

Malcolm S. Mackay School



Student Handbook 2024-2025

"It's a Great Day to Have a Great Day"

Mackay School Staff

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	Maria Butler		Cindy Pampaloni
	Kim Caporoso		Sharon Sanders
	Lyn Crasci	Custodians	Keith Ruby
	Rabia Elahi		Harold Lawler
	Jose Gallardo		
	Jaga Kokosinski		
	Melvin Maclin		
	Kathy Padula		
	Maryna Sultchouk		
	Alba Toska		
	Janet Vanderlinden		
	Catherine Vecchio		

Mackay School Expectations

1. Be responsible.

- Arrive on time.
- Support other students' learning.
- Complete homework projects carefully and thoughtfully.
- Complete assignments on time.

2. Use appropriate language

- Speak respectfully to adults in charge.
- Use appropriate language.
- Cheer respectfully in the auditorium.

3. Settle our differences in a peaceful manner.

- Resolve differences with others in a positive, non-violent way.
- Practice sportsmanship.
- Use mediation when necessary.

4. Move safely and quietly in the school

- Always walk.
- Keep your hands and body to yourself.
- Use quiet voices.

5. Follow the directions of the adults in charge.

- Listen quietly when directions are given.
- Ask questions if unclear.

6. Respect other people's property and personal space.

- Do not take or damage anything that belongs to someone else.
- Do not write on walls or furniture.

7. Be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.

- Try to include everyone.
- Only use kind words.
- Think before you speak.
- Support each other's feelings.

Arrival and Dismissal

Arrival

- Children should arrive at school between 8:30 - 8:40 A.M.
- The late bell rings at 8:40 A.M.
- On cold and wet days, the children may enter the building at 8:20 A.M. to wait in the main lobby area.

Please encourage children to arrive at school between 8:20 - 8:40 A.M., **but not before 8:20 A.M.**, please. Children who need to be here earlier **must** register for morning SACC.

Walking to School

- Crossing guards are on duty during the following hours: 7:45 - 9:00 A.M. and 2:45 -3:45 P.M.
- On early dismissal days, the hours are: 7:45 - 9:00 A.M. and 12:30 - 1:30 P.M.

Bicycle Rules

- Students who are in grades 3-5 may ride their bicycles to school.
- State law requires that all children must wear a bicycle safety helmet when riding.
- It is recommended that children bring a lock for the bicycle.
- Children are to place their bicycles in the bicycle rack located near the circle.

Before and After School Child Care (SACC)

- SACC is a tuition-based before and after school program for K-5 students sponsored by the Tenaflly Board of Education.
- Staffed by trained professionals, SACC is dedicated to providing a safe and wholesome atmosphere for children of working parents.
- SACC offers a morning program from 7:30 - 8:30 A.M. and an afternoon session from the end of the school day until 6:00 P.M.

For more information about the program and its fees, please call 201-816-4526.

School Safety Patrol

- An organized safety patrol comprised of fourth and fifth graders helps the children to observe safety rules in the morning.
- Patrol members are trained to report problems to the classroom teacher, their advisor or the principal.
- Safety Patrol begins at 8:20 A.M.

Attendance

- Attending school regularly is required by law for all elementary school-age children. Daily attendance is **essential** to a child's learning success. Please refer to the attendance letter from Superintendent Ben-David on the district website for more information.
- Parents must report absences by calling our school nurse at **201-816-7703**.

Picking Up From School Early

- If you need to take your child out of school early for a medical or special reason, send a note with your child or write an email to your child's teacher explaining the situation.
- You will need to stop at the door monitor when picking up your child and sign him/her out on the log sheet.

Absences

If your child will be absent, please call the school nurse at 201-816-7703 before 9:00 A.M. You can leave a message at any time. Please do not call the main office.

Parking Rules

- Safety is a primary concern at Mackay School.
- Please drop off and pick up your child with great care at the circle off Jefferson Avenue, Virginia Street or Daisy Place.
- **No double parking - you will be ticketed.**
- **Please watch for children on foot or on bicycles, in front, in back, and alongside your car.**
- No early drop-offs.
- **There is NO PARKING on the school side of Jefferson Avenue or in front of the circle at dismissal. Parents stopping on Jefferson, must remain in their cars and their independent release students will come directly to the car. Parked cars left unattended will be ticketed.**

Student Dismissal

- In order to ensure that your child is safely dismissed from school at the end of each school day, read the following information carefully regarding our regular, early, and emergency dismissal schedules and procedures. Kindly review carefully the dismissal times, specific dates indicated, and other pertinent safety information. Complete the form for each child enrolled on Genesis Parent Portal.

