

**William J. McGinn Elementary School**

**Family Handbook**

***2019-2020***



School	908-233-7950
Attendance	908-233-7950 x1
Fax Line	908-233-6766
Web Site	<a href="http://www.spfk12.org/mcginn">www.spfk12.org/mcginn</a>

---

1100 Roosevelt Ave, Scotch Plains, New Jersey 07076

Dear McGinn Families,

On behalf of the McGinn staff, we welcome you to our school and the Scotch Plains-Fanwood School District. McGinn Elementary School has a wonderful history. The school's name William J. McGinn was named for Dr. William J. McGinn, who at one time was the only physician in this area. He established an active practice and served the community for forty years. He died in 1966 when the school was under construction. A plaque with the likeness of Dr. McGinn is located in the front lobby of the school.

This handbook has been prepared to provide families and students with information pertinent to our school. The staff and I hope this handbook will serve as a useful document that will acquaint you with the diverse programs and procedures essential to our daily operation. For more information regarding curriculum, school forms, school events and more, please visit our website at [www.spfk12.org/McGinn](http://www.spfk12.org/McGinn).

The curricula and programs we provide our children are carefully researched, planned and implemented to meet the needs of our student population. We are concerned about the total development of our students, including their academic, emotional, physical and social growth. We are focused on fostering curiosity and creativity, respect for oneself, the adults and students at McGinn School, and society as a whole, and the value of lifelong learning.

These goals can only be achieved with the support of our family community. Parents and guardians, siblings and extended families, have an essential role building and supporting our educational community. It is important that we establish open lines of communication and strive for cooperation between the home and school. Through everyone's efforts, individually and collectively, we can establish a strong foundation that will prepare our students for their educational and future endeavors.

I am honored to serve as your principal and will strive to help your McGinn experience to be meaningful and enriching. Your interest and involvement in our school community is always appreciated.

Respectfully,  
Sasha Slocum  
Principal

---

## THE SCHOOL DAY

---

### Entrance & Dismissal Schedule

Regular attendance at school is extremely important. Parents should make every effort to have their child in school on time. To insure continuity of instruction, parents should plan family vacations when school is not in session.

- **Adult supervision is not available until 8:25AM.** Do not drop off students before 8:25 a.m.
- The morning late bell rings at 8:35. A child who is tardy must report to the office with his/her parent or guardian. When the parent or guardian signs the Tardy Book a pass is given to the child, which is permission for him/her to enter the classroom. **Instruction begins at 8:35 AM.**
- At the close of school, students who walk home are dismissed at 3:10PM.

K-Grade 4	REGULAR DAY	SINGLE SESSION	DELAYED OPENING
Student Arrival	8:25 a.m.	8:25 a.m.	9:55 a.m.
Instruction Begins	8:35 a.m.	8:35 a.m.	10:05 a.m.
Lunch/Recess - K	11:20 a.m. - 12:20 p.m.	No lunch	11:50 a.m. - 12:35 a.m.
Lunch/Recess Gr 1-4	11:50 a.m. -12:50 a.m.	No lunch	12:35 p.m. - 1:20 p.m.
Dismissal	3:10 p.m.	12:40 p.m.	3:10 p.m.

First bell: 8:25 AM, late bell: 8:35 AM

- \* Single Session: a shortened school day during parent-teacher conferences, the day before Thanksgiving, etc.
- \*\* Delayed Opening: school opens one and a half (1 1/2) hours later than usual. Students are not to arrive at school earlier than 9:55AM-10 minutes before the delayed opening time of 10:05 AM. Grades K-4: Dismissal times do not change; students remain in the school for the 40-minute lunch/recess period (12:35 – 1:20).
- \*\*\* Kindergarten Lunch 11:20 AM – 12:20 PM.

### Entrance & Dismissal Locations

- Kindergarten: enter the school through Door 15 or Door 20, depending on Teacher. **(See Below)**
- Grades 1-2: enter the school by the front or back door at 8:25.
- Grades 3-4: will be assigned a specific door to enter and leave school. **(See Below)**
- Safety: All exterior doors in each wing are locked preventing access from the outside. All visitors are to use the front door of the school.

• <b>Grade</b>	<b>Entrance</b>	<b>Dismissal</b>
• K (Rm # 103, 104, 105)	Door 20	Doors 20/9
• K (Rm # 107, 108)	Door 15	Doors 15/9
• Grade 1	Doors 1/9	Door 9
• Grade 2	Doors 1/9	Door 9
• Grade 3	Doors 5/9	Door 5
• Grade 4	Doors 5/9	Door 5

### Lunch & Recess

Lunchtime and recess, whether spent at home or at school, should be a pleasant time for students to rest and recharge.

Lunch aides are on duty for both periods. They are responsible for supervising children during the lunch hour. During inclement weather, a quiet indoor period is substituted for outside play.

### Lunch Schedule

**Lunch/Recess hour:** 11:50 AM to 12:50 PM. This hour is divided into two, half-hour periods:

GRADES	3 & 4	1 & 2	KINDERGARTEN
Lunch	11:50 – 12:20	12:20 – 12:50	11:20-11:50
Recess	12:20 – 12:50	11:50 – 12:20	11:50-12:20

- Children who have written permission from their parents may go home for lunch and should not return to school *before* 12:45 PM.
- Children who eat at school may bring their lunch to school or may order lunch.

### **School Lunches**

- The entire Scotch Plains-Fanwood School District uses the automated online payment system. This system allows you the option of depositing funds to your child’s cafeteria account online via credit card or e-check.
- The website for access to this system is <http://www.payforit.net>. This website can also be accessed through the District’s homepage, [www.spfk12.org](http://www.spfk12.org), under “Information & Forms”, “For Parents”, “Enter Online Payment System”. When visiting the Payforit.net site for the first time, it is recommended that you review the “Information (FAQ)” tab.
- You can also send, via your child’s backpack, a check or cash in a sealed envelope labeled with your child’s name, six-digit student ID and teacher’s name. Checks must be payable to the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education and include the child’s name and student ID written in the memo line. The teacher will send the payment to the main office where cafeteria personnel will enter payment into your child’s cafeteria account.
- Each student is given a lunch card with their name, photo and student ID that is swiped when purchasing lunch and the amount is deducted from their account.
- Regardless of how you choose to submit payment, it is recommended that you set-up your child’s account through the Payforit.net website in order to monitor your child’s lunch selection and payment balance.
- The monthly lunch menu will be posted on the school website at [www.spfk12.org/McGinn](http://www.spfk12.org/McGinn)
- If you have any questions regarding the lunch program please call the main office.

