am will go to beforecare without a fee. All other children who go to before care prior to 8:20 am will be charged.

Children in kindergarten through fourth grade who arrive after 8:40 am are considered tardy and should go to the office accompanied by the adult who brought them to school. The adult will

complete a late form which will be forwarded to the classroom teacher to ensure an accurate attendance record.

## Drop off/ Pick Up

### For car drop-off in the morning:

Stay in the lane until you can move your car to the yellow pedestrian zone by the front entranceway sidewalk. If there is a line, please wait your turn.

### For car pick up in the afternoon:

Stay in the lane until you can move your car up to the yellow pedestrian zone by the front entranceway sidewalk. Teachers will escort students into cars and buses. During busy times, please be ready to be directed to move forward so that multiple cars can be loaded.

Do not pass school buses or cars that are loading/unloading in front of the school!

### School Bus Transportation:

It is the family's responsibility to notify the transportation department if the bus will not be transporting a child. This courtesy prevents the bus drivers from waiting for a child who will not be riding the bus.

**ANY CHANGES IN A STUDENT'S REGULAR DROP OFF OR PICK UP SCHEDULE SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO MARIANN HAGGERTY:** 518-274-4994 or mhaggerty@taylorschool.org. Dismissal changes that are communicated after 3:00 pm are not guaranteed.

Families of children who are absent or tardy from school more than 10 days per semester will be contacted by the Head of School.

## SAGE CAMPUS

8:10 am School Day Begins

3:20 pm Dismissal

A staff member will greet students on First Street between 8:00 – 8:10 am. Students should enter the building and proceed to their classrooms.

Students who arrive after 8:10 am should be accompanied by an adult to the school and check in with a staff member. Drivers of late students can park in the shuttle zone on First Street near the school bus sign during the drop off.

Dismissal is between 3:20 – 3:30 pm on Division Street. Cars and buses should line up on the right side of Division Street.

### School Bus Transportation:

It is the family's responsibility to notify the transportation department if the bus will not be transporting a child. This courtesy prevents the bus drivers from waiting for a child who will not be riding the bus.

**ANY CHANGES IN A STUDENT'S REGULAR DROP OFF OR PICK UP SCHEDULE SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO MARIANN HAGGERTY:** 518-274-4994 or mhaggerty@taylorschool.org. Dismissal changes that are communicated after 3:00 pm are not guaranteed.

Families of children who are absent or tardy from school more than 10 days per semester will be contacted by the Head of School.

## Snacks

We feel it is important for the children to take a nutritional break each morning to fuel their minds and bodies. The school provides a daily snack to our prekindergarten students. Students in kindergarten through eighth grade should bring a daily snack that is easy to eat and clean up. Students who attend aftercare are given a snack in the afternoon.

## Snow Days

Families will be notified of school delays and closings through the K12 Alerts system. Closing and delay information will also be announced on the local television stations and our main office phone message. Every attempt will be made to make decisions by 6:30 am.

## Stanford Achievement Test

In May, students in grades 3-8 take the Stanford Achievement Test. The Stanford Achievement Test is a nationally-normed test that provides data about how your child is performing in comparison to students throughout the country. At the Taylor School, we do not spend time “teaching to a test.” Our academically rigorous curriculum fully prepares our students to take the Stanford Achievement Test.

## Ways Your Purchases Help Us

### Amazon Smile

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice.

### Box Tops for Education

Save those box tops from General Mills and we can turn them in for cash. There is a can in the office or just send them in with your child’s folder.

### Hannaford Clink Bottle Return

Simply fill a school bar-coded bag with your returnables. Then take the bag to any Hannaford, scan the bar code, and drop bag in the spot for Clink bag returns. Bags with the school code on them are available throughout the school year. Please contact Mariann Haggerty if you need additional bags.

### Target Education Fund

This store will give the school a small percentage of your purchases with the store credit card. You simply need to designate the school as the recipient of these funds. Our ID # is 115-551.

### Price Chopper Tools for Schools

Every year from September to December this company counts your purchases towards points that the school can use to get supplies for the school. Just sign up your Advantage card at a local store or online. This does not need to be done every year and automatically gets carried onto the next school year.

### Campbell Soup Labels

Please turn in your soup labels for redemption towards art supplies.

## Thank You!

Thank you for sharing your children with us. Please call, email or schedule a meeting with us anytime to discuss your child's needs, planning for next year or simply to share your thoughts and ideas.