

Park Ridge Schools

*Student & Parent
Handbook*

*2026–2027
School Year*

*East Brook Elementary School
&
West Ridge Elementary School*

Please keep this handbook for easy reference.

**Park Ridge Elementary Schools
East Brook / West Ridge
Park Ridge, New Jersey**

September 2026

Dear Parents:

On behalf of the faculty and support staff, we would like to take this opportunity to welcome you back to the start of the 2026-2027 school year. We hope that you and your children had a safe, relaxing, and enjoyable summer.

The Student & Parent Handbook includes information that is important for you as parents to know, as well as information for the students. We hope that you will take time to review the information that is provided for you, as well as take the opportunity to review and discuss the information that is included for the students. It is hoped that by presenting this information, that everyone will understand the expectations here at the schools. If you have any questions regarding the information contained in the Handbook, please call the school.

Again, we want to wish all our parents and their children a very successful 2026-2027 school year.

Sincerely,

Kevin Stokes
Principal
East Brook Elementary School

Melissa Ballaera
Principal
West Ridge Elementary School

Park Ridge Board of Education Philosophy of Education

1. We believe that education itself is:

- a. A Process through which each individual is led to develop his/her fullest potential mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually.
- b. A process of growth and development sensitive to societal needs and changes.

2. We believe that education involves:

- a. Individualized goals and expectations for each student.
- b. Emphasis on methods and approaches of problem solving based upon an accumulation of attitudes, understandings, concepts, and skills.
- c. Creation of an environment conducive to stimulating interest, inquiry, and willingness to work.
- d. Utilization of past experiences and existing abilities or skills as foundations and steppingstones toward enriched experiences and expanded abilities.
- e. Guidance, direction, and encouragement on the part of the teacher.
- f. The process of continuous evaluation in which students, parents, and teachers participate.

3. We believe that education results in:

- a. Acquisition of, and ability to use, basic competencies necessary for effective citizenship in a world undergoing rapid and technological change.
- b. Development of wholesome character and desirable conduct.
- c. Outlets for growth and enjoyment through cultural and recreational media.
- d. Understanding and appreciation of our national heritage and basic government structure.
- e. Habits and/or practices conducive to health, safety, and well-being.

Our Mission Statement

The Park Ridge School District is committed to the mission of educating all students to achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards at all grade levels. The district will nurture all students to be lifelong learners, ethical and responsible citizens, and independent, productive members of a global society.

**Park Ridge Public Schools
Park Ridge, New Jersey**

Board of Education of the Borough of Park Ridge

Members:

David Bradler, President
Rachelle Browne, Vice President
Natalie Jowett Agoos
Rosemary Malloy
Matt Rozzi
Amara Wagner
Shanai Jensen

Central Office Administration

Dr. Patrick Bernardo, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Robert Wright, Business Administrator, Board Secretary

Chain of Communication

School-related concerns involving a student are usually resolved with the teacher or the principal. Parents are asked to communicate their concerns following the chain of communication noted below. Concerns are usually resolved with the person(s) most directly involved with the situation. By following the chain of command noted below, it is hoped that concerns and conflicts can be resolved at the level where the problem exists. Problems not resolved should be brought to the attention of the person next in line. Parents are reminded that discussion of an individual problem in front of their child, or with a person not associated with the concern is counterproductive and does not address the issue.

Concern of Teacher / Adult Supervisor

1. Teacher/Professional Staff Member/Adult Supervisor addresses concern with student(s) involved.
2. Teacher/Professional Staff Member addresses concern with parent/guardian.
3. Teacher/Professional Staff Member/Adult Supervisor addresses concern with Principal, address concern with parent / guardian.
4. Principal facilitates communication between parent/guardian and appropriate school personnel. (In some instances, the student may also be involved in the process at this level so as to address the concerns of all parties involved.)
5. Principal addresses concerns with Superintendent.
6. Superintendent communicates concern to the Board of Education

Concern of Parent / Guardian of Student

1. Parent / Guardian address concern to Teacher/Professional Staff Member.
2. Parent / Guardian address concern to the Principal.
3. Parent / Guardian address concern to the Superintendent.
4. Parent / Guardian address concern to the Board of Education.

**East Brook School / West Ridge School
Park Ridge, New Jersey**

**East Brook School / West Ridge School 2026-2027
1:00 PM Dismissal/Conference Date Schedule**

Evaluation Periods

<u>Evaluation Period Closes</u>	<u>Number of School Days</u>	<u>Evaluation Forms Distributed</u>
December 3, 2026	60 Days	December 11, 2026
March 17, 2027	61 Days	March 25, 2027
June 23, 2027	61 Days	June 23, 2027

Parent/Teacher Conference Days

Wednesday, December 2, 2026 – 2:00-3:30
Thursday, December 3, 2026 – 2:00-3:30 & 6:00-8:00
January 14, 2027 – 2:00-3:30 & 6:00-8:00

1:00 PM Dismissal Days

Monday, October 12, 2026 – Columbus Day
Wednesday, November 25, 2026 – Thanksgiving Recess
Wednesday, December 2, 2026 – Conferences
Thursday December 3, 2026 – Conferences
Friday, December 4, 2026
Wednesday, December 23, 2026 – Holiday Recess
Thursday, January 14, 2027 - Conferences
Friday January 15, 2027
Monday, June 21, 2027
Tuesday, June 22, 2027
Wednesday, June 23, 2027 – Last Day of School

East Brook Kindergarten Information for the 2026-2027 School Year

<i>Kindergarten Parent Orientation:</i>	Thursday, January 28, 2027 - 6:00 pm
<i>Kindergarten Registration:</i>	Monday, February 1 to Friday, February 5 / 9:30 – 2:30

Parent Conferences

The staff is always willing to meet with parents. There are a number of parent teacher conference days scheduled during the school year. All parents will receive at least one conference invitation per year. Parents are notified when a conference is desired. Parents may request an individual teacher conference at any time during the course of the school year. **Please contact your child's teacher if you would like to make an appointment to discuss your child's academic progress or other concerns.** This allows the teacher time to gather the necessary material and information to prepare for the conference in a professional manner.

