



Family Handbook

The Heights Mission Statement:

We will create a strong community with focused instruction and critical partnerships that effectively meet the academic and social needs of all students.

School Visitors

You are *always* welcome at The Heights Community School! **All visitors must first report to the main office upon entering The Heights Community School.** This includes parents arriving to visit classrooms once the school day has started. We do require that parents and visitors check in at the main office to get and wear a visitor’s pass. Please understand when staff members inquire about your purpose in the building this is for the safety of your children. Visitors will also need to sign out before they leave the school. This ensures student safety and instructional efficiency.

Telephone Directory

Main Office.....651-293-8815
Fax Number.....651-293-8977
Attendance Line.....651-744-2273

All The Heights Community staff members have voicemail boxes for you to leave messages. Please ask for their voicemail extension when calling. **In the case of an emergency please do not leave a message on voicemail, but talk directly with office staff.**

Student Hours

Grades K-5 8:30-3:00
Pre School (AM) 8:30-11:00 Pre School (PM) 12:30-3:00

Breakfast to Go is available for ALL students starting at 8:15 am. It is free for all students.

Office Hours

The office is open from 7:30 am to 4:00 pm.

Emergency Procedures

Any changes in phone number or address should be given to the office immediately.

If a child is injured or becomes ill during school hours, the school nurse or other school staff will attempt to reach the parent(s) at home or at work. The parent will need to pick up their child. If the guardians cannot be reached, the emergency number listed on your registration will be called. If no help is found and the child appears seriously injured, he/she will be taken to the hospital listed on your emergency form or to Regions Hospital by the paramedics. Parents are billed for 911 calls. **It is essential that an emergency number be on record with the office.** Please keep the office updated.

Lost and Found

To avoid losses, please put names on all clothing, shoes and school supplies. Items most seen in the lost and found are hats, mittens/gloves and jackets. We will periodically clean and donate all items in the lost and found.

Cold Weather Guidelines



Our students have daily recess except in extreme weather conditions such as rain or severe cold/wind chill. Our cold weather policy is:

- Students will have indoor recess on any day with a wind chill or actual temperature that is below zero.

Please consider these factors related to weather as you and your child make decisions for winter clothing. Students must have a WARM coat, hat, and mittens/gloves for outdoor recess. Boots, snow pants and scarves are highly recommended.

Parent Drop-Off & Pick-Up



Safety is very important for your child as well as all the students and staff at The Heights Community School. Due to the lack of parking and increased traffic, all parents should follow traffic pattern for drop-off and pick-up.

ARRIVAL

When you arrive at school in the morning, please drop your child(ren) off on the south side of the building on Clear Avenue driving westbound just to the east of the staging area as shown on the map below. Students can be dropped off anywhere in the drop off zone between the front doors of the building and the small staff parking lot. Also note there is no parking in the drop off zone.

For the safety of all students, please wait your turn in the line until you reach the drop off zone. In addition, if you are driving east bound you need to park your car legally and walk your child(ren) across the street. Pulling around cars and double parking could result in ticketing by the police. Students should not arrive prior to 8:10 am, as the doors will not be open, nor will there be supervision. All students will enter the building through the southwest doors for breakfast, whether or not they are eating breakfast.

DISMISSAL

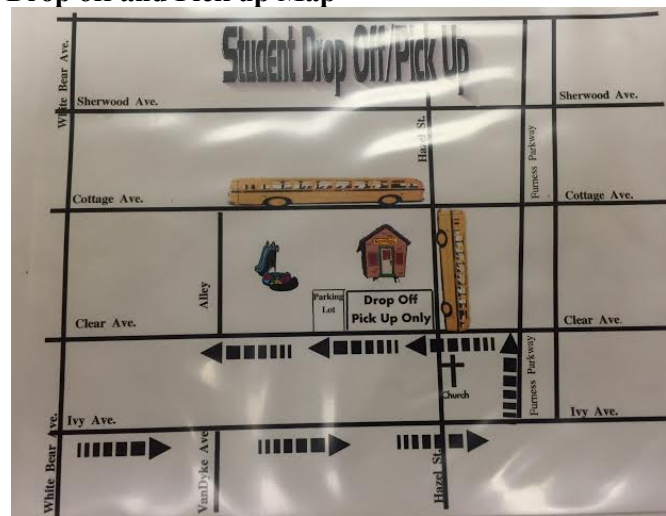
To facilitate a calm and safe pick-up at the end of the day, Families who pick up their child at the end of the school day will be assigned a family number at the beginning of the year on a card stock license plate and their students will receive a backpack tag/pin with the same number.

