

PS 90
THE EDNA COHEN SCHOOL

PARENT/STUDENT SCHOOL HANDBOOK

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I- LETTER TO READERS

Dear Parents, Guardians, Students:

PS 90 is a family. Students at our school form the nucleus of our family circle. They are the reasons we come to work daily. We know that you, parents/guardians, send us your very best. We take our work of teaching your students very seriously. As such, we endeavor to create a school where students are happy and feel safe. This handbook was prepared to provide students at P.S. 90 and their parents with many of the rules and guidelines of our school. It was also written to let you know of the rights of students.

Part of the success of our school depends on the organized and consistent manner in which it operates. It is important that we make transparent to you the school rules and the consequences to violations. The handbook is meant to be clear and concise, and we ask parents, students, and all staff members to familiarize themselves with the guidelines listed within.

Adhering to the information contained in the handbook will no doubt help us continue to strengthen the bond of our “family” ties.

Your proud principal,
Greta Hawkins

II- MISSION STATEMENT

The Edna Cohen School is a partnership of educators, staff, students, parents, and community members committed to preparing students for college by tapping into their rich multicultural background.

We will teach, motivate, and challenge all students, including students with special needs and/or students who have limited or no English proficiency. We seek to help our students fulfill their intellectual, emotional, aesthetic, and physical potential. We strive to help them apply their knowledge and skills to becoming responsible and respectful citizens in the 21st century. Our goal is to prepare students to lead successful lives in an increasingly multicultural society.

III-SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION AND SCHOOL HOURS

PS 90

2840 West 12 Street
Brooklyn, NY 11224

Principal: Greta Hawkins, ghawkins@schools.nyc.gov

Assistant Principal of PS 90: Gayle Gordon, ggordon4@schools.nyc.gov

Assistant Principal of PS 90: Lark Losardo, llosardo@schools.nyc.gov

Parent Coordinator: Doris Torres

School Phone Numbers

Main Office: (718) 787-3333

Fax Number: (718) 787-3335

School Hours

8:00 a.m. Doors open/Breakfast served

8:20 a.m. First Bell

2:45 p.m. Pre-K Dismissal

2:50 p.m. Kindergarten Dismissal

2:50 p.m. 1st-5th Dismissal

Friday Dismissal: 2:40 p.m.

IV-KEY CONTACTS

Chancellor of Schools: Dennis Walcott

District 21 Superintendent: Isabel DiMola

Children's First Network Leader: Lisa Gigoux

Community Educational Council President: Yoketing Eng

District Family Advocate: TBD

PTA President: Dina Rosado

PTA Vice-President: Lisa Serrano

III- STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. The Right to a Free Public School Education

Students have the right to:

1. attend school and receive a free public school education from kindergarten to age 21 or receipt of a high school diploma, whichever comes first.
2. be in a safe and supportive learning environment, free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, and prejudice.
3. be respected regardless of their age, race, creed, color, gender (identity or expression), religion, nationality, citizenship, sexual orientation, physical and/or emotional condition, or disability.
4. know the grading criteria for each subject area and to receive grades for school work completed based on that criteria.
5. be informed of educational progress based on both formal and informal reports.
6. be notified in a timely manner of the possibility of being held over.
7. confidentiality in regard to student records.
8. receive guidance, counseling, and advice for personal, social, and educational development.

B. The Right to Due Process

Students have the right to:

1. know what is appropriate behavior and know what behaviors may result in consequences.
2. receive written notice of the reasons for disciplinary actions taken against them in a timely fashion.
3. due process of law in instances of disciplinary action for alleged violations of school rules for which they may be suspended *and* have a parent/adult in parental relationship and/or representative at conferences and hearings.
4. challenge and explain in writing any material entered in the student records.

C. Student Responsibilities

Students have a responsibility to:

1. attend school regularly and on time.
2. be prepared for class with appropriate materials.
3. respect school property and the property of others.
4. follow school rules regarding entering and leaving the classroom and building.
5. behave in a way that contributes to a safe learning environment and which does not violate another students' right to learn.
6. behave in a polite, cooperative, and truthful manner towards peers, faculty, and staff.
7. be respectful toward others regardless of age, race, creed, color, gender (identity and expression), religion, nationality, citizenship, sexual orientation, physical and/or emotional condition, disability, and refrain from making slurs based on these criteria.
8. refrain from violence and confrontational methods of conflict resolution.