### **Alternate Lunch Time Arrangements**

If your child normally eats lunch every day at school and you wish to make an alternate arrangement on a given day, please send a note to the office so that lunch aides can be informed of the change. Your note will confirm to us that you are aware of the change and approve. Students leaving the school for lunch should not return before 12:45.

### **Behavior Expectations In School**

McGinn students are active participants in creating a pleasant, safe learning environment. Students are expected to demonstrate appropriate behaviors while within the school environment including arrival and dismissal, classroom time, lunch/recess, class trips, and after school. While the general connotation "appropriate behaviors" might be clear to the adults involved; it may not be clear to all of our students. The staff, thus, has a responsibility to fully acquaint students with school expectations, and to deal firmly and fairly with those students who do not conduct themselves properly.

### **Code of Conduct:**

Children should:

- |               |                            |
|---------------|----------------------------|
| • Be kind.    | • Be responsible.          |
| • Be helpful. | • Be safe.                 |
| • Be fair.    | • Be respectful of others. |

Be the first to say “HELLO”  
 Look people in the eyes  
 Keep your hands to yourself  
 Walk quietly through the halls

Use “PLEASE” and “THANK YOU”  
 Use appropriate school language  
 Treat others the way you want to be treated  
 Use “INSIDE” voices in all areas of the school

## **General Behavior**

Children are expected to:

- Follow directions the first time.
- Walk in the halls, classrooms, and lunchroom at all times.
- Line up and move on school property, quickly and quietly.
- Use inside voices inside the school.
- Use only appropriate language.
- Keep hands, feet, objects, and angry unkind words to themselves.
- Remain in their seats at all times. Permission from the adult in charge is required before students may leave their areas. (i.e. classroom, lunchroom, playground etc.)

In addition:

- Gum chewing is not permitted in school or on school grounds.
- Personal recreation items such as trading cards and games are not permitted in school or on school grounds. Children become very upset when they lose a personal item.

## **Lunch/Recess Behavior**

The students' lunch/recess period should be a pleasant and informal part of the school day. In addition to the behaviors listed under "General Behavior" the following items apply during lunch and recess:

Students are:

- Encouraged to use the bathroom facility prior to lunch/recess. A student is permitted to go to the bathroom during lunch/recess if (1) it is absolutely necessary and (2) with the permission from the adult in charge. Students will be "clocked" in and out to avoid excessive time.
- To address lunch aides by their proper name; i.e., Mrs. Grube, Mrs. DeMaio, etc.
- Not to trade the basic lunch (sandwich). This is to be eaten by the student who brings or buys it. No food exchanges are allowed since many students have food allergies.
- Not permitted to throw food.
- To clean up their trash after they have finished their lunch.
- Not to remove "purchased" food/drink from the lunchroom. All food/drink are to be finished in the designated area.

## **Outdoor Recess:**

- Only approved school equipment may be used.
- Appropriate safety procedures must be followed when using playground equipment and while participating in games. Wild running and wild throwing of balls are not permitted. Organized running games are permitted.
- Children are not permitted in the woods or on the property bordering school grounds.
- Aides will be assigned to specific play areas on a rotating basis to assist students.

## **Classroom Recess:**

- Students are to follow the procedures outlined by the classroom teacher: a set of lunchtime activities, developed by the classroom teacher, will be discussed with students and posted for reference.
- Indoor activities shall include reading, board games, puzzles, drawing, and coloring.
- Activities such as silent ball and other games involving throwing and catching are **not** permitted.
- The PTA provides an activity cart for indoor games. All classes are responsible for the care of these items

## **Consequences For Negative Behavior**

### **Consequences for misbehavior during lunch**

- . Students may be asked to perform a service by helping others.
- . Students may be restricted to eating at a special table away from their class.
- . Students may lose their recess privilege for a period of time.
- . Students may have their privilege of eating in school revoked for an appropriate period of time.
- . Continued chronic behavior may result in suspension.
- . Other consequences as deemed appropriate.

### **General School Consequences**

- . Aide or teacher/student conference
- . Contact family
- . Written conduct report and contact family
- . Teacher/student/paraprofessional conference and contact family
- . Principal/teacher conference with student and parent

### **Positive Behavior Consequences**

- . “Caught Being Good” credit for student in his/her class
- . Acknowledgement in student’s classroom
- . Contact family
- . Acknowledgement by principal and contact family
- . Acknowledgement in school forum
- . Other consequences as deemed appropriate

## **Special Area Classes & Services**

All students have weekly periods of art, physical education, and vocal music taught by a specialist in these areas. Fourth grade children may take instrumental music lessons once a week and perform in the school band. Students in grades 2-4 have Spanish twice a week.

A number of additional specialists increase the effectiveness of our educational program. McGinn has a full time librarian, nurse, basic skills instructor, reading recovery teacher, and speech therapist.

## **LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER**

*Grades K through 1:* Each class is assigned one library period each week for formal instruction in library, skills taught by the librarian. In addition, first graders will receive an enrichment period in the media center once a week

*Grades 2 through 4:* Students in grades 2 through 4 follow a flexible schedule. This means teachers and librarians plan together for research, book talks, skills, and lessons as well as the use of CD ROMs, Internet, DVDs, and books galore! Each of these classes will have a 15-minute book exchange each week.

In addition, children will have the opportunity to independently visit the library during scheduled times of the week with their teacher's permission to borrow or return books, do reference work, use non-print audio-visual materials or read periodicals. Library materials may be borrowed for one week. Each child borrowing a book is responsible for keeping it in good condition and returning it promptly. Children will be fined for damaged or lost books. Parents are welcome to browse in the library and to check out books.

---

## **SAFETY**

---

To promote safety for our children the following access routes were formulated cooperatively by the McGinn PTA Safety Committee, the Scotch Plains and Fanwood Police Departments, and school personnel. We encourage you and your children to learn and follow the appropriate routes to and from school.

### **Driving**

Follow the traffic pattern as described and illustrated on the next 4 pages. These patterns contribute to safety by reducing traffic congestion and allowing children to be dropped off or picked up on the school side of the road.