East Brook Elementary School

2026-2027 Faculty and Room Numbers

Mr. Kevin Stokes, Principal

Classroom Teachers

	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Room No.</u>
Miss Annette Boenigk	Grade K-3	15
Mrs. Nancy Treby	Kindergarten	8
Mrs. Monica Twomey	Kindergarten	5
Mrs. Pam Houston	Grade 1	10
Mrs. Dana Omland	Grade 1	9
Mrs. Kristy Hlavenka	Grade 2	14
Ms. Caelan Elsmore	Grade 2	12
Mrs. April Gagliano	Grade 3	A4/6
Ms. Melissa Manzella	Grade 3	A3/5
Ms. Jamie An	Grade 4-6	23
Mrs. Marlene Kanter	Grade 4	27
Ms. Leslie Litke	Grade 4	25
Mrs. Nicole Allen	Grade 5	24
Mr. Nicholas Annese	Grade 5	28
Mrs. Emilie Barros	Grade 5	30
Mr. Christopher Barba	Grade 6	26
Mrs. Elizabeth Prager	Grade 6	29
Miss Elizabeth Wojciechowski	Grade 6	22

Special Subject Area Teachers

Mr. Joseph Mazzacca	Physical Education	Gym
Mrs. Jennifer O'Riordan	Health	13
Mr. Luke Ostrow	Music	21
Mrs. Krista Baumuller	Art	21
Mrs. Heather Zeuner	Media Tech	Media Center
Mr. Kevin Grzybek	Instrumental Music	Band Room
Ms. Marzieh Farzad	Spanish	13
Mrs. Francoise Moffitt	French	13

Support Services

Ms. Jessica Epifano	School Nurse	
Mrs. Lisa Conforti	Supervisor of Elementary Education	3
Mrs. Janine Giordano	Resource Center	B6
Mrs. Shannon O'Connor	Resource Center	B5
Mrs. Alexis Potkulski	Resource Center	A1
Mrs. Jennifer Ostrowski	Basic Skills/Literacy Coach	VR Room
Miss Samantha Caminneci	Resource	11
Mr. James Hegybeli	Resource	A1
Mrs. Nicole Cariddi	Speech	B3
Mrs. Brigitte Walsh	G & T	Band Room
Mrs. Desiree Misciagna	ELL	11
Ms. Georgia Racanelli	Math Intervention/504 Chairperson	B7
Mrs. Janelle Klos	Basic Skills	VR Room

Child Study Team

Dr. Nicole Porta	EB School Psychologist	B4
Mrs. Diane Goldstein	LDT/C	B2
Ms. Gianna Gravinese	Student Support Specialist	A2

Support Staff

Mrs. Lorraine Syring	Secretary to the Principal	Main Office
Mrs. Donna Sosa	Secretary	Main Office
Mr. John Bossolt	Security Officer	

Custodial Staff

Mr. Ray Conahay	Day Custodian
Mr. Manny Sanchez	Night Custodian

COVID 19 POLICY

Effective July 5, 2021, the use of face coverings will be optional for all students and staff members inside our schools.

P.T.O.

All parents are encouraged to join and support the activities of your school's P.T.O. It is an active organization and one that is very supportive of the school programs. Your P.T.O. provides both parents and teachers with many opportunities to improve the learning environment of our school. Your support of the P.T.O. and its many programs is counted on, so that together we can make our elementary schools the best experience it can be for the children. If you need to contact the P.T.O., their email address is: eastbrookpto@parkridge.k12.nj.us

2026-2027 East Brook PTO Co-Presidents

Stephanie Kaplan and Katie Youvan

ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

STUDENTS MAY NOT ARRIVE AT SCHOOL PRIOR TO 8:15 A.M.

Parents who drive their children or "carpool" to school are to pull over to the curb when dropping off their children so as to ensure the children's safety and maintain the "flow" of traffic at the beginning of school. Once the child, or the children in the carpool have been dropped off, parents are encouraged to depart quickly as a courtesy to others and to alleviate the number of cars.

Students who walk to school should use the sidewalks and walk to the right. If there are no sidewalks, walk facing oncoming traffic. When crossing intersections, cross at those places where a crossing guard is present. Avoid "horseplay" so as to prevent injury. We ask that those children walking to school be considerate and respect the property of others. **AVOID STRANGERS AND REPORT ANY UNUSUAL OCCURRENCES TO YOUR TEACHER OR TO THE OFFICE IMMEDIATELY UPON ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL.**

To promote a healthy lifestyle, students are encouraged to walk or ride their bikes to school.

Students riding a bicycle are to observe the rules of the road and are required by law to wear a helmet. Bicycles should **NOT** be ridden on school grounds during normal school hours for safety reasons. Because of the large number of cars and people in and around the school, students are to walk their bikes on school grounds. Students are to use the bike racks provided and are encouraged to purchase a lock. The school cannot guarantee the security of bicycles ridden to school.

Electric Bicycles and Electric Scooters

The riding of electric bicycles and electric scooters on school grounds is strictly prohibited. This also includes regular bikes and scooters. If you ride them to school, you must walk them from the moment you enter school property and until you exit the property at dismissal.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Students will not be allowed to enter the building before 8:15. Supervision for students will begin at 8:15.

