

PPS Elementary Schools Family Handbook



Community Park School
372 Witherspoon Street
Princeton, NJ 08540
609-806-4230



Riverside School
58 Riverside Drive
Princeton, NJ 08540
609-806-4260



Littlebrook School
39 Magnolia Lane
Princeton, NJ 08540
609-806-4250



Johnson Park School
285 Rosedale Road
Princeton, NJ 08540
609-806-4240



Welcome to the 2024 - 25 school year!

September 2024

Dear Elementary Families,

Welcome to the 2024 – 2025 school year! This handbook was prepared for you and your child to provide information regarding activities, school policies and procedures. The topics are listed alphabetically. A yearly calendar of school holidays and scheduled events can be found in the 2024 - 2025 District Calendar. Also, please check the district website for updated information throughout the school year (www.princetonk12.org).

Please read and discuss the contents of this handbook with your child. All students are expected to know and follow the rules and regulations described within the handbook. Within you will find the Restorative Practices Elementary Code of Conduct that was created with the intention to foster positive interactions between our student and staff.

We look forward to building a home-school partnership to create a nurturing environment for all students.

Please call the Main Office of your assigned school if you need more information.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Dineen Gruchacz
Principal
Community Park
School

Mr. Max Achtau
Principal
Riverside
School

Mr. Luis Ramirez
Principal
Littlebrook
School

Mr. Christopher Sheridan
Principal
Johnson Park
School

School Hours

Princeton Public Schools

Daily Schedule

School	Reg Start Time	Reg Dismissal	90 Min Delay	Early Dismissal	Late Bus
Princeton High School	8:20am	3:21pm	9:50am	12:33pm	5:45pm
Princeton Middle School	8:30am	2:55pm	10:00am	1:00pm	5:00pm
Community park	8:25am	3:00pm	9:55am	1:00pm	NA
Johnson Park	8:25am	3:00pm	9:55am	1:00pm	NA
Littlebrook	8:25am	3:00pm	9:55am	1:00pm	NA
Riverside	8:25am	3:00pm	9:55am	1:00pm	NA
Pre Kindergarten	8:25am	3:00pm	9:55am	1:00pm	NA

Please refer to the District School Calendar or go to:

<https://www.princetonk12.org/quick-links/calendars> for more information.

Please note, our teachers BEGIN INSTRUCTION DAILY AT 8:30 AM. Students arriving after 8:35 AM will be marked tardy. Our doors open at 8:00 AM. Please aim to have your child to school between 8:15 AM and 8:25 AM so they have time to get to class and get settled before the instructional day begins. Students must not arrive before 9:30 AM on a delayed opening day.

Family Handbook Topics

ABSENCE FOR RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

A student, who is absent for religious observation, will be given an opportunity to make up any missed work. A written excuse, signed by the parent/guardian, must be presented to the homeroom teacher upon the student's return to class.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Accelerated Intervention Services (AIS) teachers provide support in Language Arts and Mathematics to students on an as needed basis based upon established criteria.

ANIMALS/PETS

Animals are not to be kept in the classroom without permission from the principal. Consideration must be given to health and safety issues. Parents may bring in animals to show the class provided that the parent obtains permission at least one day in advance and the parent remains with the animal at all times. **Whether leashed or unleashed, dogs may not be brought onto school property while the school building is occupied.**

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Students should not arrive at school prior to 8:00 AM. There is no adult supervision before that time and students will not be allowed in the building. All students will enter through the front door and line up in their designated areas. Teachers or Instructional Assistants will guide students from the designated areas to their classroom.

ART

Formal art classes are scheduled once per week for all students. Other art activities are integrated within the core curriculum content areas. You may receive a request for a smock or an old shirt for your child to protect clothing during art class.

ASSEMBLY AND SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Our PTO and community organizations provide several assembly programs throughout the year. Classes will be invited to those programs that are appropriate to each grade level. Information on other whole school programs will be sent home with students or found in the district calendar.

ATTENDANCE

School hours: 8:25 AM - 3:00 PM (see schedule)

Each student is required to attend school regularly and to arrive on time. Excessive absences and tardiness will be noted and sent to the District Attendance Officer and the Office of the Superintendent. Regular, on-time attendance is an essential part of academic success. State school attendance laws require that students attend whenever school is in session unless the child is ill.

