



RAMBLERS RISE

Columbus School

2026-2027

Student Handbook

GENERAL INFORMATION

Arrival and Dismissal

1. Students should plan to arrive at school at 8:30 A.M. Supervision is **not** provided on the grounds prior to **8:30 A.M.**
2. Students who attend the breakfast program should arrive at **8:00 A.M. and not before.**
3. Parents who drive their children to school must park and walk with their child or drop them off at the corner where a crossing guard is present in order to reduce the potential danger. **Parents and students are NOT permitted to cross in the middle of the street or walk in between school buses.** Parents are not permitted to drop students off in areas designated for school buses.
4. Upon arrival, students shall report to their assigned area.
5. Students may not enter the building prior to the **8:30 A.M.** bell.
6. Students arriving at school late are ***expected to bring a written excuse.*** Students arriving **after 8:45 A.M.** are to report to the office for a late pass.
7. At dismissal, students are to leave the building via assigned exits. Students are expected to leave the grounds immediately unless they are involved in an after-school activity. **All adults must remain outside the building at dismissal.** Parents picking up children at dismissal should wait for them in the area assigned by building administration and escort children to the family vehicle.
8. No dogs are permitted on the premises.
9. Please do not ride bikes, e-bikes, scooters, skateboards, etc, on the playground or school property during pickup and arrival.
10. Prompt Pick-Up and Dismissal Safety: Dismissal is at 2:45 P.M. Staff supervision ends shortly after dismissal. Any student who is not picked up on time must be signed out from the main office by an adult who is listed on the Parent Portal and can provide a valid photo ID.

Because the school cannot provide extended after-school supervision, chronic late pick-ups present a safety concern. The district utilizes the following progressive process to address repeated late pick-ups:

After the 5th infraction: The parent/guardian will receive an official warning letter from the main office.

After the 10th infraction: A mandatory conference will be scheduled with the Building Administration and School Counselor/Social Worker to develop a formal After-School Dismissal Plan.

After the 15th infraction: A letter will be sent to the District Attendance Officer requesting formal intervention and review.

Emergency Threshold: If a student has not been picked up by **4:00 P.M.** on a regular school day or by **2:00 P.M.** on an abbreviated session day, and the school has been unable to reach a parent, guardian, or any designated emergency contact, school administration may contact the Carteret Police Department or the New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P) to ensure the student's safety and well-being.

11. Bus students are expected to board buses in an orderly manner and conduct themselves on buses in accordance to bus safety rules. Students may only ride their assigned bus, no changes are allowed. Bus drivers and/or school administration may assign students to specific seats on the bus.
12. The school must be notified **in writing** if there are any **changes in the adult who will be picking up** your child. Your child **will not be dismissed to anyone** other than a person listed as an authorized pick-up on the Parent Portal. A written note must be provided with any change in dismissal procedures, person picking up, or how a child is going home (bus, walker, etc). **All Adults picking up must bring a photo ID**
13. Parents are responsible for providing lunch for their children. Lunch can either be brought to school or purchased through the school lunch program. The cost of full pay breakfast is \$1.10 and the cost of full pay lunch is \$3.00. If a child accumulates \$6.00 of non-payment, he or she will be provided with a jelly or cheese sandwich school lunch until the account has been paid in full. **Please fill out a NEW lunch application each year for each child to avoid charges. Lunch applications do not roll over and must be filled out every year.**

Student ID Cards

There is a replacement cost of \$5.00 for any lost student ID.

Dress and Grooming

All students in Grades PreK-4 will be expected to report to school in compliance with the uniform dress policy indicated below:

1. Polo/Button Down Shirt: Plain Navy Blue or White shirt (Short or long-sleeve) Turtleneck shirts may be worn, but must match the color shirt. The shirts may not have any images, logos, stripes, etc.
2. Pants, Shorts, Skirts, Capris, or Skorts, Jumpers: Khaki (Skirts must not be shorter than two inches above the knee.)
3. Shoes: Brown or Black School Shoes and / or Sneakers ***Crocs are not allowed.***
4. Gym (**Only to be worn on gym days**): Navy Blue Sweats (Top & Bottom) or Navy Blue T-Shirt and Navy Blue Basketball (Gym) Shorts
5. Optional items that may be worn: Navy Blue Cardigan Sweater, Navy Blue Vest, Navy Blue Tie (Boys & Girls). **Hoodies are NOT acceptable to be worn during the school day since they are not included in the uniform dress code policy.**
6. White t-shirts or undershirts are not acceptable attire and are not in compliance with the dress code policy.
7. Hats are not to be worn in the building, on your head or on your person.

Phone calls will be made to parents/caregivers to bring appropriate clothing to school if your child violates the dress code.

