

P.S. 24

THE SPUYTEN DUYVIL SCHOOL

660 West 236th Street Bronx, New York 10463

Steven Schwartz, Principal
Nina Amster, Assistant Principal
Amanda Paredes, Assistant Principal
James Kelly, Assistant Principal

Telephone: 718-796-8845
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www.ps24school.org

Handbook for Parents and Guardians

2025-2026

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome back! I hope you and your family had a wonderful summer. We all look forward to a successful and enjoyable school year. This handbook contains information that is important for you to know to ensure that your child/children achieve their highest academic level and that you can support them and the school in achieving success for all.

In order for our students to do their best in school and to achieve at the highest level, we must work together as a team. Working together both at home and at school is essential in promoting student achievement. We have high expectations for all our students. We expect students to follow the school rules, maintain consistent attendance, come to school on time, and to do their best work.

This handbook provides basic information that is important to you as a parent/guardian and as a member of our school community. Not all information about our school or the New York City Department of Education can be provided in such a handbook. Additional information will be provided to families throughout the school year and on our school website.

Three important resources for parents/guardians to utilize are:

<https://schools.nyc.gov> (NYCDOE website)

www.ps24school.org (P.S.24's School website)

<https://www.schoolsaccount.nyc/> (NYC Schools account)

- provides a way of accessing key information about your child's progress including report cards, bus information, and attendance data)

I hope you find this document helpful and wish you all a wonderful school year. Thank you for your cooperation. I look forward to watching your child/children grow socially, emotionally and academically.

GO TEAM 24!

Steven Schwartz
Principal

sschwartz@schools.nyc.gov

P.S. 24 Vision and Mission Statement

Vision Statement

We envision a school community where every student is capable of learning and thriving academically, socially, and emotionally. In our vision, students graduate not only with strong academic skills, but also with the confidence, empathy, critical thinking, and resilience necessary to navigate life's challenges with integrity and purpose. We believe in fostering excellence and strength born of resilience—where students learn from struggle, persevere through setbacks, and emerge stronger.

Our graduates become thoughtful, informed, and engaged members of society: confident in their voices, grounded in inquiry, and motivated by curiosity. They innovate, collaborate, and contribute to a diverse world—with hearts committed to justice, minds open to perspective, and spirits ready to lead.

Mission Statement

Building on proven success—like that of **P.S. 24 Spuyten-Duyvil**, where 89 % of students score proficient in math (versus the NYC average of 46 %) and 89 % in reading (versus 49 %) our mission is to:

- **Affirm the potential of every learner**, ensuring that every child—regardless of background or ability—is recognized as capable of excelling academically, socially, and emotionally, and is supported to do so.
- **Cultivate critical thinkers**, teaching students *how to think*, not *what to think*, through **authentic inquiry**, open-ended questions, project-based learning, and meaningful dialogue.
- **Prioritize academic rigor and innovation**: delivering a curriculum that challenges students intellectually, deepens conceptual understanding, and meets high standards—guided by innovative teaching practices and continuous improvement.
- **Integrate social-emotional learning (SEL)** across the school day so students learn to manage emotions, build respectful relationships, and resolve conflict peacefully—fostering emotionally resilient students equipped to grow from setbacks
- **Put excellence and resilience at the core of school culture**, teaching that striving matters—that effort and perseverance lead to achievement and personal growth.
- **Partner with families and community**, because as P.S. 24 demonstrates through its engaged PTA and strong school-home communication, a collaborative community is vital to the holistic growth of students
- **Invest in educator growth and leadership**, recognizing that strong, experienced, and supported teachers—96 % have 3+ years experience, 98 % say leadership is effective—are instrumental in delivering high-quality instruction and nurturing student resilience

Why This Approach Works

- **Evidence-based success**: Schools like P.S. 24 show that affirming every student's capacity yields exceptional test results, strong attendance (94 % vs. 91 % citywide), minimal chronic absenteeism (17 % vs. 35 %), and very low suspensions (0 % vs. 1 %)
- **Critical-thinking focus builds lifelong learners**: Inquiry-based teaching creates learners who question, connect, reflect, and contribute—more prepared for civic engagement and rapidly changing careers.
- **Resilience yields excellence**: Embracing challenge fosters grit, self-regulation, and perseverance—traits we prioritize as central to success in school and beyond.



Table of Organization

P.S. 24 The Spuyten Duyvil School
Steven Schwartz, Principal
Nina Amster, Assistant Principal (Ext. 2110)
Amanda Paredes, Assistant Principal (Ext. 1063)
James Kelly, Assistant Principal (Ext. 5016)