State approved reasons for absences include:

- Death in the family
- Religious holidays approved by the Board of Education

Family vacations are not considered excused absences. Parents are requested to schedule vacations in accordance with our school calendar. If a trip is planned during school totaling more than 10 school days, the parent must complete a withdrawal form online or through the Main Office of the school. After 10 days, the student will be taken off the school register. Upon returning, the parent should re-register the child again as a new student in the Princeton Public Schools. A place in the class or the school is not guaranteed. No homework will be assigned or given during the unexcused absence. (see: *Vacations*)

To Report Student Absences:

Parents should dial **609.806.4266** and then choose their child's school from the menu:

Press 1 for Community Park Elementary School

Press 2 for Johnson Park Elementary School

Press 3 for Littlebrook Elementary School

Press 4 for Riverside Elementary School

A recording will ask you to give the following info:

- Your child's first and last name
- Your child's grade
- Your child's home address
- The date(s) your child will be absent
- The reason for your child's absence (Please give a thorough explanation. If your child is sick, please let us know what symptoms they are experiencing so that we can monitor possible flu or COVID cases or other contagious illnesses.)

If an absence is not reported by the parent or guardian, we will contact you. If your child is absent from school, your child may not participate in an after school/evening event.

Delayed Openings/Emergency Closings:

- Emergency closings due to inclement weather will be announced via the district's phone/email notification system. Information will also be available on the School and District websites.
- In the event of an emergency early dismissal, these same notification systems will be used to inform all parents/guardians. It is extremely important that you keep us informed of current home or emergency phone numbers for all children. In addition, the children and the Main Office should know what contingency plan is in place if their parent/guardian cannot be reached.
- Delayed openings are 90 minutes in length. (Note that the regular late bell is 8:30 AM, while the delayed opening late bell is at 10:00 AM). Buses will run on a 90-minute time delay. See page 2 of the Handbook for a detailed list of school hours.
- Students must arrive between 9:30 AM and 9:55 AM. Parents are asked to simply drop children off at the school entrance and NOT to enter or wait inside the building.
- Lunch will be served. *If a delayed opening occurs on a day when school has been scheduled for a 1:00 PM closing, the school day will be extended to the regular closing time of 3:00 PM (ex. conference days or Professional Development days).*
- **Safety note to Parents: *If there is a delayed opening and you drop your child off at school at the regular time, there will be no staff members available to receive them. Early arrivals on these days present a very significant safety issue because those children who arrive prematurely are unsupervised. Please also discuss with your children any arrangements you have made for their care in the event of an emergency closing. Children should have a plan for what to do or where to go if such an event should occur.***

Tardiness:

- A student is considered *tardy* if arrival to the **classroom** is after 8:35 AM.
- A student who arrives late to school must report to the Main Office where their time of arrival will be recorded, and a late pass will be issued. **It is the parent's responsibility to accompany a tardy student into the school and sign the student in.** Continued tardiness on the part of any student will be viewed as a serious matter. Frequent tardiness may result in reporting to the district attendance officer. Further action on the part of the district will be instituted in cases of excessive tardiness.

Transfers:

- If you need to transfer your child to another school district, please notify the office at least one week in advance. You will need to provide your new home address and the name of the new school and school address, so the appropriate record can be prepared and sent forward in a timely manner.

Truancy:

- Cumulative unexcused absences of 10 days or more from school shall be considered truancy. All truancies will be reported to the district attendance officer for review and possible legal action.

Early Pick Up:

- Parents are urged to leave their children in school for the entire day. Except for sudden or serious illness, medical and other appointments should be scheduled outside school hours or on school holidays whenever possible. Removing a student from school before the regular dismissal time should be reserved for only urgent instances.
- REQUESTS FOR EARLY DISMISSAL AFTER 2:45 PM CANNOT BE ACCOMMODATED. If you need to pick up a child early, this must be done before 2:45 PM on a regular day and before 12:45 PM on an early dismissal day. Please realize that with such a large student body, requests for pick up during the final 15 minutes of the day may create problems with students being dismissed to their proper locations.
- PUPILS MAY NOT BE EXCUSED EARLY WITHOUT A WRITTEN REQUEST FROM A PARENT OR GUARDIAN. The note is to be presented to the office and will be copied to the classroom teacher. Parents picking children up early must come into the Security Vestibule to sign them out.
- For safety reasons, if a person other than the parent/guardian is designated to make the student pick-up, that person must be listed on your child's emergency contact form. Proper picture identification and written parent/guardian permission will be required for sign out.
- **Note:** Children are not permitted to walk home alone during the school day.

BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Princeton YWCA offers childcare programs at all four elementary schools in Princeton. The afterschool program begins immediately following the end of the school day and continues to 6:00 p.m. For more information, please visit: <https://www.ywcaprinceton.org/childcare-princeton>.

BICYCLES

Students are permitted to ride their bicycles to school. We strongly encourage using one of our bike racks to secure the bicycles.

