

Robert F. Kennedy’s Parent Handbook

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**Address-** 195 Nelson Street, Providence, RI 02908

Mission Statement

The mission of the Robert F. Kennedy School is to provide an environment where our students will excel in a diverse, rigorous and respectful community.

Academic Goals

Increase Student Achievement in ELA

Increase Student Achievement in Math Problem Solving

Increase Student Achievement in Science

Increase Student Attendance Percentages

Increase Family and Community Involvement

Parent Engagement Committee

**Does Kennedy have a Parent Engagement Committee)?**

**YES**! Only through parent-school teamwork and effort toward consistent goals can a child gain the full benefit from a school program. It is our sincere hope that every family with children at Kennedy will become an active member in our Parent Activities. If you are interested in being a member of this committee, please e-mail Cindy Aubin at Cynthia.aubin@ppsd.org.

State Testing

**What do I need to know about State Testing?**

During the months of April and May, all students in grades 3, 4, and 5 will be tested on the RICAS Assessment. This assessment is given in every district in the State of RI.

During the months of April and May it is important that students arrive on time each and every day. Please do not schedule any appointments for your child during the testing weeks. We will provide a more specific schedule for the weeks each grade tests as it gets closer. Students will not be dismissed from class during testing for any reason.

Students in Grade 4 are also tested in Science during the month of May. Please make sure that you are not scheduling vacations or appointments during this month as well.

Homework

**What is the homework policy?**

Homework is an extension and application of learning. Homework is assigned to:

1. Develop study skills and work habits
2. Develop the power to work independently
3. Provide essential and meaningful practice in needed areas
4. Enrich school experience
5. Develop an individual sense of responsibility

The time required for quality homework for each individual varies with the learning experience and the child’s growth and development. Time spent will vary from one assignment to another and will increase as the student matures.

Parents can support the learning process by monitoring homework. Please note that all students in grades 3-5 are provided with a planner. Please encourage your child to take good care of his/her planner as they will only receive one.

Student Success

**What are the discipline procedures?**

Kennedy has 4 major rules/expectations also known as the **Fab Four**. They are: **Respect, Responsibility, Achievement and Safety**. All rules in school fall into these four categories. All faculty and staff teach, model and practice with students all expectations throughout the school day. Please refer to the matrix in Appendix A.

*\* Please refer to the District Parent Handbook for the policies and procedures regarding discipline in the Providence Schools.*

Dress Code

**Does Kennedy have a dress code?**

**YES**, Kennedy has a dress code voted into place by the parents. **All students will need to wear any combination of navy blue, white or tan.**

We also sell school clothing with our school logo. Order forms are available in the main office.

\*Students may not wear flip flops, slip on sandals (all shoes must have a strap around the ankle or a back), shoes that have wheels, hanging chains, hanging pocket chains, do- rags, hats(in the building), handkerchiefs, bandanas, sunglasses, gang paraphernalia and clothing that displays profanity, encourages violence or the use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco, or has sexual connotations. Students may not wear shirts that expose their stomachs or shoulders i.e. shirts with spaghetti straps, tank/halter tops. Exposed undergarments or midriffs (belly shirts) are not acceptable. Students must be covered from their shoulders to just above the knee. They may wear sleeveless shirts as long as you cannot see through the shirt and it covers their shoulder.

Arrival and Dismissal

**What time does school begin?**

9:00 a.m.

**What time does a child have to be in school before he/she is marked tardy?**

9:05 a.m.

**Where does a child go if they are late?**

All students who are late will report to the main office to receive a late slip. Children will not be allowed in class after 9:05 a.m. without this slip. Please note that in the interest of every child’s safety parents are not able to escort children to classes for any reason.

*Please note 3 tardies are equal to 1 absence.*

**Where does my child go once he/she arrives at school?**

Children should arrive at school no earlier than 8:45 a.m. Students will report to their assigned schoolyard. Students are not allowed on school grounds before this time.

Students in grades K-5 report to the large school yard.

Students in grades Pre-k will report to the small school yard near the cafeteria.

**Where do children report during inclement (rainy and snowy) weather?**

Students will report to the gymnasium no earlier than 8:45a.m. All students will enter through the main entrance. Please note that parents/guardians are not permitted for any reason in the gymnasium during arrival and dismissal due to safety concerns and space constraints. There are many supervisors on duty during this time to supervise the children.

**Where should I drop off/pickup my child if I am driving?**

We ask that parents drive down Jastram Street and drop students off on the sidewalk near the gate in the fence.

Please note that Nelson Street is closed for all traffic between 8:15-9:30a.m.and after school between 2:30-3:45 p.m. Jastram Street only allows parking on one side of the street and cars may not stop on Eaton Street (as this is very dangerous). If you would like to park please choose a side street off of Eaton or Smith Street and walk your child/children to the crossing guards. Police are very visible and you will be cited for parking illegally.

