

VALLEY ROAD SCHOOL

PARENT/TEACHER
HANDBOOK

2026 - 2027



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August 2026

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We welcome you and your child(ren) to the 2026-2027 school year! The staff and I look forward to seeing the students when school opens on **Tuesday, September 8**. Please reserve the evening of **Monday, September 14** for the Valley Road School Back to School night. This is the night when you will learn about your child's specific classroom teacher(s) and procedures. The evening starts at 7:00 pm and is a night meant for **PARENTS ONLY**. There will be a 12:40 dismissal with no lunch served on that day.

This year we have some changes in staffing as listed below:

Ms. Applebaum is our new Principal.

Mr. Christopher Marcin is our new Assistant Principal of the Elementary Schools.

Mr. Caleb Bain will be our Physical Education/Health Teacher.

Ms. Kologrivov is our new K-2 MD Teacher.

Mrs. Van De Water is our new 3-5 MD Teacher.

Ms. Milford will be our grade 3 leave replacement for Mrs. Amato.

Ms. McDonough got married this summer and is now Mrs. Conway.

We wish all those moving on to new ventures great success, and we welcome all the new staff to our school. We will all be helpful in their transition to their new positions. They are all very qualified and highly motivated people.

Some new highlights for this year are:

1. This summer, the school building received new floors and a new roof. We are very pleased with how it looks!
2. We received new playground equipment for the students to enjoy!
3. We have a new school website.
4. All classrooms are equipped with air conditioning units!
5. Kindergarten Signing Day will be held on Wednesday, September 2 at 11:15 a.m. on the blacktop by our new playground!
6. Students in grades 1 and 2 will be permitted to leave their laptops in school (utilizing charging stations overnight) rather than bringing them back and forth each day.
7. The grade 5 teachers will be departmentalizing and the students will be rotating through each classroom

Please take some time to read through the topics included in the handbook. If you require any additional information or assistance feel free to call the school and ask to speak to your child's teacher; one of our office staff, Cindy Schafer or Darlene Alicea; our principal Mallory Applebaum, or our Assistant Principal, Mr. Christopher Marcin. **Please also take some time to read and sign the forms listed in your Genesis Parent Portal. Those forms must be completed prior to the first day of school!**

We are looking forward to a wonderful school year together!

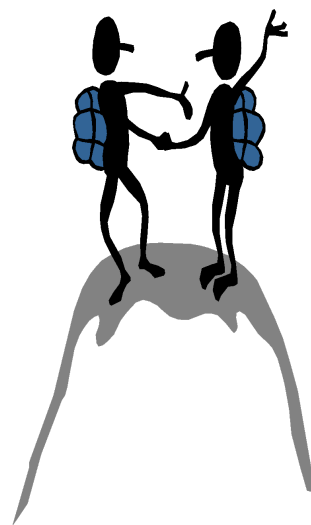
Warmest Regards,

Ms. Applebaum, Mr. Marcin, and the Valley Road Staff

THE VALLEY ROAD SCHOOL MISSION

It is the mission of the Valley Road Elementary School to promote and enhance the development of Kindergarten through grade five students by addressing the following goals:

1. To build upon a solid elementary school curriculum of knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the world.
2. To foster a sense of self within the community.
3. To create a milieu in which students learn, develop, and live those interpersonal skills needed to work with, understand, and accept others.
4. To foster an eagerness and appreciation of learning.
5. To challenge each student with creative ideas and materials while promoting an appreciation of learning.
6. To achieve an enhanced communication between all members of the Valley Road educational community and the Township of Clark, which will result in a better understanding and sense of community “ownership” of the school, its goals, and program.
7. To promote a positive and safe school climate.



SCHOOL GOALS

All public schools in New Jersey are required to create an annual school-level Professional Development Plan (PDP). Each year, the school administrators and teachers work collaboratively to select professional learning goals that are priorities for the year and the specific professional learning activities that will be implemented to support staff in working toward these goals. Our 2026-2027 school goals will be:

- 1) To implement the Writing Scope and Sequence developed during the 2025-2026 school year
- 2) To focus on Math Talk, Writing About Math (WAM) and using critical thinking skills during math time
- 3) To promote inclusion ensuring all students feel welcome and comfortable learning and growing at Valley Road School

The Clark Township Public Schools Mission Statement

The Clark Township Public Schools will, in an active and responsible partnership with the community, provide a quality education that ensures that all students achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards at all grade levels. Through a nurturing, relevant learning environment, we will assist in the development of productive, respectful and accountable citizens who are lifelong learners.

The educational goals of the Clark Public Schools are established to help each individual develop into the finest human beings s/he is capable of becoming, able to live life to the fullest, and to do his/her part in making that possible for every other human being. To this end we propose the following goals for each individual:

1. To develop to the fullest potential the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual abilities of the learner.
2. To recognize that all education serves as a basis for lifelong learning.
3. To acknowledge that education prepares learners to contribute to society in a productive manner and to recognize the challenge of global competition.
4. To acquire the oral and written language skills necessary to actively participate in all forms of communication.
5. To provide an opportunity to develop skills in problem solving, logical thinking, and reasoning.
6. To acquire information and understanding of the principles of social science through the study of history, geography, and current events, and the impact of these on our society.
7. To prepare for good citizenship in a democracy and to develop a respect for persons and property beyond the individual.
8. To acquire the knowledge and habits necessary to promote a positive attitude toward both physical and mental personal health.
9. To acquire basic knowledge and awareness of the potential of the sciences and related technology.
10. To provide opportunities to acquire knowledge and to develop an awareness of the continuing balance between human beings and the environment.
11. To acquire the ability and the desire to be creative in one or more of the arts and to appreciate the works of other people.
12. To acquire the ability to develop awareness, respect, and tolerance for a wide range of people including, but not limited to, those with social, cultural, and physical characteristics different from our own.
13. To develop an acceptance of and respect for all individuals who have learning, physical, or emotional challenges.
14. To encourage partnerships with parents and the community to create and maintain a safe and healthy educational environment for all learners.

VALLEY ROAD SCHOOL STAFF

Principal

Mallory Applebaum

K-5 Assistant Principal

Christopher Marcin

Secretary Cindy Schafer

Office Aide Darlene Alicea

Classroom Teachers

LLD K-2	Nicole Semon	Room 24
LLD 3-5	Brittany Almeidinha	Room 1
MD K-2	Emily Kologrivov	Room 21
MD K-2	Erin Van De Water	Room 20
Kindergarten	Kimberly Belverio	Room 4
Kindergarten	Valerie La Manna	Room 14
Kindergarten	Kimberly Nacht	Room 5
First Grade - 1B	Kellie Bonaccorso	Room 22
First Grade - 1P	Ashley Palma	Room 12
First Grade - 1S	Melisa Sakowski	Room 19
Second Grade - 2B	Jacalyn Bell	Room 11
Second Grade - 2M	Samantha Mazzucco	Room 23
Second Grade - 2P	Cecilia Petela	Room 13
Third Grade - 3A	Caitlyn Amato	Room 17
Third Grade - 3Ca	Juliana Cannata	Room 18
Third Grade - 3Co	Jessica Conway	Room 15
Fourth Grade - 4Gi	Emma Gilardi	Room 2
Fourth Grade - 4Gu	Jennifer Guenther	Room 7
Fourth Grade - 4S	Jenna Schiro	Room 3
Fifth Grade - 5E	Alyssa Englert	Room 10
Fifth Grade - 5M	Colleen MacNamara	Room 8

