

# River News



Dear Families,

Welcome back! We had an unprecedented school year but hopefully this letter finds you excited about the children returning to school. While the summer fun continues, here at River we have been busy gearing up for another rewarding school year albeit a little different. We are anxiously awaiting the arrival of our returning students and we look forward to meeting our new kindergarteners and all new students.

This newsletter gives some information that is important for our first few days back and it provides some information for our new families.

Our goal is to keep you informed so that we can navigate this school year together. Some of what our foci will include but not be limited to the following:

- Getting to know our students and their needs in light of Covid 19
- Higher order thinking questions and discussion
- Student self-monitoring and self-assessment

We will unpack this more as we move through the year but I want you to know your child's growth both academically and emotionally is paramount to me.

I look forward to another exciting and rewarding school year!

Sincerely,  
*Tania M. Dalley, Ed.D*  
Principal



## School Hours

School hours for students in grades K-5 are 8:50a.m. to 3:20pm.

- 8:50am – School doors open
- 9:00am – Homeroom Begins
- 3:20pm – Walker Dismissal
- 3:25pm – Bus Dismissal

To Accommodate a Hybrid Schedule there are two cohorts of students:

Cohort 1 will meet Monday & Tuesday

Cohort 2 will meet Thursday & Friday

Wednesday is a virtual/ remote learning day for all to accommodate for deep cleaning between cohorts.



**Please do not drop children off early as there is no supervision prior to this time.** Children who arrive after the Pledge of Allegiance will be considered late to school. Children who are late to school must obtain a pass from the main office. Additionally, please refrain from early releases as this practice seriously interrupts the instructional program. If, however, you must pick up your child early, please do so **prior to 3:00 p.m.** so it does not impede our dismissal procedures. Any change to a student's regular dismissal plan **must be submitted in writing**. No dismissal changes will be permitted via telephone. Please remember that all visitors must present photo identification to the greeter upon arrival.

*Please note, due to COVID-19 and CDC guidance and regulations, bus dismissal may be staggered which could result in busses being delayed while returning the students home.*



## Emergency Numbers

It is extremely important that current telephone numbers be on file for each student in the event of an emergency. Parents are asked to provide the school with a minimum of four emergency contact numbers of persons living nearby in the unlikely event that we are unable to contact a parent or guardian.

Currently the district uses the Parent Online Verification Contact System through our Parent Portal to keep contact information up-to-date. It is the parents' responsibility to login to our eSchool Parent Portal by visiting: [www.pmschools.org](http://www.pmschools.org) and clicking on the Parent Information tab to update this information and keep it current.

## Parking



bus loop.

Please be advised that when visiting the school, you **must** adhere to the traffic pattern and **only park in designated parking spaces**. During school hours, please refrain from blocking the orange cones located at the main entrance that are there to maintain a safe traffic flow, as well as the front

## Watch the Weather

The weather continues to be warm and summerlike at the onset of the school year so please remember to dress your child appropriately. As a general reminder, flip flops or open toe sandals are not appropriate footwear. Students **will not** be able to participate in physical education classes if they are dressed in flip flops/sandals. We appreciate your cooperation in order to insure all students remain safe.

## Health Office News

Medications: School nurses and other staff members are not to administer medication, including aspirin and over the counter medication, to pupils in public schools. If, under certain unusual circumstances, it is necessary for a child to receive medications during school hours, parents must assume total responsibility and provide the following:



1. To administer medication during school, parents must submit either a completed medication form (available in the health office) signed by a parent and the doctor or a separate doctor's note. A doctor's signature is needed even for aspirin or over the counter medication.
2. The container for the medication must be labeled with the student's name, date, dose and times to be administered along with the doctor's name. This should be the original prescription bottle.
3. Aspirin or over the counter medication should be labeled with the student's name and dose to be taken. Parents should send an adequate supply of the medication to insure availability when needed. The nurse cannot be responsible if enough medication is not sent.
4. Please check your child's temperature prior to putting them on the bus each morning. If there temperature 100.0 degrees or higher, please do not send them to school and contact your physician.
5. ALL STUDENTS MUST WEAR FACE MASKS. Breaks will be given throughout the day at the discretion of the teacher.

## Absence From School

If your child will be absent from school, it is imperative that you call 687-8352 to notify the school on the morning of the absence. Parents can leave a detailed voice message including your child's name, their teacher, and the reason for the absence. The school requires a parent note upon the child's return. The child should give the note to his/her classroom teacher.



## Meet-the-Teacher Night

Thursday, October 8th, 2020 is Meet the Teacher Night. See our school website for more details.



