



PISCATAWAY TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS

Elementary/Intermediate Schools Handbook 2015-2016

**Arbor Intermediate School
Martin Luther King Intermediate School
Eisenhower Elementary School
Grandview Elementary School
Knollwood Elementary School
Randolphville Elementary School**

www.piscatawayschools.org

Central Administration

Piscataway Township Schools, 1515 Stelton Road, Piscataway, NJ 08854	(732) 572-2289
Superintendent	Teresa M. Rafferty
Assistant Superintendent	Dr. Frank Ranelli
School Business Administrator	David Oliveira
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction	Carolyn Keck
Director of Pupil Services	Deidre Ortiz
Director of Human Resources	Catherine Sousa
Registration / Attendance	Kristine Leyra
Food Services (732) 981-0700 ext. 2889	Sodexo Food Service

Elementary Schools

Arbor Intermediate School
1717 Lester Place
732-752-8652
Janelle Williams, Principal

Knollwood Elementary School
333 Willow Avenue
732-885-1528
Lisa Parker, Principal

Eisenhower Elementary School
360 Stelton Road
732-752-1801
Colleen Pongratz, Principal

Martin Luther King Intermediate School
5205 Ludlow Street
732-699-1563
Dr. Alex Gray, Principal

Grandview Elementary School
130 N. Randolphville Road
732-752-2501
William F. Baskerville, Jr., Principal

Randolphville Elementary School
One Suttie Avenue
732-699-1573
Dr. Avi Slivko, Principal

Piscataway Township Board of Education
P.O. Box 1332
Piscataway, NJ 08855-1332

William Irwin, President
Alexandra Lopez, Vice President
Tom Connors
Ralph Johnson
Tom Mosier
Atif Nazir
Shantell Cherry
Isaac Peng
Ira D. Stern

MISSION STATEMENT

It is our goal to provide a safe and nurturing environment that continually affirms the worth and diversity of all students. Piscataway is a place where everyone is respected, supported and has a sense of belonging. We know that all students and staff can learn and highly qualified work is expected from all. In partnership, parents, staff and students, as a team, are responsible for successful academic, social and emotional learning outcomes.

Members of the school community work together to ensure all students reach their potential and utilize the unique skills and talents each child possesses to make a positive contribution to society. We are proud of who we are and all that we have to offer. We know and value the life long process of learning.

Positive attitudes toward school.

Attend as many school activities as possible.

Respect your child's opinion.

Encourage your children to take responsibility for their own lives.

Nurture the school/home partnership.

Take the time to talk to your child about events of the day.

Take time to know each child.

Express pleasure in children's accomplishments.

Always be optimistic.

Create an interesting learning atmosphere.

Help children to maximize their potential.

Evaluate progress fairly.

Remember what it was like to learn something new every day.

Strive for educational excellence.

Take responsibility for your own learning.

Understand the importance of an education.

Decide to make appropriate choices for yourself and others.

Every moment in school should be a learning experience.

Nurture reasoning and intellectual possibility.

Take initiative to engage in the learning process.

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Welcome to the Piscataway School District K-5 Schools. We hope that your experience with us is positive for you and productive for your child. We want to do our best to prepare your youngster for all of the wonderful and exciting things that he/she will find in the future.

We hope that you will consider your child's schooling to be a partnership and cooperation between you and those of us who work in Piscataway. Without this, very little can be accomplished. Together we can make great progress because we all have the welfare and educational success of all the children uppermost in our minds. There are things that we cannot do alone and there are things that you cannot do alone. But, as the saying goes, together we can move mountains!

Parents are the first teachers that children have. It is up to you to instill in them respect for themselves and for others. You must help them to develop a positive attitude toward learning and an excitement for all of the wonderful things in life. This is something that will last throughout their entire lives.

Someone once said that children are our most valuable natural resource. The most important job you will ever have is to raise your children to be productive members of society with a respect for learning and achievement.

