

Matawan-Aberdeen Regional School  
District  
One Crest Way  
Aberdeen, NJ 07747  
[www.marsd.org](http://www.marsd.org)



Elementary School  
Parent/Student Handbook  
2019-2020

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Cliffwood Elementary School  
Ravine Drive Elementary School  
Strathmore Elementary School  
Lloyd Road Elementary School



Dear Parents/Guardians,

The future of the world exists within the children of today. They will live in an ever-changing world of challenges that will go far beyond our current thinking, structures and experiences. During their elementary school years, your children will learn the rudiments of reasoning, reading, writing and social interactions. It is our intent to provide them with an environment that will prepare them for lifelong learning and help them reach their human potential and performance.

During the elementary years, teachers and administrators will provide students with research-based curricula connected to real world experiences making learning relevant and meaningful. These curricula will emphasize developing higher levels of thinking skills, fostering positive self-esteem, respect for others and the social and emotional development of children. We will continue to integrate technology as an essential tool for learning.

We view our role as leading the process; this calls for working with people in our school communities to determine where we are now and to chart a course of excellence for the future. While the specific activities offered by one school may differ from others, the district vision statement, our district mission statement and the outcomes of the Matawan Aberdeen Public Schools will connect us.

Remember that the early years of a child's development and education make all the difference in what a child becomes as an adult. We ask for your continued partnership, support and involvement in this process.

Sincerely,

The Matawan Aberdeen Elementary Principals

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## ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

A child whose fifth birthday falls on or before October 1 may be admitted to Kindergarten. An original birth certificate is a necessary entrance requirement. Proofs of residency are also required. For Domicile and Affidavit students, additional documentation will be necessary.

The State of New Jersey requires a doctor's record certifying the following state mandated immunizations/screening:

- DTaP: 4 doses if one dose was given on or after the 4th birthday or any 5 doses
- Polio: 3 doses if one dose was administered on or after the 4th birthday or any 4 doses
- MMR: 2 doses of measles and one dose each of Mumps and Rubella vaccine
- Hepatitis B: 3 doses
- Varicella (chicken pox): 1 dose or written report of disease
- A Mantoux screening test for tuberculosis is required if the student is entering from a country of high incidence as outlined by the New Jersey Department of Health.

Students out of compliance with the NJ State immunization requirements may be excluded from school at the discretion of the Administration.

All newly admitted students are required to submit a physical examination that has been completed within the previous 365 days. It must be provided within 30 days of entry. The New Jersey Universal Health Form is available on the district web page under the Nurse's Forum. and school nurse web page. It is also available online at <https://www.state.nj.us/health/forms/ch-14.pdf>.

## STUDENT INFORMATION

When parents/guardians register a student in the Matawan Aberdeen School District, they are asked to fill out a student information form. Revisions can be made by the parent/guardian at any time through Parent Portal or a note can be sent to the main office to update the information. This provides information to the office staff when they need to contact a parent/ guardian or in case of an emergency. **Necessary registration information includes:**

- Student's name, address, home phone number, birthday, gender and grade
- Parent(s) or guardian(s) name, address, home phone number, work number, cell phone number, email address
- Emergency contact information that includes the name, address, and phone numbers of people to contact if the parent/guardian cannot be reached (**local numbers, please**)
- Physician's name and phone number, medical alert information
- Insurance information

### **RESIDENCY VERIFICATION**

The Matawan Aberdeen School District requires all parents/guardians to submit verification of residence to demonstrate their entitlement to a free educational program in the Matawan Aberdeen School District.

Four proofs of residency will be required upon registration as well as for students currently attending:

**Acceptable proofs of residency must include a property tax bill, contract of sale, lease, mortgage or other signed evidence of property ownership, tenancy, or residency. Three additional proofs must also be provided, and may include Court orders, documentation provided by any governmental agency (driver's license, voter registration, military orders), utility bills, etc. See also Residency checklist at [www.marsd.org](http://www.marsd.org).**

### **SCHOOL HOURS**

**REGULAR SESSION** – for all regularly scheduled school days in grades K-5. Doors open 10 minutes prior to the start of the school day:

Strathmore Elementary School 9:20 - 3:35  
Cliffwood Elementary School 9:20 - 3:35  
Ravine Drive Elementary School 9:20 - 3:35  
Lloyd Road Elementary School 8:50 - 3:05

### **EARLY DISMISSAL FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER**

In the event school is to be held on a short session, the following schedule will apply. Doors open 10 minutes prior to the start of the school day:

Cliffwood Elementary School 9:20 - 1:20  
Ravine Drive Elementary School 9:20 - 1:20  
Strathmore Elementary School 9:20 - 1:20  
Lloyd Road Elementary School 8:50 - 12:50

### **DELAYED OPENING**

In the event of inclement weather, schools may have a delayed opening, which will be broadcast on local media and through automated phone call. Doors open 10 minutes prior to the start of the school day:

Cliffwood Elementary School 10:50 - 3:35  
Ravine Drive Elementary School 10:50 - 3:35  
Strathmore Elementary School 10:50 - 3:35  
Lloyd Road Elementary School 10:20 - 3:05

