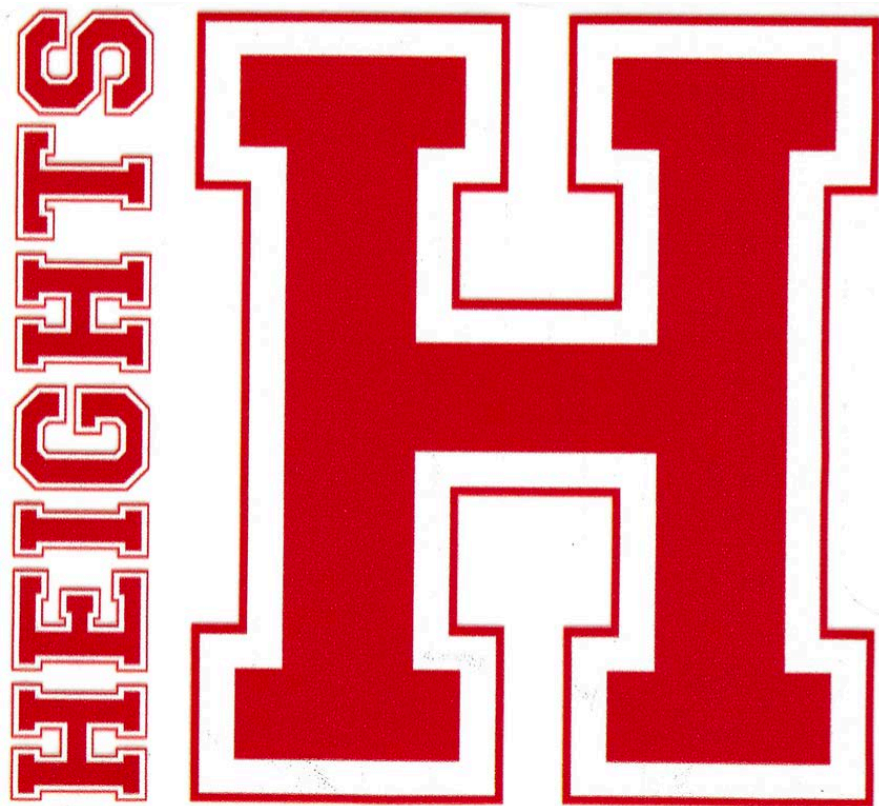


**Heights Elementary School  
Oakland, NJ**

*~Reach For New Heights!~*

***Parent/Student Handbook***

**2024 – 2025 School Year**



Robyn P. Greenwald  
Principal

**Heights School**  
**114 Seminole Avenue**  
**Oakland, New Jersey**

*~Reach For New Heights!~*

**Robyn P. Greenwald**  
**Principal**

**Tel: 201-337-4147**  
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Dear Heights Families,

Welcome to the 2024-2025 School Year! The faculty, staff, and I look forward to partnering with you to provide an outstanding educational experience for your child(ren). Each new year is a fresh start that presents an opportunity for fun, new challenges, successes, and achievement both in and out of the classroom. At Heights, our teachers and support staff are excited to warmly welcome our children back to school each September, after carefully planning and designing special programs and schedules. To that end, we support the whole child as a school community; both academically and socially-emotionally.

Since we pride ourselves on having a strong home/school partnership, we would like to encourage all of our families to join our PTO and to become actively engaged in the Heights School Community. By joining our PTO, you are supporting our children and the wonderful enrichment programs that the PTO provides. From programs that support the Arts to additional fundraising opportunities, our PTO works diligently to involve our families in our school culture. We very much look forward to sharing these events with you!

An important goal at Heights School is to promote the resolution of conflicts in a peaceful manner. Respect, kindness, understanding, a celebration of differences, and consideration of others, create a positive environment at Heights. Please have an ongoing conversation with your child at home to reinforce these important aspects of socially responsible behavior.

Additionally, we engage our children in the themes that Josephson Institute's Six Pillars of Character (Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, Citizenship) support. We highlight each pillar during different months throughout the school year, and support our students in applying their understanding of the pillars through their daily interactions with peers and adults. We impress upon our children to always display the best version of themselves!

Heights is a place that promotes personal responsibility, and is committed to fostering dignity and respect. When our children move on from Heights School, each child will have the skills that he/she needs to make informed decisions, to be a good citizen of the world, and to be successful at the middle school level and beyond. Heights is a wonderful place where children learn, have fun, and grow.

I look forward to working collaboratively with everyone in our school community to ensure that each child at Heights receives an excellent education while developing him/herself socially and emotionally. The staff and I are here to assist if you have any questions or concerns. Please feel free to contact me at any time. We are excited to embark upon this school year alongside you, in the best interest of our Heights children!

Warm regards,

Robyn P. Greenwald  
Principal

## **A Special Notice Regarding Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying:**

The Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights for New Jersey went into effect in September of 2011. I would like to take this opportunity to inform you of the major components of this law. As you review the definition of harassment, intimidation, or bullying (HIB), please understand that inappropriate behavior that does not meet the criteria of the law will be addressed according to the student Code of Conduct.

**Definition:** “Harassment, intimidation, or bullying” means any gesture, any written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14, that is reasonably perceived as being *motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic*, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds as provided for in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14 and 15.3, that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students and that a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student’s property or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property; has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; or creates a hostile educational environment for a student by interfering with the student’s education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

**Staff Training:** All teachers, administrators and school board members receive annual training regarding anti-bullying initiatives in the district and regarding the requirements of the New Jersey Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights.

**District Anti-Bullying Coordinator:** Each school district in New Jersey is required to identify a district-wide anti-bullying coordinator. This person is charged with coordinating the Anti-Bullying Program for the school district, as well as collecting and reviewing instances of harassment, intimidation and/or bullying. The Superintendent of Schools appoints the District Coordinator and this person’s name and contact information is to be posted on the school district’s website.

