

# Three Bridges School

*“Home of the Terrific Tigers”*



## Parent/Student Handbook 2020-2021

## ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

### **Morning Arrival**

While we always encourage you to have your child ride the bus, if you chose to drive him/her to school, it is essential that you make sure that he or she does not arrive prior to 8:25 a.m., because staff will not be available to supervise. It is also important for his or her safety that you drop your child off at the front door, where a staff member will receive your child. Staff members will be in the front of the building, in the bus loop and in the hallways between 8:25 a.m. and 8:30 a.m., daily to assist with your child's safe arrival. If you arrive after 8:30 a.m. and a staff member is not on duty, please park your car in a parking space and bring your child into the front office for a late pass.

### **Early Student Pick-Up**

It is always best if you can schedule doctor, dentist, or important appointments outside of school hours. However, if you find you need to pick up your child before the end of the school day, please send a note to the teacher indicating the pick-up time and reason. When you arrive at school to pick up your child, please go to the front office to sign-out your child. At that time, office personnel will notify the teacher, so that your child will come to the office to meet you.

### **Afternoon Dismissal**

We dismiss our students at 3:20 p.m. on regular school days and at 1:00 p.m. on early dismissal days for students in grades K – 3. As teachers take attendance, they record where each child will go at the end of the school day. If there is a change in your child's regular dismissal pattern, you must notify the school in writing via a signed note as soon as possible, but no later than the morning of the day in question. If the change affects more than one child, we need a separate note for each. In the case of an emergency change, please call the office as soon as possible and we will inform the teacher. It is always important that your child knows where he or she is going at the end of the day. DO NOT e-mail the teacher. We may not get that message.

If you should pick-up your child at dismissal time, we ask that you park in a parking spot and enter the building through the exterior library door. It is located between the main entrance and the double glass doors. Please have photo id ready.

## **Emergency Closings**

Situations can occur that require schools to close unexpectedly. A weather emergency, lack of heat, electricity, or water, etc., might mean that all schools or a particular school cannot open. The decision to close school is made by the superintendent.

You may log onto the district website at [www.readington.k12.nj.us](http://www.readington.k12.nj.us), to check for changes to the opening of school. In addition, you will receive an automated call and/or text message informing you of the school closing.

## **Daily Schedule**

The daily schedule is as follows:

**8:25 a.m. Doors Open**  
**8:30 a.m. Classes Begin**  
**3:20 p.m. Dismissal**

## **Early Dismissal Schedule**

Each year, the district calendar indicates days when children are dismissed after four hours of instruction. Usually the days before Thanksgiving, winter break, spring break, the dates of parent/teacher conferences and curriculum development activities are early dismissal days. During conferences and on staff development days, teachers are in the district working with their colleagues or meeting with parents after students leave. On the days before major holidays, staff and students are dismissed early. Lunch is served on early dismissal days.

Early Dismissal Times

Gr. K, 1,2,3	Starts 8:30 a.m.	Ends 1:00 p.m.
PS -AM	Starts 9:00 a.m.	Ends 11:00 a.m.
PS Ext. Day	Starts 9:00 a.m.	Ends 1:00 p.m.
PS- PM	Starts 11:00 a.m .....	Ends 1:00 p.m.

## **Emergency Delayed Opening**

When emergency situations affect the school or the district, it may be necessary to delay the start of the school day by ninety minutes. This most often occurs on winter days when road conditions are expected to improve within a short period of time. Announcements for delayed openings will be made via text, phone call and posted on the district website

The delayed opening schedule will be in effect and lunch will be served. Together with your child, please plan ahead for delayed openings and anticipate that they most often happen in the winter because buses cannot negotiate the roads safely.

## Delayed Opening Times

Grades K,1,2,3	Starts 10:30 a.m.	Ends 3:20 p.m.
PS- Ext. Day	Starts 10:45 a.m.	Ends 3:20 p.m.
PS-AM	NO AM PROGRAM	
PS-PM	Starts 12:50 p.m.	Ends 3:20 p.m.

### **Emergency Early Dismissal**

On rare occasions, it may be necessary to close school early because of inclement weather or another emergency. Usually, the decision is made by mid-morning to allow time to contact radio stations, and to post information on the website.

Parents should take particular care in designating individuals who are close to home to pick-up students in the event of an emergency early dismissal.

## **ABSENCES AND ATTENDANCE**

### **Attendance Requirements**

To ensure continuity and completion of instructional programs, it is important that all children attend school regularly. Regular attendance is important to academic and social success and mandated by law for children between the ages of six and sixteen. State law requires that children attend school 180 days each year.

