

# *Moonachie Public Schools*

ROBERT L. CRAIG SCHOOL  
20 WEST PARK STREET  
MOONACHIE, NEW JERSEY 07074

JAMES KNIPPER  
Superintendent/Principal  
jknipper@moonachieschool.org

OFFICE: (201) 641-5833 ext. 110  
FAX: (201) 641-3723

## **24/25 Community Update #1**

Thursday, August 15, 2024

Moonachie Families & Friends –

As summer comes to a close, I know everyone is anxious for the start of the school year! We are just about ready to welcome our students and families back to our great school! The school looks amazing, thanks to our wonderful custodial staff! Our fabulous teachers have begun to set up their learning spaces! Our office staff are finalizing schedules, bussing, curriculum, procedures, registrations, medical records, calendars of events, and responding to all of the questions and concerns you may have.

Please read this update carefully, as it contains a lot of important information to start our year.

### **Schedules & Supply Lists**

Schedules & Supply Lists were mailed home in early August. If you have not received your child's classroom assignment, please contact Ms. Linda Esposito at (201) 641-5833 ext 123 or email at [lesposito@moonachieschool.org](mailto:lesposito@moonachieschool.org).

We are not accepting parental requests to change classes.

### **Administration Update**

Ms. Genatt will begin this year on Maternity Leave. We will inform the community upon her return.

Dr. Mercedes Haines, previously our Spanish Teacher, will be serving as our Interim Supervisor of Special Services/Assistant Principal. Dr. Haines will be responsible for most behavioral/disciplinary concerns that arise.

Ms. Natasha Dillon, current Special Education Teacher, will be completing her Administrative Internship this year and will be supporting our Administrative Team in all areas, with a specific focus on our Child Study Team.

### **Staffing Update**

The National and NJ State Teacher Shortage crisis is currently impacting our district. As of this writing, we are without a Technology Teacher. We are creating a plan for instruction, should we not be able to find a teacher.

We are fully staffed in all other areas!

### **YMCA Update (Read Carefully) – Grades 3 – 8**

We have been extremely fortunate for the last 10-years to have the 21<sup>st</sup> Century grant, which provides free after school programming for all students in grades 3-8 through the YMCA. The grant is up for renewal this year. Unfortunately, the State was delayed on releasing and reviewing this grant. We learned that the review process began on August 8<sup>th</sup>. As of this writing, we have no concrete information if we will, or will not, receive the grant before the school year starts. We also do not have the ability, at this time, to project a start date.

In anticipation of the grant approval, we will be releasing the registration forms & information next week. We will then inform families of a start date, pending approval.

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## **Before Care – SACC Program – Grades K – 8**

Registration forms were emailed last week or can be picked up at the main office. Before Care begins at 7:15am. This is a tuition-based program for families.

## **After Care – SACC Program – Grades K – 2**

Registration forms were emailed last week or can be picked up at the main office. SACC K-2 After Care runs from 3:15pm-6:00pm. This is a tuition-based program for families in grades K-2.

## **Entrance Times & Procedures**

All drop offs will occur via the Gymnasium entrance (same as last year), beginning at 8:10am. Students will report directly to homeroom for individualized tutoring and/or provided extra time to complete projects and assignments. You are not permitted to drop off before 8:10am, unless you are enrolled in before care (see above), as we do not have staff available to supervise your child before 8:10am.

A couple of points during drop off:

- Please do not pass on the left while in the horseshoe. We will utilize cones to create one-lane of traffic.
- Please make sure your child(ren) exit via the sidewalk side of your car.
- We need to keep traffic moving. Do NOT leave your vehicle unattended in the horseshoe.
- Drop off will conclude at 8:45am. If you drop off after 8:45am, your child must enter through the main entrance. Homeroom begins promptly at 8:50am. If your child arrives to homeroom after 8:50am, he/she will be marked tardy.

## **Dismissal Times & Procedures**

As our school has only one-way in and one-way out, we need to keep traffic moving as best as possible. With that said, student SAFETY is our upmost priority. Please adhere to the following requirements to ensure everyone's safety during dismissal.

- **PreK ONLY:** Car & Walker Pick Up will be between 2:45pm-2:55pm. (1 Session Day: 12:40-12:50pm)
- **Grades K – 8:** Car & Walker Pick up will be between 3:00pm – 3:15pm. (1 Session Day: 12:50-1:00pm)
  - For security & emergency purposes, K-8 families are NOT permitted to arrive before 3:00pm.
    - **DO NOT** ARRIVE BEFORE 3:00PM. EVERYONE MUST ADHERE TO THIS REQUIREMENT.
  - We will utilize the same procedure as last year of calling children individually as your car arrives.
  - DO NOT leave your car unattended in the horseshoe. Your child will come to your car.
- If you have a PREK student **and** a student in another grade level: You will pick up your PRE-K student at 2:45pm, then pull around to the other side and wait for your older child.
- If you are just picking up a middle school student, please pull around and wait on the opposite side. We will safely cross your student. Please leave the front line available for our younger families in grades K-5.
- **DO NOT** pass the 'Do Not Enter' gate along the parking side of the road. This is a one-way. You must go around the horseshoe to exit.
- Please **DO NOT** block the entrance/exit driveway near the playground or neighbor's driveways.
- Please pull as far up as you can, always. Please do not stop when there is room in front of you.
- Please be patient during the first two-weeks of school as we learn new families and vehicles.

