

# **Swarthmore-Rutledge School**

## **PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Education at SRS prepares our young people for their present and future lives by fostering a positive academic climate and a spirit of community. We provide a rich and challenging educational program which includes developing a broad knowledge base and building strength of character. This will enable our students to successfully contribute to a diverse society in a changing world.

### **ABSENCE/TARDINESS**

Parents are asked to call the school office and leave a message on the attendance line (610-544-5702) by 9:00 a.m. each day that a student is ill and will not be attending school. Calls are made from the office to the home of each student for whom there is no absence report. A parent is to send a note with the child upon his/her return to classes. A note from a physician may be required if the student is absent for 3 or more days. Students who are late are to go to the office before going to class.

### **BEFORE SCHOOL SUPERVISION**

Supervision will be provided starting at 8:20 a.m. Please do not drop off your child prior to that time.

### **BICYCLES**

Only students in grades 3-5 may ride bicycles to school. Primary grade students (1st and 2nd graders) may not ride bicycles even if accompanied by an adult. Racks are provided in the school courtyard. It is recommended that all bicycles be securely locked at the rack. The school assumes no liability for damage and/or theft. Children must wear a helmet as required by PA Law.

### **CAR RIDERS**

No vehicles are to be driven through the faculty parking area for pickup or drop-off. Car riders should exit the front of the school and are to be picked up on College Avenue. Students are to cross with the crossing guard if the vehicle is on the other side of the street. Princeton Avenue is used only for bus pickup and drop-off.

### **CELEBRATIONS**

In the course of the year, we have five (5) All-School Celebrations. Currently those five celebrations are:

1. Back to School Picnic - Held on a week day at the beginning of the year on the college grounds adjacent to SRS.
2. Halloween - All school parade and in-class activity.
3. Winter - In-class celebration any time before winter recess.
4. Valentine's Day - In-class activity.
5. Field Day - Sport activities held on college field adjacent to SRS during the school day in May of each year.

Birthday invitations should not be brought into school for distribution. They should be mailed to avoid hurt feelings and so they do not disrupt the instructional program. Birthday children may bring enough treats for their own classroom and may visit the principal.

Class parties are a time for sharing and celebration. Please consider serving healthy treats and limiting the amount of treats that might be considered junk food. Parents are encouraged to donate game and craft ideas, party supplies or volunteer their time for the party, rather than donating extra unnecessary treats.

### **DELIVERING ARTICLES TO SCHOOL**

Should you need to deliver a forgotten item to school, leave it in the office instead of disrupting classes. Your child will pick up the item in the office when given permission by his/her classroom teacher.

### **DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

- The classroom teacher will make sure that students safely exit the building.
- Walkers will be dismissed through any of the doors on the College Avenue side of the building.
- Bus riders will exit through the auditorium doors and line up in their designated areas. During inclement weather, they will report to the gym.
- Students participating in after school clubs will be dismissed through courtyard doors.
- Students are not allowed to use the stairwell exit off the faculty parking lot for safety reasons.
- Siblings should arrange to meet at a specific location outdoors (e.g., by the flagpole or by the butterfly garden).

- Parents who meet their children at the end of the day are asked to meet them at a specific location outside of the building.
- Parents are asked not to congregate in the hallways at dismissal time so that dismissal can be handled in an orderly fashion.
- Parents driving to pick up their children should stop on College Ave. and remain in their cars. Parents parked on the opposite side of College Ave. are asked to have their child cross with the crossing guard. Parents should not double park to pick up their children.
- Students who walk and exit the front of the school should only cross College Avenue with the crossing guard who is positioned at the intersection of Princeton and College Avenues. Students should not cross in the middle of the block or at Chestnut Ave.

### **BUS DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

Pupils are to:

- exit the building to the loading point on Princeton Avenue (or the gym during inclement weather).
- line up in a quiet, orderly line designated with their bus number.
- wait seated in line until the teacher on duty escorts them to their bus for loading.
- be seated upon entering the bus and remain seated until leaving the bus.

### **DISCIPLINE: THE SRS SCHOOL PACT**

Our community has four cornerstones that enable us to live and learn together well: manners, kindness, courage and self-control. Teachers and administrators expect courtesy, good behavior, sportsmanship and proper care of materials and property. A copy of the school rules is sent home in the fall for children and their parents to read together. The School PACT is then signed and returned. In signing this, they are agreeing to live by the school rules and cornerstones of our community that will help them to grow into active, responsible members of the community.

### **SRS SCHOOL RULES**

1. We show respect for ourselves when we use positive self-talk and choose safe activities.
2. We show respect for adults in our school community when we listen attentively, follow directions, and use good manners.
3. We show respect in our language when we tell the truth, encourage others (no put downs), and use appropriate language.