BOOK BAGS

Please provide a book bag for your child to carry school materials.

BREAKFAST (also see LUNCH)

Breakfast will be provided for a cost for all students.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Buses will transport students to and from the school. Please be sure your child knows his/her bus number. Any difficulty involving buses should be referred to the District Transportation Director, Mrs. Donna Bradin, in the Transportation Office, at 609-806-4209.

Students receive their bus assignment, bus stop and boarding time from our Transportation Department. It is the bus driver's responsibility to ensure the safety of the passengers. Students are required to obey all bus safety rules. There is no eating or drinking on the bus.

Only students assigned to a bus by our Transportation Department may ride a school bus. Parents must send a note to the homeroom teacher if they do not want their child to take the bus home on a particular day. Without written instructions, the child will be put on their regular bus at dismissal.

Guidelines for Riding the Bus:

Please talk to your child about the following rules and procedures for riding the bus to and from school. Help your child understand that the bus is a privilege and requires students to follow a set of rules and procedures to continue to ride the bus.

All students must exhibit behavior that is safe and orderly while waiting for the bus at their designated bus stop, while riding the bus, and while exiting the bus. Infractions of bus safety and conduct rules that do not promote safety, order and the rights of others will be reported to parents and may result in disciplinary action including verbal warnings, reassignment of seats and loss of bus privileges.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/TELEPHONE

It is extremely important that the school office has a current address and telephone number for every student. Please notify the PPS Registrar (609-806-4203 Ext. 2042) of any address changes made during the school year. New residency documents will be requested. Please notify the main office of any telephone number changes during the school year. Additionally, phone number changes can be made through the Parent Portal.

CHILD STUDY TEAM

Members of the Child Study Team consist of a Social Worker, Psychologist, and Learning Disabilities Teacher-Consultant (LDTC). Classroom teachers who request assistance in dealing with individual student matters or parents who seek assistance for their children can make a referral to this group with a written request.

CLASSROOM BIRTHDAY PARTIES/TREATS & INVITATIONS

Parties & Treats. We welcome the opportunity to acknowledge birthdays and to share these happy events with our students. If you wish to send something to share to celebrate, a small, non-edible item is

permissible; these may include stickers, pencils, small games, and other appropriate items.

Party Invitations. Private and at-home parties are wonderful for those who attend, but they can be very difficult for those who have not been invited. To respond sensitively to this issue, we have instituted the following guidelines: Teachers will gladly permit the distribution of invitations if everyone in the class is invited. If only select children are being invited, invitations must be distributed privately from outside of the school building. For privacy reasons, the school cannot give out class lists.

CLASS TRIPS

Trips for off campus programs and enrichment activities for each grade level vary from year to year. Our school code of conduct guides behavior on such trips. Teachers will arrange for chaperones from among the class parents. Every trip, no matter how short, in which students leave the school grounds during a school day, **requires** a signed permission slip from parents. No student will leave without a signed permission slip, a phone call is unacceptable. When a child goes on a class trip, the child must leave with the class on the bus and return with the class on the bus. For safety reasons, there are **NO EXCEPTIONS**.

CONTACTING TEACHERS

Teachers cannot be called to the telephone from their classrooms except in emergency situations. Parents may leave a message with the main office or send the teacher an email and may expect a response within 24 hours. Email is the preferred method of communication with staff. Everyone has an assigned address with their firstname.lastname@princetonk12.org (ex.: janedoe@princetonk12.org).

****Please do not email teachers changes in dismissal plans on the same day. Teachers are engaged with classes all day and may not see an email in a timely way to make the change.****

DISCIPLINE

A safe and respectful environment is critical if quality teaching and learning are to take place in our school. A key element in achieving such an environment is to ensure that parents and students understand the rights and responsibilities that students have at school, what conduct is expected of them, and the consequences for inappropriate or dangerous behaviors.

Discipline infractions are addressed in an individualized manner utilizing restorative practices as much as possible. In some cases, a blend of both restorative and traditional approaches to discipline are implemented. In all situations, we seek to teach students the best ways to deal with conflict by encouraging healthy social emotional skills and strategies to accept responsibility, understand the harm caused, and learn appropriate behaviors to move forward so that future infractions are diminished (please refer to our PPS Elementary Schools Restorative Code of Conduct below and acknowledge in PowerSchool).

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Students are dismissed at 3:00 p.m. each day except for early closings. Specific dismissal locations and protocols will be shared by teachers.

When parents are late, they must come into the building to get children so that we are certain children are leaving with the correct adult.

