

2021 - 2022

Welcome to the JFK Elementary School !

Hello Families-

Welcome to the John F. Kennedy Elementary School, serving students in PreK to 5th.

At JFK, our focus is the academic, social, and emotional growth of all students. We believe that families are our partners and that together we can support students so that their futures are bright. Additionally, we pride ourselves in having high academic expectations for all students and a caring community.

At J.F.K., our S.T.A.R.R. values (Safety, Teamwork, Aspire, Respect, Responsibility) are well-established in our school culture. el students learn about each of the five school values and what it means to exemplify them. Students earn S.T.A.R.R. tickets when demonstrating S.T.A.R.R. characteristics. Our students can then use S.T.A.R.R. tickets to buy items in our school store; earn special lunch with the Principal; earn extra recess and much more.

We know that last year was a very challenging one with the hybrid/remote learning models. Many of our students struggled academically and socially/emotionally. Our focus this year is therefore on the acceleration of ALL students. We'll be very focused on providing "just-in-time supports" to our students in an effort to close learning gaps and to provide social/emotional supports.

The following pages of this handbook provide you with information to ensure that you and your child have the necessary information for a successful school year.

Thank you for taking the time to review this information. If you have any questions, please call the Main Office at 781-961-6211 to speak with one of the school leaders.

We look forward to a phenomenal school year!

Best,

Mr. Licorish
Principal

Ms. Galvin
Assistant Principal

Mr. Graves
Dean of Student Engagement

PLEASE NOTE:

- **Page 12 needs to be signed and returned.**
- **Page 13 needs to be signed and returned ONLY if you do not want your child photographed.**



John F. Kennedy Elementary School

K to 5th Student-Parent Handbook



Non-Discrimination Policy

The Randolph Public Schools (RPS) do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, ethnic identity, sex, gender identity, disability, handicap, age, religion, sexual orientation or homelessness in admission to or participation in its programs and activities.

Principal: John Licorish

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Dean of Student Culture and Engagement: Steadman Graves

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School Adjustment Counselor: Camilla Johnston

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JFK School Pledge:

We are the John F. Kennedy School.

We are SAFE.

We use TEAMWORK.

We ASPIRE.

We are RESPECTFUL.

We are RESPONSIBLE.

We are a community who believes in each other.

We will be the best we can be.

School Start / End Time:

Students may not arrive before 8:20 a.m. Our Drop-off time begins at 8:20 a.m. - Teachers who are responsible for before school supervision do not begin duty until then. Any students dropped off before then will be unsupervised, which poses serious safety concerns. Grades K-2 meet on the blacktop at the back of school and 3-5 meet on the field in front of school.

School begins at 8:35, when teachers line students up and bring them up to classrooms. Any student not with their class at that time will be marked tardy.

School ends at 3:20, and students must be picked up by 3:35. We recognize that emergencies arise, and ask that you please call the Main Office in the event of such an emergency. However, parents/guardians who repeatedly pick their child/children up late will be asked to enroll their child/children in an after-school program. Due to the un-safe nature of picking up children late from school, if parents/guardians do not enroll their children in an after-school program and late pick-ups continue, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) may be contacted.

Morning Drop-off / Afternoon Pick-up Procedures: Please enter the school lot safely and slowly to your respective drop-off and pick-up area. We value child safety above all else, so first and foremost we ask that all vehicles on our school premises drive **slowly** – 10 miles an hour or less. We do not want any accidents, and our driveway is NOT a main road, but a place where hundreds of young people enter and exit vehicles. The school has provided a visual of all traffic

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expectations; for the safety of all it is important that you follow all parts of the traffic information provided. Please be aware U-Turns, double-parking, dropping students off in the middle of the drive-way or dropping students out of the road are all moving violations, and as such are reportable to Randolph Police Department. All parent drop-offs in the morning must occur in the following two ways:

* Parents who wish to park and exit their car with their child must park in a designated parking spot only, and then safely accompany their child to their designated drop-off area, from 8:20 a.m. until 8:35 a.m. We ask that parents who park and escort their child to the building please use sidewalks and crosswalks..

*In the morning, once buses have exited the traffic circle, parents dropping off at our curb-side sidewalk must pull forward as far as they can so other cars have room to pull-in as well. Parents must then drop-off their children against the curb letting the children out on the side of the curb, ONLY. It is very unsafe for children to exit the vehicle on the drive-way/traffic side, as cars may be passing them. Once children are safely let out on the curb, parents will then immediately pull away from the curb. Parents may NOT park and exit their vehicle along our curb, or sit in their car while it's parked, as this is a fire lane where traffic needs to keep moving to flow safely.

