

Julia Lathrop Elementary School  
Parent/Student Handbook  
2021/2022



**Lathrop Elementary School**

2603, Clover Ave.  
Rockford, IL 61102

<http://webs.rps205.com/schools/lathrop/home.html>

Phone 815/ 966-3285

Mrs. Penelope El-Azhari, Principal  
Sra. Daniela Boer, Dean

**Mission Statement**

*"Our mission is to be first choice for academic success and social achievement for our diverse student population, preparing for career and college readiness in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment."*

COVID note:

All staff, students, and visitors must wear a mask in the school building. Students must also wear a mask on the bus. We appreciate your cooperation as we do our utmost to keep everyone safe.

Student drop-off:                      Door B 7:25 AM

Walkers                                      Door B 7:25 AM

Breakfast will be available the cafeteria.

# **Julia Lathrop Elementary School Staff**

**2021-2022**



## **Office**

Mrs. Penny El-Azhari, Principal

Ms. Daniela Boer, Assistant Principal

Ms. Jazmin Ramirez, Office Professional

Mrs. Dawn Bean, Nurse

## **Instructional Support**

Mrs. Kristine Lobato, Instructional Coach (English/Spanish)

Mr. Martin Lowenthal, Teacher Technology Program Support/ MCL

## **Student Support**

Ms. Livia Navarro Mendez, Psychologist (Bilingual) 18

Ms. Jennifer Dainty, Social Worker 6

Ms. Savannah Strohacker, Academic Achievement Specialist 6

Ms. Shannon Stubbs, Building Support Specialist 7,13

Mr. Stan Moskalis, ESL 25

Kindergarten Transition Support Professional 22

Mrs. Jennifer Peterson and Mrs. Caprice Latimore, MTSS (Title 1) 25

Mr. Jose Martinez, Bilingual Tutor 25

## **Parent Support**

Ms. Mayra Toral, Parent Liaison (English/Spanish)

Sra. Ana Hernandez B/L Parent Support

## **Cafeteria Staff and Recess Aides**

Ms. Michelle Steele, Head Cook

Ms. Markie, Breakfast/Lunch Aide

Mr. Bob, Breakfast/Lunch Aide

## Teachers

### Kindergarten

Ms. Cindy Schwartz 22

Sra. Carmen Ramirez 21

Sra. Mayra Rodriguez 20

### 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

Ms. Melissa Diaz 17

Sra. Lilia Delgado 16

Sra. Denise Deleon 19

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

Ms. Shemaiah White 1

Sra. Elisa Williams 2

Sra. Maria Castello 14

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

Ms. Tiarra Keough 13

Sr. Carlos Arroyo 7

### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

Ms. Dinah Hyslop 9

Sra. Claudia Valesco 8

### 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

Mrs. Laura Bremer 11

Sra. Maria Altamirano 10

Sr. Martin Lowenthal 12

Sra. Crystal Cardona AT 12

**Art:** Ms. Gretchen Gessner  
**Music:** Ms. Jessica Pearce

**P.E.:** Mr. Bill Sadler

**Library:** Ms. Audi Perrine (Para)  
Mrs. Jessica Croutcher (Librarian)

### MTSS /Supplemental Support/Special Education

Mrs. Ann Lundgren, Team Resource 3

Ms. Deanne Fletsch, Team Resource 3

Mr. Ramon Benedicto Riancho, Team Resource 3

Mrs. Jennifer Peterson, Ms. Stacey Barker

Title 1 Teachers 25

Ms. Andrea Ayala

Kindergarten Transition Support Professional

Ms. Wendy Jasinski, Ms. Nakisha Parham, Ms. Susan Cuevas – Paraprofessionals

Ms. Vani Maddali, Title 1 Tutor

## WHAT YOUR SCHOOL EXPECTS OF YOU

Students are expected to conduct themselves in such a manner as to bring credit to themselves, their family, Lathrop Elementary School, their community, and their country. This applies to activities after school hours and when visiting other schools, on field trips, as well as during the regular school day. Good behavior makes sense, and it is hoped that because of good student behavior, school personnel will find it necessary to formulate and enforce only a minimum of regulations. The purpose of school rules is to provide a safe environment in which all students can succeed, learn to act responsibly in a variety of situations, and eventually become valuable community members.

