

FAMILY HANDBOOK

2026-2027



JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Board of Education Administrative Offices
31 State Route 181, Lake Hopatcong, NJ 07849
(973) 663-5780 – www.jefftwp.org

Superintendent of Schools – Mr. Scot Burkholder
Assistant Superintendent – Dr. Roger Jinks
Business Administrator – Mrs. Rita Oroho Giacchi



Dear Falcon Family:

I hope this message finds you enjoying a summer full of family, relaxation, and new adventures. We have been hard at work preparing our schools for another exciting school year. As your new superintendent, I want to welcome you back to the Jefferson Township School District for the 2026-2027 school year. On behalf of the Board of Education, administration, and staff, I would like to welcome our new families to Jefferson Township and welcome back all returning members of our Falcon Family.

I also want to thank our amazing educators, district administrators, the facilities department, human resources, and our secretarial teams for all the hard work that went into planning this school year and preparing our schools for our opening on September 2, 2026. As the saying goes, it takes a village to support our kids. The community is very fortunate to have excellent educators and support staff here in Jefferson who work tirelessly and collaboratively to provide the best possible education for our students.

As in previous years, our mission remains focused on providing a high-quality education that supports the academic, social, and emotional growth of every child. We continue to celebrate our schools' success, made possible by our dedicated staff, supportive families, and outstanding students. This year, we have several new initiatives, including a Pre-school Inclusive Education Project piloted at Ellen T. Briggs School and several updates coming to our Intermediate School.

To ensure we establish a team approach to supporting your children, I encourage you to communicate regularly with your child's teachers, school counselor, and principal. They can help address any concerns or questions you may have about your child's academic progress. When we work together, we can help ensure that your child has a successful and enriching school experience.

Thank you for your partnership. We can't wait to welcome students back and to begin what promises to be a wonderful school year.

Warm regards,

Scot Burkholder

Scot Burkholder
Superintendent of Schools

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SCHOOL DIRECTORY.....	1
TRANSPORTATION & BUS SAFETY.....	2-3
EMERGENCY CLOSURES.....	4
ABSENCE & EXCUSE PROCEDURES.....	4-5
NEW STUDENT REGISTRATION.....	5
CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION.....	6
FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION.....	7-8
TECHNOLOGY.....	9-10
LOCKERS.....	10
HOMEWORK.....	10-11
NUTRITION SERVICES.....	11
HEALTH SERVICES.....	12-13
SPECIAL PROGRAMS.....	13-14
SCHOOL COUNSELING.....	14-15
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION.....	15
DISCIPLINE.....	16-17
HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING.....	18
BOARD OF EDUCATION.....	19



SCHOOL DIRECTORY



Jefferson Township High School (Grades 9-12)

1010 Weldon Road, Oak Ridge, NJ 07438
(973) 697-3535

Principal: Mr. Michael Lonie

Assistant Principals: Dr. Andrea Padelsky, Mr. Jason Kalish

School Hours: 7:20 am–2:00 pm (Tier 1, grades 7-12)



Jefferson Township Intermediate School (Grades 4-8)

1000 Weldon Road, Oak Ridge, NJ 07438
(973) 697-1980

Principal: Ms. Lauren Donohue

Assistant Principals: Dr. Andrea Padelsky, Mr. Sirajj Ziyad

School Hours: 7:20 am–2:00 pm (Tier 1, grades 7-12)
8:05 am–2:45 pm (Tier 2, grades 4-6)



Arthur Stanlick Elementary School (Grades 1-3)

121B East Shawnee Trail, Wharton, NJ 07885
(973) 663-0520

Principal: Mrs. Jessica Brennan

School Hours: 9:05 am–3:35 pm



White Rock Elementary School (Preschool–Grade 3)

2 Francine Place, Oak Ridge, NJ 07438
(973) 697-2414

Principal: Dr. Timothy Plotts

School Hours: 9:05 am–3:35 pm



Ellen T. Briggs Elementary School

(Preschool-Kindergarten)

1 Jefferson Drive, Lake Hopatcong, NJ 07849
(973) 663-0900

Principal: Mrs. Randi DeBrito

School Hours: 9:15 am–3:45 pm

To maintain security, all visitors must ring the bell, present a photo ID, then state their name, who they are visiting, and the reason for their visit. Please do not hold doors open for others. Use the labeled bin outside each school to drop off items and notify staff via the intercom.

TRANSPORTATION & BUS SAFETY

Riding the school bus is a privilege that carries shared responsibility. Safety depends on the cooperation among students, parents, bus drivers, and school staff.

General Expectations

- Students must follow all bus rules and directions from the driver, who has the authority of a classroom teacher.
- Parents are responsible for their child's conduct and any damage caused.
- Younger children should be accompanied at the bus stop when possible. Teach your child what to do if no one is there at drop-off.

Before Boarding

- Arrive at the bus stop **8 minutes early** and wait safely—away from the road and off private property.
- Line up at least **5 feet from the bus** until the door opens.
- Wait until the bus stops completely before boarding. Enter calmly and go directly to your seat.

