Nyack Public Schools
Contact Information

Superintendent of Schools – Dr. James Montesano ……………………353-7015

Asst. Superintendent Curriculum & Instruction/Personnel –
Dr. Winsome Gregory………………………………………………….353-7052

Deputy Superintendent – Carleen Millsaps…………………………353-7033

Director of Pupil Personnel Services & Special Education
Leonardo Macias…………………………………………………………353-7046

District Clerk – Linda DeCicco………………………………………..353-7015

Community Liaison – Jocelyne Abraham (Haitian)…………………353-7044
Yessenia Polanco (Spanish)…………………………………………353-7042

Transportation – Karen Sher…………………………………………353-7041

Buildings/Grounds (Kevin Heaton)…………………………………353-7007

Registration (Jean Lauturner)………………………………………..353-7001
Liberty School Motto

“Success is for Everyone”

MISSION STATEMENT

This mission statement, developed by all staff members, attempts to capture the focus and direction of our work with your children, our students.

The Liberty mission is to promote success for all students.

“We believe that all students are capable learners. Therefore, we will provide a rich learning environment in which all students will reach their fullest potential.”

Core Beliefs

Every child will learn in an environment which develops confidence and self-esteem.

Every child will learn in an environment where he/she receives respect and demonstrates respect to others, to self, and to the environment.

Every child will learn in an environment that encourages him/her to think, question, investigate, make connections and take risks.

Every child will learn in an environment where he/she is guided to become a self-motivated, excited, life-long learner.

Every child will learn in an environment that celebrates and shows respect for cultural diversity (differences).

Every child will learn in an environment which uses a variety of educational approaches.
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SCHOOL HOURS

Hours of the school day are 8:50 a.m. to 3:20 p.m. Kindergarten is a full day.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

The school calendar, which is published by the Nyack Public School District, is a valuable source of information about what is happening concerning your child and school. When you receive your copy, go through it thoroughly and mark off the special events which pertain to Liberty. “L” stands for our school. Days shaded in gray indicate “No School”. Please make a special note of all half days, which are listed.

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

It is important that your child attend school all day, every day. One of the most critical factors in student achievement is time-on-task. Teachers try to make every minute important. Early pick-ups or days out of school for reasons other than illness deprive your child of valuable learning time and establish poor work habits. Avoid family vacations that interrupt the school year. They are illegal absences.

However, when a child must be absent from school, parents are required to notify the school nurse that day. The phone number is 353-7250. There is an answering machine operating 24 hours a day for you to leave a message. Please tell us your child’s name, the teacher’s name and the reason for the absence. If you know in advance that your child will not be in school for any reason (illness, family matters, etc.), please advise the office, in addition to informing the teacher.

If your child has a contagious illness such as strep throat or chicken pox, keep your child at home and inform our school nurse. In addition to your phone call, a parental note is required for all absences when your child returns to school. A doctor’s note is needed to re-enter following a contagious disease. This is a legal requirement. Absence notes should always include the child’s full name (no nicknames), dates of absence, reason for absence and teacher’s name. If a child is absent and we do not receive a call, we will try to call you. We want to be sure that your child is safe at home.
ARRIVING LATE & LEAVING EARLY

Children are marked late if they arrive after 8:50 a.m. If your child will be late, please call us and have him/her report to the office upon arrival at school. A Late Pass will be issued by our school secretary.

Being late places children at a disadvantage. They must consistently try to catch up what they have missed and they begin their school day in a disorganized way. Children are marked as early dismissals if they leave school before 3:20. Leaving early also places children at a disadvantage.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Dismissal is at 3:20 p.m. Walkers will exit through the main door. No cars are permitted in the “bus” circles. Car riders begin dismissal at 3:30. If you are picking up your child by car, please remain in your car and move close to the curb as the teacher on duty signals to you. Children are not allowed to cross the center island.

Bus students meet in the gym and APR (All Purpose Room – lunch room) and are escorted by teachers to board their buses. Occasionally, the buses are delayed in picking up the children from school and consequently the children may arrive home later than usual.