### **4 HOUR SESSION - DISTRICT WIDE/PARENT CONFERENCES**

Cliffwood Elementary School 9:20 - 1:20  
Ravine Drive Elementary School 9:20 - 1:20  
Strathmore Elementary School 9:20 - 1:20  
Lloyd Road Elementary School 8:50 - 12:50

\* Buses will pick up students 90 minutes later than the regular schedule



### **SCHOOL ARRIVAL**

Students will not be admitted into the school building before the scheduled opening time. **WALKERS AND THOSE DRIVEN BY PARENTS/GUARDIANS SHOULD NOT PLAN TO ARRIVE AT SCHOOL EARLIER THAN THEIR SCHEDULED TIME AS THERE IS NO SUPERVISION PRIOR TO THAT TIME.** Any parent/guardian who needs to come to school with their child must report to the school's main office. Each elementary school is equipped with a bell and a speaker by the outside entrance. Anyone who would like to enter the school must ring the bell located by the entry door, identify themselves, and state the reason for their visit. Once you are buzzed into the building, you will enter the school vestibule and inform the main office personnel that you are dropping off your child.

### **RIDING SCHOOL BUSES AND BUS CONDUCT**

1. The right of all students to ride the bus is conditional on their good behavior and observance of the following rules and regulations. Any student who violates these rules will be reported to the school principal.
2. The driver is in full charge of the bus and the students. Students shall obey the driver cheerfully and promptly.
3. Students shall obey and respect the orders of monitors or patrols on duty (if applicable).
4. Always cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus. Never cross behind the bus or re-enter the roadway after crossing. Look both ways before crossing the road.
5. Students shall be on time; the bus cannot wait for those who are not on time. Arrive at the bus stop 10 minutes before your scheduled pickup time.
6. Students shall occupy the space designated for them by the driver.
7. Students shall observe the following:
8. While waiting for the bus, remain orderly, staying off the roadway and private property.
9. Students must board the bus in an orderly manner, proceed to their assigned seats and put on their seatbelts, immediately.
10. Seatbelts are required by law.
11. Papers or other trash should not be thrown on the bus floor.
12. No one should damage or deface the bus in any way.
13. Students should avoid any unnecessary conversation with the driver of the bus.
14. Keep all body parts and other articles inside the bus at all times.
15. Remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop at the assigned bus stop.
16. Students may not leave the bus without the driver's consent except at their assigned bus stop or at school.
17. Courtesy and respect must be shown to fellow passengers, persons along the route and the bus driver. Inappropriate language will not be tolerated.
18. The bus driver will report any damage or vandalism on the bus to the school principal.
19. No eating or drinking on the bus.
20. Should any students persist in violating any of these regulations, it shall be the duty of the driver to notify the principal. Written notice

of the action of the principal shall be furnished to the parent/guardian.

21. All students in grades K-3 must be accompanied to their designated bus stop by an adult and an authorized adult must meet each student at the door of the bus before a child can disembark upon arrival at their designated bus stop.
22. If an adult is not present at the bus stop to meet a child, the child will be returned to their school of attendance.
23. Students who are walkers and who are NOT assigned to a bus by transportation, CANNOT ride the bus home with friends for playdates.
24. Students riding the bus CANNOT change bus stops for play dates. Requests for alternate bus stops must be submitted on a form provided by the transportation department; forms can be obtained on the district website, or at school of attendance. Phone requests and hand written notes will not be accepted.
25. Phones should remain away for the bus ride home since the bus ride is considered an extension of the school day.

### **SCHOOL DISMISSAL**

Dismissal time varies on each individual building. Students will be dismissed at designated exits. Parents/guardians are not to enter the building to pick up their children. Children who are bused to and from school are expected to ride their assigned buses home.

**Any change in dismissal procedure MUST be arranged prior to the start of the school day and MUST be confirmed in writing with a note from the parent sent to the school with the child that day.**

If an emergency arises after the child has gone to school and dismissal plans need to be changed, the parent/guardian must call the office **for notification. Emails or text messages are NOT acceptable methods of communication regarding changes in dismissal.**

**Students are not allowed in the building after school unless they are with a teacher or participating in an after school activity.**

### **LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY**

Children who must be excused from school early should bring a note from their parents/guardians stating the time to be excused and the reason for leaving early. While we encourage you to arrange medical or dental appointments after school hours, we recognize this is sometimes difficult. **To minimize interruption of the school day, a note must be brought to the teacher in the morning.** Students will not be excused from school early unless their parent or other designated adult comes to school to pick them up. **The parent should report to the office to sign out the child.** Parents are not to go to the classroom. The child will be paged to come to the office. These requirements are for the safety of the children.

If someone other than a parent/guardian will be picking up the child, **a note giving permission is necessary.** Identification will be requested by the building principal. No student will be released before the regular dismissal time unaccompanied by a parent/guardian or designee. Students are not permitted to

make plans on their own during the school day which involve changes in the dismissal procedures. They must go directly home after school.

**YMCA (Before/After School Childcare)**

Schools have morning and afternoon child care programs. (7:00 a.m. - until the first bell; last bell – 6:00 p.m.). See individual schools for availability or call the Community YMCA for further information. This is a tuition program. Please note when schools are closed due to inclement weather, the program is canceled. When there is a delayed opening, before care is also canceled.

