



WHITTIER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

2024-2025

WHITTIER VISION STATEMENT

The vision of Whittier Elementary School is to create an inclusive educational community where educators, students and families work collectively to foster an enriching and welcoming learning environment by promoting the social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth of our students.

We celebrate the diversity of our school community, and strive to foster a school culture that is grounded in the shared values of respect, dignity and individuality, where all contributions are valued and students feel a sense of belonging.

WHITTIER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
TEANECK SCHOOL DISTRICT
491 West Englewood Avenue Teaneck, NJ 07666
(201) 833-5535 | https://www.teaneckschools.org/teaneckpublicschools_home.aspx

September 2024

Dear Whittier Elementary School Families:

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year! As the school year begins, we are looking forward to partnering with you to ensure the development and achievement of all of our students. This partnership and support from both home and school are critical as we share a great responsibility for our children's success.

This handbook serves to establish clear guidelines and expectations of the school, its policies, procedures, activities and services. Please read this handbook, discuss it with your child where applicable and sign and return the last page of this handbook to your child's classroom teacher. Please refer to this handbook throughout the year for necessary information. Above all, please be sure your child knows your expectations and your belief in them.

The aim of Whittier Elementary School is to provide the best educational program possible with opportunities for academic, social, physical, and emotional development. Cooperation between parents, students, and school personnel is an essential element in the education of every child. Therefore, we encourage parents to be involved in their child's education. The staff of Whittier looks forward to working closely with you and your child during the elementary school years providing your child with exceptional learning experiences each day. Each year we are focused on equipping our learners with strategies and skills that foster social and emotional wellness by reminding our Whittier Wolves to use their **P.A.W.S.**

- **Practice Respect**
- **Act Responsibly**
- **Work Hard**
- **Stay Safe**

Do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions regarding the school or your child's progress. We wish you and your child a wonderful year of learning.

Educationally yours,

Mrs. Debra Nussbaum
Whittier Elementary School Principal



Regular Arrival and Dismissal

Car Riders/Walkers: Arrival

Maintaining order during arrival and dismissal times is essential. Families may drop off students at 7:50 a.m. Students should not arrive at school earlier than 7:50 a.m. as there is no supervision before this time. Instruction begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. There is one crossing guard at Essex Road and West Englewood Avenue. Please cross at this corner if you are arriving on foot from West Englewood Avenue. Students should never cross the street in the middle of the block. Younger students should not be permitted to cross West Englewood Ave, even at the guard, by themselves. West Englewood Ave is a major Teaneck thoroughfare. Street traffic is always heavy and trucks and larger vehicles use it consistently. Parents who drive their children to school must wait until all vans have departed before driving up to the entrance on Essex Road. All students enter through the door located off the teacher's parking lot-Door 4. There is no entry through Door 4 after 8 a.m. Doors will be locked. Please DO NOT leave your child unattended. Late arrivals must enter through the (visitor's entrance) of the building. For safety purposes, we request that parents escort children to the door if late to school, help the child/children buzz in, and visit the main office to sign in your child/children tardy.

Bus Students: Arrival

Maintaining order during arrival and dismissal times is essential. Morning buses line up on West Englewood Avenue; vans line up on Essex Road. Students will be escorted to enter the school through the main entrance by Whittier staff.

Dismissal for All Students

Afternoon buses line up on West Englewood Avenue; vans line up on Essex Road. Bus and van students will be escorted to the van and bus by Whittier staff.

Dismissal time is 2:30 p.m. Any student not picked up by 2:40 p.m. will be brought to the main office. Parents will then have to report to the visitor's entrance of the building for pick up. Please visit the main office to sign your child out for dismissal.

Parents who are picking up their children must wait in the car line in their cars and drive up after the vans leave (on Essex Road) or park on one of the surrounding streets and walk to Essex Road to pick up their child. For safety reasons, it is imperative that parents/guardians do not block residents' driveways or double park to pick up their child. After all vans have departed, students who are walkers or being picked up by parents will be escorted outside through the Essex Road doors. Students with siblings will exit the respective door of the eldest sibling. Parents may not enter the building at dismissal. We request that parents make contact with the supervising teacher when picking up their children.

First Few Days of School Arrival

During the first few days of school, students line up behind their teachers on the blacktop. If you drive your child to school, you should park your car and escort kindergarten, first and second grade children to their class lines.

Late Arrival

Please make every attempt to arrive on time. Students need to be in their homeroom by 8:00 a.m. for the start of instruction. If your child arrives late to school (after 8:00 a.m.), the parent must escort the child to the visitor's entrance of the building. For safety purposes, we request that parents escort children to the door if late to school, help the child buzz in and visit the main office to sign in your child tardy. Students will be given a late pass to enter the classroom. Calls about absenteeism are generated from the computerized attendance system. They do not originate from the main office or nurse's office.

Early Dismissal

Although we recommend scheduling appointments before or after school hours, we understand that this is not always possible. When you need to pick your child up early, please email the main office or teacher by 1:00 p.m. Upon arrival at the visitor's entrance, go directly to the main office to sign out your child. Your child will be called to the office by the school secretary. If arrangements for an early dismissal are not made prior to 1 p.m., your child will be dismissed following the normal dismissal procedure. There is no early dismissal from school after 2:00 p.m. For safety reasons, no child will be dismissed early without being signed out at the office.