If a previously unannounced early dismissal is necessary, we ask that you do not make this request during the last 60 minutes of the day. Such requests are disruptive to closure in the classroom and may result in stress for students and unsafe situations. A written request is required and must be submitted to the student's teacher for early dismissal. Parents or the person named in the note must sign the child out in the lobby. Students will be called from the class once you arrive at school. **Proper identification will be required when you pick up your child.**

****Please do not email teachers changes in dismissal plans on the same day. Teachers are engaged with classes all day and may not see an email in a timely way to make the change.****

SCHOOL ACCESS AFTER DISMISSAL

Please be sure to supervise your child on the playground after school hours. The schools do not provide supervision or oversight of the playground after 3:00 pm. For security reasons, the school building bathrooms are not available for use from the playground or to retrieve forgotten items after dismissal.

DRESS CODE GUIDELINES (PLEASE REVIEW AND DISCUSS THIS ENTIRE SECTION WITH YOUR CHILD.)

At PPS schools, we strive to provide a safe, healthy, and respectful learning environment while also promoting self-discipline and supporting the integrity of the educational process.

- School attire should be neat, clean, and allow for access to learning.
- Footwear shall be safe and appropriate for school activities. Flip-Flops often cause tripping hazards and are strongly discouraged.
- Sneakers with retractable rollers may not be worn.
- **Sneakers are required of all students participating in physical education classes.**
- Graphics, language, and logos should be appropriate. Offensive images and messages are not permitted. In general, hats, caps, bandanas, sunglasses, and outdoor jackets will not be worn inside the building. (*Exceptions may be made for religious observances and special Spirit Day activities.*)

EMERGENCY FORMS

It is *essential* that we have your child's emergency contacts on file in PowerSchool. Please be sure that all information is accurate and alternate contacts are available to act on your behalf in case of an emergency. It is also essential that the school be provided with up-to-date addresses, home, and cell numbers at which responsible persons can always be reached in case of sickness, accident, or early dismissal. **Throughout the year, please keep the office informed of any changes in emergency information.** In the event of an emergency at school when the parent or guardian cannot be contacted, an

adult designated as an emergency contact will be called to take the child home. Students will not be sent home alone.

ENROLLMENT/REGISTRATION

New students may be enrolled when they arrive in the district. Online registration can be found on the PPS website under “Student Registration,” where registration documents must be submitted. Please contact the PPS Registration Office at 609-806-4203 Ext. 2042 for assistance.

The following registration documents will be required*:

- Birth certificate/passport
- Immunization record and physical examination report
- Proof of residency
- Records release for records from previous school(s)

*Specific guidelines can be found on the PPS website registration pages.

FIRE DRILLS/LOCKDOWN SECURITY DRILLS

State law requires safety and security drills each month. The bill defines a school security drill as an exercise, other than a fire drill, to practice procedures that respond to an emergency situation including, but not limited to, a non-fire evacuation, lockdown, or shelter-in-place situation that is similar in duration to a fire drill. Detailed routes are posted inside the door of each classroom. Students are reminded to follow the safety rules established in the building. There is no talking or running during a fire drill or emergency drill.

FOOD/SNACKS

We comply with the district allergy protocols. Please be sure to reach out to the school nurse if your child has any food allergies. The nurses will collaborate with classroom teachers to ensure safety procedures are implemented in the classroom regarding food and snack.

FREE/REDUCED MEALS

Applications for free and reduced meals are completed online and can be found on the PPS website under the “Resources and Notes” tab. The New Jersey Department of Education sets the income eligibility guideline. Please contact the main office if you need assistance in filling out this form or do not have a computer.

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING

Bullying among children is commonly defined as intentional, repeated, hurtful acts, words, or other behavior. Board of Education policy spells out the definitions and rules of the district regarding student conduct, student due process, consequences, and other responsibilities and rights related to behavior. Visit

the PPS website's [HIB Anti-Bullying Information](#) page to read the policy in its entirety.

HOMEWORK

Children will often be assigned lessons to practice or complete at home. Projects in connection with school studies are also frequently assigned for home completion. Parents should assist children in organizing their leisure and work periods in order that home assignments are well done and returned to school. This is important for the development of positive learning and work habits.

General guidelines for homework assignments will be shared by your child's teacher(s).

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

Students are scheduled for media center class once each week. Responsibility for and care of borrowed materials rests with the child and parent. Students are held financially responsible for lost or damaged books.

LOST AND FOUND

A Lost and Found area is located in all buildings. Eyeglasses, money, or valuables that have been lost or found will be in the main office. Lost items are donated regularly throughout the school year. If your child has lost an item, please be sure to check for it as soon as possible,

LUNCH/RECESS

Lunch: Students may buy a standard lunch each day or bring lunch from home. Parents/guardians of children who buy lunch are encouraged to purchase it by

- 1.) sending cash or a check to be deposited into the student's account (in an envelope labeled with the child's name and grade) or
- 2.) utilizing the MySchoolBucks.com electronic system. Lunches may be prepaid using MySchoolBucks.com.

