



Riverside School for Makers & Artists

PARENT HANDBOOK 2019 - 2020

VISION

To cultivate inquiry and foster imagination in all members of our school community, with a focus on both the academic and social emotional aspects of learning.

MISSION

P.S. 191, The Riverside School is a diverse and inclusive school community where children are educated through a collaborative effort among parents, staff, students and community with a focus on meeting both the academic and social emotion needs of every child. We provide a rigorous, engaging and accessible academic program, to instill a love of learning in our students and to prepare them to be responsible and productive global citizens. Learning at PS 191 expands beyond the four walls of the classroom, so that students are engaging with the community around them.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance at school is critical to your child's academic success. The curriculum is sequential and cumulative, so missing even one day can have a negative impact on your child's learning and progress. Attendance is recorded on the child's cumulative record card, and low attendance has a direct impact on grades, as well as acceptance into middle school and high school. Parents can support the work of the school by stressing good attendance and punctuality. Regular attendance also aids teacher evaluation allowing for early detection if your child needs special help in any areas. A note is required when a child returns to school after an absence. Communicable diseases, chicken pox, conjunctivitis (pink eye), head lice and ringworm, bedbug bites, must be reported to the school office. After three unexcused absences a letter is sent home and/or call is made by a staff member; after 20 days out (consecutive or not consecutive) an attendance teacher visits the home. Our automated system will notify you via phone message if you child is absent or late regardless of you giving us notice. The guidance counselor works with families who have frequent absences. Again, your child's success is dependent on their attendance at school, so please make sure they are here every day.

PUNCTUALITY

It is imperative that parents assist their children in developing the habit of arriving to school on time. Our school day starts at 8:20, but we encourage students to students to come by 8:10 so that they are ready to start their day. Since reading is the first subject of each day, students need to be prepared to begin schoolwork promptly at 8:20. As a safety precaution, parents of children in grades k through 8 may not accompany their children to the classroom. Students who arrive after 8:20am must obtain a late pass from the late desk in the main lobby before going to class.

Punctuality is key and lateness has a negative impact on your child's success. Both middle schools and high schools take punctuality into strong consideration when considering acceptance. A good rule to live by is: Early is ON TIME and ON TIME is late. Please send your child to school on time EVERY DAY!

DAILY SCHEDULE

Arrival

The school building opens at 7:45am. Breakfast is available for all children in the school cafeteria from 7:45am- 8:20am. All other children should arrive prior to the start of the school with enough time to be ready to begin the day promptly.

Pre-kindergarten students are dropped off directly in their classrooms where they will be served breakfast, should they desire.

Kindergarten students will enter through the Library. A staff member will be in the Library to receive Kindergarten students as early as 8:00am. Kindergarten students will be served breakfast in the classroom at 8:20.

Students in grades 1-5 sit at assigned tables and have breakfast if they desire. Students in grades 6-8 will receive a breakfast to go bag. All students who are in the cafeteria will be escorted upstairs to the gym or the gymnasium by a staff member at 8:05am.

** Strollers, bikes and scooters are not allowed in the school building. You are welcome to park them in the bike rack section outside the school.

Dismissal

- Pre-K students will be dismissed by their teachers at 2:30pm in the cafeteria.
- Kindergarten students will dismiss from the Library at 2:40pm.
- Grades 1-2 are picked up in the school cafeteria.
- Grades 3-5 are dismissed outside of the school building at 2:40pm
- Grades 6-8 are dismissed through the side exit on 61street.

Please note: Students in grades 3-8 are dismissed outside, rain or shine.

All students in grades PreK-5 must be signed out by an adult 18 years or older, and the person signing them out **MUST** be on the blue card. No child will be dismissed to an adult who is not on the blue card.

We understand that there are occasions when you need to sign your child out early, however sign-out after 2:00 in the office is disruptive to classroom dismissal procedures and creates a safety issue. If you wish to sign your child out early, you must sign-in at the security desk and sign your child out in the main office **BEFORE 2:00 PM**. The office will close for sign-out at 2:00 PM **SHARP**. Please plan accordingly.

Children who are to be escorted home must be picked up promptly. Again, only adults on the blue card can Please notify your child's teacher in writing if a different person is picking up your child on a particular day. Arrangements need to be made prior to the school day or call the school to notify us. Please be on time to pick up your children. The School Safety Agents do not supervise students.