Absences

Students are expected to attend school for 180 days of the school year. If your child will be absent from school, please call the school at (201) 833-5122 by 8:00 a.m. Students are required to attend school every day. An excused absence from school may be requested for personal illness, death of a family member, observation of a religious holiday, participation in an educational program or events as approved by the principal or as set forth in a student's IEP, 504 plan, or health care plan. Excessive absences may result in your child having to repeat the school year.

All students need to be in school and arrive on time to receive the maximum benefit from classroom instruction and exchange of ideas. In fact, mandatory school attendance is required by State Law and Teaneck Board of Education policy. Good school attendance is a contributor to success in school.

The New Jersey Administrative Code (NJAC 6A:16-7.6(a)4) requires certain school responses for unexcused absences. Specifically:

1. For up to four (4) cumulative unexcused absences:
 - a. Make reasonable attempt to notify student's parents of each unexcused absence prior to start of the following school day
 - b. Conduct investigation of cause of each unexcused absence, including contact with student's parents
 - c. Develop action plan to address patterns of unexcused absences, and to have student return to school and maintain regular attendance
 - d. Proceed with reporting to DCP&P and police if a potential missing or child abuse situation is detected
 - e. Cooperate with law enforcement and other authorities/agencies as appropriate
2. For between five (5) and nine (9) cumulative unexcused absences:
 - a. Make reasonable attempt to notify student's parents of each unexcused absence prior to start of the following school day
 - b. Conduct follow-up investigation, including contact with student's parents, to determine cause of each absence
 - c. Evaluate appropriateness of action plan previously developed in accordance with procedures above
 - d. Revise action plan as needed to identify patterns of unexcused absences and establish outcomes based upon the student's needs and specify interventions for achieving the outcomes, supporting student's return to school, and regular attendance that may include:
 - i. Refer/consult with the I&RS team
 - ii. Conduct testing/assessments of student's academic, behavioral, and health needs
 - iii. Consider alternative educational placement

- iv. Make referral to community-based social and health provider agency or other community resource
- v. Refer to court program
- vi. Proceed with reporting to DCP&P and police if a potential missing or child abuse situation is detected.

3. For cumulative unexcused absences of ten (10) or more, the student, between the ages of 6 and 16, is truant, and the District shall:

- a. Make mandatory referral to court program
- b. Make reasonable attempt to notify student's parents of the mandatory referral
- c. Continue to consult with parents and involved agencies to support student's return to school and regular attendance
- d. Cooperate with law enforcement and other authorities, as appropriate Proceed in accordance with applicable state and federal laws, as required.

4. Going on vacation during school time is a family decision. Parents assume responsibility for their child's schoolwork during this time. Parents should notify the Principal in advance regarding any non-scheduled vacations. No homework will be provided if you take your child out of school for a vacation. Your child can read, maintain a diary of the vacation and work on math facts, but teachers should not be asked to provide your child with the work he/she will miss as the class work and homework is directly related to the classroom instruction that is being missed. Teachers will keep a folder of all work assigned during the student's absence. It will be given to the student upon his/her return to school. Teachers will not be expected to correct any work in this folder. Tests administered during this absence must be completed prior to the absence in order to receive credit. Vacation is NOT considered an excused absence.

For students with disabilities, attendance plans and punitive/remedial procedures shall be applied in accordance with the student's IEP, Section 504 Plan, and/or individual health care plan.

In grades K-8, when a student exceeds the limit of eighteen (18) absences permitted, per year, the building principal has the authority to retain the student or to require completion of specified academic responsibilities before promotion is granted. Therefore, in order to keep parents aware of the number of countable absences, the following procedures are followed:

If a student's total number of countable absences from school reaches six (6) in the first quarter, a warning letter will be sent home and a conference between a parent/guardian and teacher will be scheduled.

If/when the total number of countable absences reaches twelve (12), a warning notice will be sent and a conference will be scheduled.

If/when a student's absences exceed the permitted maximum of eighteen (18) absences from school, parents/guardians will be notified and informed of the consequences and alternatives.

[Board Policy](#)

[NJDOE List of Holidays permitting Pupil Absence from School](#)

Tardiness

Regular tardiness to school can adversely impact the academic performance and social-well being of

students. The principal will contact parents/guardians to discuss a plan of action, should there be a tardiness issue.

Transportation

According to Board of Education policy, children who live more than 1.4 miles from school are entitled to bus transportation. The school district may provide aides for specific buses, but not all. All buses have seat belts and wearing seat belts is required by NJ Law and Board of Education policy. Please tell your child that wearing the seat belt is mandatory—it could prevent them from being hurt in case of an accident.

A student's right to ride a school bus is contingent upon acceptable behavior and observance of established regulations. The Principal will prohibit a student from riding the bus for unacceptable behavior; students who receive three bus conduct reports may have bus service revoked.