Fifth Grade - 5Z

Jessica Zerella

Room 9

Specialists

Janeen Allmendinger	Literacy Coach	Learning Center
Sarah Badillo	School Counselor	Guidance Office
Caleb Bain	Physical Education/Health	Gymnasium
Rosemarie Cacoilo	ESL	Trailer
Frank Caragher	Resource Center Teacher/ICR	Room 6
Jessica DiFabio	Math Coach	Learning Center
Susan Dzurovcik	Resource Center Teacher/ICR	Room 16
Lorraine Haney	Academic Enrichment - Title 1	Learning Center
Kerry Kennedy	Art Specialist	Room 30
Jackie Kozlowski	Resource Center Teacher/ICR	Room 6
Ann Marie Lenau	Computers	Learning Center
Kim Morrell	Nurse	Health Office
Madison Miranda	Resource Center Teacher/ICR	Room 16
Christina Salvatore	STEAM	Learning Center
Patricia Sauer	Music Specialist	Room 30
Cindy Tarello	G & T	Learning Center
Christina Warnick	Academic Enrichment - Title 1	Learning Center

Child Study Team

Lauren Baldeon	Occupational Therapist	Trailer
Danielle Catarino	Speech- Language Specialist	Learning Center
Bryan Perez	School Psychologist	CST/Trailer
Lisa Giandana	Learning Consultant	Guidance
Jackelyn Heim	Speech/Language Specialist	Trailer
Eunice Pangiochi	Social Worker	Trailer

Dina Toth

Behaviorist

Trailer

Security

Jeff Ader

Alexander Sofianakos

Teacher Assistants

Mercedes Broski

Siobhan Ford

Maria DaSilva

Grade K-Belverio

Grade K-Nacht

Grade K-LaManna

Room 4

Room 5

Room 14

Paraprofessional Aides

Grade K-2 Kologrivov

Alyssa Rivera

Lisa Herrera

Hanan Taouzari

Grade 3-5 Van De Water

Dina Delamarter

Kristina Muzikevicius

Carolyn Tierney

LLD K-2 Semon

Helena Santa Maria

Pauline Marino

Marisol Silva

Erini Samaan

LLD 3-5 Almeidinha

Jessie Acosta

Monika Corrao

Katie Casey

Jean Fazio - Grade K Nacht

Carol Botitta - Grade 2 Bell

Danielle Castro - Grade 3 Conway

Karen Sachewicz - Grade 4 Schiro

Donna DeMille - Grade 1 Sakowski

Jessica Lafaman - Grade 2 Petela

Karyn Sesely - Grade 4 Guenther/
Grade 3 Cannata

Kathi Faede - Grade 5

Lunch/Recess Aides

Carolyn Tierney

Maria Reis

Jamila Mallick

Cynthia Lonseth

MaryAnne Giovinazzo

Tracey Zarzecki

Kitchen Staff

Denise Infantino

Custodians

Nelson

Alma

Day

Night

Crossing Guards Ernie Klien & Jeff Atkinson

Clark Board of Education Administrative Team

Andrew Amondola	Director of School Counseling Services and Assessment
Heather Austin	Director of Special Services
Shirley Bergin	Principal, Frank K. Hehnly School
Christine Broski	Director of Educational Initiatives
Amanda Clark	Principal, Carl H. Kumpf Middle School
Chris DiNucci	Dean of Students
Joy Donaldson	Preschool Supervisor
Ed Grande	Superintendent
Donna Iarripino	Computer Operator (Payroll)
Gus Kalikas	Athletic Director
Chris Marcin	Assistant Principal to K-5
Francine Marzano	Confidential Secretary to BA
Olivia Miller	6-12 Supervisor of ELA & Social Studies
Tara Oliverira	Principal, Arthur L. Johnson High School
Katrina Poskay	Assistant Principal, Arthur L. Johnson High School
Terri Rodrigues	Confidential Secretary
Vicki Sasso	K-12 Supervisor of the Arts, Business, World Languages, and ESL/Data
Manager	
Mary Schaefer	Computer Operator (Purchasing)
Robert Smorol	Assistant Principal, Carl H. Kumpf Middle School
Kevin Tenpenny	Director of Instructional Operations
Christine Unish	Computer Operator (Transportation & Insurance)
Neetu Varshney	6-12 Supervisor of Science/Technology/Engineering/Math/
Paul Vizzuso	Business Administrator/Board Secretary Accountant

Clark Board of Education Members

Mr. Stephen Donkersloot, President
Ms. Lorraine J. Aklonis, Vice President
Mr. Dino Bencivenga
Mr. Robert Brede
Ms. Megan Harrison
Ms. Kristen Hickman
Mr. Thomas Maye
Ms. Alison Melnick
Ms. Tracey McCarrick, Garwood Representative
Mr. Edward Grande Superintendent
Mr. Paul Vizzuso, Business Administrator/Board Secretary

VALLEY ROAD SCHOOL PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

The role of this organization, consisting of parents and teachers, is to support our students.

2026-2027 PTA Executive Board



President
Treasurer
Secretary
Fundraising
Membership

MariaDaSilva
Jennifer Braga
Lauren Lanni
Jenn Jacobsen
Ashley Pires

The Valley Road School PTA is a very active and supportive organization. They bring wonderful programs to our school. Staff and PTA members work closely together to plan and incorporate diverse learning experiences that enrich students' academic programs while at the same time providing them with fun opportunities. All parents are encouraged to join the PTA. Come out and join the fun!

PTA meetings are scheduled once a month on a Monday. Our first meeting of the 2026-2027 school year will be held on Monday, September 28th. All meetings commence at 7:00 p.m.

SCHOOL DAY HOURS

8:40 a.m. – 2:55 p.m.

Delayed Opening Day Schedule

10:10 a.m. – 2:55 p.m.

Early Release Day Schedule

8:40 a.m. - 12:40 p.m.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Students must be in their homerooms by 8:40am. Students may begin entering the building at 8:25 a.m. **There is no supervision for children before 8:25 a.m.**, therefore, to ensure their safety, parents may not leave a child unattended before this time. The procedure for drop off is as follows:

All vehicles may enter the parking lot through either the office or field driveway. If entering via the field driveway drivers should pull around to the back of the building by passing the field and circling around the end of the building by the woods. Then pull up towards the office side of the building and drive up to the white **DROP OFF ZONE in front of the yellow sign** (located at door 2, the door with the steps in the front corner of the building along the office side of the school). Children are to disembark from their vehicle and enter the building through door 2, the **second** set of doors along the office driveway side of the school. Parents **should not leave their cars unattended during this process**. Cars are to approach the drop off zone in a single file, drop off their children, and move toward the driveway exit promptly and cautiously. **All students in grades**

K – 5 (except Ms. Kologrivov’s students and Mrs. Van De Water’s students) are to enter the building through this door. The Office Entrance is not a drop off area except for special cases. The office entrance will remain locked and will be accessible to students only with special permission. **Mrs. Kologrivov’s class and Mrs. Van De Water’s class** will be dropped off by the Field Door (door 8) closest to the playground, where help to unload will be available.

If parents want to walk their children to the drop off doors, they must park in an approved parking spot in the lot or on the local road. Please do not park in the staff lot next to the field. Due to safety reasons we ask that if parents park in the parking lot at arrival that they walk their children to the drop off area and that they only cross at the **crosswalk**. This is safer than cutting across the parking lot. **Children will not be allowed to cross the driveway. As they enter or exit the building, they will be directed to walk along the sidewalk to the crossing guards or crosswalks.** Please remember that traffic in our parking lot gets very congested so we ask that all parents and adults follow the traffic guidelines to keep our lot safe. Please share these guidelines with people that may be dropping off or picking up your children.