8:15 A.M.	Students in kindergarten and first grade who arrive between 8:15 and 8:30 must enter through the outside entrance to the multi-Purpose room. Supervision will be provided in the MPR for these children. Students in grade 2-6 will wait outside of their classroom doors in inclement weather. A teacher will supervise the students.
8:35 A.M.	Students enter their classrooms.
8:40 A.M.	Homeroom and Morning Announcements. (Students arriving at their rooms after morning announcements will be marked late.)
8:45 A.M.	ACADEMIC WORK BEGINS
11:30 A.M.	LUNCH/RECESS BEGINS
12:25 P.M.	STUDENTS PICKED UP BY THEIR TEACHERS FOR AFTERNOON SESSION (Students arriving at their rooms after 12:25 P.M. will be marked late)

STUDENT DISMISSAL - All Students must be picked up by 3:30 or be signed up for the after-school EXTRAS Program.

K – 3:10 pm
1st - 2nd – 3:15 pm
3rd - 6th – 3:20 pm

DISMISSAL

Kindergarten students will be dismissed at 3:10. Students in grades 1 & 2 will be dismissed at 3:15. Students in grades 3-6 will be dismissed at 3:20 P.M. **However, there may arise an occasion when students will be detained past 3:20 P.M. (classroom discipline infractions, incomplete assignments, etc.) No student will be detained past 3:20 P.M. unless parents are notified.** If your child has a standing appointment on any given day (i.e. Religious instruction), parents are asked to notify the teacher to avoid conflicts with these commitments. While it is sometimes inconvenient when a child is detained, please realize that your child's teacher is trying to instill positive behavior and work habits.

Once dismissed, students should not re-enter the building unless it is absolutely necessary. Children are to report directly home unless prior arrangements have been made with their parents to do otherwise (i.e., Visit a friend's home).

STUDENTS MAY NOT REMAIN ON THE SCHOOL GROUNDS AT DISMISSAL UNLESS THEY HAVE AN APPOINTMENT WITH A TEACHER OR ARE INVOLVED IN A SCHOOL-SPONSORED ACTIVITY.

AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

Classroom doors are locked at the end of the day when teachers attend meetings or leave the building. A student who has forgotten papers, books, etc. **will be permitted back into the building until 3:45 P.M.** The student will be required to be accompanied by an adult, preferably a parent.

No student or parent is allowed to enter a classroom after school hours unless they are accompanied by school personnel, i.e., Principal, Teacher, Custodian.

SCHOOL CLOSING DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of a school closing because of inclement weather, parents/guardians will be notified by our Emergency Notification system, either the night before or early on the day of closing. Please note that the letter day that is on the monthly calendar will remain as is (i.e. if the snow day is on an "A" day, and students return the next day then that day will be a B day, not an A day as it was in the past).

DELAYED OPENING DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event that the opening of school is delayed because of inclement weather, Park Ridge Elementary Schools will open at 10:05 A.M. Our Emergency Notification System will call to alert parents that the opening of school has been delayed. **PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL.**

UNANTICIPATED EARLY DISMISSAL

On occasion during the winter months, weather conditions have necessitated a 1:00 P.M. dismissal. The decision to close is usually made **by 11:00 A.M.** You will be notified by our Emergency Notification System and by Constant Contact in the event of an early dismissal

Students who have brought lunch will be provided with a short break and milk will be served to those students who have ordered it. No students will be dismissed for lunch.

1:00 P.M. Dismissal

Periodically throughout the course of the year, students will be dismissed at 1:00 P.M. for Parent / Teacher Conferences or Staff Development meetings. Parents are reminded that these dates are listed on the monthly calendar and on p.4 of this handbook. Time is allotted on those days for students to have a light snack. **Since snacks will be in the classrooms and a number of children have nut allergies, we are not permitting any snacks containing peanut butter or any other nut products.** Milk is served to those who have ordered it and the PTO customarily serves bagels and healthy snack options for a nominal charge to those that have ordered it.

STUDENT DISMISSAL OR RELEASE FROM SCHOOL DURING THE DAY

A student will be dismissed from school during regular school hours upon the presentation of a note from the parent or guardian. Students will be released to their parents or person authorized by the parent as stated in the note. Students will **NOT** be released to persons unknown to school personnel unless the individual can substantiate their identification as is stated in the note received from the parent or guardian.

Parents must always come into the office to sign out and pick up the child. While this may be inconvenient, it ensures your child's safety, our most important concern.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

According to law, (N.J.S.A. 18A:36), attendance in school is compulsory for children between the ages of six and sixteen: and according to universally accepted norms, students cannot benefit from the educational program of the school unless attendance is regular and uninterrupted. Policy 5200 of the Park Ridge Board of Education states:

"The Board of Education requires that pupils enrolled in the schools of this district attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of this state. The educational program of this district is predicated on the presence of the pupil and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. The regular contact of pupils with one another in the classroom and their participation in a well-planned instructional activity under the tutelage of a competent teacher are vital to this purpose...Pupils absent from school for any reason are responsible for the completion of assignments missed because of their absence...Prolonged or repeated absences, excused or unexcused, from school or from class, deprive the pupil of the classroom experience deemed essential to learning and may result in retention at grade level..."

Our goal is to ensure that every student attend school regularly. In order to learn, students need to be at school. "Making up work" never replicates the learning that happens with the teacher in the classroom. **Showing up for school has a huge impact on a student's academic success starting in kindergarten and continuing through high school.** Routines and expectations regarding good attendance begin at a very young age. As children grow older and more independent, families still play a key role in making sure students get to school safely every day and understand why attendance is so important for success in school and in life.

We realize some absences are unavoidable due to health problems or other circumstances. But we also know that when students miss too much school – regardless of the reason – it can cause them to fall behind academically. Your child is less likely to succeed if he or she is **chronically absent** – which means missing 18 or more days over the course of an entire school year.