On the Bus

- Buckle your seatbelt and stay seated while the bus is in motion.
- Keep the aisle clear of bags and instruments.
- Loud talking, horseplay, or distracting the driver is not allowed.
- No eating, drinking, or use of tobacco/vapes.
- Windows must remain closed unless directed otherwise. Do not stick anything out of the bus.
- Rear doors are for emergencies only.
- Recording photos or videos is not permitted.

Belongings

- Students must carry belongings in a manageable backpack or case.
- Rolling backpacks must be **carried** on/off the bus, not rolled down the aisle.
- Items too large to fit under a seat or on a student's lap (e.g., large instruments or athletic equipment) are not allowed on daily bus routes.

Approved Musical Instruments & Athletic Equipment

Items larger than 31" long x 7" wide, including sports bags, do not fit safely under the seats. All musical items must be of a size to be safely stowed under the bus seat or on the student's lap.

Allowed	Not Allowed
Clarinet Flute Piccolo Trumpet Trombone Alto Saxophone French Horn	Tuba Snare Drum Guitar Tenor Saxophone Baritone Horn Bass Clarinet

TRANSPORTATION & BUS SAFETY

(continued)

Medical Alerts

Parents should complete the emergency medical form each year. If a student has a life-threatening condition (e.g., anaphylaxis or seizures), this information is shared confidentially with transportation staff. Drivers may assign front seats for added safety at the driver's discretion.

After School / Late Buses

Late buses follow limited routes. Parents should select and review the closest bus stop with their child. Students may exit only at their assigned stop unless the school receives written permission.

Crossing Safety

- Always cross **10 feet in front of the bus** after the driver signals it is safe.
- Walk quickly and head straight home after getting off.

Behavior & Disciplinary Action

Misconduct reports may be issued for failing to follow bus rules. Repeated offenses can result in suspension of bus privileges, in which case parents must arrange alternate transportation.

Transportation to Daycare Centers

Each year, the Board of Education approves transportation to the following local daycare centers:

Alpine Montessori	Little Learner
Elements of Learning	Loving & Learning Child Care Center
First Impressions Child Care Center	My School
Jefferson Child Care & Education Center	Quality Time Child Care Center

To request transportation to one of these centers, families must complete an application each school year. Application forms are available from your child's school.

Please note: Choosing daycare transportation forfeits the seat on the student's legal route. Returning to the legal route later depends on seat availability.

Transportation to Private Sitters

Families requesting transportation to a private sitter must complete an application each school year. Applications are available at the child's elementary school. Requests are processed in the order they are received and are subject to seat availability. Parents will be notified in August whether their request can be accommodated.

Please note: Students who use a sitter give up their seat on the legal home route. Returning to the legal route later depends on the availability of seating. If a new student moves into the area and needs a seat on that route, the most recent sitter placement may be removed.

No changes will be accepted within two weeks of the first day of school.

For full transportation details, visit the Transportation Department's website.

EMERGENCY CLOSURES

IMPORTANT: It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to give their children detailed instructions on where to go and what to do in the event of an emergency school closing.

Inclement Weather-Emergency School Closing & Delayed Opening of Schools

Please do not call the school or police department for information concerning school closings. Instead, check:

- Notification from the district's emergency alert system
- Local radio and TV stations: *News 12 New Jersey*, *FOX 5*, *CBS News*, *NBC New York*, *ABC7 New York*
- The district website: www.jefftwp.org

SCHOOL	DELAYED OPENING	EARLY DISMISSAL
High School	9:20 am - 2:00 pm	7:20 am - 12:00 pm
Intermediate School (Grades 7-8)	9:20 am - 2:00 pm	7:20 am - 12:00 pm
Intermediate School (Grades 4-6)	10:05 am - 2:45 pm	8:05 am - 12:45 pm
Arthur Stanlick Elementary	11:05 am - 3:35 pm	9:05 am - 1:35 pm
White Rock Elementary	11:05 am - 3:35 pm	9:05 am - 1:35 pm
Ellen T. Briggs Elementary	11:15 am - 3:45 pm	9:15 am - 1:45 pm

Emergency closing days will be made up as follows:

- Spring Recess: April 10th-14th, beginning with April 10th
- End of School Year: Beginning with June 18th

ABSENCE & EXCUSE PROCEDURES

It is essential that a student attends school regularly. Absence can be a major cause of failure. Requests to be excused during the school day are not permitted, except in cases of emergency. Medical, dental, and other non-urgent appointments should be scheduled outside of school hours.

While make-up work can be helpful, it cannot replace direct instruction and classroom interaction. Regular attendance emphasizes the seriousness of the educational experience, while absence for minor reasons encourages an attitude of indifference toward school.

Parents are requested to call the school whenever their child is absent.

Excused Absences

- Student illness
- Recovery from an accident
- Required court attendance
- Death in the family
- Religious observance
- Cause deemed acceptable by Administration

ABSENCE & EXCUSE PROCEDURES

(continued)

Intermediate School and High School Procedures

Absence and excuse procedures for intermediate school and high school students are detailed in each school's respective student handbook.

Returning to School

Children returning from an illness are expected to resume their full schedule, including outdoor play and physical education. Students should be dressed appropriately for the weather.

If a doctor determines that a child is not ready to fully participate, a note indicating any restrictions must be submitted so that arrangements can be made with the principal, teacher, and/or school nurse.

