

Peck Slip School Family Handbook

2016 – 2017



Dear Peck Slip Families,

We are delighted to welcome you – or welcome you back – to the Peck Slip School community! This handbook describes Peck Slip School procedures, policies, traditions and curriculum. Please plan to read through this resource carefully and refer to it regularly. We are looking forward to a great year with you and your children!



Maggie Siena
Principal, Peck Slip School

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Ladder of Communication

The first stop for most inquiries regarding your child are with his/her classroom teacher. If you are unsure whether an issue you have should be brought to the Principal, or if you feel escalation is needed, please email the Parent Coordinator for assistance. (See staff contact list for contact information.)

Concern	Who you should contact
Your child's academic progress	Your child's classroom teacher or enrichment teacher
Social concerns in the classroom	1. Your child's classroom teacher 2. Guidance Counselor
Classroom Academic Activities	Your child's classroom teacher
Classroom Social Activities	Your child's class parent
General school questions	Parent Coordinator
IEP/Special Education questions	1. Special Education liaison 2. School Psychologist 3. Principal
Questions about the After-School Program	After-School Site Director
Questions about the School Bus or MetroCard	School Secretary or Parent Coordinator
Questions about School Lunch	School Secretary or Parent Coordinator
Questions about your child's attendance record	School Secretary
Change in Dismissal Instructions from school – temporary (one-time)	Note backpacked to your child's classroom teacher
Change in Dismissal Instructions from school (on-going)	Note backpacked to your child's classroom teacher <i>and</i> change must be made to Blue Card in Main Office.
Changes in dismissal from After School	Manhattan Youth Site Director
Questions about School bus or MetroCard	School Secretary or Parent Coordinator
PTA questions (fundraising, events)	PTA Executive Board
Foreign Language Translation	Parent Coordinator
Recommendation for private evaluations/therapies, tutors	1.Guidance Counselor 2.Principal
Questions about registration/forms	1.School Secretary 2.Parent Coordinator
504 Forms, medication	School nurse
Sick Notes/Emails	Classroom teacher <i>and</i> School Secretary
School Issues other than listed above	Parent Coordinator

Peck Slip School Staff Contact List

Administrative Staff	Title – Room	Contact
Maggie Siena	Principal – 238	msiena@schools.nyc.gov
Tammy Malave	School Secretary – 211	tmalave@schools.nyc.gov
Denise Greene	Parent Coordinator – 211	dhgreene@schools.nyc.gov
Teachers	Grade-Room	Contact
Lyndell Locker	PK-202	llocker@schools.nyc.gov
Lesley Plimpton	PK-204	lplimpton@schools.nyc.gov
Rachel Kirby	K-210	rkirby2@schools.nyc.gov
Catherine Schoenfeld	K-214	cschoenfeld2@schools.nyc.gov
Brent Harney	K-218	bharney@schools.nyc.gov
Camille Trotman	K-222	ctrotman2@schools.nyc.gov
Julie Lee	K-222	jlee100@schools.nyc.gov
Alina Vayner	1-304	avayner@schools.nyc.gov
Nicole Mulligan	1-304	nmulligan2@schools.nyc.gov
John Raynes	1-306	jraynes@schools.nyc.gov
Judy Moy	1-308	jmoy5@schools.nyc.gov
Lauren Carroll	2-310	lcarroll5@schools.nyc.gov
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Gretchen Lustig	2-312	glustig@schools.nyc.gov
Thea Sachs	2-312	tsachs2@schools.nyc.gov
Simona Afshar	2-314	Safshar@schools.nyc.gov
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Casey Corey	3-326	ccorey@schools.nyc.gov
Kyla Gay	3-326	kgay@schools.nyc.gov
Rebecca Glick	4-318	rglick@schools.nyc.gov
Sarah Katz	4-322	skatz19@schools.nyc.gov
Victoria Berger	4-322	vberger@schools.nyc.gov
Nikki Ionescu	SETSS – 224	nionescu@schools.nyc.gov
Anne Saidman	Library – 422	asaidman@schools.nyc.gov
Ashley LaPierre	Science – 512/Big Blocks – 126	alapierre@schools.nyc.gov
Danny Mina	Physical Education – 517	dmina2@schools.nyc.gov
Melanie Banks	Art – 522	mbanks@schools.nyc.gov
Michele Kishlansky	Music – 437	mkishlansky@schools.nyc.gov
Francesca Weiss	Academic Intervention – 306	fweiss@schools.nyc.gov
Peter Levin	Academic Intervention – 424	plevin3@schools.nyc.gov
Support Services	Subject – Room	Contact
Rebecca Newfield	Guidance Counselor – 337	rnewfield@schools.nyc.gov
Nick Cataldi	Occupational Therapist – 208	ncataldi@schools.nyc.gov
Torrie Seroczynski	Speech & Language – 237	tseroczynski@schools.nyc.gov
Sarah Dorado	Occupational Therapist – 208	sdorado@schools.nyc.gov
Lisa Elam	School Social Worker – 429A	emanger@schools.nyc.gov
Nesha Eastmond	DOH Nurse – 110	nhall@health.nyc.gov

line up. Please say good bye to your child before s/he comes inside. We will help with boots, glasses, etc. indoors.