Each child is to ride only his/her assigned bus and may not choose to ride a different bus to visit a friend. Please also instruct your child to get off only at his/her assigned stop and not at a friend’s stop.

If you are taking your child home before dismissal at 3:20, please notify the office in writing.

DIFFERENT GO-HOME PROCEDURES

If your child is going to be a car rider and is usually a bus rider – please notify the office in writing as to who will be picking up your child. If your child is usually a car rider and is going to be picked up by someone different than the person who usually picks him/her up, you must notify the office in writing of this change. If these changes occur after your child has already left for school, please call the office at 845-353-7240 before 2:00 P.M. to advise us of the change.
**SCHOOL BUS SERVICE**

All students must live one (1) mile or more away from school to receive busing.

School bus service is available to many elementary school children. Bus routes and times are mailed to parents during August. The mailing will state the bus number and the time and location of both pick-up and drop-off.

We strongly urge parents to stay with their young children until they are safely on the bus and to meet them at the bus stop when they return from school. Parents of kindergarten children are required to meet their child at the bus at the end of the day. Kindergarten children are often brought back to school when no one meets them at the bus stop.

If you need to contact the transportation office, please call Karen Sher at the Transportation Department of the Nyack Public Schools at 353-7041.
EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING & DISMISSALS

What should you do if school closes early? Designate a “safe home” on your street to receive your child in case this situation arises. Your child must know where he/she is to go if he/she is sent home from school in an emergency situation.

In the event of an unscheduled early dismissal, our automated system for K-12 Alerts will be calling three contact numbers which you have provided for us on the emergency cards. Therefore, our school must have your emergency card with accurate working phone numbers where you can be reached during the day. (See Emergency Card). Additional emergency evacuation plans are in place, should they be needed.

School closings and delayed openings due to inclement weather or other emergency situations will be announced on the local radio stations, school voicemail, and web site address listed below.

Radio Stations:

WVNJ (1160 AM)
WFAS (1230 AM; 103.9 FM; 106.3 FM)
WHUD (100.7 FM)

Phone Messages:

Liberty Elementary School 845-353-7240
Administration building 845-353-7000

Internet:

www.nyackschools.com/school closings and select www.cancellations.com or www.7online.com

OR

Log directly onto www.cancellations.com or www.7online.com

Television:

A message will appear on Channels 2, 4, 5, 7, 12 across the bottom of the screen.
Health Office Information

EMERGENCY CARDS

An emergency contact card must be completed for each child each year. It must include the child’s name, address, home phone number, a number where we can reach the parent during the day (e.g. work, cell, pager numbers) and the name and number of someone who will always be available to take your child home when you cannot be reached should your child become ill at school. Please let us know immediately of any change in phone number or address. If you leave a cell number as a contact, please make sure that it is turned on during the school day, should we need to contact you.

RESTRICTIONS ON ACTIVITY

When a child is ill, injured or has been hospitalized and his/her activities (gym or recess) need to be restricted, we must have a doctor’s note stating the injury/illness, what the restrictions are, and the length of time for the restriction. A follow-up note from the doctor is also required when the restrictions no longer apply.

MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

When a child needs medication during the school day, the following procedures are required: (This includes prescriptions and over-the-counter medications.)

1. A note from both the doctor and the parent stating the diagnosis, the name and the amount of the medication and the time it should be given.

2. The medicine must be brought in by an adult. When you go to the pharmacy to get a prescription filled, ask the pharmacist to make up two (2) bottles. One labeled with enough medication for the school nurse and one labeled for use at home. Medicine cannot be given if it is not in a properly labeled bottle.
SCHOOL PHYSICALS

State law requires that all new entrants, as well as all students in grades K, 2 and 4 have a physical exam. Those students who do not return the annual health certificate completed by their private doctors by October 1st, will be examined by the school doctor.

IMMUNIZATIONS

State law requires that all students attending school must meet the following immunization requirements:

1. DPT (3 doses)
2. Polio (3 doses)
3. Measles (2 doses)
4. Mumps (1 dose)
5. Rubella (1 dose)
6. Hepatitis B (3 doses)
7. Varicella (1 dose) required of children born on or after 1/1/1998, which must have been given after 1st birthday.