Please note the following:

1. Please be at your assigned stop 10 minutes before your assigned pick up time and prepare to be there ten minutes after your assigned time. At the beginning of the year, when students are getting acclimated to riding the bus and the location of their assigned stops, buses may run later than scheduled; however, by the third week of school the routes should be operating on schedule
2. Respect the rights of property owners in the vicinity
3. Form a single line when the bus is approaching - and no pushing
4. Parents may not ride or step onto the bus
5. Children who are walkers may not ride the buses
6. Bus stop changes must be submitted to the Transportation Office for approval/change by the transportation department. Changes in bus stops may take a few days.

Parents are responsible for the behavior of their children before and after the bus arrives. Parents are encouraged to monitor bus stops and communicate any safety concerns to school administrators.

Please check your monthly calendar for 12:00 early dismissals to assure your child will be met at the bus stop.

Before School Care

The Teaneck Community Education Center offers a morning School-Age Child Care (SACC) Program at Whittier from 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m., located in the cafeteria. Students will be escorted to their classrooms by the SACC staff at 8:00 a.m.

Interested parents/guardians should complete the required form and return it with the registration fee. The registration fee is refundable if, for any reason, the Center is unable to offer the program; otherwise, the registration fee is non-refundable. Information can be obtained by contacting the Teaneck Community Education Center at 201-833-5514 or on the Whittier Elementary School website.

After School Care

The SACC after-school program runs from 2:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. in the Whittier School cafeteria. Enrollment is first come, first served. Children are provided with healthy snacks, enrichment programs, games, and a chance to do homework. For more information and registration, please go to the Community Education Center at 201-833-5534.

The cost for the afternoon SACC program is as follows:

AM ONLY \$200 per month

PM ONLY \$260 per month

AM & PM \$290 per month

Please note there is a \$50 registration fee per family.

For more information and to complete a registration form, please go to the Teaneck Public Schools website (teaneckschools.org). You may also call the Community Education Center at 201-833-5534.

Emergency Closings

If school is canceled due to inclement weather or another emergency, you will be notified in several ways:

- An automated phone message from the Superintendent of Schools or the Designee.
- School delays or closures are posted on our website at www.teaneckschools.org.
- AM radio stations WCBS 880 or WINS 1010 and TV stations: Channels 2, 4, 5, 7, Cablevision Channel 12 and FiOS 1 News broadcast school closings starting at 6:30 a.m.

In the event of a delayed opening, the school day will begin at 10:00 a.m. Please do not send children to school earlier than 9:50 a.m. on a day with a delayed opening. There will be no supervision before this time. SACC programs do not operate on a delayed opening day. Buses will pick up children approximately two hours later than normal. Children will be dismissed at 2:30 p.m. on delayed opening days. Lunch will be served.

In the event of a snow day, we would treat the snow day as if it were a "NO" day. If the day before the snow day is an "A" day and the snow day would have been a "B" day; the day after the snow day is a "B" day.

Currently scheduled half-days (12:00 dismissal) are:

September 26, 2024-Back To School Night

October 11, 2024 - Yom Kippur

November 14, 2024- Fall PT Conferences

November 27, 2024 - Thanksgiving Break Parent

February 2, 2025 Virtual PT Conferences

May 23, 2025 - Memorial Day Recess

June 20, 2025 and June 23, 2025 - End of Year

Building Security

Building Safety and Security Measures

Our standard security procedures (locked doors, camera and buzzer entry, all visitors checking in at the visitor's entrance, etc.) will remain in place. Effective January 2022, all public schools in New Jersey added safety drills to the calendar of fire drills. These drills provide the students with practice in the event of varied scenarios. As with all district schools, we have an approved safety and security plan as mandated by the state of New Jersey. This state-of-the-art plan includes monthly fire and security drills and reflects the best current thinking on school security measures.

All steps are taken to ensure that students are safe. School staff must know exactly where each student is at all times and he/she must be under assigned teacher supervision throughout the school day.

Precautions for maximum security include the following:

- Any member of the staff has the right and the responsibility to question any strangers in the building.
- Once students have arrived in the morning, the only entrance to the building is the visitors' entrance off the staff parking lot. All other entrances will be locked.
- Please do not hold the door open for others to enter, even if you know the person.

Board Policy on Building Security

"Except for the purpose of attending functions to which the public at large has been invited, no person shall enter any school building under the control of the Teaneck Board of Education without first making his/her presence known to the Principal or other person then in charge of said building or buildings.

All persons desiring to visit a school building for any purpose shall first report to the office of the Principal or person then in charge to announce the purpose for which admission into the building is desired.

The Principal or person then in charge may grant permission sought by the person entering said building. A person found in a building who shall have entered without first having to report to the office of the Principal or person in charge shall be liable to prosecution on charges of trespassing and be subject to such penalties as the law shall allow."

IT IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL THAT THE ABOVE GUIDELINES ON SECURITY BE STRICTLY FOLLOWED.

Visitors

A visit to our school requires a scheduled appointment. All visitors are required to report to the main office to sign in. Visitors to our school must provide a valid photo ID when signing-in. All visitors must state the following information: Full name, Child's name, Class, Reason for visit. While in the office, please be patient and wait your turn. If remaining in the building, visitors will obtain a visitor pass that must be worn and visible at all times when in the building. Visitors should visit the assigned location. No visitors or volunteers should be wandering hallways, making unannounced visits to classrooms and activities, or

making unannounced entry into building offices. All visitors (including regular visitors/volunteers such as PTO persons) must follow the building rules set forth above. Visitors include anyone other than students and staff assigned to the building. Student visitors are not permitted in the building during the times that school is in session.

