

**MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS
RIVER PLAZA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

155 Hubbard Avenue
Red Bank, NJ 07701
(732) 747-3679
Fax (732) 741-6045

Mrs. Karen L. Bilbao
Superintendent of Schools

Miss Linda D. Pesce
Principal

4 September 2008

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Please complete the information listed below with your child, then sign and return this page to your child's classroom teacher.

“We have read the first day packet of information attached and understand the rules, regulations and responsibilities of students and parents for River Plaza School.”

Parent/Guardian Name (Please print)

Parent/Guardian Signature

STUDENT SIGNATURE: _____

TEACHER: _____ GRADE: _____

DATE: _____

PLEASE return ALL forms to your child's teacher by Wednesday, September 10, 2008.

Please know that your help and support are most appreciated.

Yours very truly,

Miss Linda D. Pesce
Principal

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

As principal of River Plaza School, and on behalf of the staff, I welcome you to the 2008/09 school year. I am confident that working together we can make this an enjoyable and educational year for your children.

The first PFA meeting will be on Wednesday, September 17th, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. in the All-Purpose Room. Our PFA is a wonderful group of very active parents who give the school a tremendous amount of support. I invite you to attend all meetings and to consider joining if you are not already a member.

The teachers and I look forward to seeing you for **Back-to-School Night**. We have planned two evenings to ensure that those families with children in both lower and upper grades at River Plaza will be able to meet the teachers and hear about the exciting school year. Please remember that this is an informational meeting and not a Parent/Teacher Conference Night. Both programs will begin promptly at 6:30. The dates are:

Monday, October 6th—Grades K-2
Tuesday, October 7th—Grades 3-5

I have included some information below, which will assist in making the beginning of the school year an easy transition for all. In order to maintain a safe environment for your children we need to work as a team. I therefore depend on your support, cooperation and understanding.

After you have read this entire packet of information, please complete all forms and return to your child's teacher by Wednesday, September 10, 2008. **Do not return pages in the packet that do not require a signature.** Please keep this packet handy so that you may refer to the information contained within it during the course of the school year.

For the first day of school, please remind your child to report to his/her classroom from last year. The children will then be escorted to their new classroom.

1. ARRIVING AND DEPARTING FROM SCHOOL:

- **Children should NOT arrive on the property or enter the building prior to 8:45 a.m. unless they are registered in the morning childcare or are reporting for extra help or music lessons as there will be no one on duty to supervise them until 8:45.**

- If dropping off children at the front of the building in the morning, you may walk your child to the door, but please do not enter as it would be an impossible task to maintain any level of security with numerous adults walking through the building.
- Students walking or riding their bicycle should enter through the front door.
- Bus students come in the front door.
- When driving students to school, please follow the arrows around the back of the building—pull up **AS FAR AS YOU CAN** before children exit the vehicle. This will help to avoid excessive back-up on Hubbard Avenue. Please instruct children to walk around the FRONT of your car to ensure safety.
- Kindergarten morning students exit from the front door at about 11:30.
- All Kindergarten **afternoon** students must enter through the front door at about 12:20.
- Kindergarten afternoon bus students exit from the front doors.
- Kindergarten afternoon car riders exit the breezeway doors in the back.
- Kindergarten afternoon walkers exit the front door.

2. SAFETY:

- Please note that all outside doors will be locked after 9:00 a.m. All visitors must enter the building by the main entrance located on Hubbard Avenue. Anyone wishing to enter the school must ring the bell, identify himself or herself, and tell the reason for the visit. Once inside, all visitors must report to the main office, sign-in and receive a pass/badge.
- All visitors must return to the office at the end of the visit to sign-out and return the pass/badge.

THESE PROCEDURES MUST BE FOLLOWED AT ALL TIMES (BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER SCHOOL HOURS) FOR THE SAFETY OF THE CHILDREN AND STAFF. THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS REGARDING THESE PROCEDURES.

