



2021 - 2022

Hello Donovan Families;

We are so very excited to work with you to help your student and all of the Donovan students to grow and develop into the best version of themselves! Through Brain Power Wellness, Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports, and Rigorous Academic Challenge we focus on helping each student develop academically, socially, and emotionally. We strongly believe and reinforce daily that PRODUCTIVE STRUGGLE and learning from mistakes allow all people to grow and develop. When we say “Not Yet, but I will, because I can if I keep working” those are more than words - they are a belief in hard-work, effort and perseverance!

We believe that families are our partners and that together we can support each other to meet the needs of each individual and make their futures bright. The following pages of this handbook will provide you with information to ensure that you and your child(ren) have the necessary information to experience 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)961-6248 to speak with Principal Gannon or Assistant Principal Finn.

Thank you for partnering with the Donovan to make learning great for all students!

Principal Gannon

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

- **The top section of Page 10 needs to be signed and returned. The second section of page 10 only needs to be signed if you do not want your child photographed.**

# Donovan Elementary School: Student-Parent Handbook

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## Donovan School Pledge:

I commit to saying: “Not Yet, but I will because I can if I keep working.”

## School Start:

**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. Grade K & 1 students will be in the courtyard. Grades 2 & 3 will be on the playground equipment and Grades 4 & 5 will be on the lower basketball court.

**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.

## End Time:

**School ends at 3:20**, and students must be picked up **by** 3:30. 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.

Please note that arriving for dismissal prior to 2:45 is not productive and strongly discouraged.

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**Morning Drop-off:** We value child safety above all else, so first and foremost we ask that all vehicles in our driveway 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 expectations; for the safety of all it is important that you follow all parts of the traffic information provided. This includes the expectation that NO CHILD(ren) will be dropped off on the opposite side of Reed Street and NO CHILD(ren) will be allowed to cross the street for pick up at dismissal. Reed Street is a major road with many non-residents that choose to speed by our school, so it is unsafe to have students attempting to cross the street. 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.

Walkers will not be dismissed this year until until 3:30.

All parent drop-offs in the morning must occur in the Front Loop (see attached Map). Cars are to pull all the way forward before letting your child out of the car and then pull out and drive away.

**Afternoon Pick-up Procedures:** As a result of the newly paved driveway the Donovan will have 3 Pick-Up Locations. All children will continue to wait inside, because this is safest for them and be called on the walkie when you pull into the upper lot driveway with your sign displayed. As the Randolph Police Department established all cars are to enter the driveway by making a right coming up Reed Street. No Left turns into the driveway are allowed.

Once you enter the driveway you will proceed to the location for your child's pick up. As you will note the newly paved driveway goes fully around the back of the building. As a result there is ONLY 1 ENTRY POINT and that is the upper front driveway. The back parking lot is now an exit only **(SEE MAP)**:

- Students in grades 4 and 5 that DO NOT carpool / have a younger sibling with will exit the front of the building, so the parents/rides for theses students will use the front loop. Please pull forward into the marked spots.  
**(SEE MAP)**
- Students in grades 2 & 3 that DO NOT carpool/have a younger sibling will exit out the lower basketball court area, please form a line in the marked spots. Once your child has gotten in the car, pull out and follow the directions to exit out the back driveway. **(SEE MAP)**
- student in grades K and 1 with all siblings / carpool members will exit out the upper playground blacktop. Parents will need to drive into the front upper drive way, drive down the hill and behind the school passing the pick up area for grades 2 & 3, before driving up the hill and moving into one of the painted spots. Your child(ren) will be there waiting, IF YOU HAVE DISPLAYED YOU SIGN ON THE WAY IN. **(SEE MAP)**

**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 .

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## 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, Principal Gannon or Assistant Principal Finn 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 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 Young 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, bereavement or a family emergency, or observance of a religious holiday for those religious holidays determined by the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education - a note from a parent is needed for religious holidays, bereavement or family emergencies and a note from a doctor/medical professional is needed for a medical absence. If your child is going to be tardy to, or absent from, school you must call our Main Office at, 781-961-6248, 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

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be excused. In the case of family emergencies, parents must contact **Principal Gannon or Assistant Principal Finn** 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 Donovan 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 Principal Gannon or Assistant Principal Finn.**
- **After 5 unexcused absences or tardies, parents will be contacted by the Main Office to schedule an Attendance Concerns meeting with Principal Gannon or Assistant Principal Finn. 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.**
- **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 Donovan 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 Donovan 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 Donovan Elementary students experience a rich learning environment that encourages academic and personal growth, the following include our building-wide expectations and must be met by all students at the Donovan Elementary School.

### **Students will:**

- Be Safe                      - Be Respectful                      - Be Responsible

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### 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.
- **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 Donovan 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 Donovan 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) 961-6248, and the staff will locate the student.

## Academics & Homework

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- 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 Donovan 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.<sup>7</sup> 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>

- 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.

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- 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 classroom 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 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 Donovan School parents and staff which represents the interests of student families, and supports the children, staff and parents at Donovan School. The PTO works with Principal Gannon, Assistant

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Principal Finn and Donovan 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 comprised 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:

- 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.

Si ou gen kesyon anplis, tanpri souple kontakte Lunine Pierre-Jérôme, Liaison pou fanmi ki pale Kreyòl Ayisyen yo nan 1-781-807-0081

Si tiene más preguntas, llame a Evelyn Morales, las intermediarias/intérprete para las familias hispanohablantes al 1-781-961-6220 ext. 535

Se você tiver qualquer outra pergunta, por favor entre em contato com Regina Federle, para auxílio com o idioma Português, número 1-781-961-6247.

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Nếu quý vị có câu hỏi nào khác, làm ơn liên hệ phiên dịch viên tiếng Việt, tại 1-339-216-2400

### **Handbook Acknowledgement / Agreement - SIGNATURE FOR THIS SECTION IS NEEDED**

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) 961-6248, and ask to speak with Principal Gannon or Assistant Principal Finn.

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 3:30 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:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

### **SIGNATURE BELOW IS ONLY IF YOU WOULD LIKE 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 Donovan 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.

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\*\* 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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