Students are expected to perform to the best of their abilities. In order to keep high learning standards, our school follows the guidelines for grades presented in the Rockford Public Schools Student Code of Conduct Handbook which is given to parents at the beginning of the school year. For information specific to Lathrop School, please refer to this Lathrop Elementary School Parent/Student Handbook.

## OUR SCHOOL'S PHONE NUMBERS

Main Office 815 966-3285  
Nurse Office 815 966-5278

## ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL and SCHOOL HOURS

Our school hours are 7:30 AM. to 2:00 PM. The entry bell rings at 7:30 and classes begin promptly at 7:35. Any student not in his/her classroom and ready to learn at 7:35 will be considered tardy and will be sent to the office for a tardy slip. Students who walk to school should arrive **NO EARLIER than 7:25 a.m.** There is no supervision prior to this time and, as a result, it is unsafe for your child. Please **DO NOT drop your child off at school prior to 7:25 a.m.** as there is no adult supervision available before this time.

## STUDENT DROP-OFF and PICK-UP

Lathrop has a circular driveway. This should ease the traffic congestion considerably. This driveway is for parent use. **Please** pull into the circular driveway to drop off and pick up your child from school. **Please** follow the traffic pattern when entering and leaving the circular driveway. **Please** use the parking spaces if you wish to leave your vehicle and enter the building. **Please** refrain from using cell phones when driving in the circle and watch out for students and staff. **Thank you!**

Students walking or being picked up **will not be dismissed before 2:00 p.m.** unless there is a valid reason for early dismissal and the student is signed out by the parent/guardian in the main office.

If you plan to meet your child at school at the end of the day, please wait for him/her at **DOOR B.**

### **ABSENT or TARDY STUDENTS**

If your child is going to be tardy or absent from school, please call the school office at 966-3285 between 7:05 a.m. and 7:35 a.m. Students who arrive late to school must report to the school's office with a parent for a tardy slip before going to class.

Vacations during the school year when classes are in session are discouraged and will be considered ***unexcused absences***. In cases of extreme emergency, please contact the school office in advance. Remember, if your child is not here, we cannot teach him/her!

Please note:

Students who accumulate more than five (5) days of absences per semester must provide proof of the nature of the excused absence, in the form of a note from the doctor or excuse from school nurse, for the absence to be considered excused. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence. Valid reasons for excused absences for the five- day rule include illness of the student, injury, unavoidable accident or emergency and anticipated absence with administrative approval prior to the absence. Excused absences not counted in the five (5) day rule are: religious holidays, medical appointments with written proof from doctor; funeral for family members; court appearances with written proof from court; pre-approved college visits; extended serious/critical illness of student/family member; other absences as determined by administration. Students exceeding 10 days for any reason will be dropped/Administration Regulation

An unexcused absence or (skipping) will result in a Code of Conduct Intervention. Any absence for reasons other than those listed as EXCUSED ABSENCES are deemed unexcused. The City of Rockford and Winnebago County ordinances consider each unexcused absence as an incident of truancy.

- When a school does not receive parental explanation of a student absence, the absence will be considered unexcused.
- Letters will be sent to parents of students who accrue multiple unexcused absences.
- If a student is truant, parents will be contacted to determine the root cause and offer the appropriate support needed to improve future attendance.
- Students who are chronically truant may be referred to the Student Services Department, Truancy Intervention Center or the Winnebago County Court System for more intense intervention.

Examples include but are not limited to: No transportation to school, missing the school bus, oversleeping, participation in non-school sponsored events, personal business, private vehicle breakdown/failure to start, and truancy.

## BREAKFAST

Lathrop School offers a Breakfast Program daily from 7:15-7:35. The Breakfast and Lunch Programs are free to ALL students as a result of the RPS BOE approving a free meal federal grant.