**ABSENCE OR TARDINESS**

Classes begin promptly at their scheduled time. Regular attendance is essential to a student’s success. Most subjects are taught in sequence, requiring the understanding of each concept in the order of its presentation. Persistent absenteeism creates a genuine hardship for a student and is regarded as a very serious problem.

**Any student absent from school may not participate in any after school activity (including practices on that day.)** Students must be in school for **four hours**, to receive credit for a full day of school.

- **Five allowable reasons for absence:** A school may have a day in session that would not be counted as a day in membership for a particular student for the following reasons (New Jersey School Register, Ch.3):
  - Religious observance (N.J.A.C.6A:32-8.3 (h));
  - A college visit (up to 3 days per school year, only for students in grades 11 and 12);
  - “Take Our Children to Work Day” (pursuant to the memo issued by the Commissioner to all districts on April 25, 2017) or other rule issued by the Commissioner;
  - Participation in observance of Veterans Day (N.J.S.A. 18A:36-13.2) or district board of election membership activities (N.J.S.A. 18A:36-33); or
  - The closure of a busing district that prevents a student from having transportation to the receiving school.

If a child is going to be absent, the parent/guardian must call the school office for notification.

Students returning from an absence must bring a written note signed by their parent/guardian that includes: name, days absent and reason for absence. The note should be given to the teacher. If the absence was due to a contagious illness, a note from the doctor is required. (see page 7) Parents/Guardians will provide an explanation for the tardiness.

**Homework/Make-up work:** Work will be provided upon request and can be picked up in the main office at the end of the school day. All homework/Make-up work must be requested at the start of the school day.

**The following action will be taken for students who continue to be late to school or who accumulate excessive absences:**

4 absences or lates in principal one marking period	notification letter from
8 absences principal or lates	notification letter from
12 absences conference with or lates attendance officer	parent/guardian principal & district
16 absences or lates impending	notification from district attendance officer of truancy proceedings

**EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING**

Notice of school closing due to inclement weather or other reasons can be found on [www.marsd.org](http://www.marsd.org). **Families will also be notified using the automated calling system, using the phone number specified.** The decision to close school is made as early as possible. Please do NOT call the radio stations, police headquarters or the school about school closing.

If it appears probable that weather and road conditions will improve, there may be a **DELAYED OPENING**. Delayed openings will be broadcast in the same manner as School Closings.

Cancellation of non school-hour programs and athletic programs outside of regular school hours due to inclement weather or other reasons will be broadcast in the same manner as School Closings once the decision is made by the proper authorities. The general rule states if school has been closed, all activities are cancelled, including YMCA Child Care Programs.

In the unlikely event that there is an **EARLY DISMISSAL** during the day, parents/guardians should use common sense in planning for their child's care on these days. Emergency closings will be posted on the district website and broadcast via the automated phone dialer. Working parents/guardians should make their own backup plans beforehand for use during these days. Children should know these plans and be reminded of them periodically. **After school programs will be cancelled, including YMCA afternoon childcare.**

**TRANSFERS AND WITHDRAWALS**

Parents/guardians requesting a transfer or withdrawal must complete the Transfer-Out Parent Request Form. A transfer card will be supplied. Parents/guardians should contact the Central Registrar at 732-705-4000 or via email at [registration@marsd.org](mailto:registration@marsd.org) for information on transfers and withdrawals.

**INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

The school district may provide Internet access for students during school hours to facilitate communications in support of research and education. To remain eligible as users, students' use must be in support of and consistent with the

educational objectives of the Matawan Aberdeen School Board of Education Policies. A form requiring signatures is sent home on a yearly basis with additional information.

### **VISITORS**

Each elementary school is equipped with a bell and a speaker by the outside entrance. Any visitor who would like to enter the school must ring the bell located by the entry door, identify themselves, and state the reason for their visit. Once you are buzzed into the building, you will enter the school vestibule and sign in on the visitor log. If you need to enter the school, you will receive a visitor's badge while in the vestibule prior to gaining entry into the school building. **THIS INCLUDES PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS.** All visitors must obtain a visitor's badge. Visitors who are not volunteers are not allowed in the building unless prior arrangements have been made with the principal. **Unscheduled visits to the classroom are not permitted.**

For safety reasons, younger siblings may NOT accompany parents who are visiting or volunteering in a classroom during school hours.

During school hours, visitors should park in the provided spaces. Please do not block any entrances to the school. At some schools, the driveway and/or parking areas may be blocked at dismissal times or at other times during the day. For evening meetings, when additional parking is required, cars should be parked on only one side of the driveway to allow fire equipment to get in and out in case of an emergency.

### **VACATIONS**

School vacations are noted on the district calendar. Parents are requested to make vacation arrangements to coincide with the designated school vacation periods. **VACATIONS ARE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES.**

### **CONFERENCES**

A scheduled parent/guardian – teacher conference is held twice a year as part of the regular reporting process for Kindergarten through Grade 3. Grade 4 and 5 students at Lloyd Road School have one mid-year conference. Teachers will send home appointment notices with each child to schedule a conference, or some schools may use an online conference sign up system through our Realtime Parent Portal. Students and parents/guardians will be given an early dismissal schedule, which will allow all students to be released at the early dismissal time.