Regular Dismissal

Elementary Schools 8:30 A.M. – 3:10 P.M.

Early Dismissal

Elementary Schools 8:30 A.M. – 12:45 P.M.

Unscheduled Emergency Dismissal

Occasionally, there are times when one or all of the Tenaflly Public Schools must close early due to inclement weather or other hazardous conditions. In this case, a message will be posted on the district website, and parents will be notified through the Blackboard Mass Notification System. The time and reason for this emergency dismissal will be clearly indicated on both the website as well as through Blackboard. In order to receive these important alerts, you must be registered. Please visit the [district website](#) and go to the “parents tab” for more information on how to register or to update your account. Students must be picked up on emergency dismissal days and released only to a parent or an authorized adult.

After School Supervision - SACC

The School Age Child Care (SACC) Program is available at each of the elementary schools for an additional fee. The general hours of this program are as follows:

- 7:30 A.M. – 8:30 A.M.
- 3:10 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

Students who are enrolled in this program will be dismissed from their classrooms to the SACC program.

Parents are to arrange morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up from SACC directly with the facilitators of that program. Generally, SACC is available on Regular and Early Dismissal days. Parents enrolled in the program will be notified if there is any change in coverage for specific dates and emergency situations. For further

information on the SACC Program, please contact Joanne Lehman at jlehman@tenafly.k12.nj.us or 201-816-4526.

After School Playground Use

Please be advised that school staff does not monitor the playground after school hours. Students are permitted to stay and play if supervised by an adult. Students must follow school rules at all times. Reports of misconduct could result in loss of playground privileges. Cameras allow school staff to corroborate reports of misconduct. Field use may be reserved for after school SACC, clubs, and other Tenaflyrecreational activities. Students should never ride electric bikes, scooters, etc. on the playground as it will really damage our turf field.

School Closings: Emergency Closing/Delayed Opening

Blackboard Mass Notification System

- For school closings or delayed openings, parents **must** check their status on the **Blackboard Mass Notification System**.
- Alert emails and phone calls will be sent to addresses and numbers on file. It is the parents' responsibility to update these numbers and to inform the school of any changes in phone numbers or email addresses.
- All Blackboard directions can be found under the [parents tab](#) on the main page.

Genesis

- Parents must become familiar with the Genesis Student Management System. All grades, schedules, dismissal forms, and class placements are communicated through Genesis.
- Parents **must** register for the [Genesis Parent Portal](#) by accessing the system through the main website.

School Notices/Monthly Newsletters

We try to use as little paper as possible. Children will bring home notices or flyers in their backpacks occasionally, but primary communication is handled through Blackboard. Additionally, we send out a monthly newsletter via Blackboard that contains important information and upcoming events. All newsletters for the school year can be found [here](#). The H.S.A also sends out information regularly via email, so be sure to create an account on the [membership toolkit](#).

Lunch Program

Special Lunch

The H.S.A. sponsors special lunches during the week. Scholarship funds are available should you need financial assistance. Please make an appointment with the principal. All information will be kept confidential.

Lunch Periods

1 st lunch	Grades K, 1, 2 11:30 A.M. – 12:15 P.M.
2 nd lunch	Grades 3, 4, 5 12:20 P.M. – 1:05 P.M.

Milk

One percent milk is made available for all children who order. Forms are available on the [Parent Resources>Mackay Lunch](#) tab on our website. The session dates and deadlines are listed on the form. Scholarship funds are available should you need financial assistance.

Late Lunch Drop-Off

Lunch drop off is for **emergency use only**. Students must bring lunch with them in the morning or participate in our HSA lunch program. If forgetting becomes habitual other arrangements will have to be made. Hot, last minute lunches may not be dropped off throughout the school day. All drop offs should be left with the door monitor.

Conferences and Standardized Tests

Conferences

During the school year, there are two scheduled parent-teacher conferences; one in the fall and one in the spring. At this time, the teacher shares with the parent a detailed progress report and samples of the child's work. You may request additional conferences at any time with a teacher. Please speak with your child's teacher directly to arrange a mutually convenient time.

Standardized Tests

Students in Grades 3, 4, and 5 participate in the **NJSLA** (New Jersey Student Learning Assessment). These tests are given in the spring and measure student progress in math and language arts literacy. Additionally, the 5th grade students participate in the NJSLA in Science.