Pre-K students will be permitted to wear the following uniforms for EVERYDAY use. This is ONLY for our Pre-K students. All other grades will wear the standard uniform, daily. Pre-K students may wear:

1. Standard uniform for everyone- Navy Blue or White Polo Shirt / Khaki Pants/Shorts or Skirt
2. Navy Blue T-shirt & Navy Blue Gym (Basketball style) Shorts for warm months
3. Navy Blue Sweatshirt & Navy Blue Sweatpants for winter months

The atmosphere of the school has a definite effect on the learning process. This atmosphere is affected by the appearance of the students. Students' dress and appearance also have an effect on their behavior. Students' dress, personal appearance, and cleanliness, like their conduct, should reflect a sensitivity to and respect for others. **The following dress code applies to Dress Down Days only:**

1. Proper footwear must be worn at all times. Proper footwear includes sneakers and shoes. Flip flops, Crocs, or backless shoes are not to be worn to school, as they are a safety hazard to the wearer. Heelies are not permitted in school, with or without the wheels.
2. Articles of clothing displaying inappropriate writing, pictures, or slogans are prohibited. Clothing considered unhealthy, unsafe, or distracting will not be permitted.
3. Tank-tops, halters, and tube-tops are not permitted in school. The width of the shoulder straps must be a minimum of three fingers in length.
4. Anything that is excessively tight, or bares the midriff is not permitted in school. Shorts and skirts shall be mid-thigh or longer in length.

Book Care/Supplies

1. The Board of Education provides books free of charge for classroom work. Students are expected to take reasonable care of any books issued to them. These are on **loan** to students.
2. Books shall be kept free of writing and other markings.
3. The **student** will be responsible for lost books and books which have been abused.
4. Students are to come to class prepared with pen, pencil, paper and necessary books.
5. Fines will be assessed for damaged books and Chromebooks at any time of the school year as follows:

Fine	Chromebook Cost	iPad Cost	MiFi Hotspot
Repairable Damage (1st offense)	\$75	\$100	
Repairable Damage (2nd offense)	\$125	\$150	
Non-repairable Damage	\$325	\$400	
Loss or Theft	\$325	\$400	
Damage, Loss or Theft per incident			\$99

**** The charge for a lost or broken charger will be \$50.00.****

6. Students are required to follow the acceptable use policy for Chromebooks, and will be held responsible for damages to their Chromebook, including fines.
7. A lost book must be paid for immediately.
8. The end-of-year report card will NOT be available for viewing on the Parent Portal if there are any outstanding fines due for any books.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

In order for our school to fulfill its responsibility to educate our students, the school has the general power and obligation to make reasonable rules designed to promote an atmosphere where learning can take place effectively and to discipline students in a reasonable manner when those rules are violated. The school is said to act “in loco parentis”, that is, in the place of the parent with respect to the supervision of students’ education and conduct while they are in school or on school grounds.

GENERAL RULES

- Students are not permitted to sell raffle tickets or goods of any kind in school without prior authorization from the principal.
- Students are expected to be prepared for class (including being in uniform).
- Students are not permitted to re-enter the building after dismissal for forgotten articles without reporting to the office first with an adult.
- Students are not permitted to wear sneakers with laces untied (safety).
- Students are not permitted to chew gum in school.
- Students are not permitted to wear hats inside the school building, on their heads or on their person.
- Students are not permitted to use personal electronic devices or toys during the school day unless explicitly authorized by the school administration. This includes, but is not limited to: cell phones, smartwatches, tablets, handheld gaming consoles, wireless earbuds/headphones, trading cards (e.g., Pokémon), and personal toys or fidget items. All such items must remain powered off and stored in the student's backpack.
- Students are not permitted to use profanities or obscenities.
- Students are not permitted to deface, attempt to deface or destroy school property.
- Students are expected to be obedient and respectful towards adults in authority.
- Students are not permitted to harass or threaten others. Verbal comments meant to mock, humiliate, or embarrass a peer—frequently referred to by students as "roasting"—are not permitted. The defense of "just joking" or "it wasn't serious" will not be accepted if the behavior causes distress to another student or disrupts the learning environment.
- Students are not permitted to bring any peanut butter or nut products to school.
- **Students are not permitted to bring in food/baked goods to share with peers during the school day, for celebrations, or during lunch. Birthday celebrations may be celebrated with a guest reader, stickers, pencils, etc.**

Expectations for Student Behavior

We, the staff and students of the elementary schools, agree that positive student commitment and behavior are essential to effective learning. All students should behave in ways that enhance the social relationships of the school. With this in mind, it is expected that all students:

1. Demonstrate good citizenship.
2. Demonstrate respect for people and property.
3. Take responsibility for their behavior and learning.
4. Obey all district and bus regulations.
5. Meet the requirements of each class.
6. Complete work and assignments on time.
7. Demonstrate the ability to work together and share responsibilities.
8. Demonstrate proper behavior, not only in the classroom with their teachers, but also with substitute teachers, teacher assistants, aides, bus drivers, and all school personnel.
9. Demonstrate acceptable conduct in all areas of the school building, as well as, on school-grounds, at the bus stop, to and from the bus stop, on the bus, to and from school for walkers, and on school trips.

