STUDENT/TEACHER ASSIGNMENTS: Wheeler Staff consider many factors in making classroom placements for students, including learning style, gender, ability levels, social/emotional factors, personality mix of students and match with teacher style. Parent input can be very valuable. Please submit information about your child’s learning in writing to the principal by Friday, April 10th. Wheeler staff will consider your information when making placement decisions for the upcoming year.

PARENT/TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO): The Rockwell/Wheeler PTO is an excellent opportunity to be directly involved in programs and services that benefit our children throughout the school year. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month and rotate between the Rockwell Community Room and Wheeler Library.

Reading & Technology Nights: Families are encouraged to attend the Reading and Technology nights held during the months of October-February each year. These events engage students and their families in meaningful reading and technology activities aligned with 21st Century Skills and academic excellence.
A Message from Mr. Smith

Dear Families,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2019-2020 school year at Wheeler Elementary School! The faculty and staff join me in saying we are happy to have you as part of our learning community.

While the custodial staff has been working hard to get the building ready for the start of school, the rest of the faculty continues to work hard to revise their plans and techniques to improve their ability to connect with every child.

This guide is provided to support your family with information on all aspects of our school. In this booklet, I would encourage families to review the information on the behavioral expectations, dress code, medication policy, and our many clubs. More information will come out during the school year in the form of a monthly newsletter and frequent updates on the OCS website. Please keep this guide as a reference throughout the year. If you cannot find information on the topic you are looking for, do not hesitate to contact your child’s teacher or myself for clarification.

Wishing you a successful and satisfying school year!

Sincerely,
Warren Smith
Principal

School Store

The school store will be open to students at their scheduled lunch times weekly on Fridays from 10:45 am-12:45 pm. The school store is located in the cafeteria on the stage for students’ convenience. There are a variety of supplies available for students such as: pencils, erasers, notebooks, paper, folders, highlighters, change purses and bookmarks. The members of Student Council take turns operating the store. The school store happily accepts all appropriate donations.

Family involvement helps children be successful in school. Parents can be a part of their student’s education through becoming a Wheeler volunteer and participating in the following:

Wheeler Curriculum Night: Families are encouraged to attend the Annual Meet the Teacher Event at Wheeler School on September 18th. This event is the perfect opportunity to meet your child’s teachers and tour the building.

Parent/Teacher Conferences: Parent/Teacher Conferences are held in November and are an excellent opportunity to meet with your child’s teacher(s) and discuss your child’s learning styles and achievement.

Monthly Newsletter: each month a newsletter will be sent home sharing newsworthy notes and information about events at school. The newsletter will keep families updated on Wheeler School activities.

Connecting with Families
Newspaper Club

This club is open to all 6th grade students. The focus is to engage students in the love of writing while enhancing writing and technology skills, fostering creativity, expanding students’ potential, and recognizing career options.

Open Library

Open Library is an after school group once a week for all students to read, build, play and create in the months where the weather may not be as fun to be outside! This group mostly meets in the winter months after school.

In the Office
Mr. Smith, Principal
Mrs. Vossler, Information Aide

Special Area
Mrs. Larkin, Nurse
Mr. Czarny, Physical Ed
Ms. DeMarco, Physical Ed
Mrs. Ryan, Art
Ms. Kissane, Library
Mr. Cambareri, Music
Mrs. Fosdick, Band
Mr. Ritz, AIS
Mrs. Burns, AIS
Mrs. Sonnacchio, AIS
Miss Knapp, ESL
Mrs. Orecki, Counselor
Mrs. Conway, Aide
Ms. Gwilt, Psychologist
Mrs. Szymaniak, Speech
Mrs. Brown, Lunch Monitor
Mrs. Eipp, Lunch Monitor

