

MAGNOLIA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Learning and Achieving School
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Dear Students, Parents, and Community:

We hope everyone is having a fantastic summer! It has been a pleasure seeing some of our students in our K-8 Summer program. Kids had a great time reinforcing core academics and engaging socially with their peers.

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 welcome back Jennifer Pontarelli who supervises our Curriculum and instruction. We will have many new faces this year as well! Welcome to Tufeka Potts and Patrick Healy in Pre K. Also, welcome David Rymer, Elena DiBlassio, and Rafelle Perry to our special education department.

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. On the first day, weather permitting, we invite our parents to bring their students in Pre-K - 5th grade to line up outside in our courtyard to meet teachers, parents, classmates, take pictures, etc. This will be from 8:25 to about 8:45 when students will walk in together.

Something we continue to focus on at Magnolia is raising our expectations. We are continuing our Leader in Me lessons, working to increase our math scores, as well as integrating more STEAM into our curriculum. We also want to focus on "disconnecting to reconnect." While cell phones have their use, our classrooms and the school is not somewhere we encourage this use. Please no airpods, cellphones in class unless the teacher directs, or watches. The school is not responsible for these items and students should leave it at home or off and locked up in middle school or have consequences if used inappropriately!

Student schedules are anticipated to be posted on August 22nd, 2024 on parent portals. This takes much of the summer to coordinate and compile in our information system. One thing we will reiterate is that we do not place students based on requests. There is a very complex procedure for placing students centered around equity and diversity. Switching students to be with a friend, while understandable, changes that process and is not rooted in the many data points our team uses to place students.

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. **Please feel free to dress down the first 3 half**

days of school on 9/4 through 9/6. Our first \$1 dress down will be 9/13. Yearly we raise a lot of money for charities through our dress downs and fundraising! 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

Kelly Livingston
Supervisor

Jennifer Pontarelli
Supervisor

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 attend 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 2024.

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

MORNING PROCEDURES

Breakfast:

Only students going to breakfast may be dropped off when breakfast starts or after, not before. Start time is at **8:15 AM. They will enter through the side entrance on Lincoln Avenue (closest to the cafeteria).** It is imperative that this time table be followed for the safety of the children and to allow them to eat. There will be a staff member at the entrance taking attendance. Students eating will remain in the cafeteria until at least 8:25.

Arrival Time:

1. All students should **enter the school yard between 8:20 and 8:35 AM.** No one will be permitted in the building or on school grounds before this time regardless of weather. Students will be entering the building around 8:20 and will be in the homeroom by 8:35. Students repeatedly dropped before 8:20 unattended will be documented. Contractual obligations require this time table. We encourage residents to sign up for our before school care program "Just Kids" for earlier needs.
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 days of school with the exception of preschool. If you have a unique circumstance or a special need, please notify the office and we will review the case.

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. We do try to ask parent to avoid parking on the left side of Camden Ave.

VISITOR PROCEDURES

All visitors **MUST** enter through the front door (main office,) where you will be asked for your name, ID, 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. Failure to adhere to the practice will result in loss of privilege. Visitors should turn these stickers back into the main office when you leave.

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. Please park on Lincoln, or use our school lot, and walk up as needed.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Students will be dismissed at approximately 3:00PM to 3:07(older students first, then younger students). We stagger for traffic and safe exiting. Students in PreK-5 will be walked to the back gate and to their grade level predetermined spot by their teachers to be dismissed. Students in grades 6-8 will exit the door that flows down the driveway onto Lincoln Ave. If an older sibling is picking up a younger sibling, he/she will walk to the playground basketball meetup area to link up. They can then walk to their predetermined spot discussed with a parent.

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 and reported appropriately. Failure to pick up students on time can result in loss of club privileges.

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.

The student drop off is by 8:35 AM at the playground gate on Camden Ave. Dismissal is at 3:07 PM at the back gate at the "P" sign.

UNIFORMS

The board approved uniform policy is in effect. 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 three days 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

Parents can now apply for lunch for the 2024-2025 school year on our website: Scroll to "online application" on the link below.

<https://www.magnoliaschools.org/school-lunchbreakfast/free-and-reduced-lunch-application-eligibility>

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.

**ATTENTION: Be sure to fill out a lunch form if you believe you qualify. The application is located on our website under "School Lunch/Breakfast". Please be sure to keep track of your accounts through Lunchtime, located on our school website.

DEVICES

Spending government funding responsibly gave us the ability to order enough devices to be 1 to 1 (device to student ratio.) Students will have the ability to bring the device home as assigned by the teacher in upper grades. There will be a place to store devices in the classroom. If you have not paid to replace a device

damaged in 2024, or have not turned 2024's device back in, your child will not receive another device. Parents are responsible for loss, damage, and all issues regarding the devices (this includes drops, or lost pieces).

ORIENTATION/BACK TO SCHOOL

We will hold Back to School Night September 11th, 2024. Please save the date for this important evening event, during which the teachers will help acclimate parents to the school routine and environment. Typical the time allocated for this is from 6-7:30 PM.

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.

ONCOURSE AND PARENT PORTAL:

A few key points to remember:

- You will not have access to the schedule portion of the Parent Portal until about mid August.
- You must update your information such as phone number, email address, etc.
- Annual registration will also require proof of address in the form of a *currently dated* mortgage or lease statement and one bill. You will take a picture and upload it as a document.
- You will not be able to access the parent portal or see your child's homeroom assignment without these updates.
- Parent portal is how you will see your child's schedule and grades among many other useful tools.
- Any calls to the office will be to assist parents to get on the portal, not to give or accept information outside of the portal.

From the Nurse:

Welcome back for our 2024-2025 school year!

I hope that everyone had a wonderful and restful summer spending time with family and friends! I am looking forward to working with each one of you to ensure that this year is both healthy and safe for every member of our Magnolia family. Our students learn best when their health is at its optimum. If, at any time, you feel a need to discuss the health of your child, please do not hesitate to contact me. As the school year begins, I would like to remind you of some important school policies to make note of:

- **Immunizations:** Immunizations are important to ensure that our students interact in a safe and healthy environment. If your child has received updated immunizations during the summer, please provide a copy of the updated Immunization record. Sixth grade students require TDap and Meningococcal immunizations to return in September.

- **Medications:** If your child requires administration of daily or as-needed medications during school hours, please complete and return the required forms located on our website. Please note, an adult

will need to bring the medication up to the school, they may **not** be transported by your child. If you would like your child to be able to receive Tylenol/Ibuprofen/Tums if needed, you can fill out the Tylenol permission form and have your child return it to the nursing office.

- If your child is not feeling well, please keep them home from school. Be mindful that a temperature of 100 or higher requires a student to stay at home until fever free for 24 hours without taking any fever reducing medications. Any absence of 3 or more days requires a doctor's note in order to return to school..

-If your child is pre-k-1st grade, please make sure that he/she has a change of clothes including socks and underwear that they keep here at school in case of an accident.

- Sports Physicals will be held in the nursing office by our school physician for our 6th-8th grade students on Tuesday 9/10/24. Please let me know if your child is interested as paperwork must be filled out at home PRIOR to them receiving the physical.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me anytime! I look forward to seeing all of our students back in September!