## **First Day of School – Thursday September 5th, 1pm Dismissal**

The First Day of School is for celebration, excitement, and joy! Please review the following information so we can all celebrate the First Day of School:

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- You CANNOT leave your car unattended in the horseshoe.
- No parents/guardians are permitted to enter the building, for any reason.
- If you are taking pictures, please be mindful of how long you are present as others behind you wish for the same opportunity.
- Students in grades PK-4 will report directly to the gymnasium and will meet their class.
- Students in grades 5-8 will report directly to the cafeteria and will meet their class.
- It makes everything run more efficiently if your student knows the name of his/her homeroom teacher. Please review this with your child before coming to school.

## **School Calendar**

We have sent home the school calendar on multiple occasions. It is linked here again for your review. Please plan your vacations when school is not in session. Attendance Matters!

<https://www.moonachieschool.org/domain/182>

## **Breakfast & Lunch Ordering**

We encourage all families to fill out the Free & Reduced Food Application (information below) to see if your family qualifies for this benefit. NOTE: Reduced category remains free this year.

Ms. Maurin will be sending out information on September ordering shortly.

- Breakfast (daily) 8:10 – 8:40am
  - \$3.00 for Full Price
  - Upon arrival to school, all students will report directly to homeroom for tutoring and extra time on assignments/projects/homework. Homeroom begins promptly at 8:50am.
  - If your student requires breakfast, please make sure he/she knows! Your child will go to the cafeteria, pick-up their breakfast, and then report to homeroom. For grades K-2, please also inform your teacher so we can ensure each student who needs breakfast, gets it.
- Lunch & Recess
  - \$4.50 for Full Price
  - Grades 5-8: 11:35am-12:20pm
  - Grades K-4: 12:20pm – 1:05pm

## **Free & Reduced Application**

The NJ State application for free & reduced lunch is not yet available. We will send this out separately when it is ready.

## **Reporting Absences – Attendance Matters**

All student absences must be reported to the Attendance Officer, Ms. Lucrezia Maurin by 9:00am on the day of the absence. You can submit via phone (please leave a voicemail) or email:

- Call: 201-641-5833, Option 1 or dial Extension 120
- Email: [lmaurin@moonachieschool.org](mailto:lmaurin@moonachieschool.org)

While we lowered our Chronic Absentee rate (students with 18 or more absences) last year, it remains high. Too many kids are Chronically Absent. If your student is healthy and feeling good, please send them to school. Attendance Matters!

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## **Back To School Night**

Reminder that Back to School Night will be on Wednesday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 6:30pm.

## **Bussing**

Our Transportation Department is finalizing bus routes. If your child is entitled to bussing, you will receive a letter via US Mail during the last week of August indicating bus stop times and location.

## **RealTime Parent Portal Access**

The RealTime Parent Portal permits all families to stay up-to-date on your child's academic progress. You are able to view your child's gradebook for missing work, review their grades for each assignment, and review their attendance data. You can also access progress reports and report cards. There is an App available to download directly to your phone. We encourage all families to login and stay connected. Next week, we will send all parents an e-mail reminder of your Username/Password and directions on how to log-in. If you need help logging in, please contact Ms. Linda Esposito at (201) 641-5833 ext 123 or email at

[lesposito@moonachieschool.org](mailto:lesposito@moonachieschool.org)

## **School Messages Going to Spam**

Several community members informed us that some email messages from the school were being sent directly to their spam file and never hitting their inbox. If a community member has these notifications going to spam, they will need to select the "**mark this email as safe**" option one time so all future notifications will go to your inbox. Please let us know if you need support with this and our Technology Team will assist you.

## **Personal Cell Phones**

All students are required to keep cell phones in their locker (grades 6-8) or in their book bag (grades K-5), either off or on silent, throughout the school day. Cell phones continue to be a major distraction to the learning process. Cell phones are not permitted to be used in school. We will provide all the technology items students need for class work.

- As parents, refrain from texting/calling your child during school on their cell phone. If you need to get your child a message or speak with them, please call the main office at 201-641-5833.
- If students are seen or heard using a cell phone, he/she will receive one (1) warning to put it away. If a second offense occurs, the phone will be confiscated and a parent/guardian must pick up the phone from the main office. If your student continues to use a phone after the 2<sup>nd</sup> offense, we may request that the phone no longer comes to school.

