

# Albert Cassens Elementary School 2009-10



*Working Together – Building Children's Futures*

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Glen Carbon, IL 62034  
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Martha Richey, Principal

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## WHAT IS A SCHOOL?

Who is the pupil?

A growing child, not a tool of the state.

Who is the teacher?

A guide, not a guard.

What is the faculty?

A community of scholars, not a union of mechanics.

Who is the principal?

A master of teaching, not a master of teachers.

What is learning?

A journey, not a destination.

What is discovery?

Questioning the answers, not answering the questions.

What is the process?

Discovering ideas, not covering content.

What is the goal?

Open minds, not closed issues.

What is the test?

Being and becoming, not remembering and reviewing.

What is the school?

Whatever we, together, choose to make it.

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# ALBERT CASSENS ELEMENTARY

## Vision

Albert Cassens Elementary School will provide an active and interactive school community where all members — students, staff, parents, and community — work together to create an exciting, nurturing learning environment for the exceptional achievement of all students.

## Mission

1. To provide a safe, healthy and positive learning environment.
2. To empower our children to become responsible, inquisitive and successful learners.
3. To promote high levels of family and community involvement, working to improve students' academic and social growth.
4. To celebrate diversity of all students and to foster their creativity.
5. To be environmental caretakers and productive citizens of our community.

## Theme for the 2009-10 School Year

Cougar Spirit — We're on the prowl for excellence!

## School Motto

Nothing less than my personal best!

# Parents as Educational Partners

## PARTNERSHIP BELIEF

Research continues to confirm the benefits of parental involvement in their children's education. The key element in the kind of parent involvement that most benefits children is a sense of partnership between parents and school: an understanding that it takes both to achieve positive outcomes.

We not only must believe in the concept, but must articulate what each partner brings to the partnership. Parents are not only their children's first teacher, but are also the link that integrates learning and experiences. Classroom teachers enter and exit the children's lives at different stages. They supply a depth of knowledge in subject matter content and skills.

For such a cooperative spirit to prevail, both sides of the partnership must acknowledge the contributions of the other and the necessity of a reciprocal relationship.

We look forward to working with you and your child this year!

Dear Albert Cassens Parents and Students,

The staff members of Albert Cassens Elementary would like to welcome you to the 2009-2010 school year! We are returning to our second year, following a wonderful opening year in our new school. Our strong parent and teacher partnership has enabled us to develop a very positive and productive school community.

Albert Cassens Elementary School promotes a climate of high expectations in an atmosphere of trust and understanding. The staff at Cassens Elementary School believes that all students should be guaranteed the opportunity to learn, grow, and develop in an environment that is clean, attractive, safe, and orderly. Our classrooms offer enriching, joyful, and meaningful experiences for all children. We offer each child positive attention and loving interest, backed by high standards and an emphasis on hard work.

We believe that school pride and a sense of belonging are prerequisites for academic success. Mediocrity will not be accepted where the education of students is concerned. Appropriate learning experiences are designed to help each individual achieve his or her optimal emotional and moral growth and development.

Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns. We look forward to a dynamic year of academic and social growth for each student at Albert Cassens Elementary!

Sincerely,

The Albert Cassens Elementary Staff

# Characteristics of an Effective School

## Safe and Orderly Environment

A safe and orderly environment is one that is free from physical harm and conducive to teaching and learning. Adults are consistently on duty at all times. The more clear and explicit the school's expectations, and the more firmly and fairly they are enforced, the less disorder the school experiences.

## Clear and Focused School Mission

The mission is a statement which tells what the school considers to be most important. There are learning objectives and instructional programs, which match those objectives, as well as assessments which tell whether students are achieving the learning objectives.

## Instructional Leadership

The instructional leader is the person who communicates the school's mission to the staff, parents, and students, making sure everyone understands the mission. Applying the principles of instructional effectiveness, the instructional leader manages the instructional program and serves as the facilitator for the staff.

## Climate of High Expectations

The staff of the building believes and demonstrates that all children can learn.

## Time on Task

In effective schools, students are actively engaged (90%) in whole class, group, or teacher directed instruction. It is possible to increase guided practice and engagement rates for students without increasing the school day or year.

### Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress to Improve Instruction

The most informative test is one that is locally generated, objective referenced, and nationally validated. The purpose of the test is to determine which learning objectives are attained by which students for the purpose of instructional improvement.

### Home-School Relationship

The homes from which students come are informed as to the school's mission and objectives, as well as the learning activities in which students participate. Individual student learning objectives, expectations, and individual student progress are communicated regularly.