ABSENCES

Parents are asked to call the school the morning their child is absent. The attendance telephone numbers are **201-573-6000 ext. 2444 for East Brook School**. **Calls should be made between 8:00-9:00 a.m. Requests for missed work must be made at this time.**

Children returning to school after a 3-day absence are required to bring in a written note to the nurse from their doctor indicating that they are cleared to return to school (as per School Policy 5200). All other absences must bring a written note by the parent or guardian to their classroom teacher. **If a student is sent home with a temperature (i.e., any contagious symptoms such as pink eye, rashes, diarrhea or vomiting) the child must remain home until they have been FREE of the fever and symptoms, without the aid of medication, for 24 hours**. If a student is absent from school due to illness, the student may **NOT** attend evening events.

TARDINESS TO SCHOOL

Students are expected to attend school during the established school hours. Students accumulating more than **THREE (3) LATES during the course of each marking period** will be subject to the consequences outlined below. If a student arrives after 8:40, a parent **must** sign the student in at the main office.

While the Park Ridge Board of Education and the school administration consider attendance at school the parent's and student's primary responsibility, it is understood that there are occasions which might prevent the most conscientious student from arriving on time. Doctor's and/or dentist's appointments are examples of such occasions. Submission of a doctor's or dentist's note upon the arrival at the office will exclude that late from consideration of the consequences resulting from excessive lateness to school. Once the student has arrived for school late three times during the course of the marking period the Administrator will use the consequences listed below as appropriate for the child and situations. Consequences will escalate as the student continues to be late for school.

1. **Third Late:** Administrative notification given to the student that the student has arrived for school the maximum number of times allowed. Parents informed (by notice that must be signed and returned) that the next late could result in disciplinary action.
2. **Fourth Late:** Student is assigned one lunch time detention.
3. **Fifth Late:** Student is assigned two consecutive lunch time detentions.

VISITORS TO THE BUILDING

ALL VISITORS MUST REPORT TO THE MAIN OFFICE WHEN ENTERING THE BUILDING. THIS INCLUDES BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER SCHOOL. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE PARENTS TO GO DIRECTLY TO THE CLASSROOM WITHOUT FIRST SIGNING IN AT THE MAIN OFFICE. IF A PARENT/GUARDIAN IS VISITING A CLASSROOM OR ATTENDING A MEETING, PLEASE BE SURE TO MAKE ALTERNATE ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOURNGER SIBLINGS.

The safety and security of all students is the utmost concern here at the school. Access to the school will be limited to the main entrance and all visitors will have to "Buzz" the office in order to gain access to the school. School personnel have been directed to allow only those who have identified themselves through the closed monitoring system to enter the building. **All visitors (including parents) MUST REPORT TO THE MAIN OFFICE AND SIGN IN.**

PARKING

ALL NUMBERED SPACES IN THE FRONT AND SIDE LOTS ARE RESERVED FOR FACULTY AND STAFF. PARKING IN BACK OF THESE CARS IS PROHIBITED. While there is not a lot of parking, faculty and staff must have priority so as to meet their responsibilities before, during, and after school.

Parents are reminded that it is illegal to park on crosswalks and that the **"No Parking Zones"** are reserved for emergency vehicles. Parents picking up their children must pull over to the curb on a space available basis. **DOUBLE PARKING IN THE DRIVEWAY IS PROHIBITED. Under no circumstances should parents stop their vehicles and direct their child to cross over to the car, thus stopping the flow of traffic.**

LOST AND FOUND

There is a lost and found box kept in the lobby. Parents can help by seeing to it that all articles of clothing that a child wears to school are labeled, especially lunchboxes, water bottles and sweatshirts. Parents are invited and encouraged to check the lost and found at any time of the year. Articles not claimed are disposed of periodically throughout the year.

LUNCHROOM

Children in Grades K- 6 may remain for lunch at the school. Students going home for lunch must be signed out for lunch in the office. They will be **dismissed at 11:30 AM** and should **return to the school by 12:25 PM**. **Parents who drop off lunches are to place them on the table in the front lobby. The child's name must be on the lunch bag so it can be delivered directly to the child. Parents are not to drop off lunches in the cafeteria, the classroom or wait in the hallway to give students lunches.** Lunches should be a ready to eat lunch (either a cold lunch or in a thermos); lunch staff are not permitted to heat students' food under any circumstances.

THE SCHEDULE FOR THOSE STUDENTS REMAINING IN SCHOOL FOR LUNCH IS AS FOLLOWS:

11:30 - 11:55	Grades 1, 2, 3	<u>Lunch</u>
	Grades K, 4, 5 & 6	<u>Recess</u>
11:55 - 12:25	Grades 1, 2, 3	<u>Recess</u>
	Grades K, 4, 5 & 6	<u>Lunch</u>

All students will be sent outdoors during recess unless severe weather conditions prevent them from doing so. Please have your child dressed appropriately when they leave for school. Please understand that cold weather will not necessarily mean that the children will be indoors. During inclement weather days students will remain indoors. Students in grades 1-6 will eat in the multipurpose room and then return to designated rooms for the remainder of their lunch period. Classroom teachers will establish acceptable activities for the children in their classes during the recess period. Students will be supervised by the lunchroom supervisors
Students who bring lunch to school are expected to remain on the school grounds for the entire lunch period. Students who remain at school for lunch on a regular basis will not be permitted to leave the premises unless the school is notified by the parent that the child may leave on any given day. Again, the safety of the children is our priority.

