



FAMILY HANDBOOK

2019 - 2020

We are delighted to begin a new school year with your child. This handbook is primarily about safety and the procedures for being a good citizen at East Side Middle. Please read through it carefully and follow the new policy review procedure below.

NEW FOR 2019-20:

Please visit esms.org/forms to review important school policies. Rather than signing a number of separate, paper forms, indicating that both you and your child have gone over ALL school policies and procedures, you will print and sign *only* the PARENT RELEASE FORM that went home with your child on the first day of school.

This year, only this one signed release form goes to your homeroom teacher, and it is due by Monday, September 9.

Please feel free to reach out to Ms. Hyman, Beth Servetar or me if you have any questions or concerns, if you need important information provided in a language other than English, or if you require paper copies of anything we share electronically,

Go Tigers, Roar!

David

Main Office - Room 109

David Getz, Principal
Amanda Hyman, Assistant Principal
Lori McDermott, School Secretary
Rosa Morales, Supervisory School Aide

Room 112

Jessica McInnis, School Counselor
Beth Servetar, Parent Coordinator

331 East 91st Street NY NY 10128 www.esms.org main: 212-360-0114 / fax: -0121

AFTER READING AND DISCUSSING THIS HANDBOOK WITH YOUR CHILD,
go to www.esms.org/forms to read other school policies.
Then sign and return the PARENT RELEASE FORM included in your first day folder.

EAST SIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL

COMMUNICATION

In the case of an emergency, please contact the Main Office (212) 360-0114. The office is room 109, off the lobby.

Our school website is www.esms.org. Please check the site frequently for updates on schedules, school events, trips, etc. Many questions can be answered by checking the web calendar and homepage. Our Manhattan Youth After School program has its own website tab and all after school concerns/questions should be directed toward them.

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, please contact Beth Servetar, Parent Coordinator: 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. Students will receive @esmsnyc.net email addresses.

The PTA makes available a password-protected Student Directory, also housed on the website. Parents/guardians are asked to opt in to the directory and may determine how much contact information they wish to have included. The password is provided in a fall PTA newsletter.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is critical to academic success. Absences due to 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 twice a day (morning and after lunch).

In the morning, students must be in their homeroom classes by 9:00am. The gate on 92nd Street will open at 8:35am, at which time students may enter and remain in the yard or go to the cafeteria for a free breakfast. (In inclement weather, all students wait in the cafeteria.) At 8:50am, students are sent to their homerooms. Students who arrive at ESMS after 9:00am must enter on 91st Street and go to the main office for a late pass. The lunch passes of students who arrive late for morning attendance will be confiscated for that day.

Students who leave the building for lunch should return to the 92nd St. entrance at 12:30pm. The gates are opened at 12:34pm, and students not in homeroom for attendance-taking at 12:38pm are considered late. Students who return late from lunch enter the building on 91st Street and go to the main office for a late pass; the lunch pass will be confiscated for the next day's lunch period. Students who do not return to school after lunch without being signed out by an adult (age 18+) on the blue card will be considered truant.

When your child is absent, please let us know first thing in the morning. Email Rosa at attendance@esmsnyc.net or call her at (212) 360-0114; please also call if you know in advance your child will be late. Our automated system robocalls the homes of late and/or absent students daily. **If your child is late, you will automatically receive a call from our system that says your child is not in attendance.** Once your child arrives to school and signs in, the 'absence' will be changed to a 'late.' You do not need to contact us.

Please have your child bring in a note to the main office when returning from an absence or on the day of a lateness (if possible). Doctors' notes, when appropriate, are preferable. Note for 8th graders: Students attending official tours of public schools during the high school process will be provided with notes that excuse their absences; private school notes should be submitted, but please be aware that those absences are not excused.

Remember that excessive absences and lateness will affect students' class grades and possibly their high school admissions applications. Pending any changes in admissions policy, ten (10) or more "lates" and/or poor attendance in 7th grade may prevent students from being considered by the high school of their choice. 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.

LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY

Students are **NEVER ALLOWED TO SELF-DISMISS** before the end of the school day.

If a student needs to leave school before the end of the day, they must be signed out and accompanied by an adult (age 18+) ON THEIR 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. Parents/guardians/authorized adults MUST first present a photo ID at the security desk when picking up a student early. Students may return to school on their own and sign themselves back in.