In the afternoon, it is critical that you follow the map below staging cars on the westbound side of Clear Avenue starting at the small staff parking lot. Please show your family number and staff will call your child(ren)'s number and they will exit from the cafeteria doors. **Never leave your vehicle while in the westbound lane.** Your child will come to you. **If you are picking up your child(ren) at the Parent Pickup doors you must have your family number with you. You will also need to sign your child(ren) out with supervising staff in the cafeteria. No students will be released to cross Clear Avenue unaccompanied.**

If you are picking up your child(ren) occasionally (for example, doctor or dentist appointment) and do not have a family number, you will need to sign out your child(ren) in the main office.

If you arrive after 3:20 pm, you will need to park your car and come into the building to pick up and sign out your child(ren). Please be on time to pick up your child(ren).

Drop off and Pick up Map



Riding the School Bus

Riding the school bus is a privilege; therefore, the Transportation Department policy mandates that students follow all bus safety rules. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action up to and including bus suspensions. Policy further mandates that students may not ride to school or go home on another bus that is not assigned to them, even with parental request.

Early Departure / Early Pick Up

Parents who plan to pick up children early are asked to please send a note and/or call ahead of time (before 1:00 p.m.). You must report to the main office and sign your child out. Please do not go directly to classrooms or the bus to pick up your child.

- Students may only be released through the main office when the parent/guardian arrives.
- Parent/Guardian must sign out their child and receive a "Picking up student" pass. They then may proceed to the classroom to check in with the teacher and pick up the student.
- After checking in with the teacher, the parent is free to leave with their child.
- Students picked up by anyone other than their custodial parent/guardian must make arrangements ahead of time and notify the office.
- Staff will not release a student to anyone that is not listed on the emergency card.
- The school staff reserves the right to ask for proper identification before releasing any student.

- Early pick-ups are considered the same as a tardy due to missed instructional time.

Patrols

Patrols will be available on certain busy intersections where a majority of students cross the street to get to school. Patrols will be available starting at 8:05 a.m. until 8:15 a.m. Patrols will not be on duty when the temperature is below zero. Please advise your children to walk to school quickly and safely on those days where the temperature is below zero. Patrols will also be on duty from 3:00-3:10 for afternoon dismissal.

Attendance

Please help your child to arrive at school at the proper time. Remember you are helping to teach them responsibility. Regular attendance and punctuality are essential to your child’s educational program. Make-up work cannot replace participation in class discussions and projects. If we have not heard from you by 9:00 a.m. we will notify you by phone. Please work with school personnel to address any attendance issues. Attendance is carefully monitored by both the school district and the State Department of Education. Please call 651-744-2273 if your child will be absent for the day and to give the reason for the absence.

Tardiness

School begins at 8:30 a.m. Students arriving after this time, with the exception of those on a late bus, will be considered tardy and must report to the main office for an admission slip. Parents should send an excuse note explaining the reason for tardiness.

Absences

Attendance due to illness:

1. If absence is due to communicable condition contact the school nurse or designee immediately.
2. After 5 total, or 3 absences in a row due to illness, the health office will send Nurse Letter #1.
3. After 7 excused absences Nurse Letter #2, signed by the principal, is mailed to the parent stating the student must either have a doctor’s note or come to school to be evaluated by office staff to be considered excused. If this is not followed the absence will be considered unexcused.

