

Parent Handbook

J. Harvey Rodgers School

301 Georgetown Road

Glassboro, NJ 08028

(856-652-2700) Ext. 5102

Mrs. Danielle Sochor /Acting Principal



WELCOME

Welcome to the 2018-2019 school year. I hope you enjoyed summer vacation filled with fun and exciting memories with your loved ones. The Rodgers family is thrilled to welcome all of you back to a new school year of learning and growing. To those of you who are new to Rodgers School, we extend a warm welcome and best wishes in your new school year.

Our beautiful Early Childhood Building has approximately 325 precious students and is rich with diversity. The Rodgers faculty works collaboratively to identify specific needs of our young learners and to develop learning experiences that ensure every student meets success. At the Rodgers School, we are also fortunate to have many exciting events for our families to enjoy throughout the school year, and hope that you will quickly feel at home.

I am excited to be kicking off the school year and am looking forward to working closely with you to ensure that our children are safe, happy, and achieving at high levels. We may face some challenges along the way; however, we will certainly reap wonderful rewards as our children learn and grow! As I always say, there are no limits to what can be accomplished when parents, teachers and the community work together towards a common goal!

In an effort to help you get your child off to a fantastic start; this handbook was prepared to provide you with the necessary information regarding our programming, along some helpful hints. Additional information about our school and district is also available via the Glassboro web site at <http://www.gpsd.us>

If you have any questions or concerns throughout the year, please feel free to call or email at any time. Thank you for joining us as partners in the educational process, and I look forward to seeing you at our Back to School night.

PHILOSOPHY

Each child brings to school his or her own unique interests and experiences, special abilities and developmental needs. We build on each child's strengths, while providing an environment rich with new ideas and experiences designed to encourage growth.

Our program is developmentally based and is designed for the age group served and is implemented with attention to the needs and differences of the individual children enrolled. The curriculum is geared to students' levels of understanding, different rates of development and learning styles, varying cultural backgrounds, and prior experiences. A multitude of hands-on experiences is provided.

Assessments are completed three times per year. The main goal of assessment is to drive instruction. We can determine how much growth children have made, whether particular instructional strategies are meeting student needs, and where we need to concentrate our teaching efforts.

We believe that school should be a positive, enjoyable experience for children, and that it is critical to each child's success to feel safe, encouraged and loved. In accordance, we have certain behavioral expectations that will allow all children to feel comfortable in the school setting. At this age level, we believe that it is our responsibility, with the support of parents, to teach the behaviors that are appropriate in the school setting. Our approach to teaching these behaviors is a positive one and follows the School wide PBIS philosophy through our *Bulldog Buddies* program.

We trust that you and your child will have a wonderful experience at Rodgers School. We encourage you to take advantage of the many opportunities for parent involvement and enjoy your

child's early school experiences. Please feel free to ask questions or provide suggestions for school improvement at any time. —

CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

The J. Harvey Rodgers School proudly offers diverse and expansive opportunities for our Pre-K and Kindergarten students. It is our goal to provide each student with a comprehensive academic and social foundation that will enable them to meet the challenges of the new millennium. All programming has been designed to meet the requirements of ESEA-Entitlement Grant and are aligned to the New Jersey State Standards. In short, the Rodgers faculty provides its students with the latest research based, cutting edge, data-driven best practices in education.

The Creative Curriculum has helped our Pre-K faculty address the social/emotional and academic needs of our youngest students during our ½ day Pre-Kindergarten programming. Creative Curriculum balances teacher-planned and child-initiated learning, emphasizing responsiveness to children's strengths, interests, needs, and learning styles. It helps teachers plan and implement content-rich, developmentally appropriate programs that support active learning and promote children's progress in all developmental areas that include social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development.

Literacy instruction in the Creative Curriculum classroom focuses on creating an environment and experiences that inspires children to read and write. This includes literacy as a source of enjoyment, vocabulary and language, phonological awareness, knowledge of print, letters and words, comprehension, and books and other texts. The Pre-K faculty builds upon children's interests to promote mathematics learning as well, with the goal of assisting students to fully understand mathematical concepts and skills through application.

