



Preschool Handbook



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Table of Contents

MISSION	2
BELIEFS	2
BOARD OF TRUSTEES	4
ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM	4
PRESCHOOL TEAM	5
CHARACTER EDUCATION VALUE OF THE MONTH	5
STUDENT ADMISSIONS POLICY AND LOTTERY SYSTEM	6
SCHOOL HOURS	6
SAMPLE SCHEDULE	6
ATTENDANCE & TARDINESS	8
GENESIS	8
EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS	8
ACADEMIC PROGRAM-CREATIVE CURRICULUM	9
ASSESSMENT-TEACHING STRATEGIES GOLD	10
UNIFORM	11
TECHNOLOGY	11
NUTRITION PROGRAM	12
HEALTH SERVICES	12
PROJECT CHILD FIND	13

Welcome to the Red Bank Charter School!

MISSION

The Red Bank Charter School provides a *secure and nurturing environment* that is conducive to learning and challenges students to achieve *academic excellence*. We believe in the power of *consistent role modeling* as an important teaching tool. All aspects of school life – involving students, teachers, administrators, and parents – are committed to fostering the values of *respect, personal responsibility, and good citizenship*. Within this environment, all children can achieve their highest academic potential.

BELIEFS

Belief 1: All Children Can Learn

Goal: Academic excellence

The RBCS has adopted a comprehensive integrated curriculum rich in activities designed to address the development of the whole child. Grounded in the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for preschool the curriculum is supported with numerous opportunities for experiential learning where students apply what they have learned and learn from what they are doing. The small class size allows for modified individualized instruction. Each child has a specific Learner's Individual Plan (L.I.P.) that highlights the principal elements of the subject matter. Student learning is enhanced by enriching activities that best address the child's needs, talents, and learning style. Students, teachers, and parents are involved in constructing the L.I.P. and **each partner shares the responsibility for the child's learning**. Parents, students, and faculty members meet four times each school year to review the student's goals, suggest appropriate adjustments, and assess overall progress.

Charter Chats between teachers and parents ensure continuous and open communication regarding the student's development.

Belief 2: All Children Must Care About Themselves and Others

Goal: Respect, responsibility

Through curriculum focusing on healthy social decision-making, consistent modeling, and a Code of Conduct developed and endorsed by students, parents, and faculty, all children are given the opportunity to thrive and flourish at the RBCS. The RBCS is firm in its commitment to providing a safe and nurturing environment. To support this positive climate, all children, faculty, and staff are familiar with methods of peaceful conflict resolution and are expected to behave accordingly. The school-wide

Character Education program focuses on defining and modeling our values. As indicated in the **Code of Conduct**, certain conditions are non-negotiable.

Feeling connected and cared about has considerable influence on a child's learning. To ensure individual attention beyond the classroom, the RBCS has adopted a mentoring program called MENTOS. Each child in grades 4-8 meets monthly with a faculty or staff member other than their grade level teacher. Mentors make a special effort to get to know the child informally, developing a trusting relationship where the well-being of the whole child is the primary focus. Serving as the child's advocate, the mentor works with other colleagues and family members to support the child throughout their school experience.

Belief 3: All Children Should Contribute to Their Larger World

Goal: Good citizenship

Learning through service that is linked to curriculum is a bedrock value of the charter of the RBCS. On all grade levels, students participate in activities both in and out of school at satellite locations where they make a positive contribution to their community while applying a piece of their classroom instruction. As well as reinforcing learning, these activities expose children to the value of sharing their talents with others and the impact an individual can have on the larger community. Service Learning spans a variety of organizations and activities throughout the greater Red Bank area, allowing children to sample many different settings where their contributions make a difference. Older students participate in service internships that align with their interests and attitudes. Community partners are an invaluable resource to this program.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Patrick Dorsey

Kerri Darling

Barbara O'Donnell

Anna Maria Pittella

John LeFever

Matthew Taetsch

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Dr. Kristen Martello, Head of School

