



# **PARENT HANDBOOK**

## **2023- 2024**

### **PS 85 QUEENS**

#### **THE JUDGE CHARLES VALLONE SCHOOL**

#### **Our Mission Statement**

Our mission at Public School 85 Queens is to create a safe, nurturing environment, which fosters academic and social achievement for all students. We acknowledge the diversity of our school community and strive to build an inclusive-curricula aligned with the needs of our students. We strive for excellence as we develop the foundational skills needed to produce well-rounded, life-long learners that aim towards college and career readiness through the collaboration of students, teachers, and families.

#### **P.S. 85Q School Song**

Raise your voice with proud affection  
P.S. 85!  
We will always sing your praises,  
For your honor strive!  
Ever loyal is our watchword,  
Whether near or far!  
Years will pass,  
But we'll remember Queens P.S. 85!

Dear Parents:

Welcome to another school year. We hope that it will be productive and successful for you and your child.

This handbook is intended to answer some of the questions you may have concerning policies, procedures and the instructional program provided for your child. We also hope it will be a convenient source of reference for you throughout the year.

Our staff works to provide your child with the best educational environment possible. We welcome your cooperation in this venture and urge you to become actively involved in your child's education.

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

*Ann Gordon Chang*

Principal

## PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

### **ATTENDANCE**

Children are required to be in school unless they can present legal excuses such as illness, death in the family, special religious observance, special medical appointment, etc.

**It is important that you make school attendance a priority.** Your child, in turn, will see school as important. This will also help to establish the positive traits of responsibility and dependability.

**Children should not miss school for family vacations as these must be marked as an illegal absence.** The following are legal absences:

- personal illness
- illness or death in the family
- impassible roads or weather making travel unsafe
- religious observance
- attendance at a medical clinic
- approved school-sponsored trips
- quarantine
- required court appearances

**When your child is absent you are required to call the following number to report the absence (718) 278-3630 and speak to Ms. Nikol. When your child returns to school after an absence, you must provide a written excuse that gives the dates and the nature of the absence. This excuse must be signed by the parent or guardian. In case of prolonged illness or excessive absenteeism, the school may request a medical report from the family's physician.**

If your child becomes ill while in school, he/she will be given attention by the school nurse. She will contact you if your child needs to be sent home.

We suggest that you should **not** send your child to school if he/she has:

- Fever at or higher than 100° in the past 24 hours. (Your child should be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication before returning to school.)
- Vomiting in the past 24 hours
- Diarrhea in the past 24 hours
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Strep throat (must have been taking an antibiotic for at least 24 hours before returning to school)
- Bad cold, with a very runny nose or bad cough, especially if it has kept the child awake at night

### **COVID-19 INFORMATION**

#### **Isolation Period**

The isolation period for K-12 students with a positive COVID-19 test result has been shortened to five-day from ten days. This means if your child tests positive for COVID-19 and is in kindergarten or higher, your child can return to school on Day 6.

- Children can return from isolation on Day 6 if they have no symptoms or their symptoms are improving, and they have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- Students returning from isolation on Day 6 must wear a well-fitting mask such as a KN95, KF94, or a cloth mask over a disposable surgical mask on Days 6–10.  
Children in Pre-K and under who test positive for COVID-19 still must isolate for 10 days.  
Please be aware that any child (in any grade) who has completed their isolation period is NOT required to show proof of a negative test result before being allowed to return to school or work.

### **BLUE CARD INFORMATION**

Three Blue Cards must be **fully** completed and submitted to your child's classroom teacher. Blue cards must have Parent/Guardian information, a list of three persons who may be called in case of an emergency and a person that the child may be release to if the Parent or Guardian is not able to pick their child up. **Students will only be released to persons listed on the Blue Card. Health Alert information must be fully completed, on the back of the Blue Card please include all allergies. If there are any changes to the Blue Card please notify the office or request new Blue Cards to be filled out.**

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER/BABYSITTER**

Many people change phone numbers and residence within the school district during the school year. We ask that if you do move that you immediately inform the school office, please ensure changes are also updated on your child's Blue Card. Your new phone number and address will give us the necessary information in case we need to contact you. Furthermore, if your child has a change of babysitter, please notify us of the new babysitter's name, address and phone number. **These notices are critical in the event of an emergency.**

### **CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION FOR PROBLEM SOLVING**

When parents are concerned about a student-teacher situation, the teacher should be contacted by sending a note or Class Dojo to meet with the teacher to discuss the issue. Either a telephone or a personal conference should be arranged and the matter discussed. Please contact your child's teacher via Class Dojo, email to set up a dedicated time to arrange a Zoom meeting or telephone conference.