Custodial Staff
Mr. Dimmler
Mr. Hammond
Mr. Smithson

Grade 3
Mrs. Mathieson
Mrs. Matzke
Ms. Fitzgerald

Grade 4
Mrs. Martin
Mrs. McCarthy
Mrs. Maimone

Grade 5
Mrs. Bell
Ms. Miller
Mrs. Tobin

Grade 6
Mrs. Church
Mrs. Guptill
Mrs. Smith

Special Education
Mr. Delmotte
Mrs. Ferris
Ms. Sobotka
Mrs. Wilder

Teaching Assistants
Mrs. MacCrea
Mrs. Files/Ms. Nakoski
Mrs. Keeler
Mrs. Polly
Mrs. McIntosh
Ms. Stewart
The Wheeler Drama Club involves students from grades 3-6 in all aspects of a theatre production, from audition and acting to props, lights and sound! Students rehearse after school for months to prepare for their evening performances. The community is very supportive of these fabulous students who let their talents shine through in their exciting and fun-filled productions!

The Wheeler Character Club is designed to further develop leadership skills with an emphasis on community service and collaboration. The participants are engaged in leadership, team building exercises and service learning projects for the community.
STEM Club

STEM Club is a group that gives the opportunity to explore science and technology to 5th and 6th grade students! This group will work on exploring all elements of technology allowing students to work together to answer questions. They will construct their own experiments to be displayed for the school and community on STEM Day in the spring!

Running Club

The Wheeler School Running club encourages students to participate in sports and teaches them the importance of keeping fit and improving their overall health. Our third and fourth grade members learn about muscle groups and stretching techniques, as well as how to build endurance while lapping the OCS track, competing in relays and playing tag games. Self-esteem building is a key goal integrated into the club activities.

Onondaga Central School District Mission Statement

The Onondaga Central School Community

Challenges individual maximum potential,

Prides itself on Success

And prepares contributing Citizens for life.

We get your ready for life!
**Arrival & Dismissal**

The school day is 7:50 am – 2:12 pm. Students who walk or are dropped off at Wheeler should wait in the front of the building. We respectfully request that students who walk to school or are transported to school by a parent not arrive prior to 7:55 am. Students who wish to eat breakfast at school should get off the bus when it arrives at the school, other students will wait on the bus. Breakfast begins at 7:35 am. Please make sure your children are punctual for the start of each day.

**Bus Transportation**

Transportation is provided to and from school for all students. Please help us keep your child safe by:

- Confirming pick up and drop off points at the start of each school year
- Keeping the same pick up location each day, unless there is an unforeseen circumstance
- Keeping the same drop off location each day. This may be different from the pick-up location as long as it is within the school district boundaries
- Any changes must be submitted in writing to the office

Please review the following OCS bus safety rules with your student:

1. Follow the driver’s directions the first time they are given
2. Stay in your seat
3. Keep head, hands and feet inside bus and to yourself
4. No drinking, eating, swearing or loud talking
5. Be at pick up point on time

**Local Government Trip**

The Wheeler Student Council experiences a yearly excursion to our local Town Hall to spend time learning all about the political environment around our school. Having had our own school elections for Student Council officers, and running the school elections based on national elections, it is a wonderful opportunity for our student leaders to see the things they work on out in the community!

**Special Persons**

Through a collaborative effort, the Wheeler Student Council organizes and hosts an annual Special Persons Luncheon on our school Budget Vote Day in spring. Wheeler students entertain and serve approximately 50 people for this community event. Their hard work ethic, manners, leadership skills, independence, compassion, ability to socially interact, collaboration for the common good and talents are amazing and gratifying to see played out.
The purpose of this grade 3-6 organization is to represent the views of the student body, provide services and activities for the school and community that coincide with the values of the Character Education Program, and to enhance leadership qualities. Elections are held on an annual basis and monthly meetings are held with council member and faculty representatives. An annual presentation is made to the Board of Education at one of their regularly scheduled meetings. Past community service projects include raising money for MDA and providing the Senior Citizens within our community with a Thanksgiving luncheon, among many others. The Student Council also has an opportunity to visit our local government agencies each year as a culminating activity and recognition of their contribution throughout the school year.

Homework Policy

Quality homework is an important part of student’s education. Please help your child be responsible for completing assignments on time by scheduling allotted work time in a quiet, well-lit area. Reinforce the importance of homework by talking to your child about assignments, and helping create a “homework habit”.