Adapted from NYC Dept. of Education's
*Citywide Standards of Discipline and
Intervention Measures* (pages 7-11)

IV- GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Being a member of a school is like being a part of a family. In order for everyone to get along and have freedom, everyone must share certain jobs. Rights (freedom) and responsibilities (jobs) go together.

The following pages list rules and guidelines to help you fulfill your responsibilities (do your job) to help you keep your rights (your freedom).

1- Having Respect

At school everyone works hard to make sure that you are safe, well, and having a pleasant day. You must do your part by:

- not hurting other people or their feelings.
- not taking things which do not belong to you.
- not damaging other people's property or things.
- dressing the right way for school.
- helping us keep our school neat and clean.

2- Knowing The Rules

The school has rules for all students, which you must know and follow. If you break a rule, you will be treated fairly. You will be able to tell your side of the story to your teacher, an administrator, or a designee. Consequences may include a conversation with you, a conversation with your parents/guardians, a principal's suspension or detention. In the case of a more serious offense, a superintendent's suspension will be given.

3- Learning in School

School is meant to help you grow into a responsible and respectful adult. In order to achieve this goal, you must take part in all of your classes and other activities to the best of your ability. All of the staff is here to help you do your best. If you have any questions or problems, please ask for help. Students who bother others and make it hard for them to learn or teach may be removed from the classroom.

4- Diversity

Everyone is different in his/her own special way. We should treat all people politely and with respect. Students should never make fun of anyone in our school community because of their differences.

5- Bullying/Harassment

Bullying/harassment, in any form, will *not* be tolerated at school, at school activities, on school buses or other school sponsored transportation, or school sponsored events. Bullying includes, but is not limited to **in-school bullying, cyber bullying** (Internet bullying on websites such as *Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter*), **racial/hate slurs, name-calling, put-downs, intimidation**. If, after investigation, a student has been found to have committed act(s) of bullying and/or harassment, the student may be suspended or recommended for expulsion.

6- Threats

Serious threats made a student against the life or another student, teacher, or other school personnel will immediately be reported to the appropriate administrator. Definite corrective action appropriate to the individual situation will be taken which may include suspension or a recommendation for expulsion.

7- Uniforms

Uniforms are mandatory at PS 90. They must be worn every Monday-Thursday. Friday the students are permitted to dress down. The uniform is as follows:

- Top:** White or light blue collared shirts/blouses.
No T-shirts.
No hoodies; however sweaters are permitted in winter.
- Bottom:** Black, Navy Blue, or Khaki pants/skirt/dress.
No jeans.
- Shoes:** Your choice.
Rubber soles required for gym.
- Hats:** Hats are not to be worn inside the school building.
- Outerwear:** Jackets/Hoodies are not to be worn in class.

During the warm weather months, please keep the following guidelines in mind:

Shorts: Only shorts that reach the knee are permitted in school in May and June.

They should be loose fitting and not tight. NO beach shorts should be worn.

Shirts: Sleeveless tops and short sleeves are permitted. However, students should avoid wearing spaghetti strap shirts. NO tube tops, halters, undershirts and shirts that allow for a child's stomach to be shown should be worn.

Pants: Students should wear belts with their pants so that their underwear is not shown. Students play outside and in the gym almost daily. They are more comfortable with pants or jeans that are not tight.

Shoes: Flip flops, heels, and platform shoes can cause children to trip and fall. They are a safety issue. Open sandals can also cause students to fall. In the case of an emergency, we would like to have our students in footwear that will allow for a quick exit of the building.

8- Textbooks

All textbooks provided by school must be covered and *not* written in nor damaged. Excessive writing or damage can result in a replacement fee of the book by student.

9- Electronics

Electronics are *not* permitted in school. This includes but is not limited to cell phones, pagers, CDs, electronic games, iPods, etc. If a student brings one of these (or other electronic items) into school, it will be confiscated and a parent/guardian will need to pick it up. If any electronics is brought to school, is lost, or is misplaced, the school will not be responsible for replacing or for finding the item.

10- Fads/Trends

Every year a new trend sweeps the students of elementary schools. As long as these trends are safe, not electronic, and don't present a distraction or problem they are allowed to be in school. On the occasion that the fad/trend does become a distraction or problem, it will be confiscated and a parent/guardian will need to pick it up.

11- Gum

Gum chewing is forbidden in school. Please make sure that your child does not bring gum to school.

