

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Families,

Welcome to Ralph R. Smith Elementary School! It is our pleasure to welcome you and your child(ren) back to school. We are looking forward to providing many exciting and rewarding learning experiences throughout the school year.

This handbook contains valuable information about our programs and expectations. It has been carefully prepared in order to inform families of the policies and practices at Ralph R. Smith Elementary School.

Our school makes special efforts to create and promote a positive relationship between home and school. Parents are encouraged to contact the school if there is a question and/or concern. It is important to work together to help your child(ren) do their very best. I am sure that with your support, this school year will be a successful one!

Sincerely,
Matthew Darling

The ABCs of RRS

Phone #: 845 229-4060

FAX #: 845 229-2828

Website: www.hpcsd.org/RRS

Academic Day: 9:40 am to 3:40 pm

Early Dismissal: 12:40 pm

Students are not permitted to enter the building until 9:25 am, as we do not have proper supervision for children until that time.

Students leave the building and board the buses by 3:50 pm. If you are picking up your child and they will not be riding the school bus, you must send in a note. Students must be picked up by 3:40 pm.

ABSENCE NOTES

All students must bring a note from home explaining their absence. These notes are kept on file as back up data for attendance. Students without notes will be marked with an unexcused absence.

ACADEMIC INTERVENTION SERVICES

Students who score below certain benchmarks on school and statewide assessments may be eligible for Academic Intervention Services (AIS) in school. AIS instruction is provided for reading, writing and math. These services are provided by certified reading teachers and teaching assistants. Small group instruction is provided both in the classroom and in a separate location, depending on the needs of the students. If your child is determined to be eligible for AIS, you will be notified.

ATTENDANCE

All students are expected to be in school by 9:40 am and to remain in class until the end of the instructional day at 3:40 pm. Appointments should be scheduled before or after school hours, as much as possible. Students who arrive late or depart early must have a written note, and be accompanied to and from the office by a parent or parent designee.

ATTIRE

Indoors: Students are to be dressed appropriately for a classroom setting. Clothing should be comfortable and not distracting.

At no point should any undergarments be visible. Children must have proper shoes to play in PE class, play certain games on the playground, use the equipment, and safely climb stairs. Dress shoes, shoes with heels, and shoes with no backs are not appropriate for school on most occasions.

Outdoors: Please dress your child according to the weather, we go out every day unless it is raining or below 20°. When in doubt, dress your child in layers.

In the winter, parts of our playground are covered with snow, and students should have boots, hats, gloves and snow pants in order to play in the snow. Students will play on the blacktop if they do not have boots and snow pants.



Please label all clothing with your child's first and last name.

BAND

Students in grades four and five may choose to play a band instrument. These students receive one instrumental lesson per six-day cycle, and have one or two band rehearsals per cycle. The bands perform at two evening concerts at FDR HS during the year.



BUILDING LEADERSHIP TEAM (BLT)

This is a group of staff, parents, and community members who work together to set and achieve goals for Ralph R. Smith that align with our District mission, vision and core values. If you are interested in joining, please contact the principal.

All are welcome!

BUS BEHAVIOR

The bus is an extension of our school. Therefore, students are expected to be respectful, responsible and safe. All students riding on school buses should behave in an orderly

fashion and not distract the driver in any way. Those students who struggle with making appropriate choices while riding the bus could be subject to the following disciplinary procedures: Verbal warning, written referral by the bus driver, parental involvement and/or bus suspension.



BUS PASSES

Bus passes are required if your child is to ride the bus from school and get off at a stop other than home. Parents are required to send a signed note to school that states the date, the child's name and the name/address of the location for drop off. The student must bring the note to the main office where a bus pass will be issued.

CHILD CARE

The Healthy Kids Extended Day Program offers before- and after-school child care in our district. For more information, you can contact them at registration@healthykidsprograms.com or by calling 845-330-0200.

CHORUS

Students in third, fourth and fifth grade may choose to participate in chorus in addition to their regular music class. Each chorus practices once per six-day cycle. Fourth and fifth grade choruses perform at two evening concerts per year. Third grade chorus gives a concert for our school during the school day.



DATA TEAM

The data team is a group of faculty members who meet on a regular basis to monitor the progress of students who may need an additional challenge or support in order to meet their full potential. Parents are notified by the classroom teacher if their child has been discussed at a data team meeting.

