



FAMILY HANDBOOK

2020 - 2021

**AFTER READING THE HANDBOOK AND THE ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY,
STUDENTS & PARENTS SHOULD PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THE PARENT RELEASE FORM**

MISSION STATEMENT

East Side Middle School's vision is to implement a vibrant, rigorous, academic experience within a nurturing, compassionate environment. Our mission is to have all students develop the habits of mind of the disciplines they are studying, i.e. to think and act as scientists, mathematicians, etc. Students will strive to exceed grade level standards in all academic areas and to become life-long learners. Another key component of our philosophy is immersion. We believe that our students should be thoroughly immersed in the topics which they are studying. We are strongly influenced by the work of Ken Robinson, who believed that all students should have the opportunity to discover and develop their "element," the talents or drives that make them feel most significant and alive. We are also strongly influenced by the work of Carol Dweck. We believe in fostering a growth mindset in our students. We strongly believe we are all capable of improving our understandings and skills; we are always capable of being better tomorrow than we were yesterday.

We are delighted to begin a new school year with your child. While our lives are still profoundly impacted by COVID-19, we would like to welcome you and your family to ESMS. This handbook is primarily about safety and the procedures for being a good citizen at East Side Middle. Please read through this booklet and the attached sheets with your child, **and return the signed Parental Release form to your child's homeroom teacher by September 29.**

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email Beth or me.

Go Tigers, Roar!

David
esms.david@gmail.com

Ready for another great year! Please let me know if you have questions.

Beth Servetar, Parent Coordinator
esms.bethservetar@gmail.com

HEALTH

Your child's health is our primary concern. Our work during COVID-19 highlights this concern and informs most of this handbook. Please inform the school if your child has any health conditions that may affect attendance or academic performance. Additionally, please inform the school nurse of any medications, allergies, or dietary restrictions your child has. **If your child requires medication during school hours**, please contact the school nurse for the requisite form to be filled out so that medications can be dispensed accordingly. If your child requires medication while at school and does not have a Medication Administration Form on file, you may come to the school and administer the medication. It is protocol that you do so in the Medical Room with the nurse present. This applies to all medication, whether doctor prescribed or over the counter. If you have any questions or need related assistance, please contact the school nurse at 212-360-0114, x6153.

Testing for COVID-19 and Random Testing

1. All parents of children attending the hybrid model of school, in which children attend school two times every six days, **must consent to having their children randomly tested for COVID-19 at school**, including consent to have results shared with NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Test & Trace Corps, and Department of Education as necessary. If parental/guardian refuses to provide consent for a student who has been selected randomly for testing, the student will be moved to the remote learning cohort and will not be allowed to attend the physical school building.
2. Specimen collection will be conducted or supervised by appropriate personnel from City agencies, outside organizations, and/or outside contractor nurse support. Each school's need for testing support will be evaluated based on the number of students and teachers that must be tested
3. The health and safety of students and staff are of the utmost priority when considering reopening schools. In order for school buildings to reopen and stay open, the percentage of positive tests in New York City must be less than 3% using a 7-day rolling average. School buildings will need to close and revert to fully remote learning for all students if the percentage of positive tests in New York City is equal to or more than 3% using a 7-day rolling average. It is important to note that the above threshold is just one trigger for closing school buildings, but may not be the only trigger. For example, a decision to close all of the school buildings in the City would be made if there were recurrent, uncontrolled outbreaks of COVID-19 in schools, even if the overall case rates across New York City were to remain low. Likewise, a decision to close individual schools would be made where there were multiple cases of COVID-19 identified (see "School Closures").
4. If any zip code within NYC reports a percentage of positive tests of 3% or higher using a 7-day rolling average, the city will deploy additional testing efforts within the community, including, but not limited to, increased testing of individuals in schools, opening new testing sites, door-to-door canvassing and targeted robocalls. The closure of school buildings within these communities, if necessary, will continue to be governed by the "School Closures" policy

This is all of the information we have at this time.

COVID NYCDOE Regulations

Before sending your child to school the first day.

Please make sure that you and all of the people who live with your child are either tested for COVID-19 or for the antibodies to COVID-19. Students who test positive for COVID-19, or who come in close contact with somebody who has tested positive, will need to quarantine at home for 10 days; receive a negative test for the presence of COVID-19; be symptom free without medications for 24 hours and receive the clearance to return to school from a medical professional.