- Kindergartners through second graders say good bye to their adults at the main door and go to the cafeteria.
- Third and fourth graders say good bye to their adults at the door on Water Street just north of Peck Slip and go to room 126.

Absence

- Regular attendance is incredibly important – kids who miss school fall behind. 15 – 20 days absent a year is considered chronic – that’s just two days a month. Please make every effort to have your child at school every day! However--
- **If your child is sick, s/he should stay home.** Anytime your child is running a fever of 100° or more, vomiting, or infected with a communicable illness, s/he must stay at home. Children with fevers can return after they have been fever-free for 24 hours. Children with communicable illnesses should return when their doctor has indicated it is safe. Please contact our school nurse if you have any questions.
- In addition to summer vacation, students are off from school each year for a Winter Break in December – January, Midwinter Break in February, and Spring Break in April. There are also several three and four day weekends over the course of the year. *Please plan family trips for these times.* When children take additional vacation time it is an unexcused absence. Please note: teachers do not prepare additional work for children taking additional vacation
- We are required to note the reason students are absent. If your child is absent, please call the main office or email Tammy & your child’s teacher to let us know why.
- Likewise please make efforts to schedule doctor and dentist appointments to take place after school or on days school is not in session. Thank you!!

Punctuality

- **Students are expected to be at school on time every day.** Late arrivals are very hard on students who are late and very disruptive to everyone else in the room. Be considerate of the school community – be on time.
- **PreK students who arrive after 8:15 are late.**
- **Kindergarten – grade 4 students who arrive after the bell rings at 8:20 AM are late.** Students whose classes have entered the building must wait outside until the lobby has cleared before entering the building. Caregivers must sign in late students in the office (room 211).
- **Latenesses are entered into students’ permanent school records, and play a role during the middle school application process.** Please be aware that middle schools consider more than 4 latenesses a year excessive!
- **If lateness is an ongoing issue, seek help.** Maggie and Rebecca are happy to help you plan routines and structures that promote punctuality.

Dismissal

- **PreK students will be dismissed from the classroom at 2:35 PM.** PreK parents/caregivers may begin going upstairs at 2:30 PM.
- **Kindergarten – fourth grade students will be dismissed** from spots in front of the school on Peck Slip, rain or shine. After teachers have identified the grown-up picking up each child, they will shake the child’s hand and hand her/him over. Do not take your child before the

teacher hands her/him to you. Please note that this is NOT a good time to engage the teacher in conversation.

- **We do not have outdoor supervision on the street at dismissal.** Once children have been dismissed to their parents/caregivers, they are the parents'/caregivers' responsibility. There are no school staff members supervising this area.
- **Caregivers arriving late** must go to the office to sign out & pick up their children. **Please do not be late.** We are not staffed to provide supervision after school, and it is really, really stressful for children. Parents/caregivers who arrive late for dismissal must sign in, come to the office and sign their child out.
- **Changes to dismissal plans need to be made in writing by sending a note in your child's backpack to their classroom teacher.**

Early Pick Up

- Unless there is an emergency students are expected to attend school until dismissal.
- Because early pick up is so disruptive, we ask that you refrain from doing so unless it is absolutely necessary. Every minute of the day counts, and we must minimize disruptions.
- If you must pick your child up early, please sign in and come to the office. We will call your child's classroom, and s/he will meet you in the office. You must sign your child out.
- **Students who need to leave school early must be picked up by 2:20 PM.** Otherwise you will need to wait until regular dismissal at 2:40 PM. We will not call classrooms during this time with dismissal information. Thank you for your cooperation!!

Buses

- Yellow school bus service is available to K – 2 students who live a half a mile or more from the school and 3 – 5 grade students living a mile or more from the school.
- **Do not rely on your child to convey changes in dismissal plans,** especially when it involves busing. We love them, but they cannot be trusted to accurately relay this information. Please send changes in writing or via email **with as much advance notice as possible.**
- **Bus service can be smooth sailing or very challenging,** and bus service at the beginning of the school year is especially stressful and frustrating. Understanding what everyone's roles are in the process might help to clarify how everything works.
 - The **Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT)** makes yellow bus (or MetroCards) available to eligible children. OPT works with contracted vendors (like **Consolidated, the bus company** they use for our routes), and the vendors (like Consolidated) hire and manage the bus drivers. The Office of Pupil Transportation provides a school with available bus stops for the school. The school then offers the list of stops for the families to choose from. Once students sign up for the bus and choose a stop, those stops become active on the route. ***The OPT determines the order of the stops, and sets the time schedule for the route based on those stops and the information they have about the distance between them and the school.*** School provides the route information to the families, but has no involvement in setting the times, determining order of stops, determining roads used to travel to those stops, or the hiring/scheduling of drivers. Neither the OPT nor the bus company is managed by the school.
 - **For changes in service:** When a driver calls in sick, or is on vacation, the bus company sends a replacement driver. ***The school does not get notified when this happens.*** When the bus arrives late to stops, ***we also are not notified.*** The office finds out about these