Afternoon Pick-up procedures are as follows- K students are picked up in the rear of the building. Parents are to come down Hurley Drive and take a left to get to the rear of the building and safely park or pull in alongside the building to retrieve their child. Parents picking up students in 1st-3rd should take their first right as they come down Hurley Drive and remain on the outer loop. Cars in this line should be in two lines and will wait for the staff member to inform them that they may safely enter the main traffic circle where their child will be lined up with their class. Parents picking up students in 4th/5th should take the second exit after they take a right coming down Hurley Drive. Again, cars should form two lines and wait for their child to be escorted to the dismissal area. staff will then bring your child to your vehicle or wait for you to get to the dismissal post and your child will then get in the car.

At drop-off and pick-up times, JFK School staff are assisting students and parents, please follow their directions, in order to ensure safety for all.

Breakfast: Breakfast is offered in all classrooms at the start of the school day, at no charge. Students may choose to have breakfast. Items taken, but not eaten can be shared in the class "share bin", which is available during snack time and at the end of the day or week for take home. Food allergies are carefully monitored .

Communication / Student Information

Each year we request emergency contact information from our students' parents. ALL parents *must give* the school *active, working phone numbers*. These numbers are the only way school staff can contact you if there is an emergency with your child. This also allows teachers, staff or administration to contact you periodically, to share either positive news or concerns regarding your child. If attempts to call a student's home are unsuccessful, Mr. Licorish or Mrs. Galvin may schedule a meeting with their parents, to ensure the contact information is successfully updated.

Active home-school communication ensures that information is shared by all stake-holders in our students' educational experience. Such collaboration between parents and educators is necessary to support students' social, emotional and

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academic growth. Parents can expect to receive information on how they can communicate with their children's teachers within the first few weeks of school.

During the school year, parents will receive regular communication from teachers on student progress, areas of achievement or areas of concern. It is expected that parents will be active partners in communicating with teachers, either through email, phone, or Class DOJO messaging. *Please communicate with your child's teacher regularly*, so that we can work together to give our students a rich, meaningful educational experience at the JFK School.

Attendance

A student's presence at school is the most important factor in their potential for future and life-long success. Students with excellent attendance habits have the best chance to succeed in school, attend college, and pursue their career of choice. Students with inconsistent or poor attendance are statistically likely to struggle academically, feel frustrated or confused during instruction, and are at greater risk of not finishing high school and not attending college.

Positive, life-long attendance habits begin in elementary school. The best way for parents to teach children these habits is by making sure they are ***on time***, and ***attend school every day unless they are sick***. To help your child understand the value of being on time – being inside the school building by 8:35 – and in school every day, remind them that they, like you, have a 'job' to do – being a student! And like you, they '***need***' to be on time to work *every day*. If you are struggling with getting your child to school on time, and they have been tardy to school, establish and stick to the basic routines (going to bed early, waking up on time, etc.) that will help your child develop the habit of on-time attendance.

The only absences or tardies that will be excused are when they have occurred due to medical reasons, or a family emergency. If your child is going to be tardy to, or absent from, school you must call our Main Office at, 781-961-6211, and leave a message with us. When your child returns to school, we **need to receive either a note or a phone call from their Pediatrician**, in order for it to be excused. In the case of family emergencies, parents must contact Mr. Licorish or Mrs. Galvin, to ensure the student is supported upon re-entry to school, and the absence can be excused by school administration.

Per Randolph Public Schools attendance policy, and in accordance with Massachusetts General Law (MGL) c 71, section 37H, families of students who are late, or have missed school repeatedly, will be contacted by JFK School administration in the following manner:

- **After 3 unexcused absences or unexcused tardies, parents will receive a letter indicating the number of absences and/or tardies, from Mr. Licorish or Mrs. Galvin.**
- **After 5 unexcused absences or tardies, parents will be contacted by the Main Office to schedule an Attendance Concerns meeting with Mr. Licorish or Mrs. Galvin. A plan will be developed to resolve this continued absenteeism.**
- **After 10 unexcused absences or tardies, a letter shall be sent to the student's parent/guardian and a home visit may be conducted by school or district administration.**

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- If chronic absenteeism for a student persists beyond 10 unexcused absences or tardies, School administration may contact Randolph Public Schools Central Office staff or the Department of Children and Families, to seek additional support for families.