The following are some good things you can do with your children that will be fun as well as instructive:

- Read to your children on a regular basis.
- Encourage them to reach their dreams by recognizing their accomplishments and supporting them when they fall short of a goal.
- Teach them respect for others by placing a high value on their opinions. Visit the school at least twice this year and your child's classroom at least once.
- Show your children the importance of family by relating your own family history to them.

The purpose of this handbook is to inform you of elementary school procedures that have been established in order to assure your child the greatest benefit from the K-5 instructional program and to furnish you with accessible reference material that we hope will be helpful in the year to come.

Very truly yours,

The K-5 Principals

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

If your child is entering Kindergarten, you can assist them by practicing necessary skills at home. These skills can be made part of games that you play together.

1. Help your child to identify common coins such as the penny, the nickel, and the dime. You can have fun with your child if you purchase a toy money set and use the coins for identification and to “buy” things from a home store.
2. Play counting games with your child. Use magnetized numerals and place them on your refrigerator. You and your child can play at identifying the numerals and even put them in proper sequence. Use ordinary items for counting practice e.g. beans, buttons, pennies, blocks, etc.
3. Have a variety of children’s books and games around. Teach your child how to handle books. Look at the pictures with them. Practice sequencing ideas and pictures. Be sure to visit the library frequently.
4. Teach your child to respect the rights of others. Children should not interrupt. They should be able to listen to others and to ask permission before using something that belongs to others.
5. Practice writing your child’s name. Be sure he/she knows the first and last names, street, house number and telephone number.
6. Make sure your child knows the day/month of his/her birthday.
7. Practice recognizing capital and lower case letters and their sounds.
8. Provide many opportunities for your child to color, paint, draw, listen to music, dance, and play games with other children. Involve them in hopping, skipping, jumping, catching, and bouncing balls.
9. Encourage your child to speak in complete sentences.
10. Establish an appropriate bedtime.
11. Limit television watching. Be selective in your viewing. Watch programs with your child. Discuss them with him/her. This will encourage language development.
12. Encourage your child to take responsibility at home, clean up after him/herself, with pets, etc.
13. Practice buttoning, zippering, snapping and tying shoelaces.
14. Develop a set routine for daily activities. This will help in adjustment to a school schedule.
15. Discuss everyday happenings with your child. Provide frequent opportunities for conversation.

PROCEDURES

Accidents and Accident Reports

Although every effort will be made to prevent accidents, they do occur on occasion with children. In these instances, an accident report is prepared by the school nurse for an injury that occurs while a child is on school property or under school supervision.

Bus Students

In the interest of safety and proper conduct, good behavior is essential at all times at the bus stop and while riding on the bus. Continued poor behavior may result in suspension of bus privileges in accordance with the district's Code of Student Conduct and BOE Policy File Code 5131.5. The driver of the bus is in charge at all times and is responsible for maintaining order. The first report from the driver is a warning to the student and parent notification. A second report generates communication with the home, possible seat reassignment and short-term removal from the bus. The third report results in indefinite removal from the bus.

Cafeteria – Lunch Program

The school cafeteria is open every day that school is in regular session. Each student has a 25 minute scheduled lunch period. Children may purchase lunch in the cafeteria or bring their lunch from home. Parents may make payments to their children's accounts through MealTime Online. All meals served meet the nutritional requirements of the National School Lunch Program.

School Board policy defines limits to the number of meals that students may charge when MealTime Online accounts are depleted. Students will be permitted to charge up to three (3) additional meals. If the account remains unpaid, students will be allowed to charge up to seven (7) alternate meals (tuna or cheese sandwich, milk, vegetable, or fruit). If the account remains unpaid, students will no longer be served lunch or breakfast until the account has been settled.

The district participates in the free and reduced rate phases of the national program. Parents and guardians must apply annually and meet current federal financial criteria for their child to participate in this program.

Questions regarding the breakfast/lunch program will be addressed by Sodexo Food Service. You may reach them at 732-981-0700 EXT.2289.