---

#### **NOTE:**

- The "drop-off" zone runs from the third/fourth grade path to the kindergarten crosswalk. The area beyond the crosswalk is reserved for buses.
  - Line up in single file in the drop-off zone, taking care to leave as quickly as possible.
  - Do not wait until your car is first in line to release your child. Cars should unload at all points along the drop-off zone
  - If you need to unload items from your trunk or leave your car, please park on recommended side streets and walk. Please be aware that both parking lots are closed to the public before 9:00 a.m. Only staff with permits will have access to both lots at this time.
  - Do not stop or park on crosswalks.
  - Do not park cars on either side of the street in front of the school.
- 

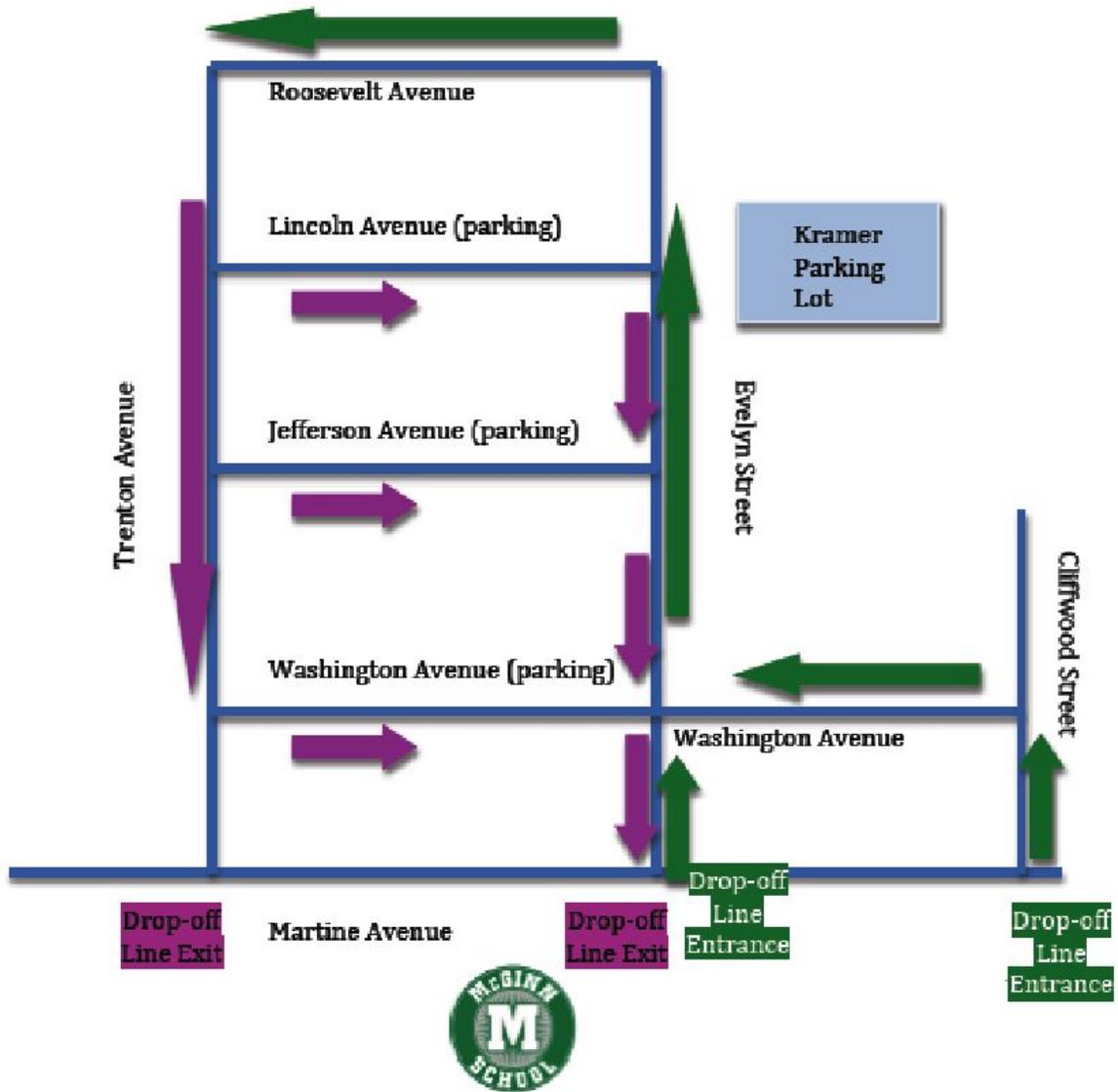
#### **NOTE:**

- The route described below is the only route permitted during the stated hours.
  - All cars must enter the upper lot from the driveway closest to Trenton Avenue.
  - Cars must turn left onto Roosevelt when exiting Visitor/Parent Lot.
  - Arrows have been painted in the lot to show the one-way traffic pattern.
  - Do not park on crosswalks.
  - At no time should cars be parked on either side of the street in front of the school-Roosevelt Ave.
  - Pedestrians crossing Roosevelt Ave. to and from the parking lot should use the crosswalk. *Be especially careful of the heavy traffic and poor visibility in this area.*
-

Front Approach: Drop-Off Zone

**McGinn Drop-off Route**

8:20 – 8:35 AM



- Turn off Martine Ave. onto Evelyn Street.
- Turn left on Roosevelt Ave.
- Stop on the right side of the street in the drop zone. The drop zone extends from the corner of the path where the yellow paint begins to the safety cone just past the flagpole.
- Leaving the school, follow Roosevelt Ave. and turn left onto Trenton Avenue. Please follow the car in front of you in the drop-off line.
- Follow Trenton directly to Martine Avenue. It is recommended that you also use Jefferson and Washington Avenues to get to Martine Avenue