- things only if families on the route call to inform us. In the morning, the office staff is not here until 8am, and since the bus route starts and practically finishes before we arrive at the office, your main points of contact in the morning are the **driver** and the **bus company**. These numbers have been provided to all bus families.
- More information regarding the morning route: If you feel that the bus is inordinately late, you may call the driver and/or the dispatcher at the bus company to check on the bus' whereabouts. Note that if your child is late to school as a result of riding a delayed bus, they will not be marked late. **Buses are required to arrive no later than five minutes before school starts (in our case, 8:15).** If the bus arrives late to school in the morning, we will notify families via email and we will lodge a complaint.
 - More information regarding the afternoon route: Dismissal is at 2:40, and it takes several minutes for kids to walk downstairs, and for Peck Slip staff to make sure all bus riders are present and accounted for before boarding the bus. If there is any question about a rider, we will wait until we are 100% sure we have everyone before we allow the bus to leave. Sometimes the bus arrives before dismissal and is waiting outside, and other times, arrives a few minutes after dismissal, depending on traffic scenarios that they might encounter on any given day. Therefore, please note that the bus arrival time might vary, up to 15 minutes any day, or possibly more on occasion. If the bus arrives at Peck Slip after 2:55, we will email bus families to let them know the bus has arrived late. **If you do not hear from us, you should assume that the bus left by 2:55.** As with mornings, if the bus is inordinately late arriving to your stop in the afternoon, your main contact will be the **driver** or the **dispatcher**. The main office will not know where the bus is along the route, or at what time it will arrive at your designated stop. Please note: ***In the afternoon, buses are required to arrive at the school no later than thirty minutes after school ends (in our case 3:10). If the bus arrives after 3:10, we can lodge a complaint.*** As parents, you can lodge a complaint any time you feel afternoon bus service has not been satisfactory.
 - **If you would like to lodge a complaint about the bus service, call the Office of Pupil Transportation at 718-392-8855. You will get a reference number for your complaint. Please forward this reference number to us** so we may keep track of the volume, and try to expedite the handling of your complaints. We can't stress enough how important this is – the more complaints that get lodged, the more attention the issue will get. The school can also file complaints (and we have filed 3 already this week), but **it is critical that families affected by the bus issues call.**

Strollers/Scooters/Skateboards

- **Please note that for safety reasons** we cannot accommodate strollers inside the school building. As is the case at other downtown schools, strollers may be parked outside.
- Strollers, scooters, and skateboards **cannot** be stored at school.
- Though space just outside the school is available for stowing scooters, strollers, and skateboards, school is not liable or responsible for lost, stolen, and/or damaged items. This is New York City – park at your own risk. We recommend labelling scooters to avoid confusion.
- Please note that we do encourage school-aged children to stop using the stroller. See Rebecca if you need assistance with this transition.

Lunch

- Because we have both students and staff with very serious peanut allergies, **Peck Slip is a PEANUT FREE SCHOOL**. If you send lunch from home, please make sure it includes no **peanuts or peanut products**. We cannot emphasize enough how important this is for the health of our community. **DO NOT** send peanuts or peanut products in lunches or snacks at any time.
- Other students have a variety of food allergies. Please remind your child not to share their lunches with others.
- **All families must complete and return a National School Food Programs form, which you can access here: nyc.applyforlunch.com**. All means all – even if you plan to send lunch from home, you must complete and submit this form. Peck Slip is required to have a National School Food Program form filled out for each family in our school. Important data is collected from the forms and is used to determine school funding. If you prefer, you may get a paper form from the Main Office. For more information regarding the Department of Education School Food Program visit www.opt-osfns.org.
- Families may purchase school lunch or send their child with lunch from home. Some families opt to purchase school lunch on Fridays only – pizza day!
- Please label your children’s lunch boxes and all containers so that items may be returned to you in case they are lost.

Birthdays

- Children who celebrate birthdays during the school year may bring a birthday treat to share. These should be ready to pass out – think cupcakes, cookies, or brownies. **DO NOT** bring cakes. **You must arrange birthday celebrations with your child’s teacher in advance**. Not only do birthday celebrations affect the schedule, teacher also need to plan accommodations for students with food allergies.
- Keep it simple – just a birthday treat. No decorations, beverages, party favors and the like. Please save these for home parties.
- Siblings may not join in – it’s too disruptive to their learning.
- Birthday party invitations may **NOT** be passed out at school, even when all kids in the class are invited – too often they have gone missing... Plan to use email or snail mail.
- Students (and staff) with summer birthdays celebrate during our annual Summer Birthday Party in June. Parents do not attend this school-time event.
- Each teacher will communicate additional classroom birthday traditions.

Cell Phone Policy

- While students are permitted to bring electronic items to school (including cell phones; smart watches; laptops, tablets, iPads, and other similar computing devices; and portable music and entertainment systems), **they may not be turned on or used during school hours**, except for instructional and educational purposes and with the explicit permission and approval of the teacher.
- If a student uses a cell phone, smart watch, computing device, and/or portable music and entertainment system in violation of the school policy the device will be confiscated, stored in a locked location in the office, and returned only to a parent/guardian.
- If a device is used in a manner inconsistent with school policy more than 3 times in a school year, the student’s right to bring that device to school will be revoked for that school year.
- The school is not liable or responsible for lost, stolen, and/or damaged cell phones, computing

devices, and portable music and entertainment systems.