Students entering before 8:25 a.m. for clubs and early morning help should enter through the **Cafeteria doors**. There should be no parking along the driveway near the woods.

Please note, parents will not be able to accompany their children into the school building on the **first day of school due to safety procedures**. Children are responsible for entering the doors by the steps and proceeding to their homeroom on the first day. After day they will line up in their designated arrival locations listed below. Homeroom teachers will review these locations on the first day. Our Safety Patrols and/or staff will be available to monitor this process starting at 8:25 a.m.

***Bicycle Safety:** Many students choose to ride bicycles to school. It is important that they follow the safety laws. Students riding bicycles to school must wear bicycle safety helmets. They should also walk their bicycles through the crowded sidewalks around the school.

Supervised Designated Morning Meeting Areas:

On the first day of school, students may go directly to their classroom. After the first day follow the procedures below:

Ms. Almeida, Ms. Kologrivov, Ms. Semon, and Mrs. Van De Water:

Teacher aides will meet the students dropped off by parents through the class’ designated drop off doors and proceed to the hallway location outside their rooms or to their classroom, unless other plans are made. Bus students will be met by the bus drop off in the back driveway behind the school.

Grades 1 – 2 and Mrs. Conway: Students will enter through the drop off doors by the stairs and go to the cafeteria and be seated.

Grades 4, 5, Mrs. Amato and Mrs. Cannata: Students will enter through the drop off doors by the stairs and line up in the gym.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

To ensure the safety of all children, classroom teachers are responsible for accompanying their students to their designated dismissal door, making sure that each student connects with an adult, unless there is an alternate procedure. If a parent or a designated adult does not meet a child, the classroom teacher will bring the child into the office so that the parent/guardian may be contacted.

Students must be picked up on time on a regular basis. There is no supervision for students after 3:00 p.m. On rare occasions, due to unforeseen incidents, we will gladly find a way to assist with supervision, but **early drop offs and late pick ups on a regular basis are a concern and considered negligent actions by the parent.** These parents will be asked to have a conference with the principal or her designee and actions may be suggested/taken by the school.

During dismissal vehicles should not pull into the pick up curb (in front of the second set of doors marked as the “White Zone” (and preceded by a large yellow sign) unless the parent/driver sees their child. We need to leave this “White Zone” open for pick up only. If any vehicle stands or parks in the pickup area, it will slow down the traffic for everyone. Also, there is no parking in the dismissal handicapped spaces and temporary handicapped spaces. These spaces are reserved during dismissal for our parents who need handicapped parking. Please respect these parents by leaving these spaces for those who need them.

Students will be dismissed at 2:55 p.m. using the doors listed below:

Grades 3 and Mrs. Schiro: Students will exit from door 2 (the arrival doors) which are the second set of doors by the steps along the driveway.

Grade 5, Ms. Gilardi, and Mrs. Guenther: Students will exit through door 1, the doors by the office.

Grade 1 and Grade: Students will exit from the doors facing Valley Road.

Ms. Almeida, Ms. Kologrivov, Ms. Semon, and Mrs. Van De Water: Students will exit through door 1, the doors by the main office.

Bus students: Students will exit using the doors in the rear of the building by the Woods Lot.

Kindergarten: Mrs. Nacht’s and Mrs. Belverio’s kindergarten classes will exit through the outside door of their classrooms (on the Valley Road side of the building). Mrs. LaManna’s class will exit through door 8, the playground doors on the field side of the school.

Siblings: If older siblings are responsible for meeting their younger brothers or sisters, they must have a planned procedure filled in on the Genesis Dismissal Form. The school may assist with these procedures. They should also send in a note to the teacher.

Please refer to Policy 8601 (Student Supervision After School Dismissal) for the complete rules and guidelines provided by the State of New Jersey adopted by the District.

<https://www.straussesmay.com/seportal/Public/DistrictPolicy.aspx?policyid=8601%20&id=02cd9cb6694c41bfb7a3189abfedda00>

Children are not to meet parents at the playground. That is an unsupervised area. Children should only enter the playground area at dismissal if supervised by a parent. Children may be asked to leave the playground area if inappropriately behaved.

Alternate Dismissal: Anyone going home in a way other than parent pick up or riding a school bus should send in a note and complete the Alternative Dismissal Form on Genesis. This would be for those going home as walkers, those attending after care or those being picked up by family friends. We will only dismiss students to adults who are not parents or guardians with a parental written note and/or a form on file either through Genesis. Please list on the note if it is for the whole year or just for a particular day.

Play Dates: Arrangements for playdates should be made prior to the day of the play date. *If your child plans to leave the building with another parent for the purpose of a play date, written notification on the part of both parents should be submitted to the office on that day.* Children should not make playdate arrangements in school and call home for approval during school hours. These arrangements should be made by the parents outside of school.

TRAFFIC PATTERNS & PARKING LOT GUIDELINES

The safety of your children is of utmost importance. It is recommended that for quick connections with your children at dismissal, parents/guardians park their cars in the lot by the woods, along Valley Road, or on other side streets nearby and walk to the school. Arranging for carpools or having students who live nearby walk together will help to alleviate traffic congestion. If you wait on-line, stay in your car in a single file. Drivers moving through the lot may not stop and leave their cars unattended unless in a legal and appropriate parking space. Please avoid parking on Schmidt Lane and Blake Drive from Schmidt Lane to the school.

Driveway Procedures

Please do not park on the left side of the office side of the driveway. Those spots will be reserved parking for our office staff. We eliminated double parking on the left side of the driveway during pick up and drop off. This will keep students and parents safe as they will not need to walk across the active part of our parking lot. We will still allow double-parking on the office side of the parking lot at dismissal because to get to the double-parked cars does not cause one to move through the active part of the driveway. As in the past, we ask that the drivers stay in the vehicles when double parking until the parent or designee sees the child at the curb. Then the parent can get out of their vehicle momentarily to cross the child to the double-parked car. This allows the parent to be able to move the vehicle if the car by the curb needs to leave. There will be three lanes for the double parkers:

1. The parking lane by the curb
2. The open lane between the double parked cars and the curb parked cars so that vehicles may exit easily
3. The double parked car lane

Additionally, there is no parking or standing in the lower exit driveway (beyond door 2). Please honor the yellow curbs and keep the driveway open for vehicles trying to exit. **The traffic pattern for those entering the field driveway will be one way only during the arrival and dismissal times.** The rest of the day it will be closed. When it is closed during the school day, the traffic may move two ways through the lot.

PARENT VISITATIONS & DROPPING OFF ITEMS

If parents have business in the office first thing in the morning or an appointment with a teacher, it is recommended that they park their cars in the lot or the street and walk to the main entrance. Children are still required to enter the building through the drop off doors and proceed to their designated areas at 8:25 a.m. Parents may not enter during the security safety times which are **8:25-8:55 a.m. and 2:40-3:10 p.m.**

To help alleviate traffic coming into and leaving the driveway, I encourage you to carpool with your neighbors whenever possible. Parents may choose to park in our school lot near the woods or along Valley Road, Liberty Street or other local roads and walk their children to the door. It is best to avoid parking on Blake Drive and Schmidt Lane, to leave room for entering vehicles. There is no parking on Blake Road near the school entrance.

