



2013-14 Back to School Newsletter

You will find on the pages below information regarding the first day of school, lunch schedules and prices, schedules for late start Wednesdays and open house nights, among other things. Parents can check the Portsmouth School Department website for other updates, such as the bus schedule, during this coming week. Parents are also encouraged to visit the school's webpages to find additional information on suggested school supplies and summer assignments.

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

The first day of school for the 2013-2014 School Year is Tuesday, August 27th. For a copy of the 2013-2014 school year calendar, please click here: [Portsmouth School Year Calendar](#)

SCHOOL HOURS

The school day schedule for students K-12 reflects a 6.5-hour day. The hours of the schools remain the same as in the prior year and are as follows:

Hathaway and Melville:	8:45 AM – 3:15 PM
Portsmouth Middle School:	8:00 AM – 2:30 PM
Portsmouth High School:	7:25 AM – 1:55 PM

LUNCH AND RECESS SCHEDULES

The lunch schedule for each of the schools varies by grade level at the elementary and middle schools and by the student's schedule taken at the high school level. In general, lunch/recess is a 45-minute period at the elementary schools and is the same allocation of time as in the prior year. A change made this year at the elementary level was to schedule recess before lunch to encourage better eating habits, minimizing both food waste and the tendency of students from eating lunch too quickly to get to recess. There is a 25-minute lunch period for Grades 4 through 8 at PMS, with a recess period added to the 4th and 5th grade schedule. At PHS, all students have a 22-minute lunch period.



The lunch/recess schedules for Hathaway and Melville are as follows:

Hathaway	Recess	Lunch
Kindergarten	10:45 – 11:05	11:10 – 11:30
First Grade	11:15 – 11:35	11:40 – 12:00
Second Grade	11:45 – 12:05	12:10 – 12:30
Third Grade	12:15 – 12:35	12:40 – 1:00

Melville	Recess	Lunch
Kindergarten	11:15 – 11:40	11:40 – 12:00
First Grade	11:35 – 12:00	12:00 – 12:20
Second Grade	12:00 – 12:25	12:25 – 12:45
Third Grade	12:25 – 12:50	12:50 – 1:10

AVAILABILITY OF CLASS LISTS AND COURSE SCHEDULES

Hathaway August 16 sent out to families

Melville August 16 sent out to families

PMS Grade 4 postcards will be sent home the week of August 19
 Grades 5 – 8 schedules and learning center assignments will be available on the first day of school

PHS August 16 through the Parent Portal in Aspen

MONTHLY LATE START SCHEDULE

In our continued pursuit of exceptional student achievement and professional excellence, the Portsmouth School Department will again schedule one student late arrival day per month, which will occur on the second Wednesday of the month. They are scheduled on the following days: September 11, October 9, November 13, December 11, January 8, February 12, March 12, April 9, and May 14.

The School starts times on the Student Late Arrival Days will be as follows:

AM Pre-K:	9:45 AM to 11:30 AM
PM Pre-K:	12:30 PM to 3:15 PM
Grades K-3:	9:45 AM to 3:15 PM
Middle School:	9:00 AM to 2:30 PM
High School:	8:30 AM to 1:55 PM



FRESHMAN ORIENTATION AND OPEN HOUSE SCHEDULES

Hathaway

- August 22 Kindergarten & New Student Orientation (K - 2:00 PM, New-2:30 PM)
- September 6 Ice Cream Social (6:30-8:00 PM)
- September 26 Open House (5:30 – 7:00 PM)

Melville

- August 23 Kindergarten & New Student Orientation (K - 9:30 – 10:45; New (Grades 1 – 3, 11:00 – 12:00 PM)
- September 20 Open House and Ice Cream Social (5:00-6:30 PM)

Portsmouth Middle School

- August 20 – Grade 4 PTO Scavenger Hunt 4:30 – 6:00 PM
- August 22 New Student Orientation 9:00 – 10:00 AM
- August 22 Math Placement Testing for incoming 8th Grade 10 – 11:30 AM
- September 10 Grade 4 & Unified Arts, Open House 6:30-8:00 PM
- September 11 Grades 5 and 7 Open House 6:30-8:00 PM
- September 12 Grades 6 and 8 Open House 6:30-8:00 PM

Portsmouth High School

- August 22 Freshman and New Student Orientation 8:30 – 11:30 AM (optional cookout to follow for \$5 provided by senior class)
- September 3 Freshman Parent Information Night 7:00 PM
- September 19 Open House (Grades 9-12) 6:00-9:00 PM

FREE AND REDUCED MEAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The Portsmouth School department utilizes the federal guidelines for determining eligibility of children who may receive free and reduced price meals served under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Local school officials will use the following size and income criteria for determining eligibility for 2013-14 School Year.

Family Size	Free Meals (Yearly)	Reduced Price Meals (Yearly)
1	\$14,937	\$21,257
2	\$20,163	\$28,694
3	\$25,389	\$36,131
4	\$30,615	\$43,568
5	\$35,841	\$51,005
6	\$41,067	\$58,442
7	\$46,293	\$65,879
8	\$51,519	\$73,316
For Each Additional Family Member Add	\$5,226	\$7,437



Children from families whose income is at or below the levels shown are eligible for free or reduced price meals. Application forms with a letter to parents are available at the Portsmouth School Department or at your child’s school office. The information provided on the application is confidential and will be used only for the purpose of determining eligibility and verifying data.