4. We show respect in our actions when we share, show good sportsmanship, and consider the feelings of others.
5. We show respect for other's property when we get permission to use another person's property and return things to where they belong in good condition.
6. We show respect for our environment when we take care of our school supplies, keep our school community neat and clean, and take pride in our surroundings.

All classrooms at SRS are involved in the implementation of a school-wide pro-social skills program that teaches students to "Stop and Think" and problem-solve. Appropriate discipline action will be taken when a student violates the school rules.

### **Consequences**

1. The teacher will talk with the student about the behavior problem, and may
  - a. use conflict resolution strategies
  - b. isolate the student
  - c. inform students
  - d. take away recess privileges
  - e. assign the student to perform community services
2. If this behavior continues or is serious, the teacher will contact the student's parents and inform the principal and may
  - a. arrange for a student-teacher parent conference
  - b. send the student to the principal
3. If the student swears, the teacher will warn the student against using this language. If the language persists, the teacher may:
  - a. inform parents
  - b. require the student to write a letter to his/her parents telling what they said
  - c. take away a privilege and/or isolate the child.
4. When the student is sent to the office, the principal will have a conference with the student, keep a record of the incident, and may notify the parent.
5. For very serious rule-breaking, parents will be notified right away and the student will be suspended.

### **SRS BUS RULES**

- Be respectful and courteous to the bus driver, bus aide and fellow passengers in your conduct and language.
- Remain seated when the bus is in motion.

- Keep hands and arms inside the bus at all times.
- Do not make, or cause to be made unnecessary noise such as loud talking, screaming, stamping of feet, loud singing, or any other noise which could distract the driver.
- No fighting or scuffling on the bus.
- Do not throw any object on or out of the bus.
- No eating or drinking on the bus.
- Do not litter on the bus.
- Do not use bad words or inappropriate language.

### **Consequences**

Minor Offense: One that demonstrates a lack of respect for authority and for fellow students. There will be a pupil conference and the student's parents will be informed. A lunch recess detention will be given.

Repeated Minor Offenses: There will be a pupil and parent conference. The student will lose bus privileges for 1-2 days.

Serious Offense: One that endangers the health and safety of passengers. There will be a pupil and parent conference. The student will lose bus privileges for 1-2 days.

Repeated Serious Offenses: There will be a pupil and parent conference. Student will be given an in-school or out of school suspension. The student will lose bus privileges.

### **DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY**

School district policy regarding controlled substance use (alcohol and other drugs) states that the possession, distribution, use or being under the influence of controlled substances is both harmful to a child's development and illegal. Strict penalties are incorporated in the policy, which include severe disciplinary actions of suspension or expulsion from school, restriction from participation in all school activities, and criminal prosecution. If you or any member of your family needs alcohol or other drug counseling or an assessment referral, a list of community resources is posted on the staff bulletin board and is available in the main office in each school building. You may also contact the building school psychologist or guidance counselor for this list of community resources and/or a referral. They can also provide you with more information on this policy if it is needed.

## **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

Decisions about closing school for the day due to inclement weather are made approximately 2 hours before the buses leave the compound, based on advice from the weather bureau and the police, and actual road checks by members of our staff. Delayed openings are used when possible, as road conditions often improve after the rush of morning traffic has passed. Local radio stations give notice of delayed opening or closing of school by announcing our school district number - 460. Cable channel 11 (in the district) and KYW radio broadcast the emergency information.

At times, hazardous conditions develop during the day, requiring that schools be closed early. *Parents must develop a plan with their children of what to do in this situation, especially if no one is home.* In the fall, families are given a form to notify the teachers about plans for where their children will go and how they will get there if school is closed. The plans are kept by the children's teachers.

## **ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)**

Diagnostic and tutorial services are provided as needed for students whose second language is English. Services may be provided by an aide or an itinerant resource person employed by the school district.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips vary from year to year based on their suitability for the grade level and curriculum. No private cars can be used for student transportation. All parents must sign a field trip permission form in order for the student to participate. No student is kept from a field trip because he/she cannot afford it. If there is a financial need, please make that need known to the teachers.

If you have acted as a chaperone during the prior year, please consider giving the opportunity to another parent the following year.

**Note:** For liability reasons, siblings are not allowed to use district transportation during field trips.

## **GIFTED PROGRAM**

All students in grades 3-5, who have been evaluated and identified as gifted, are eligible for an Individual Education Plan (IEP). The purpose of the IEP is to set forth yearly goals for students exhibiting exceptional learning abilities. The IEP is developed by the classroom teacher and the parents of children eligible for the Gifted Program.