660 West 236th Street
Bronx, New York 10463
Telephone (718) 796-8845
PS24school.org

Tentative Table of Organization - As of 10/14/25 2025-2026 School Year

Location	Grade	ATS Code	Ext	Title	Location	Ext
KINDERGARTEN (6)				SBCSE		
131	Erin Levy	001		School Psychologist (Mono): Jessica Lugo	West Wing	
103	Bonnie Roth	002		School Psychologist (Bil): Daniela Mercado	West Wing	
117/116	Kathleen Sullivan	003		Social Worker: Surany Guerrero	West Wing	
101	Iliriana Juncevic	004		Social Worker (Bil): Aileen Nazario	West Wing	
102	Aleashia Castello/ Caitlin Wallace (ICT)	005		Family Worker: Alexander Ferreira	West Wing	
114	Lily Velasquez / Rosanna Surun Rivera (ICT)	006		Clerical Associate: Julie Diaz	West Wing	
FIRST GRADE (6)				Clusters		
133	Maria Yannaco	101		Art: Lauren Laporte	214	
135	Jackie Lunney	102		Art: Frida Piazza	Push-In	
139	Ciara McGinty	103		Music: Andrea Wood	Stage	
136	Elsa Gilheany	104		Science: Renee Walker-David	Push-In	
134	Alyssa Dugan/Johnna DeRosa (ICT)	105		Science: Dana Nystrom	B-16	
142	Melanie Pearson/ Deb Bernstein (ICT)	106		Tech / Library : (Vacant)	Push-In	
115	Julia Rauscher	012		PE: Tyler Ilie / John Dugan	Gym	
SECOND GRADE (5)				Dean/ Conflict Resolution Wendy Maldonado	West Wing	
140	Martin TeBrake	201		Data Specialist / Programmer: Stephanie Walmsley	CL-5	
202	Elizabeth Cohen	202		Community Schools Office: Monique Ramirez	222B	
137	Tara Butler	203		STAFF		
212	Victoria Franek / Jenna Leonard (ICT)	204		.5 AIS / .5 ENL: Hare Qarri	CL-3	
138	Caylee Premoli/ Kayla Petrilli (ICT)	205		Guidance: Fran Hage	106b	
CL-2	Jenny Andolina	123		IEP / Intervention Teacher: Elizabeth Au-Coleman	CL-3	
THIRD GRADE (6)				ENL: Elizabeth Esterling	141	
204	Anita Maher (Math)	301		RELATED SERVICE PROVIDERS		
217	Ariel Nunez (ELA)	302		Speech: Linda Apple	223B	
239	Renee Young	303		Speech: Leslie Zimmer	222A	
201	Gina Davino	304		Speech: Lianne Doctor	CL-1	
215	Jeanine Murphy / Diana Feeney (ICT)	305		OT: Diana Christopher	223A	
203	Cara DiNapoli/ Jaime Lorenzo (ICT)	306		OT: Katherine Starr	223A	
CL-4	Giselle Rivera	234		PT: Pam Diamond	CL-1	
FOURTH GRADE (5)				EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS		
234	Marcia Reidy	401		Arlene Rosado	Brandy Torres	
236	Melissa O'Neill (ELA)	402		Alexandria Lopiano	Janeli Suriel	

231	Lindsay Adelson (Math)	403		Lisa Mayo	Julissa Acevedo
238	Claire Marley/ Hannah Walter (ICT)	404		Kevin O'Brien	Vivinasviy Polanco
233	Nikki Kanze/ Tiffany Roberston (ICT)	405		Francisco Betancourt	
213	Veronica Doherty	345		Jaileen Vargas	
FIFTH GRADE (4)				Cynthia Martinez	
235	Kerri-Ann Wallace (ELA)	501		Patrick Kenny	
240	Samuel Leichter (Math)	502		Rezwana Abbas	
242	Rachel Bingman (ELA)	503		Sussy Ramirez	
237	Kyle Cassidy (Math) Allison Reale (ICT)	504		Tracy Edlow	
241	Keara O'Connor (ACES)	543		Amanda Pichardo	
SUPPORT STAFF				SCHOOL AIDES	
Main Off	Parent Coordinator: Keishon Cruickshank (pending DOE approval)		1122	Teresa Majewska	
Main Off	Pupil: Evangelina Meletrich		1123	Giannoula Stavrou	
Main Off	Finance Sec: Rosena Rivkin		1121	Donika Trihas	
106	Nurse		1060 / 1	Manuela Vargas	
Kitchen	Josephine Delaney			Izaya Allen	
Kitchen	Dietician: Price				
108	Fireman: Jose Ocasio			Leave Replacements / Per Diem Subs	
206	Faculty Lounge			Dave Buonocore, Niashaly Rivkin	
Entrance	School Safety				

School Hours:

Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 2:20 p.m. for all students

PERIOD/LUNCH SCHEDULE

Period 1	8:05 – 8:55	Period 5 Lunch- 2nd & 3rd	11:37 – 12:27
Period 2	8:58 – 9:48	Period 6 Lunch- 4th & 5th	12:30 – 1:20
Period 3	9:51 – 10:41	Period 7	1:23 – 2:13
Period 4 Lunch- K & 1st	10:44 – 11:34	Dismissal	2:13 – 2:20

1. Contacting School Personnel:

Nina Amster, Assistant Principal. 718-796-8845 (Ext 2110)

Amanda Paredes, Assistant Principal 718-796-8845 (Ext 1063)

James Kelly, Assistant Principal , 718-796-8845 (Ext 5016)

Fran Hage, Student Support (Guidance and Counseling) 718-796-8845 (Ext 1062)

Surany Guerrero, Social Worker assigned to the School Based Support Team, 718-796-8845 (Ext 2274)