If a satisfactory resolution does not occur, email the Parent Coordinator at [parentcoordinator@ps85g.org](mailto:parentcoordinator@ps85g.org).

Concerns about cafeteria or other situations on the school grounds where one specific teacher is not in charge should be directed to the general office. If a problem occurs on the bus, please contact the Office of Pupil Transportation at (718) 392-8855. In all cases, every reasonable effort will be made to deal with your concerns.

### **CLASSROOM PLACEMENT**

Please be advised that we cannot accept specific requests for specific teachers. The placement procedure is an effort to maximize the following considerations:

- the classroom which will provide the best working environment for each child
- a combination of children who will work well together
- a cross section of abilities
- a balance of genders

Successful learning and steady progress are our goals for each child.

To place children in each class, the following information is gathered on each child: teacher recommendations, records of progress and special talents or strengths. Special needs such as health problems, students with IEPs, DOE identified G&T students are taken into consideration where necessary.

### **CLOSING OF SCHOOL**

If school must be closed due to inclement weather or impassable roads, an announcement will be made over our School Messenger notification system and the school website. It is advised that you should also listen to local radio stations and view television stations. The decision is made before 5:00 AM and should be announced by that time. Please **do not** call the school to inquire. **Remote learning will take place in accordance with Chancellor's directives.**

Our lines must be kept open to deal with emergencies. **You can call 311 and sign up to receive all school closing and emergency notifications. You can check the NYC DOE website as well.**

**Make sure that your child knows exactly what to do in the event that school is dismissed early due to bad weather, i.e. go home, go to a neighbor's, etc.**

When school is closed, all related activities, including athletic events and student activities will be suspended for that day and evening unless specific permission is granted by the Superintendent of Schools.

### **COMMUNICATION**

PS85Q communicates with our families through School Messenger, S'more Newsletters and Class Dojo.

It is very important to have your email address and phone number updated in our school system. You may miss out on important information or events that are happening in our school. Please come into the main office to update all information.

### **DRESS**

We encourage all children to be neat, clean and well-groomed. **We expect the school uniform will be worn every day in alignment with the Chancellor's Regulations A-665.** Uniforms are requested so that the way a child is dressed does not in any way interfere with the learning process. The school uniform is a blue shirt, navy blue pants or skirt.

We ask that, in cold weather, your child comes dressed warmly enough so he/she can go outdoors for play periods. This usually means boots, hats, mittens or gloves and snow pants.

For physical education the only requirements are comfortable clothing and sneakers.

Children are not to wear hats in the building once the school day has begun.

We strongly recommend that students wear sneakers to school each day. "Wheelies" (sneakers with built-in roller skate wheels) are **not** to be worn to school. These are a hazard, especially on the playground. This especially applies to field trips.

For kindergarten and Pre-K students, please provide an extra set of clothing in a bag labeled with your child's name. The bag will be kept in the classroom and used if the student's clothing becomes soiled.

### **EMERGENCIES**

If an emergency situation occurs regarding your child, the school will contact you. **This is why emergency phone numbers, addresses, employer phone numbers and addresses are important, and email addresses are requested of you.** Without this vital information, we would not be able to contact you. ***Please keep us informed of any changes in your emergency phone numbers and addresses.***

### **LOST AND FOUND**

*Lost and Found areas* are located in the lunchroom. Lost items are displayed so children may identify their possessions. In order to reduce the number of lost or unclaimed items, please **label** your child's garments with indelible ink or name tapes. Items that are not claimed are periodically sent to Goodwill or similar organization.