The staff at Wheeler Elementary School believes that homework is an important part of the learning process for your child. It provides needed practice of skills that were introduced in class, allows for the application of skills taught in the classroom, and aids in the development of responsibility and organizational skills. Homework can also help a teacher identify some problem areas that a student is experiencing. In addition, homework provides an opportunity to develop good learning habits and helps children prepare for the more rigorous requirements that they will face as they are promoted within the school system.

Homework also gives parents a chance to see what material is being studied and may encourage parental involvement with their child, both of which are beneficial to student learning.

- 3rd and 4th grade students should expect 30-40 minutes of homework daily
- 5th and 6th graders will be assigned 50-60 minutes of work daily
- These times are averages. Some nights there will be more and other nights there may be less time required

Report card grades will reflect homework assignments in those subject areas and teachers will notify parents if there is a problem. Parents are asked to work cooperatively with the school to encourage their children to take responsibility for completing homework assignments.
Mrs. Vossler, Wheeler Information Aide, will be present at the front entrance to assist you and ensure student safety. We will be maintaining a single point of entry. Please enter the building through the front main entrance. A picture ID is required upon entering the building. Students arriving late or leaving early must be signed in or out, including parent pick-ups at the end of day. Students will not be allowed to walk over to the High School to go home with an older sibling or cousin. If parents want their children to go home with a sibling a note must be written by the parent and that sibling must come and sign the Wheeler student out at the end of the day.

Please send a note with your child(ren) first thing in the morning for different pick up instructions and if your child is staying afterschool. Please include your child’s name, date, the activity they are staying for and their dismissal information (picked up or taking the bus). If your child rides an Onondaga Hill or Navarino late bus, they will be dropped off at their home or drop off address. If your child rides the Nedrow bus, they will be dropped off at a designated corner bus stop in Nedrow that may differ from their regular stop.

In the event your child forgets their note, you can fax, email or drop off a hand-written note before noon. If we do not receive a note by noon, your child cannot stay after school.

The Positivity Project, or P2, is an empowering program created to for America’s youth to build positive relationships and become their best selves. Positivity Project coordinators partner with schools across the country and equip educators with training, strategy, and resources to teach students positive psychology’s 24 character strengths. We are excited to spend this school year discovering our own personal strengths as individuals and as a school community, and working towards the common goal of “Other People Matter”!

**The Other People Matter Mindset**

- Identifying and appreciating the good in others
- Knowing that my words and actions affect others
- Supporting them when they struggle
- Being present and giving others my attention
- Cheering their successes
Character Education is solidly embedded into the culture at Wheeler School. Faculty volunteers on the Character Education committee meet regularly to develop a high quality program concentrating on different aspects of character development. The committee first establishes a year-long theme. Then, the entire school population gathers together regularly to concentrate on the facet of that theme. Grade specific classroom activities typically follow these building wide meetings. At Wheeler School we recognize that development of positive character traits directly correlates to the future success of our students. We are committed to creating a positive supportive environment for all children.

Wheeler’s building secretary will assist you with any questions you may have regarding upcoming school events, registration, or updated family information. In addition, the office staff will put you in touch with appropriate support staff, teachers, food service, or the principal to ensure that your needs are addressed.

The office phone number is (315) 552-5050.
The art room poses a whole different type of learning. It is an atmosphere of discovery. Discovery of what we can imagine and create. This is done by learning different and new methods of using materials, using our eyes more, new words, finding out about why art was created and by whom, and using a part of mind that does not always get challenged. Grading is based on first and foremost completing work in a timely fashion, following direct ions, showing some creativity, and refining our skills on a daily basis. This is a criteria that every student can meet when they choose to.

The Onondaga Central School District is committed to providing a safe and orderly learning environment where students may receive a quality education without undue disruption. Responsible behavior by students, parents, teachers and visitors is essential to achieving this goal. The Board of Education adopted a Code of Conduct which is available in all school offices, the district offices and on our district website.