1. Take your child's temperature. The school will be conducting random temperature screenings, as well as random COVID-19 testing. If your child has a fever, they will be placed in an isolation room in the school until a family member on the Blue Card comes to take them home.
2. Do not send your child to school if they are showing symptoms of any illness. According to the CDC, *"People with these symptoms may have COVID-19: Fever or chills; cough; shortness of breath or difficulty breathing; fatigue; muscle or body aches; headache; loss of taste or smell; sore throat; congestion or runny nose; nausea or vomiting; diarrhea."*
3. Any child who shows symptoms of illness that could possibly overlap with COVID-19 symptoms will be removed from class and placed in the isolation room until a family member on the Blue Card comes to take them home.
4. Any child sent home from school for symptoms that overlap with COVID-19 symptoms will need to be quarantined at home for 10-14 days, depending on whether they have COVID-19 or not. They will need to get tested, be symptom free without medications for 24 hours and get a clearance from a medical health provider before they are allowed to return to school.
5. If a family cannot pick up their child, that child will remain in the isolation room for the rest of the day and not be allowed back into the school until they meet the requirements for returning listed above.
6. Make sure your child is wearing a mask. Students will not be allowed in the building without one. We also recommend your child carry hand sanitizer and alcohol wipes. Students will be working with materials that they will need to wipe down at the end of the day.
7. Make sure we have your cell phone numbers in case we need to contact you, either about your child or about any important news from the school.
8. Please go to <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/coronavirus/get-tested/covid-19-testing.page> for information on free and rapid COVID-19 testing

SCHOOL ROUTINES

Masks

1. **Students are required to wear masks at all times**, except for when they are eating lunch or drinking water. If a student refuses to wear a mask, they will be sent home.
2. Students are not to wear masks with valves. The CDC writes that masks with exhalation valves do not protect others from contracting COVID-19. Students should not wear bandanas, scarves or gators.
3. Students will wear masks during PE and Dance.
4. Students will wear masks when entering or leaving the building.
5. If a student intentionally removes or damages another child's mask, they may be removed from participating in the hybrid model and asked to participate only in virtual learning.

Lunch

1. Lunch is an instructional period by the DOE regulations during COVID. This means that students will be required to participate in school activities during their lunch.
2. Students will eat lunch in the classroom; the DOE is not permitting out lunch this year.
3. Students may not share lunch with other students. They cannot share drinks or utensils. Students will be required to wipe down their desks after lunch
4. Students who eat school lunch will continue to receive school lunch for free. They will also eat that lunch in the classroom with their classmates.
5. We do not allow glass bottles or metal utensils in lunchboxes.
6. Students are asked to be 'nut aware' and avoid bringing products containing nuts to school. We are now eating in the room where we will spend our whole days, and we have numerous nut allergies in our school.

Coming to and leaving school

1. Coming to school, students will line up six feet apart from each other at markings that will be set up around our building. Sixth graders will line up in the yard. Parents can deliver their child to the yard

entrance, but cannot come inside the yard. Seventh and 8th grade students will line up on 92nd Street from 1st-2nd Avenue. Parents are asked to drop children at the end of the block to avoid congestion; if necessary, they may deliver their child to these markings, but cannot remain with them.

2. Students will be supervised at entrance time by ESMS staff who will also do random temperature screenings, using a non-contact thermometer. Any child with a fever will be immediately sent to the nurse for evaluation, and a parent will be called to take the child home.
3. Students will need to wear their masks and maintain social distancing while waiting to enter the building. Students who refuse to do so may be sent home and placed in virtual learning.
4. Students will maintain social distancing as they exit the building at dismissal. Students will not be allowed to cluster outside the building or wait for their friends at the building.
5. Parents may not cluster at the building as they wait for their children. Parents who are meeting their children should agree prior to school on a designated meeting spot at least a block away from school.

Hallways

1. Students must wear masks and maintain social distancing as they travel through the hallways.
2. Students who refuse to do so may be sent home and placed in virtual learning.

Bathrooms and hand hygiene

1. Students are not to socialize in the bathroom.
2. If all the stalls in a bathroom are in use, students should wait outside in the hallway, keeping a social distance from other students who are waiting.
3. Students are to wear their masks in the bathroom.
4. Students must wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water or hand sanitizer before leaving the bathroom.

Classroom behavior

1. All students will remain in the same classroom throughout the day, except when going to physical education or dance class.
2. Students will be in seats six feet apart from each other. Seats will be facing forward.
3. Students must maintain social distancing in the classroom, from other students and adults.
4. Students must wear masks in the classroom at all times, except when they are eating lunch or drinking water.
5. Students may not share materials with other students in the classroom.
6. Students are responsible for using alcohol wipes to clean the computers they used or any other materials that belong to the school at the end of the day.
7. If a student demonstrates COVID-19 like symptoms in class, that child will be removed from class and examined by the nurse. That class will then leave that classroom while the custodial staff shut down and sanitize the room. Students will resume their schoolwork in another classroom.