Report Cards/Progress Reports/Student Records

Students receive report cards three times a year. All report cards are standards-based and [rubrics](#) can be found on the school website. Parents access the grades through the Genesis Parent Portal.

Health and Illness

Physical Examinations

- Physical examinations are required by the Tenafly Board of Education prior to kindergarten, third, sixth, and ninth grades.
- Parents are asked to have this examination done by the child's pediatrician.
- Hearing and vision screenings are done for all students as per the state requirements. If a student is suspected of having a vision or hearing problem, a referral card is sent home by the nurse.
- The school nurse weighs and measures each student annually and keeps a complete copy of student health records. Additionally, every spring the nurse screens all fifth graders for scoliosis.

School Nurse

- First-aid procedures are established by the school physician and carried out by the school nurse.
- If the nurse is not present, other trained personnel will handle medical problems or 911 will be called in the event of an emergency.

Medications

The State Department of Education discourages the administration of medications in school; however, there are circumstances where it is necessary. **Medication should not be sent into school with your child to administer.** Medication can only be given by the School Nurse or parent/guardian. Medication will only be given with written permission from a physician. This includes prescription and non-prescription medication. If your child needs to take medication, please contact the nurse's office for the proper forms and procedures.

Medication will not be given without a physician's note and written parental permission.

Illness at Home

- Please keep your child home when he/she has a fever of 100 or greater or any other contagious illness or

condition.

- A child must be fever-free for 24 hours before being allowed back in school.

Illness/Injury During School Hours

- When a child becomes ill during school hours, a school official will notify a parent.
- Parents are required to come into the school office to pick up their child and sign-out the child on the log sheet.
- Parents who are unable to pick up a sick child must make arrangements for a relative or friend to pick up their child.
- If you have a change in this phone number, please advise the school office immediately. These are found on the Genesis system.

Health Care Plans

The nurse is available for conferences with parents/guardians concerning any food allergies, health issues or concerns regarding their child. Parents of children with chronic illnesses are encouraged to contact the school nurse and discuss the specific health plan required. The hours are Monday through Friday 8:10 - 3:20 P.M.

Please refer to the School Nurse link on the Mackay web page for further school health related information.

Insurance

The Tenaflly Board of Education makes accident insurance available in September to all students. Participation is strictly voluntary.

Special Subjects and Programs

Art

The art program provides students many opportunities for expression and discovery using a wide variety of materials. Art appreciation is also incorporated into the program to familiarize students with famous artists and aspects of their work that represent concepts taught. Children attend art class once per week with their class.

Library/Media Center

Students' appreciation for reading and literature is nurtured through their active participation in the library program. It is in the library where they learn relevant library skills for leisure and academic needs. The infusion of computer technology into the library has broadened the scope of the students' experiences. The children now have the opportunity to interact with state-of-the-art hardware and software to supplement and enhance their skills across the curriculum. The children attend library classes once a week.

Physical Education/Health and Family Life

All students participate in physical education/health classes twice a week. Sneakers and casual clothing should be worn on those days. Parents must send a note if a child is to be excused.

Spanish

Students begin learning Spanish starting in kindergarten. Our Spanish teacher introduces students to new vocabulary, grammar, and cultures through a variety of activities. Students have two 30-minute classes per week.

Basic Skills Program/Reading Recovery

The school has support services personnel that provide academic assistance in reading, writing, and mathematics to children who need supplementary instruction.

ELL (English Language Learning)

ELL classes are available to those children whose primary language is not English. The purpose is to help them acquire the English language successfully. Formal testing is performed by the ELL teachers to determine eligibility.

Discovery Program

The Tenaflly Discovery Program recognizes, nurtures, and develops the gifts and talents of all students. Through curriculum differentiation and various enrichment opportunities, it promotes a commitment for excellence, pride in accomplishment, and a sense of individual and social responsibility.

Instrumental Music

The instrumental music program begins at the third grade level. They have a half-hour lesson once a week. Those children who obtain a level of outstanding achievement with their instrument will be invited to join the 4th and 5th grade orchestra, known as the Mackay School Orchestra/Band. They rehearse every Wednesday and Thursday at 7:30 A.M. Students also receive a lesson once a week during the school year. Mackay School is also very proud of the elementary school symphony known as the "Super Orchestra." Students from the four elementary schools are chosen on the basis of ability. The Super Orchestra meets on Monday mornings at 7:30 A.M. at rotating elementary schools.