The school year is designed with weeklong vacations every six to eight weeks, plus two months’ vacation over the summer. This gives ample opportunities for families to get away and enjoy some time together. However, when families take vacations while school is in session, students miss valuable learning. New York State law designates these as illegal absences. If families still choose to take a vacation while school is in session, they should let the school know. However, students will not be given work prior to the family vacation. While the student is gone, the teacher will compile the work at the end of each day. Once the family returns, the student will have five school days from the return to school to make up the work and turn it in to be graded. The teacher has the discretion to what work the student needs to make up.

Regular attendance at school has a direct impact on your child’s educational success. If your child is going to be absent from school, please call the school nurse (552-5052) by 8:15 am. If we do not hear from you, our school nurse will attempt to call you to confirm the absence. New York State law requires a written excuse from home stating the reason for the absence on the first day the student returns to school. If a written excuse is not received within 5 days, the absence will be considered unexcused.

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**Library Media Center**

The Library Media Center is available from 8:00 am – 3:15 pm every day. Weekly lessons are taught to 3rd and 4th graders. The library schedule is flexible for 5th and 6th graders for collaborative research and technology projects. In addition, each 3rd and 4th grade classroom has a scheduled technology period focusing on project-based learning, such as inquiry. There is also open library time to come and check out books, work on projects, or just relax and read a good book.

![Image of a library]

**Technology**

The Library media Center has 25 computers used for projects, research, and technology. Grades 3-6 have weekly use of our 21st Century computer lab. Technology is integrated across all curricular areas.

**Behavioral Expectations**

The school experience includes learning how to be a productive, appropriate member of a community. At Wheeler School we value the strengths of each child, and respect the backgrounds they bring. We are also very clear about the behaviors expected from our students as they interact with teachers and other children. The following expectations are stressed throughout the school and supported by our No Bully/Kindness Activities:

- Use kind actions and words with others
- Solve problems by talking them out
- Be considerate of others as they learn
- Accept nothing less than your personal best

We love to catch kids making appropriate behavioral choices. Disciplinary consequences, when necessary, are determined on an individual basis according to the District’s Code of Conduct.

OCS continues to implement its policy regarding the use of cell phones by students. During the instructional day it is expected that student cell phones will be off and located in the student’s backpack or desk. Students may use cell phones at the conclusion of the day as appropriate. Cell phones are not to be used on the school buses except in the event of an emergency. The use of other electronic devices is also limited.

The following is noted in the Code of Conduct: Possession of compact disc players, tape players, iPods, MP3 players or any other electronic device, including, but not limited to cell phones, Gameboys, PSP players, etc. are to be kept out of sight and turned off during school hours (7:35-3:15). Cell phone or electronic device used during the activity period will be allowed if permission is granted by the instructor. These items are the sole responsibility of the student and the school is not responsible for theft or loss of such item.
At Wheeler School students are expected to dress in a manner that embodies a high regard for learning, minimizes distractions, and promotes a safe and positive climate. Teachers and all other district employees should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress and help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting. Also, visitors are to be appropriately attired while on District property and at District functions. Please refer to Onondaga Central School District’s Code of Conduct, which sets forth appropriate dress guidelines.

- Dress, grooming and appearance, including hair style/color, jewelry, makeup, and nails shall be safe and appropriate and may not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
- Revealing garments such as, but not limited to, tube tops, net tops, halter-tops, plunging necklines (front and/or back), and transparent or see through garments are not appropriate attire for the school environment.
- Underwear and midriff shall be completely covered with other clothing at all times.
- Footwear shall be worn at all times. (Footwear that is a safety hazard will not be allowed.)
- All headwear, including but not limited to hats, bandanas, head bands, and any other inappropriate headwear will not be worn within the school setting. With the exception of medical or religious purposes, these items are prohibited. Approval must be obtained prior to the wearing of the hat. (Exceptions may be made for school spirit days.)
- Items of apparel that are vulgar, obscene, libelous, or denigrate others on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sec, sexual orientation, or disability are prohibited.