## BULLYING

Lathrop School is a Bully-Free Zone. We do everything we can to be proactive and to prevent such incidences.

**The Code of Conduct defines bullying as follows:**

**BULLYING** - Including cyberbullying, means any *severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct*, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- (1) placing the student or students in a **reasonable** fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
  - (2) causing a **substantially** detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
  - (3) **substantially** interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
  - (4) **substantially** interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.
- Bullying, as defined in this subsection (b), may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying.

Bullying is not a one-time occurrence, an accident, or an argument between friends/associates.

Students do not always recognize the difference between peer conflict and bullying. All reports of bullying are investigated thoroughly at Lathrop. However, most incidents bear the characteristics of peer conflict rather than bullying. So, let us take a look at the difference. Being able to identify the differences enables us to respond appropriately.

<b>PEER CONFLICT – Both students.....</b>	<b>BULLYING – One student (or group)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• have equal power</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• have imbalance of power in the situation</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• do NOT seek control or attention</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• exert control by intimidation, insults, threats</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• want to solve the problem but don't know how (due to inexperience) /feel remorse</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• show little if any remorse and makes no attempt to resolve situation</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• are not deliberately trying to hurt</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• commits deliberate, hurtful acts</li></ul>

each other	
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Lathrop's Anti-Bullying Program includes, but is not limited to:

- 2 Anti-Bullying Interactive Presentations for Primary and Upper Elementary Grade levels (SSAL department)
- PBS Cool Tool assemblies
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Step instruction
- Positive Action Anti-Bullying Program
- Anti-Bullying presentation by RPD school liaison for 5<sup>th</sup> Grade  
*(Please see attached sheets at end of handbook)*

### **BUS DISCIPLINE CODE**

Parents receive the Disciplinary Transportation Code from the Transportation Department at the beginning of the school year. Please refer to this policy for further references. However, we would like to stress a few significant rules in order to maintain safe conditions during transportation time.

- **Students must be on time at the bus stops (five minutes earlier is required)**
- **Students must sit in their assigned seats**
- **Students must be seated at all times unless otherwise directed by the bus driver.**

Bus drivers or their supervisors can write transportation referrals for discipline issues. A transportation discipline referral form will be given to the student via the building principal or mailed to the parents when a discipline problem occurs. Bus suspensions can be issued for up to a ten day period. Students suspended from the bus are **expected** to attend school with *alternative transportation arrangements* provided by parents.

### **CELL PHONES IN SCHOOL**

Please see the Student Code of Conduct for 2021-2022;

#### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES - ELECTRONIC SIGNALING DEVICES -**

Students may not use or possess electronic signaling (paging) devices or two-way radios on school property at any time. The possession and use of cell phones and other electronic devices, other than paging devices and two-way radios, are subject to the following rules:

1. Unless being used for educational purposes or when needed during an emergency, they must be kept out of sight and in an inconspicuous location, such as a backpack, purse or locker.
2. They must be turned OFF during the regular school day unless needed during an emergency.
3. They may not be used in any manner that will cause disruption to the educational environment or will otherwise violate student conduct rules including sexting.

Electronic study aids may be used during the school day if:

1. Use of the device is provided in the student's IEP; or



2. Permission is received from the student's teacher.
  3. Permission is received from a building administrator.
- PROGRESSIVE INTERVENTION FOR ELECTRONIC DEVICE VIOLATIONS

1st Offense - Confiscated and returned to parent or legal guardian

2nd Offense - Confiscated and returned to parent or legal guardian – cell phone prohibited for 1 week\*

3rd Offense - Confiscated and returned to parent or legal guardian – cell phone prohibited for 1 semester\*

4th Offense - Refer to GDM level 2 – Failure to accept the assigned discipline program

\*Student is prohibited from possessing a cell phone on property.

## DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

Providing the optimum learning environment for all students at Lathrop Elementary School is our top priority. Appropriate behavior is a vital part of a quality instructional program and expected at all times. In that regard, please note the following guidelines that will be followed for the safety and success of all students:

- Fighting/play fighting **is not permitted** under any circumstances or for any reason
- The use of inappropriate language (Ex. Swearing, name-calling, etc.) **is not permitted** under any circumstances or for any reason.
- Students are not to have in their possession on school grounds gum, candy, toys, collector cards, electronic devices (e.g. pagers, games, MP3 players, etc.) gang related items, or matches/lighters, tobacco, alcohol, or drugs. Students are advised NOT to bring cell phones to school. The school's administration and staff will not accept responsibility for lost or stolen cell phones. Cell phones MUST remain OFF throughout the school day and while on school district property. They must be kept in the student's locker. If they are not in service and are incapable of making a phone call, then they should not be brought to school at all.
- Students are not permitted to use cell phones or other devices for the purpose of photographing/video taping/social media on school property and/or bus.
- Students must follow the district's Dress Code found in the Student Code of Conduct. In addition, inappropriate attire and/or unnatural hair coloring (spray in or permanent) that affects the learning process (distraction) is prohibited. (See Uniform Policy)
- Students will **WALK** in the building at all times.
- Students may talk *quietly* during lunch time in the lunchroom. Due to Health Department regulations, **food may not be traded or shared. Food must NEVER be thrown in the cafeteria.**
- **Weapons/Look-alike weapons must NEVER be brought to school. PLEASE CHECK YOUR CHILD'S BACKPACK EVERY DAY BEFORE HE/SHE LEAVES FOR SCHOOL.**

In addition to these guidelines, Lathrop Elementary School follows the Rockford School District's Student Code of Conduct given to parents at registration.

We highly recommend that parents read the Code of Conduct with their child(ren) at the beginning of each trimester so that our students and parents are aware of possible consequences as a result of infractions.

**ONCE AGAIN: Students must NEVER bring weapons or look-alike weapons to school. PLEASE CHECK YOUR CHILD'S BACKPACK EACH DAY BEFORE HE/SHE LEAVES FOR SCHOOL.**

### **DISMISSAL**

Parents of walkers are asked to wait at Door B at the end of the day for students to be dismissed. Please do not go to your child's classroom at this time. Teachers need to be able to dismiss students in an organized fashion. All walkers will be dismissed through Door B at the second bell (2:00 P.M.).

If your child is a car pick-up, **please wait in your car**. Your child will be called from the cafeteria and escorted safely to your vehicle.

Bus riders board immediately at 2:00 p.m.

**If you wish to change the dismissal arrangement for your child for any given day, please call the school and notify Ms. Jazmin (Secretary) BY 1:30 p.m.. No changes will be made after this time.**

### **DRESS CODE**

Please refer to the District Handbook with regards to appropriate dress. Lathrop does not have a uniform. However, we do expect our students to dress appropriately for school.

### **EMERGENCY CRISIS PLAN**

Lathrop, like all schools, has an emergency plan. The staff has had ALICE training, and we conduct numerous drills throughout the school year. In the event that we are forced to evacuate to other sites, please take note of the following:

RESA: Primary evacuation site – 1800 Ogilby Road

Barbour School: Secondary evacuation site – 1506 Clover Ave

Washington School: 1421 West Street

You will be notified through robocall if there was such an emergency.

### **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING/INCLEMENT WEATHER**

Inclement weather may cause the school to be closed. The decision will be made by the Superintendent and shared with the media by 6:00 A.M. Listen to your local radio or TV stations for announcements regarding whether Rockford Public School District 205 will be in session. In this circumstance, do not send your child to school.

### **FUNDRAISING EVENTS**

Parents and staff organize several fundraising events throughout the year such as Skate Night, McTeachers' Night at McDonalds, catalogue fundraisers, etc. We appreciate your support!

## **FAMILY NIGHTS**

Family Reading/Math Nights are held during the year at Lathrop School. We encourage our families to attend these events. They are great fun. The dates and times will be announced in the monthly newsletters and on our calendar.