Free and reduced-price meals are available to those who qualify; applications are online. Applications for the Free or Reduced Lunch Program are available on the PPS website under the "Resources & Notes" tab.

Beverages are sold separately. Please do not send glass containers, carbonated beverages, or energy drinks to school. More information is available on the lunch menu your child will bring home or on the Food Services webpage - <https://www.princetonk12.org/offices/food-services>.

While in the cafeteria, children are assigned to tables and are expected to behave appropriately. The following guidelines have been established to provide a safe and pleasant atmosphere.

- Students will line up to purchase their lunches under adult supervision.
- Students will wait their turn to receive lunch.

- Students must stay in their assigned seats.
- Tables should be kept clean. Trash should be picked up around the table and discarded properly.
- School rules such as walking, using proper language and manners, and respecting others are consistently enforced in the cafeteria.

Recess: When weather and time permit, students will go outside for recess. Students should bring necessary clothing outside and will not be permitted to return to classrooms once lunch/recess has begun. Food and drink are not permitted outside. Candy/gum-chewing is never permitted anywhere in the school or on the campus. Any equipment brought to the playground from the classroom must be used responsibly. Courteous respectful play is always expected. Games involving bodily contact, such as tackle football, wrestling, etc., are not permitted. Students must keep within the boundaries of the playgrounds. Students will follow the directions of the adults supervising the playground.

MONEY AND VALUABLES

The school cannot assume responsibility for lost or damaged items. Children should not bring valuable items to school. Money brought to school should be put in an envelope with the child's name on it.

MUSIC

Princeton Public Schools has a very strong visual and performing arts department. We believe that arts instruction is a critical component in every child's education. All students will receive vocal/general music instruction at every grade level, PK-5. All fourth and fifth grade students sing in the choir. Our instrumental music program is open to all interested third, fourth, and fifth grade students; weekly instruction takes place during the school day on a rotating, pull-out schedule. Students who wish to learn to play a band or string instrument can sign up for the instrumental music program at the beginning of each school year. All second grade students participate in an assembly at the end of the school year to learn more about these opportunities and about how to enroll in the instrumental music program. If you have any questions, please contact your child's music teacher or Patrick Lenihan, District Supervisor of Visual and Performing Arts, at patricklenihan@princetonk12.org.

NURSE/HEALTH SERVICES

Our full-time school nurse serves as a resource for parents and students and ensures the school community is a safe and healthy environment.

Examinations and Screenings. N.J.S.A. 18A:40-4 – Required Physical Examination Upon Enrollment
 N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.2 This section specifically addresses the physical examination required for enrollment in a New Jersey public school. For all new enrollees, including those enrolling from out of state or out of the country, the pupil's parents/guardians have 30 days to provide evidence of a medical examination that includes the following: 1. Evidence of immunizations pursuant to N.J.A.C. 8:57-4.1 through 4.24; 2. A medical history, including allergies, past serious illnesses, injuries, operations, medications, and current health problems; 3. Health screenings including height, weight, hearing, blood pressure, and vision; and, 4. A physical examination.

Princeton Public School requires a complete physical exam by your family physician for all new students, kindergartners, and 3rd graders.

Each year, our school nurse conducts screenings for height, weight, and blood pressure on all K-5 students. Vision screenings are conducted biennially K-12 and as needed throughout the year. Auditory screenings are completed annually on students K-3. Scoliosis screenings are completed biennially on students after the age of 10. Scoliosis screenings usually occur in late spring on 5th graders. Students can be exempted from the scoliosis screening with written parental permission.

Immunizations. The school nurse monitors compliance with immunization requirements to ensure that students are protected from common vaccine preventable diseases. Working with public health officials, the school nurse maintains accurate immunization records, including exemptions, and ensures compliance with mandated reporting to public health officials.

The NJ Department of Health provides the “Minimum Immunization Requirements for School Attendance in New Jersey” N.J.A.C. 8:57-4: Immunization of Pupils in School.

In-School Accidents, Illnesses, or Emergencies. If your child suffers an accident or becomes ill while at school, our nurse will administer first aid and or contact you if the injury needs further evaluation by a medical professional. Please keep all emergency contact information up to date in the PowerSchool Parent Portal.

If a student’s temperature is 100 degrees F or higher, the parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up the student immediately. Students may return to school once they have been fever-free without fever reducing medications for a minimum of 24 hours. Reminder, never give aspirin to children unless directed by your physician.