3. **LUNCH PROGRAM** – The National School Lunch Program will begin on Thursday, September 4, 2008. If your child was receiving free or reduced price meals during the 2007-08 school year, he/she will be entitled to participate in the free program at River Plaza until October 1, 2008. Please notify the school office if you are new to River Plaza and should receive free or reduced price meals. Lunch tickets are to be purchased on a weekly basis. A lunch ticket must be presented each day in order to obtain a lunch. **Please, be sure to place all lunch money in a sealed envelope marked with your child's name as well as his/her teacher's name.** The normal lunch money collection day will be Friday. Please remember that lunch money CANNOT be accepted after 9:15 a.m. on collection day (Friday)
Costs Per Week:

Full Price Lunch--\$9.25

Reduced Price Lunch--\$2.00

All types of Milk--\$3.25

Water--\$3.75

Checks should be made payable to: Middletown Café Account

- 4. EMERGENCY INFORMATION:** Please keep your emergency contact information current. Send any new or additional information to the office in writing so it can be entered into the computer.

In the event that there is an EARLY DISMISSAL during the day, parents should use common sense in planning for their child's care on these days. Emergency closings will be announced on the radio and posted on the district website. Classroom representatives will **attempt** to contact all parents. Parents should have a plan of action in the event of an early dismissal. **Children should know this plan and be reminded of it periodically in the event of any unexpected circumstance.**

- 5. SCHOOL INSURANCE:** School Insurance will be available for your children. If you wish to enroll your child for insurance please complete the insurance form **and mail it to:**
Bob McCloskey Insurance
P.O. Box 511, 76 Main Street
Matawan, NJ 07747
1-800-445-3126

- 6. SCHOOL ABSENCES:** If a child is going to be absent, the parent must call the school office between 8:00 and 9:00 a.m. as required by the Board of Education policy. This is the Childwatch Program. If the office is not contacted, a call will be made to the child's home, parent's place of employment, or emergency contact.

Homework/Make-up work: any child who is out for one (1) day should spend the day recuperating; therefore work will not be provided for single day absences. If a child is out two (2) or more days, work will be provided upon request. The work may be picked up in the main office at the end of the school day. Parents/guardians are to request homework/make-up work by 9:30 am in order to give teachers the opportunity to prepare the necessary assignments.

Students returning from an absence must bring a written note signed by their parent/guardian that includes:

- name
- days absent
- reason for absence

The note should be given to the teacher. If the absence was due to a contagious illness, a note from the doctor is required in order for the child to be readmitted to school.

Please consult the **Elementary School Handbook** for further information and policies regarding absences.

7. **PARENT REQUEST FOR EARLY DISMISSAL OF A STUDENT:** Please follow these instructions:

- Send a note clearly explaining the reason(s) for your child's early dismissal request (dentist, doctor's appointment, etc.)
- The PARENT/GUARDIAN must come in to the office and sign for his/her child's dismissal. **Your child will not be released to ANYONE unless so designated by you in writing. A written note must be submitted for each and every early dismissal.**
- If you need to pick-up your child before regular dismissal, please be sure to arrive at school no later than 2:30.
- If your child is to return to school before the end of our school day, please accompany your child to the office and sign him/her back in to school.
- **Students are not permitted to make plans on their own during the school day that involve changes in the dismissal procedures. They are to go directly home after school.**

8. **PARENT CALLS/REQUEST – “UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES”:** It would be greatly appreciated that whenever you anticipate any unusual circumstances such as a parent not being home, a house key being left in a particular place for the youngster, **instructions** to go to another house instead of coming home, etc. that these be resolved prior to the youngster coming to school rather than a last minute phone call. **When a phone call comes in late in the school day it is very difficult to get the message to your child. Any phone call received after 2:45 p.m. does not allow us adequate time to reach your youngster(s).** Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated.