PARENT COORDINATOR

Damaris Carrion is the school's Parent Coordinator. The parent coordinator works to engage and involve parents within the school community, along with the school administration, the staff, the PTA and community groups. You may visit your Parent Coordinator with any questions or concerns. She can be reached by calling the school's main number or her cell phone 917 500-3388. You can also e-mail her at DCarrion@schools.nyc.gov or DCarrion@PS191nyc.com

PARENT COMMUNICATION

- Monthly information calendar
- School-wide emails
- School Messenger phone calls

PHOTO RELEASES

We love capturing great moments in our school community with pictures and video! In order to include your child in these images, we must have a signed photo release. Please send the photo release form back as soon as possible.

LOST AND FOUND

Any articles found will be placed in back of the cafeteria. Please label all of your child's clothing. The school is not responsible for items lost.

MEDICAL

If a child has any type of allergy the nurse and classroom teacher must have a letter from a parent and a physician. We must be notified of any medical problems in writing – copies to classroom teacher, principal and nurse. If a student becomes ill or is involved in an accident during the school day, the school nurse, in conjunction, with school administrators will determine if the child should be sent home and will contact the parent / guardian. Failure to reach parent/guardian will result in a call to an alternate person listed on the **Emergency Contact Card**.

IMMUNIZATION

The New York State Department of Education and the Board of Health require that documentation be secured proving that all students who come to school are fully immunized. We are required to exclude students if they are not immunized and do not have documentation from a physician indicating that they have received all required immunization.

MEDICATION

All current medical information should be on file with the school nurse. Please be sure that the nurse is aware of any medical condition your child may have including allergies. Please be aware that students may take medication in school if there is an updated 504 form.

Medication will be kept in a safe place and administered, at times directed by the prescribing physician, by the school nurse. The school nurse will monitor careful administration of medication. Detailed records, as they pertain to the administration of oral medication, will be maintained at the school.

Please be sure to keep the school nurse updated on any changes in your child's medication or dosage. If you have any questions or need to call the school about the change in your child's medication, please contact the school nurse.

EMERGENCY / STORM SCHOOL CLOSING

A Citywide policy on emergency school closing / storm closings has been established by the Chancellor's Office – New York Department of Education.

Please note the following:

- By 6:00 am the decision will be announced on the 311 Information Line
- Department of Education web-site – <http://www.schools.nyc.gov>
- Radio stations – WINS(1010AM), WCBS (880AM), WBLS (107.5fm), WNYE (91.5 fm)
- Television stations – Channel 2, Channel 4, Channel 5, Channel 7, Channel 25 and Channel 1 on cable
- When there is a delayed school opening morning pre-kindergarten programs will be cancelled.
- It is expected that when there is a delayed school opening children will remain in school until regular dismissal time. However, if a city-wide emergency or storm condition worsens, the Chancellor may have to announce early dismissal. The Chancellor will notify bus services of the early dismissal schedule. You should have plans in place with a relative, friend or neighbor in case of early dismissal to care for your child.

EMERGENCY BLUE CARD INFORMATION

Emergency contact information must be kept up to date. In the event of a medical or national emergency or school closing, we must be able to reach you or a family member. Please be sure to notify the school of any changes in address, phone number or emergency contact. List as many people as possible. Anyone who picks up your child **MUST HAVE PHOTO ID** and be listed on **BLUE CARD**. If your phone number changes at any time during the year we must be notified in writing. If your address changes you must provide proof of your new residence. Children will be released **ONLY** to persons listed on the blue card. If there is anyone that your child **CANNOT** be released to , the school must be notified of this in writing, and accompanied by a copy of court papers.

BATHROOMS

Under no circumstances is an adult (staff, parent volunteer, etc.) permitted to use or enter the student bathrooms. All adults must use the clearly marked adult bathrooms that have been labeled for adults located in the school lobby.

This bathroom is also available for students who wish to use a single stall restroom. For example if a parents wishes to accompany a child or if a students wishes to have a gender neutral space.

BIRTHDAYS

Check with your child's classroom teacher about his or her policy for celebrating birthdays in the classroom well in advance of your child's birthday.

SCHOOL TRIPS

At the beginning of the school year, parents are requested to sign a general permission slip allowing students to take neighborhood walks. A separate signed permission slip is required for each class field trip that requires transportation. It is the responsibility of the student to bring home and return this signed note. A child will not be permitted to go on a trip without a permission slip. Children are not allowed to call parents for permission on the day of the trip. All permission MUST be in writing from the parent.

TOYS & OTHER PERSONAL BELONGINGS

With the exception of items to share during the appropriate period of the class day, children are discouraged from bringing personal items to school. Electronic items will be confiscated and returned only to parents.

TRANSPORTATION/BUS STUDENTS

Students who ride the school bus will be dismissed at 2:30 PM. An adult will escort all children in grades K-5 to their bus line. Please make sure that you have written down your child's bus company and bus route number. Busing issues should be directed to the Office of Pupil Transportation at 718 392-8855.