MILK MONEY

Milk is available to all students at school. Milk money will be collected twice during the year. Milk money for *September 17 through January 29* is due no later than September 10, 2026, and again in **January 2026 at which time you will receive a reminder for the months of February through June.** A notice will be sent prior to the collection date notifying parents of the cost of milk for that time period. In the event that a student is absent, no refunds can be made. Parents are asked to enclose **either a check or money order – NO CASH** for the **EXACT** amount in an envelope, indicating the child's name, teacher and choice of milk. Checks should be made payable to the **Park Ridge Board of Education.** **Parents with more than one child are asked to send milk money for each child separately and not combine the orders and money.**

SPECIAL LUNCH DAY, PIZZA & ICE CREAM DAY PARENTS

Parents assisting with the distribution of lunches on Special Lunch Days and those selling ice cream are asked to sign in at the main office and comply with the procedures established in the lunchroom. It is very important that consistent behavioral expectations be maintained by the lunchroom supervisors. **For safety reasons, parent volunteers should not bring younger siblings.** Please make arrangements for your childcare to avoid this situation. We ask that parents exit the lunchroom within a reasonable time period after serving lunch. Your cooperation is appreciated.

LUNCHROOM BEHAVIOR

All general school rules are in effect in the lunchroom. Announcements are made over the P.A. system, so that directions can be given. Students are expected to demonstrate proper table manners and always be considerate of others.

Students should remain seated at their assigned table. If they need to leave their seat or need assistance, they must raise their hands to get the attention of the lunchroom aide. No food or drink is permitted outside the lunchroom unless permission is obtained from the classroom teacher or lunchroom supervisor.

All general school rules are in effect while students are on the playground. They are to play in designated areas. They are to gain permission of the lunchroom supervisor before re-entering the building and must be escorted by a Safety or Adult.

CONTACT SPORTS/ACTIVITIES ARE NOT PERMITTED AT RECESS

This includes wrestling, tackling, pushing, knocking other students to the ground, grabbing clothing, pileups or any other inappropriate physical contact. Any student reported for such a violation will receive at least one lunch detention. Repeated infractions will result in multiple days lunch, before/after school detentions, suspension during the lunch recess period or suspension from school.

TELEPHONE

Please make telephone calls to the teachers after 3:20 p.m. Students are permitted to use the school telephone, either to make or receive calls, **ONLY IN CASES OF EMERGENCY**. Calls concerning after-school activities, forgotten books or supplies are not considered emergency calls. We cannot relay routine messages to your child during the school day. Emergency messages will always be delivered, but reminders about doctor's appointments, after-school activities, etc. cannot be accommodated.

PARTIES

Class parties may be scheduled to celebrate special holidays or occasions. Classroom teachers will plan appropriate activities with class parents throughout the school year. Birthday party invitations may NOT be distributed at school. As of September 2018, students **are no longer permitted** to bring in birthday treats.

FIRE DRILL/FIRE ALARM/SAFETY DRILLS

In the event that the fire alarm sounds, everyone **MUST** exit the building, by order of the Park Ridge Fire Department. In addition, **N.J. statute (18A:41:1) requires that the building principal conduct at least one fire drill each month**. All students are to exit and re-enter the building in a quiet and orderly manner so that directions can be given.

Safety Drills will also be held during the year. An announcement will be made over the public address system that "We are now conducting a Safety Drill." One of the Safety Drills is a Lockdown Drill. During a Lock Down drill students will be directed by their teacher to sit together on the floor. The teacher will close the classroom door and turn off the lights. No noise of any kind is permitted during this time and students remain out of sight. Once the building has been checked, in collaboration with the Park Ridge Police Department, an announcement will be made that the Lock Down is over. The other Safety Drills include Shelter in Place, Non-Fire Evacuation and Bomb Threat.

CELL PHONES, LAPTOPS & EMAIL

Under no circumstances should laptops be left in unsupervised areas. Unsupervised areas include the lunchroom, library, unlocked classrooms, hallways, and all outdoor space. Any laptop left in these areas is in danger of being stolen. If a laptop is found in an unsupervised area, it will be taken to the Principal's office. The student will face the following consequences, assuming there were no special circumstances.

1st Offense	Laptop returned to student – warning is given. No parent notification necessary
2nd Offense	Laptop will be held until dismissal. Parent is notified via letter.
3rd Offense	Laptop held until morning arrival the following day. Student and parent meet with Principal
4th Offense	Laptop privileges are suspended for 30 days.
5th Offense	Laptop Privileges are suspended for the remainder of the school year.

Inappropriate use of the laptop computer during instructional time will result in consequences determined by the Principal. Students are not permitted to e-mail anyone outside of the school building during the school day. Students who do not comply with this rule will be subject to consequences determined by the Principal. **Students are no longer allowed to put stickers on laptops and/or laptop cases and will be charged a \$40 fine if found in violation.**

Cellphones are permitted in school, however, must be turned off and remain in the child's backpack for the entirety of the school day. Calling or texting during the school day is prohibited. *If they are misused*, they will be confiscated, and parent(s) will be notified to pick them up in the main office at the end of the school day.

If you need to get an urgent message to your child during the school day, it is strongly advised that you call the main office so that office staff can deliver the message to your student. Please do not email the classroom teacher with an urgent message during the school day as they may not have the opportunity to read it in time.

Smart Watch Usage Policy

The purpose of this is to ensure a conducive learning environment while allowing students the convenience of using smartwatches for timekeeping purposes only, without any other distracting functions during school hours. Students are allowed to wear smartwatches on school premises, provided that the smartwatches are used exclusively for timekeeping functions. All other functionalities, such as internet browsing, texting, gaming, or accessing social media platforms, must be disabled during school hours. Smartwatches must be set to "Timekeeping Mode" or a similar equivalent that limits the device's functionality to displaying time, date, and alarms. Any other modes, applications, or features that may cause disruption to the learning environment are strictly prohibited. Any audible notifications or sounds from smartwatches are not allowed during class time, exams, or other school activities. Students are solely responsible for ensuring that their smartwatches comply with this policy. It is their responsibility to set and maintain their devices in the appropriate "Timekeeping Mode" while on school grounds.