Behavioral Guidelines and School Rules

At JFK Elementary School, all students can expect a safe, nurturing and engaging environment where academic, social and emotional growth can flourish. Such an environment only exists when all students are engaging positively with peers, staff and teachers, and focusing on classwork, doing their very best to grow as learners and community members.

Students become successful members of the JFK School community by meeting high expectations for behavior, conduct and classroom effort, which are set and modeled by parents, teachers and school staff. To ensure that all JFK Elementary students experience a rich learning environment that encourages academic and personal growth, the following general expectations must be met by all students at the JFK Elementary School.

Students will:

- Work Hard. Be Kind. Stay Safe. In classrooms and throughout the building, there are signs to remind students of expected behaviors.
- Read EVERY day; this includes weekends, school vacations, and on summer-break. More than any other academic skill or habit, daily reading leads to success in school!
- Enjoy their rich learning experiences with the JFK School community!

Some examples of what expected behaviors look, feel, and sound like are:

- Inside voices
- Walking safely
- Use kind words. Say please and thank you.
- Use materials, like pencils, markers, glue, scissors, recess equipment, fairly and safely.
- Follow directions of all school staff at all times
- Use school appropriate language

No hands on behavior.

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- **Bullying** is (Repeated) teasing, 'rash-ing', excluding peers, being mean, making threats, harassing others in school or on-line, are all strictly forbidden at the JFK Elementary School. Students engaging in bullying will be subject to direct consequences by school administration.

* Students who fail to respect the school environment or the rights of others will receive consequences including but not limited to: separation from their group, loss of privileges, school detention, conferences with parents and school administration, and in or out-of-school suspension.

Electronics in School

All electronic communication devices such as cell phones, MP3 players, iPods, etc., should be left at home. If a student brings an electronic communication device to school, it should be kept in "off" mode (not vibrate). **The JFK Elementary School will not be responsible for electronic devices that are lost or stolen.** Electronic communication devices cannot be used during school hours. Such devices that are audible or observed in use, and thus disruptive to the learning environment will be confiscated and submitted to the school's Main Office. Confiscated items may be recovered only by a parent or guardian at the school's discretion. In the event of an emergency requiring that a parent/guardian contact a student during the school day, please call the Main Office, (781) 961-6211, and the staff will locate the student.

Academics & Homework

- Students' positive development, growth, and achievement in literacy, math and other academic skills must be fully supported by the adults in their lives. Parents, in collaboration with teachers and school staff, must constantly work toward celebrating success in these areas, particularly with an emphasis on reading. Parents of JFK School students can help support their children's literacy growth by making sure that they read *every* day. This includes on the weekends, school vacations and most importantly, over the summer break. Consider the following on the importance of parental involvement with daily reading practice at home:

"The substantial relationship between parent involvement and reading comprehension levels of fourth-grade classrooms is obvious, according to the U.S. Department of Education.⁷ Where parent (reading) involvement is low, the classroom mean average (reading score) is 46 points *below* the national average. Where (parent reading) involvement is high, classrooms score 28 points *above* the national average."

Facts about Children's Literacy: Children who are read to at home have a higher success rate in school. <http://www.nea.org/grants/facts-about-childrens-literacy.html>

"Parent involvement in early literacy is **directly connected** to academic achievement. Children **need parents to be their reading role models** with **daily practice** in order to navigate successfully through beginning literacy skills."

Parent Involvement in Early Literacy. January 8, 2013. <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/parent-involvement-in-early-literacy-erika-burton>

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- This means that by reading to your younger, 'learning-to-read' children, and making sure your older 'I can read' children are reading something every day, you not only help send the message that reading is fun and important, you help the school set them up for their future success! Please, in addition to any classwork your child's teacher assigns, make sure your children read every day!

Some helpful tips for parents to promote learning every day at home are:

- Have younger children read aloud to you every night (books or magazines), and read aloud to your child, in English or in the language spoken at home.
- Choose a quiet place, free from distractions, for your child to do nightly assignments.
- Have your child read in ordinary places (in the car, reading recipes, in the supermarket, during breakfast, at bedtime - even in the bathtub!).
- Letting your child see *you* read will spark his/her interest.
- As your child reads, point out spelling and sound patterns such as cat, pat, hat.
- Ask your child questions about the characters and events in the story being read. Ask why s/he thinks a character acted in a certain way. Ask him/her to support the answer given with information from the story. Before getting to the end of a story, ask what s/he thinks will happen next and why.
- Students can be encouraged to keep a daily writing journal.
- Making dinner together is a great way to practice reading and measurement skills.
- Play games to practice counting and following directions.
- Skip counting, estimating, measuring, real-life problem solving (meal planning, budgets) are helpful to practice mathematics.
- Engaging students to share their thinking, for literacy and math, is a good way to build vocabulary and practice discourse.