## School Day

*Daily Starting Time:* 9:15 a.m. (Promptness is important to student achievement.)

*Daily Ending Time:* 3:30 p.m.

## Arriving at School in the Morning

1. The Cassens Elementary School Breakfast Program is from 8:30-9:00 a.m. Student supervision is not provided before 8:30 a.m., unless your child participates in the Kids Network Program.
2. Students should proceed directly to the gym (if they are not participating in the breakfast program) or cafeteria (for breakfast) upon arrival. Bus riders will unload on the gym side of the building off of Glen Crossing Road.
3. The designated location for parent drop-off is located in the front of Cassens Elementary School. Beginning at 8:30 a.m., there will be a monitor on duty to supervise students being dropped off by parents. Parents who choose to enter the building before school or during the school day will need to park in the parking lot and present ID to our School Safety Officer upon entering the building.
4. Students may not go to the classroom or to the restroom without permission.
5. Students should not be in the hallways without a pass.
6. Band/orchestra students should take their instruments directly to the band or orchestra room and proceed to the gym.

## Departing from School Each Afternoon

For the safety of all children, parents who choose to pick up their child from school will be required to park in the parking lot and come into the school commons. Parents will not be required to show ID from 3:30-3:45 p.m. unless there is a need to visit a classroom.

### Morning Meetings

Morning meetings are held in the gym on a daily basis. Each morning upon entering the gym, children should sit in line with their classmates. The principal will begin the meeting each morning at 9:05 a.m. Morning meetings are an opportunity for the school staff to share important announcements and build school-wide bonds between students and teachers. We will recite the Pledge of Allegiance and the School Motto during Morning Meetings. Students will be dismissed from the gym to their classrooms.

### Absences, Tardiness, and Truancy

The academic progress of our students depends greatly on punctuality and regularity of school attendance. It is our policy that every student should be on the school premises by 9:05 a.m. After 9:15 a.m., a student is tardy. When an absence occurs, parents must call the school before 9:00 a.m. (655-6150).

- All students leaving school during the day for an appointment will be required to provide written documentation from their healthcare provider in order for the absence to be excused.
- All students in the district who are absent for three or more consecutive days will be required to present documentation from a healthcare provider in order for the absences to be recorded as excused.
- All students who are absent for 10% or more days of the year must provide written documentation from a healthcare provider for each subsequent day of absence that occurs in order to have the absence recorded as excused.
- An appeals process will be established to address students with documented chronic or severe acute health issues.

### Homework Request

When contacting the school to report your child's absence, you may also request homework. Homework can be picked up in front of the main office after 3:45 p.m.

### Pre-planned Absences

A request should be communicated to the classroom teacher for a pre-planned absence, which will enable the students to get their assignments prior to the absence. The work should be completed upon returning to school.

### Bus Conduct

Proper bus conduct is very important as it may save your child's life. Any bus disruption that creates an unsafe situation, abuse to others, or a distraction to the bus driver, will be reported to the principal by the bus driver. Students will be asked to report to the principal's office. If, after an investigation, a student is found to be at fault, the following disciplinary actions shall occur:

- Parents may be notified
- Parents may be asked to attend a conference
- Detention may be assigned
- Bus suspension may occur

First Student is the District's school bus provider. Any questions regarding routes, and/or pick-up and drop-off times should be referred to First Student at 656-0125.

### Expectations

A school-wide discipline procedure is used to guide teachers, students, and parents in dealing with student behavior. This plan enables the classroom teacher to clearly and consistently communicate expectations to students, as well as the consequences for compliance or non-compliance.

Problems are best resolved when the issues are known. We feel that communication between home and school is vital, as it relates to the well being of our children.

Students will be expected to follow rules, complete homework assignments, and be good citizens. If this does not occur, a referral will be sent home. Please assist us with this communication program by talking to your child about the referral, signing the referral, and returning it to school the following day.

## Toys and Electronic Devices

Students are not to bring any toys or electronic devices (hand held games, cellular phones, cameras, CD players, MP3 players, etc) to school.

## Expectations During the School Day

- Make good choices
- Have a positive attitude
- Have good study habits
- Follow instructions
- Be a good role model
- Help to keep your school and classroom safe

## Classroom

1. Be responsible — Students will keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
2. Be respectful — Be polite in words and actions.
3. Follow directions — Students will show respect for all adult supervision.
4. Upon entering the classroom, students will go directly to an assigned seat and prepare to start work.
5. Bring paper, pencils, books, and completed homework assignments every day.
6. No gum, candy, or toys.