Dress Code

Wheeler Band

Students at Wheeler have the opportunity in 4th, 5th and 6th grade to learn to play an instrument. Students in this program gain a deeper understanding of music through a variety of experiences. Students in the Instrumental Music Program receive a 30 minute small group lesson each week. Lesson times are on a rotating schedule so that students do not miss the same class more than once per month. 4th grade students have the opportunity to study, flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone or percussion. Students will participate in a 4th grade band and will perform in the Spring Concert. 5th and 6th grade students that study woodwind, brass and percussion instruments will participate in the Wheeler School Concert Band. The Wheeler Concert Band performs three public concerts each year in addition to special performances. We look forward to our students participating in the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) Major Ensemble Festival and Onondaga All-County Band each year.
The vocal Music Program consists of General Music and the Wheeler Choruses. The General Music program includes all students at Wheeler. The students have music class once a week for 40 minutes. The main approach is music appreciation, which involves singing, instruments, movement, theory and history. The Wheeler Chorus involves interested students at Wheeler. There are two choruses, one for 3rd and 4th graders, and the other for 5th and 6th graders.

Both choruses rehearse once a week for 30 minutes. Along with learning to sing and understanding music theory and history, the students prepare for 3 major concerts.

- No item of apparel may promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs, and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities, or be deemed to have the potential of being used as a weapon or possibly injure others.
- No bandanas are to be worn on a student’s head or on a student's clothing at any time. No bandanas and/or item that could be used as a weapon are to be worn.
- No coats are to be worn in school between the hours of 8:00 am and 3:15 pm.

NOTE: When helping your child select a Halloween costume, please refrain from selecting costumes with weapons or items of apparel that do not meet the district’s dress code.
The curriculum at grades 3 through 6 is designed to provide content information and develop critical thinking and problem solving skills. Students learn knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to meet the NYS Learning Standards and become participating members of our society.

Core content areas are English/Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies, with additional content areas of Music, Art, Physical Education and Library Information.

Student success is success for all of us. Teachers use a variety of methods to monitor progress including student planners, notes, emails and phone calls to parents. Information regarding student progress is also shared through:

- Interim reports: Distributed at the 5 week point of each marking period or as teachers determine a need, the interim report provides parents with clear information about student’s progress. The interim reports are mailed home. Please discuss the report with your child and sign and return to your child’s teacher. The report may indicate a need for a conference regarding student progress.

- Report Cards: Sent home quarterly, reports inform parents of student progress towards the Common Core Learning Standards. Students receive report cards in November, January, April and June. Interim reports may also be sent home after approximately 5 weeks with an update on child’s progress.

Our physical education curriculum is structured to fulfill two obligations. The first is to provide a variety of physically challenging activities that are both educational and enjoyable. The second is enhancing the development of values such as teamwork, sportsmanship, and hard work, which are inherent to these activities. Students in grades 3 and 4 meet three times each week for forty minutes and are required to wear sneakers and proper attire on physical education days. Students in grades 5 and 6 meet three times a week for forty minutes and are required to change for physical education class. Each 5th and 6th grade student is issued their own locker and combination lock to secure their personal belongings. Students may bring in their own lock, provided it is a numerical dial lock.
Students at Wheeler School participate in the NYS Assessments in English/Language Arts and Mathematics. These assessments are required as part of the Every Student Succeeds Act. In addition, 4th grade students participate in the Elementary Level Science assessment. Results from these assessments are one indicator of your child’s growth and are used to improve instruction in the classroom. Individual student results are sent home when available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-8 Common Core ELA Test</td>
<td>March 25-26, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-8 Common Core Mathematics Test</td>
<td>April 21-22, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th grade Science Performance Test</td>
<td>May 18, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th grade Science Written Test</td>
<td>June 1, 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Built into the daily schedule, recess is a time for informal social interaction with grade level peers. While supervising recess, classroom teachers encourage the development of effective cooperation and communication skills. We take advantage of every opportunity to have the students participate in physical activities. We will go outside when the weather is reasonable and conditions are favorable. Alternatives to going outside may include: indoor recess, workroom if required for missing assignments, videos to support our science and social studies program, and games to support our academic concepts. We work hard to balance the greater demand to focus on academics with our commitment to recreation and physical fitness.
If inclement weather makes it necessary to close school, announcements are made over Syracuse radio and television stations. Announcements are made between 6:30 am and 7:30 am. If you are unsure, continue to listen to updated closing announcements and if school closes before the end of the regular school day, your child will be sent to the address listed on the Early School Closing form. Please keep your information updated and notify the office if there are any changes.