**School Anti-Bullying Specialist:** Each school has a School Anti-Bullying Specialist appointed to chair the School Safety Team. This specialist should either be a school psychologist, counselor or an individual similarly trained. The name and contact information of the school specialist is to be posted on the school’s web site. This person is charged with investigating allegations of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

**School Safety Team:** The School Safety Team is chaired by the School Anti-Bullying Specialist and includes a school administrator, an additional teacher and a parent. The parent member of the team will not have access to particular student information regarding any specific allegation of intimidation, harassment or bullying. The team works to develop, foster, and maintain a positive school environment by focusing on the on-going systemic process and practices in the school and to address school climate issues.

**Timelines:** The legislation provides strict timelines regarding the investigation of alleged instances as well as possible responses. Parents of both the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator will be notified. Additional timelines are provided if either party wishes to appeal the finding of the School Safety Team to the Superintendent and Board of Education.

If you have any questions regarding the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights, please contact the School Anti-Bullying Specialist, Ms. Jacobson, or me.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Robyn P. Greenwald, Principal  
Heights Elementary School

## ARRIVAL TIME

Each morning, the children should arrive between 8:45 AM and 8:55 AM. They are marked tardy after 9 :00 AM. Be sure that your child(ren) is(are) in school on time, so he/she(they) will be in the classroom by 9:00 AM.

Alternatively, please do not bring your child(ren) to school prior to 8:45 AM, as there is no adult supervision before that time. If you anticipate a conflict with our arrival time, please check with our office about the Wyckoff Y Before Care Program.

## STUDENT DROP-OFF

When dropping off your child(ren), please adhere to the following guidelines in the best interest of safety.

- Before leaving the house, please ensure that students are seated on the passenger side of your vehicle. **No student will be permitted to exit a vehicle from the driver side.**
- When entering from Seminole Avenue please put on your right turn signal and make a right into the school lane, and follow the traffic flow for student drop-off.
- Please do not pass a stopped vehicle or cut others in the traffic line; adhere to the traffic flow procedures.
- Once you reach the designated door where your child is being dropped off, please have your child exit the car promptly. **Please do not exit the vehicle to assist your child.**
- If you are having difficulty getting your child out of the vehicle, please let a staff member know and we will be happy to assist.
- If your child needs assistance getting out of the vehicle, please pull into one of the parking spots on the right side of the building after you make a right into the traffic flow.
- When crossing students from the building across to the parking lot or other side of the road, please use the designated crosswalk area that is supervised by our custodian. Students/parents **should not walk across traffic lanes**, as traffic is constantly flowing during this time.
- If someone not familiar with the procedure is dropping off your child(ren), please share this information with that person.
- Please be patient while other parents/guardians are dropping off their children.

## ASSEMBLY PROGRAM

A variety of assembly programs are usually planned during the school year, which are designed to complement the regular curriculum and expose students to the arts.

## ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is a vital prerequisite to the success of every child. However, when it becomes necessary to keep children home due to illness or other reasons, ***Tabitha's law requires that the parents call the school to apprise us of such an absence.*** Please do so by 9:00 AM on the day of the absence. For your convenience, a message may be left on the school's voicemail, (accessible 24 hours per day, seven days per week) at any time during the prior evening to inform us of an absence as well. A student returning from an absence of any length must bring in a letter that explains the reason for the absence, signed and dated by you, the child's parent or legal guardian. If a student is going to be absent for an extended period of time, a note must be sent into the main office or to the school nurse.

Students absent from school for any reason are responsible for the completion of all missed assignments. Prolonged or repeated absences, excused or unexcused, deprive the student of the classroom experience deemed essential to learning. Regular school attendance is required in order for the Board of Education to fulfill its responsibility of providing a thorough and efficient education for each student. **As such, Board Policy 5410 (Promotion and Retention) requires children to be in attendance for “162 or more school days in order to be considered to have successfully completed the instructional program requirements of the grade/course to which he/she is assigned.”** Any student who accumulates an excessive number of absences will be referred to the school’s Intervention and Referral Services committee (I & RS), and the student’s parents will be required to attend a conference with the building Principal.

***While we understand and appreciate the value of family vacations, please coordinate your time away with the school calendar.*** Scheduling vacations while school is in session is disruptive to the learning process and places children at a decided disadvantage upon their return to school. In most cases, we are unable to provide homework in advance when a vacation is scheduled while school is in session.

Tardiness should be avoided for the same reasons and because it interrupts the school day for the other children. Arriving to school on time underscores the importance of the educational process and promotes responsibility and a sense of community for the student. **If a student is tardy three times, a letter will be sent to the child’s parent/guardian outlining the importance of having the student arrive to school on time. Where a child continues to be tardy (more than three times), the parent/guardian will be required to have a conference with the Principal, teacher, counselor or school nurse to determine the cause of the repeated tardiness and to develop strategies to address the problem.**

In the event of an outside appointment during school hours, a written request to the school office must be provided on or before the day of the appointment. The student will be paged when his/her parents/guardians come to the school office to sign him/her out.

In the case of an emergency, the parent or guardian must come to the main office to sign out their child before he or she can leave the building. No child will be permitted to leave school grounds unescorted during the school day.

## **AWARDS ASSEMBLY**

Students are honored for various achievements in a variety of areas. This special assembly is held in mid to late June. The following awards will be distributed to recognize student achievement:

### **Principal’s Award**

This special award will be given to a fifth grade student who consistently displays the traits associated with all Six Pillars of Character (Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship) throughout the year.

### **Mr. Al’s Kindness Award**

This special award will be given to one fifth grade student who has exuded outstanding caring and kindness towards others, and is a role model for other students.

### **Academic Excellence Award**

This award will be distributed to fourth and fifth grade students who earn an “E” (Grade 4) or an “A” (Grade 5) on their report cards in all five major subject areas (Reading, Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies) during every quarter, and at least an, “S”, for Satisfactory in every other area.