Lost & Found

- **LABEL YOUR CHILDREN'S CLOTHING AND BACKPACKS.** In time, all sweatshirts and jean jackets begin to look the same. Labeled items can and will be returned to children. The rest is donated to the needy at the end of each month. The lost & found is located in the cafeteria.

After school

- Manhattan Youth provides after school for students in kindergarten through fourth grade at Peck Slip. Mae-Sue Guery is the Site Director. Mae-Sue's email is mae-sue@manhattanyouth.org.
- Manhattan Youth's website is www.manhattanyouth.org and the phone number is 212-766-1104.
- Manhattan Youth runs from dismissal to 5:50 PM, including half days.
- Though they use Peck Slip's facilities, Manhattan Youth is an entirely separate organization. All questions/concerns regarding the after school program should be directed to Mae-Sue or another Manhattan Youth representative.

Private School Recommendations

- Our teachers do not write letters of recommendation or fill out check lists for private school admissions. Instead we attach a copy of the child's most recent report. Parents should give application forms to Tammy in the office.

Recess

- Recess is an essential part of the school day. It provides the opportunity for physical release, socialization, problem-solving, and joy.
- Unless it is raining, snowing, there is ice on the play surface, or the wind chill factor creates an effective temperature below zero degrees Fahrenheit (-18 degrees Celsius), recess takes place outside. Dress your children for outdoor play each day – this includes appropriate shoes for running.
- Supervised structured recess is available during most recess periods for children who need support at this important learning time of the day.
- On the rare occasions that we must be indoors for recess, students watch about 20 – 25 minutes of entertainment appropriate to their age.

Dress code

- While we have no official dress code, children are expected to dress neatly and appropriately, including groomed hair.
- Please remember that a school day is likely to involve glue, paint, clay, running, and other outdoor play. Dress your child accordingly.
- No Heelies or flip flops. Ballet flats, heels, and high-heeled sneakers don't work at recess either. We recommend rubber soled shoes or sneakers.
- **Sneakers are a must** on the day your child has P.E.
- Remember – LABEL EVERYTHING!!

Gift Giving

- It is natural that families may want to contribute gifts to teachers and staff members. However, as City employees, all school staff members are bound by complex Conflict of Interest rules, and are subject to investigation if they accept inappropriate gifts. Please be sure to adhere to these guidelines:
 - Gifts should be of nominal monetary value.
 - Staff members may not accept cash gifts – this includes checks and cash cards, like Amex.
 - Teachers may accept class gifts, provided
 - They are not excessive in value,
 - They are from the whole class and no individual child or family is mentioned as the giver,
 - Every child/family has an opportunity to be included regardless of monetary contribution, and
 - No family has been made to feel obligated to contribute to the gift.
- A full description of prohibited activities can be found in Chancellor's Regulation C-110.
- School Safety Agents cannot accept any gifts (but enjoy your children's cards).

Health & Safety

Security

- When entering the school **all adult visitors must present ID**, sign in, and receive a visitor pass. Even if the safety agents know who you are, they are required to sign you in, and will refuse entry to anyone without an ID. Thank you for your understanding.
- **All exits other than the main entrance are alarmed.** Do NOT use a side door to exit the building. False alarms may result in unnecessary lockdowns.
- Adults may not visit classrooms without making an arrangement with the teacher. Similarly, please do not drop in for a meeting before school begins unless you have an appointment – teachers are very busy planning for the day at this time.
- Adults may not use or accompany their children to student's bathrooms. Adults must use the adult's bathrooms. Bathroom keys are available in the office or at the front desk.

Emergency Contacts (Blue Cards)

- **It is essential that these cards are filled out completely and returned to the main office as soon as possible.** In the event the school needs to contact you regarding your child, it is important to list all the telephone numbers where you or your designated caregiver(s) can be reached during the school day (work, cell, home).
- **Please provide at least two emergency numbers for other adults** in case we cannot reach you (this happens a lot). **We highly recommend including a Peck Slip parent or two on this list.**
- If information changes at any time during the year, it is important that you come into the main office and update the Blue Card. If your address has changed, you need to furnish documentation in your name showing the new address.
- Unless you have sent a dated note, children are not released to anyone whose name is not on the Blue Card.

Evacuations & Drills (General Response Protocol)

- In the event of an emergency all school staff members are trained in general response protocols. We practice these with students so everyone knows what to do.
 - Evacuation: If there is a dangerous condition inside the building (fire, smoke condition, etc.), the school is evacuated to a designated safe space outside the school. Should we need to relocate to another site, parents are kept informed through 311. For safety reasons we are not allowed to publish evacuation sites. We practice this 12 times a year, varying conditions (such as blocking one exit, simulating danger in that part of the school).
 - Shelter-in: If the danger is outside the building, such as a disturbance on the street, the building is secured so no one can enter or exit. While the situation is being monitored, we conduct business as usual.
 - Lockdown: If there is a dangerous situation in the building, such as an intruder, we lockdown. During a lockdown, teachers close and lock doors, turn off the lights, and move children away from the door. We practice this twice a year. We are very careful to make these practices serious but never scary.