Violations of Student Code of Conduct

The following incidents are a violation of our school's Code of Conduct and may result in disciplinary consequences. Columbus School follows a progressive discipline model, in which disciplinary responses are based on the nature and severity of the behavior, as well as the student's age, developmental level, prior disciplinary history, and individual circumstances. Consequences may include an administrative conference, parent conference, lunch detention, after school detention, out of school suspension, loss of privileges, confiscation, a school counseling intervention, or other disciplinary actions, as deemed appropriate.

- **Abusive Language-** including purposeful, malicious use of profanity, obscenities, or targeted insults disguised as jokes or "roasting."
- **Arson**
- **Bus Incident**
- **Cheating/Plagiarism**
- **Continued and Willful Disobedience** - including continued inappropriate interactions with staff members or peers
- **Cutting Class** - including roaming the halls without a pass or walking out of class without the teacher's permission
- **Disruptive/Disrespectful Behavior** - in class, during assemblies, recess, field trips, on the bus, etc.
- **Dress Code Violation**
- **Electronic Device Violation**
- **Excessive Lateness to Class**
- **Excessive Lateness to School**
- **Fighting**
- **Inappropriate Physical Contact with Another Student** - including hitting, punching, slapping, pinching, biting, shoving, kicking, etc.
- **Inappropriate Behavior/Interaction** - including disrespect toward an administrator, teacher, paraprofessional aide, administrative assistant, custodian, or peer
- **Inappropriate Language**
- **Inappropriate Online Activity that disrupts the learning environment, including social media, text, group chats and email.**
- **Insubordination**
- **Left School Grounds**
- **Missed Detention**
- **Multiple Infractions**
- **Not Wearing ID Badge**
- **Physical Assault**
- **Possession of a Weapon**
- **Safety Hazard** - including the intent to hurt another and/or endangering self or other or injuring another student
- **Sexual Assault**
- **Stealing**
- **Threat-** including bullying, harassment and/or intimidation of others, social exclusion, and persistent targeted teasing ("roasting") of others, whether in person or online.
- **Vandalism** - including destruction of school property or the property of another
- **Violated School Policy/Rules** - including any other behavior determined by the administration to be disruptive to the educational process.

Time Out Removal

Any student engaging in disruptive behavior, which is deemed by administration to be excessive and/or creates a danger to that student or others, shall be immediately removed to an alternate location to be established by the administration. The student can only be returned to the regular educational environment after a meeting with the appropriate administrator/building personnel. Removals of this nature shall be documented by the administration and the parent/guardians shall be informed.

Elementary School Procedures for After School Detention

Students may be assigned Central Detention. Each of the elementary schools shall establish an after school detention for Grades K-2 from 2:50 PM - 3:25 PM and for Grades 3-4 from 2:50 PM - 3:45 PM and may only be assigned by administrators. The Principal shall have the authority to cancel after school detention on any given day

providing circumstances so dictate. Teachers shall fill out a referral slip and send it to the main office. An administrator shall then determine what action is warranted. If detention is assigned, a copy of the referral, notifying the parent of the detention will be sent home at least 24 hours in advance by the administrator. The student shall by way of form, carry notification home. The referral must be returned, signed by the parent before the detention date. Signature by a parent does not admit approval, but rather that the parent is aware of the detention and that the child will be staying after school. If the form is not returned, the parent/guardian or emergency contact will be informed that the student is being detained and will be dismissed at the assigned time for respective grade levels. Any student refusing to report, or missing a detention for the **first time**, shall be assigned an additional day of detention. Any student refusing to report, or missing detention for a **second time**, shall be subject to the district suspension policy.. If a student is absent on the day he/she is scheduled to report to the detention center, or if school is canceled because of inclement weather, the student will be expected to report to detention on their first day back to school or on the first day that school reconvenes.