If a child shows symptoms of COVID-19 while at School

1. The student will be brought to the isolation room by a staff member wearing full PPE equipment.
2. The class will be relocated and the classroom will immediately be cleaned and disinfected.
3. If a nurse is available, that nurse will evaluate the child. If no nurse is available, that child's family will be notified and asked to immediately pick up their child.
4. The family will be asked to take the child to a doctor, to get the child COVID-19 tested; they will be given information on convenient, free testing centers. Centers giving priority to DOE students are posted on our website.
5. The student will participate in remote learning until they are able to return.
6. A student can only return to school if
 - a. they have received a positive COVID-19 test and been symptom free for 10 days AND received clearance from a medical professional to return to school, AND the child has been symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

7. If it is determined that a student has come in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19, then that student may only return to school after
 - a. that student has completed a 14 day quarantine, regardless of symptoms, AND presents clearance from a health care provider, AND the student has been symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication.
8. If a family does not bring the student to get tested and does not get clearance to return to school from a medical provider, that child must remain home from school for 10 days and be symptom free without the use of medications for 24 hours.

REMOTE LEARNING

1. ESMS is following a hybrid model of instruction. This means that students in each homeroom are placed in one of four cohorts, A, B, C, and D. Students in cohorts A, B, and C go to school two sequential days in 6 day cycles. Students in cohort D are 100 percent remote. The following is a **sample** 4 week schedule, with the letter showing which cohort is in school. Our actual cohort schedule with school holidays is at esms.org.

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	A	A	B	B	C
2	C	A	A	B	B
3	C	C	A	A	B
4	B	C	C	A	A

2. All students in a homeroom will follow the schedule of the cohort that is in school that day. So, if the cohort A of class 604 has math 3rd period on Monday, cohorts B, C and D will all attend math virtually on 3rd period on Monday.
3. Students who are working remotely from home are responsible for knowing their homeroom's schedule and attending all instruction on time. Schedules were sent home and ESMS will be posting schedules on its website to help students keep track of their cohort's schedule. We will also be texting schedule announcements to cohorts.
4. All remote learners are expected to keep their cameras on and be in frame when attending live Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Team, Skype or any other virtual settings.
5. All students will keep their microphones on mute during remote sessions, unless they are speaking in a session.
6. All remote learners will need to display their real names when attending any school virtual learning situation, including but not limited to Zoom, Google Meet and Microsoft Teams. Students who do not use their real names will not be admitted to a session from the waiting room.
7. Students on live remote sessions are not to record sessions.
8. Students on live sessions are not to be on their phones during these sessions without approval from the teacher.
9. Students on live sessions are not to participate in chat or messaging that is not connected to the content under discussion.
10. Students in live sessions are expected to be respectful of other participants in the session.
11. Students who do not attend live virtual sessions will be considered absent without cause, unless their families notify their teacher in advance.
12. If students cannot participate fully in a session for extenuating circumstances, they are to notify the teacher 24 hours prior to the session.

13. If a student has problems with computer hardware or software or the internet, that student is responsible for notifying their teacher as soon as possible.

LIVE, IN-SCHOOL LEARNING

1. Students will wear masks at all times in the classroom, except during lunch and when drinking water. Masks must meet acceptable standards and not have valves. Students either not wearing masks or wearing unacceptable masks will be given masks by the school.
2. Students will maintain social distancing at all times.
3. Students will follow the “acceptable use” standards for computer use in school.
4. Students will use their assigned computer in school only for ESMS related work that is appropriate for the class and subject they are currently attending.
5. Students will periodically clean their computer surfaces throughout the day with alcohol wipes brought from home. This includes wiping down the computer at the end of every class.
6. Students will bring, in addition to their assigned school materials, a book for independent reading.
7. Students will bring their own headphones with a cord to school. Students will not share headphones. Earbuds are not allowed in the classroom.
8. Students who continually violate the standards of In-school learning may be moved to 100 percent remote learning.

COMING TO SCHOOL ON THE WRONG DAY

Each child who is participating in the hybrid model, should only come to school on the days their cohort is scheduled. If a child comes to school on a day they are not scheduled to do so, they will either be sent home immediately or will remain in the isolation room until a parent or other adult on their Blue Card comes to pick them up. *It is up to the parent/guardian to give or decline self-dismissal permission* on the attached Parental Release Form. Students waiting in the isolation room will not participate in class while awaiting pickup.