Vocal Music

The vocal music program is designed to celebrate the joy of music. Children sing, move to music, play rhythm instruments, and develop an appreciation for great works of music. As the children progress through the elementary grades, they are exposed to musical form and structure, music history, note reading, singing harmony, and more sophisticated rhythms. Children attend 45-minute vocal music classes once or twice a week.

Social and Emotional Wellness

Mackay School has a school counselor who provides social/emotional support for students and families. The counselor conducts classroom lessons focused on anti-bullying, making friends, and solving conflicts. The counselor also has special lunchtime groups that meet throughout the year. The counselor coordinates the I&RS (Intervention and Referral Services) Committee meetings. Students who are having academic and/or social/emotional difficulties will sometimes be referred to this committee which consists of parents, teachers, the counselor, and the principal.

Special Services

Special programs are available which are designed to meet unique student needs. A child study team consists of specialists whose primary function is to diagnose and prescribe remediation for situations that interfere with a student's intellectual, social, emotional or academic growth. Members of the team include a school psychologist, a social worker, a learning disabilities specialist, and a speech therapist. Acting on referral made by teacher, principal, and parents, the team approaches each problem individually. Conferences with teachers and parents, special education instruction, counseling with students, and referral to outside practitioners are some of the approaches used.

The Director of Special Services supervises the special education program, oversees the bedside instruction program, and works with school administrators in the development of the curriculum. Tenaflly is a member of

Region V, a group of eight school districts that cooperate in providing educational programs and services to special education students.

Resource Center

This special education program provides direct instruction to small groups of students in language arts, math, and study skills. This program replaces the regular classroom instruction in those areas identified by the Child Study Team.

Speech Therapy

Children who have speech difficulties which may interfere with their academic, social and/or emotional performance are eligible for this service. The teacher or parent may initiate a referral to the speech therapist. Half-hour sessions are scheduled during normal classroom time. Close cooperation and participation is encouraged between the speech/language specialist, teacher, and parent.

Bedside Instruction

Certified teachers provide instruction to children who are confined at home for an extended period of time because of an illness or injury. Parents of such children should contact the school for complete information.

Other Information

School Pictures

Arrangements are made to have your child photographed alone and with the class. A fee is charged for this service. A notice will be sent home with the exact date.

Lost and Found

Mackay School's Lost and Found area is located in the vestibule by the front entrance. All items are kept for approximately two months and then distributed to the needy.

Peace Builders

Peace Builders are ambassadors of peace and kindness for Mackay School. Our mission is to create and maintain a positive school climate throughout the school year. Fifth grade students are selected based on the qualities of Mackay Champions: Respect, Kindness, Responsibility, Honesty and Collaboration.

Student Council

Student Council is a service organization for students in 4th and 5th grade. It is dedicated to promoting citizenship, school spirit, and responsibility to the community. Student Council activities benefit Mackay School, Tenafly, and the wider world.

Student Cell Phones/Apple Watches

Students are permitted to use cell phones before and after school, but not during the school day. All cell phones must be turned off and stored in the students' backpacks during the school day. Breaking this rule may result in cell phones being confiscated and held in the principal's office until a parent comes to pick it up. Smart watches cannot be worn throughout the school day. Students are not permitted to text, photograph, or access the internet during school hours on a smartwatch or similar device.

Home School Association (HSA)

It is highly recommended that parents join the Home School Association by creating an account on the [HSA Website](#). If you are interested in becoming a class parent or volunteering at various school events throughout the year, please contact the HSA at mackayhsa@gmail.com.

Birthday Celebrations

Although birthdays are exciting and are to be celebrated, please do not send in snacks to share with the class. This is both respectful to those students with food allergies and in line with keeping our students healthy. Each classroom teacher recognizes the birthday child in their own respective ways. We do not allow birthday treats or “goodie bags” of any kind for students’ birthdays. Birthday invitations should be distributed outside of school whenever possible. Teachers cannot share parent email addresses. Parents can use the HSA directory or class parent communications for this purpose.

Celebrating Holidays

One of the best things about Mackay School is our diversity. It is important that our students are exposed to different cultures. If you would like to share about a holiday that your family celebrates, please contact your child’s teacher to arrange a time for you to come in to teach a lesson to the class about it. This is at the discretion of the individual teacher.