## Walker Dismissal

Walkers will be dismissed on the blacktop area located on the north side of the building. I appreciate your continued support and follow through with the procedures laid out below. These structures have provided additional safety and security for all our students and staff.



- Walker parents are to stand in the designated pick up area, which is located to the left side of the building close to River Avenue. We ask for your cooperation in staying behind the blockades in order to afford the duty teachers adequate visibility to insure student safety. No parent should be blocking the front entrance or standing between buses. No students will be dismissed to a waving parent from the door, so please be sure to walk up to the dismissal area.
- Walker students will be dismissed prior to the bus students, and therefore parents should be on-hand at approximately 3:15 p.m.
- Separate exits for K students and grade 1-5 students were designated in order to avoid mass congestion, and subsequently increase safety.
- Furthermore, while we understand that parking can be difficult, I implore you to park in a designated parking space and walk to the dismissal area. In addition, please remember to dress for the day's weather conditions, so you are suitably prepared while waiting outside.

Fourth and fifth grade students may walk home on their own with written parental consent addressed to the principal. Written notification must be for an extended period of time (i.e., quarterly/yearly). We cannot entertain these changes daily or even weekly as this elevates the opportunity for error.

## Be a Person of Character!

River Elementary values excellent character. The pillars of character, which are displayed in our lobby and around the school include citizenship, trustworthiness, responsibility, respect, caring, and fairness. Please take time to reinforce these traits frequently. Children internalize these valuable qualities when they hear a consistent message at home and at school. Remember what Ollie, our mascot says, “River otters play well together!”



In focusing on a character education program this year we hope to accomplish the following:

- improve students’ self-perceptions as well as their perceptions of others;
- use skills that promote discipline, cooperation, and respect for the diversity of all as well as themselves
- engage in life-long social skills and knowledge that enhance a positive self-esteem, building character traits essential for successful life experiences;
- learn foundation skills and competencies essential for success in school and beyond;
- know the roots of American culture, its development from many different traditions and the ways many people from a variety of groups and backgrounds played a role in creating it;
- understand and embrace practices and traditions that unite all Americans.

We want to teach our students that character is defined by what we do and that every choice we make, helps define the person we are choosing to be; that good character requires doing the right thing all the time, even when the risk can be costly. Finally, that the payoff for having good character is that it makes you a better person and the world a better place.

River teachers and students will be working diligently to ensure that these traits make up the atmosphere at our school.

## News from our Cafeteria



River will continue to participate in the “Breakfast in the Classroom” program. This program will entitle your child to receive a well-balanced breakfast every day in their homeroom class at no cost to you. Participation is voluntary if your child prefers to eat breakfast at home. There is an additional whereas your child can choose to eat breakfast at home some days and in the classroom on other days. If your child

attends the Before Care Program they will receive a snack in the program and will eat breakfast in their homeroom with their classmates.

The school breakfast and lunch programs will begin on the first day of school. Children may choose a regular lunch or may choose an “alternate” option. The children may choose to supplement lunches from home by purchasing regular or chocolate milk. Please check your lunch menu for alternate lunch items and lunch prices.

**We have many children that have various food allergies. Most are nut allergies. I implore you to please refrain from sending in any lunch or snacks that have peanuts to school.**

**There is no sharing of snacks, water bottles, hand sanitizers or materials.**

A lunch charge is a special and occasional service for students who lose or forget their lunch money on a given day. After students charge their meals, notices are sent home to let parents know of the charge. The school district now has a **Prepaid Meal Plan**, which also allows you monitor what your children are purchasing on a daily basis. Parents can sign-up at: [www.MySchoolBucks.com](http://www.MySchoolBucks.com).

*In light of Covid-19, there will be a 40 minute period for both recess and lunch. Lunch will be delivered to the classroom as will breakfast. However, there will be brain breaks and opportunities for learning through play during the day.*

## Code of Conduct



Each school upholds the Patchogue-Medford Board of Education Code of Conduct mandated by the New York State SAVE legislation. The district has a long-standing set of expectations for conduct on school property and at school functions. This code applies to all students, school personnel, parents and other visitors when on school property or attending school functions. The full-length document can be found on our district website at [www.pmschools.org](http://www.pmschools.org).