Please keep your child home if they have had fever, nausea, diarrhea, or vomiting in the past 24 hours.

Medications. If a student will need medication administered during the school day, the nurse is the only person permitted to administer medication. The nurse will require:

- Physician orders to administer any medication including OTC (over the counter) medications
- Written permission from the parent/guardian
- The medication must be in its original container

*Elementary children may not carry medication or self-administer any medication without a doctor order on file in the health office.

Medical Considerations. If your child has special health needs that may affect participation in school activities (including but not limited to fractures, concussion, sprains, stitches), please notify our school nurse. If your child has any medical considerations like asthma, allergies, or seizure disorder, please have your child’s physician create and sign an emergency action plan and work with your school nurse to help keep your child safe while at school.

Communicable Diseases and Conditions. It is helpful for the school nurse to be aware of any communicable diseases in the community. Please notify the school nurse if your child is diagnosed with

chicken pox, strep, measles, mumps, rubella, scarlet fever, or fifth's disease.

Students becoming ill or injured during the school day or on the way to the school must notify the teacher/supervisor in charge and will be directed to the nurse's office.

Injuries incurred outside the school day must be cared for at home. Similarly, children who feel ill in the morning should be kept at home for the day. Whenever it is determined that a student's condition warrants leaving school, a parent/guardian/designated adult will be notified. In such cases, arrangements must be made to pick up the student; students may not be sent home unescorted. In medical emergencies, the Princeton Rescue Squad will be called.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parents are encouraged to contact teachers to discuss any aspect of their child's performance or progress in school. Appointments can be made by leaving a message in the teacher's voice mailbox, sending the teacher an email, or sending a note to school. The teacher will respond to the request and establish a mutually agreeable meeting time. There are two formal conference periods scheduled for the Fall and Spring. *****Please refer to the District Calendar for exact dates and times.*****

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

PTO meetings are held monthly at the school or virtually throughout the year and are listed on the district calendar. Program topics, dates, and membership information, along with other requests for information will be sent home early in the school year. The PTO has a mailbox in the school for any correspondence. All parents are invited to take an active role in the PTO sponsored activities.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

In general, students may not bring valuable personal possessions to school. The school does not assume responsibility for lost or damaged personal items. Common sense and consideration are the best guides for determining what is appropriate for school. Generally speaking, any item that may disrupt the educational process is prohibited. The following guidelines will also be maintained:

Cell phones. For safety purposes, students may carry cell phones to school *with parent permission*. They must, however, be kept in the child's book bag and they must be turned off and kept out of sight at all times during the school day.

Toys. Except in the case of a special teacher-planned project, students may not use toys, trading cards, electronic devices or games, iPods, etc. during the school day. *In the event of a special circumstance, parents will be notified by the teacher and asked to give permission for specific items to be brought to school.* In all other cases, if a child is found to be using such an item during the school day, that item will be held by the teacher or an administrator for parent pick-up.

*****No weapons of any kind - real or facsimile - should be brought onto school property.*****

These as well as other offending items that may detract from an optimal learning environment are prohibited at school. They will be confiscated and may be returned to the student at a parent conference or at the end of the school year. Additional offenses will be considered insubordination. Students who disregard these rules will be subject to loss of the item and/or disciplinary action.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students participate in a regularly scheduled physical education program. Students are required to wear sneakers in order to participate. Roller-skate/sneaker combination shoes are not permitted.

PLAYGROUND PROCEDURES

While on the playground, children will adhere to the following basic rules:

- No food is allowed on the playground.
- No wooden or aluminum bats, hard balls, or other dangerous equipment are to be brought to or used on the playground.
- No rough games such as tackle football, etc. which involves potentially dangerous physical contact will be allowed.
- No “play fighting” will be allowed.
- Prompt responses to adult requests and to the line-up signal are expected.
- Students are not permitted to use the playground without adult supervision.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR

A full-time school counselor is available for students at each school. Referral may be made by a child’s parent or by a teacher using a referral form. Students may also request to speak to the counselor. Note that written parental approval must be obtained prior to the initiation of regular counseling contact. School counselors teach social emotional lessons in class to all students, host various groups, and provide 1:1 counseling check-ins when appropriate.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Individual student and class pictures will be taken early in the year with an additional make-up picture day. Check the district calendar for the date. Notices will also be sent home to remind parents of the event and to provide ordering information. Parents are under no obligation to purchase pictures.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Whether involving employees or students, sexual harassment of any kind is not tolerated. Incidents of sexual

harassment are to be reported to the building administration as near to the occurrence as possible. For more information and to review the complete policy, please go to the District website: <https://go.boarddocs.com/nj/pps/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=B52N2K5A97A1#>

SMOKING

All school buildings are smoke-free as required by State and Federal laws.

