

# Parent/Student Handbook 2022-2023



## SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

John Hancock Demonstration Elementary School  
3700 Morrell Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19114  
215-400-3120

John Hancock Demonstration Middle School  
10800 Hawley Road  
Philadelphia, PA 19154  
215-400-3122

Mrs. Melissa Bragg  
Principal

Mr. Kevin Kelly  
Assistant Principal

Mr. Christopher Oswald  
Assistant Principal

## **I. Attendance Policy**

- A. Our experience has shown that the students who experience the greatest degree of difficulty are those with the poorest attendance and punctuality records. Students need to be in school.
- B. Pupils are expected to attend school every day except when they are ill. Regular attendance is essential to the educational growth of every child. It is critical that each student maximize the time spent in the classrooms. Time missed due to excessive absences or lateness is a loss of valuable, consistent, sequential instruction, which cannot be made up with extra work. Parents/guardians will submit all absence notes through the absent note link found on our website. If the school does not receive a note excusing the absence within three days, the absence will be considered unexcused. After three unexcused absences, your child may be considered truant and referred to a support organization.
- C. In the event that your child will be absent from school for a period of time due to a family vacation, please be aware that your child will be marked absent for the days he or she is not attending school, and the absences will be documented on your child's permanent attendance record as unexcused.
- D. Children arriving 15 minutes after admission are considered late.
- E. Virtual Learning- In the event that the school district requires the school to partake of virtual learning, students are expected to be present during scheduled Google Meet and Zoom Sessions with their teacher each day during Virtual Learning to receive direct instruction. Students will also be expected to complete work asynchronously (independently and in small groups) during the Virtual and Hybrid Learning times.

### **Below is the Standard Attendance Process followed at Hancock Demonstration School**

- Pursuant to the District's attendance policy, written excuse notes explaining the absence, must be given to the school within three (3) days upon the student's return to school. If the note is not submitted to the school within the required time frame, the day(s) may not be excused. Written excuse notes must include a valid telephone number or other means of contact for verification purposes.
- All absences resulting in a total of three (3) or more consecutive days will require a written excuse note by a licensed healthcare provider.
- For absences that do not total three (3) consecutive days, parents may submit a written excuse note stating the reason for the absence. Excuse notes from a healthcare provider may also be submitted in lieu of a parent note for any absence.
- When a student has been absent due to illness, excused with a parent note, totaling eight (8) days (cumulative), all subsequent absences may require a written excuse note from a licensed healthcare provider.

## **II. Early Dismissals**

- A. It is imperative that your child remains in school the entire day. Medical and dental appointments should be made during non-school hours. We ask parents to avoid signing students out early for appointments as much as possible. School District Policy does not approve of students being signed out for non-emergency appointments. Signing students out of school disrupts the educational process.
- B. All persons picking a child up from school must be listed on the student's contact form and must have photo identification in order to validate their identity. These persons will

- be asked to show identification to the camera, prior to gaining entrance to the school building. The person picking up will then report to the office and sign the child out in the "Sign-Out Book." The child will then be called to the office. For the safety and security of your child, no child will be dismissed without an identified adult (over 18 years of age) to accompany him/her.
- C. During in-person student learning, an early dismissal, unless in an emergency, is permitted up until 30 minutes (1:40 p.m.) before the end of the school day.
  - D. Notices of early dismissals for report card conferences and staff development will be sent out in a timely fashion. Please check the School District Website [www.philasd.org](http://www.philasd.org), the Remind Application and/or Hancock School Advisory Council Facebook Page for dates and times of these and other activities and events.
  - E. Please reference the Special Release Procedures for School District of Philadelphia students- September 9, 2013-Revised Date: October 13, 2017 document, which is located at the end of this handbook for all Special Release mandates.

### III. **Emergency School Closing**

- A. When school is closing due to extreme weather conditions, an announcement will be made on television news stations early in the morning. The announcement will be "ALL PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED." When it is necessary to close school during the school day, radio and television stations will also make announcements. It will be announced as " ALL PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS WILL CLOSE AT (time)." If this should occur, parents and caregivers are asked to tune in to the local news, visit The School District of Philadelphia's website at [www.philasd.org](http://www.philasd.org), or call the District's Parent hotline at (215) 400-INFO (4636).
- B. It is imperative that we have on file current home information, emergency contact numbers and work numbers. It is also important to review with your child the instructions for what to do in the event that you are not home when he/ she arrives home from school.