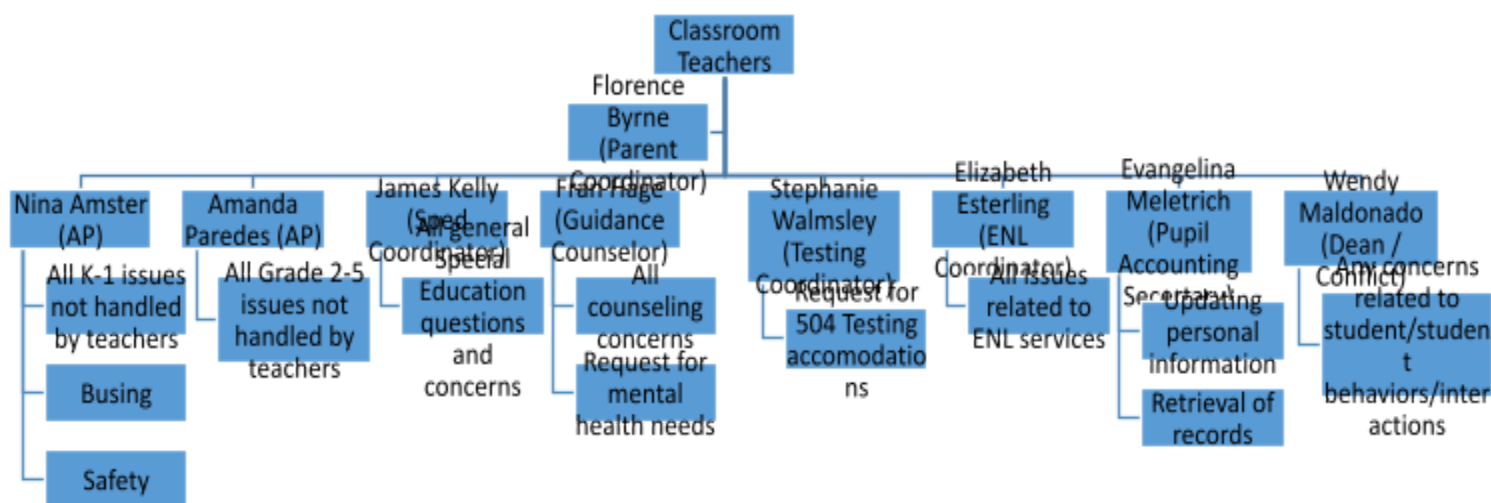
Keishon Cruickshank, Parent Coordinator (pending DOE approval), 718-796-8845 (Ext 1122)

There are many ways to stay in contact about upcoming events and activities at PS 24. Families are encouraged to sign up to use applications used by their child's teacher(s) such as Class Dojo, read the monthly newsletter/calendar of events and review the school marquee outside the building. It is also advisable that each family signs up for the PS 24 app which can be downloaded from your phone's respective app store.

Class Dojo is widely used across the school and provides parents with updates on what is happening at school. Parents can review their child's progress with student reports, and communicate simply and safely with their child's teacher. If you have any concerns or questions regarding your child's learning and progress, do not hesitate to contact your child's classroom teacher immediately. You should receive a reply within 2 business days.

When communicating a problem, the first point of contact should be contacting the classroom teacher and/or Parent Coordinator (pending DOE approval), Mr. Keishon Cruickshank at KCruickshank2@schools.nyc.gov. You can also refer to our Ladder of Communication that was created and approved by our School Leadership Team in 2018.

Ladder of communication for Parents



- 1- Please note that all parent concerns **MUST** be given to your child's classroom teacher first.
- 2- If the classroom teacher feels that they cannot handle the issue, please escalate the issue with our Parent Coordinator, Mr.Cruickshank (pending DOE approval). She will be responsible for the original intake of most concerns that cannot be addressed by the classroom teacher.
- 3- If Mr.Cruickshank cannot address the matter, she will e-mail the parent back and copy the appropriate staff member (see above) to support the situation.

All visitors to the school building including parents must use the building's Main Entrance at all times, present ID and sign in at the security desk. Unless approved ahead of time by the administration, parents will not be allowed into the building.

2. **Arrival and Dismissal Procedures**

Arrival

1. All Kindergarten students should enter through the main entrance. They will report directly to their classrooms and wait by their classroom doors.
2. All students in Grade 1-3 should enter through the doors across from the library on 235th street. Students will enter through this entrance and report immediately to the auditorium.
3. All 4th and 5th grade students should enter through Exit 12 (on the ramp). They will report directly to the Cold Lunchroom.

During arrival, parents should not expect a meeting with the teachers, as the teachers are preparing for the day with their students. If you need to speak to a teacher, please send a note or email your teacher to request an appointment. We realize that parents have questions for staff members but speaking with them during arrival (and dismissal) times can create an unsafe situation as they must be attending to their students.

We appreciate your cooperation in making sure we have a safe and orderly arrival.

To assure safety during morning arrival, cars should line up at the curb to discharge passengers. Please proceed to your designated drop-off area; this will move traffic more efficiently. Children should be let out of cars on the curb side only. Please be sure to stop for a bus that has flashing lights at the top and a STOP sign visibly deployed. **Passing a bus under these conditions is against the law and subject to heavy fines.** It is always better to park in a legal spot near the school (double parking is illegal). Since there is no alternate side parking during arrival and dismissal, there are plenty of spots available within a comfortable walking distance from school.

Dismissal

1. All families should go to their child's dismissal area.
 - Grades K: Exit 6
 - Grade 1 & 2: Upper Yard
 - Grade 3: Exit 9
 - Grades 4-5: Lower Yard (Please do not wait on the ramp)
2. You must have an ID out to pick up your child.
3. Please make every effort to pick up your child on time. The contractual end of the in-person day for staff is 2:20 pm. Any children who are not picked up by 2:20 pm will be brought to the hallway outside of Room 116. You can pick your child up via **Exit 6**. If your child is not picked up by 2:50pm, they will be brought to the main office and parents will have to come through the main entrance to sign their child out. All children must be picked up by 3:00pm

Only students who are in grades 3, 4 or 5 can walk home unaccompanied. Signed parental permission in writing is required before students will be released.

In order to have a successful dismissal, please arrive on time, don't double park, and avoid crowding around the exits. **This is a particularly busy time when we need to make sure all children are dismissed properly.** Parents should not expect to speak with teachers at dismissal. The teachers must ensure the safety of all the students.

Students who do not have permission to walk home on their own will only be dismissed to the pick-up person who has been designated for that purpose by the parent in writing (by parent on the first day, letter from parent, Emergency Blue Card). We don't accept verbal dismissal directions given by a child, nor do we dismiss a child to a person who has not been designated to do so by a parent, even if the child identifies the person or the person says the parent has an emergency. In the event a non-designated person wants to take a child home, we always call a parent to confirm at which point the parent must send an email. Verbal permission is not sufficient. If we

cannot reach a parent, the child remains in school until we do contact the parent. If there is a person(s) that may not have access to your child, you must email this information to Ms. Amster, along with documentation from the courts and be put on the blue card as well.