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM

- Information about the after school programs, which offer enrichment classes for students in grades Pre-k through 8, will be sent home in September. YMCA, which serves students in K-5, will run from 2:40 PM – 5:30 PM each day. Hudson Guild, which serves students in grades Prek and 6-8, will run from 2:40 PM – 5:30 PM each day. Please contact our Parent Coordinator, Damaris Carrion, for more information and enrollment.
- Afterschool for students in grades 6-8 is provided by Hudson Guild. Please contact our Parent Coordinator, Damaris Carrion if you need an application.

DISCIPLINE CODE

It is crucial that our school is a safe and respectful environment. The NYCDOE Code of Discipline and the RSMA Code of Conduct are used to ensure that students behave responsibly towards themselves, their peers, and school personnel. It helps students foster a respect for school property and the property of others.

- The NYCDOE Code of Discipline describes a broad range of acts of unacceptable behavior. The Code of Discipline ranks the acts according to severity and sets forth permissible intervention strategies and sanctions. The NYCDOE Code of Discipline is based on the premise that rules must be enforced fairly, firmly, and consistently. It recognized that as

students progress in school as they advance in age, they must assume greater responsibility for their actions. You can access the NYCDOE Code of Discipline on-line.

- At RSMA we also have our own internal Code of Conduct, which aligns with the DOE Code of Discipline. This document outlines our behavioral expectations and promotes positive behavior across the school community. It lists strategies for intervention and clarifies our discipline procedures. Most importantly, it highlights our non-negotiables, which is a list of core rules that all students must adhere to. It also highlights our community code, which lists our core values and expectations. You will receive and sign for a copy of this document.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Families must be involved in the decision to allow their children to establish an account with social media sites, including Facebook, Instagram and others. Instagram and Facebook require a user to be 13 years old to establish an account. Therefore, families **MUST** monitor their child's social media interactions. RSMA takes the use and abuse of social media very seriously. If your child receives something inappropriate electronically from a classmate or someone else, please take action. If you need assistance in facilitating a conversation, please contact the school social worker, guidance counselor, or administration. RSMA urges you to carefully consider whether or not your child is mature enough to monitor their own internet activities. Posts on the internet become permanent digital record and can be re-posted beyond the originally intended audiences. These sites are blocked on school technology. Inappropriate and/or offensive posts will be handled by RSMA in a serious way with strict consequences.

CELL PHONE POLICY

- Phones and electronics devices should not be seen or heard in school. This includes timers, alarms and any other noises.
- If a student's device is seen or heard it will be confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the day. If a student refuses to hand-in their phone when it is seen and then requested by an adult, administration will then get involved and hold the phone for pick-up by a parent on Friday afternoons **ONLY**. Again, parent pick-up will only be permitted on Fridays. This policy is in place to ensure that our students are focused on their academic success, not on social media while in school. If you need to reach your child or your child needs to reach you at any time during the school day, the office phones must be used. The school phone number is 347 478-5228. We appreciate your cooperation with this policy.
- RSMA and the DOE are not responsible for lost or damaged electronic devices. You bring these items to school at your own risk.
- Students will not be permitted to use electronic devices during lunch, recess, or any other free period.
- Electronic devices may not be turned on or used during fire drills or other emergency preparedness exercises.
- Electronic devices may not be used in locker rooms or bathrooms.
- All electronic devices should be turned off and stowed before students enter the building.
- Students in Grades 6-8 will have the option of turning in their phones for safe keeping during arrival. Phones will be locked up and returned before dismissal.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

The Parents Association at RSMA strives to be a very active participant in helping support our teachers with the education of our children. It is through our efforts in fundraising and community building that we look to strengthen and enrich the academic and artistic experience of everyone at RSMA. We invite you to come and share your time, talents, energies, and caring for our kids and our community. Please let us know how and when you can volunteer an hour or two on our next project.

Tips on getting involved-and having a great year!

- Attend school events, both social and academic.
- Complete homework assignments. Establish a regular homework time. This will help your student to complete assignments on time.
- While your child is doing homework, discourage distractions such as television radio, the Internet or phone conversations during homework time.
- Contribute financially to PA fundraisers, no matter how small.
- Read everything in your child's backpack.
- Attend both Parent/teacher conferences.
- Volunteer your time as a chaperone for field trips.
- Attend Meet the Teacher Night (Curriculum Night).
- Ask your child's teacher if you can contribute to her wish list.
- Routinely visit the school website for updates.