Confiscation and Consequences:

If a student is found in violation of this Smart Watch Usage Policy, the following consequences may apply:

- a) First Offense: The smartwatch will be confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the school day.
- b) Subsequent Offenses: The smartwatch will be confiscated and released to a parent or guardian only.
- c) Repeated Violations: Repeated offenses may result in progressive disciplinary actions as per the school's disciplinary policy.

Electric Bicycles and Electric Scooters

The riding of electric bicycles and electric scooters on school grounds is strictly prohibited. This also includes regular bikes and scooters. If you ride them to school, you must walk them from the moment you enter school property and until you exit the property at dismissal.

SCHOOL WIDE DISCIPLINE GUIDE

The faculty, staff and administration make every effort to guarantee that every child has the opportunity to attend school in an atmosphere where the teaching/learning process can happen most effectively. We believe that each student can behave appropriately in school. Behavior which creates a disruption to the education process, and/or prevents others from learning, cannot be tolerated.

Our philosophy is that students are responsible for their own actions and are able to control their behavior so as to allow every child in the class the opportunity to learn. As a result, the following discipline guide has been established:

- Students are expected to arrive on time for school and class.
- Students are expected to respect the rights of every person in the school and the authority of every adult.
- All students must respect other students' property, as well as the property of the school.
- Students are expected to respect and abide by established classroom rules and procedures (including the completion of homework and class assignments), as well as the rules listed for the lunchroom and the playground.
- Inappropriate physical contact, teasing, bullying, harassing and intimidating will not be tolerated.
- The use of inappropriate language will not be allowed.
- Throwing anything at another person is not permitted.
- Hats must be removed once students enter the building and are not to be worn at any time during the school day
- Candy and gum chewing are not permitted.
- Disruption of a teacher's class is not allowed
- Disregard of an adult's authority will not be permitted

Consequences:

If a student **chooses** to violate any of the General School Rules, measures will be implemented as is deemed appropriate by the Administrator. Such consequences include: a warning, parent phone call, counseling, written statement by student, lunch detention, before or after school detention, parent conference, behavior plan and possible Intervention & Referral Services or Child Study Team Intervention.

THE ADMINISTRATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO IMPLEMENT MEASURES AT HIGHER LEVELS FOR MORE SEVERE VIOLATIONS, AS WELL AS TO IMPLEMENT MEASURES AT LOWER LEVELS FOR INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS AT GOOD BEHAVIOR.

Threats/Weapons/Violence:

Park Ridge Board of Education Policy **PROHIBITS** students from bringing weapons to school. The following procedures will be followed where cases of threats are made, and/or students are reported for bringing objects that pose a danger to anyone at school:

1. The principal will conduct an investigation of all parties involved. Any evidence, e.g., e-mail, pictures, notes, items, etc. will be collected
2. The principal will report such incidents to the Superintendent.
3. The parents of the accused student will be notified, and a conference will be held.
4. The police department will be notified, and they will file a report.
5. The student making the threat or bringing objects that pose a danger will meet with the elementary school psychologist with a possible referral for a psychiatric evaluation if the counselor feels that the student poses a danger to himself/herself or others. Detention, in/out of school suspension, and/or other disciplinary consequences will be imposed.

HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

Homework is assigned to reinforce concepts introduced in the classroom. It is not assigned without purpose or as busy work. Through the sixth grade there are four objectives in assigning homework:

1. To develop a student's study techniques and the ability to complete independent work.
2. To complete independent assignments that are done more effectively in a non-classroom environment.
3. To provide for practice, extra study and/or reinforcement of content and/or skills.
4. To provide the opportunity for a student to "make-up" work due to an absence.

In order to meet these objectives, the following times should be considered as guidelines for the completion of homework:

Grade K-1*	per teacher discretion
Grade 2	about twenty minutes, several times per week
Grade 3	about thirty minutes, up to four nights per week
Grade 4	about thirty to forty-five minutes daily
Grade 5	about forty-five to sixty minutes + daily
Grade 6	about sixty to ninety minutes daily

*Homework may be assigned as necessary to meet objectives 1, 2 and in some circumstances, objective 3.

These are considered as general guidelines for the average student. Individual students may require more or less than the designated time allotment. If the student leaves long term assignments until the night before the assignment is due, that student will have difficulty keeping within the suggested times.

Please see your child's teacher if you have any questions, or if there is a great discrepancy between the guidelines and the time it takes your child to actually complete assignments on a regular basis.

Parents are encouraged to provide a quiet, well illuminated study area and regularly scheduled homework time. We urge parents to take an interest in your child's work by asking questions about their assignments, answering your child's questions, and by reviewing your child's homework each night. Please be sure your child has all books and assignments with them when they leave for school each morning.

MAKE-UP WORK

When a student is absent from school, it is expected that the work missed will be made up in a timely fashion. Parents should request homework be sent home when calling the school to inform us that the child will not be in attendance.

Requests made after 10:00 A.M. CANNOT be honored. If the absence is anticipated to be more than one day's duration, please inform the school so that the classroom teacher can plan accordingly. **Calls to the school about absences and assignments can be made to the school from 8:00-9:00 A.M.** Work can be picked up in the lobby or sent home with a sibling or neighbor. Please realize that there are certain periods during the year when large numbers of students are absent from school on any given day and as a result there are large numbers of parents requesting work be sent home. Work

missed because of absences for vacations will be made up after the student returns to school. It is difficult to anticipate the work that will be completed, and parents are urged to plan vacation periods as they coincide with the school calendar. It has been our experience that work prepared in advance has not been completed when students are on vacation from school.

MONTHLY CALENDAR

A calendar of events for the school is issued at the end of the month listing the activities as known for the upcoming month. Parents are encouraged to retain the calendar for reference for those events scheduled during that particular month. Information can also be found on the board in front of the school and the school website.