12- School Bus

While riding the school bus to and from school *and* on field trips, students must:

- enter and exit the bus in an orderly manner.
- sit in the assigned seat if designated by the driver or matron.
- remain seated and facing forward at all times while on the school bus.
- not eat or drink on the bus.
- not throw items out of the windows of the bus. This is a serious offense and parents and students will be held responsible.
- not litter or throw objects inside the bus.
- not put any body part outside the windows.
- not vandalize the bus. This includes any writing or other damage. Parents and students will be held responsible and restitution may be required.
- not use obscene language or gesture obscenely while on the bus.

The driver and matron on the bus are in full charge of the bus and the students.

STUDENTS MUST FOLLOW THE RULES FOR RIDING THE SCHOOL BUS.

They must obey the driver and matron at all times. Violation of the rules and standards of school bus conduct, including disruptive behavior, is grounds for suspension from the school bus. Such violations may also be grounds for in-school suspension, superintendent suspension or other disciplinary action, which may result in criminal charges being filed.

13- Out of the Classroom Expectations:

i. Hall/Bathroom:

- Students leave the classroom in pairs of two, after signing out in the log book and taking hall/bathroom pass.
- Students are expected to use the bathroom/run an errand and return to their classroom immediately.
- **NO** horseplay in hall/bathroom.
- **NO** climbing in hall/bathroom.
- **NO** playing with toilet paper or paper towels in the bathroom.
- **DO NOT** throw anything other than toilet paper into the toilet. This can clog the toilet.
- If you are caught playing around in the hall/bathroom, you will receive a consequence.
- **No** writing on the walls.
- **No** writing on the stairs.

ii. Auditorium:

Teachers will bring classes in and out of the auditorium and students will SILENTLY walk in and out. Classes will sit in their assigned rows for all performances. Students are expected to face forward and sit QUIETLY during all assemblies. Students must show respect and be considerate of those performing.

iii. Library

- No food, drinks, candy, or gum.
- Respect *all* of the materials in the library (including books and furniture).
- Follow librarian's rules about the way books are to be signed out, returned, and what to do if you take a book off of the shelf that you don't plan to sign out.
- Return *all* books to the library. If a book is not returned or is damaged too badly, it may result in the replacement of that book by the student.

iv. Lunchroom

In order to maintain a safe and comfortable environment for your lunch period, there are rules that must be followed. If you do not abide by the rules, you will receive a reprimand by a lunchroom staff member. The second offense may result in a lunch detention. If you continue to break the rules, your parent/guardian will be called to come to school for a conference.

The lunchroom rules are as follow:

- Classes enter the lunchroom in an orderly fashion.
- Students sit at their assigned tables in the lunchroom.
- When your table is called, line up in a single line to receive your lunch.
- **NEVER** run in the lunchroom.
- Raise your hand for permission before leaving your seat.
- Sit properly, facing your table, with your feet on the floor.
- Snacks are part of your lunch. We do not encourage sharing.
- Candy, gum, soda, and glass containers are not permitted in the lunchroom.
- Empty trays only when your table is called.
- Do your share to help keep the lunchroom clean.
- Know and use the signal for “quiet.” (“Signal’s up.”)
- When “signals are up” and a staff member is on the microphone, you must be silent.
- Use “indoor voices” in the lunchroom.
- Always keep your hands and feet to yourselves.
- **NO** horseplay.
- Do not use foul or inappropriate language.
- Sit quietly until your class is picked up at the end of the lunch period.
- When your teacher comes to pick you up, classes must leave the lunchroom in an orderly fashion.

v. Recess/Playground

- During the warmer months, we take the classes to the schoolyard for recess. There are specific rules to follow when in the schoolyard. They are as follows:
- **NO** horseplay.
- Use the equipment properly and fairly, sharing and being considerate of others.
- Take turns using the slide, one student at a time.
- When the whistle blows, all students are expected to “take a knee” and wait for further instructions.
- As classes are called, students must walk to their assigned line spots.
- For safety reasons, only students wearing appropriate footwear will be allowed to play.
- Line up in your line spots and wait quietly for your teacher to arrive.

vi. Field Trips (Expected Behavior)

Field trips are an extension of classroom learning. Therefore, all students are invited to participate. HOWEVER, if there is a concern for safety, the student must participate accompanied by a parent/guardian. Teachers will obtain permission from the principal of any such arrangement. Students, who for reasons determined by the parent/guardian, teacher, or principal, cannot attend a school trip, will be placed by the teacher in a different classroom. The teacher will inform the secretary of where the student is being placed. The student will be responsible for completing work while in school that day.