**What time does my child get out of school?**

**Monday through Thursday 3:31 dismissal. Friday is at 2:11**

All students must be picked up no later than 3:41 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 2:21on Friday. We do not have on-site after school daycare. Students must leave school grounds promptly. The school closes at 3:41 M-Th and 2:21 on Friday and we do not offer supervision from that time on. If this is a child care issue, please call the school and we can provide you with the names and phone numbers of the after school programs that drop off and pick up children at Kennedy on a daily basis. Any changes to the routine that your child is dismissed will require a written note or an e-mail from the parent or guardian by 11am. This is for your child’s safety.

**Where should I go to pick up my child?**

Students are dismissed through the small yard and large yard.

If your child is in room Kindergarten or first grade, they will be dismissed outside their classroom door into the appropriate school yard. Pre-K will dismiss in the small school yard.

All other students will be dismissed from the large school yard.

Parents may not pick up students in the gym as this is the dismissal area for students who ride the bus. If your child rides a bus and you need to pick them up on a certain day you must write a note stating who will pick them up. The note must have your signature and phone number in case there are any questions.

**Where do students report for dismissal when they ride a bus or van?**

The Gymnasium

Visitors/Volunteers

**What is the procedure for parents/visitors entering the school building?**

All visitors/parents must report to the main office. Please note during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal parents are not permitted to walk a child to class. Students in K have a teacher assistant who will help with escorting students to class until students are familiar with the school setting.

**What is the process if I want to volunteer in my child’s class, for a field trip or in the school?**

Any parent or person who wishes to volunteer in the school must first fill out an application from V.I.P.S. Inspiring Minds (Volunteers in Providence Schools) or the Parent Volunteer application form. You will need a VIPS Inspiring minds application if you are working directly with students to support learning. If you are volunteering to simply chaperone a trip or to help out at an event you will just need the parent engagement volunteer form along with a copy of your license and BCI check. Only individuals who go through this process will be allowed to volunteer. All policies are in place to ensure a safe environment for our children. Applications for V.I.P.S Inspiring minds and parent engagement volunteer forms are available in the main office or online at [www.vips4kids.org](http://www.vips4kids.org)

At Kennedy we take every measure to ensure that all adults that interact with our children receive a B.C. I. check.

\*Please note: Volunteers are used at the teacher’s discretion.

We suggest all parents who may consider volunteering during the year (even if it is only one time) complete an application to avoid large numbers during busier times of the year. Just because you submit a volunteer form does not mean that you have to volunteer.

Student Attendance

**What is the policy if my child is absent?**

When a child is going to be absent the parent must call to notify the school and then send in a note when the child returns that states why the child was absent. Please make sure the note is signed. If it was a medical reason you can send in the note from the doctor.

*Types of Absences*

**Excused Absences:** The following absences are excused and do not count against the

maximum absence rule: verified illnesses(need doctors note); verified death in the family; verified medical appointments that cannot be scheduled outside of school hours; verified family emergency; verified religious holidays; school-sponsored events; verified court appointment; verified counseling appointment

**Unexcused**: An unexcused absence is any absence due to family vacation, employment and poor planning

\*\*\* Three (3) unexcused late arrivals or early dismissals equal 1 unexcused absence\*\*\*

**What happens when a child is out more than 5 days?**

If a child is out more than five days they will need a doctor’s note to return to school. If they are out for a non medical reason they will be withdrawn from school and when the child returns they will need to report with a parent to the student registration center to register.

\* Also note: There have been times where parents have called and said they are going on vacation and his/her child will be out more than five days. There are no exceptions to this policy. Any child out more than 5 consecutive days will be withdrawn and will ultimately lose their seat at Kennedy.

**What is the policy for students who need to leave early?**

Students should only be pulled out of school for **extreme circumstances**. Students will only be released from school if the school office has received a signed note by the parent/guardian. If your child has an appointment that cannot be made after school or during the vacations, you must send him\her to school with a note that explains the reason, a parent signature and a telephone number to confirm. Students will not be pulled out of class until the parent arrives. The letter should be addressed to the teacher who will then send the letter to the office. Students without a note will not be dismissed after 3pm for any reason( 1:45 on Fridays). The office staff will not open doors to parents looking to dismiss children without a note.

Please understand that it is our responsibility to create a learning environment free from disruptions. The main office cannot disturb teaching and learning for any reason, please do not arrive after 3pm (or 1:45 on Fridays) and ask that your child be dismissed. This disruption interrupts the learning of 25 other students as well as your own child’s learning.