**Effort Award**

This award will be distributed to fourth and fifth grade students who earn a “Consistent” rating in all of the effort categories in the “Work Habits and Social Development” section of the report card during all four quarters.

**Athletic Recognition Award**

This award will be distributed to students in Grades three, four and five who demonstrate outstanding effort or performance in physical education.

**Art Recognition**

Certificates of recognition will be distributed to those students who exhibit exceptional talent in art. Criteria will include participation in the special art program and/or participation in school and/or District-wide competitions. Students in all grade levels are eligible.

**Music Recognition**

Certificates of recognitions will be distributed to those fourth and fifth grade students who participate in the elementary band, strings, and/or choir programs.

**Student Council Recognition**

Certificates of recognition will be distributed to third, fourth and fifth grade members of the Student Council.

**Safety Patrol Recognition**

Certificates of recognition will be distributed to members of the School Safety Patrol. Students in Grade five are eligible.

**BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT**

This adult-only evening will provide you an opportunity to meet your child’s teacher and to review the year’s curriculum. This is a great time to meet other parents, become a PTO member, and volunteer for various events during the course of the year. More information will be sent home in the beginning of September.

**BALANCED LITERACY**

Beginning with essential phonics instruction in the primary grades, the Balanced Literacy Program is a comprehensive, differentiated approach to reading and writing instruction that is designed to help all students learn to read and write effectively. More information will be presented at our annual Back to School Night.

**BIRTHDAYS**

Although we do not hold class parties to celebrate birthdays, you may send in *simple* refreshments on your child’s birthday. Please consider the well being of every student by sending in *healthy* snacks only. **Snacks with nuts or nut-based products are not permissible.** Also, don’t forget to check with the classroom teacher or school nurse regarding other food allergies prior to sending in snacks. To eliminate any doubt about the safety of food-related treats, we strongly encourage you to send in non-food items such as pencils, stickers, or a donation to the classroom library. Birthdays are also recognized during morning announcements each day.

In the interest of student health and safety, ***please do not send in goodie bags for the class***, as they will not be distributed. It is also requested that all private invitations be distributed outside of school. We appreciate your cooperation!

**CAFETERIA FOOD AND BEVERAGE PRICES**

Please see the monthly menu on the District’s website.

**CHANGE OF INFORMATION**

To maintain effective communication between the school and home, please notify a secretary in the main office of any changes to pertinent information (i.e. your address, telephone number, emergency contacts, etc.) during the course of the school year so that we may update our records.

**CHARACTER EDUCATION**

Throughout the year, students will be recognized for consistently displaying the characteristics associated with the Josephson Institute’s Six Pillars of Character (Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship). Teachers will regularly integrate lessons related to each Pillar into their daily plans. In addition, each day will begin with character-related messages read by the Principal over the P.A. system. Students will also be recognized and rewarded for displaying Random Acts of Kindness. Special assembly programs and classroom lessons will also support character education themes throughout the year.

**CLASS TRIPS**

During the year, students may have the opportunity to participate in field trips that reinforce or supplement classroom instruction. Parents or guardians are notified of the details of the trip in advance and are encouraged to give their child(ren) permission to attend. A permission slip must be signed by each child’s parent or guardian and returned to school prior to the trip. There will be a fee associated with many of the class trips. Parents are urged to contact the building Principal or School Counselor if payment becomes problematic. No child will be denied the opportunity to participate in a class trip because of financial hardship. Only class parents will be permitted to attend class trips with the students.

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

An elementary District-wide *Code of Conduct* has been created to ensure our goal of delivering an outstanding education to every child. Focusing on growth in social behavior and on balance in all things, we discipline appropriately for misbehavior and give guidance in social problem solving. When a negative behavior persists, we will call home to communicate the problem and to work with you toward a permanent solution. On the first day of school and throughout the year, the teachers will discuss behavioral expectations with students. The complete *Code of Conduct* can be found in *Appendix A*.

**DAILY SCHEDULE**

*Regular School Hours*

First Bell (School Doors Open)	8:45 A.M.
Late Bell (Homeroom Begins)	9:00 A.M.
Dismissal	3:10 P.M.

*Minimum Day Schedule*

First Bell (School Doors Open)	8:45 A.M.
Instruction Begins	9:00 A.M.
Dismissal	1:00 P.M.

Please Note: No lunch is served on minimum days, but students in all grade levels may bring a snack to school.

### *Delayed Opening Schedule*

Please see "DELAYED SCHOOL OPENING" below.

### **DELAYED SCHOOL OPENING**

A delayed opening procedure has been established to enable all elementary schools to begin classes at 10:30 A.M. when weather conditions make it necessary to do so. If a delayed opening or emergency closing is announced, a reverse 911 message will be disseminated to notify parents. We request that you do not bring your child(ren) to school prior to 10:20 A.M. on such days since the weather conditions might adversely affect our staff members' ability to arrive in time to provide supervision any earlier. Transportation companies will be notified and adjust their schedules accordingly. Any changes to the regular schedule due to inclement weather or any other unanticipated reasons will also be posted on the district's website.

### **DIRECTORY**

The Heights School Directory is a school-wide listing of student/family names, addresses and phone numbers. The Directory, funded by the PTO, is online in the fall of each year for PTO members.