Positive Behavior Intervention and Support

To encourage a positive and nurturing learning environment, Whittier School has implemented an initiative to promote and support appropriate student behavior. This initiative is referred to as Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS).

What is Positive Behavior Intervention and Support?

PBIS is a process for creating safer and more effective schools. The process focuses on improving a school's ability to teach and support positive behavior for all students. Rather than a prescribed program, PBIS provides systems for schools to design, implement, and evaluate effective school-wide, classroom, non-classroom, and student specific plans. PBIS includes school-wide procedures and processes intended for all students and all staff in all settings. PBIS is not a program or a curriculum; it is a team-based process for systemic problem solving, planning, and evaluation. It is an approach to creating a safe and productive learning environment where teachers can teach and all students can learn.

What is PBIS at our school?

We have adopted a unified set of school rules as the foundation for the Whittier School code of conduct. These rules define the expectations for behavior in our school. You will see these rules posted throughout the school and your child will be learning them during his or her first days at school. Our unified school rules, found in every classroom and non-classroom setting in the school, are as follows:

- **Practice Respect**
- **Act Responsibly**
- **Work Hard**
- **Stay Safe**

WHITTIER BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

2024-2025

	Playground	Cafeteria	Hallway-Transitions	Bathroom	Classroom	Assembly/Special Events	ALWAYS
Practice respect	Listen to adults, use kind words, share with others	Listen to adults, use kind words, use a quiet voice	Stay in personal space, use a quiet voice	Respect others' privacy	Respect others' learning, use kind words, help and share with others	Listen to the speaker, eyes on the speaker	Be a good listener, use kind words
Act responsibly	Follow rules, report problems	Follow cafeteria rules, use time wisely, clean up after yourself, throw away trash	Use time wisely, go directly to your destination, return to your previous location quickly	Use time wisely, keep the space clean, flush, wash your hands, report problems	Be prepared to learn, make good choices, be on time, ask for help if you need it	Be a good audience, sit appropriately	Make good choices
Work hard	Stay in your assigned area	Eat your lunch appropriately, keep your area clean	Respect other classes as you pass by	Use the bathroom appropriately	Try your best, complete tasks, participate	Participate	Try your best
Stay safe	Play appropriately, maintain personal space, keep your hands and feet to yourself, be safe on equipment	Sit safely at your seat, maintain personal space, walk, wash your hands,	Face forward, maintain personal space, stay in line, walk,	Keep personal space, wash your hands	Keep your hands and feet to yourself, use materials appropriately, keep your mask on, sanitize your hands,	Maintain personal space, control your body,	Keep your hands and feet to yourself

As part of our PBIS process, teachers and other staff members use evidence-based practices to increase student learning and decrease classroom disruptions. To keep students adhering to the rules in a positive manner, we do the following when teaching academics and behavior:

- Constantly teach and refer to our school-wide expectations
- Provide students with more praise than correction
- Talk to students with respect using a positive voice tone
- Look for the positive first and provide positive, immediate, frequent and explicit feedback
- Please click on the link below to view the complete Code of Conduct (Policy 5600)

[Board Policy: Expectations of Student Conduct](#)

[Board Policy Student Discipline/Code of Conduct](#)

[District Regulation: Student Discipline/ Code of Conduct](#)

Student Rights

The Board of Education recognizes that pupils possess both the right to a free public education and the rights of citizenship. In granting pupils the educational opportunities to which they are entitled, the Board shall provide them with the nurture, counsel, and custodial care appropriate to pupils' ages and

maturity. At the same time, the Board will respect the due process of law, freedom of expression and association, and the privacy of his/her own thoughts.

Attendant on the rights guaranteed to each pupil are certain responsibilities which include, but are not limited to, respect for the rights of others, obedience to properly constituted school authority, and compliance with the policies and regulation of the District.

As pupils differ in age and maturity, they differ in the ability to assume both the rights and the concomitant responsibilities of citizenship. Accordingly, the exercise of each right will be granted with due regard for the degree of responsibility possessed by the pupil and the pupil's need for continuing guidance and control.

N.J.S.A. 9:17B-1

N.J.S.A. 18A:36-20

[BOARD POLICY](#)

Responsibilities of Students

To achieve academic and social success, the students of the Teaneck Elementary Schools should familiarize themselves with the following responsibilities:

- Always do your best
- Be respectful of property, others and yourself at all times
- Accept full responsibility for your behavior and actions
- Be prepared for school, seek help when needed and be responsible for making up all missed work and tests
- Make the best use of time and contribute positively to class, group and school activities
- Dress appropriately including the use of appropriate footwear. Please do not wear slippers or slides to school. [Board Dress and Grooming Policy](#)

Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

- Ensure attendance at school and prompt arrival/pick-up
- Be the primary advocate for your child's education
- Play an active role in promoting your child's learning experience and positive behavior through collaboration with the school

Parents/Guardians and Students

The Teaneck Elementary Schools' code of conduct consists of reasonable rules based upon respect to produce a positive learning environment. Our belief in responsive school discipline is that a positive, physically and emotionally nurturing environment enables children optimal growth academically and socially. These rules will be thoroughly emphasized and consistently enforced. All stakeholders are responsible for good discipline.