Return-to-School Notes

- Elementary students: Return notes to the main office
- Intermediate/High School students: Return notes to the Guidance Office
- All Physical Education notes ("No PE" or "Return to PE") must be submitted to the school nurse

Truancy

The Board of Education will report infractions of attendance laws for students between the ages of 6 and 16 to the appropriate authorities. Repeated unexcused absences by enrolled students over the age of 16 may result in suspension or expulsion.

The district will assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of a student's educational program when habitual absences occur. This may involve consultation with the I&RS Team, 504 Committee, or Child Study Team for recommendations.

Attendance Policy – [Policy #5200](#)

Every parent should review the Student Attendance Policy. All policies are strictly enforced and are available on the district website at www.jefftwp.org.

NEW STUDENT REGISTRATION

To register for preschool, children must turn 3 years old before October 1 (Policy [#5112](#)).
To register for kindergarten, children must turn 5 years old before October 1 (Policy [#5112](#)).

Requirements:

- [Online pre-registration](#)
- Original birth certificate
- Proof of residency
- Complete immunization record, including:
 - DPT (4–5 doses, one after age 4)
 - Polio (3–4 doses, one after age 4)
 - Measles, Mumps, Rubella (2 doses or lab proof of immunity)
 - Hepatitis B (3 doses or lab proof)
 - Varicella (1 dose after age 1 or documented immunity)
 - Physical exam completed within the past year
 - Doctor or Health Department certification of all records

Immunization and physical forms are collected at the new student screening. State law prohibits entry to school without all required documents. These requirements are strictly enforced.

CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

Curriculum review and revision are ongoing processes. During the 2024-2025 school year, revisions to the district curriculum continued to ensure alignment with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS). The revised NJSLS provides a foundation for the curriculum of Jefferson Township Public Schools, ensuring that the learning standards are met while offering lessons and activities that meet the learning needs of our students and community. Recent revisions to the English-Language Arts (ELA) standards included integrating the Companion Standards into the Reading: Information Text Domain and the Foundational Skills into the Language Domain. In addition, the ELA and Mathematics standards were updated to include opportunities for climate change education.

Throughout the school year, Elementary Curriculum Councils convene to focus on English-Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Technology, and World Language. These councils provide a forum for teachers in grades K-5 to collaborate and conduct vertical and horizontal articulation. Specifically, each group articulates subject-area curriculum across grades, as detailed in our district curriculum. The councils address implementation issues and, more importantly, serve as a conduit for sharing good practices among elementary teachers.

Ongoing professional development in curriculum and instruction and social-emotional learning (SEL) is provided at the grade level and during faculty meetings for elementary teachers. In the Middle School, teachers meet in teams, departments, grade levels, and during faculty meetings. High School teachers meet in departments and during faculty meetings. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are in place in each school.

Our preschool classes use the Create Curriculum, a comprehensive, whole-child curriculum that integrates language, literacy, and mathematics throughout the day and emphasizes rich, engaging, play-based learning experiences that empower children to become confident, creative, and caring learners.

State Testing

The NJ Department of Education requires annual assessments to measure student progress in meeting state standards:

NJSLA-ELA/M: Grades 3–11 – English Language Arts and Math

NJSLA-S: Grades 5, 8, and 11 – Science

NJGPA: Grade 11 – Graduation requirement (ELA & Math)

DLM: Alternate assessment for qualifying students with special needs

ACCESS: For ESL students – measures English language development

Home Instruction

Home instruction is provided to students (grades K–12) who are either medically confined for 10 consecutive days or 20 cumulative days, or suspended from school for disciplinary reasons for five or more days

For reasons other than disciplinary, a doctor's note stating the need and the dates of confinement is required, along with a written parent request.

Requests must be submitted through the school counselor or case manager, who will coordinate the application process. Approval is required from the Principal, the Supervisor of Student Personnel Services, the School Physician, and the Superintendent.

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

DISCIPLINARY CONCEPTS & CORE IDEAS

	By the end of Grade 2	By the end of Grade 5	By the end of Grade 8	By the end of Grade 12
Personal Growth & Development	Individuals enjoy different activities at different rates. Personal hygiene and self-help skills promote healthy habits.	Health is influenced by the interaction of body systems. Puberty is a time of physical, social, and emotional changes.	Individual actions, genetics, and family history can play a role in an individual's personal health.	Responsible behavior can impact one's own health and development, as well as others'. Personal decisions influence growth and development across all dimensions of wellness.
Pregnancy & Parenting	All living things have the capacity to reproduce.	Pregnancy can be achieved through a variety of methods.	An awareness of the stages of pregnancy and prenatal care can contribute to a healthy pregnancy and the birth of a healthy child.	Various factors influence the social, emotional, and financial challenges of parenthood. Individuals can use a range of strategies to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. Pregnancy and childbirth involve many decisions with both short- and long-term impacts.
Emotional Health	Many factors influence how we think about ourselves and others.	There are different ways that individuals handle stress, and some are healthier than others. Self-management skills impact an individual's ability to recognize, cope, and express emotions about difficult events.	Resiliency and coping strategies shape how individuals respond to everyday challenges. Self-management skills affect one's ability to handle mental, emotional, and psychological situations.	Self-confidence, personal traits, stress, limitations, and strengths impact the mental and emotional development of an individual. Healthy individuals demonstrate the ability to prevent and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways.