### **DISMISSAL**

#### **Student Pick Up**

Student dismissal will take place at **3:10 P.M. on a regular school day**. Please adhere to the following procedures at student dismissal regardless of weather conditions:

- Parents/guardians of Kindergarten will meet their children at Door # 10. First graders can be met at Door #11. Second graders can be met at Door #12. These doors are located directly down the path from the back parking lot. With the exception of bus students, no Kindergarten, First or Second Grade student will be permitted to leave the area unless accompanied by a parent, guardian or other authorized individual (over the age of 16).
- Teachers of students in Grade Three, will be dismissed through door #18, and in Grades Four, and Five teachers will escort their students to Door #17 in the rear of the school. Parents/guardians of non-bus students in those grades should determine a place to pick up their children on a daily basis. School personnel will be on duty to ensure the safe and orderly dismissal of students.
- **IMPORTANT! At the elementary level, students may NOT leave school grounds unescorted without your prior written consent.** If you wish to provide your child with such permission, you must sign a release and return it to the main office. Unless otherwise indicated, your signature will grant such permission to your child for the entire school year.

***CHANGES IN DISMISSAL PREFERENCES*** – For a variety of safety and security reasons, parent/guardians wishing to change daily dismissal preferences may do so with prior written and signed notification only. **PHONE CALLS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** Every effort should be made to supply the school with such written requests at least twenty-four hours prior to the date of the change. The only exception to this is if a parent or guardian requests that their child is picked up by an adult listed on their child's emergency card. In this case, a phone call is acceptable, because the signed emergency card acts as written permission.



## **DRESS GUIDELINES**

A copy of the guidelines governing student dress can be found in Appendix B. Please review it with your child(ren).

## **EMERGENCY DRILLS**

**\*\*Drills are dictated by state law and NJDOE requirements.**

In accordance with State Law, fire drills, bus drills and other emergency responses are planned by the Principal's Office and participated in by all students and adults. The New Jersey Legislature requires one fire drill and one other emergency drill per month. An email notification will be sent home the same day of the monthly emergency drill each month as required by state law.

## **EMERGENCY CONTACTS**

We understand that parents or legal guardians may not always be available in the event of an emergency. As a result, it is **imperative** that emergency contact information be submitted to the office on the Emergency Health Card sent home in September. Emergency contacts should be available during the school day, and if possible, live in Oakland or the surrounding area. If the names or phone numbers of your emergency contacts change, please remember to notify the office as soon as possible.

## **FORGOTTEN ARTICLES**

In an effort to teach personal responsibility, parents are discouraged from bringing in any forgotten books, homework, musical instruments, lunches and/or other materials. No child will go hungry; he/she will be able to charge lunch on any day a lunch or lunch money is forgotten at home. After school, children may reenter the building with a parent to retrieve forgotten items.

## **GLOBAL EDUCATION**

During an exciting two-week period, students at each grade level study a specific country, exploring its culture, geography and history. Parents, grandparents, and other guest speakers often serve as valuable and wonderful resources.

## **GUIDANCE**

Heights Elementary School offers the services of a School Counselor. In addition to individual counseling, the School Counselor also provides students with the opportunity to participate in a variety of small group sessions that focus on a specific need (e.g., social skills, character, etc.).

## **HALLOWEEN PARADE**

Students have the opportunity to parade around the building in their costumes. Parents are asked to send costumes to school with their children on the morning of the parade. Students will change just prior to the parade (Kindergarten students may wear their costumes to school). Class parents and other volunteers will be present to assist younger students. Children will not be permitted to leave school to change into their costumes. All of our families are also invited to see the parade. In the interest of safety and security, children may not wear masks in school. They will, however, be permitted to wear them during the parade.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

A school nurse is here to provide first aid and a variety of health-related services. Periodic height, weight, vision, hearing, and scoliosis screenings are held. Please contact the school nurse if a child has a contagious disease or is being treated for one. Please also contact the school nurse if your child requires medication during school hours. Medication cannot be administered without a signed doctor's order.

## **HEIGHTS FIELD DAY**

A fun day of activities and events is usually held for students toward the end of the school year in May.

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework is an extension of class work. As such, it will be assigned on most days. If your child is not bringing home homework assignments on a regular basis, please contact your child's teacher. Kindergarten and First Grade students will have between 10 and 25 minutes of homework per night; Second and Third Graders will have between 25-45 minutes; and Fourth and Fifth graders will have between 45 and 60 minutes.

## **INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC CONCERT**

On one very special evening in late May or early June, the fifth grade orchestra students and the fifth grade instrumental music students from all three Oakland elementary schools join together to produce an unforgettable evening of music.

\*Our beginning strings students in the Fourth Grade will showcase their talents at a special event in May or June.

## **INTERVENTION AND REFERRAL SERVICES (I&RS)/RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI)**

The Oakland Public Schools are fervently committed to establishing a safe and secure learning environment that promotes high standards of academic achievement along with the social, emotional, and physical well-being of every child. We are equally as committed to eliminating any barriers that might have an adverse impact on a student's achievement or overall well-being --- whether those barriers are academic, behavioral, or medical in nature. If and when children experience any such barriers, their classroom teachers will devise strategies in an attempt to meet their individual needs. If those strategies fail to adequately address any existing concern, the classroom teacher may then elect to refer a child to the school's Intervention and Referral Services Team (I&RS), which is currently transitioning toward a tiered intervention model known as Response to Intervention (RTI).

The purpose of the I&RS team, which consists of the building Principal or designee, the referring teacher, the school nurse, the school counselor, the building reading specialist, the building mathematics specialist, and a member of the Child Study Team, is to target the specific area(s) of concern by devising innovative strategies for the teacher and/or other school personnel to implement for a specified period of time. At the conclusion of the intervention period, the team will reconvene to assess the effectiveness of the strategies that were selected for implementation. Additional recommendations from the I&RS team will depend on the effectiveness of the original interventions. If the strategies have proven to be effective, the team may recommend leaving them in place until the areas of concern have been ameliorated. However, if the original interventions have not achieved the desired outcomes, the team could either recommend additional strategies or make a referral to the Child Study Team for an evaluation.