9. **BICYCLES:** Riding a bicycle to school is a **privilege earned by fourth and fifth grade students only.** Any fourth or fifth grade student who would like to ride a bicycle to school **must** have a permission slip. No one is allowed to ride a bicycle ON THE SCHOOL GROUNDS. Your child must walk his/her bicycle while on our school grounds at all times. **According to N. J. State law students must wear helmets!** It is also required that students have a lock for their bicycles. If any child tampers with another student's bike they will lose the privilege of riding their bicycle to school. Skateboards, roller skates, and heelys or shoes with rollers are not allowed in school.

10. **JEWELRY, VALUABLES AND OTHER COLLECTIBLES:** Please use your discretion as to what you allow your child to bring to school. If you allow him/her to take any such valuable to school, please know that the school will not be held responsible for lost or broken possessions. Please do not bring in any collectible cards (Pokemon, baseball, etc.) to school.

11. MONEY: Please do not send your child to school with an excessive amount of money. Any amount over \$5.00 is considered to be an excessive amount of money. The only acceptable times your child should be in possession of “excessive” amounts of money will be:

- (1) lunch money and milk money collection days
- (2) school book fairs/school store
- (3) school pictures
- (4) school class trips
- (5) yearbook purchases and for any other school fund raising activity

All monies should be placed in a sealed envelope and marked with your child’s name, teacher’s name and activity or explanation for money (i.e. – milk, lunch, book fair, etc.) on the envelope.

12. ELECTRONIC GAMES, EQUIPMENT: Game Boys, personal CD players, tape recorders, laser pointers, cell phones, etc. are generally not to be brought to school. Electronic toys and/or equipment of this nature may tend to distract the child and other children from the learning process.

13. STUDENT ATTIRE: Student attire should be neat, clean, and appropriate for the scheduled activities of the day. In the extremely warm weather we may have during September and October and in May and June, shorts of a reasonable length are permitted. We are very fortunate to have air-conditioning in the building, so it is never excessively hot inside. All blouses and shirts must meet the skirt/pants. Straps on blouses/shirts should be at least two inches wide. **Open toed shoes of any type are not permitted at any time for safety reasons.** Sneakers must be worn on days your child is scheduled to have physical education.

14. SCHOOL GROUNDS AND PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT: In order to protect the best interest and safety of your child, the following rule will be in effect: “No visitors will be allowed to utilize the playground equipment and school grounds while school is in session.”

15. VOLUNTEERS: the PFA will send home information on the various committees and activities where parent volunteers will be needed. Please follow their directives.

16. PERSONAL DATA CHANGES: During the school year changes may occur in your family “make-up” or information. Please notify the school of all changes so the records may be kept up-to-date. For example: marriage, divorce, death, change of address, phone number or emergency information. Please call the office if you have any questions. Also, if any concerns arise during the school year; please do not hesitate to contact me.

I would like to introduce you to the new members and advise you of changes to the staff at River Plaza:

Mrs. Barbara McAleer—Grade 1
Mrs. Dina Betancourt—Grade 2
Mrs. Denise Generelli—Grade 2
Mr. Blake Abbot—Physical Education/Health
Mrs. Sonia Cataldo—Spanish/G & T Co-Teacher
Mrs. Doreen Beam—Reading Specialist
Ms. Danielle Kelly—School Psychologist
Mr. Michael Cotter—Evening Custodian

Join us on congratulating Miss Sweeney on her recent marriage. Her married name is Mrs. Wessels.

Mrs. Burke has also had a name change—Ms. La Pilusa

The entire staff and I look forward to an exciting new school year as we work collaboratively to meet the individual educational, social and emotional needs of each child.

Yours very truly,

Miss Linda D. Pesce
Principal

The Middletown School District is striving to insure that all students shall receive equal educational opportunity regardless of race, sex, handicap, creed, color, religion, ancestry, national origin or social or economic status, and has instituted open and equal access to all school-sponsored courses, programs and activities offered during, before and after school hours. The Affirmative Action Officer for the Middletown School District is Mr. David Healy or his designee, 59 Tindall Road, Middletown, NJ 07748 (732) 671-3850.