Lisa Weinstock, Special Education Supervisor

David P. Block, Business Administrator

Mike Woods, Facilities Management

PRESCHOOL TEAM

Pre-K Teacher: Jaclyn Stevenson

PK Instructional Assistant: Mina Rodriguez

Pre-K Instructional Coach Michelle Fogerty

Nurse: TBD

PIRS/CPIS: Matthew Strippoli

ESL: Siobhan Stratton

Child Study Team/Services

School Social Worker- Victoria Grothues

LDTC- Dr. Michele Tiedemann

School Psychologist- Dr. Erin Herman

OT- Alexis DeJianne

Speech Language Therapist- Michelle Plessner

PT- Therapy Coaches in Motion

CHARACTER EDUCATION VALUE OF THE MONTH

Red Bank Charter School has adopted monthly values for Character Education. These shared values guide our attitudes and behavior. Parents are encouraged to reinforce these values at home.

September:	Cooperation
October:	Persistence, Diligence, Perseverance
November:	Citizenship and Service
December:	Acceptance and Fairness
January:	Humor
February:	Courage
March:	Friendship
April:	Honesty
May:	Empathy and Caring
June:	Self-Discipline

STUDENT ADMISSIONS POLICY AND LOTTERY SYSTEM

By Resolution of the Board of Trustees, it is the policy of the Red Bank Charter School that, prior to a lottery, priority in enrollment of students shall be given to the siblings of any student then enrolled who is a resident in Red Bank. It is further Policy that priority enrollment shall be given; first, to the sibling of any Charter School student then enrolled who is a resident of Red Bank; second, to any student who is a resident of Red Bank. Priority within each of the preceding categories following the lottery shall be determined in the order in which the applications are received.

If the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available, we will use a lottery system for selection. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis; however, in order to be considered for the lottery system, applications must be received by the application deadline.

RBCS conducts a weighted lottery as approved by the New Jersey Department of Education. Children who receive types of public assistance will have a 3:2 chance to be admitted. **Documentation for eligibility for this preference based on one of the qualifying factors listed below must be submitted with your application.**

Qualifying Factors:

- Child lives in Red Bank public housing
- Child lives in Section 8 housing

- Child/family receive SNAP/TANF benefits
- Child qualifies for free/reduced lunch at his/her current public school

The lottery will use a random selection process conducted by a professional accountant. The lottery will be held at a location that will be accessible to the public for observation. All numbers will be pulled in order to compile a waiting list of prospective students.

Residency procedures as of August 2019: Based on recent court decisions discussed by the BOT at the July retreat, supported by our solicitor Tom Johnston, and guidance provided from Acting Director of the Office of Charter and Renaissance Schools, Julie Bunt, RBCS will operate on the following:

- No changes will occur to the enrollment process of the Red Bank Charter School; specifically, students must be residents of Red Bank in order to be enrolled;
- Once accepted into the Red Bank Charter School, if a student moves out of Red Bank for any reason, they will retain their seat with the Red Bank Charter School until 8th grade unless the parent/guardian decides to transfer the student out. In this situation, students would need to enroll in their district of residence and then transfer from the Red Bank Charter School;
- Sibling preference remains as it has been established in the Red Bank Charter School bylaws and supported by NJ Charter School Program Act: 18A:36A-8. Enrollment preference.

SCHOOL HOURS

TIME	PURPOSE
7:45am-9:00am	7:45-8:00: Arrival for Preschool Before Care & Breakfast 8:00-9:00: Preschool Before Care Program
8:45am-3:00 PM	8:45-9:00 AM: Arrival for Preschool Day 9:00AM-3:00 PM: Preschool Session
3:00pm-3:45pm	Preschool After Care Program
3:45pm-4:00pm	Dismissal

SAMPLE PRESCHOOL SCHEDULE

8:45-9:00	Arrival, Handwashing, Free Play
9:00-9:20	Morning Meeting
9:20-9:40	Small Group
9:40-10:40	Choice Time (Centers)
10:40-11:20	Gross Motor
11:20-11:30	Transition/Handwashing
11:30-12:20	Lunch/Transition/Bathroom
12:20-1:10	Rest Time/Quiet Activities
1:10-1:30	Music and Movement
1:45-2:00	Read Aloud
2:00-2:30	Choice Time
2:30-3:00	Closing Meeting & Dismissal

Attendance & Tardiness

Research shows that preschoolers who miss 10 percent or more of the school year arrive at kindergarten with lower levels of school readiness skills. Excessive absences and tardiness disrupt the learning process for your child and others as well as the teacher's lessons. Additionally, preschool students depend on the structure of the day. When students are repeatedly tardy, the routine and structure are disrupted. Children who are often late have trouble settling in and mastering routines. Tardiness can throw off their whole morning or even their entire day. Our objective is to provide the best possible learning experience for your children and the best way to ensure that is going to happen is making sure our students are in school. The families of students with repeated absences will be asked to meet with the Head of School to determine pathways to success.