If a student pays for a trip and has to miss it due to illness or the scenarios described above, the money will not be returned. For information on signing students out after field trips, see **Dismissal** section.

14- Consequences

i. Ladder of Referral- Discipline

1. Teachers will follow these procedures concerning infractions against the discipline code:
2. Reprimand by teacher
3. Parental Notification (1st Behavior Notice sent home by teacher)
4. 2nd Behavior Notice – Requesting Parent/Teacher Conference
 - a. Teacher will provide Assistant Principal with notification of reason for conference.
5. 3rd Behavior Notice – Requesting Parent/Teacher/Assistant Principal
6. Parent/Teacher/Assistant Principal/Principal Conference for Pre-Suspension conference. Disciplinary action may be imposed.
7. Principal Suspension – depending on the severity of the infraction according the Citywide
8. Standards of Discipline and Intervention Measures (The Discipline Code)
9. Superintendent Suspension – depending on the severity of the infraction according the
10. Citywide Standards of Discipline and Intervention Measures (The Discipline Code)

ii. Incident Reports/Write-Ups

When an incident occurs in the school building, the staff member who was in charge during that time writes up an incident report. A description is given and students/staff are asked to write up their statements, either as part of the incident or as a witness. An investigation is then started by the assistant principal or a designee. Once the investigation is complete, the incident is put online, and a consequence is handed down. This may include a detention, Principal's Suspension (SAVE room), lunch detention, or trip privileges being revoked. In more severe instances, a superintendent suspension will be given. It is important to understand that when this report is entered online, there is a record of the incident. You are expected to conduct yourself in a mature, professional manner. Take the rules seriously and follow them at all times.

iii. SAVE Room (Principal's Suspension)

A student spends time in the SAVE Room as a result of a Principal's Suspension. When a child does not follow the rules in any given area of school, they may be sent to the SAVE Room. This could be for a single period, a day, a week, etc. depending on the severity of the infraction.

While in the SAVE Room the student receives schoolwork to complete. The student remains in the SAVE Room for the entire day, including the lunch period. There is no talking or playing amongst students in the SAVE Room. The student is expected to complete all of his or her work. The student may speak with the staff

member about his/her reason for being in the SAVE Room. All conversations take place between staff member and student. The student should take time to reflect on the situation and he or she will do things differently in the future, so that he or she will not have a return to the SAVE Room.

While on a Principal's Suspension (SAVE Room), students cannot participate in any school activities held during and after school hours.

There may be times when the SAVE Room is not in operation. At that time, students will spend time in a classroom other than their own.

V- ATTENDANCE AND ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

1- Attendance

i. Absences

Good attendance is key to success in school. When a student is sick or has a family emergency, he/she may remain at home. When the student returns to school, he/she must have a note from the doctor or parent/guardian.

ii. Lateness (Tardiness)

Classes start at 8:20 a.m. and the doors are open until 8:25 a.m. When a student arrives to school after 8:25 a.m., he or she must walk in the front door and sign in at the security desk. A school aide will give the student a late pass, which must be given to the teacher.

iii. Coming to School Too Early

Doors open at 8:00 a.m., rain or shine. For the safety and protection of our students, parents should not allow children to arrive on school grounds before the time of supervision by the teachers and staff.

iv. Rainy Days

School **IS** in session on rainy days. Students need to attend school, and be on time.

2- Arrival

i. Breakfast

- Served at 8:00 a.m.
- All students are welcome to eat breakfast.

ii. Morning Line-Up

- When students arrive to school, or after students finish eating breakfast, they are to report to their designated areas and sit in their assigned rows/seats.
- Students are allowed to speak with their friends using "inside voices." However, students must remain in their seats and wait for the teacher to pick up the class.

3- Dismissal

i. Parent/Guardian Pick-Up

At the end of the school days, students should be picked at the following times and not any earlier:

Pre-K: 2:45 p.m.
Kindergarten: 2:50 p.m.
1st-5th: 2:50 p.m.

ii. Bus

- Students who take the bus will be picked up from their classroom by a staff member at 2:30 p.m. and brought to the appropriate buses.
- Staff members and students must not disturb the rest of the class when leaving for the bus.

iii. Early Pick-Up

At PS 90 we pride ourselves on providing a fine education for our children. We have had an unusually large number of children signed out early for a variety of reasons. We are now starting to enforce a **NO EARLY SIGN-OUT POLICY** except in cases of emergency, medical appointment, religious instruction, or specialized lesson. Students who are routinely picked up early from school miss out on valuable instruction time. In order to provide uninterrupted lessons we ask that you cooperate with us on this issue.

