

MAGNOLIA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Learning and Achieving School

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August 2021

Dear Students, Parents, and Community:

We hope everyone is having a fantastic summer! Our K-8 "Sliding into Summer" program was an unprecedented success, with almost half our students in attendance. Kids had a great time reinforcing core academics and exploring the various high-interest clubs. We look forward to offering this program again next year, too!

Here at school, we have all been working really hard to make sure that Magnolia Public is ready for the quickly approaching school year. We have updated all our bathrooms, improved safety and appearances around the outside of the building, and are improving communication with our digital sign. Our school has changed so much inside and out these past 3 years!

Of course, we can not wait to see our students! Nothing is more enjoyable than sharing conversations, telling stories, and conveying understanding of our world with students.

Something we continue to focus on at Magnolia is raising our expectations. The school will be using the "Leader in Me" program to teach and grow within the "7 Habits of Highly Effective People." In partnership with you, we want our students to work to the best of their ability and achieve greatness. Nothing brings greater joy than speaking with our former students who have gone on to Westpoint, the Naval Academy, numerous area colleges, or have started working in jobs locally.

In the pages following this letter you will find important information about returning back to our normal procedures. We hope you enjoy the rest of the summer. We cannot wait to continue our partnership in educating our students, and look forward to working together with you to have a great school year!

Karen Macpherson
Superintendent

Paul Sorrentino
Principal

Jennifer Pontarell
Supervisor of Curriculum

SECURITY

Magnolia is committed to the safety and security of our students and school. We have initiated many measures over the past several years to help us maintain and tighten our security. Administratively, we have visited up to 10-20 area schools and attended multiple security training sessions provided by the NJ Department of Education to get ideas on how to make our school more secure. Security protocols were then discussed and created through a committee of students, staff, board members and parents. As we move into the new school year, we would like to remind you of our procedures that have been put in place to enhance security. Please adhere to these important safety measures starting in September 2021.

Please note when reading the "Arrival" section that the grounds will be open the first day of school for parents to walk up their child and take photos and interact with the staff.

MORNING PROCEDURES

Breakfast:

Students going to breakfast may be dropped off when breakfast starts at **8:15 AM**. It is imperative that this time table be followed for the safety of the children and to allow them to eat. They will enter through the backdoor. There will be a staff member at the entrance taking attendance.

Arrival Time:

1. All students should enter the school yard between 8:15 and 8:35 AM. No one will be permitted in the building or on school grounds before this time. Students will be entering the building around 8:25 and will be in the homeroom by 8:35. Students repeatedly dropped before 8:15 will be documented, as they're being left unattended by their families.
2. Students in grades PreK through 5 will enter through the back gate at Camden Ave. All students 6th - 8th grade will enter the main driveway on Lincoln and wait outside the double doors that lead into middle school. The Lincoln Ave driveway gate will not be open and is for egress/emergency exits only. No students will be permitted through the front office unless late after 8:35AM.
3. Students coming in for music lessons or another school function must have a teacher pass or be on an approved list to enter early. This ensures the students will be supervised for an approved event. These students are typically dropped off at the end of the driveway.
4. Guardians will not be allowed to enter the school or school grounds when dropping off students after the first day of school. (During the first day, we allow parents to help walk the students to where they need to go, meet and greet staff, and take photo opportunities. If you have a unique circumstance or a special need, please notify the office and we will review the case. *To help in this endeavor, a select group of 6th - 8th graders will be responsible for walking our younger students to their lines.)
5. During inclement weather, all the same security measures will still be in place, however students will come onto the grounds at 8:15 and then line up in the gym (1st-5th), library (Pre-K, Kindergarten) and Cafeteria (6th-8th).

PARKING/DROP/ PICK UP LANE

Parking on Camden Avenue is permitted while waiting for your child. If you are stopping or parking, please pull over to the side of the road and park on the curb line. The middle of the street is a flowing lane for drop-off and pick-up traffic. Please keep the drop/Pick-Up lane moving and do not exit the vehicle. A staff member will assist with your kids. This lane will be marked by cones. If your child is not ready to be picked up or dropped off, you will have to pull over to the curb or circle around the block again to prevent creating a traffic flow problem.

VISITOR PROCEDURES

All visitors MUST enter through the front door (main office,) where you will be asked for your name and the purpose of your visit. Anyone coming unannounced may be denied entry for security purposes. Visitors will be asked to sign in and/or drop off items at the window. In addition, there will be a storage bin located at the front door for parents to drop off items, such as lunches, bookbags, instruments, etc. Please label all items with the student's name and their homeroom teacher.

Anyone without a yellow "visitor" sticker will be stopped and escorted to the office to follow proper sign-in procedures. *If you are a visitor, we kindly ask you go to and from your assigned location only. Please do not go to any other location in the building.

FRONT DRIVEWAY

The front driveway will only be utilized for emergency vehicles, handicap access, and school sanctioned transportation vehicles. The driveway is not to be used to drop off items, students, or pick up students early.

DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

Students will be dismissed at approximately 3:07PM. Students in PreK-5 will be walked to the back gate by their teachers to be dismissed. Students in grades 6-8 will exit the door that flows down the driveway onto Lincoln Ave. If a middle schooler is picking up a younger sibling, he/she will walk around back to the playground meetup area.

Parents/Guardians of students in K-5 are to wait in the assigned area (there are numbers and letters to help children link up with their family. For example: There will be a sign on the fence with a K on it. This is the area where kindergarten students and parents will meet. ***Please do not stand in the middle of the driveway out back. Wait at the signs to make it easier for everyone to see their own child.**

Any student still outside after 3:20 will be sent to the office. No students or parents should remain on school grounds after 3:20PM. Students repeatedly not picked up by 3:20 will be documented.

Early Pickups between the time of 2:50 and 3:07PM will not be honored through the main office unless there is an emergency situation. Any early pickups should have a note submitted to the office the day prior or morning prior to pickup.

* K-5 students waiting for siblings will wait on the basketball court where a teacher will be assigned for duty.

PRESCHOOL ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

Preschool students will enter like all other students, but parents will be permitted to wait with their children until they enter the building. (On inclement weather days (rain/snow/freezing temp), the foyer may be opened up for parents and students between the AM and PM classes.)

The AM program arrival is at 8:35AM at the playground gate on Camden Ave. Dismissal is at 11:05AM at the front driveway gate by the shed on Lincoln Ave.

The PM program arrival is at 12:40PM at the front driveway gate by the shed on Lincoln Ave. Dismissal is at 3:10PM at the playground gate on Camden Ave.

MASKS/COVID Precautions

On August 6, 2021, Governor Murphy signed Executive Order 251, which states that all students, educators, staff, and visitors will be required to wear face masks inside of school buildings, regardless of vaccination status, for the start of the 2021-2022 academic year. The mandate went into effect on August 9, 2021. To learn more about this Executive Order, please visit: <https://nj.gov/infobank/eo/056murphy/pdf/EO-251.pdf>

We will not be doing temperature checks each morning. We would ask parents to screen their children at home and notify the school with any concerns.

UNIFORMS

We will be resuming the board approved uniform policy. Uniforms have been proven through extensive research to cut down on discipline and bullying issues. They also are more cost effective. The uniform policy is on the website in Parent resources and in the handbook. Students who do not adhere to the uniform policy can face disciplinary action and lose privileges. Parents should make every effort to prepare for the school year and get uniforms for their children during the summer. Students out of uniform often feel like an outlier in the classroom.

*The first day of school will be a dress down day (or Dressup!). We typically have a dress down on the first Friday of every month for charitable organizations. We also sprinkle some in throughout the year and announce it through DOJO or our email system.

LUNCH

Lunch will be split into a “recess” period and a “lunch” period. We will be implementing a structured recess with activities based on grade level. This could include yoga, organized sports, mindfulness, study hall class (middle school), etc. Lunch tables will be assigned by homeroom. Many classes will eat right in their classroom to help contain any potential spread of the virus, and to help us maintain distance protocols.

**ATTENTION: the state of NJ has enabled schools to provide free lunch to all students for the 2021-2022 school year. However, if you feel you would qualify for this benefit because of household income it is imperative you fill out the [online link](#). Applying may directly affect any assistance you receive outside of school and affects federal funding for our district that enables us to have more programs and benefits for the students

of Magnolia. By not filling out the form or link Magnolia could lose a large budget benefit allocated based on these applications. Please fill out this link even if you may not qualify for reduced benefits.

DEVICES

Spending government funding responsibly gave us the ability to order enough devices to be 1 to 1 (device to student ratio.) With that in mind and COVID still being around, we have elected to assign each student a specific device. Students will have the ability to bring the device home as needed (decided by the teacher.) There will be a place to store devices in the classroom. If you have not paid to replace a device damaged in 2021, or have not turned 2021's device back in, your child will not receive another device. Devices that were not returned to the school for updates/maintenance may experience slower speeds and programming issues, as they did not receive normal maintenance over the summer. Parents are responsible for loss, damage, and all issues regarding the devices unless it is deemed there is a manufacturer defect.

ORIENTATION/BACK TO SCHOOL

Due to ongoing construction combined with COVID restrictions increasing, we regret that we will not be able to accommodate families with an orientation during the month of August. Staff will help students navigate the building and feel comfortable during their first days of school.

We will hold Back to School Night September 15th. Please save the date for this important evening event, during which the teachers will help acclimate parents to the school routine and environment.

We appreciate your cooperation in implementing these measures, which will enhance our security and the safety of students, staff, and the community. We at Magnolia take pride in our "small town feel" despite the security implementations we must make for safety. Many of our procedures can be found on our website in the handbook section. We thank everyone for their valued effort to help us put these measures in place.

Thank you,

Magnolia Administration