All students are expected to behave appropriately in accordance with general rules of good conduct, Board policy and regulations. The administration will consider each case individually and administer appropriate discipline in accordance with Board policy.

The classroom or special-area teacher handles most student conduct issues. Parents will be notified of serious behavior incidents.

Some student conduct issues cannot be resolved by staff members. These students are referred to the Principal. The following conduct is subject to immediate disciplinary action and is strictly prohibited:

- o Bullying, Harassment, and/or intimidation
- o Weapons including toy models
- o Fighting / assault

Such occurrences are subject to immediate disciplinary action as determined by the Principal.

Homework Policy

Homework is an essential part of the educational program that is intended to foster a positive attitude toward learning, promote independent study/learning, encourage children to utilize outside resources which will aid in current learning situations, provide for the extra practice needed to master basic skills, extend and enrich student learning and broaden student interests. Homework is NOT intended to punish the students or be a substitute for instruction. Homework is assigned on a regular basis. Weekend assignments are avoided unless part of preparation for a long-term project. Although homework should be completed by the student, it can be checked by the parent/guardian for completeness. A parent/guardian can support their child by providing a quiet study area and routine for completing homework.

[Board Homework Policy](#)

Birthday Celebrations

Whittier School supports and encourages the recognition of a child's birthday during the school day. It is an annual milestone in every child's life that should be celebrated not just at home, but in school as well, where children spend one-third of their day with teachers, classmates, and peers. However, while there are many wonderful and creative ways to celebrate a child's birthday in school, birthday celebrations shall not include food treats. We can recognize the day in a variety of special ways that do not include food treats, including:

- Class sings "Happy Birthday"
- Principal visits classroom with a non-food gift
- Parent donation of book to class library
- Student reads favorite book to class
- Parent/Guardian reads story to class
- Class creates crown or card that everyone signs
- Student leads class in game

Distributing gifts or gift bags of any kind to classmates will not be permitted. Bouquets of balloons and other celebratory decorations will not be permitted in school as they can be distracting to students' learning. Invitations can be distributed in school for outside birthday parties only if ALL students in the class are invited. This process will be supervised by the classroom teacher. Each grade and teacher may vary its non-food birthday celebration practices. Please discuss with your child's teacher how you would like to celebrate your child's birthday.

Lost and Found

A Lost and Found will be located in the Whittier School cafeteria. Staff can assist children in finding lost belongings. Please label all clothing, backpacks, and lunch boxes for efficiency. Items should always be labeled on the inside for safety purposes. At the end of each month, all unclaimed items will be donated to a charitable organization.

Family Involvement-PTO

Research has shown that family involvement is the most important factor in a student's success. Families are encouraged to be involved in their child's education. The Parent Teacher Organization encourages families to attend its meetings and to become active members of this organization which supports our school.

Health Services

The Whittier school nurse is Yadira Bustamante, BSN, RN and can be reached at 201-833-5538. Please send to the nurse any doctor's note.

An emergency form is sent home with your child on the first day of school. Parents and guardians are required to fill out all sections of the form. Please return the form promptly and update the information throughout the year. School staff uses this information to call parents/guardians in an emergency. The staff must be able to reach you, or the person you designate, during the school day.

MEDICATIONS

Medications (prescription and over-the-counter) can be given to your child ONLY with a prescription from a doctor and a permission form signed by a parent/ guardian. Please contact the health office at: 201-833-5538 Email: ybustamante@teaneckschools.org for further information and/or to request forms.

1. ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

- a. The following individuals are authorized to administer medication to students in school:
 - i. School physician;
 - ii. Certified school nurse or non-certified nurse;
 - iii. Substitute nurse employed by the Board of Education;
 - iv. The student's parent or legal guardian;
 - v. Student with diabetes, asthma, life threatening allergies who has received written permission pursuant to Board policy to self-administer Glucagon, Inhaler, Epinephrine;
 - vi. Other school employees trained and designated by the certified school nurse to administer epinephrine in an emergency pursuant to Board policy; or
 - vii. Other school employees trained and designated by the certified school nurse to administer Glucagon to students with diabetes

2. DIABETES

- a. Diabetes is a diagnosis that requires constant management throughout the day.
- b. If it is not properly managed, students' ability to learn may decline.
- c. Students with diabetes may require:
 - i. Unlimited access to water;
 - ii. Frequent access to the restrooms;

- iii. Snacks in the classroom or on the bus at scheduled times.
- d. Students with diabetes may self-administer their medication (e.g., insulin/ glucagon injections) if their physician has certified that the student is capable of self-administering his/her medication.
- e. Schools are required to consult with the parent or guardian of a student with diabetes to develop individualized healthcare plans and individualized emergency healthcare plans.
- f. Through these individualized plans, students with diabetes will be better equipped to manage their disease throughout the school day while participating in school-related activities.
- g. If you have a student with diabetes in your classroom, please consult with the school nurse to determine blood glucose testing schedule, accommodations for field trips, class parties, after-school activities, and how to recognize and treat hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia and when to call for assistance.
- h. No school employee shall be held liable for any good faith act or omission made pursuant to a student's individualized healthcare plan or individualized emergency healthcare plan.