Blue Cards. Students can be picked up only by individuals listed on the blue information card. Individuals must be 18 years or older.

iv. Sign Out After Field Trips

Parents/Guardians who accompany children on field trips and who would like to take them home immediately after the trip must notify the office *prior* to the trip. Please note that it is best to have students receive additional instruction time in the classroom after the trip. To the extent possible, please do not take your children home early.

VI- FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills are held at school twelve (12) times a year as required by law. Drills may occur at any time of the day. Students are expected to move quickly and quietly, as directed by the teacher, to the designated exit area. There is no talking during a fire drill.

Remember, fire drills are just practice; however if there is ever a real fire, the procedure is exactly the same. There should be no talking so that emergency instructions can be heard.

VII- TEACHERS

1- Corporal Punishment

A teacher or other member of the certificated staff will assume authority for the control of the classroom and will maintain good order. However, the use of corporal punishment is prohibited.

2- Verbal Abuse

Verbal abuse by a teacher towards a student is prohibited. Verbal abuse constitutes language that belittles, demeans, or insults a student.

VIII- PARENT-TEACHER RELATIONS

1- Involvement

Parent Teacher Association (P.T.A.) meetings are held monthly. Your attendance is an opportunity to make a contribution to your child's school experience. Look for meeting dates on P.T.A. notices and our outdoor sign. We highly encourage and appreciate parental involvement in the school.

2- Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parents/Guardians are strongly encouraged to attend Parent-Teacher Conferences in November and March. Please look for school notices informing parents/guardians of the dates and times. This is the parent's/guardian's opportunity to meet with their child's teacher to talk about their child's work in class.

3- Meet Your Child's Teacher Night

One evening in September, parents/guardians are invited from 5-7 p.m. to meet their child's teacher and other staff members.

4- Report Cards

Report cards will be sent home at the end of each marking period. This is a means of informing parents/guardians of student's progress in each subject. Students and parents/guardians need to review report cards together. Parents/guardians must then sign them and return them to school.

5- Parent-Teacher Meetings (outside of parent teacher conferences)

If a parent/guardian would like to meet with a teacher outside of parent-teacher conferences, we ask that they refrain from approaching them during arrival and dismissal time. We ask that the parents/guardians call the school to schedule a time to meet with their child's teacher.

6- School Visits

Parents can visit classrooms during the school year during which time they will be able to see evidence of their children's work. See the school calendar for specific dates.

IX- ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1- Student Council

Students in the 5th grade can run for election on the student council. Elections are held every year and 3rd-5th grade students vote to elect members. Student council members take the lead in volunteer work and in raising money for individuals in need.

2- Medication

Medication **may not** be given to any child by teachers, supervisors, or other school personnel unless approved by the Department of Education. A parent must file a formal request (504 form) available in the main office. Long-term medication (for example, insulin) will be dispensed by the school nurse.

3- Money

We suggest that students only bring the amount of money necessary for any given day. If a student is found to have a large sum of money on them, the money will be confiscated and given to the principal. The parent/guardian will be called.

4- Senior Dues

Once senior dues are paid, they cannot be reimbursed.

5- Lost and Found

We suggest that parents mark students' belongings so that they can be identified easily. We encourage parents and students to check the lost and found regularly and especially at the end of the year for belongings that may have been lost and forgotten. The school is not responsible for lost articles or money.

6- Snacks

As per chancellor's regulations, certain unhealthy snacks can no longer be sold at school. Therefore, keeping in line with these regulations, please only send your children to school with healthy snacks.

7- Parties

i. Birthday Parties

If you are planning a party outside of school and are not inviting all of the children in the class, we ask that individual invitations be distributed outside of school. This is to be mindful of children's feelings. Teachers are to be advised if you are planning an in-school party for your child. Ask the teacher if any child in the class has any food allergies. This will allow the teacher to have the parent of that child bring in a treat for the party. Please do not bring lollipops.

ii. Holiday Parties

Parties are planned by the teacher. At PS 90, we respect the personal and religious views of ALL children. Staff and parents will be mindful that not all students celebrate birthdays and certain holidays. With parents' permission, please have students spend the time in another classroom.