If the way your child is dismissed on a particular day is changing, you must notify your child's teacher in writing or by email the day before the change will be taking place. Teachers are not always able to check email during the day. If there is an emergency and you must change your child's way of dismissing at the last minute, you must call the main office before 1:30 pm and if the person is not on the blue card, you will be asked to send an email. There will be no changes to dismissal granted after 1:30 pm because classes are already in the process of preparing for dismissal and getting picked up for buses or the after school program.

This policy applies to bus children as well. If you do not want your child on the bus on a particular day you must notify the teacher or main office in advance and the request must be in writing. Children will not be signed out off the bus line or by the back door. Our number one priority is your child's safety. Having parents pull children off buses or the bus line creates a potential safety risk.

2A. Visitors/Safety

All visitors must have a pre-scheduled appointment, which must be approved by administration beforehand. Visitors must sign in at the security desk, which is in the main lobby. In order to be signed in, all visitors must present proper, valid identification. **NO VISITOR WILL BE PERMITTED TO ENTER THE BUILDING WITHOUT PROPER IDENTIFICATION AND A VALID REASON TO ENTER.** All visitors will be directed/escorted to the Main Office. Please note, no visitor will be permitted to visit a classroom or to talk to a staff member during the instructional day without a prior appointment. It is extremely important that all who visit our building accept, embrace, and follow these vital procedures; the safety and security of our children depend upon it. Failure to follow this policy will result in having restricted access to the building. Unless directed otherwise, please enter and exit using the school's main door. (Other doors are alarmed and **will** sound.) Please inform teachers ahead of time if you are planning to pick up your child before regular dismissal. Your child will be brought out to you and you will sign them out after being verified in front of the building. **No students can be picked up after 1:30 p.m. unless you have an emergency and notify the main office.**

3. Attendance/Lateness

- The New York State Department of Education has set a standard of 92% attendance for promotion to the next grade level. Attendance is an essential component of learning and overall success in school. It is of utmost importance for parents to ensure that their children come to school on time every day.
- Parents need to plan/schedule their vacations and other family outings during the outlined vacation days by the Department of Education. Medical appointments should be scheduled after school hours. In case of an absence, parents need to send a note to school the next day of attendance with an explanation for such absence(s).

Excusable reasons for absences include:

- 1 - Personal illness of the student
- 2 - Serious illness in the immediate family
- 3 - Death in the immediate family
- 4- Religious Observances

All absences for other reasons are unexcused.

An excused absence is still an absence on the student's record.

- Any child that arrives after 8:10 a.m. will have lateness recorded on his/her permanent record. It is extremely important to remember that it is the **law** for students to attend school daily. Therefore, if you need to pick up your child before the instructional day ends you must have a valid medical excuse.
- All students who arrive after 8:00 am are expected to report directly to their classroom and enter through the main entrance.
- Teachers will take attendance at 8:10 am and mark students “present who are in their classroom at that time. Any students arriving after 8:10 am will be marked late. (This does not include students who ride the bus to school).
- Studies show that the time a child spends in school directly correlates with academic achievement. This is why we encourage children to remain in the school for the entire day unless there are extenuating circumstances that may result in needing to pick up your child early. Please follow the protocol below:
 - If you plan to pick up your child early, please send a note that morning to your child’s teacher. Your child will be brought out to you and you will sign them out in front of the building.
 - There will be no early pick up after 1:30 pm. This is a transition time and if you arrive at school after 1:30 pm you will be asked to wait until dismissal to pick up your child.
 - In case of an emergency, **please notify the office ahead of time** so that we can have your child packed up and ready. If you come to school early to pick up your child and your child is at lunch it may take longer to get them. For this reason please be aware of your child’s lunch time and if possible do not pick up children during this time:

Kindergarten and 1 st Grade	10:44 – 11:34 am
2 nd and 3 rd Grade	11:37 – 12:27 pm
4 th and 5 th Grade	12:30 – 1:20 pm

4. **School Conferences**

September 17	Parent Night (In Person)
November 6	Parent-Teacher Conferences (virtual)
March 5	Parent-Teacher Conferences (virtual)
May 7	Parent Night (virtual)

Again, teachers will be available to make appointments with parents to discuss their child’s progress and performance. Please contact your child’s teacher to make an appointment.

Questions to Consider Asking Your Child’s Teacher

- What is my child expected to learn, know, and do at this grade level?
- What does my child do well, and what does he or she struggle with? Can you give me examples?
- How do you know when my child is making progress and when he/she needs additional help?
- What are you doing to support and motivate him/her?
- How do you challenge my child when he/she is doing well at something?

- How do you support my child when he/she needs extra help?
- What does my child get excited about learning?
- What can I do at home to support him/her?
- Are there programs or services in the community that could also help my child?
- How many days of school has my student missed or arrived late?
- Does my child seem engaged or happy at school?
- Has he/she made friends?
- How does my child get along with classmates and adults?
- Does my child participate in class discussions and group activities?
- Are there times when my child is more or less engaged?

5. School – Wide Grading Policy

Grades are evaluative instruments which measure students' achievements, efforts, and extent of progress in their classes. The components of a grade should be academically oriented and reflect each student's competency in the course content. Grades are not tools of discipline, nor shall they be based on the student's attitudes or personalities.