GENESIS

Genesis is our school management system. Parents are responsible for knowing how to access this important informational system as it provides access to your child's attendance, school forms, updated emergency contacts, and more.

From the school website, under the scrolling photos, is a square button, with a capital “G”, labeled, “Parent Portal.” Select this button and it will take you to the login page. If you do not know your login information, please call the main office or ask your child’s teacher.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Blackboard Connect Communication System

The Blackboard Connect Communication System promotes communication between the school and home, and will allow us to contact every home within minutes. RBCS will be using the system to inform you of important events, weather emergencies and to provide information in case of crisis.

Early School Closing

During the course of the school year, school may have to close early due to inclement weather or some other emergency. As we learned over the course of the previous year, learning may need to pivot to virtual instruction at a moment’s notice. The Blackboard Connect system will be used to alert all families of an early closing or need to move to virtual instruction. Students will not be released early unless contact with the family has been made. It is important for the office to have a work or cell phone number where you can be reached.

Delayed Opening/Inclement Weather Closing

During the course of the school year, it may be necessary to delay the opening of school or close early due to weather and road conditions. Appropriate announcements will be made using the Blackboard Connect system, the Red Bank Charter School website (www.redbankcharterschool.com), and our social media platforms such as Instagram (@redbankcharterschoolnj) and Facebook (Red Bank Charter School).

Fire/Security Drills

Each month the school will conduct one fire drill and one security drill. Homeroom teachers will review the expectations of each of the drills at the start of the school year as well as post a map of approved evacuation routes in each room.

CREATIVE CURRICULUM

The philosophy of The Creative Curriculum® is that young children learn best by doing. The Creative Curriculum® is built on theories of development in young children, that all children learn through active exploration of their environment and therefore the environment plays a critical role in learning. The goal of the Creative Curriculum is to help children become independent, self-confident, inquisitive and enthusiastic learners

by actively exploring their environment. The curriculum identifies goals in all areas of development: Social/Emotional, Cognitive, Physical and Language. The planned activities for the children, the organization of the environment, the selection of toys and materials, planning the daily schedule and interacting with the children, are all designed to accomplish the goals and objectives of the curriculum and give your child a successful year in school. The Creative Curriculum® shows teachers how to integrate learning in literacy, math, science, social studies, the arts, and technology throughout the day. It also gives the teacher a wide range of teaching strategies-- from child-initiated learning to teacher-directed approaches-- to best respond to children's learning styles, strengths, and interests.

Red Bank Charter School builds the curriculum for our children around the environment using units of study and fourteen different interest areas or learning centers:



Dramatic Play • Blocks • Manipulative/Table Toys • Art •
Sand, Water & Rice • Library • Music •
Writing Center • Computers • Outdoors • Science
Discovery • Listening Center Large Motor Area •
Trains/Doll House

The richer the environments, the more concrete opportunities there are for children to learn by interacting with materials and people. The teacher's role is to create an environment that invites children to observe, to be active, to make choices, and to experiment. Our environment is continually assessed using the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale.

CREATIVE CURRICULUM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

These goals and objectives provide a direction for planning the program and a way to determine what children know and how they are developing. This information enables teachers to respond to each child individually to build on strengths and target skills that need strengthening. Because our teachers have a holistic approach, and focus on the "whole child" to promote learning, the goals interrelate and focus on all areas of development.

- ❖ Social/Emotional Development: children's feelings about themselves, the development of responsibility, and their ability to relate positively to others.
- ❖ Physical Development: children's gross and fine motor development.
- ❖ Cognitive Development: children's thinking skills, including the development of symbolic and problem-solving skills.
- ❖ Language Development: children's ability to communicate through words, both spoken and written.