*\*\*\* Important! 3 early dismissals are equal to 1 absence.\*\*\**

**If my child is out sick what should I do about their work/homework?**

When a child is out sick it is because they are not well enough to make it through the school day. In cases like this, when it is 1 or 2 days, the child should rest while at home and wait to return to school to make up the work. Teachers will not provide work for a

1 or 2 day absence. Once the child returns, the teacher will provide time for the student to make up the work.

Only children who are out sick for more than 2 days will need to call the school to pick up work. Please notify the school once you know the illness is more than 2 days. Teachers will need sufficient time to gather work in this case. The office staff will speak with the teacher and let the parent know what time the work will be ready for pick up. Teaching is very involved and much of what takes place in the classroom begins with an introduction from the teacher, therefore it is difficult to gather materials to send home. The teachers will do their best to gather work that will support what is happening in the classroom. A good rule of thumb is always have them reading and practicing their math facts.

**How do I reach my child if his/her after school plans change?**

Please make every effort to ensure that your child understands what to do when they leave home. **Children are not permitted to leave class and come to the phone for any reason**. The office staff is also not allowed to interrupt a class to leave a message with a child. If there is a need to get a hold of your child, the office staff will wait until there is an opportunity to inform the teacher.

**Please note all children will go home the same way they do everyday unless there is a signed note by the parent explaining the change and the reason for the change. Phone calls are never accepted as there is no way to verify who is on the other line.**

If a child arrives to school and at the end of the day informs the teacher that his/her mom said they will pick them up today instead of riding the bus the child will be sent home on the bus. Unfortunately, we must take every precaution that a child is safe and only parents/guardians can change the plans. We are unable to accept phone calls because there is no way for us to verify that it is the parent on the phone. Therefore, if you do need to change the plans, you must send in a signed note with a number to reach you.

Contacting Teachers/Principal

**How do I make an appointment with my child’s teacher?**

To make an appointment with the teacher it is best to send in a note with your child with a phone number for them to reach you. You can also call the office and the secretaries will leave them a message in their mailbox.

**What do I do if I have a concern or complaint?**

If you have a concern or complaint about a classroom issue or your child’s teacher, you should first contact the teacher to resolve this issue. If you do not feel that the teacher has resolved your concern or complaint, you should contact the principal to resolve the issue.

If you have a concern or complaint about an issue outside the classroom, you should contact the principal.

Lunch

**What should I know about lunches?**

At the beginning of every school year every family is sent a free/reduced lunch application this form must be completed and returned to school as soon as possible. If you send your child to school with a lunch or you are not eligible for free or reduced lunch, please sign the form and return it with the words “not eligible” or “not interested”. Every family must have a form on file. **Please note that whatever amount you paid the previous year is in effect until the beginning of October.**

If you are required to pay for lunch please send your child to school with the money in an envelope with their name and room number on it. The classroom teacher will deliver the money to the Kitchen Staff. It is easier to pay weekly, biweekly or monthly rather than sending money everyday. If you choose not to pay, then you must supply your child with a lunch. Lunch menus are distributed every month and are also available in the newspaper and online at [www.providenceschools.org](http://www.providenceschools.org).

Students are not permitted to share food

**Children may not bring the following items to school: sunflower seeds, soda, canned drinks, glass bottle drinks, candy, gum, knives of any kind (i.e. plastic knives, butter knives etc…).**

Health/Welfare

**What do I do if my child needs medicine in school?**

Parents must provide written authorization for school nurse teachers to administer

medicine and prescription medications, including Tylenol or similar medicines. All forms must be completed by a physician with a diagnosis and directions for dispensing the medication. Authorization forms must also be signed by the parent/guardian. All

medication is dispensed by the school nurse. Authorization forms may be obtained from the school nurse/teacher. All such medications must be turned in directly to the school’s

nurse teacher by the parent or guardian prior to the start of school. **Children are not allowed to bring medicine to school.** All medications must be delivered by an adult to the school nurse. Additionally, even throat lozenges (cough drops) must be approved by the nurse.

**What information should I provide to the school?**

All students are required to have an emergency form on file. This form is distributed the first week of school. The form must be completed and returned to school as soon as possible. This form should have the current address and phone numbers (home, work and cell) of the parent/guardian as well as emergency contacts of whom the school can contact in case of an emergency. If you move or change phone numbers please contact the teacher or school office so we can update the information. **Only people listed on the emergency form will be able to pick up your child from school.**  These individuals must be at least 18 years old and they must have a photo id.

Lost & Found

**What do I do if my child loses something in school?**

Each year there are numerous amounts of clothing and other articles that turn up. Our school does have a lost and found. This is an area set aside for children and parents to have an opportunity to look through these items. It is helpful if parents label their children’s articles of clothing and lunch boxes with the child’s name. Any item not picked up by the end of the month will be discarded.