OFFICE HOURS

Our office hours will remain as 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Parents may still do business with the office until 4:00p.m. by appointment. Any students entering for early morning events before arrival, need to enter through the cafeteria doors. We ask people **not** to return to the school for forgotten items **after 3:30 p.m.** as the school is closed and preparation for the next day starts at that time. Parents may pick up items after 3:30pm in the drop off box if they make plans to do so with a school staff member. The Drop off Box is located by the office doors and remains outside until at least 6:00pm.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Children are to attend school on a regular basis. N.J.S.A. 18A: 38-25 requires every parent, guardian, or other persons having custody and control of a child between the ages of six and sixteen years to cause such child regularly to attend the public schools of the district. The Policy of the Clark Board of Education defines attendance as the student's presence in school and in the classroom to which he or she is assigned at the time scheduled for instruction or other activities. A student is considered to have attended school if he or she has been present for **at least four hours during the school day.**

If a child is to be absent, parents/guardians are required to either add that absence to the Genesis account (we encourage this) or to call the school to report the absence. Please call the school anytime before 8:30 a.m. to notify us of the reason. Please state the child's name, teacher's name, reason for absence and duration of absence. The voicemail system is available from the end of the day until the next morning.

If a child is absent and a call is not made by the parent, the school will contact the parents. If we can not get a hold of a child's parents we will proceed with calling the emergency contacts listed in Genesis. Please be sure the people who are listed as contacts for your child are aware of this procedure. Whenever a child is absent a signed note is needed, even if the parent called in. This documents that the parent is aware of the absence. This must be done for safety and record keeping purposes.

Absence from school will be excused only in accordance with Board Policy and with proper and appropriate documentation. Please refer to [NJDOE 2026-2026 School Year Observances](#) for a listing of religious holidays permitting absence from school. Absence for any other reason will be deemed unexcused and subject to review and action by the Attendance Committee. Accumulated absences will result in progressive action by the school as outlined in the following procedures:

1. Upon accumulating four (4)+ cumulative **unexcused** absences, a letter will be sent home to a student's parents/guardian reminding them about the importance of a child's consistent attendance on their education and of the repercussions of missing a school day.
2. Upon accumulating between five (5) and nine (9) cumulative **unexcused** absences, a letter will be sent home to a student's parents/guardian explaining that they may have to attend a meeting with the school's Attendance Committee to develop and implement a corrective action plan. Parents will be informed of the school's legal recourse should a student accumulate ten or more unexcused absences.
3. Upon earning a tenth (10)+ cumulative **unexcused** absence, a student may be considered truant. The Attendance Committee will meet to review the student's attendance record. At this time, a parent/guardian may be charged with a disorderly persons offense and subject to a fine.

Please note: School absences for family vacation are **unexcused** pursuant to New Jersey Statutes Annotated 18A: 36-16, 18A: 38-26, and NJAC 6:20-1-3. These statutes state that students must be in school all of the hours of all of the days that schools are in session. Please do your best to plan vacations that do not interfere with school days.

TARDINESS

The instructional day begins at 8:40 a.m. The drop off doors will be locked promptly at 8:40 a.m unless there is a continuous line of cars that were online before 8:40 AM. If children arrive later than 8:40 a.m., parents are to park their cars and escort their children to Door 1 and ring the doorbell. The main office staff will allow the student to enter the building and report directly to the office for a late slip. If the outer doors are still open, children may enter without a parent.

Consistently arriving late can negatively impact a child by setting a rushed or stressful tone for the day. Morning time allows students to socialize with friends, get organized, and prepare for the day ahead, helping them feel more settled and ready to learn. Parents are encouraged to develop a

morning routine that provides their child(ren) with sufficient time to dress, have breakfast, and arrive at school in a timely fashion.

The following procedures will be utilized to manage habitual tardiness, to keep parents informed, and to “impose a response that will affect a change in behavior:”

1. Upon earning a sixth (6) tardy, a letter will be sent home to a student’s parents/guardian, reminding them about the importance of arriving at school promptly and of the impact of habitual tardiness on a child’s education. A copy of the state statute will accompany the letter.
2. Upon earning a ninth (9) tardy, a letter will be sent to a student’s parents/guardian explaining that they may have to attend a meeting with the school’s attendance committee to develop and implement a corrective action plan. The repercussions of continuous tardy arrivals will be highlighted.
3. Upon earning a twenty-fifth (25) tardy, a letter will be sent home to a student’s parents/guardian, reminding them about the repercussions of arriving at school tardy and the school’s legal obligation and protocol should a student earn forty or more tardy days.
4. Upon earning a fortieth (40) tardy, a student’s parents/guardian will be required to attend a mandatory court appearance.

LATE ARRIVAL/EARLY PICKUPS

We encourage parents to make medical appointments for after school hours, whenever possible. In the event that your child will be out for a portion of the day because of doctor appointments, please notify the school in writing. Be specific about who will be picking up your child (or dropping them off). No child will be released from the building or returned to the building without a parent or guardian. **A parent who is not known to the office staff will be asked to show identification.** If someone other than a parent or legal guardian comes into school for a child, they will also be asked to show identification. This person must be someone who you have designated as a person in Genesis that may pick up your child. **The adult must come into the office and sign your child in or out of the building. Early pick ups must be made before 2:40 p.m. There is no access or release between 2:40-3:10 p.m.**

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent Teacher Conferences will be held in November Teachers will maintain class records and documentation of student progress in preparation for these formal parent-teacher meetings. These conference days will be early release days with dismissal at 12:40p.m. and no lunch served. Information on how to sign up through Genesis, will follow as we get closer to those dates.

Tuesday, November 10 (afternoon conferences)

Thursday, November 12 (evening conferences)

***Additional time slots at 8:15 a.m. will be available.**

REPORT CARDS



There are 3 marking periods at the elementary level. Report cards should reflect a child's performance for the period. Comments on a report card should speak to a child's performance, effort, and/or behavior. A summative report card grade for students in grades 3-5 should not be a surprise to a parent or guardian since teachers' gradebooks are live in Genesis for students in the upper elementary grades. It is a teacher's responsibility to keep parents/guardians informed of any concerns or difficulties a child is experiencing throughout the marking period. The principal or designee will review all report cards prior to posting. Refer to the schedule below for the marking period dates and the dates reports are posted on Genesis.

Marking Period

1. 09/08 – 12/08
2. 12/9 – 03/12
3. 03/13 – 06/23

Reports Posted

12/21
03/25
06/24

INTERIM PROGRESS REPORTS

Interim reports will be sent home in the middle of each marking period for all students except for the 1st marking period. *Parent Teacher Conferences are held in lieu of sending mid marking period interim reports.

Interim Progress Reports

Post

Mid-marking period 1	*
Mid-marking period 2 (HR)	2/5
Mid-marking period 3 (HR)	5/7

SECURITY REMINDERS

In years past, we made changes to make our buildings even more secure for our students and staff members by limiting the number of people who are granted visitor entry access. Below is a reminder of security procedures. Additional clarifying details are also being provided.