### **Attendance/Tardiness Committee**

The principal, the school nurse, the guidance counselor and other staff as needed make up the Three Bridges School Attendance/Tardiness Committee. This committee reviews student attendance and arrival patterns. You will be notified if we are concerned about your child's attendance/tardiness or if the number of absences approaches the limit established by our Board of Education. We will discuss the reasons for your child's absences/tardiness and determine an appropriate course of action. Children must attend 160 days or else retention may be recommended.

### **Chronic/Lengthy Illness**

If your child has a chronic health issue that causes frequent absences, please call and discuss the situation with the school nurse. We are very sensitive to issues of this nature and will work with you to see that your child receives the best possible support and educational program we can offer.

### **Family Vacations**

Days taken for family vacations are not considered excused absences. Therefore, it is best to schedule vacations when school is not in session. If your family does take vacation during the school year, advance schoolwork is difficult

to provide. The “hands-on” and differentiated instruction that goes on in our classes daily do not always make it possible for teachers to provide all work in advance for students going on vacation. They may recommend reading material and suggest that children keep a written or picture journal of their trip.

### **Make-up Work**

If you wish to have the teacher prepare homework for your child when out of school, you may request this when you report the absence. If your child will be absent for a day or two, he or she will most likely not need to have make-up work sent home and will be given time and assistance upon return to make up work. If you expect that your child will be out for an extended period of time, please make arrangements to speak with the teacher to discuss the possibility of sending assignments home. These assignments can be brought home by siblings or neighbors, or picked-up after 3:00 p.m. in the school office.

### **Reporting Absences**

When you know that your child will be absent, please notify the school as soon as possible by calling the main number, 782-2141 ext.1, and leaving a message in the attendance mailbox. Please include your child's name, the teacher's name, the reason for the absence and his or her estimated date of return to school. As an additional safeguard, we ask that you call the school each day that your child is absent. We retrieve our attendance messages after 8:45 a.m. each day. If a child is absent and no call is on record, a member of the school staff will contact you to ensure that your child is safe.

### **Returning to School**

After each absence, we require a note, addressed to the nurse, and signed by you when your child returns to school. A doctor's note is only necessary in the case of a lengthy illness or for a communicable disease. We are required to keep these notes for the year.

### **Tardiness**

School begins promptly at 8:30 a.m. If your child arrives after that time, please accompany him or her to the office and sign the late register. The office staff will give the child a late pass and, in order to minimize the interruption, allow him or her to proceed quietly to class. Please understand that it is not safe to drop off your child at the front door alone and that it can be disruptive to walk him or her to the classroom.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Animals in the Classroom**

Because of safety and medical issues, we cannot allow animals in the classroom without prior approval. Animals are not permitted to travel to or from school on the bus.

### **Backpacks/Book Bags**

Children are expected to have a backpack in order to transport homework and other materials. The size of the backpack should be age-appropriate. For safety and storage purposes, the backpack may not have wheels.

### **After School Child Care**

The Deer Path YMCA offers an after school care service. It is a private arrangement that is between the parent and the YMCA. Although the program uses the school building, it is not under the direction of school personnel. If you are interested in arranging this service you may contact the YMCA at 236-4184 for more information. If a change in bus transportation is necessary, discuss arrangements directly with the transportation office at 534-3835 and complete the necessary paperwork.

### **Bicycles**

Students in grades K-3 are not permitted to ride their bicycles to school.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

Birthdays are special times for children and their families. Many families include some or all of the child's classmates in the celebrations. Children's feelings can be easily hurt. Therefore, please do not send your child to school with birthday invitations to distribute unless there is one for every child in the class or, in the event of an all-girl or all-boy party, one for each of the boys or girls. If you prefer to send invitations just to a few children, the H.S.A. produces a directory of addresses and phone numbers that you can use for this purpose. The same guidelines will apply to "Thank You" notes.

### **Class Trips**

During the year, our teachers plan class trips that are designed to enhance and enrich the content of the curriculum. Prior to a class trip, your child's teacher will send home trip details and costs accompanied by a permission slip for you to sign. We will not be able to take your child on the trip unless we receive your signed permission. In the event that a trip is canceled or postponed, the teacher will contact the class. If you do not want your child to go on a class trip, your child is still required to attend school that day. We will provide an alternate program in school for him or her on the day of the trip.

### **Computers & Technology**

Each classroom has several computer stations. In addition, students and teachers have access to a fully equipped computer lab and a set of MAC laptops on a cart. Each teacher also has access to the Internet in his/her classroom as well as software that supports math, reading, writing, and keyboard skills for instructional use with students. The library is also fully automated and each library

computer has access to the Internet. The "Acceptable Use Policy" provides information on the rules governing the use of computers, the local area network, and Internet access. You will receive a copy of this policy, for your signature, early in September.