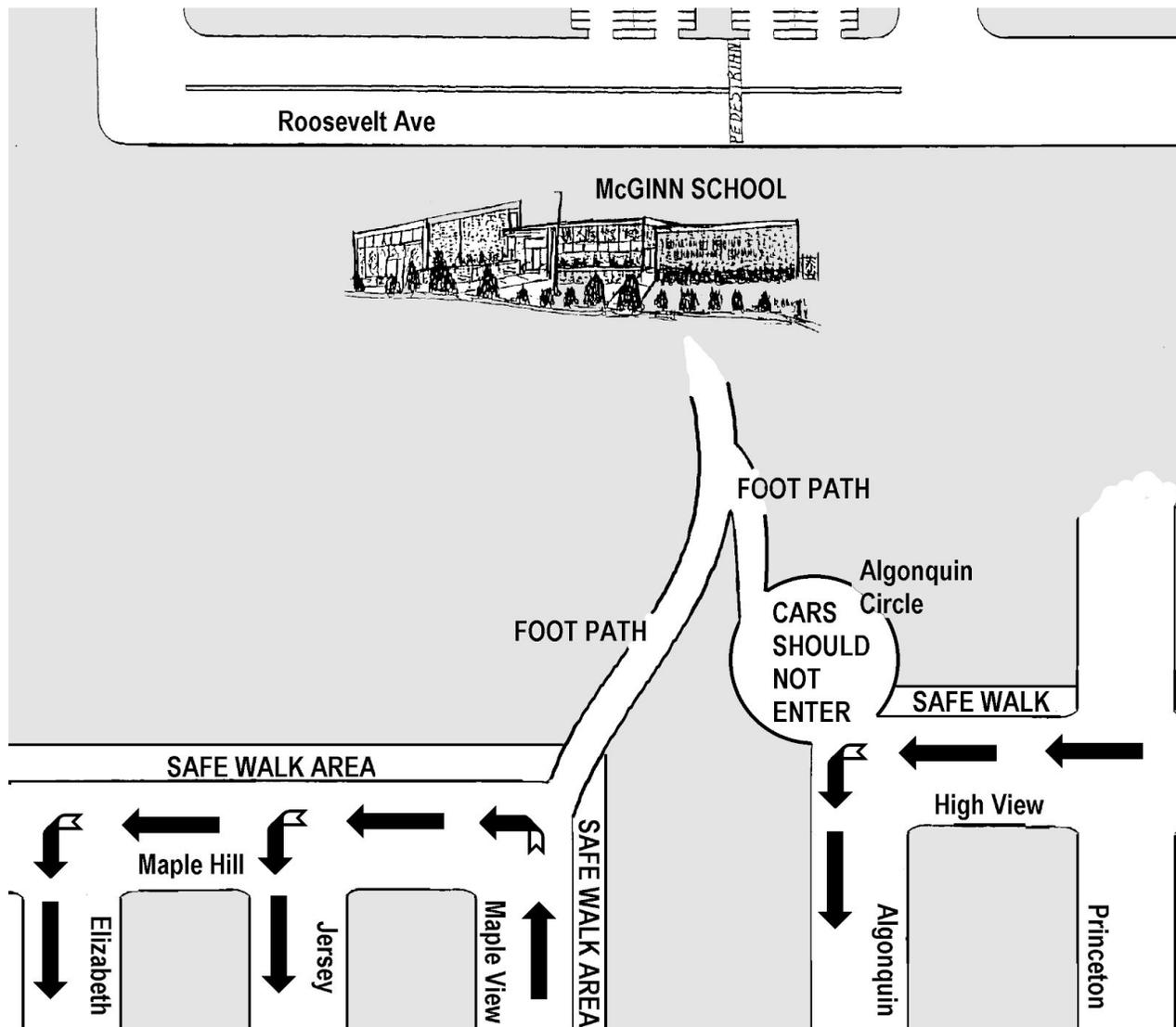
**Supervisors are on duty until the 8:35 AM bell. Any students arriving at 8:35 or later are considered tardy and the parent/guardian needs to come in to school and sign their students in to school.**

## **WALKING**

**Front approach:** (See Access Map)

- Use the crosswalks on Martine Ave. and Roosevelt Ave.
- Crossing guards are stationed at the intersections of Martine/Trenton Ave. and Martine/Ramapo Way. Children who need to cross Martine Ave. should do so at either of these intersections.
- Use the sidewalk on Trenton Ave. and cross over Roosevelt Ave. at the crosswalk to get to McGinn.

## REAR APPROACH ACCESS MAP



### Rear Approach: Maple View Ct.

- Proceed from Hetfield Ave. onto Maple View Ct.,
- Follow a one-way pattern down Maple View Ct.,
- Drop off students at the back path, and
- Continue around the corner to Maple Hill Rd.
- Do not stop or park on crosswalks.

### Rear Approach: Algonquin Dr.

- Stay on the right side of High View Ct. going to school and
- Turn left on Algonquin Dr.
- Do not park in the "NO PARKING" areas.

### Pick-Up on Side Streets: Jersey, Elizabeth, etc. (See Access Map)

- Park single file on the right side of these streets, facing Hetfield Ave. This allows traffic to move away from the congested area at the back path.

---

**NOTE:**

- Park in single file either before the "No Parking" signs on Maple View Ct. or after the signs on Maple Hill Rd.
  - Drivers waiting to pick up children on Maple View Ct. or Maple Hill Rd. should park in single file on the school side of the street.
  - Do not park in "No Parking" areas.
  - The curve from Maple View Ct. onto Maple Hill Rd. is one way.
  - Do not park on crosswalks. We teach our children that these are the only places where they should be crossing; let's keep them safe.
  - Drivers should not drive into, park, or pick up children in the Algonquin Circle because of congestion and poor visibility in this area.
- 

## **WALKING**

### **Rear approach:** (See Access Map)

- Walk on the school side of the access roads leading to the paved school paths at Maple View Ct. or Algonquin Dr.

### **Bicycle Riding**

- Before permitting a child to ride to school, parents should consider carefully local traffic conditions, distance, and the ability and maturity of the youngster.
- Children should not be encouraged to ride to school before the third grade. The Safety Committee thanks you!!
- NJ State law requires all children under the age of fourteen to wear bicycle helmets; McGinn students are expected to wear their helmets when riding to school.
- Bicycle racks are located at the rear of the school.
- Parents should provide locks. Stolen or damaged bicycles are solely the parent's responsibility.
- Bicycle riding is not permitted on school property. Children must walk their bicycles on school paths, sidewalks and on Roosevelt Ave.

### **Visitors/Parking**

Visitors are always welcome at McGinn. However, unless you have an appointment, please do not ask to enter the building **until after 8:40 am**. The Scotch Plains Police have asked that **ONLY STUDENTS** enter the building during arrival times to support security procedures. There is no available visitor parking in either lot at McGinn School. Parking is available on any side street or Kramer Manor Park on Evelyn Street. **All visitors are to use the front door of the school, and ring the doorbell to be admitted into the building.** Parents and others visiting school for any reason, per Board of Education policy, **must show proper identification**, sign the visitor's log in the office and wear a visitor's badge while in the building. When leaving school return the visitor's badge and sign out in the office.

---

**NOTE:**

- For safety, all exterior doors in each wing are locked preventing access from the outside.
  - **When planning a visit to your child's classroom for a birthday celebration or special activity, please note that infants and small children are not to be brought to classrooms.** Please make personal arrangements if you have children that are not of school age.
  - The hallways of the school can become crowded during the day. To ensure the safety of students and staff moving through the halls, **strollers are not allowed within the school building.**
-

---

## COMMUNICATION

---

### Automated Phone System

To call McGinn School by phone, dial (908) 233-7950. From a touchtone phone you may then select one of the following options:

To reach the:	Press:
Main Office	1603
Principal's Office	1602
Attendance Line	1
Nurse	1601

If you do not have a touchtone phone, remain on the line and office personnel will help you. To leave a message for a teacher, please enter the room number for the teacher. In the event of an emergency, please call the Main Office at Extension 1602 or 1603.

**Email** – The teachers, staff and principal can be reached directly by email. All addresses can be found on McGinn's website at [www.spfk12.org/mcginn](http://www.spfk12.org/mcginn).