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

DISCIPLINARY CONCEPTS & CORE IDEAS

	By the end of Grade 2	By the end of Grade 5	By the end of Grade 8	By the end of Grade 12
Social & Sexual Health	Every individual has unique skills and qualities, including the activities they enjoy, such as how they dress, their mannerisms, and things they like to do. Families shape the way we think about our bodies, our health, and our behavior. People have relationships with others in the local community and beyond.	Everyone should feel welcome, regardless of gender, gender expression, or sexual orientation. Family members influence children's physical, social, and emotional development. Healthy relationships involve mutual respect and open sharing of thoughts and feelings. Inclusive schools and communities accept all individuals and help them feel welcome.	Relationships are influenced by a wide variety of factors, individuals, and behaviors. There are factors that contribute to making healthy decisions about sex. How individuals feel about themselves, their identity, and sexual orientation can be positively or negatively impacted by a wide variety of factors.	Healthy individuals build and maintain relationships through positive communication and social skills. State and Federal laws provide minors access to sexual health services and protect them from unsafe situations. Communication strengthens relationships and helps resolve conflicts. Conflicts happen, but there are effective ways to resolve them.
Personal Safety	The environment can impact personal health and safety in different ways. Potential hazards exist in personal space, in the school, in the community, and globally. Any time children feel uncomfortable or in an unsafe situation, they should reach out to a trusted adult for help.	Safety includes being aware of the environment and understanding how certain situations could lead to injury or illness. There are strategies that individuals can use to communicate safely in an online environment. Children who practice setting healthy boundaries know how to say no and what to do when they feel uncomfortable or find themselves in unsafe situations.	Awareness of potential risk factors and knowledge of strategies to evaluate choices and potential consequences can help to reduce negative impacts when confronted with difficult or unsafe situations. Individuals may experience interpersonal and/or sexual violence for a variety of reasons, but the victim is never to blame.	Technology can impact a person's ability to maintain healthy behaviors and relationships. Considering short- and long-term consequences helps individuals make healthier choices. State and Federal laws help protect individuals from abuse and break cycles of harm. Technology expands communication but can complicate relationships and self-esteem.

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION DISCIPLINARY CONCEPTS & CORE IDEAS

	By the end of Grade 2	By the end of Grade 5	By the end of Grade 8	By the end of Grade 12
Health Conditions, Diseases, & Medicines	People need food, water, air, waste removal, and a particular range of temperatures in their environment to stay healthy.	There are actions that individuals can take to help prevent diseases and stay healthy. Diseases can be contracted from a variety of sources and choices individuals make may contribute to or prevent a person from being susceptible to a disease or health condition.	The degree to which an individual is impacted by a health condition or disease can be affected by their immune system and treatment strategies. Health-enhancing behaviors can contribute to an individual reducing and avoiding health risks.	Medicines treat or relieve disease or pain and may be prescribed or over the counter. Public health policies promote health and prevent disease, often with global impact. Mental health conditions affect individuals, families, and communities.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A: 35-4.7, any child whose parent or guardian presents to the school principal a signed statement that any part of instruction in Health, Family Life Education or Sex Education is in conflict with their conscience or sincerely-held moral or religious beliefs shall be excused from a portion of the course. No penalties as to credit or graduation shall result. Additional information may be found on the district's curriculum page or by contacting your child's school.

TECHNOLOGY

Jefferson Township Public Schools has developed a technology philosophy committed to preparing students to use technology to solve real-world problems and to be informed, productive members of a global society.

The district will continue to maintain the technology infrastructure and tools needed for management, communication, and successful integration into classroom instruction to transform learning. Jefferson Township will strive to expand access to innovative technology for students, teachers, and administrators—both in our schools and in the community—to promote 21st-century skills.

The district will ensure that educators acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to use educational technology effectively to help students:

- Meet the New Jersey Student Learning Standards
- Develop higher-order thinking skills
- Foster 21st-century design thinking, life literacies, and key skills

Technology Resources

Students have access to a range of resources, including, but not limited to:

- Desktops, laptops, iPads
- Digital textbooks and the Internet
- Interactive whiteboards
- A variety of software and apps

The purpose of providing these tools is to integrate technology into the curriculum so that students can practice critical thinking, collaborate with others, and express their creativity.

Student Responsibility

Students are responsible for maintaining appropriate behavior and academic integrity when using technology-related resources. Younger students will be monitored by teachers for appropriateness and instructional relevance, while older students will have greater responsibility for their digital citizenship and usage.

Access to technology is granted only with parent/guardian permission and an agreement to act respectfully and responsibly.

Acceptable Use Policy

Please refer to [Policy #2361 – Acceptable Use Policy](#) for full guidelines (available in all school offices).

