

Patricia A. DiChiaro School
Grades PK – 8

STAFF HANDBOOK

MISSION STATEMENT

The students, parents, staff and community of the Patricia A. DiChiaro School are committed to academic excellence in a positive learning environment. All students will achieve high standards in this safe and creative atmosphere. At the Patricia A. DiChiaro School collaboration and cooperation successfully prepare our students for the future.

VISION

Students will continue to become literate in reading, writing, mathematics and technology.

The Positive Action Program will continue to foster a positive learning environment.

Families continue to be recognized as an integral part of their children's academic, social and emotional achievement.

Staff development and New York State Standards will continue to raise the quality of instruction.

ACCIDENTS

All precautions must be taken to avoid accidents. If, however, one takes place, you are required to report it to an administrator. Written reports must be submitted when an accident occurs in the school or on school property and a child or visitor is injured. An Accident Report may be obtained from the office. The Accident Report Form must be submitted within 24 hours of the accident. Staff members who are injured should report to the office to complete an accident report.

ATTENDANCE

Student attendance must be taken daily at 8:45 a.m. for grades PK – 6. Students who arrive in class after 8:45 a.m. must have a late pass.

Student attendance must be taken each period for grades 7 & 8.

BULLETIN BOARDS

Bulletin boards should be attractive, colorful, interesting and fun! They set the instructional climate of a school and the class. They are invaluable both as an instructional tool and as a vehicle for improving school-community public relations. The finished product is a model for the children to imitate. Assignments for hall bulletin boards will be by class.

Bulletin boards should be changed regularly to reflect current work.

Dates – Beginning of September, November, February, April, June optional.

All hall bulletin boards should be labeled with the class and the teacher's name. These should focus on the theme of the school or a major unit of study from within the class. All drawings/pictures should be explained and related to a unit of study with authentic student work and standards listed.

CUMULATIVE RECORD CARDS

Check all information on cards, i.e., address, telephone numbers, etc. Cards should be kept current throughout the year. Fill in your current information including DATE, TEACHER'S NAME, etc.

One set of cards (yellow) must remain in the office. They will be alphabetized by class for easier access by individual teachers and registrar.

All information and comments on the children's records are accessible to parents upon request. Be professional in your manner of expression.

White cards are to be kept in the classroom (along with a folder containing samples of children's work taken during the year and a copy of the standardized test results).

EMERGENCY CARDS

Each child is required to have three emergency cards on file in the school. Note bus assignment in the right corner. Please alphabetize the cards in three groups. Keep one group in your class and send one set to the office and one set to the nurse one week from the first day of school.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips should be purposeful and should be planned in advance to allow for adequate preparation and maximum value.

* No child may participate in a field trip without the written permission of the parent/guardian on file in the classroom.

If required, bag lunches must be requested seven days before trip.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Emergency Drills will be held on a regular basis. Please stress with your students the need for complete silence and proper order. The drill begins the moment the alert is heard until the class returns to its room or the all clear is heard.

The children should be taught the correct process for each drill. Please review the drill procedures several times during the first week of school.

Children should be prepared for an alternative measure in the event that they encounter an obstruction outside exit door.

The appropriate fire exit for each class should be posted near the classroom door.

“GO HOME PLANS”

Each parent is expected to complete a school form indicating where his/her child is to be sent in the event of an emergency evacuation.

HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

Check your classroom and closets for any safety hazards. Report any problems immediately to the office. Do not overuse the closet for storage purposes. Please clean out all excess materials. This is a fire hazard.

*Do not permit children to carry glass objects from room to room, home to school or from school to home.

Do not permit children to carry AV equipment from room to room nor should they be asked to connect or disconnect electrical units.

ALL VISITORS ARE EXPECTED TO SIGN IN AT THE SECURITY TABLE.

Please notify the office if you are aware that a student is absent with a communicable disease. Upon the child's return to school he/she must bring a note from the doctor.

No child may be taken from the school by anyone other than a school employee (upon approval by administrator) without the written consent of the parent or guardian. Copies of signatures will be on file in the office.