### **Dangerous Articles/Violent Actions or Threats**

Recent events have brought home to all of us the seriousness of violent threats, actions, or possession of any dangerous article on school property, by even the youngest of children. We will act immediately and decisively if any of these conditions occur. School suspension or expulsion could be the consequence of dangerous and/or violent acts. Please be vigilant. Make sure your child does not have access to potentially dangerous items. Also, it is most important that you discuss with your child the seriousness of any action or threat of action that can be considered dangerous to himself, his peers or any member of our learning community. Students must refrain from writing about or illustrating pictures that depict violence.

### **Discipline**

We consider discipline to be a teaching tool that can help students achieve self-discipline. In the early grades, most discipline issues are minor and are handled by the classroom teacher. If this occurs, the teacher or other member of the staff will offer your child a simple reminder and/or a brief time-out followed by a private discussion of the problem. If the need arises, the teacher may discuss these issues with you and ask for your suggestions for working with your child to help build self-discipline. If necessary, the teacher will consult with the principal and/or guidance counselor and implement a behavior management plan. Harassment, intimidation, and bullying reports will also be addressed and may lead to consequences. In the event that the behavior is very disruptive or involves fighting, injuring others, or damaging school property, the principal will be involved and you will be contacted. Disciplinary measures will follow. It is our hope that children receive the same message about behavior expectations from school and home.

### **Dressing for School**

School is an active and interesting place and children are rarely still for long periods of time. Please be sure your child dresses in clothing that is comfortable and that can be independently managed. Play clothes with sneakers are ideal and recommended because they are comfortable and allow the children to safely participate in all activities without restrictions. Children are required to wear sneakers in gym class. Children may not wear flip-flops to school at any time. When flip-flops are worn in crowded hallways and stairwells, children often, inadvertently, step on the back of the flip-flops of the child in front. Without the appropriate footwear, children will not be able to fully participate in recess and gym class, as they may be asked to sit out during activities for safety reasons. Children go outside for recess, weather permitting. At times, gym classes are also held outdoors. Please be sure that your children are dressed appropriately for the weather each day so that your child may enjoy his or her time outside. Students wear hats only outdoors,

unless religious or medical reasons would necessitate the wearing of them indoors. Other special exceptions may include occasional school-wide spirit days such as team sport days or crazy hat days. For art class, we ask you to provide a smock or an old shirt that will be kept in the classroom for the duration of the school year.

### **Early Intervention**

In order to support the development of strong early literacy skills, we offer the services in reading for grades K, 1, 2 & 3. Our intervention teachers are skilled professionals adept at assisting children when they are experiencing difficulty acquiring early literacy skills. They work closely with the classroom teachers and assist children, as needed. Students who score substantially below expectations on district developed assessment instruments or standardized tests may be recommended for these programs by their teacher. Math intervention typically occurs as a skill based session in the general education classroom.

### **English as a Second Language (ESL)**

The district provides the services of a teacher who specializes in instructing children for whom English is a second language. The ESL teacher works with eligible children, one at a time, or in a small group. Eligibility for the program is determined by the ESL teacher following an assessment of the child's English language skills and services are provided with permission of the parents.

### **Fire Drills**

We conduct fire drills each month. During each fire drill, students silently evacuate the building in a quick and orderly manner. Our goal is to make our children comfortable with this process and trained to act appropriately in case an emergency would necessitate the evacuation of the building. These drills occur every month, even in the winter. Coats are typically not worn. Keep this in mind when dressing your child. Shorts and t-shirts are not good choices in the winter months.

### **Guardianship of Students**

If you are separated, divorced or a single parent, it is important that you provide us with a copy of up-to-date custody papers. This will ensure that we have the correct information needed to release a child to the proper adult. In cases of foster care, and/or other guardianship situations, the legal guardian(s) of the child may need to confer with the school staff concerning custody issues. In cases where conflicts may exist, please notify the office and meet with the principal to share, in confidence, the original custody documents and discuss the issues related to custody and the school's responsibility to the custodial and non-custodial parents. The principal will share the information, in confidence, with appropriate members of the school staff. It is important that everyone responsible for the child have a clear understanding about who may or may not come to school to request release of the child.



## **Guidance**

A guidance counselor with expertise in working with young children is available to assist teachers and parents when children need special support. The counselor can provide individual counseling or small group activities if your child is experiencing school or family difficulties. The counselor also provides whole class lessons on such topics as bullying and making friends. Ongoing individual and small group services from the counselor will not begin without verbal consent from parents. The guidance counselor also works closely with the teachers throughout the year.

## **Intervention and Related Services (I&RS)**

The I&RS Committee is made up of the guidance counselor, learning consultant, early intervention specialist, special education teacher, and several trained staff members. Parents may also participate in the meeting regarding their child. This team meets each month to assist teachers with students who are having academic, social, or emotional difficulties. If a teacher wishes to ask for the help of the committee, he or she may do so through the guidance counselor. The committee reviews the information presented by the teacher and makes recommendations to help the teacher meet the child's needs. This is a regular education service.