### Attendance

It is important that a child be present each day that school is in session to insure continuity of instruction, unless illness prevents his/her attendance. While attendance is important, it should never be stressed to the point where the child is sent to school ill. Assist us in protecting the health of all youngsters by keeping your child home if they are not well. **NOTE: Children showing symptoms of sore throat, earache, runny nose, fever, cough, stomach upsets, vomiting, rash, diarrhea, or reddened, watering eyes during the preceding 24 hours, should remain at home until total recovery. A CHILD MUST BE FEVER FREE FOR 24 HOURS BEFORE RETURNING TO SCHOOL.**

Whenever parents contemplate keeping their child from school it is essential that the school be notified. If the term of absence from school is greater than three days, the parent/guardian should consult with the principal for appropriate record keeping. **In any event, if a child is absent from school for any period of time, a written explanation signed by the parent or guardian is required.**

### Absences From School

Parents are asked to call the school attendance number, 233-7950 and press #1, whenever their child is absent from school or will be more than 15 minutes late. Calls to this number may be made at any time during the day or night. The attendance officer will check messages left on the recording against class attendance reports.

Follow-up calls will be made to parents who have not called the answering service about absent or tardy children. If the attendance officer is unable to reach the family or the emergency contact person of the absent student, Board of Education policy requires the school to notify the local police of the unexplained absence. To avoid unnecessary calls to the police, parents are encouraged to keep the school informed about all of their child's absences by calling the attendance line whenever their child is unable to attend school for any reason, including family emergencies. If a child has attended the morning session and for some reason cannot return for the afternoon session, parents should call the school office at 233-7950 as soon as possible. These procedures will assist the school and parents in verifying that students have arrived safely at school each day. **Parents should continue to send a written excuse to their child's teacher whenever an absent child returns to school.**

Since attendance at school is essential for student learning, the following guidelines have been established to assist parents and guardians focus on this critical goal.

- If a student has accumulated a total of ten (10) absences during the school year, excluding documented medical illness, the school will notify the parents that improvement in attendance is necessary.
- If a student has accumulated a total of 15 absences during the school year, excluding documented medical illness, the parents will be required to attend a conference with the principal or other school personnel.
- If a student has accumulated a total of 20 absences during the school year, excluding documented medical illness, the parents will receive notification from the District's Attendance Officer.

### **Tardiness**

**Children are considered tardy if they are not in their classroom ready to begin at 8:35AM.** Unavoidable exceptions, however, caused by weather or transportation, will be excused at the discretion of the school Principal. All students who are tardy must be signed into school by their parent/guardian at the main office.

Since being prompt to school is essential for developing critical life skills, similar guidelines from our attendance practices have been established to assist parents and guardians focus on this critical goal.

- If a student has accumulated a total of five (5) late arrivals during the school year, excluding documented medical illness, the school will notify the parents that improvement in this area is necessary.
- If a student has accumulated a total of ten (10) late arrivals during the school year, excluding documented medical illness, the parents will be required to attend a conference with the Principal to design an improvement plan.
- If a student has accumulated a total of 20 late arrivals during the school year, excluding documented medical illness, the parents will receive notification from the District's Attendance Officer.

**Attendance Phone Number: 233-7950, press #1  
Operational 24 hours a day**

### **Early Dismissal**

Parents are requested **NOT** to ask that children be excused early except when an emergency makes early dismissal unavoidable. When necessary, dismissal of students prior to established times must be arranged through the principal's office in writing. Children are called to the office *after* the parent/guardian arrives and signs the child out of school. Parents will meet their child/children in the school office and sign them out before leaving.

### **Busing**

If your child usually goes on a bus after school, or attends an aftercare program, you must **notify both the school and the aftercare facility** if there has been a change of plans.

### **Forgotten Items - Drop-Off Bin**

We foster student responsibility by expecting our students to check that they have packed all they need for the school day. If your child has forgotten any school items, including their lunch box, there is a Drop-Off Bin outside the front door where parents may drop them off. To minimize the number of disruptions to the classrooms, please drop these items off *before 10:00 am*. All items in the bin will be collected and delivered to the classrooms by 10:00 am. If it is absolutely necessary to drop an item off *after 10:00 am*, please ring the bell to inform us that you are placing an item in the bin. Also, please remind your child that if they should ever find that they do not have their lunch / lunch box to please check in with the Main Office.

Also, to ensure safety, students who need to return to their classroom after dismissal to retrieve a forgotten item will be permitted to do so only if they are accompanied by a parent or guardian who will sign in at the Main Office. This must be done *before 3:45 pm* as the office closes at 4:00 pm.

**Notes**

If a student is going home with another parent, and this is not his/her usual routine, the parent needs to send written permission to the teacher for their child to go home with another parent.

**Order Forms, Payments, Permission Slips, Questionnaires, etc.**

Place each item in a separate envelope that is labeled with:

- child's name,
- teacher's name and
- contents of envelope.

**Telephone Messages to & from Home**

We understand that there are times a student must call home or there is a circumstance that requires a child to receive a message, however, this will be allowed only in an emergency situation. Since one of our objectives is to instill responsibility in the child, students should be prepared for school with all of his/her instructional materials. This shall include homework, musical instruments library books, snacks, sneakers, etc.

- If a child forgets any one of the above, permission will not be given to call home.
- If a child should fail to bring his/her lunch money to school, the child will be given permission to call home on the first and second occurrence, but on the third instance, other arrangements will be necessary.
- To reduce the number of classroom interruptions, please drop forgotten items off in the bin outside Door #1 **before 10:00 am.** (See above section on Forgotten Items)
- Make after school plans and pick up arrangements with your child before he/she comes to school. Classroom instruction will be interrupted only for emergency messages.

While we understand that this policy may be difficult to adjust to in the beginning, however it will instill in each child a level of responsibility and will minimize disruptions in the instructional program.

**Closing of School & Delayed Openings**

If school is closed or delayed because of inclement weather or emergency conditions, announcements will be sent through our Honeywell Emergency System to the phone numbers you provided. In addition, the information can be found on our district website.

**Problems & Questions**

If you have a question or problem concerning your child, first contact or refer to:

---

Bus .....	Principal
Curriculum.....	Teacher
Discipline .....	Teacher
Health .....	Nurse
Homework .....	Teacher
Instruction .....	Teacher
Lunch Menu .....	McGinn or District Website
Lunchtime .....	Teacher
School Calendar .....	District Website
School Procedures .....	McGinn Website, Teacher or Principal
School Records .....	Principal
Special Subject .....	Special Subject Teacher
To and From School .....	Principal
School Phone Number .....	233-7950
Attendance Number .....	233-7950 x1
FAX Number .....	908-233-6766
Website .....	www.spfk12.org/mcginn

---

## **Emergency Dismissal**

There may be occasions due to inclement weather or mechanical problems in the building when students must be dismissed before or detained after regular dismissal time because of unusual circumstances. In such cases the following procedures will be followed:

- The District will activate the Honeywell Emergency Alert System to notify parents of the early or delayed dismissal. **PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL OFFICE.**
- Children authorized to be released are then dismissed. At each grade level, children with younger siblings are instructed to pick up their siblings before they leave school.
- Children whose parents cannot be reached by telephone at home or work will remain in school until alternate arrangements can be determined. Information on the blue **Yearly Registration Update** form will be used to locate a neighbor or a relative who can assume responsibility for the child. Keep information current at all times.
- If an emergency occurs that requires alternate housing, all children are moved to Congregation Beth Israel for dismissal.