LIBRARY

Library books are available free of charge to all students. Students in grades K-6 may sign out three items for a two-week period. Magazines circulate for a period of one week. Reference books may be signed out **OVERNIGHT** and must be returned by 9 a.m. the following day. Failure to do so will result in the privilege of being suspended for a period of two weeks. Students who do not return books after the due date will receive a warning that the book is overdue. Parents will be notified when and if the book is not returned over an extended period of time. **Failure to return the book by the end of the marking period will result in either the student's laptop being held and/or the student will not be permitted to attend their grade level field trip until the book is returned or paid for.** Money will be refunded if the book is found and returned to the library.

RIGHT TO KNOW

Each school maintains Right to Know information as mandated by the federal government. A poster indicating parents' and employees' Right to Know is posted in the main office. Additional information is kept in the main office of each school. Any parent wishing to review this information should come to the main office and request to see it. The district is responsible for providing parents with 48 hours' notice prior to the commencement of construction or activities involving the use of hazardous substances.

EXCUSED ABSENCE FROM PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES

Students bringing a note to excuse them from physical education class must bring the note to the nurse. Written in the note should be the reason for the excuse and the duration for which the child is to be excused from participation. If the duration is not stated in the note, a second note will be required before the child is able to participate in physical education class. Students who exhibit symptoms of an injury, which could result in further injury, and who DO NOT have a note, will be excluded from participation in physical education.

DRESS AND GROOMING

The Board of Education recognizes each pupil's mode of dress and grooming is a manifestation of the pupil's personal style and individual preferences. The Board will impose its judgment on pupils and parent(s) or legal guardian(s) only when a pupil's dress and grooming affect the educational program of the schools.

Pupils may not wear clothing or engage in grooming practices that present a health or safety hazard to the individual pupil or to others; materially interfere with schoolwork, create disorder, or disrupt the educational program; cause excessive wear or damage to school property; or prevent the pupil from achieving his/her own educational objectives because of blocked vision or restricted movement.

The Board of Education prohibits pupils from wearing, while on school property, any type of clothing, apparel or accessory which indicates that the pupil has membership in, or affiliation with, any gang associated with criminal activities. The local law enforcement agency will advise the Board, upon request, of gangs which are associated with criminal activities.

In addition, pupils must abide by the following:

- Hats, hoods or other head gear and jackets are not to be worn in the school building. They must be placed in classroom cubbies after the student arrives in the building. After the first warning, hats or other head gear will be confiscated (except documented religious head coverings). Refusal to comply will be considered insubordination.
- Students must always wear shoes or proper footwear in the building.
- Students are not to wear clothing which depicts vulgar/offensive pictures or statements, clothing with alcohol, drug or other inappropriate messages/advertisements, etc.

The Building Principal or designee shall determine whether the dress or grooming of pupils comes within these prohibitions.

The Superintendent shall, on consultation with staff members, pupils, and parent(s) or legal guardian(s), prepare a dress code that imposes only minimum and necessary limitations on a pupil's taste and individuality.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

We advise students to refrain from wearing jewelry, watches, necklaces, etc. on days when they are scheduled to participate in physical education classes. Aside from it being unsafe during play, it can be misplaced, forgotten or lost when it is removed. **Students are required to wear a lace up type athletic shoe for all physical education activities. Students wearing footwear that could cause an injury will not be permitted to participate in that day's activities**

SUPPORT SERVICES

Our schools recognize that each child has a unique pattern of growth and development. It is our goal that each child moves on with a feeling of security in his/her ability to learn, and to interact successfully with his/her peers. To meet the individual needs of each youngster, we offer a variety of supportive services in the following areas:

- **BASIC SKILLS**

Those children at the school in need of additional support in reading, language arts, and/or math receive specialized instruction from a certified teacher working in collaboration with the classroom teacher. This assistance is designed to aid the student who needs additional help with a particular skill or concept.

- **INTERVENTION AND REFERRAL SERVICES & CHILD STUDY TEAM**

Literacy & Mathematics Intervention

Children identified as needing additional support in literacy or mathematics can receive specialized small-group instruction. Interventionists work in collaboration with the classroom teacher to assist in the development of literacy and math skills to help general education students reach grade-level benchmarks.

Intervention & Referral Services

Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) is a process designed to support students experiencing learning, behavioral, or health difficulties. It's a collaborative effort between the school and home, wherein both parties work together to develop and implement interventions to help the student succeed in the general education setting. The committee is made up of members of the professional staff, a member of the Child Study Team, and sometimes the Principal. Parents and/or teachers may ask the I&RS Committee for assistance. Once an initial meeting has been held an action plan will be developed. Subsequent meetings may be planned to continue to follow the student's progress and determine a future course of action.

In similar fashion, teachers and/or parents may ask the Child Study Team to suggest ways for them to help their children in the academic, social, or behavioral area after all means have been exhausted in the regular education setting. Parents are welcome to discuss their concerns confidentially with the principal or any member of the team.

- **RESOURCE ROOM**

Children who have been identified as needing a differentiated program in the academic and/or organizational areas receive individualized small group instruction from a special education specialist. Children identified as needing such a program are tested by the Child Study Team. Parents are informed of the referral and recommendations made as the result of such testing.

- **ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ELL)**

Children whose native language is not English receive daily instruction in reading and language skills from a professional trained in this area.

- **GIFTED AND TALENTED**

Owls Pride Program – This program is for students in grades three through six. Students will have pull-out instruction weekly with the district's Gifted and Talented teacher. The curriculum includes teaching critical and creative thinking skills, problem solving skills, research skills and self-awareness skills. The students are responsible for making up work they miss during their time out of the classroom.