All the following components shall contribute to the assessment of a student's academic performance: Classroom examinations, and quizzes; homework assignments; literacy tasks or portfolios; and classroom effort and participation. Attendance will be a factor in determining a student's grade to the extent that poor attendance prevents the student from participating in class activities, completing homework assignments and projects, taking examinations and quizzes, etc. The administration and staff of P.S. 24 feels that it is necessary and a best practice to create this policy and to provide this information to all stakeholders (parents, students, teachers, administration) to ensure transparency and equality in all staff members responsible for reporting grades. The school – wide grading policy is as follows:

Course Mark	Description	Numeric Equivalent	Pass/Fail Equivalent
E+	Excellent +	98-100	P
E	Excellent	95-97	P
E-	Excellent -	93-94	P
G+	Good +	88-92	P
G	Good	85-87	P
G-	Good -	83-84	P
S+	Satisfactory +	78-82	P
S	Satisfactory	75-77	P
S-	Satisfactory -	73-74	P
N+	Needs Improvement +	68-72	P
N	Needs Improvement	65-67	P
N-	Needs Improvement-	60-64	F
U	Unsatisfactory	55-59	F

For information on Promotional Standards, please review the following Chancellor's Regulation

<http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/05F5B0BC-4B78-401B-AFF8-13C0520C557D/0/A501.pdf>

Weight of Grading Policy

Final Assessments = 45%

This may include the final test, project, presentation, or task that incorporates all of the learning for the unit of study. The assessment should be a culmination of all prior assessments and class work that were a part of the unit of study to gauge the level of understanding for the entire unit of study. Examples may include, but not limited to:

- End of Unit Cumulative test
- End of Unit Project
- End of Unit Presentation
- Oral Presentation
- End of Unit Writing Assessments

Classwork Products = 45%

This includes all of the day-to-day assessments in the classroom. This may include on-demand tasks, projects, presentations, quizzes, homework. Examples may include, but not limited to:

- Short quizzes
- Published writing pieces

- Daily tasks
- Small Group work assignment

Class Participation = 10%

This includes the level of participation from a student. Participation may include contributing to a classroom discussion, contributing to group work, contributing to the classroom environment, staying on task. Examples may include, but not limited to:

- Consistently participating to group discussions
- Consistently providing input when working with a group of students
- Asking for help when needed / Providing help to peers when needed
- Contributing to a positive classroom environment that is conducive to high levels of learning

6. Parent Coordinator

Keishon Cruickshank is the Parent Coordinator (pending DOE approval) for our school. His job is to assist parents with their needs and concerns pertaining to their child's education. You may reach him at KCruickshank2@schools.nyc.gov.

7. NYC Schools Account

NYC Department of Education's "NYC Schools Account" is a way to access key information about your child's progress in school. With a NYC Schools Account, you will be able to view your child's attendance, grades, and contact information in one of ten languages on a computer, phone, or tablet.

All current families have received information on how to set up an account. New students and all Kindergarten students will receive information at the end of September. All parents who have not set up an account please contact Keishon Cruickshank, Parent Coordinator (pending DOE approval) at KCruickshank2@schools.nyc.gov or visit <https://www.schoolsaccount.nyc/>.

8. Periodic Assessments

All students in Grades Kindergarten through 5th are assessed in the Fall, Winter and Spring. These assessments give the teacher valuable information about the children they teach, such as how the class is doing on certain standards as a whole, how individual children scored with a percentage, and most importantly, information about how individual students answered each question. This information will be made available to all parents.

9. Parents / Teacher Association (PTA)

Please join! Your attendance at meetings, availability to volunteer at school, and your help in fundraising all contribute to the success of our school. There are many opportunities for parents to volunteer in our school through the PTA. The PTA Newsletter, *The Sounding Board*, has current information about school events.

In addition, the School Leadership Team meets monthly. This is an open meeting and all are welcome to attend. However, if you wish to speak at a School Leadership Meeting, requests must be made in writing in advance of the meeting.

The Parents' Page on the school website has current information about all school events.

10. Emergency Cards / Emergency Procedures

All parents of Kindergarten – Fifth Graders are required to fill out two emergency blue cards for each child. One is kept on file in our main office and one in the nurse's office. **If information entered on your emergency blue card changes you must immediately notify Evangelina Meletrich and come into the school to make the**

appropriate changes to the blue card in the main office so the information is on record. **We will not release a child to anyone who is not listed on the blue card.**

11. Trips

School trips are a part of instruction. All children are expected to go on them. Prior to each trip, we send home a Trip Permission Form. Please return it to school in a timely manner. If a child is scheduled for a trip, but doesn't have a permission slip, we cannot take verbal authorization over the phone.

12. Dress Policy

Children should dress appropriately for school. Students should also wear appropriate footwear as a safety precaution when engaging in physical education and/or lunch. Sneakers with roller wheels are not permitted.

13. Head Lice

The policy on lice and nits for all NYC public schools is as follows: students will not be excluded if they have nits (lice eggs). Students with head lice will continue to be excluded until they are lice-free. Excluded students will be examined for lice when they return to school to confirm that they remain free of lice.

When lice are reported in a classroom, our nurse is informed. A letter to all parents will be sent home informing them of the situation. The students in the classroom are then individually checked by volunteers for lice. If you do not want your child to be checked for lice, please go to our website (Notes Home Tab) or contact Keishon Cruickshank, Parent Coordinator (pending DOE approval) at 718-796-8845 ext. #1122 for an opt out form.

14. Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices (Updated)

Policy statement:

Students will not be permitted to use or access their personal internet-enabled electronic devices upon arrival at school until the end of the school day. This includes all cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, personal laptops, tablets, IPADS and any portable music, entertainment or gaming systems. The school day is defined as the period from the moment students enter the school building until the last class of the day ends, including during lunch and during all after-school programs. The school day starts at 7:35AM (breakfast program) and ends at 6:30pm (after-school dismissal). Students will be able to use only school/NYCPS-issued devices during the school day.