Snow days & Emergency closing

- Snow days and emergency closings are announced on the DOE website (schools.nyc.gov) and through most local media outlets. If it looks like weather may result in a school closing, please check these sources. *Please do not call the school regarding school closings or delays.* We are typically informed when the public is...

Lice

- Unfortunately, head lice are an unpleasant fact of school life. They are neither a health hazard nor a sanitary problem, but they are a force to be reckoned with.
- If there is a case of head lice in a class, a letter will be sent home informing you of that fact so that you can check your child's scalp.
- Children found to have lice will be sent home. Children who have been sent home because they have lice can only be re-admitted to the classroom after being checked by school personnel. Children who have live lice cannot come back to school.
- Please inform the teacher if you discover lice or nits, so that the class can be checked. Please also inform any siblings' teachers.

Medication

- **The school nurse is the only person who can administer medication at school** (including inhalers and Epi-pens), and she can only do so after she has received a medical authorization form that has been approved by the Department of Education. See Tammy or call the office if you would like to request a form. Please remember, children may not bring any medication to school, including antibiotics, medicated creams or ointments, acetaminophen or ibuprofen.

Communication

Home-to-school Communication

With Staff Members (see ladder of communication on pages 2-3)

- If you have a concern about your child, reach out to your child's teacher – she or he is the person with the most information and day-to-day contact with your child, and is most likely the best person to clarify and resolve issues.
- If your concerns are specific to one of the specialty classes (art, big blocks, music, physical education, science), please contact the teacher of that class.
- If your concerns have to do with the after school program, contact Mae-Sue Guery at mae-sue@manhattanyouth.org.
- If there are specific events, problems or changes in your family's usual routine which may affect your child, please let your child's teacher and/or the guidance counselor know. This helps us better understand and support your child.
- You may contact a teacher or other staff member by:
 - e-mailing the teacher
 - sending a note with your child
 - leaving a note in the teacher's mailbox in the main office
 - calling the main office and leaving a brief message
- Please briefly state your concern and if you would like to set up a meeting or speak on the phone. Please give a few possible meeting times and include the best way to contact you. Teachers will respond within 48 hours.
- A brief word of advice: Email is a useful, paper-free way to ask quick questions. But if you have serious concerns or issues, plan to discuss them in person or on the phone rather than through lengthy emails.
- **Do not email teachers or the office with last minute changes or requests.** Teachers may not see your email until students are dismissed.

With principal

- If you wish to meet with Maggie, you can arrange an appointment by stopping by the office, email, or phone.
- Again, please briefly state your concern and if you would like to set up a meeting or speak on the phone.

School-to-home Communication

- Email & backpack folders are our most likely means of communication. Please check both daily.
- Teachers will post newsletters on the Peck Slip School website on a weekly or monthly basis. Newsletters include information about classroom curriculum, reminders, and important dates.
- Parent Coordinator Denise will also send a weekly email with school-wide news and important dates.
- Most other communication will be by email. Please make sure we have your most current email address.
- If we reach out to you, please respond to us in a timely manner. Thank you!

Back-to-School Night

- In September parents/caregivers are invited to Back-to-School Night. You will hear from the principal and your child's classroom teacher. You will also have an opportunity to see our specialty teachers. **Please note:** childcare is not available for this event.

Progress Reports

- Progress Reports are distributed to students' families three times a year: shortly after the parent-teacher conference in November, right before the parent-teacher conference in March, and on the last day of school. Samples of progress reports are available on the school website.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

- Parent-teacher conferences are held for all students' families in November and March.
- This is the time for individual discussions about your child's class work and progress. Student work is often available for you to peruse, and if you don't get into the classroom often, it's a great way to see what the class is working on.
- To get the most out of these conferences, it is important to take a positive approach in talking to the teacher. If you have concerns that you are not sure how to raise, you may want to consult with Maggie and/or Rebecca.

Classroom Visits

- Approximately once a month family members are invited to their children's classroom to see what is happening and learn a little something with the kids.
- **When visiting our classrooms, please do not bring food or beverages with you.** This is important not only for safety and housekeeping reasons, but because:
 - You are showing that your full attention is on your child's work,
 - You are modelling your willingness and ability to delay gratification,
 - You are showing that you will follow rules even when you prefer not to, as your children are so often expected to do.

Student Directory

- Early in the year the school and PTA collaborate to prepare and distribute a school directory. This directory will only include information you have approved. Please carefully check the draft distributed before it is published to be sure your information is correct.
- The directory is to be used solely for individual & personal communication by Peck Slip administrators, staff, parents and students. It should not be used for commercial, political, or charitable solicitation.