## **Lockdown**

For safety purposes, we practice active shooter drills throughout the year. These drills are designed to restrict the movement of people within the building in the event of an intruder, a natural disaster, or another unforeseen event that would prohibit people from exiting the building freely. Each year, we will explain this process to the children prior to implementing these drills. Our goal is to make our children comfortable with this procedure and train them to react appropriately in the case of an emergency that would necessitate activating this procedure.

## **Lockout**

A lockout takes place when there is a remote or potential external threat to occupants of the school. The following takes place:

- The school remains locked and no one is allowed into the building.
- Classes proceed as normal.
- Staff and children remain inside the building.

## **Lost and Found**

All lost and found items are placed in a lost and found area in the Cafetorium. Please check there for missing items. Also, remember to mark your child's clothing and personal belongings with his or her name.

## **Money**

When it is necessary to send money to school, please place it in a sealed envelope or zip-lock bag that is clearly labeled with your child's name, the teacher's name, and the purpose for the money. Be sure your child does not come to school with more money than he or she needs. Send exact change whenever possible.

## **Parking**

The parking lot in the rear of the building is primarily used for staff. Parking is available for visitors in the front of the building. Visitors may not park along the curb in the front of the building. Please park in a designated spot.

## **Personal Property**

Any items brought to school are the sole responsibility of the child to use appropriately and with teacher permission. If a child does not heed teacher rules, items may be taken by the teacher and returned to parents. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen personal items.

## **Recess**

Recess is scheduled daily, weather permitting, in Grades K-3. Children go outside together and are supervised by the classroom teachers. Please dress children appropriately for the weather.

## **Registration**

Children entering kindergarten must be five years of age on or before October 1 of the year for which they are registering. First grade students must be six years of age by the same date of their first grade year. Kindergarten registration is usually held in early spring. Information about the dates is available from the school office, as well as posted on the website.

In order to register a child for any grade, you will have to complete a registration form at the Board of Education office at 52 Readington Road, Whitehouse Station and bring the following original documents: birth certificate, proof of residency (deed, lease, or contract of sale), and immunization records signed by a physician. The secretary will make copies of the birth certificate and the proof of residency. Immunizations must be up-to-date, signed by the physician, and be on file 10 days from the first day of attendance. For students transferring during the year, the sending school will provide up-to-date copies of health and academic records. At registration, parents complete a transfer request for records, which the office staff mails to the prior school.

## **School Property and Books**

In the primary grades, many of the materials are “hands-on” and are kept at school. Your child may take home library books, math games, and reading materials belonging to the school so that he or she can share them with you. Please help your child to carefully keep track of all such items. He or she is responsible to return all school-owned items in good condition, or you will be asked to replace them. In addition, in the event that your child defaces any school property, you will be expected to repair or replace that property.

## **Snacks**

Your child should bring a snack to school each day. These snacks should be nutritious, easy for your child to manage and something that your child enjoys eating. Please do not include items such as candy, soda, or anything in a glass container. Individual classroom teachers will notify parents of the exact time for snack in their classroom. You will receive special notification if your child is scheduled in a class that is “nut-free”, etc. due to severe allergies.

## **Special Education Services**

A Child Study Team, whose members include a school psychologist, a learning disabilities teacher consultant, and a social worker, is available to evaluate students and determine eligibility for special education services. Parents of special education students transferring from another district must inform the school and contact the Child Study Team as part of the enrollment process. The team members are professionals with special training in the evaluation of a child’s learning potential and current academic achievements. Child Study Team evaluations are completed in accordance with state and federal legislation and cannot begin without a parent’s signed consent.

The district has a variety of programs to assist youngsters who require special intervention: preschool handicapped classes, special education classes, resource centers, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech & language therapy. With parental permission, children are placed in these programs and their progress is carefully monitored.

When a child is evaluated by the team, an evaluation plan is created in consultation with the child’s parents. Members of the team observe the child in the classroom and assess the child, one-on-one, in a private testing environment. They also interview the parents as part of the evaluation. Testing by other health and/or educational professionals may also be recommended and included in the child’s evaluation plan. Once testing is completed, parents meet with the team to review its findings and, if the child is eligible for services, the team and the parents discuss and create the child’s Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). With the parents’ consent, the child then receives services as outlined in the IEP. The team meets with the parents each year to review the child’s progress and make recommendations for the following year.

### **Speech and Language Therapy**

Speech and language therapists provide assistance to children requiring speech and/or language therapy. If a child needs the services of a speech and language therapist, the parents must provide permission, and an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) will be developed for the child. The IEP will be implemented only after the therapist has received the parent's signed permission.