Our Kindergarten Language Arts Literacy program is built upon the foundations of Balanced Literacy and takes place within an uninterrupted, 90-minute LAL block. Daily instruction consists of Shared Reading, Guided Reading and Independent Literacy Stations, as well as a Writer's Workshop.

Literacy instruction is maintained consistently from classroom to classroom; however, daily lessons and activities are regularly differentiated to fit the needs and ability levels of each student. This can be observed through the use of flexible groupings, independent activities, and literacy stations. Individual student achievement is closely monitored, and data is continuously collected through the use of the Fountas/Pinnell Benchmark System and the DIBELS Assessment, progress monitoring, and running records. This, combined with collaboration among grade level members and our Literacy Coach, allows the faculty to proactively address student needs.

Math has brought fun back into learning for our Kindergarten students and their teachers! Our children are expected to master mathematical skills and concepts, but often not the first time the skills are introduced. The concepts and skills are taught in repeated fashion, which begins with concrete, "hands-on" experiences. Students study specific, important concepts through a variety of instructional strategies. These grade level concepts are identified by the NJ Student Learning Standards. Each grade level builds upon and extends the previously taught concepts and skills so that children can approach a new challenge with a firmly established foundation. Our teachers consistently bring renewed energy and enthusiasm to provide support to each student to address his/her individual strengths and weaknesses.

In order to accommodate the needs of all students, the Rodgers School provides many ancillary programs as well. This includes push-in Basic Skills support for Language Arts, English as a Second Language (ESL) programming, and an Extended Year program for our Special Education students. Students at risk (academic and/or behavioral) are serviced through the Intervention & Referral Services Team (I&RS). This team identifies intervention strategies and best practices for teachers to use with the referred students. If it is found that the strategies are not successful, a student may be referred to the Child Study Team for further testing.

At Rodgers School you will also find active, child-centered character education programming based on Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support (PBS) to ensure the behavioral success of all students. Through this program, we continue to address the emotional and social needs of our students through a variety of activities. This includes the selection of a Student of the Month from every classroom and opportunities for positive reinforcement through the *Bulldog Buddies* program.

Parents and families also play an active role as members of the Rodgers community. Our PTO meets monthly to discuss any schoolwide issues and to plan fundraising activities that will benefit our students. Parents regularly volunteer to assist staff, dispense fundraiser items, chaperone field trips, assist at the Scholastic Book Fair, or help at class parties. Family Participation Nights also happen regularly at Rodgers, and are well attended. Activities include Math Game Nights, Family Dances, Movie Nights, and Family Literacy Nights, just to name a few!

SCHOOL DAY/HOURS

Kindergarten

Kindergarten students attend school Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM. On Early Dismissal days, Kindergarten students attend from 8:00 AM to 12:30 PM.

Pre-Kindergarten

All Pre-Kindergarten students attend school from Monday through Friday. Students are assigned to either the first (AM) or second (PM) session.

| | <u>Regular Session</u> | <u>Early Dismissal</u> |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| AM Group | 8:00 AM – 10:30 AM | 8:00 AM – 10:00 AM |
| PM Group | 11:30 AM – 2:00 PM | 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM |

There are several early dismissal dates scheduled throughout the school year. On these days, the kindergarten students attend school from 8:00 to 12:30 PM. We do serve breakfast/lunch on these days. The AM Pre-K session attends from 8:00 to 10:00 AM. The PM Pre-K students attend from 10:30 to 12:30 PM. **It is very important for parents to arrange for someone to be available at the bus stop or pick children up at school when we are on an early dismissal schedule.**

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION

During the winter months, ice and snow may result in school closings or early dismissals. A decision to close the schools is made for the safety of your children, and is usually made early in the morning. Decisions for early dismissal, although rare, are usually made by 10:00 a.m.

Parents will be notified via the district website. A phone recording will also be sent out to all families via the *School Messenger* phone system. **Please do not call the school, as there will be no one in the office.** In the event of early dismissal due to weather or other emergency, every effort will be made to notify the parents.