At Swarthmore-Rutledge School, the Gifted Program is primarily administered by the classroom teacher. The program strives to develop students as inquirers and investigators in their classroom through integrated learning and interdisciplinary teaching that

promotes creative and critical thought. The classroom teacher differentiates instruction as appropriate for the identified gifted student and provides learning experiences to implement the goals of the IEP. The Gifted Teacher supports the classroom teacher by providing materials, suggesting activities, and serving as a resource. In addition, the Gifted Teacher provides direct and extension instruction for students outside the classroom for limited periods of time throughout the school year.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

First aid will be given for illnesses and injuries that occur at school. When medication is to be taken in school, please adhere to the following district policy:

1. A written order from a physician is needed for physician prescribed and over-the-counter medications.
2. Written permission from the parent is required.
3. Medication must be in its original container.
4. All medication must be given in the Health Office.
5. Medication must be brought in and picked up by an adult or the parent/guardian of the child.

**Emergency Cards.** These cards are made out in duplicate and include where the parent or another responsible adult may be reached in case of an emergency. To aid us in the care of your child, the card gives us information about any special health need, the physician's name and number, and permission to give acetaminophen.

**Health screening.** Your child will be periodically checked by the school nurse for vision, hearing, height, weight, and scoliosis. If any problems are found, you will be notified. In addition, physical and dental examinations will be required in some grades. Parents are encouraged to have their children examined by their family physician and dentist.

### Exclusions followed by condition upon which student may return to school:

Temperature elevations of 100: When temperature has been normal for 24 hours.

Conjunctivitis: With physician's note that student is under treatment, or eyes are clear.

Persistent nausea, vomiting or diarrhea: May return when symptoms are gone.

Lice, scabies: After treatment and after being checked by the school nurse.

Rashes of unknown origin: With note from physician stating that rash is not communicable.

## **HOMEBOUND PUPILS**

Upon approval by the Board of School Directors, qualified teachers are provided to give instruction to students who are confined at home for an extended period. Parents should contact the school for complete information.

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework assignments should complement classroom instruction. Assignments should develop student responsibility, good study habits and organizational skills.

Following are suggested times that SRS students at each grade level should generally be expected to spend on homework, Monday through Thursday:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Time</b>
1st	20 minutes
2 nd	20 minutes
3 rd	30 minutes
4 th	45 minutes
5 th	45-60 minutes

## **INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM**

The Instructional Support Team is part of a statewide initiative whose goals are to maximize individual student success in the regular classroom, while at the same time serving as a screening process for students who may be in need of special education services. IST is a success-oriented program which uses specific assessment and intervention techniques to help remove educational, behavioral, or affective stumbling blocks for all students in the classroom. The team consists of the classroom teacher, the parent(s), the school psychologist, the principal, the instructional support teacher, and other professional personnel who may be helpful in planning instruction to meet the student's needs.

## **LIBRARY**

Children are responsible for all materials signed out in the SRS school library. If a book or magazine is lost or damaged beyond repair, a student obligation form is sent home with the amount of obligation noted.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Please mark all articles of clothing, books, backpacks, and lunch boxes with the student's name so that they can be returned when found. Unmarked articles found at school are taken to the Lost and Found (located in the student dining room), where they may be

claimed. Students should check the Lost and Found for several weeks after losing an article. Unclaimed items will be donated to charitable organizations over the holiday breaks.

## **LUNCH**

All students remain at school for lunch. Daily hot and cold lunches are available in the dining room, in addition to milk and juice. Menus are distributed ahead of time. Students may choose to bring their own lunch, but, please, no glass containers. If your child forgets his/her lunch or lunch money, a limited food choice will be offered.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT AT SRS**

Parent involvement is an important part of an effective school experience for children. All parents, faculty, and administrators are members of the Home and School Association. Attendance at Home and School Association meetings promotes a better understanding among parents, teachers, and administrators by providing a forum for discussion of school issues.

The Home and School Association supports school programs by raising funds and providing volunteers. Parents are encouraged to become involved with the Home and School Association as grade representatives or room parents, and for fundraisers such as the Book Fair.

Parents can also volunteer in the classroom, nurse's office, library and in enrichment programs. The Home and School Association offers enrichment opportunities for students through Dimensions in Art, Dimensions in Science, Dimensions in Math, Dimensions in Social Studies, and Dimensions in Technology.

Communication about special events is carried out through a monthly newsletter, The Rising Star, and through our district web site (<http://www.wssd.org/>).

The Home and School Association also publishes a school telephone directory each year, which includes students' names, their classes, addresses and telephone numbers.

Parent participation is encouraged in every activity of the Home and School Association. Just call your grade representative for more information or to volunteer, or leave your name in the office.

## **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Students are not permitted to bring in electronic games, cd players, radios, etc. Students are not to bring trading cards, such as Pokemon cards, to school. If a student brings any personal property such as athletic equipment, etc. the student must be responsible for their safekeeping. It is suggested that any money sent into school be in a change purse or envelope with the student's name.