The New York State Education Department has mandated that school districts provide Academic Intervention Services to students who are at risk of not achieving the New York State Learning Standards. Academic Intervention Services are designed to help students achieve the standards in English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies by providing additional instruction or support services.

Through period reviews and assessments at various grade levels, the professionals at Wheeler School determine whether a child is at risk of not achieving the standards. Parents are provided a summary report of the additional services scheduled to be provided.

Your child will receive the services and/or support from a faculty member, which may include the child’s teacher, a reading specialist, a math specialist, a teaching assistant or other support staff. The school personnel will work to provide the students with the necessary skills and supports to be more successful in achieving the expected learning standards.

The grouping of students and instructors responsible for direct teaching may vary throughout the year as student’s needs change. Progress will continue to be monitored to determine the continued need of services.

If you have any questions or wish to request additional information about your child’s progress, please do not hesitate to call the school.
Speech Language services are provided to only those children who qualify for therapy through the Committee on Special Education. Speech therapy focuses on the development of many skills including but not limited to vocabulary, sequencing, social skills, fluency, articulation and overall appropriate communication skills.

Special Education means specially designed instruction services or programs provided to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities, ensuring access to the general curriculum. Special Education services may be provided individually to a student or in a group with other students with similar educational needs.

Special Education may include specially designed instruction, supplementary instruction and services provided in the general education classroom. The following components are often included in a development of individual student programs: co-teaching between regular and special education professionals and/or help from consultant teacher, resource room programs or special classes.

Breakfast and Lunch Program:
Wheeler offers a balanced breakfast and lunch program. The cost is posted on the menu sent home each month. The cafeteria is a place for students to enjoy their meals in the company of school friends. The lunch monitors provide assistance and organize activities for the children to engage in once they are finished eating.

School Lunch Prepayment Program Update:
The food service department offers an online prepayment option. Please feel free to contact our Kitchen for more details.
In coordination with the OCMBOCES Alcohol-Drug Abuse Prevention and Education Program (ADA-PEP) Wheeler School provides full time guidance services to students. The service includes short-term crisis intervention, preventative and ongoing counseling, conflict resolution, social skill building and agency referrals. Some students with disabilities receive counseling as a related service.

Mrs. Orecki

SIT (School Intervention Team)

The Wheeler SIT meets regularly to assist teachers and families in addressing the educational needs of students. SIT is a multidisciplinary team of professionals who meet to develop, implement, and evaluate school based interventions for students who are struggling with learning (RTI). Students who do not respond successfully to interventions may be referred to the district’s Committee on Special Education.

Wheeler School nurse, Robin Larkin, is available from 8:00 am - 3:00 pm each day. Her responsibilities include attending to the medical needs of students, maintaining attendance records and absence calls, maintaining medical records and assisting with school physicals.

Medication Policy:
Students are not allowed to carry prescription or over-the-counter medications while in school or on the school bus. This includes cold medications, aspirin, etc. In the event that your child needs medication during the school day, the following guidelines need to be followed:

- Parents must deliver the medication directly to the school nurse
- The nurse must have written instructions from the child’s physician for prescription and over-the-counter medications indicating the dosage and frequency to be dispensed
- The nurse must also have written permission from the parent to dispense the medication as prescribed by the physician
- Prescription medications must be in the original container and should include the students name, name of the medication, dosage and frequency

Mrs. Larkin

Students and staff at Wheeler School benefit from Health and Wellness information and programs conducted by the Health Office, Programs on Dental health, bike Safety and Healthy Hearts are some examples of information shared with students and staff.