Any student who does not provide proof of immunization will not be permitted to attend class.
VISITORS

Parents and community members are encouraged to visit Liberty Elementary School. However, in order to ensure the safety of the students and staff and to maintain an orderly school day, the following rules will apply to all visitors to the school:

1. All visitors to the school will enter at the front entrance and sign in at the main office. The visitor will be issued a visitor’s badge that should be worn at all times while in the school or on the school grounds.

2. Parents who wish to observe their child’s classroom while school is in session should make arrangements with the teacher in advance. Other visitors who wish to observe or take a tour of the school are required to make an appointment with the principal.

3. To prevent any interruption in the instructional day, individual meetings with teachers about a child’s progress or other matters should be arranged in advance around the teacher’s instructional day.

For the safety and welfare of the school community, any unauthorized person in the building or on school property will be asked to leave.

GUIDED TOURS

Tours of the school will gladly be provided for interested parents. Please telephone the school at 353-7240 to schedule a convenient time for both you and the teacher.
**VALUABLES**

It is required that students leave all valuables and toys at home. Toys, radios, walkmen, tape decks, cell phones, IPODS, IPADS, electronic games and other similar items must remain at home. School is not responsible for these items if they are brought to school. Additionally, trading cards should not be brought to school.

**LOST AND FOUND/CHANGE OF CLOTHES**

Lost and found bins are located by the Main Office. Please check this place periodically for lost items. All unclaimed clothes will be donated to local agencies at varied times throughout the school year. Please always label or write your child’s name on his/her clothing and belongings.

The nurse’s office has a very small supply of sweat pants and shirts for use during the school day. We ask the family to clean the borrowed clothes and return them to the nurse as soon as possible. Donations of sweat pants or pants with elastic waist bands in all sizes would be greatly appreciated. Of course, we prefer that you send your child with a change of clothes in his/her backpack – children of all ages can get wet or muddy on the playground.
CLASS PLACEMENT

Students are heterogeneously grouped in classes. Each class contains a well balanced group of children with all abilities, interests and backgrounds. Each student’s social, emotional, intellectual and academic progress is taken into account when class lists are developed in the spring. Teachers, the Principal, and the Response to Intervention Team are the decision makers when creating appropriate student placement. It is asked that parents do not make specific requests for student placement.

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT

Parent orientation or Back-to-School night is generally held during the month of September. The exact date is found on the school calendar. During this evening, teachers will highlight their educational programs for the year.

MORNING PROGRAM

Morning program, a Nyack tradition, is a daily coming-together of students to discuss topics, sing songs, showcase student performance, celebrate special occasions, play learning games and say the Pledge of Allegiance.
DRESS CODE

Children should wear clothing to school that is seasonably appropriate, comfortable and safe. Clothing should be modest and respectful. Shoes with high heels or those which easily slip off can be a source of injury on the playground. Remember, your children are climbing in these shoes! Hats and bandanas are not permitted inside the school building. Please dress your children in clothing that will not be harmed by outdoor play on our field, which becomes very muddy after rain.

The Nyack School District dress code is as follows:

A student’s dress, grooming and appearance shall:
1. Be safe, appropriate and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
2. Not include extremely brief garments such as short shorts, short skirts, midriff tops, tube tops, net tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps, plunging necklines (front/and or back), oversized tank tops, muscle T-shirts and see-through garments.
3. Ensure that underwear is completely covered with outer clothing.
4. Include safe footwear at all times. (No flip-flops)
5. Sneakers should be worn for Physical Education classes.
6. Not include the wearing of hats, grades K-8.
7. Not include wearing bandanas and other headwear in school except for medical or religious purposes.
8. Not include items that are vulgar, obscene, libelous, or denigrate others on account of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
9. Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.
**FOOD SERVICE**

Lunches can be brought from home or purchased at school. School lunch menus and prices are sent home with the children on a monthly basis.

Students who wish to have hot lunch on a daily basis are asked to send lunch money in an envelope with their name on it. Lunches can also be prepaid for a week at a time.