- 1) No visitor entry access, including to parents/guardians, will be granted within a fifteen-minute window of time on both ends of student arrival and dismissal. In other words, no visitors will be granted building access **between 8:25 a.m. to 8:55 a.m. and between 2:40 p.m. to 3:10 p.m.**
- 2) Any visitor entry access outside of those time windows must be accompanied by a previously arranged appointment.
- 3) Early student pickups will need to occur at least 15 minutes before the end of the school day. The appointment for an early pickup can be made by calling the main office during school hours. When school is closed, a message informing the school of an early pickup can be left similar to how a student absence can be reported after hours. Any other appointments ideally will be made with the appropriate school personnel at least a day before through a phone call, voicemail, a note, or an email. If a more unexpected situation arises, a call to the main office needs to be made at least 15 minutes in advance.
- 4) No visitor entry access will be granted in order for items to be dropped off for students,

e.g., lunch, physical education clothes, or homework/projects. A drop-off box will be at the front door of each school for these items. Any items must be clearly labeled with the student's name and grade level. When leaving the item in the box, please ring the door buzzer in order to notify the main office of the drop-off so the item can be brought to the student upon the availability of the office staff. Money may not be dropped off. If lunch money is forgotten, the student will be provided with lunch and then his or her parents subsequently will be charged.

- 5) When visitor entry access is granted, we need to make certain **not to hold the door open for someone who might be behind us**, even if he or she has a familiar face, because doing so gives that individual unintended access.

GENESIS

Our student management system is called Genesis. Please be sure you create a Genesis account and know how to access it, as we will use it often! Among other items, this platform is used for communication, to post report cards, to sign up for conferences, and to keep accurate and current student demographic information. Please be sure you update your list of emergency contacts (please provide at least 2) so the school knows who to call should we not be able to reach you. This program will allow parents to read and sign most of the school documents, electronically so please be sure to take care of signing all of the beginning of the year school forms, in a timely manner.

APPTGY

Our district is excited to launch a new website through the platform, Apptgy. Important updates, calendar events, forms, and other resources can be found on the district and school websites. The school community is encouraged to visit our website regularly. In addition, time sensitive alerts will be sent through Apptgy. These alerts/announcements may be delivered via email, phone, or text messages so families can receive messages in a timely manner.

LOOKING INTO THE NEEDS OF KIDS (LINK) Program

The LINK Program is designed to assist students with learning differences. The role of the program is to provide increased opportunities for positive interactions between general education students and students with social or learning challenges. A LINK mentor is a student nominated by staff members for demonstrating positive behaviors and a willingness to support another student, or mentee. The mentor provides support in the classroom, during lunch, and at recess by helping the mentee feel included in activities and modeling appropriate behavior.

The benefits of this peer mentoring approach help us build a strong school community. Mentors are able to improve reasoning and communication skills, increase feelings of connection, self-esteem, and empathy, while also working on their problem solving skills. Mentee benefits include an increase in academic achievement and feelings of connection to school and peers. In addition, mentees continue to build positive self-esteem, social skills, and positive school behavior. Overall, the LINK Program is a win-win for all involved.

ROCK IT CHARACTER

At Valley Road School, we believe that character is just as important as academics. We want to recognize the students who consistently make good choices, show kindness, help others, and do the right thing—even when no one is watching. These students are not looking for a reward or recognition; they simply let their character shine through in the way they treat others each and every day.

Twice a year, staff members have the opportunity to nominate students who have gone above and beyond in demonstrating outstanding character. Students can be nominated in one of nine character areas that highlight the qualities and values we want to see throughout our school community.

Once nominations are complete, we celebrate these students during our Rock It Character Ceremony. Students are recognized in front of their families and members of our school staff for the positive impact they have made through their words, actions, and choices.

We believe that recognizing these students does more than celebrate their accomplishments—it helps inspire others. Our hope is that their kindness, integrity, responsibility, and compassion create a domino effect, encouraging others to follow their example and reminding our entire school community that character truly matters.

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, BULLYING (HIB)

We will continue to follow the NJ State guidelines in dealing with bullying behaviors. Making sure students understand the difference between bullying type behavior and school code of conduct behavior is imperative so please take the time to reiterate what we explain to students in school about the difference between the two. Bullying type behavior will cause specific procedures to be followed with an anti-bullying specialist reviewing the case, the principal assigning consequences and reports sent to the superintendent and the Board of Education. We will also continue with our anti-bullying lessons throughout the year in all classes. Our Bully Prevention mission statement is:

Valley Road is a school-wide community supporting anti-bullying. We empower each and every staff member to intervene in situations viewed as bullying. We support a climate of school safety and respect, positive learning outcomes and acknowledgement of individual feelings of security. Through these ideals and ongoing staff, student, parent and community training, we strive to make Valley Road School an environment of acceptance for ALL.

Bullying vs. Conflict

Bullying is behavior that is motivated by a distinguishing characteristic such as a person's group, background or other characteristic and has an impact on the child's education. Bullying does not always have to be direct or involve a student being personally targeted. It can also include behavior that creates a negative or uncomfortable school environment and interferes with the student's ability to learn or participate in school. Reports of possible bullying are handled by the Anti-Bullying Specialist.

Conflict is when two (or more) students are having a disagreement or experiencing difficulties with each other. Conflict situations are handled by the teacher and/or office staff/administrators.

GENERAL INFORMATION A-Z

Birthday Party invitations: Please refrain from handing out birthday/party invitations in class unless you are inviting the whole class. This will prevent students from feeling left out or having hurt feelings.

Buddy Class Program: We think of ourselves as a whole school community. What better way is there to promote community than to provide children with opportunities to interact with children outside of their classroom environment?! The buddy program does just that. It is an avenue for teaching the value of building relationships within a community. We match classes of different grades as Buddy classes. For some children this is an opportunity to build self-confidence and self-esteem and for others it is a chance to work with an older or younger student in a positive atmosphere. Children learn best from each other, and with our guidance and prior planning, we can plan activities or share times that are conducive to learning for all involved.

Care of Property: Students are responsible for caring for textbooks, chromebooks, workbooks, and library books issued to them during the school year. It is recommended that textbooks be covered to help protect them from damage during use. Students must pay fines to replace a lost or damaged book and Chromebooks.

Chromebooks: In accordance with New Jersey Student Learning Standards, specifically Standard 9 Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills, use of Chromebooks will be necessary in meeting the standards. Chromebooks will be used as a way to foster creativity and innovation, creative thinking and problem-solving, digital citizenship, media literacy, and technology literacy across the curriculum.

The Chromebooks' use includes but is not limited to the following ways:

- Access and use of textbooks and other resources for the course
- Access and use of instructional materials prepared by the teacher
- Access and use of class assessments, including formative and summative
- Access and use of standardized assessments
- Access and use of Google Suite platform and other resources to participate in class

This year, students in grades 1 and 2 will have the option to keep their chromebooks in school charging overnight rather than taking them back and forth each day. Parents will decide whether they will be utilizing this option.

Communication: A strong school/home connection is the basis for building and maintaining open lines of communication. It is the Valley Road School procedure that teachers return parent phone calls within 24 hours. Teachers are required to keep parents informed of student progress. In addition to report cards, teachers will communicate formally and informally on a regular basis to report a child's areas of difficulty and signs of improvement. Phone calls, notes, meetings, emails, report cards, media connections and interim reports are some of the ways a teacher may choose to communicate with parents. If you have questions or concerns about your child and/or their academic program, please contact your child's teacher first.



If you have further concerns or have questions about school procedures or curriculum, contact the office to discuss the issue or to set up an appointment. You may feel that contacting the school without identifying yourself insures that your child will not be singled out by a teacher or treated differently. Identifying yourself allows the school to personally contact you to work collaboratively in the best interest of your child. All matters are handled professionally.

Electronic Surveillance:

The Clark Schools have a policy and regulation that guide electronic surveillance in our schools. Below are the links to this policy and regulation.