DISTRICT POLICIES

An abbreviated form of the District Attendance policy, Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of Technology can be found on pages 7-12 in this planner. The documents, in full version, can also be found on the District website and are also sent home at the beginning of the school year.

FOOD SERVICE

Our school has a cafeteria that serves breakfast and lunch for all students. The daily menu is posted on the District web site and a copy is sent home at the beginning of each month.

Students are able to purchase a la carte snack items. Parents are encouraged to pre-pay for these items. This can be done by sending in cash or a check to the cook manager at our school, or through the on-line meal pay program, Titan, which can be found on the District web site, choose Department – Food and Nutrition – payment options. If you do send in lunch money, please put it in a sealed envelope with your child's first and last name and the amount enclosed, written on it.

HEALTH EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

Each student new to the District, as well as every student enrolled in grades kindergarten, 1st, 3rd and 5th grade, must have a recent health examination. These examinations must be completed on the approved NYSED Student Health Examination Form for School which can be downloaded from the District website under Health Services

LOST AND FOUND

All clothing found on the school grounds, regardless of its value, is placed on the lost and found area in the lobby. Money, jewelry, and other items of value are turned in to the office. Students may claim them after proper identification. All belongings should have the child's name on it. This includes hat, gloves, sweaters, coats, lunchboxes, backpacks, and boots.

Common sense and consideration is the best guide in determining whether or not to bring personal possessions to school. The school administration and staff are not responsible for valuables that students bring to school. It is recommended that students leave all valuables at home.

MEDICATIONS

To have medication administered during the school day, the school nurse must receive written permission from your child's doctor. This form can be found on the District website: from the Department's tab, choose Health Services for a link to the form. **Medication must be delivered by the parent to the school nurse, and not sent on the school bus.** The medication must be in its original container with a pharmacist's label. Over the counter medications cannot be administered by school personnel.

MEET THE STAFF

Parents are invited to school to meet their child's teacher and to learn about the program and expectations for the upcoming year. For the elementary schools, this date is usually during the first month of school. Please check the District website for the latest information.



NOTIFICATION OF EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS



Sometimes due to weather or mechanical failure, it is necessary to close or dismiss students early. Your child will be sent to the location you have chosen on your emergency form, which is sent home every September. Closings will be announced over the local radio stations and on the District website, as well as via Parent Square. To sign up for notification, please visit the District website. We cannot call parents directly to inform them of an early closing.

ORCHESTRA

Students who choose to play a string instrument are also part of the school orchestra. These students receive an instrumental lesson and have orchestra rehearsal once per cycle. The orchestra participates at two evening concerts per year. Selected students may be invited to join the District Orchestra.



PARENT PORTAL

Report cards are posted each quarter to the Parent Portal and it is accessible through the school website. Each family must create their own account.

PARENT SQUARE

This is a mass communication system that the school district uses to send email, texts and phone calls to district parents and staff. Messages will be sent to your computer or phone or you can download the free app. Go to <https://www.parentsquare.com/signin> to sign up.

PHOTOGRAPHS



Throughout the school year, your child may be photographed for District produced publications or shared with the news media. If you do not wish your child to be photographed or videotaped, please notify the main office.

PICK UP PASSES

If you are planning to pick your child up at the end of the day, please send in a note to let the office know. Please indicate your child's name, teacher and who will be picking him or her up. Anyone picking up a student must show a valid photo ID. Your child's name will be added to the daily sign out sheet and they will receive a pass so that they know to go to the cafeteria at dismissal. If necessary, you can call the office and ask for your child to be given a pick up pass. If you know that your child will be getting picked up at dismissal every day, you can request for their name to go on the everyday pick up list; this will eliminate the need to advise the school each day and

for a pass to be issued.

PROHIBITED ITEMS

Please note that some items should not be brought to school. Toys, as well as electronic devices, such as cell phones, iPhones, watches, game systems and i-pods are easily lost or broken, and **do not** belong in school. Trading cards or fidget spinners should not be brought to school for the same reason. Any item that your child would be devastated if it were lost, stolen or damaged, should stay at home. The school administration and staff are not responsible for valuables that students bring to school. In addition, for safety reasons, no food items should be sent to school in glass containers.

Please do not allow your child to bring in balls to use on the playground; balls are provided for playground use.