Unexcused Absences:

1. After 3 unexcused absences the Attendance Alert Letter is mailed to inform parents of the school attendance laws and consequences of failing to follow the laws.
2. After 5 unexcused absences a referral to FTIP is made.
3. After 6 unexcused absences a meeting is set with parents, student, principal, teacher and counselor/social worker to sign a School Contract.
4. After 7 unexcused absences a referral is made to SART.

Unexcused Tardies/Early Pick-Ups:

1. After 5 unexcused out of the building tardies or pick-ups the Tardy Letter is mailed to inform parents of the school attendance laws and consequences of failing to follow the laws.
2. After 10 unexcused out of the building tardies or pick-ups a referral is made to FTIP for a parent meeting.

After 15 unexcused out of the building tardies or pick-ups the Attendance Team will discuss whether the tardies/pick-ups are impacting the child’s academic achievement.

Acceptable reasons for being absent include: illness, doctor’s visit/mental health included, religious holidays and extreme family emergencies (death in the family, house fire, etc.)

For illnesses, please keep your child home if he or she has:

- A fever (100 degrees or higher) – fever must be gone for 24 hours (without the help of medication) before your child can return to school.
- Vomiting or diarrhea during the night or in the morning.
- A rash that may be caused by a disease or if the cause is unknown, check with your doctor before sending the student to school.

Unacceptable reasons for being absent include; overslept, missed bus, staying home to babysit, needed at home, too cold, work, etc. We consider an absence unexcused when it is considered an unacceptable reason, and/or if we receive neither a phone call nor a note of explanation.

When a child is picked up early from school this will count as a tardy.

Please contact the office at 651/293-8815 if you have any questions, comments or concerns about an absence.

Family Vacations

Principal approval is required prior to any family vacation. Parents/Guardians are responsible for completing the “Student Travel Form” which is located in our main office. Parents are responsible for working with the classroom

teacher to get make-up assignments and helping their child to complete that work in a timely manner.

In accordance with Truancy Intervention Program, vacations during the school year are not considered an excused absence by the Ramsey County Attorney's Office. Vacations, while important, should be scheduled during those times that school is not in session. Families that choose to take their children out of school for vacations may be referred to the Ramsey County Attorney's Office.

Emergency School Closings

In the event of severe weather, the listing of school closing can be found on either AM radio, the morning news programs or at www.spps.org. Either turn your radio to 830 WCCO, watch television channels 4 or 11 for their morning news programs, or check online at www.spps.org. A Robo Call will be made to families from SPPS. It is important to keep your phone numbers current with our main office so that you receive all important information.

Student Cell Phones/Electronics/Toys

Cell phones are not allowed during the school day. Students with permission to have a cell phone need to keep it in their backpacks and turned off. If seen or heard during the school day, a staff member will take the cell phone and return it to the student at the end of the day. If the cell phone continues to be heard and seen, the staff member will give the cell phone to the building principal and parents will need to pick it up in the main office.

Students are not allowed to bring any electronic devices, toys, sports equipment, or anything that is not school appropriate. This includes Fidget Spinners and sports equipment. These items will be confiscated and turned into the office. Students are then responsible to tell their parents they brought it to school. The parent then can pick it up in the office.

The Heights Community School will not assume responsibility for any electronic devices that are broken, stolen or lost. Administration will not take time to investigate the theft of cell phones or electronic devices that are not allowed in school. Please encourage your child to leave these items at home.

Field Trip Permissions

Revised 7/27/17

Permission slips for all level 1 field trips (walking field trips) will be sent home at the start of the school year. This permission slip covers all level 1 field trips for the year. Level 2 field trips (requiring a bus ride) will have a permission slip required for each trip. These permission slips will be sent home prior to the level 2 field trip. Students that do not turn in a permission slip will not be able to attend the field trip. Telephone permission is not legally acceptable. **The cost for each field trip is \$4.00 unless noted on the Level 2 field trip permission form. We only accept cash with field trip permission forms. Checks are no longer accepted.** Students who are suspended from the school bus at the time of a level 2 field trip are not permitted to ride the bus for the field trip. Field Trip chaperones are required to have an approved background check completed before attending any field trip. Background checks are good for 1 year at a cost of \$15 cash only. Please allow 2 weeks for processing.