1. COLLECTION/STORAGE

- Upon arrival, students must power off their devices.
- Device Collection
 - A designated collection point, supervised by staff members, will be set as follows, between 7:35 and 8:00. The collection points will be as follows:
 - Grade K: By their respective classrooms
 - Grade 1-3: Upon entering the auditorium
 - Grade 4-5: By the Cold Lunchroom
 - At the end of the school day, devices will be distributed by school staff in the following manner:

- o Grade K: In their classrooms (during dismissal)
- o Grades 1-3: By the auditorium (Students escorted during dismissal)
- o Grade 4-5: By CL-5 (Retrieve on way to dismissal)
- o Students who were late or had their device confiscated at scanning, will have to pick up their device from the main office.
- o Students with approved early dismissal will retrieve their devices by the main office. **Students who are picked up early without advance warning will retrieve their devices the following day and will not be able to pick up their devices the same day.**
 - o **Multiple lateness will result in missed instruction and may lead to loss of device privileges**

2. EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

- In case of an emergency or exigent circumstances, parents or guardians can call the school's main office to speak to their child.
- In case of emergency or exigent circumstances, students may request to call their parents using the school's main office phone. Students may request this through their respective teacher(s).
- In case of emergency or exigent circumstances, the school will use the DOE messaging system to communicate information to parents or guardians (current practice).

3. EXCEPTIONS

- Students are allowed to use their device if they have an individualized education program (IEP) or 504 Plan that includes use of an internet-enabled device and do not have a DOE-issued device for such purposes.
- Parents/guardians must contact the school if a student requires an exception for reasons such as: medical monitoring/treatment s (for example to monitor blood sugar or other similar circumstances), if student is a caregiver, for approved language purposes (such as translation or interpretation services if no other means are available), or where otherwise required by law.
- The principal/designee may authorize use for an educational purpose.
- Exceptions will be processed and approved within 10 school days of request.

4. DISCIPLINE

- Students who use electronic devices in violation of the NYCPS [Discipline Code](#), the school's policy, Chancellor's Regulation A-413, and/or the NYCPS [Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy](#) ("IAUSP") will be subject to progressive discipline. This means that the disciplinary responses will escalate based on the nature and frequency of the violation. As provided in the State law, a student may not be suspended solely on the grounds that the student accessed a personal internet-enabled device in violation of school policy. Repeated incidents of insubordination (i.e. refusal to surrender or store device) **may** result in a suspension **if approved** by the Office of Safety and Youth Development.

5. OTHER: If lost or stolen

- In the unlikely event that an electronic device is stolen or damaged at school, parents can submit a claim to the Comptroller's Office. More information on submitting a claim is available on the [Comptroller's webpage](#).

We appreciate your cooperation in helping us maintain a focused and productive learning environment. If you have any questions or need further clarification regarding these policies, please do not hesitate to contact our Parent Coordinator, Ms. Byrne.

15. Toys

Conflicts often occur resulting from students bringing assorted toys into the school. Please keep in mind that toys, electronic games, stuffed animals and Pokemon cards are not permitted in the school building. This has been a long standing rule at the school. School is a learning environment and toys are a distraction. During lunch and recess these toys and cards become a source of unnecessary conflict. The school cannot be responsible for toys, electronic games, stuffed animals and Pokemon cards that are lost, taken, or broken. Valuable instructional time is being spent looking for missing items and resolving conflicts that result from having these items at school. There have also been some instances where children have put themselves in an unsafe situation because their focus was on these items. We are asking for your cooperation in ensuring that children do not bring any toys, electronic games, or Pokemon cards to school. If your child needs to bring in a non-school related item into the school (ex. sporting equipment for an after school program) please have your child keep the item(s) in their book bag.

16. Birthday Celebrations

We are happy to acknowledge student's birthdays and recognize that children would like to celebrate with their classmates. In order not to impede on instructional time, we ask that all birthdays are celebrated on the last Friday of each month at **1:30 p.m.** in your child's classroom. Please limit your child's celebration to a healthy snack (no sweets) for the class and keep in mind that school celebrations are not in place of a student's birthday party. Balloons and party bags are not acceptable. Celebrations are limited to the students and staff. Parents will not partake in these celebrations. Our Parents Association will supply parents with an approved snack list. **Please see the snack list on our school website under Quick Links www.ps24school.org.** Please note that failure to follow these guidelines will result in canceling the celebration. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

17. FOOD PROGRAM

All children eat lunch in school. No child may leave the building for lunch. Please check the school website at www.ps24school.org for the monthly lunch and breakfast menus.

All parents must fill out a lunch form, whether or not your child is going to be eating hot lunch. Certain funding is determined on how many lunch forms are returned from parents. Even though lunch is free for all children, it is imperative that you return this lunch form (increases funding for our school).

Hot Lunch - Free

Children may choose to have school lunch on any given day and don't need to sign up for it in advance.

Cold Lunch

Please note the following from the Parents Association Health and Safety Committee: It is becoming increasingly more important to cut down on garbage in our city. Our children should learn to take some responsibility in caring for their environment. Therefore, we ask for your cooperation with the following plan. Please send lunches in soft insulated bags and put contents (sandwiches, juice, etc.) in reusable plastic containers (more information is

available from the Parents Association Health and Safety Committee). Be sure beverage containers do not leak and instruct children to check this when they are finished with their lunch. Paper bags may be used as an alternative, but they are not desirable.

Do Not Send: hard lunch boxes,
glass containers of any kind
carbonated beverages

Do: label all bags and their contents with the child's name and class.