Website

- The school web address is www.peckslip.org
- Our website is still in its infancy – expect to see a number of changes over the course of this school year! For now, you will find an up-to-date calendar of school events, a link to the breakfast and lunch menus, links to important sites (like Manhattan Youth) and current weather.

- If you connect to Amazon through our website a percentage of your purchase goes to our PTA at no cost to you. Make www.peckslip.org your Amazon bookmark, connect through the site & order away. You won't know the difference, but the PTA will!

Parent Involvement

Peck Slip School PTA

- Peck Slip is a new school with a world-class PTA, and every parent/caregiver is a member.
- Our PTA has two primary goals: community building and fund raising.
- PTA Meetings are held one Tuesday a month. Each year two to three are evening meetings, and childcare for school-aged children is provided. All other meetings are held after drop off on Tuesday mornings.
- Though the lion's share of the work is done by our tireless Executive Board, they cannot do it without you – to make it work, they need your help. Plan to attend at least one PTA meeting, give what you can during the Direct Appeal, volunteer at an event, and/or consider running for office – two Member-at-Large on the Executive Board positions are help open for new parents.

Class Parents

- The role of Class Parent is a critical one- you will serve as the liaison between the PTA and the families in your class, and you will be able to assist your classroom teacher(s) with classroom activities and communication. It is a wonderful way to give back to the school community and stay closely connected to what's happening in your child's classroom. On Back-to-School Night classroom teachers will ask for volunteers to be class parents. If more than two volunteer, the teacher typically make two official class parents & lets them know who is willing to help. Here are some of the things that will be expected of you:
 - Attend monthly PTA General Meetings, and communicate critical information to class.
 - Collect donations for book fair
 - Collect donations for holiday and end-of-year gifts. See guidelines for gift-giving.
 - Organize class-wide or grade-wide social events/mixers.
 - Work with your classroom teacher to understand their expectations of your role, as this will vary by teacher. Some of the things teachers will request assistance with might be:
 - communicating classroom supply needs
 - sending requests for classroom volunteers
 - helping to set up Amazon Wish List for classroom materials
 - assistance with setting up classroom curriculum celebrations
 - communicating class activity or trip information
 - updating or entering information into class blog
- The PTA & Parent Coordinator will co-sponsor meetings for class parents 2 – 3 times a year.

Volunteering at school

- Teachers will be in touch with volunteer requests. Please note that some children have a harder time at school when their parents are present – please be ready to follow your child's teacher's lead.
- Volunteering opportunities include:
 - Preparing materials (at school or at home)
 - Help in the room with projects

- Weekly volunteering in art and/or science classes
- Chaperoning on trips

Chaperoning Field Trips

- Parent chaperones play a vital role in maintaining the safety and educational value of the trip. Please take note of these **“Rules of the Road” for parent chaperones:**
 - **Do not tell your child you are chaperoning a trip until this is confirmed by your child’s teacher.** We often have more volunteers than we can accommodate.
 - Always follow the instructions of the teacher who organized the trip.
 - Silence your cell phone and put it away.
 - Limit adult socializing.
 - Do not bring siblings of any age. This is a liability as well as safety issue.
 - Do not purchase souvenirs or food for your child or any other students.
 - Remember that you are there for all the students, not just your child.
 - All students must return to school at the conclusion of a field trip even if you are chaperoning the trip. If you wish to leave school and take your child with you after the class has returned to school, you may do so by signing out in the office.

School Leadership Team (SLT)

- Every New York City school has a School Leadership Team (SLT) comprised of an equal number of school staff and family members.
- The Peck Slip School SLT is comprised of five staff members (the principal, the UFT Chapter Leader, and three additional staff members) and five family members (one PTA co-president plus four additional family members elected by the PTA).
- The SLT meets monthly to oversee the creation and implementation of the Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP), a document that aligns annual goals with the school’s budget.
- The SLT also discusses other relevant school-wide issues. The Peck Slip SLT has also adopted the practice of reading and discussing a book or articles related to one or more of our annual goals.

Classroom & Curriculum

Peck Slip School Mission Statement

The mission of the Peck Slip School is to educate young people to be passionate about learning, curious about others and the world, and committed to community engagement. Peck Slip graduates will be active learners and independent thinkers who have high standards, the ability to reflect on their skills, understandings and abilities, and a desire do their best. The same high standards for excellence apply to academic, artistic, athletic, and social endeavors. The impetus for their work will be curiosity about the world and commitment to the diverse communities they participate in – both local (the classroom) and global (the human family and the world we live in). Three core values support this mission:

Learning is a pleasurable, life-long pursuit. Perseverance through challenges underlies success.

Intelligence is effort-based. There is always more to learn.

Human beings are interdependent. In the classroom and across the world, we rely on one another.

Developing a sense of gratitude, Peck Slip students will appreciate what the world has to offer and be optimistic that their contributions, now and in the future, will make a difference.

Content Studies

In-depth inquiry of topics that interest children builds powerful habits of mind, including curiosity, the drive for mastery, questioning, and metacognition. Designed around significant, enduring ideas (*animals are adapted to survive in their environment*, for example), these studies teach students how to study topics in depth, preparing them for a lifetime of learning.