Policy <https://goo.gl/2H3Pba> Regulation <https://goo.gl/o5JpuA>

Emergency Closing Information: An automated contact system, called Apptegy will be used to notify parents/guardians in the event of an unscheduled school closing due to inclement weather or other instances as well as information about upcoming events. Apptegy will use the parental/guardian contact information from Genesis. Information will also be placed on our school and district websites during times of emergency closing.

Food and Other Treats: The district food procedure is set up to better protect students with food allergies, diabetes, and other food related health issues. **There will be no food or beverages or non-food treats allowed in the classrooms for student birthdays or other occasions.** This will make school safer and protect our many students with health issues. It will also help students' feelings who may have not received items on their birthday. This procedure will also save instructional time. To align with our reading incentive program, a parent will be able to send in a book for the classroom library or come in to read a book on their birthday, if they work that out with the teacher ahead of time. No other items should be sent in.

Students are still allowed to bring in lunch and a snack. Snacks must meet procedures according to any guidelines sent home for class snacks by our nurse. In most cases, classroom snacks should be **peanut or nut free items. Nut products are allowed in the lunchroom because we have designated tables set aside for students who may need to sit at a peanut free location.**

Classes will have **3 PTA sponsored parties** throughout the year: Halloween, Holiday Season, and End of the Year parties. A special list of acceptable food items for these parties is available on the website. The PTA Classroom Parents will organize these parties and set up the approved refreshment lists. **Parents should not send in any food or non-food items for these parties unless requested by the PTA Selected Class Parents.** This procedure will lead to a safer classroom environment. There will be no other parties during the school year. This includes Valentine's Day parties.

Any other use of food needs special permission. Special events or instructional activities for small groups or grade levels, may be held with approval by the office.

Health Office and Medication: The emergency contact information will be used if the school needs to contact you during the school day in the event of illness, accident, or other emergency. It is important that you keep the school informed of any changes in contacts or phone numbers on Genesis for you and your emergency contact. If a student requires



medication, the school nurse is the only person authorized to dispense medication. NJ State Law requires a written statement from the family doctor that spells out the type of medication, dosage, and purpose. A written statement from the parent must accompany the medication, in its original package, giving the nurse permission to administer the medication.

Health Screening: According to the NJ state guidelines, a yearly health screening is conducted for each student in kindergarten through grade 12, including; blood pressure, height, weight, visual acuity, auditory acuity, and scoliosis. If a physical is submitted yearly by your child's primary care physician your child may not need to be screened that school year. A note will be sent home by the nurse with any deviations from the recommended standards, and you will be asked to follow up with your child's physician. **If you do not want your child to be screened, please notify the school nurse in writing at the beginning of the school year.**



Homework: Homework is an important part of the school program and serves several purposes. Through homework, students learn to take responsibility for their education and develop lifelong strategies and attitudes for success.

Assignments are purposeful and meaningful extensions of classroom activities and are meant to reinforce school learning. At the start of the school year teachers will review homework expectations with the students.

In the primary grades, homework is designed to foster a positive attitude toward learning. Tasks may include reinforcement and enrichment activities, and should range from fifteen minutes to a half-hour. Homework assignments for students in fourth and fifth grades, are designed to encompass study, review, reading, or practice related to their school day experience, and should range from 30 minutes to one hour in duration.



Parents are asked to supervise the completion of homework, but not to complete any assignment for a child. It is important that the teacher is made aware of any difficulty your child might be experiencing with an assignment. If your child is struggling with a task, it is good practice to stop him/her and to make an indication on the task, or to write an attached note that indicates that the child struggled with the assignment. If you do the work for your child, the teacher gets a mixed message that the child successfully mastered the concept. In addition, children should be encouraged to engage in about 10 - 15 minutes of reading for pleasure in the evening, separate from homework. Reading to a younger sibling, or with an adult or older sibling, not only builds an appreciation of reading but also provides children an opportunity to spend quality time with their family.

Lost and Found: Children have a way of losing clothing, backpacks, lunch bags, etc. It is important and helpful if you label your child's belongings. We have a lost and found area located in the hallway outside the cafeteria. Should you find another child's book or personal item among your child's things, please return it to the office. Please be aware that the Lost and Found items are donated to a charity, if not claimed over a period of several weeks.

Lunch/Recess: Meals, milk, and snacks may be purchased daily. **Free and Reduced lunch is available for those who are eligible.** A copy of each month's menu is posted on the website for your reference. This year, a student lunch costs \$4.05. Parents are encouraged to pay for lunches

in advance through payschoolscentral.com computerized system or you may simply enclose cash or check (made out to Clark Board of Ed) in an envelope that is clearly marked with your child's name and homeroom. Pre-paid lunch money is sent to the kitchen in the morning, so that the cashier can enter the amount into your child's account. Prepaid lunch money may be sent to school on any day. Paying for lunch in advance will help to expedite the lunch line process. Students who were enrolled last year will automatically be enrolled in the PaySchools system. For new students or new users, you will be able to create an account. All you will need is your child's name, student ID number, and school zip code. ID numbers for Kindergarten students can be found on Genesis under student information.

If you have any additional questions about the lunch program, you may contact Nelly Rendeiro at 732-574-9600, check the Lunch tab on our school website, or visit www.maschiofood.com

Collecting Milk Money: Kindergarten, first and second grade milk money is to be collected 3 times each year. Each payment is \$54.90 and payment must be made, in an envelope with the child's name and choice of white or chocolate milk noted. Parents can also pay with a check for \$162.06 for the entire year with one payment. Checks can be made out to the Clark Board of Education. Milk cycle information will follow:

Sept.- Nov.: due Friday, Sept 8th

Dec.-Feb.: due Friday, Dec. 4th

Mar-June: due Friday, Mar. 12th

Personal Belongings: School is not the place for children to bring personal items, such as electronic games, stuffed animals and dolls, souvenirs or favorite trinkets unless permission is given by the teacher. Items that send and receive communication to other students or to parents/guardians are prohibited. These items cause distractions and are subject to being lost, destroyed, or stolen. **Cell phones, beepers, and/or 2-way communication devices** are included in the items that are not to be brought into school. These expensive items are not necessary educational tools and should be left at home. If a child needs to have one for after school use, it **may not** be taken out of his/her backpack during the school day. If seen while under school supervision it will be confiscated. **A camera should only be brought to school for classroom use and permission is needed by the parent and teacher.**

School Calendar: The school calendar with activities and special events may be found on our school website. It is continually updated.

School Dress: Students are encouraged to dress comfortably and appropriately at all times. Be sure that sayings on clothing are in good taste. Bare midriffs and short shorts are not appropriate attire. Caps or hats are not to be worn in the school building. No roller/sneakers or "heely" shoes are permitted. For your child's safety, they must wear sneakers during physical education classes. Students are asked to remove jewelry during gym class as another safety precaution. **Children should avoid footwear without support at the heel in school to avoid tripping.** Flip flops and open back shoes without a heel strap should not be worn by students.

Transfers of Students: If you are moving out of the district, please call the school office or come by the school a few days prior to the withdrawal date. This will give you ample time to complete the necessary paperwork.



Visitors: To ensure the safety of children, all outside doors to the school are locked. To enter the building, all visitors must identify themselves to the office, be buzzed into the school and then report directly to the main office upon entering the building. Visitors must sign in and out of the building and wear a nametag while visiting the facility. Please park your cars in an available visitor space or on a side street. For safety, do not park along yellow curbs. Visitors not known to the office staff will be asked to show identification. As an additional reminder,, visitors are not permitted to enter the building between these hours: 8:25-8:55 a.m. and 2:40-3:10 p.m., unless special arrangements have been made.