Classroom doors should be locked when the room is unoccupied.

*All children leaving the room for any reason must have a pass. It is required that children in grades two and higher sign out and in into a notebook specifically set up to allow for more efficient follow-up on incidents reported. Children must have a pass at all times.

Children should not run in hallways, cafeteria, etc.

*Please be punctual when you pick up your class or accompany them to appropriate exits during arrival and dismissal times.

HOMEWORK

Homework assignments should be based upon the genuine need of the students and should serve a definite purpose, i.e.:

- To provide drill and reinforcement of a skill taught
- To provide application of learning
- To develop knowledge of community resource, i.e. library
- To develop and enhance the individual growth of the student

Homework need not only be a group activity as individualized assignments can have a great learning value for the pupil.

Parents should be appraised of your homework policy and be informed of ways in which they can be involved and helpful.

Homework should be checked and corrected the day following the assignment. All grades/classes should have homework assignments. The amount of homework should be according to grade level.

INVENTORY

Equipment inventory will be maintained by office.

Text inventory is to be completed by teacher on forms provided at the end of the school year.

LUNCH HOUR PROCEDURES

Review with students prior to first lunch period and, as often as necessary, the proper lunch room behavior:

1. Wait at the table until called for lunch.
2. Do not leave seats without permission.
3. Anything dropped on the floor is to be picked up immediately.
4. Wait until each table is called to line up at the appointed place and to proceed to the next area.

Children are to be escorted by the teacher from their rooms to the cafeteria, to the playgrounds or in the case of inclement weather to the appropriate area.

Children going directly to the lunchroom are to be escorted and seated at assigned tables prior to the teacher leaving.

Orderly lunch periods, respect for one another -- especially for the aides, and proper handling of food will be mandated.

Remind the students that the last ten minutes of the lunch period are for cleanup and quietness.

MAINTENANCE

Whenever a teacher or staff member requires custodial service, please send the request to the office, clearly stating the need on the request form.

Encourage your children to maintain a neat and tidy classroom and school environment.

Report offensive activities in the bathroom such as defacing doors, stuffing lavatories with paper, etc.

No food is to be kept in the closets overnight. Snacks kept for snack time must be put in a canister to be kept fresh.

MEDICATION

*NO medication of any kind is to be administered in the classroom. Please send a note to the nurse's office if a child comes to school with medications. Notes from doctors should be sent to the nurse. They should not be filed with parent notes regarding illness. Please notify the nurse's office that such a note has been received.

OFFICE NOTIFICATION

***Every change of program is to be reported to administration, i.e., classes going outside, inter-classroom activities.**

OPEN HOUSE

Open House provides the opportunity to foster effective communications between the school and home.

All teachers are expected to make a presentation in their classroom. This talk should include: goals, procedural expectations (e.g., homework, routines, materials used), and ways in which parents may assist students.

In preparation for this activity:

Student Folders

Each teacher is expected to have samples of each student's work in a folder for the parents to view and take.

Classroom Setting

Classroom areas are to be set up as explained previously. On each activity table or at each learning center a tape explaining the materials and purpose could be set up for the parents to tune in.

PARENTS

The administration should be made aware of any problems a teacher is having with a child. Please check all parental communications through the office so that the principal may be fully informed should a parent call.

It is important to communicate with parents under both positive and negative circumstances.

Please fulfill all parent requests for meetings with you.

Records are to be kept on all contacts made with parents. It is helpful to keep copies of any notes sent home. Such items are retained in the child's folder for easy access.

Parents are NOT permitted to come into your room during the school day without notification from the office.

Should you sense a particularly difficult situation, please inform the principal immediately.

Any general notices sent home to parents must be cleared by the principal. Appearance is important. Your written work serves as a model for students.

Respond to “Parent Comments” on report cards/progress reports when appropriate.

Please cooperate with your PTA in every way you can, as they are a vital component in our school organization.