Bicycles, Rollerblades, Skateboards and Heelys

It is the policy of The Heights Community School that students are permitted to ride bicycles to school. However, there are no bike racks and locking up bicycles is the student's responsibility. No rollerblades or skateboards will be allowed. *Students are not allowed to wear the wheels in Heelys while at school.*



Playground

Children go outside for fresh air and exercise each day depending on the weather. It is imperative that your child comes to school dressed for the weather. Recess is cancelled when conditions are too wet or if the wind chill or temperature is below zero. In order to ensure the safety of all children while out at recess, students are expected to follow these rules:

1. Be safe and use equipment safely.
2. Be in control of yourself at all times. (Fighting, rough play such as play fighting, tackling, kicking, wrestling, throwing of sand, rocks, snow, etc. will NOT be permitted.)
3. Remain in the play area.
4. Be friendly and treat everyone with respect. (No put-downs, obscene language or threats.)

Discipline Procedures

The classroom teacher will make a committed effort to resolve discipline issues with the student whenever possible. When a student's behavior is interfering with teaching and learning, the following practices will occur:

- **Remind, Redirect, Reinforce** – The student will be warned to discontinue inappropriate behavior and given expectations and/or appropriate behavior choice.
- **“Take a break”** – If the student continues the inappropriate behavior he/she will be directed to “take a break” at a designated location in their classroom to calm down refocus and get ready to learn.
- **Buddy Room** – If the inappropriate behavior continues after the student has taken a break, the student will be directed to “take a break” in another room (buddy room teacher’s room) to get calm, refocus and get ready to learn.
- **Parent/guardian contacted** – The teacher or student will notify the parent/guardian by phone, email and/or note when a student’s behavior continually and repeatedly interferes with teaching and learning or if the student is sent to the office.

Dismissals and Suspensions

See the SPSS Rights and Responsibilities Handbook for information.

Dismissals are issued for one day or less and Suspensions are issued for more than one day. A parent conference with an administrator upon the student’s return to school following a dismissal or suspension is always required. Parent/Guardian participation as a partner in addressing behavior issues is frequently the difference between a positive change in student behavior and the need for further disciplinary action.

Breakfast and Lunch



At The Heights Community School, **breakfast** is **free** for students in Pre-K – Grade 5 and **lunch** is **free** for students in K – Grade 5. Saint Paul Public Schools is expanding its Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program for the 2017-2018 school year. That means every student in grades mentioned will receive a healthy lunch at no cost. Please note that all students enrolled at The Heights already receive breakfast at no cost. In order to ensure that our school receives benefits related to this program, please complete the Household Application for Educational Benefits and Free/Reduced-Price Lunch. This form will be mailed to your home and available online at ns.spps.org in August. Forms will also be available at our fall open house.

Please visit ns.spps.org to view the monthly lunch menu. We do serve peanut products at The Heights. Please review the menu for items that your child(ren) maybe allergic to. Please contact the health office regarding any food allergies.

If you are sending a bag lunch to school with your child, we encourage a healthy lunch. **Pop, Soda, and Energy Drinks are not allowed in the cafeteria.** If you have any questions, please contact administration.

If a student is eating a hot lunch, NO outside food can be brought into school. Any outside food not a part of a bag lunch brought from home will be confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the day.

Parents that wish to bring an outside lunch (such as Subway, McDonalds, etc.) to eat with their child will be moved to a location away from the cafeteria.

Snacks

Students will be receiving a healthy snack from Nutrition Services 3 days a week. Please look for communication from our main office and your child’s classroom teacher for which days the healthy snack will be served.

Medications



It is important that you contact the school nurse /health assistant if your child needs medications or treatments during the school day.