In emergency situations, parents will not be able to contact their child by telephone to make individual dismissal arrangements during the initial phase of the dismissal because the school's telephone lines will be in constant use. For this reason, please discuss emergency dismissals with your children including specific instructions to follow if an emergency occurs. Taking a few minutes several times during the school year to make sure your children know exactly what to do in the event of an emergency dismissal will help them take appropriate action.

---

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

---

### **Intervention and Referral Services**

The I&RS Committee is designed to suggest strategies for students who are experiencing difficulty in the classroom. The committee is composed of McGinn staff members and meets monthly to review the progress of individual students who may require supportive services. After the I&RS Committee discusses areas of concern, the group reviews parent input, the child's school records, and current diagnostic tests. It then makes recommendations to alleviate the problems. Suggestions might include specific strategies to be used in class and at home, supplemental help in school (such as speech therapy or Resolve counseling), or an evaluation by the Child Study Team.

### **Basic Skills**

Supplemental help in reading, math and writing is given to children in grades K-4 who do not meet district standards in these subjects. At each grade level, the Basic Skills Instructors meet with small groups of children several times a week to strengthen skills in reading, math, and writing. Participation in these programs is mandatory unless parents meet with the principal and sign a form rejecting these services for their child.

### **Reading Recovery**

Reading Recovery is a short-term early intervention program in reading and writing for first graders. Candidates are chosen on the basis of kindergarten and first grade teacher recommendations combined with the results of screening by a trained Reading Recovery specialist. Students are seen on a one to one basis for thirty minutes a day and are given the opportunity to develop strategies which will enable them to read at or above the class average.

### **Resource Room**

Special education teachers meet with small groups of children at each grade level and provide assistance with academics, social, and study skills for students with an Individualized Education Plan (I.E.P.).

## **QUEST**

The district's elementary program for selected gifted and talented students beginning in grade 4 is called "QUEST". Multiple criteria are used to identify children for this program, including Cognitive Abilities Test and NJ ASK, three benchmark activities, teacher and parent recommendations. The program stresses critical and creative thinking and problem solving. It is a pullout program at grade 4. In addition enrichment unit in Language Arts and Math are provided to all 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes and to selected groups in 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

## **Occupational Therapy**

School-based occupational therapy is intended to enhance a child's ability to fully access and be successful in the learning environment. Occupational therapists use purposeful activity to facilitate a child's active participation in self-maintenance, academic and vocational pursuits, and play or leisure activities that occur in the school environments. School-based occupational therapy referrals may occur when a child consistently experiences difficulty in areas such as handwriting, fine motor coordination/manipulation copying off the board, using scissors, organizing belongings and materials, or sitting still. A child may be appropriate for school-based occupational therapy services if they are classified as eligible for special education. Eligibility for special education does not mean automatic eligibility for related services, including OT. The final determination is made by a multi-disciplinary team, in conjunction with the OT evaluation.

## **Physical Therapy**

Physical therapy is a related service that focuses on a student's ability to function independently within the school setting and to benefit from an educational program. The physical therapist will assess a student's ability to move safely and independently throughout the classroom and school, postural control for academic activities, and functional performance for gross motor activities in the classroom, physical education class, and with peers. Interventions include facilitating gross motor development, strengthening, positioning, mobility training, and modifications and adaptations to the student's environment to allow for increased independence. A student is eligible for school-based physical therapy if classified as eligible for special education by the child study team and a physical therapy evaluation reveals a need for that related service. Physical therapy is provided in collaboration with the student's classroom and physical education teachers as well as parents to ensure understanding of the child's functional needs and to promote carry-over of newly acquired skills and/or needed adaptations.

---

## **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

---

### **Field Trips**

Grade level teachers plan field trips, which directly relate to the instructional program. These class trips are always of an educational nature and make a valuable contribution to the curriculum. Each grade level decides which trips, if any, are appropriate for their classes. Parents are notified in advance of field trip arrangements and must sign and return a permission slip prior to the trip.

**Chaperones:** For safety reasons, only *designated* chaperones are to accompany students on class trips. Parents interested in chaperoning, should notify the teacher in writing of his/her availability. If your child has a medical condition that needs attention during the day, you or your designee will need to accompany your child on the field trip.

### **Helping Hands**

Helping Hands (composed of fourth grade students with a teacher advisor) promote safety on school grounds. Helping Hands members remind children to follow school rules and report unsafe practices or conditions to the teacher-advisor.

## **Celebrating Birthdays In School**

Your child's special day is important to us. All student birthdays are recognized at McGinn during morning announcements. If you would like your child's birthday celebrated in the classroom, please contact your student's teacher to organize this.

Invitations to private parties may be distributed in class provided all of the children in the class are invited. Parents who want to mail invitations should consult the MobileArq for names and addresses. Please note that **NO GOODIE BAGS OR TRINKETS can be distributed in the classroom.**

For more comprehensive information regarding celebrating birthdays in school, please refer to the "Announcements" section of the home page of the McGinn website.

## **Class Activities Occasion**

Social graces, as an area of learning for youngsters, are part of the total school program. The scope of this area is wide. Parties on some occasions are appropriate; it is requested that no class have more than two parties during the school year (such as Halloween and Valentine's Day, or curriculum related activities) and that there be **NO** parties on the last day of school. In addition, goody bags and party favors are not permitted.

- **When planning a visit to your child's classroom for a birthday celebration or special activity, please note that infants, small children and other siblings are not to be brought to classrooms.** Please make personal arrangements if you have children that are not of school age.

## **School Performances**

- Siblings will not be released from their individual classrooms to attend another sibling's class performance. The only exception will be the Celebration of Learning for fourth grade in June.

## **Pick Up Arrangements**

- If a child is to be picked up by someone different on any given day, please make sure a written note is sent to the teacher giving permission. **The individual will need to show the office proper identification.**

## **Back-To-School Night** (see district calendar for dates)

This special event provides parents with the opportunity to visit their child's classroom, meet the teachers, and listen to a presentation about the curriculum outline. Students ***should not*** accompany the parents to this event. This evening is specifically designed for you to learn about the curriculum; questions about your child should be reserved for individual conferences, which are scheduled for November and December.