### **BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAM**

A federally subsidized free breakfast and lunch program is available to all families. Breakfast will take place in the classroom daily and will be grab and go. Information regarding this is available on [www.schools.nyc.gov](http://www.schools.nyc.gov). All students are entitled to free breakfast and lunch for the 2023 - 2024 school year. Please visit <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/food/menus> to view what is on the cafeteria menu.

## **DISMISSAL**

When you are planning to pick up your child prior to the regular dismissal time, please send written permission with your child to be given to his/her classroom teacher or Class Dojo before 8:00 AM. This note will be sent to the office.

**All Pre-K-5 students must be signed out from the Main office prior to leaving the school early and you must provide a picture ID.**

**Your child/ren will be called and will come to meet you.** Teachers are not allowed to let you or legal guardians take children from the classroom.

**If you wish to have someone other than yourself pick up your child (such as a sitter, grandmother, etc.), we need to have a note with that information signed by you or the legal guardian.** This person also needs valid identification. It is important to keep the office informed if this information changes during the year. **We cannot accept telephone authorization, faxes or email notes to have someone but yourself pick up your child(ren). This must be in writing.**

Your child may not leave the school during the day without specific consent from you. Permission to leave early must be in writing.

Bus students will be placed on the bus daily, except upon occasions where a written note is sent to the main office indicating that the parent or guardian will pick up the child.

Promptness is important to the smooth operation of our program and also to the development of each child's personal habits.

## **SCHOOL MATERIALS & SUPPLIES**

All books are furnished to students. Students are expected to take care of all materials issued to them.

Supply lists are posted on the school's website at [www.ps85q.org](http://www.ps85q.org).

## **SCHOOL MESSENGER**

PS 85Q uses School Messenger to communicate with parents.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **A. Student Rights**

Our school is committed to safeguarding the rights accorded to all students under local, state, and federal law. In addition, to promote a safe, healthy, orderly, and civil school environment, all students have the right to:

1. Take part in all School activities on an equal basis regardless of age, race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability or socio-economic status.
2. School that is free of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.
3. An explicit and consistently-administered discipline code.
4. Courtesy and respect from one another and from school personnel.
5. Present their version of the relevant events, at an appropriate time, to school personnel before imposition of penalty and be afforded due process before removal from an instructional program.
6. Access school rules and, when necessary, receive an explanation of those rules from school personnel.

### **B. Student Responsibilities**

All students have the responsibility to:

1. Contribute to maintaining a school environment conducive to learning and to show respect to other persons and to property.
2. Comply with all school and NYC Department of Education policies, rules, and regulations regarding student conduct.
3. Attend school every day unless they are legally excused and be in class, on time, and prepared to learn.
4. Work to the best of their individual ability in all academic and extra-curricular pursuits and strive toward their highest level of achievement possible.

5. React positively and responsibly to directions given by teachers, administrators, and other school personnel.
6. Display their emotions in an appropriate manner.
7. Ask questions when they do not understand.
8. Seek help in solving problems that might lead to discipline.
9. Dress appropriately for school and school functions.
10. Accept responsibility for their actions.
11. Conduct themselves as representatives of the district when participating in or attending school-sponsored extra-curricular events and to hold themselves to high standards of conduct, demeanor, and sportsmanship.

### **Parent Partnership**

Parents are vitally important to the success of their child's education. As such, they must also assume the responsibility to see that their child attends school regularly and is well-rested, well-nourished, and appropriately dressed. Parents are expected to support high academic expectations by overseeing the regular completion of homework. Parents should help their children understand and obey school rules, regulations, policies, and procedures. Maintaining open lines of communication with school personnel is essential.

### **RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE CHILDREN**

We are proud of the behavior of our students in kindergarten through grade five and we are continually looking for improvement. It is our intent that seeing and hearing the same language will help our students to focus on good behavior. Classroom teachers work with their students to develop classroom rules. Please reinforce these rules with your child at home. Please review the Chancellor's Citywide Behavioral Expectations at <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/know-your-rights/discipline-code>.

**Electronic devices are allowed in school (phones, games, etc.) Please refer to our electronic device policy posted on our school website.**

### **STUDENT COUNCIL**

There is a Student Council which is composed of elected representatives from grade five. The group meets periodically with the guidance counselor to discuss school affairs, to organize various programs and to suggest possible changes.