### **Substitute Staff Members**

The district provides certified substitutes for staff members who are not able to be in school during the regular school day. If no certified teacher is available on that day, the class may be assigned to an instructional aide who is certified either as a teacher or as a substitute teacher. If there is no substitute nurse available, we make arrangements for medications to be administered by another district nurse or by the child's parent. In that case, a staff member will notify you immediately if your child is ill or if there is some question affecting his or her health.

### **Telephone Use**

Your child may use the classroom or office telephones only under the supervision and direction of an adult. Teachers may ask children to contact you if they have forgotten their lunch, lunch money, or homework. Your child may also contact you if there are changes in after-school activities. If you need to contact your child in the case of a family emergency please call the office at 782-2141 and speak with the office personnel.

### **Transfers**

Please notify the office staff in writing regarding a child's pending transfer out of school. This will allow us to update school records and plan a suitable farewell for your child. Before your child leaves the school, he or she will be expected to return library books and other property belonging to the school. You will be required to complete a transfer card indicating the name and address of the new school your child will be attending. Once you have registered your child in the receiving school, they will request official records. These records will be mailed from Three Bridges School directly to the new school.

### **Transportation**

The director of transportation schedules buses based on home addresses. In order to arrange for pick-up and drop-off at a sitter's house you will have to contact the transportation office directly at (908) 534-3835. These arrangements have to be made each year. If an emergency situation requires an unanticipated change in babysitting arrangements, contact the transportation office directly to

arrange the necessary change. We are not able to make bus or bus stop changes in order to accommodate play dates. You and your child will be notified of the bus route, the bus stop, the time of pick-up and the time of drop-off shortly before school begins.

Your child may not board the bus at any other place than their assigned stop. Once boarded, he or she should be seated and belted until the bus arrives at its destination. In accordance with P.L. 1992 c.92, mandatory use of seat belts on school buses became effective in September 1994.

During the ride, children may engage in quiet conversation. They may not change seats, put their feet in the aisles, eat or disrupt the bus ride in any way. Please bring concerns about the behavior of children on the bus to the principal's attention immediately. We make every effort to work with children who exhibit disruptive bus behaviors. However, considering the safety implications of such behaviors, children who disrupt the ride or engage in dangerous behavior repeatedly may be denied transportation on the bus for a specified amount of time or be disciplined, as determined by the principal. The school staff periodically reviews bus safety with the children and we would like you to do the same. Please note that most bus trips to and from school are video and audio recorded. These tapes are reviewed when there are serious behavioral issues.

### **Visitors**

We all agree that our schools must be safe places in which our children can feel free to learn. As one measure to ensure that Three Bridges School is safe for all of our children, parents and other visitors are expected to enter through the front door after being "beeped-in" and proceed immediately to the main office. We require that you sign-in and obtain a visitor's badge each time that you visit. At the end of your visit please stop in the office, sign-out and return your badge.

Staff members are required to stop and question any adult, other than a district staff member, who is in the building without the proper badge. Our external doors are kept locked during the school day. The office staff monitors the front entrance through a security camera and visitors are admitted in response to the door buzzer. Please place any item you are dropping off for your child in the gray bin at the main entrance. Labeling the item with your child's name will be very helpful.

### **Website**

Parents may visit the district website at [www.readington.k12.nj.us](http://www.readington.k12.nj.us) to obtain information about the district's four schools and central office happenings. The Three Bridges section of the website is updated regularly during the school year and provides an overview of the curriculum, programs, staff information and student happenings.

## **World Languages Program**

Our Spanish language program is taught by an elementary world language teacher. The Spanish language and culture are shared with our students. The program is designed as an overview to develop awareness and interest in world languages and Spanish-speaking cultures outside of the United States.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

### **Allergies**

If your child has any allergies or takes any medications, it is important to share this information with the school nurse. The nurse puts the teachers on alert about the allergic condition so that proper steps are taken to ensure your child's well-being. The parent should update this information annually or as changes occur.

### **Communicable Diseases**

If your child has a communicable disease such as chicken pox, strep throat, etc. he or she may not remain in school. Once medical steps have been taken and your child is ready to return to school, he or she may do so immediately. It is important, however, to remain in contact with the school nurse about your child's health.

### **Emergency Information**

Early in the school year, please review your contact information in our student information system (Genesis). We will need you to carefully review it in order to confirm its accuracy. Please make any necessary changes as soon as possible. The information will be made available to school personnel and must be up-to-date. It will also be used as parental permission for emergency medical treatment at the Hunterdon Medical Center or another hospital, if needed. If moving with the district, changing jobs, etc., parents must notify the school of these changes before they occur. Failure to do so would place your child at risk, should an emergency occur during the school day.