EMAIL NOTICES

Notices will be sent home **via EMAIL** to parents/guardians for a variety of reasons during the course of the year. This information is sent home regarding special information as it pertains to each of the schools.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL INFORMATION

- **IMMUNIZATION AND MEDICAL RECORDS**

NJ State Statute requires that all students' immunizations be accurate and up-to-date before they can be admitted or attend school. Specific questions regarding immunizations should be directed to the school nurse.

- **ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION**

In order to avoid any possible misuse or misapplication of medications, the following procedures have been established for your child's safety and health:

- A. Students will not be permitted to carry medications to or from school under any circumstances. They will not be permitted to keep or consume any medications which have not been cleared through all steps of this procedure.
- B. **ONLY MEDICATIONS WHICH MUST BE ADMINISTERED DURING SCHOOL HOURS ARE PERMITTED IN THE BUILDING.**
- C. Parents must personally deliver any type of medication to be taken by their child during school hours, all medicines delivered by the parent to the school nurse shall be completely and properly labeled and accompanied by a note from the physician. Medications should be in the original pharmacy container and labeled with the following information:

The child's name

The physician's name

Pharmacy medication number

Expiration date of the medication, if any

Name of medication

Complete directions for the proper administration of the medication

- D. Please bring in your child's medication with the completed medication administration form, filled out by you and your physician. The form requires parent and physician signature.
- E. Over-the-counter medications will be dispensed **only** under the supervision of the nurse upon receipt of **PRIOR WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM THE CHILD'S PARENT OR GUARDIAN, AND A NOTE FROM THE PHYSICIAN.**

F. **ITEMS SUCH AS THROAT LOZENGES AND COUGH DROPS** will be dispensed **only** under the supervision of the nurse upon receipt of **PRIOR WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM THE CHILD'S PARENT OR GUARDIAN.**

- **NO ANIMALS OR PETS ARE PERMITTED ON SCHOOL PROPERTY AT ANY TIME.**

This is due to allergies, student fears, and threat of danger of unknown animals and disruption to the school environment.

- **6th GRADE VACCINATIONS**

The New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services have revised the administrative rules for school immunizations. The law went into effect as of September 1, 2008. We are advising you of the two vaccines that are required for students entering sixth grade.

A. Tdap Vaccine: (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Acellular Pertussis)

One dose is required for pupils entering Grade Six on or after 9/1/08 and born on or after 1/1/97. Note: A student does not need a Tdap dose until five years after the last DTP/Dtap or Td dose was given.

B. Meningococcal Vaccine:

One dose is required for pupils entering Grade Six on or after 9/1/08 and born on or after 1/1/97. Therefore, this applies to students when they turn 11 years of age and attend sixth grade.

Every child born after 1/1/97 and transferring into a New Jersey school from another state or country on or after September 1, 2008, shall receive one dose of Meningococcal vaccine.

- **HEALTH SCREENINGS**

Parents should be aware that the nurse conducts health screenings throughout the year. These screenings include the following:

Vision and Hearing Blood Pressure Height and Weight

Students ten years of age and over are screened for scoliosis with written parental consent. Parents who have questions or concerns regarding these screenings should address them to the school nurse.

- **INSURANCE**

Parents have the opportunity to purchase school insurance at the beginning of the school year. Forms and instructions will be posted on the East Brook website under "For Parents" tab.

- **EMERGENCY ADMINISTRATION OF THE EPI-PEN DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

Parents who have a child that has an allergy that could result in anaphylaxis in the event of an attack, and whose child will be unable to self-medicate in the event of an attack, must complete a *Request for Emergency Administration of the Epi-Pen During the School Day* form available in the Nurses office. The parent then gives the school nurse, or their designee, their consent to administer epinephrine, via epi-pen to the student in the event of such a situation. Parents who have questions with regard to this procedure are encouraged to call the nurse.

Copies of the Request for the Administration of Medication Form and the Emergency Administration of the Epi-Pen during the School Day may be obtained from the school nurse.

**PARK RIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PARK RIDGE, NEW JERSEY**

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students:

The following information is sent to inform all parents, guardians and students of regulations and procedures relative to the availability of pupil records, equal educational opportunity and substance abuse.

SCHOOL RECORDS AVAILABLE TO PARENTS AND ADULT STUDENTS

Schools maintain data relative to the education of each pupil. The required records and additional information such as grades, standardized test results, health statistics, attendance, etc. are available to the parents and adult students. Arrangements for access can be made by contacting the school.

Federal and State legislation regarding pupils' records provides certain rights to parents. These rights include provisions for the maintenance, security, conditions of access and the right to appeal parts of the records.

Educational, occupational and military recruiters have access to student information directory pursuant to statutes. Any adult pupil or parent may request in writing to the superintendent to be excused from participating in all recruitment programs or having their name appear in student information directories for recruitment purposes.

Copies of the complete law and details regarding local procedures are available in the school offices upon request.

BOARD OF EDUCATION RESOLUTION OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Consistent with Federal and State requirements on non-discrimination, the Park Ridge Board of Education hereby affirms its responsibility to continue to provide all students with equal educational opportunity and all employees equal employment opportunity regardless of race, sexual orientation, color, creed, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, social or economic status and non-applicable handicap.

Inquiries on this resolution may be directed to Mr. Troy Lederman, Affirmative Action Officer, 2 Park Avenue, Park Ridge, New Jersey.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE: DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO

The Park Ridge Board of Education recognizes that misuse of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco is a serious problem. Therefore, it has approved curriculum to inform students of the dangers of use of these substances and administrative procedures for evaluation and treatment of students suspected of being under the influence of alcoholic beverages or a controlled substance.

Copies of N.J. State Law, Park Ridge Board Policies and Administrative Procedures are available in school offices on request.

Further information on any of these regulations can be obtained by contacting any of the school administrators.

Very truly yours,

Dr. Patrick Bernardo
Superintendent of Schools