Cafeteria Rules

1. Students must remain seated while eating lunch.
2. Students may not leave the lunchroom without permission.
3. Students are expected to place all scraps and wrappers in the proper garbage disposal.
4. Low volume conversation is permitted. Shouting is not.
5. Appropriate behavior is expected in the lunchroom.
6. Students are expected to respect the authority of aides and teachers during lunch and recess.

Cell Phones

As per district policy, elementary school children at the 4-5 level that bring cell phones to school must keep cell phones turned off and stored in backpacks during school hours. Any phone calls that must be made by students during school hours may only be made using school telephones under the supervision of a staff member. If students use a cell phone or if a cell phone rings or is visible during school hours, it will be confiscated by the classroom teacher and turned in to the principal. Parents must come to the school to pick up any confiscated cell phones. District schools are not responsible for any lost, stolen or damaged student cell phones.

Classroom Telephones

Piscataway has a telephone system giving each classroom capability of making calls and receiving messages without calling the office. This can be accomplished by calling the school number and then entering the classroom extension. Though there is a phone in every class, the number of lines to the building is limited. Calling parents for emergencies, such as school closings, can take a considerable amount of time.

Students are not permitted to use the telephone except for emergencies. Forgotten books, homework assignments, lost lunch money, etc. are not emergencies. Please see that your child comes to school prepared with his/her daily needs. When calling the school please leave a voice mail message as teachers do not answer the telephone during instructional periods. Students are also unable to be called to the telephone during class time. For emergencies, call the office.

Teachers will leave recorded messages about their specific homework or other class activities. Teachers will return calls as soon as they are available but within 24 hours.

Conferences and Report Cards

Report cards are issued four times per year at the end of each marking period for grades 1-5 and are hand carried by the students. Dates for distribution are on the district calendar. Kindergarten students receive report cards three times per year at the end of the second, third, and fourth marking periods. Parents are asked to review the information and respond with comments. Currently, 95% of our families have an active Genesis Student Information account and our website (www.piscatawayschools.org) is available via the internet on all technology platforms. Therefore, we will be eliminating most of the district and school mailings beginning in September of the 2015-2016 school year. We will utilize our Genesis Student Information System to transfer information electronically such as report cards and we will provide most of district and school information via e mail. We will continue to make other important information clearly available on our website.

Formal conferences are scheduled after the first report card in November. Parents may request a conference at other times during the school year by notifying the teacher. Please note that the district-wide Parent/Teacher Conferences that are held in November are scheduled electronically. This process will be completed through our Genesis Student Information System.

Report cards will be held in June if there are outstanding book fines, library books or overdrawn Sodexo lunch accounts.

Code of Conduct

The Piscataway Board of Education, in accordance with state law, has adopted a Student Code of Conduct. This document provides clear standards for behavior and fair consequences should infractions occur. The Code is revised regularly and updated annually. Consequences for infractions are developmentally appropriate for the

age and grade placement of all students. Each student receives a copy of the Code at the beginning of every school year, and it is also available on line at www.piscatawayschools.org.

Dress Requirements

Students are expected to dress in a conservative manner appropriate for school and not distracting from the instructional program. Students should be encouraged to take pride in their dress and appearance. They should appear neat, clean, and modest at all times.

The appearance of any child is primarily the responsibility of the individual and parents. Students appearing in school unsuitably dressed will be requested to return home and change into appropriate clothing.

All students must keep in mind the following requirements:

1. The health and safety of the student must not be jeopardized.
2. Dress and grooming must be sanitary.
3. The student's dress and appearance must not distract from the educational process.
4. Clothing which is appropriate for beachwear (flip-flops, bathing suits, etc.) should not be worn to school.
5. Apparel with offensive or profane messages will not be allowed.
6. Students may not walk barefoot in school and should wear sneakers for gym and on the playground. Shoes must have a back or strap to be worn in school.
7. Hats and kerchiefs may not be worn in the building.
8. Bare back, bare midriff and open sided athletic shirts are not acceptable.
9. Shorts and skirts should be a reasonable length.