### **Health Services**

In order to provide an environment where all children are safe and are not unnecessarily exposed to communicable diseases, each school in the district has a full-time certified school nurse. The school nurse is a licensed, registered nurse whose responsibilities include maintaining student health records and providing emergency assistance when children are ill or injured. Teachers send children to the nurse when they appear ill or complain of stomach aches, headaches, etc. Children who are injured in the classroom, on the playground, or during physical education instruction are immediately referred to the nurse. Each visit is recorded in the nurse's log and the teacher and the nurse complete a referral form. A copy of this form is sent home with the child.

At the beginning of the school year, the district-appointed physician reviews the nurse's standing orders and authorizes him or her to treat minor illnesses or injuries and to dispense medication under the guidelines of state law and district policy. The nurse may apply ice to a bump, a topical ointment and/or band-aid to a cut, conduct checks for head-lice, and conduct hearing and vision screenings depending on the child's need and district requirements. The nurse cannot administer over-the-counter or prescription drugs without additional permission from the child's physician and/or parents or guardians.

### **Illness or Injury**

If the nurse determines that your child is too ill to stay in school or if your child has been injured and needs additional medical attention, parents will be contacted to pick-up the child. Children should be picked-up from school as quickly as possible. If your child is sent home with a fever and/or vomiting, and/or diarrhea, he/she should not return to school for at least 24 hours of being symptom - free. If your child has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher, he/she must be fever-free for 24 hours **without** the use of fever-reducing medications such as Advil or Tylenol. Also, please keep your child at home if he/she has a contagious disease such as a stomach virus, impetigo, chicken pox, roseola, Fifth's Disease, strep throat, conjunctivitis (pink eye), head lice, etc., until it is medically appropriate for him/her to return to school. Please feel free to contact the school nurse with questions regarding your child's return to school.

### **Insurance**

Your child is covered by accident insurance, provided by the Board of Education, during the school day and on class trips. This policy is supplemental to any other insurance for your child. If your child is injured in school or on a class trip, the nurse will provide information about the insurance claim process. The district's student insurance company also makes additional coverage available for a fee. Information about this coverage will come home with your child at the beginning of the school year.

### **Immunizations and Physicals**

If your child is a newly enrolled student, immunization documentation is required by the state of New Jersey. The school nurse will update parents with the most current information about these requirements.

### **Medical Awareness Information**

It is the parents' responsibility to update medical information regarding their child. Significant and pertinent information will be shared with the staff. The information is confidential, but critical to the health and well-being of the children.

### **Medication on Class Trips**

School employees, except for a certified school nurse or nurse substitute, may not administer medication to students at any time, not even on a class trip. The nurse or your child's teacher will contact parents to discuss arrangements prior to the class trip, if necessary and parents must contact the nurse if a medication is needed to be administered that the nurse does not know about.

### **Medication in School**

The parents or designated adult must bring all medications and nutritional supplements to the nurse in the original container. Only the nurse may administer medication or nutritional supplements in school. Prescription and over-the-counter medication must be accompanied by a signed note from the physician, as well as by a note from the parent. Parents must send such medication or nutritional supplements to the nurse in their original containers. All medication and nutritional supplements must be stored in the nurse's office.

Your child is not permitted to keep any of these items in his/her backpack or desk. Supervised self-medication may be permitted in certain cases (for example allergies and asthma) with physician and parent consent.

## **FAMILY AND SCHOOL CONNECTION**

### **Back-to-School Night**

Early in the school year, parents will be invited to attend Back-to-School Night. The purpose of this evening session is to provide an opportunity to meet the school staff and hear about programs and activities that are scheduled for the year. The officers of Readington's Home & School Association (H.S.A.) will be present to share information about the goals and activities of this organization and to give parents a chance to become involved members. During this evening, there will not be time for an individual conference concerning your child. Please call the teacher and arrange for a different time to address your individual concerns.

### **Communication with Teachers**

It is important that the school and home communicate frequently. Please contact your child's teacher as soon as possible if there is a question or a concern. If it is necessary to speak with a teacher or to set up a conference, please email the teacher. A message may also be left on the teacher's voicemail at school. Teachers will usually return calls and respond to notes within twenty-four hours and will readily set up a mutually convenient time to meet or speak with parents.

Like all other professionals, our teachers will want to be prepared and to be as



helpful as possible at conferences. In the early morning, teachers are busy preparing for the day, working with children, meeting with colleagues, etc. At the end of the day, teachers are often engaged in staff meetings, preparing for the next day, and/or returning home to their own families. Please call in advance to make an appointment to see a teacher. This will allow him/her to plan his/her schedule, assuring that there is adequate time to address concerns. In an emergency situation, the principal, guidance counselor, or other representative of the school administration will do his/her best to meet with parents as soon as possible to address concerns.