Some parents/guardians are hesitant about participating in conferences. However, our teachers can do a much better job with students if they can share their understanding of the student directly with the parent/guardian. It is not necessary to wait for the regular conference time if a parent/guardian has a special concern. Conferences can be arranged during the school year. Any parent/guardian who feels a need to meet with the child's teacher may request an appointment by calling the school and leaving a message on the teacher's voicemail or sending a note/ email to the teacher.

### **BACK-TO-SCHOOL NIGHTS**

In early fall, parents/guardians are invited to come to school in the evening to meet as a class with their child's teacher. During this time, the teacher will inform parents/guardians of the curriculum, discuss classroom procedures and expectations and give homework guidelines. **THIS IS NOT A TIME FOR INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES.** Parents/guardians are strongly urged to attend this informative session.

### **ILLNESS/INJURIES AT SCHOOL**

If a student becomes ill or is injured at school, the school nurse is available to give immediate assistance. If it is necessary for an ill or injured student to be sent home, either the nurse or office will notify the parent/guardian to come for the student. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the people listed on the student information form will be contacted. When filling out the form, it is important to list people who are likely to be available for such pickups. **IF FOR SOME REASON DURING THE YEAR YOUR JOB, RESIDENCE, OR THE PEOPLE YOU HAVE LISTED CHANGE, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT YOU NOTIFY THE OFFICE IMMEDIATELY.**

### **CASTS/CRUTCHES**

A doctor's note is required if a child must use crutches at school, has had a cast, brace, ace bandage, splint applied or otherwise needs special medical attention. **The parent/guardian MUST contact the school nurse to make necessary arrangements for accommodations as needed.**

### **CONTAGIOUS ILLNESS**

Based upon the school physician standing orders, your child should stay home if he/she has:

- An elevation in temperature (100 degrees or more). Your child should remain home until fever-free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication.
- Any vomiting or diarrhea. Your child should remain home until vomiting and/or diarrhea has stopped for 24 hours and food is tolerated.
  
- Any contagious illness ( strep throat, purulent conjunctivitis, persistent cough, unidentified rash, etc.) that could infect others, distract your child or disrupt the class. Physician's note will be needed to return.

Any student returning from absence due to a contagious illness will be required to present a physician's note for re-admittance. The note should include the diagnosis, date of clearance to return to school and the physician's signature. The note should be delivered to the school nurse on the day of return.

### **MEDICATIONS**

Exceptional circumstances may require a child to take medication during school hours. This is allowed only if the child's attendance at school would not be detrimental to the health or physical well-being of others. Parents/guardians should come in and administer any required medication. Where medication is necessary, but a parent/guardian is unable to administer it, the school nurse may perform this function. The following conditions must be met:

The nurse must have a written statement from the parent/guardian giving permission to give the medication to the child.

The nurse must have a written order from the child's doctor including:

Child's name and name of medication

Purpose of the medication, dosage, and termination date

The medication must be in the original container.

The medication **MUST** be kept in the nurse's office.

All medications must be delivered by the parent/guardian to the school nurse.

The district medication authorization form can be accessed on the district web site on the Nurse's Forum and school nurse web page.

### **ANNUAL HEALTH SCREENINGS**

The following health screenings are completed in accordance with the State Guidelines for Student Health Services. All students will have an annual height, weight and blood pressure screening. Vision screening will be performed for students in Kindergarten, grade 2 and grade 4. Hearing screenings are performed for students in Kindergarten through grade 3.

All children ten years of age and older are screened biennially for scoliosis (curvature of the spine).

According to the State Guidelines for Student Health Services, examinations of students by a medical professional are recommended at certain developmental stages. Elementary students are at the early childhood/pre-adolescence stages (grades K-5) and it is recommended that parents/guardians provide a copy of a physical examination to the school nurse at least once during this developmental stage.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION EXCUSES**

Students that need to be excused from physical education for one day must bring a note from the parent/guardian for that day. Excuses for a long period of time or serious injury require a written note from the child's doctor stating the date the child may return to physical education.

### **FAMILY LIFE**

The Family Life Program (in Grades 4-5) is part of the district's health curriculum which provides students with the information, decision-making skills and attitudes that will encourage thoughtful and responsible behavior. Permission slips are sent home to all the parents/guardians for each student's participation in the program at the beginning of each school year.

### **SCHOOL INSURANCE**

School insurance is offered at the beginning of each school year. The cost is small compared to the potential cost of medical care. Parents/guardians are encouraged to take advantage of this service. The State of New Jersey offers affordable health care called NJ Family Care. They can be reached at <http://www.njfamilycare.org/>

### **SCHOOL LUNCHES**

In grades K-5, School lunches are available daily, starting with the first day of school. Lunch money may be paid online through Realtime or collected by the child's teacher. Checks should be made payable to MARSD Foodservice. Money or a check should be put in an envelope with: child's name, teacher's name/grade and amount. Please see Board policy #8550 regarding *Outstanding Food Service Charges* should you have any questions about lunch money arrears.

During the first week of school, children will bring home the annual application to determine eligibility for free and reduced priced meals for the current school year. Students approved for free or reduced priced meals for the previous school year will continue to receive them until the new application is completed. If the new form is not returned by September 30, the program will stop. See also Policy 6641, Pupil Lunch Charges, regarding debts for lunch charges.