School Closings/Delayed School Opening

In some emergency situations or when the road conditions are hazardous, it may be necessary to close schools or delay the opening of school by two hours. Notifications of closings or delayed openings will be made through the district website at www.piscatawayschools.org and with Blackboard Connect) telephone messages. Parents can also call (732) 981-0700 or (732) 572-2289 after 6:00 AM to find out about closings or delayed openings.

In the event of a two hour delayed opening, schools will be dismissed at the regular time and a cold lunch will be served. The delay gives both the school staff and the township road department time to clear the roads, walkways, and parking lots. Students normally transported by bus should be at their designated stop two hours later than their usual departure time.

Delayed Opening Schedule...

Grades K, 1, 2, 3, and Arbor 4, 5	11:00 A.M. to 3:15 P.M.
King 4, 5	10:05 A.M. to 2:20 P.M.

Emergency School Closing

During the year, schools may have to be closed in an emergency situation. Students will be dismissed as the condition demands. Dismissal will be announced on the district website.

The administration will activate a Blackboard Connect emergency phone chain to notify parents of the decision to close. We strongly urge parents to discuss this procedure with their children and keep the school up-to-date on phone numbers.

Early Release of Students

Should it be necessary to take your child out of school for a valid reason before dismissal time, please adhere to the following procedure:

- Send a note in to the teacher a day or two prior to the dismissal date.
- Come to the office. **Do Not Go To The Child's Classroom!** Teachers are not authorized to release students.
- Parents must wait in the office and leave with their child. No student will be released to the parking lot, to walk home or any unsupervised area.

Should it be necessary to have your child picked up by someone other than yourself, please send a note stating the person's name and giving permission. Please advise the other person to present him/herself to the office and show identification.

Please make every effort to avoid scheduling appointments during school hours and consult the school calendar for testing dates.

Elementary Attendance Procedures

Regular attendance by students is necessary if they are to be successful in their studies. Every student shall be in attendance in every class or activity unless the absence is the result of death in the family, illness, religious holiday or other reason with prior permission from the principal. All absences are recorded, even excused absences.

1. Parents must report absences using the school attendance line. All pupils who are absent from school must present a note to their homeroom teacher explaining the reason for the absence on the day the child returns to school. If a student is absent due to illness for more than three days, a doctor's note is required and is due the day the child returns to school within ten business days in order for the day to be considered excused. Parent notes for student illness are accepted for no more than two consecutive days, twice per marking period. Parent/guardian follow-up may take place if no note is submitted. All absences are reported on the district student management system.
2. Elementary pupils entering after the start of the day must report to the office to sign in and receive a pass to class. K-3 students must be signed in by a parent or guardian.
3. Pupils leaving early must be signed out by a parent/guardian through the main office. The Principal will follow-up excessive use of early dismissal.
4. Parents should notify the school by 8:30 if their child is to be absent.
5. Board of Education policy has been established to notify parents/guardians, in writing, when children have been late or absent from school more than 3 days. Excessive absences will be addressed in accordance with BOE File Code 5113R.
6. To be counted as a full school day, students must be in attendance for four hours of schooling.
7. All students should be picked up promptly at their scheduled dismissal time. Students who are not picked up may be placed in the Aftercare Program and fees applied.
- 8.

E-mail

Email is a quick, efficient means of communication. All school personnel have email addresses. To email a teacher or principal, please use the first initial of the first name, last name @pway.org. (For example: jdoe@pway.org)

Fire / Evacuation / Emergency Drills

Fire and emergency event drills are conducted each month to teach the children procedures for emergencies including bomb threats, active shooters, or medical/chemical/biological events. Bus evacuation drills are also scheduled throughout the year. Occasionally township emergency personnel, such as police or fire departments, participate in the drills. Drills are generally unannounced to staff and students.