## **READING SPECIALIST**

The reading specialist coordinates the reading/language arts program. The reading specialist also administers reading inventories to new entrants beyond kindergarten and provides diagnostic testing for students as needed. The reading specialist meets with individuals and small groups for diagnostic and instructional purposes.

## **RECESS**

Recess is one of the student's favorite parts of a school day and essential to a child's learning success. Many teachers also take their classes out for another recess during the day. We encourage families to dress their children appropriately for outdoor play during each season of the school year. If it is raining, muddy, excessively wet or if the wind-chill is below 18 degrees, recess is held inside the cafeteria (games are available and many students bring activities from their classrooms) and gym (when available).

## **SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

This is a group composed of the principal, teacher and parent representatives. The SAC meets on a regular basis throughout the school year to discuss issues affecting the SRS school community. Meeting times are indicated on the WSSD school calendar. Visitors are welcome.

## **SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST**

The school psychologist acts upon referrals for assessment of abilities, aptitudes, interests, achievements, personality, and adjustment of designated pupils referred by authorized school personnel, usually through the Instructional Support Team. The psychologist interprets the findings to appropriate school personnel and parents. The psychologist is also a resource person for teachers and parents and may provide counseling for developmental issues with parental permission.

## **SCHOOL SAFETY**

The following safety plan is in effect at SRS: (1.) Limited Entry into SRS and TKP: Only the main SRS door will remain open from the outside after 9:00 a.m. (2.) Strict Observance of Visitor Guidelines: All visitors are asked to register at the main office and receive a visitor's badge. (3.) Regular Lock Down Drills and Fire Drills: Students, staff and faculty regularly practice lockdown drills and fire drills so that we can respond quickly and calmly in the event of a threatening situation or fire.

## **SKATEBOARDS, ROLLER BLADES, AND SCOOTERS**

Only students in grades 3-5 may ride their skateboards, roller blades, and scooters to school. Roller shoes ("Heelies") are not permitted in the school. It is highly

recommended that your child wear a helmet and other protective gear when using any of this equipment. The school assumes no responsibility for any lost or stolen property. Scooters, skateboards and roller blades should be placed in the alcoves at the bottom of the Princeton Ave. and College Ave. stairwells when students enter the building.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Students identified as having a disability that affects academic progress may receive instructional support from the Special Education teacher.

## **SPEECH THERAPY**

The Speech and Language therapist provides evaluations, consultation and direct therapy services to students at all grade levels. Services are available for disorders or delays in development, voice problems, and fluency difficulties. Written permission to evaluate is obtained from the parent before the evaluation process begins.

## **STANDARD OF DRESS**

Since choosing the proper attire is part of a student's learning experience, we believe our students should be dressed in clean, moderate styles, appropriate to the occasion. Tank tops and spaghetti strap tops are discouraged. Appropriate outerwear and footwear are required in snow and inclement weather, and students are encouraged to layer clothing to insure comfort in and out of the classroom. All students should bring sneakers or rubber-soled shoes for physical education. Label articles of clothing to avoid loss.

## **STUDENT PLACEMENT**

Parents may discuss placement with teachers focusing the discussion on "suitable environments" rather than personalities, gender, or request for specific teachers. This discussion will be undertaken with the understanding that final decisions are made by the faculty and the principal. As a public school, our goal is to ensure heterogeneous and balanced classes so that *all children have an optimum learning environment*.

Note: With the above guidelines in mind, parents are asked to communicate in writing any specific placement concerns/requests to the principal by the beginning of May of the preceding school year.

## **TELEPHONING**

If you need to telephone your child for an emergency during school hours, the message will be relayed through the office. Office phones are for school business; however, students will be allowed to use school phones on an emergency basis. Emergencies do not include forgotten homework, lunches, instruments, or planning after school activities.

## **TRANSFERRING TO ANOTHER SCHOOL**

Students transferring to another school, whether in our district or not, must notify the school office in sufficient time for transfer information to be prepared. Books and supplies must be returned in good condition and all obligations, financial and otherwise, must be fulfilled before records can be forwarded to the new school.

## **VACATIONS DURING SCHOOL DAYS**

The WSSD Board has recently revised this policy to limit the number of excused absences for vacations during the school year to two days per school year; any additional days will be counted as unexcused absences. As in the past, these vacations must be pre-approved by the school principal. A journal must be kept by the student detailing what was learned on the trip. The teacher and the principal will review the journal when the student returns.

## **VISITORS AND PARKING**

We ask all visitors to register at the main office. A visitor's badge must be worn during the time of your visit. It is necessary to make arrangements in advance with classroom teachers before visiting classrooms.

Please park on College Avenue or on surrounding streets, as parking is limited in our lot and is reserved for staff members. Only the main SRS door will be open from the outside after 9:00 a.m.