### IV. **Delayed School Opening**

- A. Due to inclement weather or other emergencies, it may be necessary to cancel school for the day or have a "**delayed opening**." If this should occur, parents and caregivers are asked to tune in to the local news, visit The School District of Philadelphia's website at [www.philasd.org](http://www.philasd.org), or call the District's Parent hotline at (215) 400-INFO (4636).
- B. Dismissal time will remain the same. Yellow bus transportation will run, but bus pick up times will be pushed back in accordance to the time of the delayed opening for students (e.g. – If a student's normal pick up time is 7:30 a.m. and there is a two-hour delayed opening, the pickup time will be 9:30 a.m.). All school trips that are scheduled will be canceled. Breakfast, lunch, after-school programming, and athletics may not be affected. The School District will announce if the weather affects after school programming. We strongly encourage you to make arrangements for your child's supervision when schools are closed or delayed and to review these arrangements with your child periodically.

### V. **General School Safety**

#### A. **General Safety**

1. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Hancock Demonstration School will follow all School District of Philadelphia Health and Safety protocols. Please note that as the epidemic evolves, the District policies may be adjusted and changed.

Parents are encouraged to visit the Philadelphia School District website for updates. While the epidemic continues, please be certain to contact the school office before any visit to the school, and confirm all appointments. It is possible that parents and visitors may not be permitted to enter the building based on District Health and Safety Protocols. Please be patient and understanding during this time.

2. Until otherwise cleared, all parents and visitors are expected to wear a face mask and follow social distancing guidelines while on school grounds and or while inside the school building.
3. Once approved to enter the school, all parents and visitors must use the Main Entrance doors. All parents and visitors must bring identification. To ensure the safety of all of our children and school community, **identification must be shown prior to entering the school** building. For the safety of our school community it is critical that all visitors are prepared to present proper identification when visiting the Hancock Schools.
4. We ask parents to schedule appointments if there is a need to visit the school or meet with the administration or your child's teacher. So that the proper staff members are able to meet with you and address any questions/concerns please call the school first. Scheduling appointments and calling in advance allows us to anticipate your arrival. Please leave a message if no one is available to answer your call and someone will get back to you.

#### **B. Walking/Automotive Safety**

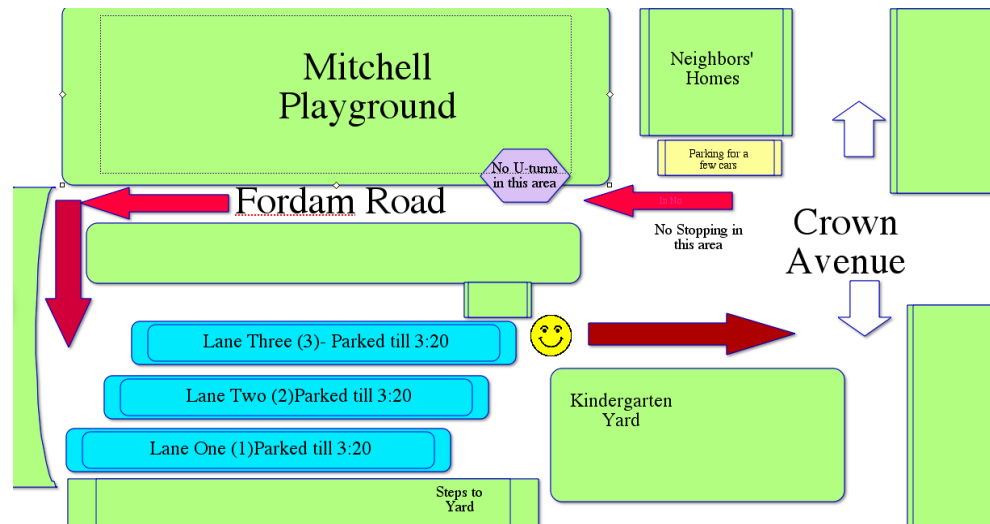
1. We encourage parents to park on some of the side streets a block away from the school and walk their children to and from the schoolyard.
2. For the safety of our children, please do not double park at any time. Please do not block the driveways of our neighbors.
3. Students are encouraged to come directly to school and to go directly home after school has been dismissed. This is for their safety. Parents are asked to please support this policy.
4. Signs and traffic cones have been placed around the school perimeter to help ensure the safety of our students and the entire school community. It is important that together we make safety a priority. Please comply with the directions on the signs and do not enter areas or park in areas where traffic cones have been placed.
5. The staff parking lot on Morrell Avenue is only for staff and service vehicles. Please do not enter that parking lot.