## **HEALTH SERVICE**

**Medication**-According to the School Code, all medication must be given by the school nurse with written directions and approval by a doctor. Over-the-counter medications (aspirin, cough drops, cough medicine, etc.) are NOT permitted in school without written approval by a parent or guardian and **are to be given to the nurse to administer.**

**Physicals/Immunizations/Dental/Eye Exams**- School health physicals/exams are required for students entering Kindergarten or any student new to the school district. **Dental exams** by a licensed dentist are required for **Kindergarten** and **Second grade** students prior to May 15<sup>th</sup>. Eye exams by a licensed optometrist are required for **kindergarten** students only. All records must be completed and updated in the school office by the beginning of school as required by the Illinois School Code guidelines. All necessary immunizations must be completed by the beginning of school. Students without the appropriate records **by October 15<sup>th</sup> can be excluded from school** until records are complete.

**IT IS CRITICAL** that the school office has current parent and emergency phone numbers. Please update your information when your address or phone number has changed. We must have **accurate** information to alert you if an emergency should arise.

## **ITEMS PROHIBITED AT SCHOOL**

The following items are a sample of articles prohibited at school:

- Gum
- Candy
- Toys
- Takis
- Pop
- Electronics (MP3 players, electronic games, CD/DVD players, pagers, etc)
- Cell phones (**Cell phones are ONLY allowed at school IF they are turned OFF and in the student's backpack**)

- Matches/lighters/tobacco/unlawful substances
- Weapons (real, look-alike/ toy)
- Gang related items
- Collector cards
- Other items not approved by staff
- See Uniform Policy for dress code
- Jewelry
- Money other than lunch money/fundraising money, etc.

**\*We can NOT be responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items. Confiscated items will ONLY be returned to the parent of the child to whom the item belongs.**

### **LUNCH PROGRAM**

School provides hot lunches for all students throughout the school year. The school provides free lunches to ALL students as the district has received a grant to enable this to happen.

Candy, gum, **Takis** and pop should not be included in lunches brought to school from home. When this occurs, students generally eat the sweets or snacks and do not eat the nutritious items included. These are also the items students like to share or trade, and this is against health code regulations.

**If you bring a fast food lunch to school for your child**, please remember that NO POP is allowed. After you have signed in at the office, you may proceed to the lunchroom.

All students have an assigned lunch table. Moving from table to table is NOT permitted.

Students who are late to lunch will have additional time to finish their lunch. They may be moved to a different table to make room for the other classes entering the lunchroom.

**All students are given a minimum of 20 minutes to eat their lunch.**

While we encourage students to eat their lunches, we never force them to do so. Please be aware that your child might make the choice to go to recess before finishing all of his/her food.

Please be sure all bagged or boxed lunches are identified with your child's first and last name.

Parents will be contacted if students chronically misbehave in the lunchroom or on the playground. Parents whose children repeatedly disobey school rules at lunchtime may be required to make alternative arrangements for their children for a designated length of time (lunch detention and eating with a parent are two alternatives).

During inclement weather, recess will be held in the cafeteria, classrooms, or in the gym. After lunch, students will remain with lunch supervisors and support staff who will assist students and monitor behavior for the safety of all. Teachers will have activities for

students to enjoy during this time. Students are EXPECTED to behave in an **orderly and respectful** manner.

Recess is an important time to exercise and unwind. All students will go outside for recess unless the student is assigned lunch/recess detention or has a DOCTOR's note excusing the child for health reasons. Please **do not** make unnecessary requests for students to remain inside at lunch. Your child's teacher and the principal are not available to supervise him/her at this time. These expectations are district-wide.

Students are expected to play in a safe manner and should line up in an orderly fashion at the designated door(s) as directed by staff members and lunch supervisors.