If there is a 2 hour delayed opening, we will adjust the times of our pre-school program according to the following:

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| AM Group | 10:00 AM – 11:45 AM |
| PM Group | 12:15 PM – 2:00 PM |

ABSENTEEISM & TARDINESS

It is important that your child attend school on all school days, unless ill. We recommend that families schedule vacations when school is not in session. Attending school on a daily basis will help your child's academic success and will help to develop a good lifetime habit. Excessive absences may result in retention.

In the event that your child is absent from school, please call the school nurse at 652-2700, ext. 5311 to report the absence. If we do not get a call and your child is absent, the school nurse may call you. When your child returns to school, send a note in to your child's teacher explaining the reason for the absence. If your child is absent for three or more consecutive days, a doctor's note maybe requested. **However, please be aware that a doctor's note will not excuse your child for being absent.** Please reference the attendance chart in the appendix.

PICKING STUDENTS UP FROM SCHOOL

Students should remain in school for the full school day, unless unavoidable. Early release of students is only permitted for doctor's appointments and other urgent business that cannot be done outside of school hours. **No students will be released early during the last 30 minutes of the school day (dire emergencies excluded).** Individuals who must pick up a child early must report to the main office and be prepared to provide ID.

Children who do not ride the school bus must be signed out in the All-Purpose Room. The entrance is on Dickinson Rd. Parking for this purpose is on Dickinson Rd. The adult must see the teacher on duty before taking any child and be prepared to provide ID.

If your child normally rides the bus and there is a change to this routine, you must write a note to your child's teacher, including the date and the name of the person who will be picking up your child. Please be sure to sign the note and be prepared to provide ID upon pickup.

Students will only be released to a parent or an individual designated in writing by a parent. We will ask for a photo ID, so always be prepared to have one available. Make sure that any individual that you designate is also aware of this policy.

ILLNESS POLICY

It is in the best interest of your child and of other children at school to keep your child at home when he or she is ill. Your child needs to be well to be able to participate actively in the program.

- In the event of vomiting, fever or diarrhea, please keep your child home.
- In order to return to school, your child must be fever free without the aid of Tylenol/Aspirin for 24-hours.
- If your child is well enough to come to school, we will expect him or her to go outdoors with his or her class, weather permitting.
- If your child becomes ill while at school and you are called, please cooperate by picking up your child promptly. **Please make sure all contact information is updated.**
- If your child has a chronic illness such as asthma, please contact the school nurse. To minimize absences, medication orders from your child's doctor may be submitted and used to provide care at school.
- If your child develops a contagious illness, rash, head lice, ringworm, please let the school nurse know immediately. Anything that causes a fever (100 or above) should be assessed by a doctor prior to your child attending school.
- Injuries outside of school should be reported to the school nurse. A doctor's note needs to be submitted regarding restrictions for gym, recess, etc. A follow-up doctor's note for return to activity is also required.

VACCINATIONS

All students under the age of five must receive an influenza vaccination by **December 31, 2018**. Students who have not received an influenza vaccination by this date will be excluded from school, as per NJDOE regulations. Documentation of all other vaccinations must be included with registration. Should you have any questions pertaining to vaccinations, please contact our school nurse, Mrs. Fiebig, at ext. 5311 or via email at nfiebig@gpsd.us.

BEHAVIOR & SCHOOLWIDE PBS (POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT)

The J. Harvey Rodgers School has effectively established a Schoolwide PBS program, called the *Bulldog Buddies* Program. Through the modeling of schoolwide expectations (rules), common vocabulary, student-centered rewards and data-driven decision making, our children quickly learn what a positive learning environment "looks like." As our *Bulldog Buddies* motto states, every student at the Rodgers School will: *Take care of yourself, your friends and your school!*

Teachers begin by teaching children that there are positive consequences for following expectations. This includes rewarding students with specific, positive praise statements, *Bulldog Biscuits* (tickets for our daily prize drawings), and various extrinsic rewards. The schoolwide

expectations and “what they look like” in practice are explained as needed, and are modeled several times throughout the year as part of our Schoolwide PBS role-plays.

Our students also learn that there are logical consequences for not following expectations. Consequences are used to help students to solve their problems through character building interactions with our school faculty. Parental support is also critical in teaching appropriate school behavior; therefore, parent communication is expected from all staff to ensure that children receive the same message from both home and school.