#### **C. Drop-off/Pick-up Loop (Fordham Road adjacent to Mitchell Playground)**

1. The entire Hancock School Community (students, staff and parents) must work together in order for it to function.
2. Utilize the following procedures when using the Drop-off/ Pick-up Loop in the **morning**:
  - a) In the mornings of In-person learning the Drop-off loop is open at 7:20 am and closes at 7:35 am. Please note that students are not able to enter the school buildings prior to 7:30 am unless they are eating breakfast in the school cafeteria.
  - b) Drivers are to use Fordham Road to enter the Drop-off/ Pick-up Loop. Drivers are only permitted to go south on Fordham Road prior to entering the Drop-off/ Pick-up Loop.

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- This map shows the layout of the area around Mitchell Playground. Mitchell Playground is at the top. Below it is Fordam Road, with a red arrow indicating traffic flow from left to right. To the right of Fordam Road is a green rectangular area labeled "Neighbors' Homes". Below the homes is a small yellow rectangle labeled "Parking for a few cars". To the right of the parking area is a white arrow pointing up, labeled "Crown Avenue". Below Crown Avenue is a green rectangular area labeled "Kindergarten Yard". To the left of the Kindergarten Yard is a red arrow pointing down, labeled "30-60 Seconds Drop Off/Pick up". Below this arrow is a green rectangular area labeled "Steps to Yard". To the left of the Steps to Yard is a green rectangular area labeled "No Parking".

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#### D. **Schoolyard Safety and Safe Supervision**

1. Please leave your pets at home when dropping off or picking up your children. Some students are afraid of dogs, so therefore it is best to leave your dog at home. Dogs/pets are not permitted in the schoolyard and are not permitted near the gates of the schoolyard.
2. For the safety of all Hancock Students it is critical that all children are picked up at dismissal/2:09 pm. Once all students are dismissed, the schoolyard and adjacent areas are no longer supervised.

#### E. **Health Safety**

1. By order of the School District, Hancock School will provide a smoke-free environment to its students, parents, visitors and employees. No smoking will be tolerated in the building or on school property, including the schoolyard and surrounding sidewalks. For the safety of our children, please do not discard cigarette butts on the school premises or in the school waste cans. Please refrain from smoking cigarettes, pipes, cigars, vaping or any form of tobacco/other smoking products in our schoolyard and/or on the sidewalk directly adjacent to the school.

### VI. **School Schedule**

- A. Posted on our school website

### VII. **Food and Food Services**

- A. **BREAKFAST**- Breakfast is provided to all students free of charge in the Cafetorium. All kindergarten students receive breakfast daily during the school day.
- B. **LUNCH** - All Students are eligible for and can receive free lunch.
- C. Parents/Guardians are responsible to make sure arrangements are made for their child to eat by sending a packaged lunch if students will not take advantage of the free lunch prepared daily by our cafeteria staff.
- D. Please be supportive of the School District's nutrition guidelines as we support student wellness for the student's here at Hancock. More information regarding the district's

nutrition and wellness initiatives may be found on the website:

<https://www.philasd.org/nutrition/>

- E. We encourage parents of students with food allergies to inform the administration and/or school nurse of food allergies. Students with peanut allergies are offered seats at designated tables in the Cafetorium to address contamination concerns.
- F. Lunch brought to school from outside places (such as McDonalds or Wendy's) are discouraged. We do not have the staff capacity to deliver these lunches to students. All students are eligible and welcome to eat free lunch every school day.

## VIII. Student Behavior

- A. The Hancock Demonstration Schools adhere to the Code of Conduct put forth by the School District of Philadelphia. The 2022-23 Code of Conduct may be found on the School District website as follows: [here](#).
- B. Hancock is a recognized PBIS (positive behavior interventions and supports) school, and students are expected to follow the behaviors as outlined in the PBIS Behavior matrix.
  - 1. The norms for student behavior are as follows:
    - a) Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Ready, Be Safe
- C. All students are expected to behave in an acceptable and responsible manner while at school, on field trips, riding school buses, on the playground, and in other school related situations. Good behavior, courtesy, and cooperation are essential for learning.