### **SPEECH**

Speech services fall under the New Jersey Administrative Code Title 6A, Chapter 14 Special Education. Students may be eligible for speech services if their speech problems will have an educational impact. This is discussed during a pre-determination meeting with the parent/guardian, teacher and speech language specialist. A decision is made whether or not to implement specialized speech testing.

### **ELL (ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS)**

The law requires that we identify all students whose native language is one other than English. These students may qualify for help in an ELL program.

### **SPECIALS SCHEDULE**

The specials at the elementary level include Spanish, Art, Music, Computer Literacy, Physical Education, Health and Library/Media Skills in K-3 schools.

### **HOME INSTRUCTION**

Home instruction, due to temporary illness or injury, will be provided when a physician documents the need for confinement for at least a two-week period of time. When a child is ready to return to school, it will be necessary to submit a statement from a physician that he/she may return to school. Please contact the school nurse for information regarding the home instruction process.

### **STUDENT SERVICES**

The Office of Special Services is responsible for special education programs, child study team evaluations, health services, drug prevention, truancy and domicile. Programs in special education, which vary by building, include pull-out resource, resource with in-class support, self-contained classes and speech/language services.



Included within the staff are educational specialists representing the following disciplines: learning disabilities, psychology, social work, speech, nursing, and medicine. The Child Study Team is composed of a Learning Disabilities Consultant, a Psychologist and a Social Worker. Members of the team are available at each elementary school to assist students with social needs, personal/family problems affecting their learning, and crisis situations.

### **INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC**

K-3 students learn music fundamentals and appreciation. In the fourth and fifth grades, students can further develop their musical ability by participation in the Instrumental Music Program, which includes small group lessons, band practices when proficient and may include a concert for Grade 5 students and parents/guardians.

### **LIBRARY**

In grades K-3 each class has a regularly scheduled library circulation period. Grade 4 and 5 classes sign up for library visits based on their available openings and needs. A child takes a book home and should bring it back the following library day. In order for another to be borrowed, a book must be returned or the child may bring in the book for renewal. If a book is lost, the student must pay for a replacement and may not take out another book until the fee is paid.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are planned with a specific purpose. Students must have a signed permission slip for each trip. They will remain at school on the day of the trip if a permission slip is not returned. Sometimes the cost is partially funded by the PTO and Board of Education. Other times, students must pay their own expenses. Money should be placed in an envelope with the child's name, teacher's name and amount. Checks should be made payable to the school or "Cash". **If a child is absent on the day of the trip, the cost cannot be refunded.** Students going on field trips are representing their school. All rules of proper behavior and courtesy are expected. In addition to proper behavior expected on field trips, a student's behavior may be taken into consideration prior to a field trip to determine if a parent needs to accompany the child to assure proper behavior. In situations where a student has exhibited regular unsafe behavior prior to a field trip, that may restrict field trip participation to prevent any unsafe behaviors from occurring on a trip. Parent/guardian chaperones are not permitted to bring other siblings/children with them.

### **BUILDING ACTIVITIES AND INFORMATION**

Schools are working toward creating a paperless environment and encourage all families to utilize the virtual backpack to support efficient two-way communication. Check your school website, including the Parent Portal, regularly for important information. Consult individual schools for such topics as newsletters, bulletins, student photographs, lost and found, telephone calls, notices and posters, directories and handbooks, supplies, safety patrols, school stores and other similar items. From time to time other bulletins and notices are distributed. These school communications are important ways to keep parents/guardians informed of school activities. Children need to understand the importance of bringing these notices home.

### **HOMEWORK POLICY**

Homework is defined as an assignment related to class work that is to be prepared or completed outside of class. It should be assigned according to these guidelines:

- Homework should be purposeful and its relevance and format clear to the student.
- The number, frequency, and degree of difficulty of homework assignments may vary with subject matter, but should always be based on the ability and needs of the student and take into account other activities which make a legitimate claim on the student's time.
- Homework should be of a type which can be completed by the student without requiring additional instruction from a teacher.
- Reading assignments, written assignments, and long-term projects should be varied according to the individual needs of students.
- Homework must be reviewed by the teacher.
- Homework requests should be made for students who are absent more than one day. Such requests should be made before 9:30 a.m. to be picked up at the end of the school day.

Properly designed, regularly scheduled homework is considered an integral component of the instructional program. A quiet place should be made available for this purpose, and a regular time for doing homework may also be helpful in developing good study skills. Parents/guardians may provide guidance for children, but should not do the assignments for them.

### **TEXTBOOKS**

Each student is responsible for all issued books and supplies, even if they are damaged, lost or stolen. If a book is damaged or lost, it must be paid for before another will be issued. Payment should be made in the office, and a receipt will be issued. The teacher will then issue another book. If the book is found later, the office will refund the money.

The following are textbook regulations:

- Every textbook should be covered and kept covered throughout the year to protect it from damage. On the cover should be written name, subject, grade and teacher.
- No writing or marking in textbooks is allowed at any time.
- To protect the book bindings, no papers, rulers, combs, etc. should be placed inside the books.
- Torn pages should be mended immediately.
- Books should be kept dry.
- The habit of lending and borrowing books should be discouraged.

### **ANNUAL STATE TESTS**

Students in third through eighth grade are required to participate in the **New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA)** for Math and English Language Arts Literacy each year. Additionally, students in grades five, eight and eleven must participate in the **New Jersey Student Learning Assessment – Science (NJSLA-S)**.