TRAFFIC SAFETY

Please make sure your children observe the following safety guidelines when crossing the street on the way to/from school and during lunch:

- Cross with the light and obey school crossing guards.
- Do not begin crossing the street until the light is green; the bike lane is considered part of the street.
- Do not look at cell phones while crossing the street.

COMMUNICATION

In the case of an emergency, please contact the Main Office at (212) 360-0114, please also email David at esms.davidgetz@gmail.com, Amanda at hyman@esmsnyc.net, or Beth at esms.bethservetar@gmail.com

Our school website is www.esms.org. Please check the site frequently for updates on schedules, school news, afterschool, calendar updates, etc. Many questions can be answered by checking the web calendar and homepage first. Cohort schedules will be published and updated regularly on the website.

Most school-wide communication from our administrative staff is via email. Please read all emails carefully. You may join our Constant Contact email list by submitting your information through the Email Registration box on the school home page. The PTA emails a weekly newsletter on Sundays using this list as well. If you are not receiving school emails by mid-September, please contact **Beth Servetar, Parent Coordinator**, to troubleshoot: esms.bethservetar@gmail.com / (212) 360.0112.

The most effective way to communicate with your child's teacher is by email. All staff emails can be found under the Directory tab on our school website. Staff members will respond to you in a timely fashion, however, teachers may not be able to email you during the school day.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is critical to academic success. Unexcused absences, such as extended holidays and vacations, are highly discouraged. Please take your family vacations during regular school breaks. **Teachers will not create individual assignments for students who take vacation during regular school days.**

Student attendance is taken in the morning homeroom.

Students who are remote will have their attendance taken in the morning homeroom. As they will need to do whenever they are remote, students will need to have their cameras on when they appear in homeroom for morning attendance. If a child does not have their camera on, they will be marked absent.

During the time of COVID-19, students will report to school on the days assigned to their cohort. Students who arrive on days not assigned to their cohort will be sent home on their own, if their parent has signed permission. If that parent has not signed permission, then that child will remain in the isolation room until a parent on the blue card comes to pick that child up. Students coming on unassigned days will not be placed in a classroom.

Students will be dismissed on a staggered schedule starting at 2:30pm. Dismissal will take place at the back gate on 92nd street.

Please call the school (212) 360-0114 or email attendance@esmsnyc.net when your child is absent or if you know in advance your child will be late. Our automated phone system calls the homes of late and/or absent students daily. **If your child is late, you will automatically receive a call from our system that your child is not in attendance.** You do not need to contact us. Once your child arrives at school and signs in, the 'absence' will be changed to 'late.'

Please be aware that excessive absences and lateness may still affect students' class grades and their high school admissions applications.

Unexplained absences and chronic lateness will be reported to the administration for further action. Extended or unexplained absences will be followed up and may be reported to the Department of Education.

Please have your child give doctor's notes to their homeroom teachers when applicable, or email doctor's notes to attendance@esmsnyc.net.

LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY

With the exception of the permission for self-dismissal when a student arrives on the wrong cohort day, STUDENTS ARE NEVER ALLOWED TO SELF-DISMISS BEFORE THE END OF THE SCHOOL DAY. If a student needs to be dismissed before the end of the day, they must be signed out and accompanied by an adult on the BLUE CARD. **Adults NOT on your child's blue card are NOT AUTHORIZED to sign your child out of school early.** This is a Department of Education regulation and there are no exceptions. Phone calls or emails giving permission to an adult not on the blue card to pick up your child *are not acceptable.*

You may make changes to your blue card in person during the school year by visiting the main office. **In the case of a family emergency, please contact the main office.**

Parents/ Guardians/ Authorized adults signing out students MUST bring photo ID.

ADDRESS CHANGES

To change a child's legal address in Department of Education records, please submit documentation of the family's new address. Acceptable documentation includes Con Edison bills or a current rent/mortgage statement. A child may have only one legal address. Changing your blue card information or PTA directory address does not make the change to your Department of Education address.

METROCARDS

The Department of Education Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) determines whether individual students receive full or half fare Metrocards. This is not a determination made by the school. Please be aware that full or half fare status may change when a child goes from grade to grade or after a birthday. Lost Metrocards will be replaced on the 1st and 15th of each month as long as our supplies last. If a student's Metrocard is defective, the child should bring it to the main office, and it will be replaced immediately.