Attendance

Regular attendance at school is vital for a successful education. If your child is out for illness, please provide a medical note to excuse their absence. Please be mindful of the following procedures for unexcused student absences:

1. Once a student accumulates **four (4) unexcused absences**, the school must send a letter to the parent/guardian advising parent of such and require the parent to meet with a school administrator and guidance counselor/social worker **to develop an action plan to address patterns of unexcused absences**. For students with disabilities, the CST must be involved to intervene and also to ensure that the action plan is in accordance with the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).
2. Once a student accumulates between **five and nine (5 – 9) unexcused absences**, the building administrator is to notify the Attendance Officer. The Attendance Officer will send a letter to the parent advising that action will be taken by the office if the child does not attend school.
3. The school must continue to investigate (along with the parent) the cause of the unexcused absences, revising the action plan by establishing outcomes based upon the student's needs and specify the interventions for achieving the outcomes, supporting the student's return to school and regular attendance.
4. For cumulative unexcused absences of **ten (10) or more**, the student, between the ages of six and sixteen, is truant pursuant to NJSA 18A:38-27, and the school district shall:
 - a. Make a mandatory referral to the court program required by the New Jersey Administrative Office of the Courts.
 - b. Make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parents of the mandatory referral
 - c. Continue to consult with the parent and the involved agencies to support the student's return to school and regular attendance
 - d. Cooperate with law enforcement and other authorities and agencies, as appropriate
 - e. Proceed in accordance with NJSA 18A:38-28 through 31, Article 3B, Compelling Attendance at School.
 - f. For students with disabilities, the attendance plan and punitive and remedial procedures set forth shall be in accordance with the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).
5. Unexcused absences from school or from classes within the school day shall subject a pupil to the disciplinary rules of the Board which may include the denial of a pupil's participation in co-curricular activities and/or athletic competition. A student is considered **chronically absent** when they are absent for 10% or more of the school year, regardless of whether the absences are excused or unexcused. Students who accumulate 20 or more absences may be considered for retention in accordance with district policy and after a review of their overall academic progress, attendance history, and individual circumstances.
6. Excused absences include: illnesses covered by a physician's note, medical appointment of child that cannot be scheduled outside of the school day (**a doctor's note must be issued for that day**), documented bereavement(immediate family member), & religious days of observance as recognized by the state of New Jersey. In compliance with NJ State Code, an absence **cannot be excused** due to illness of a sibling or parent/caregiver. An absence due to illness that does not require a physician or medical visit is also unexcused. **Family vacations or trips are not excused. Such absences will be considered unexcused** and be subject to the above-stated procedures.

Tardiness

After 8:45 AM, students are considered tardy.

- After the 5th infraction, the student will receive a verbal warning.

- After the 10th infraction, the student will receive one day of detention (Gr. 3-4) and a parent conference.
- After the 15th infraction, a letter will be sent to the District Attendance Officer requesting a possible court appearance.

Field Trip Procedure/Extra Curricular Activities

If a student has served more than four (4) detentions at the time of the collection of trip fees or the date of the trip, that student will not be able to go on the school trip. Students may have one (1) served detention removed for every ten (10) consecutive school days where detention is not received.

If a student has two (2) or more suspensions at the time of collection of trip fees or the date of the trip, that student will not be able to go on the school trip. Students may have one (1) suspension day removed for every twenty (20) consecutive school days where suspension or detention is not received.

If a student demonstrates inappropriate behavior over the course of the year, the child may be excluded from the extra-curricular activities as determined by the building administration.

Note:

The parent/guardian has the right to appeal the decision to exclude the child from an activity/event due to a disciplinary action. The parent must submit a written request to the building principal requesting a hearing. The hearing will be conducted in a timely fashion.

Elementary School Discipline-Suspension Policy

Realizing that positive approaches to acceptable behavior are usually more effective and always more desirable, it is however, sometimes necessary to penalize students for violations of school regulations to ensure the good order of the school and to teach consequences of disruptive behavior.

The consequences for students who engage in inappropriate and disruptive behavior in grades kindergarten through grade four shall include, but are not limited to, an assigned after-school detention or a suspension, which would temporarily remove a student from the school environment, as stated in district policy.

Further realizing that disciplining a student either by after school detentions or by exclusion from school is a serious decision that impacts both the student and/or the parent/guardian, it is imperative that the decision to assign detention or suspend be substantive and procedurally fair. The administration shall establish, and the board shall approve, specific procedures for dealing with suspension cases. Regulations ensuring due process to all students before a suspension is imposed shall be developed with the advice of the board attorney and shall include at least:

A. Informing the parent/guardian of the charges against the student.

B. Giving the parent/guardian an opportunity to reply to said charges.

These regulations shall also include safeguards for the dismissal of students suspended from school, procedures for calling an immediate conference with parents/guardians, limitations in the length of suspensions, and specifics for the reinstatement of students.

Any student who commits an assault (as defined by N.J.S.A. 2C: 12-1) upon a board member, teacher, administrator or other employee of the board of education shall be suspended from school immediately according to procedural due process and suspension rules.

School Funds Online

Please note, the Carteret School District now utilizes an online payment system to collect funds for field trips, Chromebook/technology fees, fundraisers, etc. You must register for this program in order to make payments. Please see the following website for more information: [School Cash](#)

Safety Drills

There are two safety drills that are performed each month in all schools, one fire drill and one security drill. Guardians will be notified after a security drill is completed that normal activities have resumed. *This notification does not apply to fire drills, which also take place monthly.*