The following are not permitted under the policy:

- Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
- Using obscene language
- Harassing, bullying, insulting, or attacking others
- Damaging computers, systems, or networks
- Violating copyright laws
- Using another person's account
- Trespassing in another person's files
- Intentionally wasting limited resources
- Using the network for commercial purposes or financial gain
- Internet use for personal business, advertising, or political lobbying (including student body elections)

TECHNOLOGY

(continued)

Violations of this policy may result in the loss of technology access and in disciplinary or legal action, depending on the severity of the offense. Disciplinary action may be handled at the building level in accordance with established procedures, in addition to any district-level penalties.

LOCKERS

(Grades 6-12)

Homeroom teachers will assign lockers and combinations to all members of the homeroom. Students should keep a record of their combination and keep lockers locked at all times, especially when articles are left inside. Keep your combination private; do not allow anyone to look over your shoulder as you enter it.

Students are not permitted to double up in lockers unless assigned by the office. Students should not leave money or valuables in lockers.

Hall and gymnasium lockers are school property and are subject to inspection by school personnel at any time. Defacing any locker is unacceptable and will result in a fine. The inside and outside of the lockers must remain free of writing.

HOMEWORK

Purpose of Homework

- Develop home study habits and independent work skills
- Make up work due to absence
- Complete tasks better suited for home (projects, reports, etc.)
- Reinforce skills through extra study

Time Guidelines

- Kindergarten: Occasionally assigned; should not exceed 15 minutes daily
- Grades 1–3: Up to 30 minutes per evening
- Grade 4: Up to 45 minutes per evening
- Grade 5: Up to 60 minutes per evening
- Grades 6–8: Approximately 90 minutes per evening
- Grades 9–12: Time spent will vary by course load, level of study, and individual need

These time allotments are not to be considered maximum requirements. Some students may require more or less time. The guidelines do not in any way limit teacher-guided enrichment of the program.

Nature of Assignments

- Aligned with material that students can complete independently
- Should not require teaching by parents, but may involve assistance from them
- Clear instructions provided to all students
- All homework is designed to connect with classroom instruction

HOMework

(continued)

Make-Up Work

- Students have two days to complete homework for each day of absence
- Students aware of an upcoming absence should request assignments in advance

NUTRITION SERVICES

Pomptonian Food Service is pleased to serve the Jefferson Township schools. As your school's nutrition provider, we aim to offer a program that meets students' tastes while providing sound nutrition.

The District will participate in the National School Lunch Program, and each week's menu will be designed to meet specific nutritional requirements. Each lunch will include five components: an entrée with bread, two servings of fruit and/or vegetables, and an 8-oz. milk selection.

Students at all grade levels will be able to choose from a variety of lunch options each day. Each school features a farm stand where students may select their fruit or vegetables from a variety of options as part of the lunch program. We are also proud to feature in-season "Jersey Fresh" produce.

- The High School cafeteria features several changing specials daily, along with assorted premade salads, deli sandwiches, and hot grilled selections.
- Intermediate School students enjoy a wide variety of hot menu selections daily, including a wide range of changing specials.
- The elementary school cafeterias feature two hot meal selections, alternate salad platters, a weekly rotating sandwich, bagel lunches, and yogurt lunches.

At each school, we serve a hot breakfast daily, with a rotating menu that offers a different, filling, and nutritious option each day.

All schools will focus on nutrition. The cafeterias will emphasize healthier dining choices that are popular with students and offer healthier snacks in compliance with the District's wellness policy.

Payment Options:

- Parents may add funds via cash or check (payable to Jefferson Township Nutrition Services)
- Credit/debit payments can be made through [PaySchools Central](#)
- Students may request that their cashier leave change "on account"

Communication and feedback are essential to the success of the Nutrition Program. We value input from parents and students. Please contact our Director of Food Services, Ms. Morgan Cullen, at (973) 697-3106 or email: mcullen@jefftwtp.org.

HEALTH SERVICES

To support student wellness and learning, Jefferson Township school nurses conduct routine health screenings, maintain up-to-date health records, provide emergency care during the school day, notify families of health concerns and make appropriate referrals, and assist with classroom health education.

Required Health Records

K–12 Students:

- Physical exam within 30 days of enrollment
- Immunizations:
 - DPT (4–5 doses, booster in 6th grade)
 - Polio (3–4 doses)
 - MMR (2 doses)
 - Hepatitis B (3 doses or lab proof)
 - Varicella (1 dose or documented immunity)
 - Meningococcal (1 dose after age 11, entering 6th grade)

Pre-K Students:

- Physical exam within 365 days of school start
- Immunizations:
 - DPT (4+ doses, booster after age 4)
 - Polio (3+ doses, booster after age 4)
 - MMR (1 dose)
 - Varicella (1 dose)
 - Hib & Pneumococcal (1 dose each after age 1)
 - Influenza (1 dose annually between 9/1–12/31)

When to Keep Your Child Home

- Had vomiting, diarrhea, or a fever (100°F+) within the last 24 hours
- Show symptoms of a communicable illness (e.g., pink eye, flu, COVID, strep)
- Are awaiting test results or a diagnosis from a medical provider
- Are on antibiotics for less than 24 hours

If your child becomes ill during the school day, they must be picked up within one hour of the nurse's notification and cannot ride the bus home if they have a fever or are potentially contagious.

Medical Clearance After Injury, Surgery, or Diagnosis

If your child has an injury, undergoes surgery, or receives a medical diagnosis, you must provide a medical provider's note outlining any restrictions and confirming clearance to attend school. For PE or sports absences longer than one week, a return-to-activity note from a medical provider is required before participation resumes.