TEACHING STRATEGIES GOLD ASSESSMENT

Teaching Strategies Gold is an authentic performance-based assessment tool. It is designed to help classroom teachers document and evaluate children's skills, knowledge, behaviors and accomplishments across a wide variety of curriculum areas on multiple occasions in order to enhance teaching and learning and to keep track of each child's individual achievement. Students are observed during their regular classroom activities and their progress is recorded and shared during our Quarterly Learners' Individualized Plan Conferences.



The components of the Teaching Strategies Gold report include:

Social Emotional
Cognitive
English Language Acquisition

Physical
Literacy
Spanish Language

Language
Mathematics

UNIFORM

Preschool students are permitted to wear the gym uniform (comfortable clothing) every day. Additional uniform information is provided below:

	Colors
Dress Uniform Short or long sleeve Polo Shirt (with RBCS logo optional), khaki shorts or pants, long uniform skort for girls with navy top under. Navy Sweatshirt or Sweater. Dress Shoes.	Navy Khaki
Gym Uniform Short sleeve navy shirt (with RBCS logo optional), gray or navy mesh shorts, Navy sweatshirt and navy nylon gym pants for winter.	Navy or Gray Shirt Navy or Gray Shorts
Shoes Closed toed, solid colored shoe. Solid Vans are accepted. Regular sneakers for gym class only .	Brown, Black, Navy Solid Color
Socks, stockings or tights	Black, White, Navy

Parents are welcome to purchase the uniform components at any location.

TECHNOLOGY

The primary purpose of the Red Bank Charter School's electronic communications network and technology is to support and enhance learning and teaching that prepares students for success. Providing access to technology is an investment in the future of our students, faculty and families and directly supports the Red Bank Charter School's mission of celebrating individuality, appreciating cultural diversity, mastering conflict resolution, and insisting on accountability by all as the foundation for good citizenship.

The Red Bank Charter School believes that electronic communication is a tool for life-long learning, and that access to the electronic resources and technologies can promote educational and organizational excellence. We believe responsible use of these electronic resources and technology will enable students and faculty to broaden their knowledge.

NUTRITION PROGRAM

RBCS seeks to provide healthy, nutritional school breakfast, lunch and snacks for our preschool students. Our goal to cultivate health and fitness is another way of implementing our beliefs and educating the whole child.

Monthly breakfast, lunch and snack menu calendars are posted on the school website. Students will be eating both meals family style within the preschool classroom.

For information and the application for free or reduced meal benefits, please visit the school website: www.redbankcharterschool.com.

A copy of the Wellness and Nutrition Policy can also be found on the school website.

HEALTH SERVICES

The goal of the health professionals at Red Bank Charter School is to promote a healthy lifestyle for the school community through education and health services. We believe in strong communication between students, families and outside providers to support quality emotional and physical health to optimize the learning opportunities for each child.

Medications

Medications cannot be administered at school without proper documentation. If your child needs medication administered at school, forms are available in the nurse's office. Please do not hesitate to call the school nurse with any questions or concerns.

Visiting Nurse Association (VNA)

Should your child need to be seen for a condition that requires medical attention, we have the service of a Nurse Practitioner from the VNA , who comes in as needed, when available. If you would like to take advantage of this service, a permission form is required.

Screenings

The Nurse will provide yearly screenings for height, weight, hearing and vision.

Mobile Dentist

The Mobile Dentist visits twice per year to provide dental service to our students. They accept most insurance plans and provide grants and reduced rates for those who do not have insurance.

Health Concerns

Please notify the school nurse of any health concerns you may have for your child so they can receive the proper care they need to succeed in and out of the classroom.

PROJECT CHILD FIND

Project CHILD FIND is a free referral service and public awareness campaign to assist in the identification of unserved/underserved youth with a delay or disability from birth through twenty one years of age. In addition, Project CHILD FIND develops and distributes information to the public about early intervention services and special education programs throughout New Jersey. Information through Project CHILD FIND may be obtained by calling the toll-free number, 1- 800-322-8174, which is in service 7 days a week, 24-hours a day. All calls received are confidential.