Breakfast is offered daily from 8:20 to 8:50 a.m.

**SNACK TIME, BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS
CLASSROOM PARTIES**

Snack time is scheduled at the discretion of the teacher who will discuss with the class what is appropriate. We encourage children to bring nutritious, healthful foods. Certain classrooms have restrictions due to allergies. Please discuss with your child’s teacher before you visit.

Special holiday celebrations or special classroom events related to the children’s work are planned by the teacher and students. Parents are often encouraged to help in these situations.

**RECESS**

Recess is provided for the children for 20-30 minutes each day. During this time, children will either play outside (weather permitting) or have recess in the classroom. We encourage our children to play outside year round, so please provide them with boots, hats and gloves in the winter months. Children will not go outside if the temperature is below freezing, playground conditions are not safe or there are strong winds.
KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION
AND ORIENTATION

Kindergarten registration begins in January. Children who will be five years of age on or before December 1st are eligible for kindergarten.

In late spring, all incoming kindergarten children are invited to visit our kindergarten classrooms and attend a sing-a-long. While the children visit, parents are provided with opportunities to ask questions of the building principal and hear about a typical kindergarten day.

PARENT_TEACHER CONFERENCES

You will be invited to parent-teacher conferences in the fall and spring of the year. During these very important meetings, you will be informed about your child’s progress and you will have an opportunity to discuss how you can best support your child’s educational success. These dates are noted on the school calendar and parents are notified by teachers as of the day and time of each parent-teacher conference. Students are important participants and are invited to be part of the conferences, too.

REPORTS TO PARENTS

Several different written communications will come home in order to provide the best possible information about your child’s progress. Report cards are prepared by trimester. Parent/Teacher Conferences will be scheduled in December and March. End of year report cards will be sent home with students on the last day of school in June.

The third, fourth and fifth grade students are given standardized tests. These assessments are of Language Arts, Math, and Science. Parents will receive home reports for most of these assessments.
TELEPHONES

The office telephone is a business phone and, except in emergencies, is not to be used by students for social arrangements such as requests to visit a friend’s house after school. Similarly, students will not be called to the phone to talk to a parent unless it is an emergency situation.

Student use of cell phones is not permitted by children in school. If you feel that your child needs the use of a cell phone for before or after school activities, please bring the cell phone to the office and we will hold it for the day.

If you need to leave a message for your child’s teacher (other than go-home changes), please call voice mail directly at 845-353-7165.

HOMEWORK CENTER

Homework supports the learning that takes place in school. It provides practice which reinforces and extends classroom learning and can also provide opportunities for independent study, research and creative thinking. If your child is absent, please contact the school by telephone or written note requesting that homework be sent home with another child or picked up at the end of the school day.

Kindergarten: Generally, homework is given 2-3 nights a week. Assignments may include teacher’s request for materials from home, (e.g. photographs, objects) and/or simple writing/readings tasks that should take approximately 5-10 minutes per task. Parents should read nightly with their children.

Grades 1: Generally, homework is given 4 nights weekly. Assignments may vary from skills reinforcement to voluntary projects and should take approximately 15 minutes per night. Students are expected to read for 10-15 minutes very night.

Grades 2: Generally, homework is given 4 nights weekly. Assignments include reinforcement and practice of skills taught and should take approximately 20-30 minutes per night. Students are expected to read for 15 minutes every night. Several long-term projects will be assigned during the year. Occasionally, weekend homework may be given.

Grade 3: Generally, homework is given 4 nights per week for an average of 30-45 minutes per night. (This represents the time it should take students to complete assignments.) Students are expected to read for 15 minutes a night. Several long-term projects will be assigned during the year. Occasionally, weekend homework may be given.
**Gr. 4 and 5:** Generally, homework is given 4 nights per week for an average of 45-60 minutes per night. (This represents the time it should take students to complete assignments.) Also, students are expected to read independently for 15-20 minutes every night. Several long-term projects will be assigned during the year. Occasionally, weekend homework may be given.

**LIBRARY**

All classes visit the library at least once during the week, where they may receive library curriculum instruction. Students are encouraged to take out a book which is to be returned the next week. Should a library book be lost, the student is expected to replace the book by contacting the librarian.