Peck Slip students engage in two to three in-depth studies per year. Topics include Life Studies (such as Pets, Egg to Duckling, Birds); Systems (Bridges, Subways, Boats), Cultures (Eastern Woodland Indians, New Amsterdam) and History (New Amsterdam, Immigration, Colonial New York). Students learn through nonfiction texts (including primary resources), trips, interviewing experts, and exploration and experimentation. Reading and writing instruction is often integrated in the content studies. In addition, students acquire, integrate, and demonstrate skills and information through the arts.

Literacy

Instruction in reading and writing focuses on building strong skills in the context of making meaning. Kindergartners develop solid letter-sound correspondence, phonemic awareness, sight word vocabulary, and print concepts through direct instruction as well as reading and writing integrated in content studies. First graders are consolidating these skills and gaining fluency as readers of increasingly complex books. Second graders are developing independence as readers, learning to choose just right books on their own and deepening their understanding of various text types and structures. Students in third through fifth grade are developing sophistication as readers, building comprehension skills while studying different genres, authors, and text forms.

Comprehension plays a crucial role across all grades. In addition to teaching comprehension skills students can use in independent reading, teachers foster strong comprehension by reading interesting and challenging texts aloud.

Peck Slip students learn to write through a process that includes direct instruction in spelling patterns and grammar and a workshop approach to learning writing process, genre, and voice. Our youngest students are encouraged to use drawing and estimated spelling to express themselves while they are beginning to learn early conventions and mechanics of writing. As our students grow, they are encouraged to develop their own voice and style while meeting increasingly demanding expectations for spelling and grammar. Handwriting plays a role as well. Students in grades K – 2 learn conventional print, and in third grade begin learning cursive. In all grades Peck Slip students learn to read and write across fiction and factual genres, with the ultimate goal of developing a love of literacy and an eagerness to read and write.

Mathematics

Peck Slip students are expected to gain deep understanding of mathematics concepts as well as fact mastery and efficient, accurate computational skills. The math curriculum is aligned to the Common Core State Standards and draws from a number of resources for lessons, problem solving experiences, games, and practice opportunities. Our goal is for students to be skillful and interested in mathematics, and to see its relevance to their lives.

Students learn both traditional and alternative approaches to operating with numbers, and are expected to master addition and multiplication facts.

Kindergarteners learn addition facts to a sum of 10 and begin learning doubles.

First graders learn addition facts to a sum of 20.

Second graders learn the standard algorithm for addition and develop familiarity with combinations to 100.

Third graders learn the standard algorithm for subtraction and multiplication facts to products of 100.

Fourth graders learn the standard algorithm for multiplication and divisibility rules for numbers 1 - 12.

Fifth graders learn the standard algorithm for division.

We emphatically request parents allow us to adhere to this timeline. Research shows that when children memorize facts and procedures before exploring their conceptual bases they are less successful in mathematics later on.

Social and Emotional Learning

Our students' social and emotional growth is as important as their academic development. Through a variety of experiences, students learn to be increasingly resilient, persistent, empathetic, assertive, and reflective. Teachers receive training in the Responsive Classroom approach, and lead classroom activities and discussions with the aim of developing community and individual awareness. Social and emotional growth is fostered directly, through class conversation, and through experiences like collaboration, play, and the content study curriculum.

Play

Play is a powerful, cognitively-rich activity that also happens to be extremely fun. Play promotes social and emotional growth as well as the development of executive function, the set of internal controls that are the foundation for school success.

Play is an integral part of the early childhood curriculum. Pre-kindergartners and kindergarteners have Worktime daily, during which they play alone or with classmates at activities including blocks, dramatic play, the water/sand table, construction, art, puzzles and games. First and second graders have Worktime regularly as well.

As children get older, play is integrated into the social-emotional curriculum and the content studies. Students engage in play activities to build community, develop interpersonal relationships, and deepen understanding of curricular themes. For example, students may dramatize a social scenario to explore appropriate and empathetic ways to react. Or they may build models, write plays, or create board games in the context of a content study.

PreK – grade 1 students also have one period a week of play with the Imagination Playground big blocks in the movement room.

The Arts

Peck Slip students receive visual arts and music & movement instruction once a week, and a storyteller visits once a month. Dance, theater and music are also integrated in classroom activities, often in

connection with the content studies. Arts curricula are aligned with the New York State Blueprint for the arts, and include both technical instruction and arts appreciation.

Physical Activity

Peck Slip Students have physical education at least once a week in the movement room. PE includes wellness education, aerobic exercise, and developmentally-appropriate experience with fairness, team play, and winning and losing. All students have recess midday, going outside unless it is raining, snowing, or exceptionally cold. Pre-kindergartners through first graders have an additional recess either mid-morning or in the afternoon.

Academic Intervention Services

When students are struggling to meet grade level expectations, they are provided with small group instruction in their areas of weakness. Parents are informed about the extra support and receive additional information about their child's progress. If we find that a student is still having trouble keeping up in spite of this additional help, parents can request an evaluation to determine whether their child qualifies for special education services.