The NJSLA test measures how well students are meeting academic expectations and learning the knowledge and skills they need to stay on track in school and

after high school – in college or a career. The test measures complex skills like critical thinking, persuasive writing, and problem-solving. Your child’s overall score (out of a possible 850) and performance level (1-5) gives a quick glimpse of whether he or she is on-track with grade-level expectations. Level 1 indicates the greatest need for improvement and Level 5 indicates the strongest performance. The NJSLA test is just one of many ways that teachers and schools measure whether your child is on track for success. Teachers use the scores to improve teaching and learning, and to customize instruction to meet each student’s needs. Parents receive one report for English Language Arts and one for Mathematics.

### **REPORT CARDS**

Report Cards are sent home by request or are accessible via the *Parent Portal* four times during the year.

### **VIRTUAL BACKPACK**

As part of the PreK-5 Virtual Backpack, weekly emails will be sent to families containing links to notices, as well as important updates. **In an effort to decrease the amount of paper that is utilized, notices and flyers will no longer be sent home as paper copies.** Please check the email address that you have entered in Realtime to ensure that you receive this important information.

### **STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

Proper and reasonable behavior is expected from every student. The New Jersey law states that students shall submit to the authority of the teachers and others in authority at all times. This statute gives school authorities the legal right to govern all aspects of student behavior.

It is the student’s responsibility to recognize that the principal, teachers, and other adults in the school are in complete charge of the students and their actions at all times. **Under no circumstances will defiant or disrespectful behavior be tolerated.** Fighting, harassment, and bullying will not be tolerated in the Matawan Aberdeen Schools or on school campuses. Breaking this rule will result in immediate consequence as deemed fit by the principal according to district policy.

### **HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, HAZING OR BULLYING**

The Matawan Aberdeen Board of Education prohibits any forms of harassment, intimidation, hazing or bullying among and between students. A safe and civil environment is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards; harassment, intimidation, hazing or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student’s ability to learn and a school’s ability to educate its students in a safe environment; and since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers should be conscious of demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation or bullying. This policy is established according to provisions set forth by the New Jersey Department of Education pursuant to New Jersey State law.

The statute and district define harassment, intimidation, or bullying in the following manner: Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means any gesture, written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function or on a school bus and that:

Is motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability; or by any other distinguishing characteristics; and

A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of harming a pupil or damaging the pupil's property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or

Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any pupil or group of pupils in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

“Electronic communication” means communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, cellular phone, computer, or pager. Acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may also be a pupil exercising power and control over another pupil, either in isolated incidents or patterns of harassing or intimidating behavior.

The statute and district define hazing in the following manner. A person is guilty of hazing... if in connection with initiation of applicants to or members of a student or fraternal organization, he knowingly or recklessly organizes, promotes, facilitates or engages in any conduct, other than competitive athletic events, which places or may place another person in danger of bodily injury pursuant to New Jersey State law.

Specifically, no one shall harass, intimidate, threaten or bully either explicitly or implicitly another student. Students are required to conform to the student code of conduct. Students are also required to respect the person, property and rights of others; to obey constituted authority; and to respond to those who hold that authority.

Other harassing, intimidating, hazing or bullying conduct in, around school buildings, and during school functions is also prohibited. Everyone including but not limited to: professional staff, support staff, parents/guardians, siblings, visitors and volunteers, in/around the school premises or on school district business off-premises has a responsibility to contribute to a professional environment which is free from harassment, intimidation, hazing or bullying.

### **SUSPENSION**

Suspension is a last resort in dealing with serious discipline problems. When a student's behavior becomes such that the safety or well-being of others in the school is endangered, it will be necessary to exclude the student from school for an appropriate period of time.

### **STUDENT ATTIRE AND BELONGINGS**

Student attire should be reasonably neat, clean, and appropriate for the scheduled activities of the day. In hot weather, shorts of a reasonable length are permitted. Shirts must be worn and the shirt must meet the pants. **Spaghetti straps are not**

appropriate for school. Sandals, flip-flops, or shoes with high heels, Heelys or other shoe/skates are not permitted in school for safety reasons.

- For physical education days and Daily Physical Activity, sneakers should be worn. Dresses are inappropriate and should not be worn.
- Students are not to bring any electronic equipment to school unless prior approval is received by the teacher and/or administration, and it is intended solely to be used for educational purposes.

### **CELL PHONES**

Any cell phones brought to school must be turned off at all times. This includes during the bus ride to and from school.

### **CLASSROOM CELEBRATIONS AND GIFTS**

Celebrations may occur for holidays and at the end of the year. Children may bring in a special snack for the class on their birthdays if they desire. Parents must first check with the classroom teacher regarding any student food allergies and specific school policies.

The Board of Education discourages the presentation of gifts to teaching staff members by pupils and their parent(s) or legal guardian(s), because it may embarrass pupils with limited means and give the appearance of currying favor.

The Board directs that teaching staff members instruct their pupils to express their appreciation by means other than gifts.

Teaching staff members may receive gifts of only nominal value from pupils or their parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

### **HALL PROCEDURES**

Students are to cooperate with the following hall rules in order to maintain order and secure safety for all:

Avoid excessive noise, i.e. loud talking and yelling, since other classes are in session.