While a referral to the Child Study Team could result from the I&RS process, it should be noted that an original referral to the I&RS Team does not constitute a referral for special education services, nor does it guarantee that any such services will be rendered in the future. As per district policy, parents will receive written notification if their child is referred to the I&RS team. While parents have the right to attend the meeting, it is not mandatory that they do so. If parents elect not to attend the meeting, the referring teacher or the assigned case monitor will contact them to provide a summary of the outcomes from the meeting.

## **L.E.A.D. PROGRAM**

The Fifth Grade students at Heights participate in the Nationally Recognized L.E.A.D. (Law Enforcement Against Drugs) Program. This twelve-session course is offered by a specially trained L.E.A.D. officer of the Oakland Police Department.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

The school maintains a lost and found collection. Unclaimed items are displayed for parents several times throughout the year. Any items still unclaimed at the conclusion of the school year will be donated to a local charity.

## **LUNCH AND RECESS**

Student lunch periods are divided into two twenty-minute sessions: one for lunch and one for recess.

11:07 – 11:27 lunch – Kindergarten	11:27 – 11:47 recess - Kindergarten
11:27 – 11:47 lunch – Grade 1	11:07 – 11:27 recess – Grade 1
11:47 – 12:07 lunch – Grade 2	12:07 – 12:27 recess – Grade 2
12:07 – 12:27 lunch – Grade 3	11:47 – 12:07 recess – Grade 3
12:27 – 12:47 lunch – Grade 4	12:47 – 1:07 recess – Grade 4
12:47 – 1:07 lunch – Grade 5	12:27 – 12:47 recess – Grade 5

Children may either bring their own lunch, or they may elect to purchase lunch. If eligible, students may receive lunch on a free or reduced basis. Each student will receive an information sheet and application for the Federal reduced price or free lunch program. Children may also purchase milk, juice, and assorted snacks. Menus are posted on the Heights School website under the 'Parent Information and Forms' tab.

Parents also have the ability to utilize Pay Schools Central as a resource to fund your child's lunch account using a secure online portal. This allows students to use a pin code to charge against their balance. Detailed information about this service is provided prior to the start of each school year. Please keep in mind families may still utilize checks or cash to fund their child's account.

## **NEW JERSEY STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT**

The New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA) is a standardized assessment administered each spring to students in Grades 3-5. Designed to measure students' progress toward and mastery of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, the children in Grades 3-5 will be assessed in English Language Arts and mathematics. Grade 5 students will also be assessed in science. For more information and free access to practice assessments, please visit <https://nj.mypearsonsupport.com/practice-tests/>

## **PARENT PORTAL**

The Parent Portal can be used to view school information, along with current information related to your child's educational experience. All parents will receive log-in credentials for their children. Parents are encouraged to log in daily, as each child's daily homework assignments are now posted on the Portal as well. In addition, student report cards will only be accessible through the Parent Portal.

To access the portal, simply navigate to the District's home page ([www.oaklandschoolsnj.org](http://www.oaklandschoolsnj.org)) and click on the "Parent Portal" link on the right menu bar.

## **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent conferences are held each fall. Parents are encouraged to be active participants in their child(ren)'s education by attending these important conferences. Sign Up Genius will be utilized to schedule your conference. Further information will be provided as we approach conferences.

## **PARENT/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

A strong home/school partnership is necessary for success in school. It is essential for the well-being of the children that ongoing communication is maintained between the home and school. This can happen through electronic communications, in-person or virtual meetings, phone calls, conferences, etc. Look for dates of regular school meetings and events on the Heights Newsflash and on the PTO calendar.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Although students are not required to change clothes for their physical education classes, they must wear sneakers on their scheduled PE days in order to participate.

## **PICTURE DAY**

In the fall of every school year, student portraits are taken. Notices will be sent home to inform families of the date and the various packages available for purchase. A picture retake day is typically scheduled in November

## **PTO**

The Parent-Teacher Organization is a collaborative partnership between parents and staff members, whose mission is to continually enhance the learning environment for Heights students. This is accomplished through active involvement, including assisting with and coordinating programs that will be shared at the beginning of school, as well as posted on the PTO website, and highlighted in the weekly Heights Newsflash. Monthly meetings may be held both in-person and virtually; all parents/guardians are invited to attend.

## **PTO CALENDAR**

This valuable schedule of events for our school year is posted on the PTO Website at the beginning of the year and will also be available in the weekly Newsflash.

## **PTO NEWSFLASH**

A communication that is distributed to members of the community electronically via PTO Newsflash, and contains important and timely information that will keep you up-to-date of the happenings in the Heights School community.

## **SAFETY**

Your child(ren)'s safety is our first priority. A high degree of cooperation between the home and the school is crucial for teaching children about effective safety habits. You can help us in this endeavor by urging your child(ren) to do the following:

- Prepare for school early enough to arrive before the late bell.
- Walk on the sidewalks and cross only at specified crossings.
- Walk within the guardrails. (Openings in the guardrail have been strategically placed to allow children to do so.)
- Refuse to enter or approach strange automobiles or to talk to strangers.
- Proceed directly to school or home.
- Be respectful and considerate of others.
- Return to the school office if the ride or the person responsible for taking him/her home does not arrive within a reasonable period of time.

## **SAFETY PATROL**

The Oakland Board of Education recognizes the value of a school safety patrol as a means of preventing accidents, instructing pupils in good habits, and providing opportunities for leadership training. As such, fifth grade students are given the opportunity to serve on the school safety patrol (Fourth graders may serve as substitutes in the event that Grade five students are off the premises). All eligible students may apply for appointment; however no student will be permitted to serve without the written consent of a parent/guardian. All applicants must acknowledge the possible hazards of safety patrol duty and agree that in case of injury no liability will be attached to the Board or to any employee of the Board. Selection of applicants will be made on the basis of demonstrated sense of responsibility, good citizenship, leadership capacity, maturity, and academic proficiency. Members of the safety patrol must attend a training program before they may assume their duties. Safety patrol members will serve during the school year while completing their assignments. A student may be removed from the safety patrol for violation of the school rules, failure to maintain the high standard of conduct expected of school safety patrol members, or for not fulfilling their responsibilities adequately.