Breakfast Program

Our breakfast program begins on the first day of school and is available to all students at no cost. Students may attend our breakfast program which takes place between 7:35 am - 8:00 am Monday through Friday. Please drop students off at exit 1 located at the back of the school (across the street from the public library). Students will remain in the hot lunchroom until they are released to their classrooms at 8:00am.

Snack

Please send a healthy snack to school each day. We discourage pastries, candy, overly sweetened drinks, and chips. We encourage fresh fruit, cut up vegetables, healthy breads, and other such foods.

20. P.S. 24 DISCIPLINE CODE.

Please go to our website www.ps24school.org there is a link to the NYC Student Intervention and Discipline Code.

The standards set forth in the Discipline Code apply to behavior

- In school during school hours
- Before and after school, while on school property
- While traveling on vehicles funded by the NYC DOE
- At all school-sponsored events
- On other-than-school property when such behavior can be demonstrated to negatively affect the educational process or to endanger the health, safety, morals, or welfare of the school community. When misbehavior involves communication, gestures, or expressive behavior, the infraction applies to oral, written, or electronic communications, including but not limited to texting, e-mailing, and social networking.

The following are general guidelines:

- Parents and students must be respectful to the teachers, aides, support personnel, lunch supervisors and/or other students.
- Parents and students are to respect the rights of others. Parents and students threatening others will not be tolerated.
- Parents and students are to respect school property.
- Destroying or damaging furniture or other school property is not permitted.
- Pushing, shoving, and/or fighting of any kind, including play fighting will not be tolerated.
- Spitting, swearing, or using vulgar foul language is not permitted.
- Throwing food, rocks, snow, ice, and other non-playground objects is not permitted.
- Students are to refrain from bringing money, expensive games and toys to school.
- Weapons are never permitted at school nor on the school bus. This includes, but is not limited to, guns, of any sort (including pellet and BB guns), toys that resemble weapons, slingshots, chains, laser pointers, box cutters, and anything that can be used to inflict serious bodily injury.

Students that do not behave risk a range of interventions from parent teacher conference, classroom removal, up to and, including Principal's suspension or Superintendent's suspension.

Indoor Conduct

- Students are to walk orderly and quietly while indoors, including in the hallways and stairwells.

- During the lunch hour, students are to remain in their seats while eating. If a child needs to get out of their seat (request of water, restroom, etc.) they should raise their hand and wait for an adult supervisor to hear their request.
- Each student is responsible for cleaning up his/her area of the cafeteria table.
- Students are to use appropriate table manners.
- Students are to use appropriate bathroom procedures including: flushing, washing hands, and disposing of paper towels in the trash can.

Playground Conduct

- Students are to follow the directions of the teachers and/or staff who are supervising.
- Students who need to return to the building for any reason must get permission.
- When the whistle is blown to end recess and/or lunch, students should quickly freeze and wait for further directions. When asked to line up, they should do so in an orderly fashion in their designated areas and follow the directions of the teachers and/or staff who are supervising.
- Kick ball, soccer and other related games are to be played in designated areas only.
- Rough or dangerous play (tackle football or other contact games) is not permitted anywhere on school grounds.
- All playground equipment is to be used safely: misusing the equipment is not permitted.
- Metal bats and hard balls are not permitted on the playground.

21. SCHOOL BUS SERVICE - TRANSPORTATION

Students are eligible for free busing if they are:

In grades Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd and live more than ½ mile from P.S. 24.
In grades 3rd, 4th & 5th and live more than 1 mile from P.S. 24.

Please email Ms. Amster for additional information at Namster@schools.nyc.gov.

Students in Gifted & Talented

Admission to a gifted and talented program or school does not guarantee a student yellow bus transportation. If you live more than a certain distance away there may not be a specific stop near their house and they may need to travel to get to the closest stop. Eligibility for yellow bus transportation for general education students attending gifted and talented schools and programs is based on the same criteria that apply to public school general education students as indicated above.

(All mileage is determined by the Department of Education's Office of Pupil Transportation)

Students Children enrolled through the *No Child Left Behind* Act, or those given a medical waiver in grades K-5 receive school bus transportation.

Please note that with the exception of busing on an IEP, this is not a door to door service. Children meet the bus at stops near where they live. While there are times scheduled for some stops, **we cannot guarantee that buses will always stick to that schedule**. Bus schedules for the first few days are often irregular; we ask that you wait patiently.

Students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) If you wish to add busing to an IEP you must contact Mr. Kelly and Ms. Amster to determine if you are eligible.

If your child rides the school bus, we do not allow any change in the dismissal procedure unless we have a written note from the parent. We cannot change the dismissal procedure for children according to oral instructions because verbal messages can be distorted. Please, for the safety of your child, if you make any changes, send a

note to the teacher. Children may not change buses nor may they ride a bus if they are not usually transported by that specific bus.

METRO CARDS

Students in Grades 3-5 who live more than 1/2 mile from the school are eligible for metrocard.

Students in grades 3-5 who live more than 1 mile away can get busing or a metrocard.

Students in K-2 who live more than 1/2 mile are eligible for a bus or metrocard.

22. INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR CHILD

When non-custodial parents wish to obtain information regarding their child, the custodial parent must be called first to determine whether there are any legal prohibitions that would limit such access.

23. IMPORTANT DATES

School Calendar 2025-26

Released June 2025

<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/calendar>

24. PROSE Curriculum Days

In addition to the above dates there are additional dates approved through the PROSE schools process that will be considered Curriculum Planning Days for teachers.

Purpose

The purpose of implementing five dedicated **Curriculum Planning Days** during the 2025–26 school year is to provide our educators with critical, uninterrupted time to collaborate, analyze data, and design instructional materials that are aligned with recent curriculum changes. These days are intentionally structured to empower teachers to reflect, adapt, and innovate so they can continue delivering the best education imaginable to all students and differentiate these learning opportunities for all students.