SNACKS

We encourage students to develop healthy eating habits. Individual classroom teachers decide when and/or if students may have a healthy snack in class. Chewing gum and candy are inappropriate. Beverages in glass containers are not permitted.

SPEECH & LANGUAGE SERVICES

Children who have been assessed and need assistance in correcting speech or language patterns will receive instruction from a speech and language specialist outside the classroom.

STEAM

Elementary STEAM lab is an opportunity for students to engage in scientific inquiry through hands-on investigations of natural phenomena connected to grade-specific science concepts taught during classroom instruction. Students utilize the engineering design process to identify and solve problems in their worlds and to apply computational thinking to solve problems, using code to express ideas. The STEAM course develops critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills for future success of the students using creative processes to observe, interpret, and analyze their world.

SUPPLIES

While the school provides most materials, requests may be made at times for special kinds of notebooks, covers for books, extra pencils, etc. Suggested supply lists will be shared by classroom teachers.

TECHNOLOGY

Our district policy on technology states in part: *While in school, student access to technological resources will be under the supervision of teaching staff and will be monitored by the staff member in the same manner as any other classroom activity.* No student shall be allowed to use the computer network and/or the Internet unless they have filed a consent form signed by the students' parent(s) or guardian(s) in grades pre-kindergarten through five.

Our district guidelines specifically prohibit a student's use of our technological resources for non-educational purposes. Of course, disrupting or damaging equipment, software, or the operation of the system, is also prohibited. Students who violate district guidelines are subject to disciplinary action. The

entire district policy and guidelines are available upon request at the school office. The current district Acceptable Use Policy can be found on the district website in both English and Spanish: (<https://www.princetonk12.org/offices/technology>)

TELEPHONES

Parents are asked to make after school arrangements with their children before they leave home. It is not desirable to disrupt classroom instruction to deliver messages nor feasible to handle last minute calls for all students in the building. Students are permitted to use the phones in the main office to contact home in case of an emergency.

Cell phones. For safety purposes, students *may* bring cell phones to school *with parent permission*. Teacher notification is strongly recommended. Cell phones may not be turned on or in use during the school day. They must be kept in the child's book bag, and they must be turned off and kept out of sight at all times while school is in session. A student who attempts to use a cell phone in school will be referred to an administrator.

Devices that allow students to make calls, text, or message others, such as cell phones or Apple Watches, or of the like, are not permitted to be used during the school day. If a student is permitted to carry these items to school, parents must give written permission to the classroom teacher or administration, and the items must be secured during the school day. If a student misuses this privilege, they will be referred to an administrator.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are costly. We ask all families to help care for and preserve these books. Students are to cover all hardcover books; please do not use contact paper. It is the responsibility of the family to replace a textbook that is lost.

VACATIONS

We respect your decision to make plans in the best interest of your family, but we believe strongly that a child's presence in the classroom each and every day is very important for his/her learning. Board of Education Policy #5113 provides an overview of what is declared an excused absence to that of an unexcused absence. The policy goes on to declare that attendance is required of all children unless excused due to sickness, death in the family or religious observance. Family trips do not qualify as excused absences from school. If you choose to take your child out of school, homework will not be provided in advance. (See: *Attendance*)

VISITORS TO THE BUILDING

We welcome parents, guardians, community members, and professional guests to participate in

opportunities throughout the school year to support our student's learning. Though we are open and honored to accept visitors, we must carefully adhere to health and safety procedures, minimize interruptions, and guard student privacy. **To that end, all visitors must enter through the main entrance doors and report directly to the building/monitor/main office. There, visitors must sign in and obtain and wear a visitor's tag. A photo ID will be requested of any visitor by security staff or administrator.**

WEBSITE

Additional information may be found on the school's website: <https://www.princetonk12.org> Please check the website for school activities and closings.

Princeton Elementary Schools Restorative Code of Conduct

(see [District Policy 5600](#))

This Code of Conduct is applicable to school functions, activities or events that occur on campus, on the school bus, during before or after school activities, field trips and any activities that are school/district/PTO-sponsored or an extension of the school and/or district. This Code of Conduct may be applied to any activity outside of school and beyond school hours that impacts the operations, learning or safety of the school environment.