## Examples of Rewards

- Verbal praise
- Certificates of merit/good news notes, etc.
- Special privileges
- A positive environment in which to learn

## Examples of Consequences

- Warning
- Privileges curtailed
- Note to parents, signed and returned the following day or phone call to parents.
- Detention
- Suspension

Each student shall begin each day with a fresh start. The discipline procedure reminds students that it is their responsibility to help maintain a positive, productive atmosphere and provides the teacher with a fair and consistent approach to all students.

### Why Homework is Assigned:

- It reinforces skills and material learned in class.
- It prepares students for upcoming class topics.
- It teaches students to work independently.
- It aids in evaluating student progress.
- It teaches students to assume responsibility for their own work.
- It teaches students organizational and time-management skills.

### Homework Procedure

1. Students will be assigned weekly homework to be completed outside of the regular classroom.
2. Required homework shall be submitted to the classroom teacher on the assigned date.
3. Students who do not complete assignments on time will be given a detention notice. This notice must be taken home, signed by a parent or guardian, and returned the next day with the completed assignment(s). Failure to return the completed assignment(s) and the signed notice will result in an after school detention.
4. Late assignments will be lowered one letter grade.

### Students' Homework Responsibilities:

Students will be expected to do their best work on homework assignments. All assignments will be turned in on time.

### Grading Scale

- 92-100 — A
- 82-91 — B
- 72-81 — C
- 62-71 — D
- 61-below — F

### Parents' and Teachers' Homework Responsibilities:

Parents and teachers are the key to making homework a positive experience for the children. By making homework a priority, providing praise and support, and by keeping in touch, we will be able to avoid potential problems.

### Lunch/Recess

Group One:

11:30-11:50 Lunch

11:50-12:10 Recess

Group Two:

11:50-12:10 Lunch

12:10-12:30 Recess

Group Three:

12:10-12:30 Lunch

12:30-12:50 Recess

Group Four:

12:30-12:50 Lunch

12:50- 1:10 Recess

### MyLunchMoney Service

This fall, the Food Service Department is implementing *myLunchMoney*, a new service that allows parents to prepay for their child's school breakfast, lunch, and ala carte food items using their credit or debit card. The website [www.myLunchMoney.com](http://www.myLunchMoney.com) will go into service in time for the start of school. *The service is optional.*

### Cafeteria and Lunch Procedures

1. Be respectful of cafeteria/recess monitors.
2. Keep the eating area clean of debris, food, and liquids.
3. Make sure the area is clean for the next person. All trash goes in the trash containers.
4. Raise your hand and wait to be recognized.
5. Keep noise level at a minimum. If the teacher or monitor can clearly hear the student's voice above other students at the table, the student is too loud.

6. Students may not carry food out of the cafeteria.
7. Students may not go back to the classroom without permission.
8. On cold days, students will be expected to take their coats with them to the cafeteria.
9. Good table manners are expected.

### Restroom

1. No playing or loitering in the restroom.
2. No writing or defacing of school property.

### Playground

1. Follow safety rules at all times.
2. Line up immediately and quietly after recess to enter building.
3. On cold days, students will be expected to wear coats and keep them on during the recess period.

### Playground Safety Rules

A Safety Assembly will be conducted at the beginning of the school year. The purpose of the assembly is to review and orient students to safety procedures.

1. Get along with your fellow students.
2. Be courteous, friendly, and demonstrate good sportsmanship.
3. Walk from the building to the playground.
4. Know and stay within the boundaries of the playground.
5. No wrestling – wrestling could be confused for fighting or it may lead to a fight.
6. No fighting – if there is a conflict, seek the help of an adult.
7. Unnecessary roughness in any game may result in the loss of the privilege of playing the game.
8. Do not hang on the rim of the basketball hoops.
9. Do not raise or lower the basketball hoops. Ask an adult to do this.
10. Ropes should be used for jump rope only. Ropes should not be tied to another student or to any object.
11. No throwing of objects (rocks, dirt, etc.)

## 12. General Apparatus:

- No “rough house” playing.
- Keep moving – Do not sit on apparatus and block the movement of others.
- Move from the climbing wall toward the swing set.
- There should be no tag games of any kind.
- Do not have objects (pencils, pens, combs, etc.) in pockets.
- Do not run through swings.
- Do not jump off of the apparatus.

## 13. Do not jump off of swings.

## 14. Respect the rules of the monitors.

### Recess During Inclement Weather

Several factors are considered prior to permitting the students to go outside during winter months. This includes the temperature (including “windchill factor”), the condition of the playground, the length of time the children will be outside, and finally each student’s clothing and footwear. All students shall participate in regularly scheduled recesses unless excused by a physician.