**SPECIAL AREA CLASSES**

All children in grades K-5 attend physical education class, art class and music class at least once weekly. Often special area teachers work with classroom teachers to create special inter-subject projects. The students also work in our computer lab once or twice weekly. (Classrooms also have their own computers.)
FIELD TRIPS

Field trips to nearby points of interest are scheduled by various classroom teachers throughout the year. These trips are designed to supplement and enrich various aspects of classroom instruction. Field trips are funded by the district, the PTA and parents. Parents will receive notices of bused field trips in advance and will be asked to sign field trip permission forms. At times, parent volunteers may be sought to help chaperone.

In addition to scheduled field trips, Liberty’s location makes it possible for classes to take walking neighborhood trips to Rockland Lake throughout the year. A permission slip will be sent home for those walking trips.

Children must arrive at school for class trips and return to the school with their classes to ensure their safety.

LIBERTY NEWSLETTER

Our monthly school publication highlights the many exciting events taking place in our school. In addition, you may find interesting interviews, parenting information, features and activities at particular grade levels.
COMMUNICATION:
If you have a concern about your child’s academic performance or behavior, the protocol is to contact the classroom teacher before going to administration. The classroom teacher has the most information regarding your child and it is important to keep the lines of communication open between the teacher and the parent. Open communication and parent involvement contribute to the positive climate we enjoy at Liberty. I encourage you to join us in our mission of preparing students to become productive world citizens. Feel free to call, email, or visit. We are here to serve you and your child.

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER: This school-based partnership links community services and support programs with adults and children in our school. We have our own site coordinator on staff who ensures that families in need of support are served.

SITE BASED TEAM – L.E.A.D: As mandated by the State Education Department, Liberty has established a site based management team. This team consists of school staff and parents who are guided by the New York State Compact For Learning. This team meets on a regular basis to discuss and decide upon issues specific to our school.

CLASS PARENTS: Class parents are volunteers who lend their assistance to the classroom teachers in various ways. A class parent may do the following:
- assist with class parties
- chaperone class trips
- assist during the year with special projects and school functions (class plays, etc).
PTA

The PTA is a nationwide organization created by parents, made up of parents and teachers working together to give support and service to the school. PTAs also work to get laws passed that help children. Through meetings and committees, our PTA works closely with the school to sponsor and help with social and educational events of interest to students and their families.

THE PTA EXECUTIVE BOARD: The Board consists of the following positions: President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer.

This group plans and oversees the activities of the PTA. In the spring of each year, the Executive Board is formed and many of the activities are scheduled for the next school year. New members are always welcomed and encouraged to participate.

Some of the events which our PTA has sponsored are:

THE ICE CREAM SOCIAL: This event is held each September and generally begins the social calendar for the PTA. Children and parents are invited to make their own sundaes and meet new schoolmates. It may be your child’s first chance to “show off” his/her school to the family. You will have an opportunity to sign up for the PTA membership at this event.

SCHOOL PICTURES: The PTA does all the organizational work for the taking of your child’s school picture. You can expect this to happen in September or October. A portion of the proceeds goes to the PTA, but the fruit of their labor usually is displayed on your refrigerator or in the wallets of grandparents.
THE BOOK FAIR: Books are offered for sale each spring. The primary goal of the fair is to encourage our children to read, read, read!

THE PTA FUNDRAISER: The Parent Teacher Association offers products for sale once or twice a year. The profits are used for the benefit of the students.

THE CULTURAL ARTS PROGRAMS: Music, drama, dance, science programs and cultural arts residencies are presented throughout the year as special enrichments supported by the PTA for the children. Parents are welcome to attend any special event.

MOVING UP: The PTA sponsors many of the “Moving Up” Activities, which mark the transition of our fifth graders to middle school students. These events, such as “Bridges” when the district 5th graders meet at the Middle School for games, music and a picnic.

HOLIDAY SALE: The PTA provides holiday shopping for all students during the month of December. The children enjoy shopping for their family members.