Genesis Parent Module

The Parent Module for Genesis, the online student information system, is available to elementary and intermediate school families. Use of this module will enable you to access your student's report card/grades, attendance, and other important information from any computer with Internet connection. To register:

1. Send an e-mail to piscatawaydata@pway.org.
2. In the subject line, type in Parent Module Registration.
3. In the body of the e-mail, you will need to enter the following information: Parent/Guardian first and last name, first and last name of student(s), grade(s) of student(s), school(s) of student(s).
4. You will receive an e-mail with login information for your individual secure account.

Half Day Sessions

During the course of the year, it may be necessary to conduct half-day sessions due to parent/teacher conferences, teacher in-service days, etc. On these days, school is in session from:

Grades K, 1, 2, 3, Arbor 4, 5
King 4, 5

9:00 A.M. to 1:20 P.M.
8:05 A.M. to 12:25 P.M.

Handicapped Student/Parent Rights

The Piscataway Township Public School District does not discriminate in admission or access to, or employment in, its programs and activities on the basis of handicap in violation of Section 504 and its implementing regulations. The District official responsible for coordinating compliance with Section 504 and its implementing regulations is Deidre Ortiz who may be reached at the following address and telephone number:

Piscataway Township Schools
Administration Building
1515 Stelton Road P.O. Box 1332
Piscataway, New Jersey 08855-1332
732-572-2289 Ext. 2554

Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying

In accordance with state law and code, the Piscataway School District has developed policy and procedures that outline the definition of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB). This policy is posted on the district website at www.piscatawayschools.org. All Piscataway schools have HIB specialists and they are listed on both the district and individual school web sites. Anyone who wishes to make a referral, or who has questions, may contact the appropriate specialist.

Homework

Homework is scheduled daily. If your child is absent from school, he/she is given time to make up incomplete or missed work. When there are extended absences due to illness, the procedure to follow is to call the teacher via voice mail in the morning to make arrangements to pick up work at the end of the day. Work will be picked up in the office. Homework assignments are listed on each school's web page under "Staff Websites."

Illness During the School Day

If your child becomes ill at school, the nurse will contact you as soon as possible. If you cannot be reached, we will use the emergency contact information you have provided on the emergency card. Please be sure the emergency information is up-to-date and that someone will respond when called. Emergency contacts should not be out of state relatives. Children who are ill in the morning should not be sent to school. Your child should be **temperature free without medication for 24 hours** before returning to school.

Student/Teacher Assistance and Response / 504

The Student/Teacher Assistance and Response Team (S.T.A.R.) is a school-based problem-solving group that assists teachers by designing and implementing strategies for children who are experiencing learning, behavior, health, or other problems that are interfering with a student's academic progress.

Your child's teacher will notify you that your child will be referred to the S.T.A.R. team. You will be requested to provide information to assist the committee. An action plan will be developed with strategies for the teacher to implement and this will be shared with you in addition to home interventions to assist you and your child.

If your child requires services through 504 because of a medical condition that seriously impacts learning, you should contact the principal. You will be asked to submit documentation of the condition annually and a meeting with the 504 team will be arranged. 504 plans must be reviewed annually.

Lost and Found

A lost and found box for general items such as gloves, hats, jackets, etc. is located in each school. Should your child lose an item, please have him/her check the lost and found box. Many items are never claimed. The box is emptied from time to time and unclaimed items will be donated to charity. Valuable items, such as glasses, jewelry, or money, will be kept in the office. Please do not send your child to school with large amounts of money. All personal belongings brought to school, including lunch boxes and jackets, should be labeled with the student's name.

Medication

Diagnosis and treatment of illness, including the prescription of medicine, is not the responsibility of the school. However, in the best interest of the student, the school nurses may administer medication in accordance with the following regulations:

1. A form must be obtained from the school nurse and completed by your physician. The form identifies the child's name, the name of the prescription, dosage, purpose, and possible side effects. This form is also available on the district website, www.piscatawayschools.org. Select "Parent Center," then "Health and Wellness." Click on "Health Forms and Letters" on the left side of the page.
2. The completed form, **signed by the parent or guardian**, must be sent to the nurse along with the medication in the original prescription bottle.
3. Nurses may not administer over the counter medication without a note from the doctor.