All documentation must be submitted to your child's school health office.

Important Health Policies

The following policies are strictly enforced and available at www.jefftwp.org:

#5310 – [Health Services](#)

#5320 – [Immunization](#)

#5331 – [Management of Life-Threatening Allergies in Schools](#)

#5200 – [Attendance](#)

#8505 – [Wellness Policy/Nutrient Standards for Meals and Other Foods](#)

#5330 – [Administration of Medication](#)

HEALTH SERVICES

(continued)

Scoliosis Screening

Screenings for students in grades 5–12 occur every two years. To opt out, send a written notice to the school.

Head Lice (Pediculosis)

Parents should check their child regularly—especially after vacations or sleepovers. Notify the school nurse if lice are found. Students must be escorted by a parent to school for evaluation after treatment before re-entry.

Medical Action Plans

If your child has severe allergies, asthma, diabetes, seizures, or another condition requiring medication or monitoring during the school day:

- You must contact the school nurse during the first week of school
- Submit a current emergency action plan (e.g., asthma, seizure, anaphylaxis, allergy) from your child's medical provider

Forms and guidance are updated regularly and available through the school nurse.

Medication at School

All medications (prescription and OTC) must be delivered by a parent/guardian and require:

- Provider's written order
- Parent/guardian permission
- Medication in its original container (new and unopened for OTC)

Exceptions:

- Epinephrine auto-injectors and rescue inhalers with medical approval to self-carry
- Cough drops allowed in grades 6–12 with written parent permission

Field trip medication: Contact the nurse in advance.

End of year: Unclaimed medications are discarded—none are stored over the summer.

State law does not allow exceptions to these rules for the administration of medication in school.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Section 504 / ADA

Jefferson Township Public Schools are committed to supporting students eligible under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which prohibits disability-based discrimination. A 504 accommodation plan is available to students with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. For more information, contact your child's school counselor.

Notice of Parental Rights Under Section 504:

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is a non-discrimination statute barring discrimination on the basis of one's disability.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

(continued)

- It is the policy of the school district not to discriminate on the basis of disability in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by the Act.
- The Act requires the school district to locate, evaluate, and determine if the student is a qualified individual requiring accommodation necessary to provide equal access to educational programs.
- Parents are entitled to have the opportunity to review relevant educational records under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Parents or guardians disagreeing with the decisions reached by the school personnel for accommodations necessary for access to education programming and/or facilities may request a hearing before an impartial hearing officer by notifying the school principal.

The district's designated 504 Coordinator is Mrs. Josephine Ramirez, located at Jefferson Township High School. She can be reached at (973) 697-3535 ext. 5835 or joramirez@jefftwtp.org.

Special Education Services

The Department of Special Services offers a full range of special education programs for students from preschool through grade 12. These services support academic, physical, social, and emotional development in a caring, inclusive environment.

In accordance with Project Child Find, the district identifies residents ages 3–21 who may have needs in areas such as cognition, communication, motor skills, or social-emotional development. Evaluations are provided at no cost, and eligible students are entitled to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).

For questions, contact the Office of Special Services at (973) 663-5780 ext. 5062.

Structured Learning Program

The Structured Learning Program supports classified high school students in exploring career options through work-based learning experiences, helping them set achievable goals and expand their future opportunities. For more information, contact Mrs. Nicole Jahn at (973) 697-3535, ext. 5829.

SEPAG – Special Education Parent Advisory Group

SEPAG, the Special Education Parent Advisory Group, gives families a voice in policies, programs, and services that affect students with disabilities. To get involved or receive meeting updates, email JTSEPAG@gmail.com or follow the Jefferson Township Special Education Advisory Group on social media.



SCHOOL COUNSELING

The Jefferson Township Public Schools Counseling Department has developed an inclusive, comprehensive school counseling program that is an essential part of the educational experience. This program supports students' academic, career, and personal/social development and is guided by student needs, data, and district goals.

SCHOOL COUNSELING

(continued)

As student advocates, counselors recognize each individual's uniqueness, dignity, and personal worth. Services are delivered systemically through:

- Classroom and group lessons
- Small group counseling
- Individual counseling
- Ongoing collaboration with parents, educators, and community members

This tiered system of services is inclusive of all students and responsive to individual needs. Counselors work with families and stakeholders to help students reach their full potential as productive members of society.

Counseling Program Beliefs

The school counselors of Jefferson Township are committed to providing services with unconditional positive regard for all students. They believe:

- Every student has the potential to succeed on their personal journey.
- Counseling addresses students' developmental needs through curriculum delivery, responsive services, and collaboration.
- Counselors advocate for students by working closely with families, staff, and the broader community.
- Community stakeholders offer valuable insight and support for program development and implementation.
- Using a variety of data sources is essential to building a responsive, effective counseling program.
- The ASCA Ethical Standards guide counselors in professional responsibilities and decision-making.
- Counseling programs must be inclusive of all students' ethnic, cultural, racial, and sexual orientation differences, as well as students with special needs.
- All students should feel safe, welcomed, and supported in school.
- Strong collaboration with families, teachers, school leadership, and outside resources is key to each student's growth.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Each year, federal law requires us to make the school district's Affirmative Action policies available to parents. Affirmative Action ensures equal educational opportunities for all students and equal employment opportunities for staff. The Board of Education policies are listed below. The Affirmative Action Officer (AAO) for the Jefferson Township School District is Mrs. Josephine Ramirez.