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences** (see district calendar for dates)

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled at the close of the first marking period in November. Children attend school for a single session in the morning; conferences are scheduled in the afternoon and one evening. Whenever possible, consecutive conferences are scheduled for parents with more than one child in school. *Single Session schedule is in effect for these days.* Conferences may be arranged at other times during the year by sending a note

to the teacher. If a conference with the principal is desired, an appointment may be made by contacting the school secretary.

In grades 1-4, report cards are sent home three times a year. In kindergarten, a Conference Form is reviewed at a November conference with each parent; progress reports are sent home in January and June.

### **District Internet Address**

The school community may communicate with the District via the website: <http://www.spfk12.org>. To directly access the McGinn Website: [www.spfk12.org/mcginn](http://www.spfk12.org/mcginn)

---

## **HEALTH**

---

### **Illness/Accident In School**

You will be notified if your child has a serious accident or becomes ill at school. *The school nurse may not administer care beyond ordinary first aid.* It is imperative that the school has on file the name and telephone number of two persons who may be contacted in an emergency if you cannot be reached. On the first day of school each student will bring home the Yearly Registration Update. Please review the information on both sides of this form, sign and return to your child's teacher. This information will be used for McGinn's Emergency Contact procedures.

### **Injuries & Prolonged Illness**

Please inform the school nurse if your child has a serious injury or a prolonged illness. A note from the attending physician outlining specific restrictions, if any, must be presented to the school nurse when your child returns to school. This is particularly important in orthopedic injuries because limited physical mobility may restrict participation in school activities (i.e. gym or recess).

### **Communicable Diseases**

- Please call the school nurse if your child contracts a contagious or infectious disease or any other serious illness.
- Children who show signs or symptoms of colds, cough, fever, upset stomach, vomiting, skin rash, diarrhea, sore throat, earache or reddened eyes should remain at home until they are completely recovered.
- In the event your child is ill with a fever, he/she must be fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication BEFORE returning to school.

### **Head Lice (Pediculosis)**

Periodically we have had reported or identified instances of head lice. The school nurse will examine the child and if necessary, he/she will be removed from the school setting to receive treatment. When this occurs, a letter will be sent home to the parents of all students in that class.

Scotch Plains-Fanwood School District has a "no nit" policy. A student sent home due to lice infestation **MAY NOT** return to school without first being checked by the school nurse to ensure the lice nits or eggs have been removed.

### **Medication At School**

- The school nurse should be notified of any medication being taken by a child attending school, particularly medications which might cause a change in behavior.
- The SP-F Board of Education shall not be responsible for the diagnosis or treatment of a child's illness.
- The administration of prescribed medication to a child during school hours will be permitted only when failure to take such medicine would jeopardize the health of the child. If your child needs to take medicine at

school, it must be administered by the school nurse after she has received a "Request for Administration of Medication" form completed by the physician and the parents. This form can be obtained from the school nurse.

- The SP-F Board of Education does permit self-administration of medication for asthma or other potentially life-threatening illnesses by children in grades three through twelve. Please check with the school nurse for restrictions and requirements for a child's self-administration of medication.

## **HEALTH EXAMINATIONS**

### **Physical**

- A medical examination is required for all new entrants (i.e. children entering kindergarten, and all transfer pupils).
- The school district recognizes the importance of periodic physical examinations to promote the health and safety of all students. We strongly recommend that you have your child examined by your personal health care provider at least once during the development stages. A district form is available in the school nurse's office for school record documentation of physical examinations.

### **Auditory/Visual**

Hearing and visual screening is done by the school nurse for all students each year. Children can also be screened at the request of the classroom teacher, parent, or physician.

## **DOGS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

Local ordinances prohibit walking dogs on any school property in the district. Violators are subject to fines and penalties.

## ***SMOKING IS NOT PERMITTED IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS, ON SCHOOL GROUNDS OR ON SIDEWALKS IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO THE SCHOOL***

## **APPROPRIATE DRESS**

While there is no formal dress code, students are encouraged to wear appropriate dress for school, which will allow them to participate safely and comfortably in all school activities. We ask students not to wear hats/kerchiefs during the school day. It is strongly suggested that students wear closed shoes to protect their feet during physical activities. **Sneakers are required on Gym days.**

## **STAYING AFTER SCHOOL**

Children may be asked to stay after school briefly (10 minutes) for extra help or to resolve a problem. However, if longer periods are necessary parents will be contacted in advance by the teacher.

## **HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT REQUESTS:**

### **Requesting Assignments Due to a Child's Illness**

When a child is absent from school, parents/guardians often call to request assignments and work missed. If a child is absent for a short-term illness, which constitutes one or two days, teachers, at their discretion, will provide assignments upon the child's return to school. Our practice is based upon the philosophy that if a child is experiencing an illness, it is essential that they rest so that they may return to good health as soon as possible. When the child returns to school, the teacher will be able to explain the assignment and/or provide the necessary instruction so that the student's understanding will be enhanced. In addition, the teacher will also be able to determine a reasonable time frame for the work to be completed based upon other assignments that are planned during the week.

### **Long-Term Illness: Three or More Days**

Parents should notify the teacher if their child is absent for three or more days.

The classroom teacher will prepare appropriate assignments based upon their discretion and notify the parent when the assignments are ready. A brief meeting or telephone conference may be necessary to insure that the assignments are understood and proper directions are provided.

### **Family**

When planning family vacations, McGinn School respectfully requests that you honor the Scotch Plains-Fanwood School District Calendar. We strongly believe that it is essential for your child to be in attendance each day of school and only be excused when there is an illness or extenuating circumstances. If there should be an occasion that necessitates a family trip, the teaching staff and administration recommend that you engage your child in the following ways to maintain your child's reading, writing or basic computation skills:

- Reading on a regular basis
- Creative writing topics
- Vacation logs or journals
- Practice math facts and spelling lists.

Please do not request additional assignments from the teacher since many of the activities generated in the classroom require teacher direction. Such instruction, where necessary, will be provided when the student returns to school.

### **MOVING**

If you are moving out of town or to another location in Scotch Plains or Fanwood contact the main office. Parents need to complete a “Student Transfer Verification Form” and a transfer card will be mailed to your child's new school on the day after your child's last day at McGinn. Your child's permanent records will be forwarded when the new school requests them.

If you move and stay within the McGinn boundaries, you still need to notify the office and fill out a new residency form.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Lost and found articles are collected in the Multi-Purpose Room. Parents and children may check for lost articles at any time during the school year. Lost and Found items not claimed are donated to charity in December and June. To reduce the number of lost items mark clothing and personal possessions with the child's name.