3. ASTHMA/LIFE THREATENING ALLERGIES

- a. Students with asthma/life threatening allergies may self-administer their medication provided that there is:
 - i. Written authorization from parents/guardians; AND
 - ii. Written medication order from student's physician AND
 - iii. Written certification from the student's physician that the student is capable of and instructed in self-administration
- b. Permission for the student to self-administer medication is effective for the school year in which permission is granted.
- c. No school employee shall be held liable for any good faith act or omission made pursuant to a student's individualized healthcare plan or individualized emergency healthcare plan.

Transgender Students

The District is committed to providing a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment for all students. The District shall ensure that all students, including transgender students, have equal educational opportunities and equal access to the District's educational programs and activities. The District will comply with Federal and State laws and regulations regarding transgender students and no student shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of gender identity or expression. The District will ensure the privacy of transgender students to the extent permitted by law.

The District will not question or disregard the assertion of a student's gender identity. However, the Superintendent or designee may question a student's asserted gender identity when there is credible basis for believing the student's gender identity is being asserted for some improper purpose.

The District recognizes school-related issues regarding transgender students will vary on a case-by-case basis. Therefore, the Superintendent or designee will meet with the parent and the student to discuss school-related issues, including but not limited to, names/pronouns, student records, restrooms, locker rooms, physical education classes, intramurals programs, interscholastic athletics, and dress codes.

Section 504 Services and Protection under the

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Section 504 is a federal law prohibiting discrimination in and by educational institutions (receiving federal funds) based upon disability. The Americans with Disabilities Act is a federal law providing similar protections, but this law is not limited to educational institutions. In order to be eligible for protection or services, an individual must have a defined physical or mental impairment which substantially impairs a “major life activity.”

Services and Protections for Students

Students may be eligible for Section 504 accommodations who are not otherwise eligible for services as a “classified” child eligible for special education services.

Intervention and Referral Services

The New Jersey Administrative Code at NJAC 6A:16-8.1 through 8.3 requires that each school must maintain a multidisciplinary team for the planning and delivery of services to all students. The system is designed to provide services to students experiencing learning, behavior or health difficulties and to assist faculty who have difficulties in addressing these student needs.

The Intervention and Referral Services Committee (I&RS), helps teachers assist students who are having social, emotional or academic difficulties. Children who need support services may be referred by staff or parents/guardians through collaboration with the classroom teacher.

Intervention and referral services committees may make a recommendation to the Child Study team to review individual cases for special education services.

Special Education Services

Child Study Team

The Whittier Elementary Child Study Team consists of a School Psychologist, a School Social Worker and a Learning Disabilities Teaching - Consultant (LDT-C). The Child Study Team is responsible for evaluating students to determine if they are indeed a student with a disability which means a student who has been determined to be eligible for Special Education and Related Services according to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.5 or 3.6.

If, upon evaluation, a student is deemed a student with a disability and eligible for Special Education and Related Services, the Child Study Team designs an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) to meet the child's specific needs. An IEP is a written plan that sets forth a student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, measurable annual goals, and short term objectives or benchmarks and describes an integrated, sequential program of individually designed instructional activities and related services necessary to achieve the stated goals and objectives. This plan shall establish the rationale for the student's educational placement and serve as the basis for program implementation.

Once classified as a student with a disability, the Child Study team ensures that the district's obligation to make a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) available to each eligible student is met. Additionally, the Child Study Team ensures that students with disabilities are educated in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

[BOE Policy](#)

[BOE Regulation](#)

DCP&P – Reporting of Various Offenses

All school personnel are mandated reporters and therefore charged by law with the responsibility for

reporting suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect. The suspicion of child abuse and/or neglect may be based on the complaints of the child or on the direct observations of the staff member/volunteer. Please report suspected abuse to the Division of Child Protection and Permanency immediately (1-877-652-2873) in accordance with law.

Class Trips

Field trips may require payment from parents. No child will be allowed to attend a class trip without a signed permission form. On the day of the trip, parents will not be called to give verbal permission. Participation in class trips is contingent upon the exhibition of good behavior prior to and during the trip.

Breakfast Program

Breakfast is served in the cafeteria from 7:50 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. Full price breakfast is \$2.00. Any student eligible for free or reduced lunch is also eligible for free or reduced breakfast. All breakfast meals must be pre-registered and prepaid. Hot breakfast is now served.

Lunch Program

Children eat lunch in the school cafeteria. Before or after lunch, they have a recess period, usually outdoors if the weather permits.

Children may bring lunch from home or buy it at school. Maschio's Food Service has been retained by the Board of Education as its food service management company for the 2024-2025 school year. If children buy lunch, they may bring cash every day or parents/guardians may prepay for their child's lunch by sending in cash or through the My School Books Program. You can register for My School Bucks by going to www.teaneckschools.org, click on For Families – School Meals – Online prepayment. We recommend that parents use the on-line alternative to minimize the handling of cash and for parents to manage the amount of funds available in the student's account at any time.