### **VISITORS**

It is requested that your visitation occur in a way that avoids or minimizes disruption to the normal learning process and the usual classroom routine. The date and time of your visit should be mutually agreed upon ahead of time directly between you and the teacher.

**Upon entering the building, it is very important that you have a picture ID to present to the Safety Agent. You will not be able to pick up your child or enter our building without it. Please present it to the Safety Agent and sign in.**

## **PART II: HEALTH SERVICES**

### **IMMUNIZATIONS**

New York State Public Health Law requires immunizations for all children entering school. The required immunizations are: DTaP- 3 doses, Polio-3 doses, MMR-2 doses, Hepatitis B-3 doses and Varicella-1. If your child has had the chicken pox virus, written verification from your child's physician is required. A complete copy of your child's immunization record from his/her physician must be submitted in order for your child to attend school. Children without the required immunizations will not be permitted to attend school. A Tdap is required for entry into 6<sup>th</sup> grade as well as proof of Varicella if born before 1994.

If you have any questions, please call the Primary School Nurses at (718) 278-3630 ext. 1610.

## **MEDICATION IN SCHOOL**

Any student who is required to take prescribed medication during school hours *must* comply with the following New York State/school regulations:

**Written orders from a physician must detail the name of the medication, dosage, time interval that the medication is to be taken and diagnosis or reason for the medication to be given.**

**Written permission must be provided by parent or guardian requesting that the school comply with the physician's orders allowing the School Nurse to administer.**

**Medication can only be brought to school by an adult in an original container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician. Please do not send medication to school with your child.**

Please note this includes **ALL** medication, both prescription and nonprescription. It is important that you follow these procedures so that your child receives **only** the medication prescribed and in the correct dosage.

## **HEALTH SCREENINGS**

The district's School Health Services program supports your student's academic success by promoting health in the school setting. One way that we provide care for your student is by performing the health screenings as mandated by the State of New York. During this school year, the following screenings will be required or completed at school:

### **Vision:**

- Distance acuity for all newly entering students and students in PreK, Kindergarten, Grades 1, 2, 3, & 5.
- Near vision acuity, hyperopia and color perception screening for all newly entering students.

### **Appraisals:**

- New York State Education Law Section 903 and the Regulation of the Commissioner of Education require physical examinations on all children newly entering school and students entering Pre K, Kindergarten and grades 2, 4, 7 and 10. Your child's health care provider will perform the required physical. The exam needs to be completed within 12 months prior to the start of the school year. A copy of the exam with the health care provider's signature is to be submitted to the school health office. Health appraisals will be completed by the school physician if necessary.

Nurses will assess and perform basic first aide and will notify parents if further medical evaluation or intervention is warranted.

### **NYC Health Screening before entering the building:**

<https://healthscreening.schools.nyc/>

## **SOCIAL EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

PS85Q is committed to helping develop good character with our students. You, the parents, remain the most important teachers of character. However, we feel that working hand-in-hand with you is the key to success.

We have a consistent K-5 set of rules governing behavior and believe it is everyone's responsibility to see that they are followed. There are many ways that we promote positive behavior. The following are some examples: letters sent to you by teachers informing you of the K-5 general rules and classroom rules; recess monitor and cafeteria monitor training; teaching proper cafeteria and recess behavior to your child; the Responsive Classroom approach; focusing on a district character trait every other month; teachers integrating literature containing character lessons; service learning projects; and **Citizen of the Month** recognition.

Our present programs and procedures are helping to develop good character and promote positive behavior. In combination with initiatives that will be implemented in the near future, character education will become even more effective.



## **SMOKE FREE SCHOOL**

PS 85Q operates totally smoke free. There is no smoking in the building or on any district owned property by faculty, staff, students and visitors at any time. This policy reflects the district's concern for the health and safety of all our students and employees.

## **PART III: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

### **GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM**

The Next Generation Learning Standards are emphasized. Core areas include reading, writing, math, social studies and science. In addition, we provide instruction for art, music, physical education and health, and technology.