Enter the classroom promptly to avoid congestion at the door.

**WALK!** Do not run, push or shove.

Keep to the right in single file when passing in the hall.

Have the first student open the door back against the wall when the class is leaving.

### **LUNCH/ SNACK PROCEDURES**

In grades K-5, lunch time is twenty minutes for each class and is a time to relax. Lunch is eaten in the cafeteria. The following will help maintain a student's comfort:

Remain seated except for getting lunch or throwing away trash.

Clean up after finishing.

Use good manners.

Follow directions and cooperate with the adults in charge.

**Do not bring GLASS bottles to school.**

At the teacher's discretion, there may be a snack time in the morning. This is typical for all grade levels. Children must bring their own snack unless told otherwise. Nutritious snacks are strongly recommended.

### **ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS**

Assemblies are held periodically to provide enrichment experiences. For the benefit of everyone, these procedures should be followed.

Respect the participants and show courtesy. Negative remarks, sounds or booing will not be tolerated.

If there is a question and answer period, the students should:

- Only respond when recognized
- State the question loudly and clearly
- Say "Thank You"
- Listen carefully to avoid repetition
- Not talk or eat unless told to do otherwise
- Be attentive to the participants

### **SCHOOL SECURITY/FIRE EVACUATION DRILLS AND BUS EVACUATIONS**

One fire drill and one school security drill are held each month within school hours, including any summer months during which the school is open for instructional programs. Bus Evacuation drills occur twice a year. All drills are important and every person in the school building or on the buses should act accordingly. The purpose of the drills is to practice leaving either the building or the buses, or securing the building, as quickly and efficiently as possible and to be prepared in the event of a real fire or other emergency. The following are the responsibilities of each and every student during drills

Follow the directions of the teacher or adult in charge at all times.

Proceed quickly and in an orderly fashion to the designated area or exit.

**DO NOT TALK AT ANY TIME.**

Stay in line, remain quiet and await further instructions.

Our only assurance of students safety is everyone's complete cooperation. Students who do not cooperate in observing the above responsibilities are endangering the lives of everyone in the building.

### **CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY**

Vandalism of desks, walls or other equipment belonging to the school is a serious offense. Students are responsible for cleaning, repairing, or replacing any school property that they abuse and may be subject to disciplinary action. This policy also pertains to buses.

### **BICYCLES (*Several schools do not allow bicycles for safety reasons.*)**

Students who ride bicycles to school are expected to be aware of and to abide by New Jersey Bicycle Rules and Regulations. In addition, the following should be observed:

Every child riding a bike must wear a helmet (14 years of age or younger).

It is a law.

Every bicycle must have a lock and chain.

Bicycles must be walked when on school property.

### **SCHOOL PHOTOS**

Individual photos are usually taken in the fall and spring. A letter detailing the ordering procedure is sent home prior to the photo session. Various packages are available for purchase if interested. If a child is absent, another date is usually scheduled later in the year for make-ups. Class photos are taken on the same day.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Students are responsible for all their books and belongings. Everything should be labeled with the student's name. Lost and found items will be held in the office for a reasonable length of time. Students are urged not to bring valuable items or excessive amounts of money to school.

### **TELEPHONE CALLS**

The office phone may be used by children for emergency situations only. Parents/guardians are urged to avoid unnecessary calls to the school office. Any unusual circumstances, such as a parent/guardian not being home after school or a child going somewhere other than home, should be resolved with the child before the start of the school day. Last minute phone calls are highly discouraged. There can be no assurance that a child will receive any message arriving after 2:00 p.m.

### **PROMOTIONS AND RETENTIONS**

Promotions and retentions are based on an evaluation of academic, physical, social and emotional growth.

Parents/guardians can assume their child will be promoted unless the alternative of retention has been discussed during the school year. Parents/guardians will be involved in any retention decision.

### **PARENT/GUARDIAN GROUPS**

Many services for our schools are provided by parent/guardian groups. They strive: to promote the welfare of children in home, school, and community; for a close relationship between home and school that will enhance the education of our children; to develop a united effort between educators and the general public to secure the highest advantages in physical, mental, and social education for all children.

All services and programs provided by the parent/guardian groups are made possible by the work and efforts of volunteers. All parents/guardians are requested to join and offer their services when they are available. Dues for the organization are collected in the fall. An executive board heads the group and consists of officers and committee chairpersons. A yearly list of these will be published in the school supplement to this handbook. Meetings are held monthly. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend these meetings. Occasionally, a speaker or a student presentation will be part of the program.

Volunteers are needed for many parent/guardian group activities throughout the year. Committee chairpeople are responsible for assigning the needed volunteers. Parents/guardians interested in volunteering should contact the appropriate chairperson or fill out the volunteer sheet which is sent home with the children at the beginning of the year. Volunteers are welcome throughout the year.

If parents/guardians have questions to address to the PTO concerning any aspect of the educational program, they should submit them to the Principal or the PTO Presidents. There is a PTO mailbox in the office. Questions concerning individual PTO committees should be directed to the appropriate chairperson.

### **PTO ACTIVITIES**

Fundraising:

Parent/guardian groups conduct fundraisers in an effort to produce the necessary funds that will enhance the education and well being of our children. Examples of these may be a product sale, book fair or a holiday shop.