In the case of more extreme behaviors that interfere with safety, general well-being, or the learning of our students, additional consequences may be necessary. In these cases, the school principal will work directly with the student and his/her family to help ensure behavioral success.

CONFERENCES

Parent /Teacher Conferences are scheduled for the week of **December 10, 2018 to December 14, 2018**. Teachers will be sending appointment times several weeks prior. A second Parent/Teacher Conference is scheduled for the week of **March 18, 2019-March 22, 2019**. Every effort is made to arrange a time that would be mutually convenient.

The purpose of the conference is to discuss student progress, get parent input, and discuss home activities that may be beneficial. It is important for parents to attend conferences, as this will help support the success of your child.

Additional individual conferences regarding specific concerns may also be necessary throughout the school year. The parent or teacher may request such a conference and arrange a mutually convenient time to meet.

SCHOOL SECURITY & DRILLS

Student and employee safety is a priority. Visitors are required to buzz in at the front door (which is located near the corner of Georgetown and Yale Roads) and must report directly to the main office, where they will be to confirm a specific appointment/reason for visit. All visitors will have provide identification. Before accessing the building, all visitors will be given a badge to signify that they have checked in. Please do not be offended if you are asked for identification or if you are stopped by our staff/faculty, as we contact with many people and may not remember every individual. As always, our goal is to keep our children safe.

No visitors are permitted to walk the building or visit classrooms without the knowledge of the office staff. Many times throughout the year our young students may forget important items (i.e. book bags, lunch, library books) or you may wish to drop off birthday snacks, for example. Any items that you may wish to drop off can be left in the main office and will be delivered by building staff.

Students will ONLY be released to individuals who the parent has designated as appropriate. Please keep your STUDENT PICK-UP AUTHORIZATION FORM current and contact both the main office and your child’s teacher in the event of any changes. You will be requested to complete an authorization form at the beginning of the school year. Anyone picking up a child will be required to show identification.

QUESTIONS/CONCERNS & PHONE EXTENSIONS

Please feel free to call your child's teacher with any questions or concerns. The telephone number at J. Harvey Rodgers School is 652-2700 Ext. 5102. **Your child's teacher will generally be available to talk to you before or after your child's scheduled school hours, or you may leave a voice mail message during school hours.** The principal or secretary may address your questions at other times. You may also e-mail your child's teacher.

Email: firstletterlastname@gpsd.us

Example dsochor@gpsd.us

| Staff | RM/Location | Extension |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Barbara Fortini | A-1 | 8283 |
| Renee Vanartsdalen | A-2 | 8264 |
| Patricia Kately | A-3 | 8185 |
| Andrea Foglietta | A-4 | 8293 |
| Priscila Antuna | A-5 | 8283 |
| Erica Sloan | A-6 | 8250 |
| Lori Kaszupski | A-7 | 8184 |
| Victoria Toczylowski | A-8 | 8120 |
| Erin Pimpinella | A-9 | 8226 |
| Suzanne Rutter/ Denise Gallagher | A-10 | 8105 |
| Carrie Owens | B-1 | 8219 |
| Melissa Mickle | B-2 | 8204 |
| Kelly Moxey | B-3 | 8162 |
| Linda Keith | B-4 | 8188 |
| Amanda Fordyce | B-7 | 8159 |
| Amy Witkoski | B-8 | 8277 |
| Amy Ceroli | Media Center | 8134 |
| Beth Conley | Gymnasium | 8141 |
| Sue Hars | Gymnasium | 8171 |
| Alexa Kowalski | Resource Rm. (Music) | 8247 |
| Beth Grygo | Occupational Therapist | 5508 |
| Corey Grisi | Speech Therapist | 6417 |
| Dr. Kelly Yanek | Child Study Team | 6413 |
| Nancy Fiebig | School Nurse | 5311 |
| Elizabeth Calvo | Main Office | 5102 |
| Cathy McDonald/TBA | Main Office | 5101 |
| Danielle Sochor, Principal | Main Office | 5105 |