### **LUNCH RULES**

Children are expected to abide by the following lunchroom rules:

- All students are to remain seated during the **entire** lunch period. Lunch supervisors will assist students who forget lunch items, etc. Switching seats with other students is not permitted.
- Polite table manners are expected and enforced. Popping of bags/milk cartons, throwing food, overly messy eating, or bothering other students are examples of unacceptable behaviors.
- All food is to remain in the lunch area. Students may not eat their food later in the day.
- No bottles or cans of soda pop are allowed at school
- No glass items of any kind are allowed at school
- Individual table space should be left in a clean and orderly fashion. Students will be asked to clean up after themselves just as they would at any fast-food restaurant
- Trading, sharing, or giving away food is not permitted. (Health Code)
- Students may leave the lunchroom **ONLY** when given permission to go to the restroom or the class is dismissed **by school staff.**

### **MONEY**

**All money** sent to school should be sent **in an envelope** with the following information: child's name, teacher's name, room number, and the purpose for the money (e.g. lunch, fundraiser, pictures, field trip, etc).

Mary Jones Ms. Smith Room 63 Field Trip
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### **The Lathrop PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**The Lathrop Parent Advisory Committee hopes you will plan to join this year!**  
Please try to attend the meetings, and participate in our school activities. **We need your**

**support to help improve our school! Collaboration between parents and school is vital to our students' success.**

## **PARENTAL CONCERNS**

If you have a question or concern, please do the following:

### **STEP 1**

Contact the classroom teacher by phone, Seesaw, or email, or make an appointment to meet with him/her at a convenient time for both parties. It is important for parents and teachers to be able to share information, observations, and give suggestions for the overall benefit and success of your child.

### **STEP 2**

If your concerns or questions have not been resolved by speaking with the classroom teacher, please call the main office and ask to speak to the principal, Mrs. Penny El-Azhari or Assistant Principal, Ms. Daniela Boer. They have an open-door policy, and will always find time to speak with parents. If they are unavailable when you call, they will get back to you as soon as possible.

## **PROGRESS REPORTS**

All grade levels will send home mid-term progress reports for students who are in danger of failing. Parents are expected to **sign and return** the form to your child's teacher.

## **REQUEST FOR CHANGE OF PICK-UP PLANS FOR STUDENTS**

From time to time, it may be necessary to change your child's transportation plans for the end of the day. If you know about these changes in advance, please send a note to the teacher. **Please try to keep these changes to a minimum.** If you do not know ahead of time, **please call the school office by 1:30 P.M.** in order get this information to your child in a timely manner. **Changes will not be made after 1:30 p.m..**

## **ROOM PARENTS**

Room Helpers are always needed and welcomed for all grade levels. Please contact your child's teacher if you would like to volunteer. You will need to go through a background check if you wish to volunteer.

## VISITORS and LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY

Parents are most welcome and we encourage visiting the classroom for a reasonable amount of time when appropriate arrangements have been made. We strongly believe that visits to the classroom help foster understanding and encourage good home-school communication. Please contact your child's teacher to make sure the day you desire to visit is one that is good for the class in general.

If you intend to bring "treats" for any special event for your child or your child's class, please contact the teacher for special instructions regarding food items in the classroom. We have to make sure that students with food allergies remain safe.

All visitors must enter through the main entrance at the front of the school.

For the safety of our students, **all visitors are required to report to the main office when they arrive at school. Please bring a State ID with you (i.e. Driver's license). This will be scanned and you will receive a badge.** Visitors are required to display the visitor's badge at all times while on school property. All other entrances will be locked during the school day.

Parents picking up students during school hours must report to the office. The secretary will call the child from the classroom. You must sign your child out in the school office before leaving the building. Students should be picked up early from school **ONLY** in the case of **EMERGENCY!** Please try to arrange medical/dental appointments, and things of that nature, after school so students do not have to leave school early. **Attendance is important to your child's academic success!**

## VOLUNTEERING

When your child sees you in his/her school, it makes all the difference! If you have 30 minutes each week to help in a classroom, read to a child, or help supervise lunch/recess, we would love to see you here at Lathrop!