[Online payment account](#)

[Lunch Application](#)

Lunch (including milk) \$3.50

Federal Lunch Program

This program is for families that meet specific income guidelines. This form is available on the Teaneck Schools website. Please complete and return the form, even if you think you are not eligible. Families must apply for this aid every year. If your circumstances change, you may reapply at any time during the school year.

Lunchroom/Playground Expectations

Students will follow Whittier behavior expectations outlined in P.A.W.S.

- Students will respect each other by not teasing, arguing or name calling
- Students will use appropriate voice level
- Students will show good table manners by sitting and eating properly and staying in their seats
- Students will show courtesy to others by using "thank you" and "please"
- We will have a safe lunchroom and playground by not throwing objects, running, hitting or pushing others, climbing fences, and not leaving an area without permission
- The lunchroom and playground will be kept clean by placing all papers and wrappers in the proper containers
- Students will follow line up procedures

Classes

Whittier School operates on an A to F day schedule, with each letter representing a different day on which the specials (art, music, etc.) will take place. If a day is missed because of a holiday or school closing, the schedule resumes, omitting the day but continuing the sequence of the alphabet. The first day of school is an A day. Every classroom has a specific A to F schedule that your child will bring home, telling you on which day the class has physical education, music, art, and library. Depending on the grade level, some specials meet more than once within each A to F rotation.

Grades and Report Cards

There are four marking periods where report cards are distributed.

Period	Start Date	End Date	# of Days of Instruction	Report Card Distribution Date
Marking Period 1	09/05/2024	11/14/2024	45	12/3/2024
Marking Period 2	11/15/2024	01/31/2025	45	02/14/2025
Marking Period 3	02/03/2025	04/09/2025	45	04/30/2025
Marking Period 4	04/10/2025	06/13/2025	40	06/23/2025

Physical Education

Weather permitting, physical education is taught outdoors. During inclement weather, it is taught inside the gym. All children must wear sneakers and appropriate, comfortable clothing on physical education days. "Heelys" and "shoes that roll" are not permitted in school, even with the wheels removed. Also, flip flops, slippers and non-strap/slip-on sandals/slides are not permitted at any time in school.

Music

Elementary General Music introduces students to a variety of musical experiences using diverse instruments and activities. Students start with singing, rhythm exercises, and simple instruments like drums and xylophones, and progress to learning the ukulele. They explore concepts such as pitch, tempo, and dynamics, engaging in listening and movement activities. As they advance, students experiment with more complex instruments and musical forms, fostering creativity and an appreciation for different genres

Fourth Grade Instrumental Music Lessons focus on building foundational skills for a range of instruments, including flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, percussion, and strings (violin, viola, cello). Students will learn to read music, play simple melodies and rhythms, and improve their technique and tone. The curriculum emphasizes ensemble playing, musical expression, and performance skills, preparing students for more advanced studies

Art

In Elementary Art, students will explore various mediums and develop foundational skills appropriate for their age. Kindergarten focuses on familiarizing students with art materials and basic vocabulary, emphasizing line, shape, color, and fine motor skills. First graders build on these concepts, introducing collaborative work and personal artistic expression. By second grade, students delve deeper into art analysis and critique, while third and fourth graders engage in more complex projects, incorporating cultural elements and multimedia techniques.

World Language

Instruction to Spanish is provided by a certified Spanish teacher during the course of the school year. Students are introduced to some basic vocabulary and simple conversation in the Spanish language. Students also learn about the culture, music, and dance of Spanish-speaking nations.

Library/Media Center

Children may borrow books from the school library. Books must be returned or renewed every week. The library is available to children for research projects.

Cell Phone Use

We understand that many parents have provided their children with cell phones for safety reasons so that they can speak with their children after school. Any cell phone brought to school, must be kept off and in student backpacks during the school day, during before-school and after-school programs, and on the bus.

Chart of Discipline for Infractions

Behavior	First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense
Electronic Devices/ Cell Phone (violation of policy, or offensive or unlawful use or publication)	Warning Parental Contact Written Reflection	Detention or Written Reflection Parental conference	Detention or Written Reflection Parental conference

Teaneck's Academically Gifted Services

The Teaneck Academically Gifted Services (TAG) provides an enriching, rigorous, varied and continuous curriculum with differentiated learning opportunities for our students. We are guided by the New Jersey Student Learning Standards Instructional Supports/Gifted and Talented, the NJ Strengthening Gifted and Talented Education Act and the standards set by the National Association for Gifted Children. At Whittier School, TAG's goal is to provide a continuum of services to nurture the academic talents and skills of students. For First and Second Grade Students, instructional adaptations are listed in the district's curricula and are also exposed to enrichment opportunities in their classroom as they work through various content areas and units of study in small groups of students. This is provided for one 40-minute period every 6 day cycle by the elementary gifted education teacher. For Third and Fourth Grade Students, students may be identified, based on data and need for academic enrichment, to participate in a STEM and/or Humanities seminar beyond those services already provided in the classroom. Both the STEM and Humanities seminars occur for one 40-minute period per 6 day cycle with the elementary

gifted education teacher. Further information regarding the TAG program can be found on the [Teaneck Academically Gifted Services website](#) or by contacting Mr. Ashley Sularz, Supervisor of the Academically Gifted Program for Teaneck Public Schools (asularz@teaneckschools.org).