Special Education

When students qualify for special education services they are provided with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that is created by a school-based support team in collaboration with the student's parents. This is a legal document that mandates the supports a child is entitled to receive. Supports typically include instruction from a special education teacher, speech and language support, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and counseling. Frequency, group size, and location are determined by the team with the parents. IEPs are reviewed annually. Parents can request additional reviews if they feel an IEP is not serving their child's needs. To learn more about special education and the referral process, please see [*A Shared Path to Success: Family Guide to Special Education Services for School Aged Children.*](#)

Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT)

Like most New York City schools, the Peck Slip School has at least one Integrated Co-Teaching classroom on each grade. In ICT classrooms a mixture of typically-developing students and students with IEPs (see **Special Education**) are taught by two full time teachers, at least one of whom is a certified special educator. ICT classrooms offer the same rigorous and engaging curriculum as other classes on the grade, and the teachers work closely to ensure the classroom curriculum is accessible, engaging, and challenging for all students. The two teachers use a variety of models for instruction:

1. Team Teaching: Both co-teachers deliver instruction to the whole group at the same time.
2. One Teach, One Observe: While one teacher leads the lesson, the co-teacher collects specific data about the students, the co-teacher or the environment.
3. Station Teaching: Teachers divide content and students. Groups of students rotate through stations in which they work on non-hierarchical activities.
4. Parallel Teaching: Two co-teachers teach the same content to separate groups simultaneously.
5. Alternate Teaching: One teacher works with the large part of the class while the co-teacher works with a smaller group.
6. One Teach, One Assist: one teacher leads instruction while the co-teacher circulates providing unobtrusive help as needed.

Most general education students will spend at least one year of elementary school in an ICT classroom. While the ICT structure was originally designed to support students with disabilities, there is robust evidence that it benefits students of all abilities. Not only do students develop their capacity to relate and empathize with each other, they ALL benefit academically from increased opportunities for small group instruction.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of our content studies. Teachers organize and arrange field trips to enhance, deepen, and support what students are learning. They are not optional excursions. They range from walks around the neighborhood to visits to museums, parks, and other landmarks, big and small, in our incredibly culturally rich city. Classes travel on foot or by subway, school bus, or chartered bus, depending on the destination. **Please note: when we cannot walk, the subway is our preferred mode of transportation.** It is safe, efficient, and far more reliable than the yellow school bus. *If you have concerns about you child riding the subway on field trips, please reach out to Rebecca or Maggie.*

Teachers will notify you of upcoming trips and give information on lunch, transportation, admissions fees, etc. Please do not hesitate to inform the teacher if you are requesting assistance to cover trip costs or fees. All trips require signed permission slips. *Children who do not bring in a signed slip cannot go on the trip.* Please be sure to get permission slips in on time.

Homework

Beginning in first grade Peck Slip students receive homework, consisting mostly of reading at home. Teachers may also assign additional math practice or work that supports the content studies. Your child's teacher will provide each family with a copy of the homework policy in September. Unless otherwise specified, children should be able to complete homework independently, and it should not be onerous. Please inform your child's teacher if s/he is struggling with homework.

We do not place a heavy emphasis on homework at Peck Slip, and you will not see a lot of it coming home. Our homework policy is based on the available research on homework, which notes that there is little correlation between homework and academic success in the elementary years (with the exception of reading. More reading = better readers). Instead, we encourage students to engage in free creative play, organized enriching activities, play dates (the best!), and age-appropriate chores (setting and clearing the table, feeding pets, tidying their rooms...). Children should definitely practice self-help skills (dressing themselves, putting on shoes and jackets, taking off boots, cleaning up after themselves).

Rules & Discipline

Peck Slip School adheres to the *Citywide Standards of Intervention and Discipline Measures*, a copy of which is provided to all families each school year. The standards describe infractions and the progressive discipline we use to address them.

At the building level, Peck Slip School has four basic school-wide agreements:

Be safe.

Be kind.

Be helpful.

Be your best.

These agreements cover it all and they tell kids what to do rather than listing exhaustively what NOT to do. They are discussed school-wide, and definitely encourage positive behavior. However, it takes many lifetimes for people to learn to adhere to these tenants, and as you can expect, our young people do make mistakes. When that happens, we respond with discipline and guidance.

First, teachers make every effort to address misbehavior in the classroom. They may use time outs, conflict mediation, a peace corner, or loss of privileges to teach students about appropriate behavior. When children are exceedingly disruptive, defiant, or aggressive, teachers may send them to the office. We discuss what problem students were trying to solve and brainstorm other, acceptable solutions. Consequences also follow, and in most cases we try to help students come up with ways to restore trust and make injured parties feel better. If they are sent to the office, students may be required to call home themselves to report what they have done. When necessary, we ask parents to meet with us to discuss strategies for addressing misbehaviors.

Finally, positive interpersonal relationships are of paramount importance. Teachers invest significant time and energy to foster safe, kind, and inclusive classrooms. If you believe your child is being bullied or systematically mistreated, please inform the school right away. We will investigate and get back to you about what we learn. We are absolutely committed to working together to ensure all our students are safe and learning to be good friends and community members.