Volunteers: In these continuously difficult economic times which affect school staffing, we are lucky to have parents that have volunteered their time to assist the staff in preparing the school for the 2026-27 school year. We thank all the parents and grandparents who gave us a helping hand over the last year. We could use additional help throughout the year. If anyone would like to be a part of a group of parent/ teacher/ student volunteers, please let the office know. Potential tasks for this group may include: helping new staff with adjustments, assisting with orders and delivery of materials, making copies, supporting clerical staff, preparing materials, typing, and various other miscellaneous items that may arise. Volunteers are welcome to help throughout the school day or in the evenings on occasion. Call the school at 732-388-7900 or email mapplebaum@clarkschools.org or cschafer@clarkschools.org if you would like to be on our volunteer list.

Notice of Nondiscrimination: The Clark Public School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities. Any person having inquiries concerning the school district's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, The Americans with Disabilities Act, or Section 504 is directed to contact:

Heather Austin, Affirmative Action Officer
Arthur L. Johnson High School, 365 Westfield Avenue, Clark, NJ 07066
(732) 388-6200.

Right to Know: You can locate all "Right to Know" information in the front office. This includes the material safety data sheet (MSDS) and the hazardous substance fact sheet (HSFS) on all hazardous materials stored on the school property. If you have any questions or concerns, contact our office or the Right to Know officer, at (732) 574-9600, Ext. 3355.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

During the school year we expect appropriate student behavior. Each teacher has a set of rules and consequences for his/her classroom that they will share with the students. Teachers will share their behavior plans with parents at Back to School Night. There is also a set of rules and consequences

for behavior in lunch, recess, and the school's common areas. There are positive rewards given when we recognize good behavior and consequences/remedial efforts following inappropriate behaviors.

Threats: We have noticed that as technology for children improves and increases, many of our students have the need to learn social skills and which behaviors are appropriate and inappropriate for school. One area is the use of violent type terms such as, "I want to kill you," or "I will blow up your house," or "Daddy will hit your daddy" etc. When these types of statements are used, the district protocol dictates the child speak with a school counselor and/or psychologist, administrator, and at times, a juvenile officer.

FALSE PUBLIC ALARMS AND SCHOOL THREATS

Clark Public Schools is committed to providing a safe, secure, and disruptive-free learning environment. The District maintains a **zero-tolerance policy** toward any behavior that compromises the safety of our students and staff or disrupts the orderly operation of our schools.

Prohibited Conduct

Students are strictly prohibited from circulating, instigating, or originating a false warning or threat of fire, explosion, shooting, or other catastrophe. This includes, but is not limited to:

- **Physical Graffiti:** Writing, scratching, or drawing threats of violence or destruction on bathroom walls, desks, lockers, or any other school property.
- **Digital/Verbal Threats:** Sending, posting, or verbalizing hoax threats via social media, text messages, email, or phone calls.
- **Equipment Tampering:** Maliciously pulling a fire alarm or triggering an emergency alert system when no emergency exists.

The Duty to Report

Safety is a shared responsibility. Students who have knowledge of a planned false public alarm, graffiti threat, or any hoax threat, and fail to report it to school authorities, may be subject to disciplinary action for complicity.

- **How to Report:** Threats should be reported immediately to a teacher, administrator, or school resource officer.
- **Anonymous Reporting:** P3 Campus can be used to report threats anonymously without fear of retaliation.

Escalating Disciplinary Consequences

Any student found to have engaged in, assisted with, or willfully spread a false public alarm will face disciplinary action. The District applies a progressive, escalating framework to address these violations, though administration reserves the right to bypass lower steps for severe or highly disruptive incidents.

Tier 1: Complicity or Unwitting Dissemination (First Offense)

Target Behavior: Failing to report a known threat, or sharing/forwarding an existing hoax threat on social media without originating it, causing localized disruption.

- **Consequences:**

- Mandatory parent/guardian administrator conference.
- 1 to 3 days of In-School Suspension (ISS) or Out-of-School Suspension (OSS).
- Mandatory behavioral/counseling intake assessment.
- Temporary loss of extracurricular activities and school privileges (up to 30 days).

Tier 2: Direct Violation / First Active Offense

Target Behavior: First instance of originating a threat (graffiti, digital, verbal) or tampering with emergency equipment (e.g., pulling a fire alarm) where safety is compromised but no mass evacuation or external emergency response is triggered.

- **Consequences:**

- Immediate 5 to 10 days of Out-of-School Suspension (OSS).
- Mandatory referral to the Superintendent for a formal disciplinary hearing.
- Loss of all extracurricular privileges, athletics, and school events (including prom and graduation activities) for the remainder of the school semester or school year.
- Mandatory mental health/risk assessment clearance required prior to school re-entry.

Tier 3: Repeat Offense or Severe Disruption (Aggravated Offense)

Target Behavior: Any second offense under this policy, OR a first offense that results in significant public alarm, full school evacuation, emergency service deployment, or district-wide closure.

- **Consequences:**

- Immediate Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) pending a formal Expulsion Hearing before the Board of Education.
- Recommendation for long-term suspension (greater than 10 days) or permanent expulsion from Clark Public Schools.
- Permanent revocation of all school privileges, senior activities, and extracurricular participation.

Legal and Financial Liability

In accordance with New Jersey law (**N.J.S.A. 2C:33-3**), initiating a false public alarm is a crime.

8. **Law Enforcement Notification:** The District **will** report all incidents to the Clark Police Department for criminal investigation and prosecution.
9. **Financial Restitution:** Under New Jersey law, the parents or legal guardians of a minor who falsely reports an emergency may be held financially liable for the costs incurred by emergency services, law enforcement, and the District responding to the false alarm.

STATEMENT ON THE ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY & AI PLATFORMS

If students are caught trying to bypass any safety and filtering systems, trying to factory reset their devices, and are overall not practicing digital citizenship we will deny a student access to the network, computers, and technological resources.

With the emergence and evolution of generative AI (Artificial Intelligence) technology, teachers may explore ways to integrate these tools in classrooms. Teachers will clarify when students may use such tools and model or explain their appropriate and ethical use. Our current Code of Conduct outlines examples of violations including the non-authorized use of online service computer programs which covers all generative AI platforms and apps.

<u>If Tech misuse is suspected</u>	<u>If AI Use is suspected</u>	<u>If Plagiarism is suspected</u>
1. Conversation with student 2. Check browsing history 3. Contact Home 4. First offense - warning 5. Second Offense - recess detention 6. Third offense - restricted use of chromebook 7. Continued offenses - loss of device	1. Conversation with student 2. Check browsing history 3. Contact Home 4. First offense - warning 5. Second Offense - recess detention 6. Third offense - restricted use of chromebook 7. Continued offenses - loss of device	1. Conversation with student 2. Check browsing history 3. Contact Home 4. First offense - warning 5. Second Offense - recess detention 6. Third offense - restricted use of chromebook 7. Continued offenses - loss of device

CLARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

The mission of the Clark Elementary Schools' discipline plan is to provide a uniform procedure that promotes responsibility and respect to ensure a safe and educationally sound environment for both students and staff. Our goal is to establish a step-by-step process, whereby corrective procedures may be employed under everyday student/school circumstances. This plan is not meant to punish, but to effectively change behavior so as to provide a positive learning experience for all our students. We teach students to demonstrate respect and kindness in your words and actions towards others

Continued disobedience against school rules and regulations may result in the following consequences at the discretion of the teacher/administrator.