### Hall Conduct

1. No running in the hall.
2. Always stay to right side of the hall.
3. Keep noise level down.
4. Remove hats upon entering building.

### Dress

Each student has the responsibility to dress and groom in a manner that meets reasonable community standards of good taste, health, safety, and cleanliness. Dress should not disrupt the educational process or indicate affiliation with any group which advocates dangerous or unlawful activities. Please refer to the dress code in the Edwardsville District #7 Handbook. Following are some guidelines:

- Hats, sunglasses, and outerwear such as jackets and coats may not be worn in the building, halls, or classrooms, and

must be stored in students' lockers during the school day. Expensive items should not be brought to school.

- All clothing must be appropriate for school.
- Clothes displaying alcohol or drug-related images or other inappropriate messages, words, phrases, or logos are not acceptable.
- Clothes that expose a student's undergarments by being excessively loose or sagging, sheer, small, or having holes in them are unacceptable. This includes spaghetti straps, tanks tops that expose the back, side, or midriff of a student.
- Wear appropriate shoes for the playground.

Teachers and administrators will screen dress that is inappropriate for the school environment. Students in violation of the dress code may be sent home to change clothes. Repeated violations by a student may result in additional disciplinary action. Parents must assume the responsibility to see that their child is appropriately clothed for school.

### Motivational Programs

Throughout the school year, students will be rewarded for positive behaviors and for demonstrating respect for school rules and policies.

### Medication Procedure

Edwardsville Community Unit School District 7 has adopted a policy regarding administration of medication (including non-prescription medications such as aspirin and Tylenol) during school hours and at school-related events. A student who needs medication to be administered during school hours or school-related events must have authorization from the building principal. A student may possess an epinephrine auto-injector and/or medication prescribed for asthma for immediate use and self-administration at the student's discretion provided the student's licensed health care provider and parent(s)/guardian(s) have authorized self-administration through a completed and signed "School Medication

Authorization” form, and this form is on file at the child’s school. Please see the building principal or nurse regarding the District’s medication policy and to obtain required forms.

The STUDENT INFORMATION FORM is the only source for school personnel to know whom to contact in the event of a serious injury or illness, and exactly how to contact these persons. It is imperative that the information on this form be kept current at all times.

### Leaving School During the School Day

1. Students are not to leave the school grounds without permission from the office.
2. Parents/Guardians wishing to remove their child(ren) from school during the day, **must check in with the School Safety Officer and show photo identification, then proceed to the office. The office personnel will call the student(s) to the office.** This will assist in keeping proper attendance records and ensure the safety of the students.
3. Students **will not** be dismissed to anyone other than parents unless parents have made arrangements through the office.
4. Students **will not** be permitted to go home with a friend or relative unless a note or a phone call is received.
5. There will be **no** deviation from these procedures.

### Periodic Progress Updates

Periodic progress reports will be sent home during the school year. You may also access your child’s grades via the TigerView website - [tigerview.ecusd7.org](http://tigerview.ecusd7.org). Please review the reports carefully and discuss with your child his/her academic achievements. You are encouraged to contact the school for an appointment anytime you would like to discuss your child’s progress.

### Parent Conferences

Parents are encouraged to call and arrange a conference time to discuss student achievement, behavior, or other areas of concern.

Conferences shall be scheduled when the teacher is relieved of classroom responsibilities. This allows teachers to give parents their full attention. Teachers shall not leave their students unattended to hold conferences.

### School Closing Information

- On days when inclement weather occurs, or is pending, the decision to cancel school will be made by 5:00 a.m. whenever possible.
- On days when it may be necessary to dismiss school early due to weather, the decision shall be made by 11:00 a.m. whenever possible.
- On days when inclement weather occurs, or is pending, please listen to the following radio/TV broadcasts regarding school closings: KMOX-AM (1120); KMOV-TV CHANNEL 4 NEWS; KLOU-FM (103.3); KSDK-TV CHANNEL 5 NEWS; KXOK-AM (630); FOX 2 NEWS; KTVI NEWS 30; WINU-AM (880); CHANNEL 10 LOCAL ACCESS TV; MIX-FM (97.1); WSIE-FM (88.7); WBGZ-AM (1570)
- On days when inclement weather occurs, or is pending, information regarding the closing of school can also be accessed through District 7's web site ([www.ecusd7.org](http://www.ecusd7.org)) and by calling the main phone line (656-1182).
- Parents are encouraged to make the necessary arrangements to meet their children on early dismissal days.