## IX. Dress Code/School Uniforms

- A. Grades K-5
  - 1. TOPS: navy blue or white shirts with collars or any navy blue or gold t-shirt. When cold in the classroom, students may wear navy blue, black white or gray sweaters, fleeces or crew neck sweatshirts over their uniform shirts. Hooded sweatshirts are not permitted.
  - 2. BOTTOMS: Navy blue or khaki slacks, knee length skirts or jumpers.
  - 3. GYM UNIFORM: navy and/or gold t-shirts with navy, black or gray sweatpants. In warmer weather, the children may wear navy, black or gray shorts if they choose.
  - 4. SHORTS: navy blue or khaki shorts are only permitted during the following months: September, October, April, May, and June. When shorts are appropriate, knee length is required.
  - 5. No jeans, sleeveless tops or midriff tops are permitted.
  - 6. Footwear may be shoes or sneakers. Shoes must have rubber soles. **Light up sneakers and skate sneakers are not permitted.** Open toes, open backs, heels or crocs are not permitted. Sneakers are the recommended footwear.
  - 7. Leggings are not permitted as part of the Hancock uniform. Navy or white stockings or leggings under a skirt are permitted if the weather is cold.
- A. Grades 6-8
  - a. TOPS: navy blue shirts with collars, any navy blue or gold t-shirt, or LaBrum Gear t-shirt. When cold in the classroom, students may wear solid black, blue, white, or gray sweaters, fleeces, or crew neck sweatshirts over their uniform shirts. LaBrum

hoodies can be worn if hoodie passes are earned by students (schoolwide weekly incentive based on attendance).

- b. BOTTOMS: Khaki slacks, knee length skirts, or jumpers.
- c. GYM UNIFORM: navy and/or gold t-shirts with navy, black, or gray sweatpants or leggings. In warmer weather, the children may wear navy, black, or gray shorts if they choose.
- d. SHORTS: Khaki shorts are only permitted during the following months: September, October, April, May, and June. When shorts are appropriate, knee length is required.
- e. No jeans, sleeveless tops, or midriff tops are permitted.
- f. Footwear may be shoes or sneakers. Shoes must have rubber soles. No flip flops or open-toe shoes. No slippers or slip-on shoes without a full back. Sneakers are recommended footwear.

## **X. Lockers**

- A. Each student will be issued a locker at the beginning of the school year. Students should not share lockers or combinations with any other student. All items kept in the locker are the student's responsibility and Hancock Middle School - LaBrum Campus assumes no fiscal or other responsibility for items taken from a locker.
- B. Students may go to their lockers four (4) times a day: in the morning; the beginning and end of the lunch period; and at the end of the day.
- C. All hats, outer clothing, book bags, and electronic devices must be kept in the locker. During class time, students are permitted to carry only their books, writing tools, and a small carrying item (pencil case, small bag, purse) for the purpose of storing personal hygiene products.
- D. The locker is loaned to the student, and to protect the health and safety of all students, the school administration reserves the right to inspect any locker for illegal items such as weapons, drugs, or alcohol.
- E. Students are encouraged to keep a change of uniform in their lockers.

## **XI. Cellular Phones**

### **A. Policy**

- a. Students have the option to turn their cell phones in at the beginning of the school day. All cell phones that are turned in will be returned to students prior to dismissal.
- b. If students choose not to turn in their phones, they are to remain off and in their book bags or lockers.
- c. Parents and Guardians are to call the main office if they need to get an urgent message to their child. If students need to contact their parents for an emergent matter, they may ask permission to go to the main office to use the office phone or their cell phone.

### **B. Infractions**

- a. In the event that a student is observed using a cell phone during the school day, the following will occur:
  - i. First Infraction– Warning by teacher/staff member. Parents/guardians are contacted.
  - ii. Second Infraction– Device surrendered to office, returned at the end of the day. Parents/guardians are contacted.



- iii. Third Infraction– Device surrendered and submitted to the office. The device is held until the end of the day and returned to the parent/guardian after the form is signed by the parent/guardian and student indicating knowledge of policy and future steps.
- iv. Fourth Infraction– Device surrendered and submitted to the office. Returned to parent/guardian at the close of the school day after form is signed indicating acknowledgment of policy and future steps. The student will turn in the device each morning for one week. The student may pick up the device at the end of each school day.
- v. Fifth Infraction– Device surrendered and submitted to the office. Returned to parent/guardian at the close of the school day after form is signed indicating acknowledgment of policy and future steps. The student will turn in the device each day for the remainder of the school year.