Nondiscrimination/Affirmative Action

No pupil enrolled in the district schools shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any educational program or activity of this district on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, civil union status, domestic partnership status, sex, gender identify or expression, affectional or sexual orientation, disability or nationality of such person. The affirmative action officers shall be responsible for planning, implementing and monitoring the district's affirmative action program with respect to school and classroom practices. The District Affirmative Action Officer is Dr. Frank Ranelli, who may be reached at the following address and telephone number:

Piscataway Township Schools
Administration Building
1515 Stelton Road P.O. Box 1332
Piscataway, New Jersey 08855-1332
732-572-2289 Ext. 2554

Parent/Teacher Organizations

The Elementary Schools are proud of their Parent/Teacher Organizations. They have been a tremendous source of assistance and support in accomplishing many worthwhile goals. We encourage all parents to participate. Information will be distributed at Back To School Night and in the monthly newsletter.

Parents and Visitors to the Building

For the safety of the students and staff, **all parents and visitors are required to report to the office to sign in.** Parents and visitors ring the doorbell and wait to be buzzed into the school. You must secure a visitor's pass from the main office. When planning to observe the instructional engagement of your child, please call the Principal's office for an appointment at least 24 hours in advance.

Parking

The area in front of each school is designated as a "no parking zone" for bus pick-up and drop-off. Please follow signs and specific directions at each school.

Permission Slips

Parental permission slips are required for various activities during the school year such as field trips, physical examinations, or participation in special programs. A student will not be permitted to participate in these activities without a completed permission slip on file.

Playground

1. Students are expected to behave in a safe manner.
2. Fighting, tackling, and body contact games are not permitted.
3. Students are not permitted to return to the building unsupervised during outside recess time.
4. Footballs and hard objects are not allowed at school.
5. Objects such as sticks and stones should never be thrown.
6. Students are not to engage in activities that are harmful to their safety or the safety of others.

Snacks

In Kindergarten and first grade, a set time is devoted to snack period. It is suggested that a light, nutritious snack such as celery, carrots, fruit, etc. be sent with your child.

Special Bus Requests

If your child is a walker, we cannot accept a note requesting that he/she use the school bus, as per Board of Education policy. A bus student may not use a bus other than the one to which he/she is assigned and may not enter or exit the bus at a different stop.

Standardized Testing

Students in grades 1 and 2 are assessed using a Universal Screener that is administered in the spring. Students in grades 3, 4 and 5 will take the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) in May. These tests permit educators to assess student progress and identify areas in need of support. It is very important that your child be in school on time and mentally and physically prepared to take the tests. Results are generally received from the state during the summer and will be mailed home.

Student Transfers

Please notify the school at least two days prior to withdrawal from the elementary schools. All textbooks, library books and cafeteria balances must be returned or paid before transfer papers can be processed. Please notify the office in June if you will be moving during the summer so that documents can be prepared before June 30th. (Secretaries do not work during the summer months.)

Student Photography and Videotaping

Photography and videotaping of student activities and events are for personal and family use only. Families are advised not to post to social networking sites that are public, including, but not limited to, *Facebook* and *YouTube*. Such postings may invade the privacy rights of other students and may pose a security risk for some students.

Textbooks, Library Books, and School Property

All students are responsible for all textbooks and library books issued during the school year. Lost or damaged books must be paid for by submitting a check to the Piscataway Board of Education. If a book is found within a reasonable amount of time, the money will be refunded.

Report cards, transfer cards, and class assignments will be issued when obligations are met; this includes negative cafeteria balances owed to Sodexo.

Toys and Other Electronic Devices

Children should be discouraged from bringing playthings and electronic devices, such as iPods and handheld game devices, to school. The school provides equipment and games for use during recess. The school is not responsible for damage or loss of personal property.