PARENT CONFERENCES

A minimum of two parent conferences are to be scheduled during the school year. Conferences should be made not only for the two half days set aside by the district, but also anytime during the year, as a well-informed parent is our most important “partner” in the education of the children. The first should be scheduled to coincide with the distribution of the first report card. The second could take place during the spring, March or April, providing an assessment of the child’s yearlong progress.

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS:

Plan the conference carefully. A prepared, informed teacher commands greater respect.

Encourage the parent to talk openly. What is learned can be helpful to you in understanding the child.

- * Begin and end on a positive note and on one of continuing cooperation.
- * DO NOT become involved in discussions of other children, their families or teachers.

Sit on chairs of equal size and preferably at a table, not the desk.

Be prepared to substantiate your evaluations, judgements and qualitative statements. Be truthful, but tactful. Select for emphasis those areas with which the parent and child are capable of dealing constructively.

Do not allow conferences to become too lengthy where you find yourself or the parent rambling aimlessly. Tactfully bring the conference to a close.

Conclude by summarizing points covered and suggestions agreed upon and record information on the appropriate conference form.

PERTINENT STUDENT DATA SHEET

This is an important form created for your convenience. It will give you immediate knowledge of all forms returned by your youngsters. A copy will also be kept in the office.

PHONES

No one is to use their cell phone in their classroom for any reason.

PREP PERIODS

No one is to leave the building during their prep period.

REPORT CARDS

Frequent monitoring and reporting have been shown to be effective in improving student focus and achievement.

Children are expected to be graded on their academic achievement. Grade level expectations are defined in the curriculum guides. Reading grade level expectations are defined by the basal reading program.

Student performance on his/her functioning instructional level should be determined by a combination of evaluative criteria and with frequent monitoring.

Keep accurate records of all classroom/group/individual learning activities, testing grades, homework and independent activity marks in order to easily substantiate report card grades. They could also be helpful during a parent conference.

Report cards are the school's vehicle for communicating with parents. They are intended to help both the school and parents view their students strengths and weaknesses realistically as well as to provide the encouragement and support services necessary for improvement.

SCHEDULES

An original and a copy of your schedule are due in the office by the second week of school.

The initial schedule can be in pencil and will be reviewed by administration. For the final draft, print or write legibly as no cross-outs or write overs should be submitted.

Lunch hours and prep periods should be clearly marked for the benefit of those who may be called upon to cover your class.

STAFF ABSENCES

All teachers and teaching assistants must register their absences with Aesop.
All CSEA staff are required to call the school office at 8:00 a.m.

STAFF ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE

All teachers are expected to sign in by 8:30 a.m.

Children should not be sent to retrieve items from the mailboxes or to obtain keys.

In the event that you are going to be late, please notify the office so appropriate coverage can be provided.

STUDENT FOLDERS

A folder should be kept on each child within the homeroom.

These folders should contain samples of the children's work; test results; reading placement information; anecdotal notes, if necessary, etc.

All folders are to be kept up-to-date.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER FOLDERS

The substitute's job is not an easy one. He/she seldom has more than an hour's notice to prepare for the day or days ahead. Because of the numerous problems and questions the substitute is bound to have, each teacher is required to have a folder in the office. This is to be forwarded to the office in September. Periodically it is essential to update information and activities within.

The folder should contain:

1. Class list.
2. Identity of children with special needs, i.e., discipline, no gym due to physical reasons, etc.
3. Standards of classroom behavior.
4. Classroom and building procedures, i.e., shelter/fire drills, lunch, dismissal, etc.
5. Up-to-date instructional plans for three consecutive days.
6. Student's note of dismissal.

SUPERVISION

Students are to be supervised at all times. If you must leave your room in an emergency use the P.A. system to notify the office and coverage of your classroom will be provided. **NEVER LEAVE ANYONE UNSUPERVISED!**

SUPPLIES

A supply list will be provided monthly. Supplies requested will be distributed during the first week of each month.

TARDINESS

Students who are chronically late are both academically and personally at risk. It is the teacher's responsibility to monitor tardy students and to take steps to help eliminate this problem.