DRESS CODE

East Side Middle's dress regulations comply with the Department of Education Discipline Guidelines which state:

- No weapons, gang related accessories
- Hats, hoods
- No visible tattoos or body piercings
- T-shirts with inappropriate words or images of weapons
- No pajamas
- No flip-flops

PLAGIARISM

If we determine that willful plagiarism has taken place, that child will receive either no credit for the assignment or an 'F' for the assignment. The student then will be required to submit original work with a potentially reduced grade.

If we determine that a child plagiarized accidentally, he/she will be given the opportunity to redo the project with a potentially reduced grade.

CHEATING

Students caught cheating will be given a 55 on that assessment. The student will then be given a make-up assessment on the same material. The grade for the assessment will be an average of 55 and the grade received on the make-up. Families of students caught plagiarizing and/or cheating will be contacted by the school administration and/or the teacher.

GUM CHEWING

STUDENTS MAY NOT CHEW GUM IN SCHOOL

BATHROOM PRIVILEGES

Students must sign-in and sign-out to use the bathroom. A gender neutral single stall bathroom is located on the 3rd floor.

Students are to maintain social distancing in the bathroom. If there are no available stalls in the bathroom, students will wait outside the bathroom in the hallway, maintaining social distance.

CELL PHONES, SMART WATCHES, AND OTHER ELECTRONICS

Smart watches are not allowed in school. Students are not allowed to use cell phones for any reason during the school day. Please respect this Department of Education regulation and do not call or text your child's cell phone during the school day.

If a student is seen with a smart watch or a cell phone out (including clipped to their clothing), unless given permission by a teacher, the item will be confiscated. The first time the device is confiscated, it will be returned to the student at the end of the school day. Repeat violations of this rule will require a parent to come to school to get the item. Please be sure your child understands this school policy.

PLEASE DO NOT CALL OR TEXT YOUR CHILD ON HIS/HER PRIVATE CELL PHONE DURING SCHOOL HOURS. If you need to reach your child in an emergency, please call the school.

DELIVERIES TO STUDENTS

Messages

As stated above, if you need to get an urgent message to your child, please call the office (212) 360-0114, and we will do everything possible to get the message to the child.

Forgotten Items

Bringing homework, permission slips or other required items in on time is a *student's responsibility* and should be considered part of the assignment. In addition, **during COVID-19, we will not accept unnecessary visitors to the school building.** Students who forget their lunch will always be provided with a free lunch from the school cafeteria. We cannot accept phone or email permission for trips or for other activities; all permission must be in writing.

SOCIAL MEDIA: PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT...

1. There is no such thing as "privacy." Your child should understand that anything they communicate through social media, photos or comments, will **eventually** be public, and that "eventually" may come sooner than expected. Any social posting is only one person's click away from being made public.
2. A student who causes any harm through social media to students at East Side Middle, whether it is intended or not, may be held responsible for that harm. This is the case, even if the posting took place outside of the school or outside of school hours. If it affected our students, it is our responsibility to investigate.

3. While the posting of nude or suggestive “selfies” or pictures of friends may be common among adolescents, these postings have often led to police involvement.
4. The school will be forced to act on any postings that suggest a student’s participation in illegal activities, harassment, substance abuse, or that may affect the health or safety of the child.
5. Colleges and private companies use software that enables them to search the social media history (even that which has been “deleted”) of candidates. The impulsive postings of today might show up in the job application or college application of tomorrow.
6. During COVID-19, students will be spending many hours in front of their computers, both in school and at home. Even in these circumstances, we expect all students to abide by our social media policies.

LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found is located in the school basement. If your child has lost an item, please have your child contact a staff member to arrange for them to visit the Lost and Found. Each trimester we donate items remaining in the lost and found.

MISCELLANEOUS

We ask that personal transactions, such as distributing invitations to events outside of school, not be conducted in school.

Out of respect for the whole community, we request that personalized party merchandise (like event sweatshirts) not be worn to school.

2019-2020 MEDIA CONSENT

East Side Middle School has an informational website (www.esms.org), designed by the PTA and is maintained each year by a volunteer Communications officer on the PTA Executive Board. We usually enjoy using photos of ESMS field trips, teams, activities, trips and performances on this website to give those outside our community a great feel for ESMS. The PTA also maintains a small social media presence to share school news and shoutouts on Instagram and Facebook. We would like to keep those pages current, so photos from the website may occasionally be posted there as well.

On the Parental Consent form, please indicate whether you agree to allow your child’s picture to appear on these ESMS pages (Yes/No). Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.