Members of the safety patrol may be assigned to control and direct student traffic on school grounds, on school buses, on sidewalks and paths adjacent to a street or roadway, and across streets and roadways. No school safety patrol member shall be permitted to direct or place himself or herself in the path of vehicular traffic. All students will be instructed to respect the authority of school safety patrol members in the performance of their duties.

## **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

A list of recommended school supplies is posted on the school web page prior to the start of each new school year. This list can also be found on the PTO website.

## **SNACKS**

Students in all grade levels may bring in a healthy snack to enjoy during the designated time for their grade level. Candy or other sweets are not acceptable as regular snacks.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES: REFERRAL PROCEDURES**

At any time during the year, either the school or a child's parents may initiate a student referral to the District's Child Study Team. Such referrals are generally initiated when a child is experiencing ongoing difficulty with the general academic curriculum even after modifications or interventions have been attempted in the general education setting. Procedures for such referrals are governed by Board Regulation 2460.1 as follows:

### **Parent Initiated Referral**

When a parent makes a written request for an evaluation to determine eligibility for services:

- a. The written request shall be received and dated by the Director of Student Personnel and Special Services;
- b. The written request shall be immediately forwarded to the office of special services/special education;
- c. A file will be initiated to include a timeline for processing the referral including the date that initiates the twenty-day timeline for conducting the

referral/identification meeting and any forms used to open a case;

d. Upon receipt of the referral a request for a summary and review of health and medical information regarding the student shall be forwarded to the school nurse who will transmit the summary to the CST;

e. The Director of Student Personnel and Special Services will convene a referral/identification meeting within twenty calendar days (excluding school holidays, but not summer vacation) of the date the request was received by the district;

f. A "Notice of a Referral/Identification Meeting" will be sent to the parent(s);

g. The notice will contain "Parental Rights in Special Education" (PRISE) Booklet; and

h. The referral/identification meeting will be attended by the parent(s), CST, and regular education teacher.

### **School Initiated Referral**

Referral of a student to the CST may be made by administrative, instructional, or other professional staff to determine eligibility for special services when:

a. It is determined (optional: through the I&RS Committee) that interventions in the general education program have not been effective in alleviating the student's educational difficulties.

b. It can be documented that the nature of the student's educational problem(s) is such that an evaluation to determine eligibility for services is warranted without delay.

c. The Director of Student Personnel and Special Services, through in-service training, shall ensure that students are referred who may have a disability, but are advancing from grade to grade.

(1) A student with a disability, who is advancing from grade to grade with the support of specially designed services, may continue to be eligible when:

(a) As part of the re-evaluation, the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team determines that the student continues to require specially designed services to progress in the general education curriculum; and

(b) The use of functional assessment information supports the IEP team's determination.

The following procedure will be followed for a school initiated referral:

- a. A referral to the CST will be completed by the referring staff member;
- b. I&RS documentation including, but not limited to: teacher reports, grades and other relevant data (optional: the intervention record) shall be forwarded with the referral to the CST along with any other relevant data;
- c. I&RS documentation does not need to be forwarded for direct referral when the nature of the student's problem is such that the evaluation is warranted without delay;
- d. The referral should be dated upon receipt by the CST;
- e. A file will be initiated to include a timeline for processing the referral including the date that initiates the twenty-day timeline for conducting the referral/identification meeting;
- f. Upon receipt of the referral, a request for a summary and review of health and medical information regarding the student shall be forwarded to the school nurse who will transmit the summary to the CST;
- g. The Director of Student Personnel and Special Services will convene a referral/identification meeting within twenty calendar days (excluding school holidays, but not summer vacation) of the date recorded on the referral;
- h. A "Notice of a Referral/Identification Meeting" will be sent to the parent(s);
- i. The notice shall contain "Parental Rights in Special Education" (PRISE); and
- j. The referral/identification meeting will be attended by the parent(s), CST, and regular education teacher.

The parent(s) must receive a copy of their child's evaluation report and any documentation leading to a determination of eligibility not less than ten calendar days prior to the eligibility conference in order to ensure the parent(s) has (have) a reasonable amount of time to review documentation prior to an eligibility conference.

### **SPIRIT DAYS**

Generally, one day per month is designated as a school spirit day. These special days provide students and staff members with an opportunity to show their support for and pride in our school. Keep an eye on the monthly calendar, and encourage your child(ren) to catch the spirit by participating each month!

### **STUDENT COUNCIL**

Heights Student Council affords students in the Third, Fourth and Fifth Grade the opportunity to assume leadership positions that provide them with the chance to work with faculty advisors on a variety of school and community-based projects. Students who are interested in serving on the student council will become

engaged in various aspects of the political process, including campaigning, speechwriting, and serving their constituents.

### **TELEPHONE USE/ CELL PHONE POLICY**

Students are allowed to use the telephone in the main office for emergencies or to clarify arrangements for getting home. Please assist us in having your children understand that the telephone is not available to request forgotten items or to arrange social gatherings after school. Students may bring cell phones to school; however, their phones must remain off and safely stored out of view during the school day.

### **TOYS AND GAMES**

Students are not permitted to bring toys and games to school. The school will provide all games and equipment during the students' recess period. All toys and games should be left home, as they are often a distraction to the educational environment that we work diligently to maintain. *(This includes card games, spinners, fidget cubes, etc..)* We thank you in advance for your support.

### **TRANSFERS**

Please notify the office as soon as possible if you plan to transfer your child to another school, even if the transfer is to take place the following year. This would provide the office staff with adequate time to process the necessary forms and records. Prior to the issuance of a transfer card, students must return all books and materials belonging to the school.