As we implement new curricular standards and programs across core content areas, it is essential to create structured time for grade-level and content-area teams to:

- Unpack and align new curricular frameworks
- Develop rigorous, engaging unit and lesson plans
- Analyze student data and differentiate instruction accordingly
- Share best practices and deepen instructional expertise
- Develop cross-curricular connections that enhance student engagement and real-world application
- Create rubrics and progress monitoring tools to inform students and families of areas where their children are succeeding and areas where they will continue to develop

Student Learning: No Lost Instructional Time

Each curriculum day will still be considered a school day and learning will still take place. On each curriculum planning day, students will have a choice of continue learning through our **robust remote learning platform or attending school for a shortened school day**. Teachers will provide **asynchronous assignments** that align

with current standards, current modules/units of study and learning targets. These activities are designed to maintain instructional momentum and rigor, ensuring that no instructional time is lost.

Students who wish to report to school will do so at 10:45 for lunch and engage in many enrichment opportunities with our CBO Westhab in the afternoon. Pick up from this shortened day will be at the usual 2:20pm time. A signup sheet will be sent out so that parents can indicate if they will pick the remote only option or attend school for the shortened session.

This model offers flexibility for families while keeping student expectations high. It also reinforces the digital literacy and independent learning skills that are foundational in modern education.

Scheduling and Rationale

We have strategically selected **five days** throughout the academic year that are generally considered **low attendance days**. This thoughtful scheduling ensures:

- Minimal disruption to instructional continuity
 - Enhanced professional value for planning days
 - Greater flexibility for families to coordinate personal time or travel
 - Optimal timing for instructional planning based on the school calendar (end of quarters, beginning of units, etc.)
-

Proposed Curriculum Planning Days – 2025–26 School Year

Date	Rationale
Monday, September 22, 2025	The Monday right before we are off for two days (Rosh Hashanah); historically low attendance; ideal for content planning the first semester. Crucial for setting new teachers up for success in the beginning of the year. Allows families a 5-day weekend that is uninterrupted.
Friday, November 7, 2025	Day after PTC. Allows teachers to regroup after a long evening of meetings and feedback. Focus would be on analyzing Q1 diagnostics and adjusting units / modules based on this data.
Friday, January 16, 2026	Friday before the MLK holiday. Allows families a 5-day weekend that is uninterrupted. Focus would be on data review of Q2 and planning Spring Modules / Units in each content area.
Thursday, March 19, 2026	Thursday before EID. Allows families a 4-day weekend that is uninterrupted. Focus would be on Test Sophistication, analyzing Q3 data, and adjusting for Spring modules / units
Tuesday, May 26, 2026	Bridges the days off on Monday and Wednesday to give families an uninterrupted 5-day weekend. Near end of year, supports wrap-up, vertical articulation, and planning for 2026–27

Benefits to Teachers

- Time to adapt to new curriculum frameworks with fidelity and creativity
- Consistent collaboration and peer support within teams
- Space to create data-informed, differentiated instruction
- Reduced after-hours workload, improving staff morale and retention
- Professional growth aligned with school and district goals
- Allows families to plan future vacations without missing instruction
- Planning dates are low-attendance dates which will not result in penalizing students who would normally take these instructional days off
- Students can receive instruction regardless of their families' respective plans.

Conclusion

These curriculum planning days reflect our school's deep commitment to instructional excellence and the professional development of our teachers. By investing in our educators' time and collaboration, we are investing directly in student success.

With a balanced model that continues rigorous student learning through asynchronous assignments, and a calendar that minimizes disruption, this plan represents a win-win for our entire school community.

25. Medication

The school nurse is the only employee permitted by state law to administer medications to your child during school hours and only with an MAF (Medical Administration Form) <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/health-and-wellness/health-services>. Please see addendum 1 for Guidelines for the Provision of Health Services and/or Section 504 Accommodations for Students in the New York City Public Schools (2017-2018). If your child has any medical needs that the school needs to be aware of (allergies/epi-pen, asthma, etc), this information must be given to:

- the school nurse
- teacher(s)
- Ms. Amster (NAmster@schools.nyc.gov)

For additional information, please speak to the school nurse.

26. Injuries and Illnesses

Injuries: The school nurse administers first aid for injuries occurring during school time, according to medical protocol as approved by the NYC Department of Education & NYC Department of Health and Hospitals. If the injury is severe, every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian immediately.

Illnesses: In case of student illness such as fever, rash, or vomiting, the parent/guardian will be notified promptly to make arrangements to pick up their child at school. In the event the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the contact person delegated by the parent to assume the responsibility will be notified. An emergency card must be

on file for each child in the school. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school promptly of any changes in telephone numbers or contact, to keep this information up to date. Persons on the card should be informed by the parent that they are on call for their child.

PLEASE NOTE: Conditions such as chicken pox, strep throat, pink eye, and head lice are to be reported to the school nurse as soon as diagnosed. To maintain an accurate and correct health record for each student other medical conditions such as asthma, pneumonia, accidents, or surgical procedures should also be reported to the nurse. A note explaining the cause of absence should be given to the nurse when a child returns to school.

Allergies, asthma and other medical conditions must be emailed to Ms. Amster prior to the beginning of the school year. Also note the nurse may not administer any medication including Tylenol without a 504 from a doctor

Following these school policies are an integral part of making your experience at P.S. 24 a happy and successful one. Thank you for entrusting us with your most precious commodity; your child. We take this trust and responsibility seriously. Thank you for allowing us to be partners in this important role of supporting you and your child(ren).