## Electronic Devices



Electronic devices, including cellphones, are not permitted in school during the regular day. While it is understood that some parents feel the need to provide their child with a cellphone for the purpose of emergency communication before or after the designated school day, these devices must be powered off and secured in backpacks throughout the day. Students who violate this procedure will have their device taken away and it will need to be picked up by a parent in the main office. Please be reminded that the school is not responsible for personal property including damage or theft. Any clothing or accessories that display an expression of obscenity, violence, drugs, alcohol, tobacco or prejudice of any kind are unacceptable. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

## Proper Attire

In order to maintain a suitable learning environment, all children are encouraged to choose clothing accordingly. Parents are asked to please check and monitor appropriate dress. Headgear is not permitted in school, i.e. hats, and/or hoodies. Any clothing or accessories that display an expression of obscenity, violence, drugs, alcohol, tobacco or prejudice of any kind is unacceptable. Thank you for your cooperation.



## Transportation

Bus students are assigned their regular bus and stop by the transportation department. As a reminder, **students are not permitted to ride other buses for play date reasons.** In the event you have a “true” emergency, permission must be requested in writing, and approved by the building principal in order for your child to ride a different bus. Your cooperation is appreciated.

## PTA News

River PTA sponsors numerous programs and activities throughout the year. Please consider joining the PTA, as their contributions benefit all the children in our community. We look forward to your active participation.

### A Word from our PTA President

*The PTA wishes to welcome you to the 2020-2021 school year. Although this year is starting in a nontraditional fashion, we are working hard to ensure that we bring some fun, virtual programs to your children this year. We hope you will consider joining the PTA to help support these efforts. Be sure to join our River PTA FaceBook page to stay up to date on all things PTA! We look forward to “seeing” you at our virtual PTA meeting this year. Best wishes for a wonderful school year!*

### PTA Executive Board Members

President: - Trish Lee  
Vice President – Megan Fertmann  
Treasurer: Laura Valenti  
Recording Secretary: - Adriane Brower  
Corresponding Secretary: - Jennifer Kreiger  
Past President – Kathleen Langlan  
PTA Council Rep – Lisa Chiovaro

## Extra Help



Extra help will be scheduled by your child’s classroom. During the Hybrid learning model, students will receive extra help on Wednesday. On full remote learning, extra help will be scheduled on Tuesday & Thursday from 3:20pm -3:50pm. These sessions are designed to provide small group remediation in order to assist your child in meeting and exceeding state standards.

## Before and After Care

Enrollment in the Before/After Care program guarantees student safety and parental peace of mind for those families in need of childcare arrangements. Both programs are open to all River students in grades kindergarten through grade five who are not older than twelve years of age. Hours of operation during the academic year will be 7:15 am to 9:10 am and from dismissal until 6:15 pm, everyday that school is in session. Children may attend one or both of the sessions. Tuition for each of the programs is based on family income and the number of children from that family who are simultaneously enrolled. Please call the Child Care Coordinator for more information at 687-8105.



## Visitors

Due to Covid-19 we will not have visitors in the school building. During school hours all doors will be locked from the outside. If there is an emergency, all visitors to the school must scan photo id to the greeter at the main lobby entrance to obtain entrance to the building. Additionally, if you need to meet with school personnel you must make an appointment. You must have a mask worn at all times while in the building. Also, all visitors must complete a health questionnaire via a QR code posted on the door to be cleared for entry.

## Wellness Policy

In accordance with the Patchogue-Medford Wellness Policy, please note the following for all students in grades K-12:

- Support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis following minimal New York State Education Department Guidelines.
- Food and beverages sold or provided by schools will meet or exceed the minimum nutrient standards established by the USDA School Food Service Program.
- Food may no longer be used as part of an incentive or reward, as part of a birthday celebration, or as part of a holiday or seasonal celebration. The celebration of birthdays, changing seasons, and holidays should be celebrated with special privileges /activities, such as songs, games, etc. in lieu of food-based parties.
- We appreciate your cooperation in helping us to collectively establish life-long healthy habits for your children.



## Clubs / Intramurals

Our students are afforded numerous opportunities to participate in Clubs/Intramurals to enhance their educational experience. While we encourage students to participate, students will need to be cognizant to make appropriate selections as multiple opportunities may be available and regular attendance is required. When completing permissions slips, please select your dismissal plan appropriately as students will not be permitted to change their designated dismissal plan without parental written notice to the advisor in advance. Phone calls home will not be allowed as a means to change dismissal plans. Your cooperation and follow-up is greatly appreciated. Clubs will begin later in the fall this year as we adjust to accommodate social distancing guidelines.

## **Board of Education**

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Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Jessica Lukas  
Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel,  
Special Services, Testing & Research

Lori Cannetti  
Assistant Superintendent for Instruction

Frank Mazzie  
School Business Official

Dr. Joey Cohen  
Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

Tania M. Dalley, Ed.D.  
Principal

Please check our website regularly for updates at [www.pmschools.org](http://www.pmschools.org). Our web page can now be translated into a number of different languages using Babel Fish to serve our community better.