### Safety Alert Program

In order to improve communication with parents, District 7 has instituted a new safety and weather alert system. The system will consist of three components: an email safety alert system, a safety alert hotline, and a web alert system.

#### *Safety Alerts—Violence*

The system will be used to alert parents to viable threats and/or to dispel rumors. Students sometimes attempt to use fear to manipulate others around them—often because they think it's funny or just want to have a day off. All threats will be treated seriously

and will be investigated by the district and public safety officials. Anyone responsible for threats faces tough penalties, including possible expulsion from school and criminal prosecution.

### *Safety Alerts—Weather*

The system will be used to alert parents to cancellation of school due to inclement weather.

### *Safety Alert Notification*

A message will be posted on each alert component stating one of the following:

- There are no current safety alerts; please disregard the rumors.
- There is a viable threat.
- School has been cancelled due to inclement weather.

Parents can access safety alert information in three ways:

- Subscribe to the email alert system at [www.ecusd7.org/alert/subscribe.asp](http://www.ecusd7.org/alert/subscribe.asp)
- Call the Alert Hotline at 655-6090
- Visit the District's website at [www.ecusd7.org/alert](http://www.ecusd7.org/alert)

Subscribers to the email alert system will not be able to reply to the system. Callers to the hotline will not be able to leave messages.

### Visitors

1. Upon entering the building, visitors are required to present photo identification, state their reason for being in the building, and sign in with the School Safety Officer in the main lobby.
2. All visitors are required to wear name badges to identify them as a visitor. These can be acquired from the School Safety Officer.
3. Student visitors are not permitted to accompany regular students to school.
4. All unauthorized persons shall be required to leave the premises.

5. Parents are welcome to visit or help with their child's class. The parent should set an appointment ahead of time with the teacher.
6. Parents who volunteer in classes, for field trips, or classroom parties, must make other accommodations for younger siblings so their full attention can be directed to the Albert Cassens students.

**Food Donations:**

Edwardsville District 7 encourages parents to participate in school activities that request the donation of food for class parties, bake sales for fundraising, PTO activities, Open House, etc. We appreciate parent generosity in supporting these worthwhile activities. However, due to possible spread of infectious disease through the mishandling of food products, we are requesting that any food donated to school activities be commercially wrapped items. We appreciate your cooperation in helping us keep all our children safe from becoming ill due to contaminated food.

## School Calendar 2009-10

August 18, 2009	First Day of School - Half Day Student Attendance
September 7, 2009	Labor Day - No Student Attendance
October 12, 2009	Columbus Day - No Student Attendance
October 16, 2009	End of First Quarter; Half Day Student Attendance Half Day Teacher In-service
November 11, 2009	Veterans Day - No Student Attendance
Parent Conferences, November 23-25, 2009	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monday, November 23 (5:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m.)</li> <li>• Tuesday November 24 (1:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m.) No Student Attendance</li> <li>• Wednesday, November 25 (8:00 a.m. until 12:00 Noon) No Student Attendance</li> </ul>
November 26-27, 2009	Thanksgiving Holiday - No Student Attendance
December 18, 2009	End of First Semester
December 21-January 1	Holiday Break - No Student Attendance
January 18, 2010	Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday No Student Attendance
February 15, 2010	Presidents Day - No Student Attendance
March 1, 2010	Casimir Pulaski Holiday - No Student Attendance
March 12, 2010	End of Third Quarter
March 26, 2010	Teacher Institute – No Student Attendance
March 29 – April 2, 2010	Spring Break – No Student Attendance
April 30, 2010	Teacher Institute – No Student Attendance
May 25, 2010	Last Day of Student Attendance (If five (5) emergency days are used, last day for students is June 2, 2010)

### As a Parent, I will:

- work with the school staff and cooperate to see that my child gets a good education.
- set a time and place for my child's homework, free from distraction.
- see that there is no television, radio, phone calls, or other interruptions during time set aside for homework.
- see that my child attends school, unless ill, and comes to class on time.
- hold a family reading time, in which the entire family will have a quiet time and enjoy some good reading together.
- provide educationally-oriented activities at home for my children, and develop summer activities, as a family, which will be educationally valuable.
- attend Open House, programs, and meet my child's teachers when the need arises.
- become actively involved in the PTO, which meets once each month.
- take an active interest in my child's homework projects and assignments.
- get in touch with the school immediately if I have a concern or a problem.
- work to instill a positive attitude and to motivate my child with a desire and a feeling of need for an education; support the school, the administration, and the staff of the district.
- attend school functions and show my child that I am interested.