	Consequences
<u>1.</u>	Phone Call to Parent/Parent Conference
<u>2.</u>	Detentions
<u>3.</u>	Behavior Intervention Conference (Possible Behavior Plan)
<u>4.</u>	Suspension
<u>5.</u>	Crisis Intervention Conference

VALLEY ROAD SCHOOL DISCIPLINE SYSTEM PROCEDURES

The table on the next 2 pages delineates various misbehaviors/offenses and the disciplinary actions/consequences that are associated with them at the Valley Road School. These procedures are in alignment with the district philosophy as outlined above but have been created so as to be specific to the VRS context. For continued disobedience, students may receive a combination of the above consequences including suspension.

Behavior	First time	Second Time	Third Time	
1. Teasing (Name calling, insulting, or other behavior that would hurt others' feelings or make them feel badly about themselves.) 2. Exclusion (Starting rumors, telling others not to be friends with someone, or other actions that would cause someone to be without friends.) 3. Chasing Someone, bothering others. 4. Inappropriate comment, picture, gesture, etc.	Written warning. Student/Principal or her designee calls parent.	One inside recess. Student/Principal or her designee calls parent.	Three inside recesses. Principal or her designee calls parent.	After the third time a student shows this behavior in a year, school staff, and parents meet to develop an individual plan. OR Possible after school detentions or suspension.
5. Hitting, Pushing, Slapping, Grabbing, Rough Play, Throwing Things Inappropriately, taking someone's item, kicking, tripping and similar behaviors. Inappropriate comments. 6.. Disruption to the Educational Process (Serious disruption may be cause for immediate suspension.)	One - 2 inside recess(es). Student/Principal or her designee calls parent.	Three inside recesses. Principal or her designee calls parent.	Five inside recesses. Principal or her designee calls parent.	Same as above.
7. Severe Hitting (Punching, Kicking, and similar behavior that may injure others) 8. Threat of serious violence harassment (Racial, ethnic, or sexual name calling or other severe harassment) 9. Defiance 10. Threats of Harm to others or the facility (Threats could be cause for immediate suspension and could be reported to the local police juvenile division.	Three inside recesses or more and possible after school detentions or suspension depending on the Principal's or her designee. Principal calls parent.	Five inside recesses. Principal or her designee calls parent. OR Possible after school detentions or suspension.	Suspension (suspension or after school detentions may come sooner in this process due to the severity of the situation.)	Same as above.

11. Disrespectful Behavior towards adults and other students. Stealing. 12. Using derogatory words, phrases or hand gestures toward any adult in the building.	Two -three inside recesses or more and possible suspension depending on the Principal's or her designee' determination. Principal/ designee calls parent.	Three to Five inside recesses or more and possible after school detentions or suspension depending on the Principal's or her designee. Principal/ Designee calls parent	Five or more inside recesses and possible after school detentions or suspension depending on the Principal's or her designee. Principal/ Designee calls parent	Same as above.	
13. Unsafe bathroom/Inappropriate behavior 14. Cyber Bullying (Sending derogatory, hurtful, inappropriate messages or pictures over the internet, text messages, through gaming systems, or cameras.)	Call parent with the child. 1 recess detention. In accordance with school and district policies the principal will administer disciplinary action.		Two or Three recess detentions. Possible alternate bathroom behavior.	Three to five recess detentions. Possible alternate bathroom behavior.	Same as above

*Students in grades K-2 may receive one additional warning.

LUNCH/RECESS BEHAVIOR

When in the lunchroom and at recess, we ask our students to listen and be respectful to our lunch/recess aides, who are the adults in charge. We also ask that they walk quietly in the hallways when transitioning between lunch and recess. Students who do not listen to the adult speaking or are acting inappropriately may be given a time out or a checkmark. This is done without anger or yelling. The timeout represents a signal that the child did not follow the rules and has to have a 1-3 MINUTE TIME OUT during or at the end of the lunch session before recess or the next day at recess for each time out. If recess has already been held, the timeout may be recorded on a pad and given the next day or held during the lunch period after the child has completed eating. Consequences may be adjusted when needed with the principal's approval. We will also ask that lunch aides recognize good behavior when groups or individuals are seen making positive choices.

At times incidents will get reported to the principal from lunch, recess and common areas. She or her designee will interview the students involved and when necessary assign consequences and contact parents. These consequences are usually detentions during recess or if needed after school detentions or suspensions. In very severe incidents a suspension from school is sometimes given.

CAFETERIA DISCIPLINE PLAN

While the schoolwide system will be used for major infractions, use of timeouts and rewards/recognition will be used when minor incidents occur during lunch and recess. Our Grade 4 and 5 students will be on a 5 check system where each check brings about an increased consequence. See the chart below for more information. When students maintain no checks they are allowed special privileges such as changing seats, playing a game after eating, etc. As students accumulate checks they will get increasingly longer time outs/ consequences.

1 check	Verbal Warning
2 or 3 checks	Time out given
4 checks	A visit to the principal or his designee and a call home. A longer time out to be given. The child is warned that the next check will result in an inside recess detention and possible lunch separate from the regular seating.
5 checks	Recess detention and possible lunch time removed from the regular table. Continued disobedience or added checks may add a special behavior plan which may include after school detentions and/or suspension. Checks will be cleared after several weeks (usually monthly) for all students. If students improve behavior, checks may be gradually removed.

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND INTERVENTION SERVICES

Per the mandated NJ Code and District Regulation #2460, the following information is to be disseminated and reviewed yearly with parents and staff.

The Clark Public Schools provides interventions to meet the individual needs of its students who may be struggling in school or who have a disability. Identified students may be entitled to intervention services through Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS), Special Education and Related Services, or a 504 Plan.

INTERVENTION AND REFERRAL SERVICES

The Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) team provides assistance in the general education program to staff and parents/guardians for students who demonstrate learning, behavior, and/or health problems. A collaborative problem solving approach is used to collect information and develop action plans. Services for students are generally initiated by a referring teacher, administrator, or counselor, but can be initiated by parents/guardians, as well. A referral should be made to the building principal or his/her designee. The request should contain the following: the reason for the request, descriptive behavior of the pupil's performance, and an indication of prior intervention. Referral forms are available in the Principal's office.

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES (IDEA)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004 mandates that all pupils with disabilities who are in need of special education and related services be located, identified, and evaluated. A student with a known or suspected disability should be referred to the Department of Special Services at Arthur L. Johnson High School for a Child Study Team (CST) evaluation to determine eligibility for special education and related services. A referral for a Child Study Team evaluation can be made by parents/guardians, I&RS team, administrators, or instructional and other professional staff. The written request for a CST evaluation must be signed by the referring person(s). An email request is not accepted. The Child Study Team includes a School Psychologist, Learning Disabilities Teacher-Consultant, and School Social Worker. The School Nurse, Guidance Counselor, general education teacher, Speech/Language Specialist, and/or other professionals may also be included on the team, as needed. Upon receipt of a referral, a file will be initiated to include a timeline for processing the referral. A Case Manager will be assigned to coordinate the services of the CST and convene a referral/identification meeting within twenty days. A "Notice of a Referral/Identification Meeting" will be sent to the parents/guardians and will contain "Parental Rights in Special Education" (PRISE). Any concerns or questions should be directed to the Department of Special Services.

SECTION 504 OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Students who have substantial limitations to one or more life functions due to a disability may be entitled to accommodations in school under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of the Americans with Disabilities Act and its amendments. These laws protect the rights of pupils with special needs who might have difficulty attending school or participating in regular school activities without related aids or modifications. If a parent/guardian has a concern, he/she should contact the Guidance Department for assistance.