Children need a written physician’s order to receive any medication at school including Tylenol, aspirin, etc.

Prescriptions: District policy allows the school nurse or trained designee to administer short-term prescription medications without an order from a prescribing health professional. When a medication is prescribed for less than two weeks and must be given at school, the parent or guardian may request/authorize that administration by sending the medication in the original container with the prescription label and a signed consent. All medications should be sent directly to the school nurse. The parent must supply the medication in the original prescription bottle. Whenever possible medications should be administered at home.

School Supplies

School supply lists, for those items to be brought to school by each student, are provided at the beginning of the school year and can also be found on our school website: www.heights.spps.org If a family is not able to purchase school supplies, please contact the school office.

Library Books

Students will be given the opportunity to check out books from the school library on a regular basis. Students who do not return books on the identified due date may be denied further checkout privileges. Should a student have any

unreturned library books, parents will be notified by the Media Center staff of the replacement cost or other alternatives.

Internet Use

Computer and Internet instruction is used to be integrated with curriculum and teaching at The Heights. The Internet is used for educational purposes and the proper use of the Internet is the joint responsibility of students, staff and parents. Each parent/guardian must either give or deny permission for their child to use the Internet. This permission is requested on The Heights Community School Emergency Contact form. It states:

As the parent/guardian of this student, I have read the school district's policy relating to acceptable use of the Internet and other technology resources.

A copy of the school district policy is given to parents/guardians when first registering their child at The Heights Community School. The policy can also be viewed by visiting: http://connect.spps.org/Usage_Policy.html

Please note that inappropriate use of the Internet by a student will result in having their Internet privilege revoked.

Weapons

A weapon brought to school will result in immediate suspension and possible referral to the district office for expulsion. Toys that look like weapons will also result in **administrative disciplinary action** and should not be brought to school. Children should not bring any non-instructional items to school.

Fire and Lock Down Drills

Throughout the year, drills are occasionally held to acquaint students with the proper procedures in the event of a fire, intruder or other emergency at school. While we try not to frighten students, knowledge and preparedness can go a long way toward making them feel safe in their environment and equipped to handle potential emergency situations.

Child Abuse Reporting

Any Saint Paul Public School staff person who knows or has reason to believe a child is being neglected or physically or sexually abused is **required by law as a mandated reporter** to report the information to the appropriate authorities.

Classroom Celebrations

We are promoting food-free classroom celebrations. Due to food allergies and dietary food restrictions we will not be allowing cupcakes or sweet treats to be shared with classmates in ALL classrooms at The Heights. Please contact your

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child's teacher for suggestions for celebrating your child's special day. Thank you for your cooperation with this school district policy. For more healthy classroom tips, you can visit www.spps.org/studentwellness

Home and School Connection

Communication between home and school is vital. We encourage you to call your child's teacher whenever you have a question or concern. All phone calls will go into voicemail during instructional time. You can also send your child's teacher an email. Please follow these basic steps to resolve a concern about a specific incident or issue:

1. Communicate with your child's teacher or the teacher involved in the incident or issue.
2. Problem solve together with the teacher.
3. If this approach does not solve your concern, call the main office and you will be connected with an administrator.

A Thursday Folder will be sent home once a week with written communication between the school and home.

Conferences

Parent teacher conferences are scheduled twice per year (typically fall and spring). We encourage all parents and guardians to attend. Interpreters are available as needed. Transportation to and from conferences is extremely limited, please contact Julie Wellman as soon as possible. Conferences give families and teachers an important opportunity to review progress and to plan goals for the future. Progress reports are distributed at conferences.

PTA

A Parent/Teacher Association (PTA) is active at The Heights Community School. Please contact the parent liaison, check the school calendar or website (heights.spps.org) for more information.



Family Nights

Through the course of the year, The Heights Community School provides many opportunities for parents, students and staff to come together over food, activities and conversation. Please check the school calendar or website (heights.spps.org) for information regarding these events.