Affirmative Action Plans

The Affirmative Action Plans for the Jefferson Township schools are on file in the office of the Superintendent of Schools.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

The Jefferson Township Board of Education affirms its responsibility to ensure equal educational opportunity for all students in the public schools of Jefferson Township and equal employment opportunity for all employees, regardless of race, color, creed, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, social or economic status, age, or marital status.

Grievance Procedure

Complaints will be brought to the attention of the Affirmative Action Officer, who will respond in writing within ten school days. The response may be appealed to the Superintendent of Schools, who will conduct an informal hearing and issue a written decision within ten days of the appeal's filing. The complainant may then appeal the Superintendent's decision to the Board of Education, which will issue a decision within ten days. At the end of each step, the complainant will be notified by letter of the actions taken.

DISCIPLINE

Expected Behavior

The Board expects students to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment, consistent with the code of student conduct.

The Board believes that standards for student behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the students, parent(s) or legal guardian(s), staff and community members, producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for school district and community property on the part of students, staff, and community members.

The Board believes the best discipline is self-imposed, and it is the responsibility of school district staff to use instances of violations of the code of student conduct as opportunities to help students learn to assume and accept responsibility for their behavior and the consequences of their behavior. Staff members who interact with students shall apply the best practices designed to prevent student conduct problems and encourage students' abilities to grow in self-discipline.

General guidelines for student conduct will be developed by the Superintendent in conjunction with school staff, and approved by the Board. These guidelines will be developed based on accepted core ethical values from broad community involvement with input from parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and other community representatives, school employees, students, and administrators. These guidelines for student conduct will be suited to the developmental ages of students, the severity of the offenses and students' histories of inappropriate behaviors, and the mission and physical facilities of the individual school(s) in the district. This Policy requires all students in the district to adhere to these rules and guidelines and to submit to the remedial and consequential measures that are appropriately assigned for infraction of these rules and guidelines. The district prohibits active and passive support for acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Students are encouraged to support other students who walk away from these acts when they see them, constructively attempt to stop them, and report these acts to the Building Principal or designee.

Students are required to conform to reasonable standards of socially acceptable behavior; respect the person, property, and rights of others; obey constituted authority; and respond to school district teaching, support, and administrative staff. Each Building Principal will develop and provide a school-based program for appropriate recognition for positive reinforcement for good conduct, self-discipline, good citizenship, and academic success.

Severe Misconduct

The district enforces a Severe Misconduct Policy for serious offenses involving drugs, alcohol, weapons, vandalism, or violence. Students may face suspension, alternative placement, or expulsion following a Board hearing. The district may also pursue legal action.

Under the Zero Tolerance for Guns Act, students found with firearms or who commit a crime with a firearm on school property must be removed from the regular education program for at least one calendar year and placed in an approved alternative setting.

Reentry Procedures

Students returning from an extended absence due to disciplinary action must go through a Reentry Committee process. This team supports the student's transition back to school and develops an action plan. A reentry meeting and signed documentation may be required before the student can return.

DISCIPLINE

(continued)

Discipline Policies

The following Board policies are strictly enforced and available at www.jefftwp.org:

#5512 – [Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying](#)

#5530 – [Substance Abuse](#)

#5533 – [Student Smoking](#)

#5600 – [Code of Conduct](#)

#5610 – [Suspension](#)

#5611 – [Firearm Offenses](#)

#5620 – [Expulsion](#)

Enforcement of Drug-Free School Zones

The Jefferson Township Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to ensure ongoing cooperation between school staff and law enforcement authorities on all matters involving the use, possession, and distribution of controlled dangerous substances and drug paraphernalia on school property. The Board further recognizes its responsibility to cooperate with law enforcement activities and operations on school property. The Board shall, therefore, establish a formal Memorandum of Agreement with the appropriate law enforcement authorities, consistent with the School Zone Enforcement Code (N.J.A.C. 6:3-6.1-6.6), the Statewide Action Plan for Narcotics Enforcement, and the Attorney General's Executive Directive 1988-1.

Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act

Under New Jersey law, every district must adopt a policy addressing harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB). Jefferson Township Public Schools complies with all legal requirements, including appointing an Anti-Bullying Coordinator, School Anti-Bullying Specialists, and School Safety Teams.