Written communication from the school to home is usually sent through Genesis. This is an email based system. All information sent through Genesis can be accessed in the website's Virtual Backpack. Please sign up for it through the district's main page on the website. Please also make it a daily routine to check your child's backpack and to read the information provided by the teacher. If divorced, separated, or if guardianship arrangements with relatives exist, please share information with each person who needs to know. We will arrange conferences with non-custodial parents, but our primary responsibility is to communicate with the parent or guardian with whom your child resides. If it is necessary to have information sent separately to a location other than the child's residence, the child's teacher must be given self-addressed, stamped envelopes. The teacher will do his/her best to mail pertinent information in a timely fashion. The best plan is for parents to communicate school information directly with each other.

### **Homeroom Parents**

Each class has one or more homeroom parents who help the teacher with special projects, field trips, and celebrations. These parents are selected by the H.S.A. through a lottery system, after class lists are published in late August. The H.S.A. and/or the school may call upon homeroom parents to help with other activities during the year, as well.

### **Homework**

Homework is designed to reinforce skills and concepts taught in the classroom and to help children develop study skills and independence. Please provide a quiet work space for your child and establish a routine for ensuring that your child is able to complete his or her homework, as assigned. Kindergarten students may occasionally have activities to do at home that last for several minutes. First, second, and third graders will have more regularly assigned work that will last longer. Student needs differ, so some assignments may vary from teacher to teacher at the same grade level and from student to student in the same class. Teachers will guide the children and their parents as they work together on assignments at home.

### **Orientation and Information Sessions**

Prior to school opening in the fall, parents are invited to tour the school with

their child and visit his or her classroom during the scheduled visitation time. We offer this "Open House" to help relieve any anxiety that your child is feeling prior to the start of the new school year and to build excitement about the upcoming year. Children in kindergarten are also invited for a bus ride during Open House.

### **Parent Organizations**

Home & School Association (H.S.A.): The Home & School Association is the parent group of Readington Township Schools. This group supports the efforts of the staff and the Board of Education for the benefit of our children. The group encourages parents to join the H.S.A. at the beginning of each school year and to become involved in the various events it sponsors. The H.S.A. handbook contains information about the organization and will be sent home with your child at the beginning of the year. The H.S.A., through its parent-supported fund-raisers, provides programs for our children that extend what is provided through district funds. Assembly programs, book fairs, mini-courses, holiday shopping, mini-grants for teachers, Winterfest, the Halloween Read-In, and movie nights are examples of what the H.S.A. sponsors to enrich the school experiences of our children. H.S.A. funds also support the library and help with the funding of other school projects. Without volunteers from the H.S.A., your child's school experience would not be as well-rounded and diverse. We encourage parents to volunteer and to support the fundraising efforts of the H.S.A.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Formal parent/teacher conferences are held in the fall and may be scheduled in the spring of each year. A conference is scheduled with each parent. The conference is designed to provide both the parents and the teacher with an opportunity to exchange information, share portfolio assessment results and discuss the child's academic, social, and emotional progress. The teacher will share examples of student work and parents will be asked to share insights and discuss any issues that may impact the child's success in school. It is a formal opportunity that the district provides for parents each year, but informal discussions are encouraged all year, and conferences can be set-up with the child's teacher at any mutually convenient time, as the need arises.

### **Report Cards**

Report cards are posted on our student information system, Genesis, twice each year for students in kindergarten. For grades one, two and three, they are posted quarterly. Posting dates are listed on the school calendar. The purpose of report cards is to share your child's progress. If there are questions about your child's performance, it is not necessary to wait until report cards are posted before contacting the teacher. Teachers

will arrange a mutually convenient time to discuss your child's work whenever requested, and parents should be contacted well in advance of report card postings, if there is cause for concern.

### **Teacher Assignments**

Placing students in classes for the coming school year is challenging. Many variables are considered when making each decision. For instance, a child's personality and ability to interact with other students is reviewed. In accordance with the district's heterogeneous grouping philosophy, balanced academic groups are established. In addition, the relative compatibility of student and teacher is considered. The goal is to provide the very best learning environment possible for your child.

Prior to the start of school, in late August, parents will be notified of their child's teacher assignment. Requests for specific teachers cannot be accepted. However, each year, in the spring, parents have the opportunity to place any educational concerns that would influence a child's placement in writing. These might include academic, emotional, or social issues. Parents may be concerned about conflicts between students and/or other similar issues that could adversely affect their child's progress in school. It is important that such concerns are received, in writing, before class assignments are finalized.

### **Volunteers**

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to volunteer in the school, in the classroom, and for the HSA. During Back-to-School Night, parents can sign-up to help with classroom projects, school and district activities, and HSA functions. Parents may volunteer to chair or assist with special events at school and through the HSA or to participate in activities in their child's classroom. At the district level, we encourage involvement with curriculum and other district-wide committees. Parents should not bring younger siblings to school when volunteering.