## **XII. Medications**

- A. Please do not send medications into school with your child. Drugs such as nose sprays, antihistamines, cold tablets, cough syrups and aspirin should remain at home or on your medical shelf. We cannot monitor the misuse of over-the-counter drugs. If, however, your child needs medication prescribed by your doctor for a prolonged period of time and it must be taken at school, you may come into the school office or make an appointment with the school nurse to receive clearance for your child to be given the medication by our school nurse or principal. The doctor must fill out forms for any medications, including over the counter medications that must be administered in school.

## **XIII. Health Services**

- A. A child who is too ill to remain in class reports to the school nurse or office. If it is necessary that the child be sent home, parents or the emergency contact will be notified. Children who are ill before school should not attend to protect others from infection.
- B. Care given in school is limited to first aid in an accident and illness until the parent or emergency contact is reached and the child is released.

## **XIV. Physical Education**

- A. The Hancock School physical education department provides all children with the opportunity to participate in a variety of learning activities with an emphasis on physical fitness and body movement. Students are asked to wear appropriate clothing under their regular dress for school as directed by the teacher.

## **XV. Homework Policy**

- A. Homework is to be assigned Monday through Friday of each week (sometimes over the weekend).
- B. Homework is a reflection of curriculum taught and should either reinforce or enrich skills taught by the teacher. Projects may be homework assignments.

## **XVI. Title One Funded Programs**

- A. Title I Parent Involvement Policy and Parent-School Compact are reviewed and revised as needed on a yearly basis. They are sent home to families in the fall and are published in this Handbook.

## **XVII. Parent Volunteers**

- A. Once approved following all COVID 19 Protocols, parents are welcome and encouraged to volunteer at the John Hancock Demonstration Schools. All parents wishing to volunteer must first contact the Main Office to obtain a copy of the school's volunteer policy and necessary clearance documentation. All potential volunteers must attend volunteer training. Each volunteer must meet and interview with the principal or assistant principal. During this interview, the principal or assistant principal will review volunteer policies and volunteer expectations, and assess final approval of all potential volunteers. Once approved, the principal or assistant principal will then determine the most appropriate placement/assignment for the volunteer, which in most cases will not be in the same classroom as the volunteer's child. Additional information will be available at the conclusion of the interview.
- B. Information regarding the Philadelphia School District's Volunteer policies may be found on the District website through the F.A.C.E. Organization (Family And Community Engagement) at <https://www.philasd.org/face/volunteer/complete-the-volunteer-orientation/>. We require families to complete the process of obtaining clearances and the orientation in order to volunteer in our school community.

## **XVIII. Celebrations/Birthdays/Food Events**

- A. If permitted, as per School District of Philadelphia Policy, students may bring a small pre-packaged treat to share with their class on their birthday. Please send items to be shared in the morning with your child. Please be certain that the treat is packaged in a way that your child is able to carry the treat themselves. It is disruptive to classroom learning to send treats later in the day, as the classroom teacher needs to be able to plan the best time to serve the treat to the students in the classroom.
- B. When families are asked to bring food to an event during the school day, we request that families bring foods free of such allergens as nuts. We cannot guarantee this request will be followed, but we do think this approach will generally reduce the risk of exposure and increase community awareness.
- C. Larger treats such as a birthday cake or pizza party are not permitted as a way of celebrating student birthdays. These treats generally take longer to serve and may impact the planned learning of students in the classroom. It is also cumbersome for the teacher to serve these treats to the number of students he/ she has in the classroom.

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## **XIX. Special Release Procedures for School District of Philadelphia Students- September 9, 2013 - linked [here](#)**

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**An Affirming Pledge to Myself**  
**By Marva Collins**

This day has been given to me fresh and clear.  
I can either use it or throw it away.  
I promise myself that I shall use this day to its fullest,  
Realizing it can never come back again.  
I realize this is my life to use or throw away.  
I am the only person who has the power to decide what I will be.  
I make myself what I am.  
Because, I am somebody!  
I am somebody!  
Respect me. Protect me. Never neglect me.  
My mind is a pearl!  
I can do anything in the world!  
If my mind can conceive it, and my heart can believe it, I can achieve it!  
Because, I am somebody!