APPRECIATION FOR OUR TEACHERS: PTA members demonstrate appreciation for our teachers during a “Welcome Back Breakfast” in September and a lunch on “Teacher’s Recognition Day” in the spring.
Some of the other services, programs and events we are proud to offer include:

- Character education
- Olweus Anti-Bullying Program/PBIS
- Health and Wellness Fair
- Instrumental music for grades four and five (Band grade 4; Strings grade 4 and 5)
- STARS (After school reading support)
- Recorders in music class for third and fourth grades
- ENL (English as a New Language for children needing language assistance, reading and math support)
- ENL Homework Center
- Special education support
- Computer lab classes for all children
- Psychologist and Social Worker on staff
- Library, physical education, art, and music classes
- Speech/language support
- Reading and Math support staff
- Resource Room support
- D.A.R.E. – drug awareness program for fifth graders
- Field trips
- Numerous cultural arts programs
- School Garden
- LEAP Program – an after school program developed by parents designed to enrich our students’ lives
- “Bridges” (A 5th grade spring event bringing together all district 5th graders for the purpose of introducing each school’s “graduates” to their future Middle School friends.)
SAFETY & BEHAVIORAL GUIDELINES

The safety of our students has always been a priority for the staff at Liberty. All doors are locked to outside entry. The main door is equipped with a buzzer system and a security guard is on duty during school hours.

In order to ensure safety, we have a developmentally appropriate Code of Conduct. We have established cafeteria rules, playground rules, bus rules, and rules for students to follow while in school. Basically, we expect our students to be respectful at all times.

We urge each parent to review the Code of Conduct with his/her child in order to fully understand our expectations and the implications or consequences of unsafe and/or inappropriate behavior. The consequences for these behaviors may be: “time-out thinking” time; a behavior report sent to parents; a bus report and/or suspension of bus privileges; request for a parent meeting or a phone call or note to a child’s home, in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension.

Cafeteria rules:
- Use “restaurant” voices.
- Remain seated unless you have permission to leave the cafeteria.
- Be respectful, kind and helpful at all times.
- Place garbage in the trash can and keep your area clean.
- Be safe! Always walk in the lunchroom.

Bus rules:
- Soft, sociable voices are to be used.
- Students must remain seated at all times. (Students cannot change seats.)
- The driver’s directions must be followed.
- Students will act in a kind manner towards each other and not cause harm to anyone or themselves.
- Proper language is to be used on the bus.
- Food, drinks and gum are not to be eaten on the bus.
- Students must not deface or harm any parts of the bus.
- No glass is allowed on the bus.
- Large objects may only be brought on the bus if they fit on the student’s lap.
Playground rules:

- Never place anyone (including self) in danger.
- No rough playing or unkind actions on the playground. (No shoving, pushing, kicking, tackling, fighting, “play fighting”, pinching, spitting, teasing, bullying.)
- Use age appropriate equipment as designated.
- Do not sit on top of equipment.
- Stay in the playground area at all times.
- Take turns on the playground equipment.
- Do not play with or throw sticks, rocks, bark, dirt, or any other dangerous object.
- No football or “touch football” at any time.

Liberty is a caring community where learning is a passion and students are inspired to reach for excellence as we encourage and support them to succeed in academic and personal activities. In order to have a safe, respectful, caring Learning Community, the students learn the Liberty School Pledge and what it means.

LIBERTY SCHOOL PLEDGE

As a liberty student, I pledge to come to school prepared and ready to learn. I will believe in myself, be positive, work hard, help others and make wise choices. I will always remember to be respectful and show I care. Liberty will be a better school because of me.

SUCCESS IS FOR EVERYONE

A school is stronger and more effective when there is a close partnership between families and school staff. This is your school and we hope that you feel involved, welcomed and productive here because as our motto implies, success, in a wide variety of ways for all, is our goal as we support each and every special child at Liberty!
Liberty School Song

Cheer! Cheer for Liberty School.

Learning is fun at Liberty School.

Students, staff and faculty,

Being the best that we can be

We can succeed at all that we do.

That’s when our winning spirit shines through.

Liberty we’re proud to say,

Will stand by us all the Way!