## **LUNCH PROGRAM**

### **Bringing Lunch from Home**

Your child may bring lunch from home on any school day. For safety reasons, drinks in glass containers are not permitted. Children who bring lunch from home may purchase milk or snack every day.

### **Free and Reduced Price Lunches**

At the beginning of the school year, the district sends home information about free and reduced price lunches. If your family is eligible for this help, please complete the requested income information, sign the form, and return it to the

school. The information provided determines your child's eligibility for a reduced price or free lunch and will be kept in strictest confidence.

### **Ice Cream and Snack Purchases**

Your child may purchase snacks each day at lunchtime. Please be sure that your child has a clear understanding about what he or she is to buy. Snacks are available at specific times and children are called to purchase these items only after they have had sufficient time to eat their main meal. You may view on-line through Nutri-Kids the items your child buys each day.

### **Menus and Lunch Purchase**

A private company, under contract with the Board of Education, operates the lunch program for the district. At the beginning of each school year, information about lunch prices and standard menu choices will be found on the school web site in the Parent Portal. Your child may choose milk when lunch is purchased. Lunch menus can also be found on our website under the Parent Portal. We ask that parents review the menu choices with their child. If your child comes to school without lunch or without lunch money, he or she will be given a plain bagel bag lunch.

Lunches can be paid for with cash at the checkout line, or cash/check may be sent in on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. Checks should be made payable to the Readington Township Board of Education and sent to your child's classroom teacher. The classroom teacher will forward your check or money to the appropriate school personnel. In addition, a secure online prepayment service is available to deposit money into your child's school meal account at any time. This service provides you with the ability to view your child's account balance through a web site called MyNutriKids.com.

## Discipline/Code of Conduct for Elementary Schools

In the early grades, most discipline issues are minor and are handled by the classroom teacher. If this occurs, the teacher or other member of the staff will offer your child a simple reminder and/or a brief time-out followed by a private discussion of the problem. If the need arises, the teacher may discuss these issues with you and ask for your suggestions for working with your child to help build self-discipline. If necessary, the teacher will consult with the principal and/or guidance counselor and implement a behavior management plan. Harassment, intimidation and bullying behaviors will also be addressed and may lead to consequences. In the event that the behavior is very disruptive or involves fighting, injuring other, or damaging school property, the principal will be involved and you will be contacted. Disciplinary measures will follow. It is our hope that children receive the same message about behavior expectations from school and home.

Our Code of Conduct which will be utilized when students make poor choices:

### Level 1

#### Behavior

Inappropriate hallway behavior  
(such as running, talking, screaming,  
wandering, etc.)

out.

Unkind or inappropriate language/gestures  
directed toward students or adults

Inappropriate use of materials and equipment  
conference  
Including electronic devices

Ignoring adult direction  
collaboration

Repeated offences of the above  
may result

#### Possible Consequences

Verbal reminder to student of expected  
behavior.

Consequence plan imposed by teacher. Time

Communication with parent

Teacher/School Counselor/Parent  
with student, if appropriate

Possible teacher/school counselor  
to develop action plan

Referral to administration

## Level 2

### Behavior

Physical altercation/aggression

Vandalism

Possession of weapons, illegal substances tobacco (including smokeless and vaping), alcohol

Theft

Non-emergency fire alarm district

Bullying/Cyberbullying/Threats/  
Sexual Harassment

Use of technology for inappropriate websites and /or web searches

Insubordination with verbally aggressive behavior

### Actions

Administrator/Parent Conference

Referral to school counselor

Documentation of behavior

Possible in school suspension

Possible out of school suspension

Possible permanent removal from

Possible referral to RTPD and/or DCP&P

Loss of Tech privelegdes

## **Title I**

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was passed by the United States Congress and signed into law on December 10, 2015. The ESSA replaces the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and is the latest reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Although NCLB was designed to make changes in teaching and learning in order to increase students' academic achievement, the Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) provision under NCLB was eliminated from the ESSA. Despite this fact, all educators in New Jersey are still required to hold the appropriate state certificate/license for their given position.

Under the ESSA, all schools receiving Title I funds must inform parents of their right to ask schools about the professional qualifications of their child's teachers and paraprofessionals. Our school receives Title I funding, and we are happy to share this information with you upon your request.

New Jersey has some of the most qualified teachers in the country, and we are extremely proud of the quality of the teaching staff at Three Bridges School. All of our teachers have college degrees and many have advanced degrees. In addition, every teacher continues learning through professional development activities, and our teachers are evaluated each year to make sure their teaching skills remain at the highest possible level.

I encourage you to support your child's education and communicate with your child's teacher(s) on a regular basis. For more information on ESSA, and the role of parents, please visit the United States Department of Education's website at [www.ed.gov/essa](http://www.ed.gov/essa). Parental Involvement is important, and we want you to be a part of your child's education.

By partnering, families and educators can provide your child with the best education possible.