State Assessment

The New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA) are statewide assessments that assess students' progress toward the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, and science.

[NJSLA DOE Parent Resources](#)

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB)

"Harassment, intimidation, or bullying is prohibited. "Harassment, intimidation, or bullying" means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, as defined in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents that:

1. Is reasonably perceived as being motivated by either any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic;
2. Takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds, as provided for in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15.3;
3. Substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students; and that
 - a. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to their person or damage to their property; or
 - b. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; or
 - c. Creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with a student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

[HIB 338 Reporting Form](#)

[HIB 338 State Form](#)

School employees (or contracted service providers) who have witnessed or have reliable information that a student has been subject to harassment, intimidation, or bullying must verbally report the information to the school Principal on the same day they discover the information. Any school employee (or contracted service providers) must complete a written report within two school days of the initial verbal report. All staff members are immune from civil liability for reports made in good faith. Reprisal and retaliation are prohibited against any person who reports acts of student harassment, intimidation or bullying.

The Principal shall inform the parents/guardians of all students involved that an incident of HIB has been reported. The Principal may discuss, as appropriate, the availability of counseling and other intervention

services. An investigation must be initiated by the Principal within one day of the incident being reported verbally and the investigation must be conducted by the school anti-bullying specialist in coordination with the Principal. The Principal may appoint additional personnel to assist, if necessary. The investigation must be prompt, thorough, and efficient. The investigation will permit reports that are oral, written or electronic.

The anti-bullying specialist's investigation must be completed not ten (10) school days of the written incident report. The school anti-bullying specialist may amend the original report to reflect information anticipated but not yet received by the end of the ten (10) day period. Teachers and staff members must always monitor for further incidents of bullying, harassment or intimidation and warn students of the consequences of continued behavior.

The school anti-bullying specialist's investigation results must be reported to the superintendent within two school days of completion. The Superintendent may take or recommend appropriate action, including providing intervention services, establishing training programs to reduce HIB or enhance school climate, imposing discipline, and/or counseling.

The results of the investigation and action taken or recommended by the Superintendent must be reported to the Board of Education no later than its next meeting following the completion of the investigation.

Information about the investigation must be provided to parents/guardians of students who are parties to the investigation. This report must be in writing within five (5) school days after reporting the results to the Board of Education and must include the nature of the investigation, whether the District found evidence of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, whether consequences were imposed or if services were provided to address the harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying. A parent/guardian may request a hearing before the Board of Education after receiving the information. The Board of Education hearing must be held within ten (10) days of the parental request. The hearing is to be conducted during executive session to protect confidentiality. The school anti-bullying specialist may testify about the incident, recommendations for consequences or services, and any programs instituted to reduce such incidents.

The Board of Education must issue, at its next meeting following the receipt of the report, a written decision affirming, rejecting, or modifying the Superintendent's decision. The parent/guardian may appeal the board's decision to the Commissioner of Education within 90 days of issuance of the board's decision.

[Board Policy HIB](#)

[Board Regulation HIB](#)

TEANECK ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS:Whittier Elementary School

Parent/Child Behavior Contract for a Safe School Year

In order to ensure that your child has a great year, expectations and regulations must be clear. Please

read the following, discuss it with your child and sign and return to your child's teacher. Signing and returning the contract indicates that you agree and will adhere to the contract. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

- Use appropriate language (no cursing, profanity, threats, vulgar or crude language).
- Respect staff members and students. Name calling, bullying, teasing and offensive language will not be tolerated. Respectful cooperation with peers and staff is expected.
- Physical contact is NOT permitted – even in the spirit of fun. There will be no pushing, poking, piling on or throwing punches. No fighting or inappropriate behavior on school property, bus stop or on the bus.
- Respect school and personal property. We should all be mindful about keeping our building clean. Damaging or defacing the school or personal property is not permitted.
- Show respect for authority – no negative attitudes.
- Electronic toys, etc. are not to be brought to school unless they are part of a class project. Cell phones may be carried in back-pack for emergency purposes, but not used during the school day. Absolutely no toy guns, knives or any other weapons or objects that can be used as weapons are permitted.
- Be an active learner. Come prepared to learn. Complete class assignments and homework. Ask for help, when needed.

I agree with the Teaneck Elementary School rules outlined in the parent/child behavior contract. By signing this contract and having my child sign it, I am indicating that we have discussed this and that I understand that Teaneck Elementary Schools reserve the right to impose consequences on any child whose behavior indicates a flagrant disregard of the rules and regulations and/or jeopardizes the well-being and safety of himself/herself or other learners.

By signing below, I also acknowledge that I have read the Whittier School Parent/Student Handbook. Please sign below and return to your child's teacher.

Student's Name (printed) _____

Student's Signature _____

Parent/Guardian's Name (printed) _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature _____

Date: _____