Princeton elementary schools utilize restorative practices that emphasize values of empathy, respect, honesty, acceptance, responsibility and accountability. A restorative justice approach to discipline facilitates student self-reflection and development in conjunction with appropriate consequences. Restorative Justice practices are utilized to support growing our students' independence and ability to work together as a community to problem-solve and resolve conflict. Allowing students to participate in reflective learning practices, increase their awareness of how their actions create problematic results, and how a community can work together in the healing process are essential life-skills that result from their participation in an effective restorative justice practice.

When assigning consequences, we often include an educational component so that students learn how to make better decisions and how to have empathy for others. Interventions may include, but not limited to, parent conferences, student counseling, peer support groups, conflict mediation, restorative circles, corrective instruction, other relevant service, learning experiences, supportive student interventions, behavioral management plans, and/or alternative placements.

The following is a list of behaviors and consequences that will also serve as a guide for administrative action. There may be circumstances that could alter responses to certain behaviors, and these will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the administration.

TIER 1- Students may engage in breaches of ethical judgment and engage in poor choices or lack of responsibility. Teachers should be providing Interventions for first and second offenses.	
BEHAVIOR	CONSEQUENCES That may be imposed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊘ Acting disrespectful towards peers/staff ⊘ Misuse of technology in accordance with district AUP ⊘ Damage to school property ⊘ Profane Language ⊘ Use of discriminatory language ⊘ Inappropriate behavior in unstructured or unsupervised areas (playground, school bus, cafeteria, hallway, bathroom, etc.) ⊘ Use of cell phone and/or recording device ⊘ Misuse of smart watches (ex: texting/calling during school hours, sending messages, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊘ Restorative conference ⊘ Letter of apology ⊘ Communication with parents via writing or by phone by staff ⊘ Removal of technology use ⊘ Alternate assignment ⊘ Restitution (paying for item if damaged/broken) ⊘ Referral to school counselor ⊘ Use of Calming Corner/self-regulation tool ⊘ Device removal by teacher/administrator (ex: cell phones, smart watches). If a second

<p>taking photos, etc.) ☒ Any other infraction as determined by teacher/staff member</p>	<p>offense occurs parents will be notified to come and collect the device.</p>
<p>TIER 2- Lack of self-awareness/poor social interactions/poor judgment/poor decision making/lack of empathy. These behaviors are more serious and should be referred to Administration.</p>	
<p>BEHAVIOR</p>	<p>CONSEQUENCES That may be imposed</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ Any behavior from level 1 that is habitual ☒ Academic integrity infraction ☒ Breach of acceptable use policy ☒ Picture taking/filming without consent ☒ Bullying (may come with an HIB (Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying) complaint) ☒ Profane Language ☒ Use of discriminatory language ☒ Fighting ☒ Vandalism ☒ Truancy/skipping school ☒ Not adhering to safety protocols: fire drill, school safety drill or health and safety protocol. ☒ Elopement from classroom/educational spaces ☒ Teasing/Name-Calling ☒ Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) that does not rise to Tier 3 classroom removal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ Behavioral contract ☒ Mentor program ☒ Referral to school counselor ☒ Loss of privilege(s) ☒ "Time out" with counselor or administrator ☒ Lunch detention (separate from recess) ☒ Parent contact by phone by administration ☒ Parent conference
<p>TIER 3- These behaviors pose a risk to self-and/or others or exhibit that other interventions have not been effective at correcting behavior choices. They should be dealt with by the administration and may involve district and community resources for support.</p>	
<p>BEHAVIOR</p>	<p>CONSEQUENCES that may be imposed</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ Any behavior from Tier 1 and 2 that is habitual ☒ Harassment/Intimidation/Bullying - HIB – (see District Policy 5512) that rises to a classroom removal level ☒ Assault (please note this is different than a fight) ☒ Elopement from building or school grounds ☒ Possession/distribution of a controlled substance ☒ Use of weapons and/or explosive devices ☒ Making threats of violence against school or individual(s) ☒ Using profane and/or discriminatory language ☒ Misuse of technology (ex: social media, inappropriate online activities, video/photography, cyber bullying, etc.) ☒ Any unlisted offense to be decided by Administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ Removal from class for a restorative activity ☒ Parent conference ☒ Referral to outside agency/law enforcement ☒ Suspension from school (see District Policy 5610) ☒ Expulsion from school (see District Policy 5610)

This Code of Conduct is not an exhaustive list of infractions. The school administration reserves the right to evaluate and revise, as necessary.

- ☒ I am in receipt, have read and understand this Restorative Code of Conduct for the Princeton Elementary Schools.
- ☒ I am in receipt, have read and understand the Princeton Elementary Schools Handbook.

Student Name (Printed) _____

Student Signature _____

Date _____

Parent Name (Printed) _____

Parent Signature _____

Date _____