### **VISITORS**

All visitors must have a pre-scheduled appointment approved by the building principal. In order to ensure the safety of our children and teachers, we require all visitors to adhere to the following procedures. Upon arriving at the main entrance, please ring the bell and look into the camera. You will be asked to provide your name and the purpose for your visit. Once you have been granted entrance, you must proceed to the main office. All visitors are required to sign in and wear a visitor's badge while in the building. Prior to exiting the building, please return to the main office to sign out. Adhering to this process is essential to keeping our students, staff and visitors safe.

### **VOCAL MUSIC CONCERTS**

Fourth and Fifth Grade chorus students typically showcase their talent in two evening concerts per year. Parents and younger siblings are invited to the dress rehearsal, which takes place during school hours on the day of the concert. Due to limited space, it may be crowded at the evening concerts, and as a result, younger children may be more comfortable at home.

### **WYCKOFF BEFORE/AFTERCARE**

The Wyckoff YMCA runs a before and after school program that is available for a fee. Call (201) 891-2018 for more information.



## **PART II**

### **Appendix A**

#### **Elementary Code of Conduct**

### **Appendix B**

#### **Guidelines for Student Dress**

## **Appendix A**

### **Elementary Code of Conduct**

Dear Parents and Guardians:

This Code of Conduct is offered so both parents and students know the basic rules and responsibilities in order to get the best possible education. Also included in this Code of Conduct, are the consequences students may face if the rules and responsibilities are not met, as well as the positive consequences for outstanding accomplishments. We ask that you please review this with your children in the Oakland Elementary Schools.

#### **Attending School**

*Rules/Responsibility:* Every student is expected to be at school every day, unless sick or dealing with a family responsibility. Being sick means that a parent or guardian has decided that because of a temperature or an illness, either the student would not be able to focus on schoolwork, or there is a very real chance that the student would make other people sick.

A family responsibility is a religious or family obligation that parents or guardians feel is very important and they truly believe is more important than going to school that day.

*Consequences:* If a student does not attend school every day that they are able, the primary consequences is denying themselves the best possible education possible. The State of New Jersey has told the school districts that we have to have certain procedures, identifying other consequences for unexcused absences.

Classroom teachers may impose a consequence if unexcused absences result in the student missing a substantial amount of class work. They may have the student visit them early or stay after dismissal, so he/she can catch up to the class in academic areas. If a child is absent for three consecutive days, the school nurse will contact the parent/guardian. After ten absences, the school's principal will conference with parents/guardians to develop strategies to ensure consistent attendance. Excessive unexcused absences may affect grades and school performance. The school may involve the Intervention and Referral Service Team to brainstorm ideas to support the child's regular attendance.

#### **Punctuality**

*Rules/Responsibility:* Students are expected to be at school every day unless there is a legitimate reason for an absence. They are also expected to be to school and to class on time. At the beginning of the school day, teachers make important announcements, take attendance and lunch counts and review the schedule or any special events planned that day at school. Even if a child is only five minutes late, that means he/she will have missed some important information or will cause some things to be repeated, thus delaying the start of instruction. That is not fair to classmates who are on time.

*Consequences:* Being late to class can affect how well a student learns. Therefore the most serious consequence is denying a student the best possible education. To avoid this, the teacher and/or principal may implement other consequences. The teacher will call parents to discuss why a student is late if this happens five or more times. IF a student is late to school more than three times, the school nurse will contact parents/guardians to see if there is a health issue preventing the student from being to school on time. After continued tardiness, the principal will ask for a meeting with the parents and student.

### **Learn and Let Others Learn**

*Rule/Responsibility:* Every student should do his/her best in every class. They also have to make sure they allow their classmates to do their best. Everyone should refrain from disturbing the learning environment, whether that is the classroom, the gym or the assembly hall.

*Consequences:* The principal will be in charge of determining what kind of consequence a student faces, based on the disturbance to the learning process. Sometimes the disruption to the learning process is relatively minor. In these cases, teachers may notify the parents of the disruption and the consequence. It is expected that the teacher and building administrator have a clear understanding of what may be dealt with in the classroom and what must be brought to the attention of the building administrator.

### **Do Your Best on Assignments**

*Rule/Responsibility:* All students should try to finish every assignment, whether it is a class assignment or a homework assignment, to the very best of their potential.

*Consequences:* The real serious consequence is the fact that students are depriving themselves from a great education if they don't try their best. The teacher may have no choice but to lower a grade if a student does not try their best on homework and classwork assignments. The teacher may choose to have a conference with parents or to invite the student in for extra help.

### **Be a Good Citizen**

*Rules/Responsibility:* Our school district has special rules about bullies and teasing in schools. We know that bullies are really children who are usually frightened about something and want to act tough or mean to hide the fact that they are scared. The teachers and principals will work hard to help these children learn how to identify what is scaring them and to not be bullies.

Of course, while this is happening, they will also try to decide the best consequence for the bullying behavior. Again, a lot depends on the age and the maturity level of the student. Two students, one in third grade and another in seventh grade may use the same inappropriate word, for example, to a classmate. The third grade student may not even know what it means; they may have heard it on television or around town, and decided to repeat it. The older student, however, may know *exactly* what it means and is mature enough to know that it may be hurtful to a classmate.

The staff, teachers and/or principals, therefore, may provide different consequences to those students, *even if the victims were both hurt the same way by the words spoken*. It is expected, however, that when bullying behavior is reported, the staff will address it with both the victim and the perpetrator and discuss it with the parents of both students.

### **Causes for Suspension or Expulsion of Students**

School administrators shall take a variety of factors into consideration when determining appropriate consequences and remedial measures for student misconduct. Those factors include the age and developmental maturity levels of the students involved, the degrees of harm, surrounding circumstances, the nature and severity of the behavior(s), incidences of past or continuing patterns of behavior, relationships between the parties involved, and the context in which the alleged incident occurred.