---

### **WHAT TO DO IF**

---

- I need to contact my child: Classroom instruction cannot be interrupted to deliver routine telephone messages to a teacher or child. These matters can be handled more effectively before or after the school session. Emergency messages will be delivered immediately. During school hours, students are not permitted to make telephone calls except in an emergency; forgotten homework, snack, library books, rollerblades, etc., are not considered an emergency.
- My child needs medication at school: See section under medication in this handbook and contact the school nurse.
- I cannot pick up my child after school: Contact your emergency card friends or relatives to make arrangements, and notify the school office so your child is informed. However, we do ask that parents make the necessary arrangements for their child's dismissal from school in the morning BEFORE their child leaves for school. We do realize that occasionally an emergency arises and you must get a message to your child during the school day, but we ask that you keep these interruptions to a MINIMUM (especially at the end of the day when we cannot guarantee that the message will be received on time).
- I need to speak to my child's teacher: Call the school phone number and leave a message on the teacher's voice mail and the teacher will return the call as soon as possible. (Call the school number, punch in prompt #6 for directions, punch in first three letters of teacher's last name, and leave a message on Voice Mail.)

- My child has a problem in school: Always contact your child's teacher as an initial step to gain information and develop strategies to resolve the situation. If resolutions are not satisfactory, contact the Principal.
- My child is absent (for more than 3 days) and I need to pick up homework: Call school telephone number and leave a message on teacher's Voice Mail.

---

## **SCHOOL NAME & HISTORY**

---

McGinn School was named for Dr. William J. McGinn, who at one time was the only physician in this area. He established an active practice and served the community for forty years. He died in 1966 when the school was under construction. A plaque with a likeness of Dr. McGinn is located in the front lobby of the school.

McGinn School was completed in 1966. The original building contained 22 classrooms and a small library. An addition containing a library-media center and six classrooms was added in 1973.

In 1985, the students at McGinn were asked to select a mascot. Because the newly constructed playground contained a tire dragon, the students chose to be known as the McGinn Dragons. School colors of green and white were also determined at that time.

In 2002, a new gym was constructed next to the Multi-Purpose Room. The classrooms behind the library were enlarged and enclosed. The Staff Lounge was also enlarged to encompass the larger number of staff.

In 2003, windows replaced old windows. Blinds were replaced. The tire playground was replaced with colorful, steel, multi-faceted play apparatus donated in memory of Ben Singh, a four year old whose mother attended McGinn. Local businesses and families provided the additional funds.

In 2016, two classrooms and a small multi-use room were constructed to accommodate full day Kindergarten.

---

## **PTA**

---



The PTA at McGinn School is an active association of parents and teachers working together to enrich and enhance the education of all students. PTA meetings are held monthly in the Multi-Purpose Room at 7:30PM. Meeting dates are posted on the McGinn Website. All interested parents are invited to attend.

Ongoing services provided by PTA include yearly student photographs, cultural art and safety assemblies, a reception and a tour of the school for parents new to McGinn, and assignment of room parents. The PTA "E-Blast" is sent via email provided to them by each family Sunday evenings to inform the general membership of McGinn's weekly activities and events.

## **APPENDIX A - Parents**

Parents are significant contributors to the enrichment experiences of our students. We respect and appreciate your time and talents as well as your financial support. Below are a few reflections to ensure a safe, orderly and pleasant experience.

### **Parent Volunteers**

- Classroom parents
- Guest readers
- Guest presenters

**To assure your full attention to one or all of the above activities, we are requesting that you not bring younger siblings.**

### **After School Activities**

- Daisies, Brownies, Girl Scouts

- Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts
- Baby Bundles
- Variety Show

**Coordinators and Supervisors of these groups are expected to give their full attention to the children. Therefore, younger siblings, who do not attend McGinn, should not be brought to the activity. Please arrange for childcare.**

- **Scheduling Facility Usage**
  - Scout Coordinators should come to the Main Office for a Facility Usage Form.
  - Complete all details on the application and be sure to submit an insurance certificate which names Scotch Plains - Fanwood Board of Education as an additional insured.
  - Supervisors should have planned activities and are responsible to provide all materials needed for these activities. Please plan activities that do not involve cooking. There is no stove.



## INDEX

Absences From School	12	Lunch/Recess Behavior	5
Access to School Grounds	8-11	Medication at School	18
After School Activities	21-22	Milk Money	4
Appropriate Dress	19	Moving	20
Attendance	12	Occupational Therapy	16
Back-To-School Night	17	Parking.	11
Basic Skills	15	Parent Volunteers	21
Behavior (Expectations in School)	4	Parent-Teacher Conferences	17
Behavior (General)	5	Parties - Birthdays	16
Behavior (Lunch/Recess)	5	Phone System	12
Bicycle Riding	11	Physical Therapy	16
Busing	13	Pick-Up by Another Parent	17
Child's Illness	19	Policy - School and District	23
Class Activities	17	Principal's Letter	2
Communicable Diseases	18	Problems and Questions	14
Communication	12	Prolonged Illness	18
Consequences for Negative Behavior	6	PTA	21
Delayed Openings/Closings	14	QUEST	16
Dismissal (Early)	13	Reading Recovery	15
Dismissal (Emergency)	15	Recess (Classroom)	5
District Internet Address	18	Recess (Outdoor)	5
Driving - Front Approach	7, 8	Resource Room	15
Driving - Rear Approach	10	Return of Forms	
Driving to School	8	(Orders, Payments/Permission Slips)	14
Email..	12	Safety	7
Entrance & Dismissal Locations	3	Scheduling Building/Grounds Usage	21
Entrance & Dismissal Schedule	2	School Closings	14
Family	20	School Lunches.	4
Field Trip	16	School Name and History	20, 21
Field Trip-Chaperones	16	School Rules	4-6
Forgotten Items	13	School Time Schedule	3
Head Lice	18	Smoking	19
Health	18-19	Special Area Classes and Services	6
Health – Auditory/Visual	19	Staying After School	19
Health - Physical	18	Support Services	15
Health Examination	18	Tardiness	13
Helping Hands	16	Telephone Message to/from Home	14
Homework Assignment		Visitors	11
Requests Due to Illness	19-20	Walking - Front Approach	9
Illness/Accident	18	Walking - Rear Approach	10,11
Injuries and Prolonged Illness	18	Walking Dogs	19
Intervention & Referral Services	15	What To Do If	20
Library/Media Center	6		
Lost and Found	20		
Lunch and Recess	3		
Lunch Schedule	3		
Lunch (school program)	4		
Lunch Time Alternate Arrangements	4		