PTA

The Ralph R. Smith PTA usually meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm. Please check the school website to verify meeting dates and times as they are subject to change. All parents are encouraged to join. The PTA needs volunteers to help with the many activities that benefit and enrich your child's school experience throughout the school year.



RECESS

Weather permitting, students will go outside each day and should be prepared to do so. Please send your child to school each day with appropriate outerwear, including hats, gloves, and boots. When it is raining or extremely cold (20 degrees or below, including wind chill) the students will stay indoors for recess. Students will also stay in if the heat index is 96 degrees or higher. If your child cannot participate in recess, please send a note from your child's doctor to our nurse. They will be given a "quiet recess" plan. We always consult with WeatherBug.com for current temperatures and wind chill for Hyde Park.

REPORT CARDS AND CONFERENCES

Report cards are issued four times a year – every 10 weeks. Please check the district calendar for the exact dates that report cards will be sent home. All parents are required to conference with their child's teacher at the end of the first marking period, where they will receive their child's report card. Conference days are also scheduled at the end of the third marking period for those who wish to have a conference at that time. Any time you have a question or concern about your child's progress, please feel free to contact the teacher.



SCHOOL RULES

We have developed three rules that apply to all areas of the building. Students at Ralph R. Smith Elementary School are expected to **SOAR**:



If a student is having difficulty following our school rules, he/she will get a reminder. If he/she is still having difficulty following our school rules, a referral may be written. If a student gets a behavior referral, that student will be seen by the principal and a parent/guardian will be notified and a copy of the form will be sent home.

We also use positive behavior referrals on a regular basis to recognize good choices. The form is then sent home.

SECURITY

Our doors are always locked. You must ring the bell, state your name and reason for visiting and present your photo identification. Our school security monitor, Mr. Samson, will work with families to ensure they are checked in properly and provided with a visitor sticker.

SIX-DAY CYCLE

All Hyde Park schools are on a six-day cycle rotation with days listed as A-F. This rotation allows for the equity of instruction and continuity of program. The letter day is posted on our website and announced each day.



STATE ASSESSMENTS

New York State gives assessments each spring in the areas of English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics for students in Grades 3, 4 and 5. In addition, 5th graders have a Science assessment in the



spring. Please check the District website for testing dates.

STUDENT SIGN-IN / SIGN-OUT

If your child arrives after 9:40 am, he/she **must** be signed in on the clipboard in the main office. Failure to do so may result in your child being marked absent for the day.

Anytime a student is picked up from school, a note should be sent in to your child's classroom teacher. The note should include the time of pick-up as well as the name of the adult picking your child up, except in the case of emergency. That adult will be required to show the office staff their photo identification and he or she must sign out the student being picked up. If your child is picked up during the school day, you come directly to the main office. After 3:25, parent pick up begins in the cafeteria. Students are called down to the cafeteria at 3:40. We ask that you do not pick up your child early (before 3:40 pm) unless it is absolutely necessary. Academic instruction is occurring until the very end of the day. If students are consistently picked up early, they will miss valuable instructional time.

TELEPHONE

Our telephone number is 229-4060. For the Main Office, press 1; nurse, 2; kitchen, 3; and the counseling office, 4. Students' use of the phone will be limited to emergency calls only.



Our fax number is 229-2828.

VISITORS

Visitors are always welcome to our school. Visitors to our school must sign in at the main office, show photo identification, and receive a visitor pass. Visits with staff should be pre-scheduled to ensure availability.

WEBSITES

The District website www.hpcsd.org has a great deal of information, including the current day's lunch menu, the letter (A-F) day, calendar of school vacations, agendas for the Board of Education meetings, and links to individual school websites. Snow day closings are also posted on the site early in the morning. Information specific to our school is on the Ralph R. Smith webpage: www.hpcsd.org/RRS.

Our District also uses the Parent Square system. Parents and other community members can register online, and then receive phone calls, text messages, and emails regarding important items, such as snow days and emergency closings. From the District webpage, choose the Parents & Students tab, then scroll down to the Parent Square link to sign up for this service.

WHO'S WHO

PrincipalMatthew Darling
Email..... matthewdarling@hpcsd.org

Secretaries Gillian Rush
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..... Amy Rajczi
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PsychologistKelly Schluter
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Social WorkerBeth Camaan
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Head CustodianMonique McLaughlin
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Cafeteria ManagerNancy Elwell
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A full staff directory can be found on our website.