CLASS PARENT(S)

Class Parents serves as the primary interface between the parent body and the classroom teachers; and every Class Parent should be cognizant of their responsibility toward the other parents, the teachers, and the school. This role can be shared among several parents from a class, and responsibilities can be divided up (take turns attending meetings, one can be in charge of email, another can try to touch base regularly with the teacher, another be in charge of organizing classroom events, etc). Class Parent responsibilities include:

1. Supporting your grade-level team of teachers. This may include volunteering for or finding volunteers for field trips, plan and arrange class social events.
2. Supporting PTA and school events, sponsored by the PTA, by volunteering or finding volunteers from your class and/or getting the word out to the parents in your class.
3. Distributing monthly PTA Meeting Announcements.
4. Serving as a critical link in communicating feedback and information between parents and teachers. As a representative for your class, parents may approach you about concerns and ideas they would like to share with the school. Teachers may solicit your feedback regarding grade-level events and changes. They may also ask you to disseminate information regarding your class.

5. At least one class parent from each class should try to attend all PTA meetings to ensure that there is good regular communications between the parent body and the administration.
- 6.. Establishing a classroom phone/email chain and activates.
- 7.. Attend monthly Class Parent Meeting with Parent Coordinator.
8. Attend monthly RSMA Cafe

VISITING THE CLASSROOM

Your classroom teacher will provide opportunities throughout the year for you to visit your child's classroom to see their work in progress, participate in celebrations, and chaperone class trips. Parents are not permitted to volunteer in their child's classroom throughout the school day. There are many other ways a parent may help the school i.e: Class Parent, PTA, SLT, special events, trips etc.

MEETING WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER(S)

If you would like to meet with your child's teacher or any staff member, please arrange it with the classroom teacher or contact your Parent Coordinator for an appointment.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM

School Leadership Teams (SLTs) are school-based organizations composed of an equal number of parents and staff. They meet at least once a month, and determine the structure for school-based planning and shared decision-making.

The core responsibility of each SLT is to develop the school's Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) that is aligned with the school-based budget. SLTs are strongly encouraged to solicit input from various school community constituencies in order to ensure that all voices are heard regarding the needs of students. Functioning in a collaborative manner, SLTs also help to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's educational programs and their impact on student achievement. SLTs receive support and guidance as needed from their District Leadership Teams. We encourage parents to attend SLT meetings, which will be posted on our school calendar. We hope you can attend.

RIVERSIDE CAFE

Our Riverside Café gives parents an opportunity to inquire and learn about all the wonderful events that are happening in our school. Come and have coffee and refreshments with our staff the first Friday of every month in the cafeteria.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Students will receive a week's worth of homework every Monday or the first day of the week. The homework will be given to the students by their teacher and also posted on the class page on our website. Homework is a critical part of reinforcing the skills your child is learning at school, and we expect that you support homework completion. Homework will be checked on a regular basis by your child's teacher and will account for 10% of their final grade.

GRADING POLICY

At RSMA we value the use a range of criteria to evaluate student achievement. It is important that students be graded using a combination of that criteria, which is outlined below.

Tests/Quizzes/Assessments – 55%

Classwork/Projects/Essays – 25%

Homework – 10%

Participation/Preparedness – 10%

OUR PARTNERS

- Counseling in Schools
- A Fair Shake for Kids
- Hudson Guild
- Jewish Board
- Kids Creative
- Lincoln Center Education
- Learning Partners
- Reaching for the Arts
- YMCA

MOVING UP CEREMONIES/GRADUATIONS

At Riverside School we celebrate our children's achievements.

* Pre-k and Kindergarten celebrate their Moving Up Ceremonies – NO CAPS AND GOWNS

* 5th Grade Graduation

* 8th Grade Graduation

LANGUAGE SERVICES

Chancellor's Regulation A-663 establishes procedures for ensuring that LEP parents are provided with a meaningful opportunity to participate in and have access to programs and services critical to their child's education. (The term "parent" means the student's parent[s] or guardian[s], or any person[s] in a parental or custodial relationship to the student). Chancellor's Regulation A-663 requires language services in the nine most common languages other than English spoken by parents of New York City school children. Based on the DOE's Home Language Identification Survey these languages are Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, Spanish and

Urdu (hereinafter referred to as the “covered languages”). These languages, including English, account for over 95% of student households. Support in additional languages is available through contracted vendors.

AMENDMENTS AND REVISIONS

The Parent Handbook is subject to amendments and revisions at any time at the discretion of the principal.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL...

Dear Parents,

We are looking forward to another positive and productive school year. You are our most important partners in the work we do with your children, so we look forward to collaborating with you. Please know that my door is always open to you.

All my best,