The PTO certainly understands the problem of feeling inundated with one fund raiser after another. If this is the case, all we ask is that you review the description of events and choose one or two that you feel you are able to give your greatest support. Please remember that the money raised is used only for the benefit of the children. Technology, playground equipment and cultural enrichment programs are all examples of the use of such funds. No door to door solicitation is permitted.

### **EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

In an emergency, immediate evacuation of the building and notification of authorities are the standard procedures. The staff, teachers and administrators are well prepared for a variety of emergency situations. Parents/guardians should feel confident concerning all emergency procedures at the school. Each building has its own Evacuation Plan, and has provided training and drill in its use. The school acts "in loco parentis" (in place of parents) during evacuations and lockdowns. It is extremely important for you to discuss this with your child.

### **STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

We encourage positive interaction and caring behavior among all individuals within our school community. Practices that promote a responsive classroom community, valuing respect for everyone and their learning environment such as the Morning & Mindfulness Meetings are promoted at our schools. Our job as educators and parents is to guide students to rewards for appropriate choices and to assist them in learning from their mistakes. Within this framework, teachers certainly have the leeway to establish a variety of individualized behavior management plans that support the school's philosophy.

The principal is kept informed of discipline problems in the classroom and is readily available to consult with teachers on preparing alternative strategies for managing students. When there are serious or repeated infractions of the rules, the student may be sent to the principal or school counselor for a conference. Parents will be made aware of school concerns so we can work together toward improved behavior. The principal may administer age-appropriate, incremental discipline for a situation. Patterns of misbehavior or repeated offenses will be handled accordingly.



## **PARENT PORTAL INFORMATION**

The Matawan-Aberdeen Regional School District's Parent Portal is open for parents with a child at the K - 5<sup>th</sup> grade level. It is now also open for our incoming Kindergarten students. The Parent Portal offers a school/home connection by providing electronic communication and information opportunities via our district webpage. Implementation of the Parent Portal eliminates printing and postage costs and provides parents immediate access to information.

Your child's teacher for the school year will also be available on the Parent Portal prior to the district mailing.

Other information available for Parents/Guardians includes:

- Assigned Teacher/s
- Attendance
- Report Cards

The link to the Parent Portal is available on the district website [www.marsd.org](http://www.marsd.org) and on your school's homepage.

Username and password information, along with instructions to access your Parent Portal account are provided through the main office of each school. Your account provides access to your child only. This feature is both secure and easy to use. If you forget your password you can reset it on the portal site and a new password will be emailed to you.

**After logging in, please remember to change your username and password.** Also you may update your contact information in the Parent Portal. All school district communications will be delivered through your contact phone number and email from the Parent Portal. This includes snow closings, delayed openings, and early dismissals.

Matawan-Aberdeen Regional School District is committed to reducing costs and conserving our natural resources.

Please access our new method of home/school communication. If you have any questions regarding the Parent Portal or your account, please email [ParentPortalHelp@marsd.org](mailto:ParentPortalHelp@marsd.org)



## **SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION**

### **Cliffwood Elementary School**

422 Cliffwood Avenue Cliffwood, NJ 07721

Phone: 732-290-2770

Fax: 732-566-2837

### **Ravine Drive Elementary School**

170 Ravine Drive Matawan, NJ 07747

Phone: 732-290-2780

Fax: 732-566-6423

### **Strathmore Elementary School**

282 Church Street Aberdeen, NJ 07747

Phone: 732-290-2790

Fax: 732-290-8463

### **Lloyd Road Elementary School**

401 Lloyd Road Aberdeen, NJ 07747

Phone: 732-705-5700

Fax: 732-705-4765

**Matawan Aberdeen Regional School District website; [www.MARSD.org](http://www.MARSD.org)**





**District Mission Statement**

*We are committed to meeting or exceeding the NJ Student Learning Standards at all grade levels in all areas, and providing a safe and supportive environment where all students are inspired, empowered, and encouraged to maximize their unique potential.*

**Published by the  
Matawan-Aberdeen Board of Education**

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**DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS 2019-2020**

**Joseph Majka, J.D.**, *Superintendent of Schools*  
**Nelyda Perez**, *Assistant Superintendent for Special Services and Programs*  
**John Bombardier**, *Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction*  
**Alexandre Ferreira**, *School Business Administrator/ Board Secretary*  
**Michael J. Liebmann**, *Director of Personnel*  
**Maggie Lazur**, *Assistant Director of Special Services and Programs/ Assistant Principal of  
Cambridge Park Preschool*  
**Elford Rawls-Dill, Ph.D.**, *Director of Curriculum and Instruction, 6-12*  
**Mona Tobia.**, *Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Prek-5*

**Mr. Mark VanHorn, Principal**  
Cliffwood Elementary School

**Ms. Kelly Bera, Principal**  
Strathmore Elementary School

**Ms. Patricia Janover, Principal**  
Ravine Drive Elementary School

**Ms. Michele Ruscavage, Pre-K-3 Early Childhood Administrator**  
Pre-K-3 Elementary Schools

**Mr. Joseph Jerabek, Principal**  
Lloyd Road Elementary School

**Ms. Cristina Olsen, Assistant Principal**  
Lloyd Road Elementary School