Applications from families receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits (formerly the Food Stamp Program) or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) need only to list the children’s names, respective case number, and the signature of an adult household member.

All other households that would qualify based upon income must show the names of all household members related or not (such as grandparents, other relatives, or friends), the amount of gross income each person receives in a month, the frequency of pay and source, the signature of an adult household member, and the last four digits of that adult’s social security number—or check the box if the adult does not have a social security number. The information on the application may be verified by the school or other program officials at any time during the school year.

Foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for free meals. Any foster child in the household is eligible for free meals regardless of income. If a family has foster children living with them and wishes to apply for meals, they should complete the application using the instructions for households that have foster and non-foster children residing in the home.

Applications may be submitted any time during the school year. If you are not eligible now but have a decrease in income, become unemployed, have an increase in family size, or become eligible for SNAP or FDPIR benefits, you may fill out an application at that time.

LUNCH PRICES AND NUTRIKIDS

		Breakfast	Lunch
Elementary	Paid	\$1.00	\$2.50
	Reduced	\$0.30	\$0.40
Middle	Paid	\$1.25	\$2.75
	Reduced	\$0.30	\$0.40
High	Paid	\$1.25	\$2.75
	Reduced	\$0.30	\$0.40
Adult		A la Carte	\$3.25



The Portsmouth School Department offers an online prepaid food service system. This service provides parents with the opportunity to deposit money into their student's school meal account at any time.

Called NUTRIKIDS, this has been the District's Point of Sale (POS) system that provides families with the ability to deposit payments into their child's account, view and print their children's account balances. Parents also have the ability to print out a copy of their child's purchasing history report. This report lists all dates and times that your child has purchased a breakfast, lunch, milk and snacks within the past 90 days. In addition, families automatically receive low balance email notifications once they have set up that feature.

Simply go to www.mySchoolBucks.com and setup your child's account.

The benefits for parents are:

- Set up automatic recurring payments
- Automatically add money to a student's account when the balance runs low
- Low balance email notifications
- Ability to view purchases for the past 90 days

MyNutrition is available to parents within the MySchoolBucks website.

TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

We are very fortunate to have our Portsmouth community who supports and values the use of technology in education. This summer, we made investments in our network infrastructure and in our systems to support the curriculum, improve efficiencies and to prepare for high stakes online testing. As the new school year begins, we plan to make investments in our valued employees to ensure that they are well trained and proficient in using the equipment, integrating it into the classroom and serving as technology role models to our students.

Portsmouth High School has two more wings (four in total) of classrooms that have interactive projectors and document cameras. The Art Department and the TV Studio has refreshed MacBooks and the Modern World Language and Science Department's mobile carts have been refreshed. At Portsmouth Middle School, the 4th and 5th grade now join the Math, Science and Computer classes in being outfitted with Interactive White Boards. The 7th grade Math curriculum highlights rigorous digital content. A mobile cart of thirty laptops has been configured and deployed to support this initiative. The Music lab has been upgraded. We are very proud to have the opportunity to improve the elementary schools. Each school has mobile cart refreshes and we are in the preparation stages of building a stationery classroom computer lab. Each teacher will supplement their classroom set of document camera, projector and netbook with the mimeo device. This device will enhance teaching and learning by turning the



projector into an interactive classroom device. The 8 year old thin clients have been removed in each classroom and replaced with three mac mini devices dedicated to student use.

This new equipment and our initiatives would be useless without the dedication of our Administration, Teachers and Staff who embrace the use of technology in their classrooms and in their daily work. They are eager to learn and practice while they integrate technology into lessons to improve student performance. We are very privileged to have our technology team who is dedicated to supporting all users in the district to use the technology and to improve technology skills. Our team has been very busy during the summer, and look forward to a very exciting school year, 2014!

PARENT PORTAL

To be able to access your student's information for grades 4 through 12 including school schedules and grades, please sign up on our Parent Portal through either the PMS or PHS websites. The Aspen Portal for PHS is found on the left side tab of the [PHS website](#). The middle school's portal information is found on the [PMS main page](#). The portal is available for parents of grades 4 through 12 but only High School students will be able to create their own accounts as well.

VOLUNTEERS IN SCHOOL

Please remember that in order to volunteer in your student's school you must sign up on the VIS site. Parents are required to sign up every year.

[Please Click Here to Sign up Electronically](#)

PHYSICAL EXAMS

All students entering Kindergarten and 7th grade are required to have a completed physical examination. State of Rhode Island guidelines also require lead testing for students entering Kindergarten.

For students entering the Portsmouth Schools for the first time, a physical examination by a qualified physician is required within 12 months prior to enrollment or within 6 months of entering the schools. Rhode Island Law requires evidence and dates of immunizations against Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (DPT), Polio (OPV), Measles, Rubella, Mumps, and Chicken Pox.