A vast majority of our HIB (Harassment, Intimidation, & Bullying) investigations last year were from social media or messaging from student devices, during the evenings, weekends, and vacations. The NJ HIB Law requires districts to investigate all HIB complaints, regardless of where, when, or how they occur. As parents, you must monitor child's cell phone & social media usage. The school will continue to teach proper usage and guide on kindness in all areas. But we cannot monitor your child's cell phone, only you can. We must partner in this area, for the mental health and cyber safety of our kids.

## **School Issued Devices**

All students will be assigned a school laptop (grades 3-8) or iPad (grades K-2) to be used during the day. Each teacher has directions on usage for their classroom. Inappropriate use will not be tolerated. Please be advised of the following consequences for inappropriate device usage. This is tracked for the whole school year:

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Device taken away for one (1) school day. All work will be provided in paper format.

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**2<sup>nd</sup> Offense:** Device taken away for one (1) week. All work will be provided in paper format.

- Grades K-3: Discussion on appropriate usage/following directions with student and parent.
- Grades 4-8: One (1) after school detention is assigned. Discussion & parent notification.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Offense:** Laptop taken away for one (1) month. All work will be provided in paper format.

- Grades K-3: Discussion with parent & student. One (1) Lunch/Recess detention assigned.
- Grades 4-8: Three (3) after school detentions are assigned. Discussion & parent notification.

**4<sup>th</sup> Offense:** Student Device privileges are revoked for the remainder of the school year. All work will be provided in paper format. Discussion & parent notification.

## **Middle School Families – Important Items (Grades 6-8)**

Parents in Grades 6-8, please review these items with your child:

- Please bring your printed schedule with you to school on the first day.
- All students have lockers. Bookbags are required to be placed in his/her locker throughout the day. Students will have plenty of opportunities to go to their locker between certain classes, as well as before and after lunch. Teachers will work with students on how to organize themselves for success each day.
- Middle School Students are expected to be on time. For every three (3) lateness's (arriving to school after 8:50am), the student will receive one (1) detention until 4:30pm.
- Each student has a unique schedule. Please review it with them. You can also access it via the Parent Portal.
- The 6-8 supply list contains a laptop carrying case. We had too many accidental breakages over the past two years. Our hope is that carrying cases will help your students keep their devices safe while they transition between classes. If you cannot afford one, please let Mr. Knipper know.

## **NJSLA Results**

As of this writing, we have received preliminary results from the NJSLA State Assessment taken in May for grades 3-8 in ELA, Math, & Science. However, we cannot share them with families, yet. The State of NJ is projecting family reports to be available in September.

## **PTO Update & Volunteering as Class Parent**

Our PTO is planning a wonderful year of fun events for our kids and families. If you wish to volunteer as a class parent, please complete this Google Form: <https://forms.gle/SvxYpiafGULjMyne9>

## **PRE-K / Kindergarten Sneak Peek Event Reminder**

We are excited to offer an event for our youngest learners! Please join us for our **Sneak Peek** event for our Pre-K & Kindergarten families. **Kindergarten is on Tuesday August 27<sup>th</sup> from 1pm – 2pm.** **Pre-K is on Wednesday September 4<sup>th</sup>, from 2pm – 3pm.** This is an opportunity for you and your child to meet his/her teacher, while becoming acquainted with their classroom and school. More information will be found in the letter sent home today.

## **Who To Contact:**

Should you have any general questions, please direct them to myself at: [jknipper@moonachieschool.org](mailto:jknipper@moonachieschool.org).

Should you have any health related questions, please direct them to Nurse Gallo at: [dgallo@moonachieschool.org](mailto:dgallo@moonachieschool.org).

Should you have any new student registration information, please direct them to Ms. Linda Esposito at: [lesposito@moonachieschool.org](mailto:lesposito@moonachieschool.org)

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Should you have any class assignment questions, curriculum, or scheduling, please direct them to myself at:  
[jknipper@moonachieschool.org](mailto:jknipper@moonachieschool.org)

Should you have any special education questions, please direct them to Ms. Natasha Dillon, at  
ndillon@moonachieschool.org

Should you have any Pre-K questions, please direct them to our Master Teacher, Ms. Allison Maccarrone, at  
[amaccarrone@moonachieschool.org](mailto:amaccarrone@moonachieschool.org)

Should you have any attendance or food service questions, please direct them to our Attendance Officer/Food Service Coordinator, Ms. Lucrezia Maurin, at [lmaurin@moonachieschool.org](mailto:lmaurin@moonachieschool.org)

**We know this is a lot of information. Please let us know if you have any questions. We are here.**

We are looking forward to a wonderful school year and cannot wait to see our students and families soon! Have a wonderful rest of Summer!

Best,



James Knipper  
Superintendent/Principal