However, pursuant to New Jersey Statute 18A:37-2, grounds for the suspension or expulsion of students include, "the continued and willful disobedience, or of open defiance of the authority or any teacher or

person having authority over him (sic), or the habitual use of profanity or of obscene language, or who shall cut, deface or otherwise injure any school property.

Conduct which shall constitute good cause for suspension or expulsion of pupil guilty of such conduct shall include, but not be limited, and of the following:

- Continued and willful disobedience;
- Open defiance of any teacher or other authority figure;
- Conduct that places the physical well being of other pupils in danger;
- Physical assault upon another pupil or member of the school community;
- Taking or attempting to take, personal property or money from another pupil or member of the school community, by means of force or intimidation;
- Willfully causing, or attempting to cause, substantial damage to or destruction of school property;
- Unauthorized occupancy of any part of the school or other District-owned building and/or the failure to leave such a facility after having been directed to so;
- Incitement which is intended to and does result in unauthorized occupation by any group of pupils or others of any part of a school or other District-owned facility;
- Incitement that is intended to and does result in truancy by other pupils;
- Knowing possession or knowing consumption of alcoholic beverages or controlled dangerous substances on school premises, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function, or being under the influence of intoxicating liquor or controlled dangerous substances while on school premises, a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function;
- Possession of a weapon (including all firearms) on school premises, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function; and
- Harassment, intimidation, and bullying, as outlined in Board Policy 5131.9 (NJSBA)5512(SEA).

Also pursuant to 18A:37-2.2, any pupil who commits an assault upon a teacher, administrator, board member, other school employee, or another student with a weapon, on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function shall be immediately removed from the regular education program pending a hearing before the Board of Education. Any student removed from the regular education program shall be placed in an alternative education program or on homebound instruction, if an alternative education program is not available.

### **Positive Rewards**

A Code of Conduct would not be complete, if it didn't also have a section on positive rewards. The Oakland Public Schools recognizes the hard work and good character of all of its students. Some, in particular, however, stand out for their accomplishments and/or efforts. For these students, the school district will offer special recognition.

Below is a list of awards that will be given out each year in each elementary school.

### **Principal's Award**

This award will be given to a Fifth Grade student who consistently displays the traits associated with all Six Pillars of Character (Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship) throughout the year.

### **Academic Excellence Award**

This award will be distributed to fourth and fifth grade students who earn an “E” (Grade 4) or an “A” (Grade 5) on their report cards in all five major subject areas. (Reading, Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies) during every quarter, and at least an “S” for Satisfactory in every other area.

### **Effort Award**

This award will be distributed to fourth and fifth grade students who earn a “C” (Consistent) in all of the effort categories in the “Work Habits and Social Development” section of the report card during all four quarters.

### **Athletic Recognition Award**

Certificates of recognition will be distributed to those students who exhibit exceptional talent in art. Criteria will include participation in the special art program and/or participation in school and/or District-wide competitions. Students in all grade levels are eligible.

### **Art Recognition**

Certificates of recognition will be distributed to those students who exhibit exceptional talent in art. Criteria will include participation in the special art program and/or participation in school and/or District-wide competitions. Students in all grade levels are eligible.

### **Music Recognition**

Certificates of recognition will be distributed to those fourth and fifth grade students who participate in the elementary band, strings, and/or choir programs.

### **Student Council Recognition**

Certificates of recognition will be distributed to third, fourth, and fifth grade members of the Student Council.

### **Safety Patrol Recognition**

Certificates of recognition will be distributed to members of the School Safety Patrol. Students in Grade five are eligible.

### **CONCLUSION**

This Code of Conduct cannot possibly cover every possible behavior or circumstance that arises in a public school. No code of conduct can do that. What you, the student, should keep in mind is that many people believe that you are very important and want the very best for you. You have certain rights as a student in the Oakland public Schools, but you also have certain responsibilities that go along with those rights. To help keep the Code of Conduct simple, here are your Rights and Responsibilities:

#### **“I have the right to...**

**Be respected  
A safe school  
Share different opinions  
Receive an education  
Receive support from others  
Be free from taunting**

#### **I am responsible to...**

**Respect everyone else  
Protect the learning environment  
Listen to what others have to say  
Do my best in class  
Lend support to others in need  
Refrain from teasing others.”**

Regards,  
Elementary School Principals

## **Appendix B**

### **Guidelines for Student Dress**

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Although we feel strongly about celebrating each child's individuality, it is necessary to enforce certain guidelines with respect to student attire in the interest of maintaining student safety and establishing an environment that is conducive to learning and high standards for student achievement.

The following guidelines follow from Board of Education Policy and are in effect across the district:

- All attire should be neat, clean, reflect modesty, and be appropriate for a school environment;
- Apparel shall not be sheer, brief, low cut, or revealing so as to be embarrassing, distracting, or indecent;
- Shorts or short-like apparel may be worn during hot weather, but they must be neatly hemmed and long enough to ensure modesty;
- Exposure of undergarments is unacceptable. Cutoffs or frayed bottoms are not permitted, and shorts with distracting or suggestive words/images on them are not acceptable for school. Neither are lycra/spandex shorts permitted in school;
- Shirts with excessively low cut arm holes are not to be worn. Short shirts which leave the stomach area/midriff exposed are unsafe and not acceptable in school. Also, halter tops and spaghetti strap tops are not permitted;
- Footwear is required; however, beach thongs or flip flops are unsafe in a school environment and are not permitted;
- Hats, caps, or other headwear shall not be worn inside the school building;
- Unless required for a medical reason, sunglasses may not be worn during school;
- Graphics that are suggestively obscene or promote/depict an illegal substance on any garment are prohibited (e.g., alcohol, drugs, lewdness, profanity).
- Gang related clothing is prohibited.

With appreciation,

The Oakland Elementary Principals