Josephine Ramirez District Anti-Bullying Coordinator (973) 697-3535 ext. 5865 joramirez@jefftwp.org	Lyndsay Vesia High School Anti-Bullying Specialist (973) 697-3538 ext. 5837 lvesia@jefftwp.org	Joelle Verbist Intermediate School Anti-Bullying Specialist (973) 697-1980 ext. 5717 jverbist@jefftwp.org	Kaila West Arthur Stanlick Elementary Anti-Bullying Specialist (973) 663-0520 ext. 5135 kwest@jefftwp.org
Amy Yermal White Rock Elementary Anti-Bullying Specialist (973) 697-2414 ext. 5672 ayermal@jefftwp.org	Dana Williams White Rock Elementary Anti-Bullying Specialist (973) 697-2414 ext. 5625 dwilliams@jefftwp.org	Elizabeth West Ellen T. Briggs Elementary Anti-Bullying COordinator (973) 663-0900 ext. 5320 ewest@jefftwp.org	HIB@doe.nj.gov HIB Policy 5512 HIB Reporting Form 338 Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights HIB Self-Assessment

More information, including HIB reporting procedures, is available on the district website homepage.

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING

Visit www.jefftwp.org to view the entire policy and other related policies and regulations in series 5000.

Policy Statement

The Board of Education prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of a student. A safe and civil school environment is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate students in a safe and disciplined environment. Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

"Harassment, intimidation, or bullying" means any gesture, written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus and that:

1. Is motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical, or sensory disability; or
2. By any other distinguishing characteristic; and
3. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to themselves or damage to their property; or
4. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

"Electronic communication" means communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to a telephone, cellular phone, computer, or pager. Acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may also be a student exercising power and control over another student, either in isolated incidents (e.g., intimidation, harassment) or patterns of harassing or intimidating behavior (e.g., bullying).

This Policy may impose consequences for acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying that occur off school grounds, such as cyber-bullying (e.g., the use of electronic or wireless devices to harass, intimidate, or bully), to the extent it complies with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6, Conduct Away from School Grounds, and the district's code of student conduct, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1. In all instances of harassment, intimidation, or bullying behavior occurring off school grounds, the consequences only may be exercised when it is reasonably necessary for the offending student's physical or emotional safety and well-being or for reasons relating to the safety and well-being of other students, staff or school grounds, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:25-2 and 18A:37-2, and when the conduct which is the subject of a proposed consequence materially and substantially interferes with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school. All acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying that include the use of school property (e.g., school computers, other electronic or wireless communication devices) apply to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15 and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.9, harassment, intimidation, and bullying, whether the subject or recipient of the bullying is on or off school property.

Jefferson Township Police Department Services Bureau

The Jefferson Township Police Department has partnered with the school district for more than two decades to provide safety, prevention, and drug education programs. The district and the department operate under the State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement and remain committed to maintaining a drug-free school environment.

School Resource Officer

Officer Nolan Ryan
(973) 208-6158

nryan@jeffersonpolice.com

School Resource Officer

Officer Jason Fuehring
(973) 208-3628

jfuehring@jeffersonpolice.com

Traffic Safety Officer

Officer Charles Paskas
(973) 208-6159

cpaskas@jeffersonpolice.com

Services Bureau Supervisor

Sergeant Bryan McCarthy
(973) 208-6155

bmccarthy@jeffersonpolice.com

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mr. Christopher Brown, President

Mrs. Christine Mallimo-Orna, Vice President

Mr. Albert Camacho, Mr. Christopher Natale, Mrs. Diane Perez, Mrs. Stacey Poulas,
Mrs. Kristin Ruggiero, Mrs. Jill Small, and Ms. Christine Seugling

Main Number Administrative & Supervisors (973) 663-5780	Jefferson Township Public Schools Robert F. Drummond Administrative Offices 31 State Route 181 Lake Hopatcong, New Jersey 07849	Main Number Business Office (973) 663-5782
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Mr. Scot Burkholder Superintendent of Schools	Ext. 5094	Dr. Maria Dunbar Supervisor K-12 Instructional Technology, K-5 Mathematics, Fine Arts, Business & Finance and Advisor for the Business & Finance Academy	Ext. 5077	Mrs. Rita Oroho Giacchi Business Administrator & Board Secretary	Ext. 5010
Dr. Roger Jinks Assistant Superintendent	Ext. 5089	Ms. Tamarra Fernandez Supervisor Special Education, K-12 Gifted & Talented, and Family & Consumer Science	Ext. 5078	Mr. Nicholas Serignese Supervisor Buildings & Grounds	Ext. 5017
Mrs. Heather Racansky Coordinator Human & Public Relations	Ext. 5040	Mr. Christopher Hiben Supervisor K-12 Science, 6-12 Mathematics, and Advisor for the Academy for Environmental Science, and Advisor for the STEM Academy	Ext. 5077	Mrs. Vanessa Sanchez Supervisor Transportation	Ext. 5085
Ms. Juceyka Figueroa Director Special Services	Ext. 5062	Mrs. Lia Lendis Supervisor K-12 Language Arts, Media Studies, Technology Education, and Advisor for Multimedia, Broadcasting, & Journalism Academy	Ext. 5072	Mr. Robert Fleming (973) 697-3535 Coordinator Technology	Ext. 5844
Mr. William Koch (973) 697-3535 Director Athletics Supervisor Health & Physical Education and Nurses	Ext. 5863	Mrs. Josephine Ramirez (973) 697-3535 Supervisor Student Personnel Services	Ext. 5835	Mr. Richard Gherardi (973) 697-3535 District Network Administrator	Ext. 5844
		Mr. Derek Sica Supervisor K-12 Social Studies, World Languages, Music, and ESL	Ext. 5073		