Homework:

Homework provides a valuable opportunity to reinforce skills learned in the classroom. Homework builds upon class-room work and encourages the development of self-discipline and personal responsibility. It is also an important means of promoting dialogue, collaboration, and cooperation between home and school. Parents should look for homework to come home with students on most nights. Homework may be assigned by paper or with the use of a computer. Teachers send updates on homework through email, newsletters, and Class DOJO messages. Parents with

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questions about their children's homework should email or, if applicable, use Class Dojo to text the teacher, for a quick and helpful explanation or tips on supporting children with a certain assignment.

Some helpful tips for parents to support their children with homework are:

- Be positive about homework, and tell your child how important school is. The attitude you express about homework will be the attitude your child acquires.
- Make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit area to do homework.
- Make sure the materials your child needs, such as paper, pencils and a dictionary, are available.
- Help your child with time management. Establish a set time each day for doing homework.
- When the teacher asks that you play a role in homework, do so. Cooperate with the teacher, as it shows your child that the school and home are a team.
- Watch your child for signs of failure and frustration. Let your child take a short break if s/he is having trouble keeping his/her mind on an assignment.

Parent Volunteer Opportunities / Student Support / Engaging with School

PTO – Parent Teacher Organization

The PTO is a volunteer organization made up of JFK School parents and staff which represents the interests of student families, and supports the children, staff and parents at JFK School. The PTO works with Mr. Licorish and JFK School staff, to plan school events, raise funds for special school activities, and discuss parents' concerns and other school-wide issues.

School-Site Council

The School Site Council is a governing/ advisory body at each school. The School Site Council is composed of equal numbers of parents and staff. Parents on the School Site Council are accountable to the School Parent Council and are elected by the School Parent Council of the school.

The School Site Council reviews and approves school policy, including but not limited to:

- ~ Parent Engagement Plan
- ~ Serving on personnel subcommittee for new teachers
- ~ Reviewing the Whole School Improvement Plan
- ~ Reports back to School Parent Council and the larger parent body on a regular basis

The School Site Council is important to our school and the success of our students. Research shows that family involvement promotes student success. Students with involved parents are more likely to:

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- Earn higher grades and pass their classes,
- Attend school regularly and have better social skills,
- Go on to postsecondary education.

When families, schools, and communities work together:

- Student achievement improves,
- Teacher morale rises,
- Communication increases,
- Family, school, and community connections multiply.

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Handbook Acknowledgement / Agreement

So that we can ensure that you and your child have read the handbook together, discussed it, and understand the information within it, please sign where requested, and return this agreement to the school on or before Friday, September 17th. If you have questions or need help understanding the handbook agreement, please call 781-961-6211, and ask to speak with Principal John Licorish or Assistant Principal Danielle Galvin.

1. We agree to help our child read every day, including weekends, holidays and school vacation days – reading is fun, and we'll help them grow as readers!
2. We agree to make sure our child is on time, and attends school every day (except for excused absences). We also agree to make sure they are either in an after school program, met at their bus stop on time, or picked up by 3:35 every day, without exception. We understand that failing to ensure our child's positive school attendance, or leaving them unattended after pick-up time, is a child safety concern, and if part of a pattern, could initiate school administration contacting the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families.
3. We have read the Behavior Guidelines and School Rules and discussed them with our child. We agree to work with school staff to make sure that our child follows all school rules.

Student Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date: _____

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THIS PAGE ONLY REQUIRES SIGNATURE TO SAY NO/OPT OUT.**Child Photograph Permission**

During the school year, RPS District staff take photographs or videos of classrooms and students during their school day. These photos are sometimes shared or posted on Randolph Public Schools' home website, the JFK Elementary School page, with local media, or in emails to staff or families. If you do **not** wish for pictures or videos featuring your child to be shared in the ways listed above, please sign below. If you don't sign below, we would understand that you agree that photos or videos featuring your child could be shared within our district, or with local media.

**** I do not give permission for photos or videos of my child to be shared in any way:**

Student Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

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