Please plan ahead; phone calls or emails authorizing 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 or by requesting in advance that we send a new blank card home with your child. **In the case of a family emergency, please contact the main office.**

All matters regarding after school dismissal time changes/attendance each day should be directed to leasha Ramsay, Manhattan Youth: iramsay@manhattanyouth.org / (917) 565.7472

ADDRESS CHANGES

To change a child's legal address in Department of Education records, please submit to the main office a piece of mail with the family's new address. Acceptable pieces of mail include Con Edison bills or a current rent/mortgage statement. A child may have only one legal address. Simply changing your blue card or PTA directory address does not make the change to your official Dept. of Education address.

LUNCH

All grades will have lunch 4th period (11:44am – 12:34pm); cafeteria lunch is free and available daily to all students.

Cafeteria:

Please be aware that packed lunches may not contain glass containers, metal utensils, or knives made of *any* material. Please label everything.

Out Lunch:

With parental permission, East Side Middle School students are allowed to leave the building for lunch. Seventh and eighth graders may do so beginning the first day of school; 6th grade students may leave the building for lunch beginning **Wednesday, October 2**. Students who eat lunch in the building will have recess in the yard, weather permitting, or the cafeteria. Please note that children who go out for lunch will not be allowed back into the building until 4th period is over. When students leave the building for lunch, some buy food and others eat packed lunches brought from home.

There is no limit on the distance students may travel at lunch, but they **MUST** be able to return to school on time. Students who arrive to school late in the morning and/or after returning from lunch, must come to the main office (room 109) to sign the late log and get a late pass for class. The lunch passes of students late in the morning will be confiscated; those students will not be permitted to go out to lunch that same day. Students returning late from out lunch lose lunch privileges the following day. If lost, replacement passes may be obtained using the signature forms available in the main office; forms must be filled out completely for students to have their lunch passes replaced.

Students who do not return to school after lunch will be considered truant. If you wish to take your child out of school during or after lunch, an adult on the blue card must come to the office (room 109) and sign the student out.

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:

- Students are not allowed to cross streets mid-block/between cross streets, even when being picked up or dropped off by an adult. Parents/guardians, please always cross together *at the corners and with the light*.
- Cross with the light and obey school crossing guards, school staff and security agents.
- 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, smart watches or other electronic devices while crossing the street.

Students caught violating any of these traffic safety rules will lose their lunch passes: two weeks for a first offense and one month for additional offenses. Students without lunch passes

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 to school on time is a *student's* responsibility and should be considered part of the assignment. Interrupting classes to deliver forgotten items is very disruptive to teachers and staff, and we ask that this be done **ONLY IN EMERGENCIES**. *Forgotten lunch is NOT an emergency*; students who forget their lunch will always be provided with a free lunch from the school cafeteria. Forgotten afterschool needs, like uniforms or sneakers, may be brought to school for delivery to the student *at the end of the school day*. We cannot accept phone or email permission for trips or for other activities in place of paper forms that go home; all permission must be submitted by the deadline in original written form.

BATHROOM PRIVILEGES

Students must sign-in and sign-out to use the bathroom during class. A gender-neutral, single stall bathroom is available.

CELL PHONES, SMART WATCHES, AND OTHER ELECTRONICS

Smart watches may not be worn in school, and students are not allowed to use cell phones or smart watches for any reason during the school day. If a student is seen with a smart watch, cell phone or other electronic communication device out on school grounds (including clipped to their clothing), 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. Please respect this Department of Education regulation and **do not call or text your child's devices during the school day**. If you need to reach your child in an emergency, please call the school.

DRESS CODE

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

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

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 fare status may change when a child goes from grade to grade or after a birthday.

Lost Metrocards will be replaced by Rosa, in our main office, 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.

HEALTH & MEDICATIONS (Revised, December 9, 2019)

Your child's health is our primary concern. 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.

LOST & FOUND

Our lost & found is in a cafeteria cabinet accessible to students before, during and after school, though some items of value may be held by the Parent Coordinator. Please label students' coats, hoodies, lunchboxes, eyeglass cases, etc, and have your children check the cabinet regularly. The lost & found fills up quickly, and anything unclaimed gets donated to the Association to Benefit Children (ABC) in mid-December, March and June.

GUM CHEWING:

Students may not chew gum in school.

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.

SOCIAL MEDIA: Adults & children, it is VERY IMPORTANT to 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.

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