Each day your child is offered instruction in one special class: physical education, music, art, computer. Additional instructional support is provided when appropriate.

The school day includes a variety of learning experiences and activities for your child. The teachers differentiate their instructional programs based on individual and/or group needs.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAMS**

#### **RtI Response to Intervention**

Part of the PS85Q vision is to create academic success for every child we serve. To do this, we conduct benchmark assessments in reading and math. State assessment results are used in grades 3-5. From these assessments, we determine which students qualify for more intensive support in reading, math, or both. Following the guidelines set forth by New York State and Response to Intervention (RtI), student assessment scores fall into three tiers of instructional intensity. Intensity can be described as conditions of time, group size, instructional targets, instructional methods and/or strategies, support by instructional personnel, and/or a specific intervention program.

- **Tier I Instruction:** All students participate in Tier I core classroom reading and math programs. Core programs include 90 minutes of reading instruction and 60 minutes of mathematics instruction. Within these instructional blocks, teachers have been trained to differentiate to help meet the needs of each student in their classroom.
- **Tier II Instruction:** This applies to those students who are not fully responding to Tier I instruction. These students will receive more in-class support to target their specific needs through methods that could include computer-assisted instruction and targeted instruction provided in small groups by the another professional.
- **Tier III Instruction:** This level provides intensive interventions to support students that are *non-responders* to Tier I and II instruction. A variety of push-in or pull-out support options are available to students in grades kindergarten through five based on identified individual student needs. This Response to Intervention (RtI) would be in addition to the classroom reading or math block. Student participation may be on a short term or long-term basis determined by performance in relationship to state and school benchmarks. Parents are notified via mail if their child requires supplemental push-in or pull-out services.

All students who fail to meet the designated state assessment criteria are required to receive services, including those with disabilities and/or limited English proficiency.

#### **Special Education Services**

PS85Q provides a continuum of services for students with disabilities where the systems of special and general education are merged into one collaborative, well-supported system that is able to educate children with a range of needs. Students are provided special education services specified on their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Our special education services provide for the individual needs of the student including academic, social, physical and management needs. These services are provided with the continuing commitment of serving the student in the least restrictive environment.

The placement of an individual student with a disability in the least restrictive environment shall:

- Provide the special education needed by the student
- Provide for the education of the student in a setting with other students not having disabilities
- Provide services in the student's home school when possible

Some of the programs and services available include:

- Related Services such as speech and language services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, counseling services and other appropriate services
- Resource Room
- Special Classes
- Adaptive Physical Education

### **SPECIAL SERVICES**

Supportive services include the following:

**School Nurse** - The school nurse coordinates the healthcare of students and is a link between home, school and the student's physician. They promote increased classroom attendance and academic achievement by providing specialized nursing care.

**School Psychologist** - The primary responsibilities of the school psychologist are the evaluation of children who are experiencing difficulty learning and to make recommendations for modification of the child's program.

**School Guidance Counselor** - The emphasis is on in-class programs and small counseling groups to address social/emotional issues. The guidance counselor serves as resources for the staff and parents. They also provide information on outside resources. Goals focus on prevention and healthy mental development.

**School Social Worker** – The school social workers assist children, families, school staff and administrators by serving as an outreach liaison to families and community agencies. He also obtains social histories for the Committee on Special Education (CSE), to discuss concerns and to help with referrals to community support organizations. Referrals are made for such things as medical, social, mental health.

**Occupational & Physical Therapists** - Occupational and physical therapy are provided for children who have been diagnosed as having small and/or large motor difficulties.

**Speech/Language Therapists** - Speech/language therapists are available to work with children in need of speech and/or language services.

### **REPORTING TO PARENTS**

Parent/Teacher Conferences are scheduled for **September 14, 2023 - Curriculum Night, November 2, 2023, March 7, 2024, and May 9, 2024**. During Parent/Teacher Conferences you will receive a full report of your child's progress. Report cards will be issued in November, March and the end of June. Number grades indicate your child's academic achievement.

Parent Teacher conferences will be remote, an email from **Teacher Reacher** will be sent out to schedule a time to meet with your child's teacher. If we do not have an updated email address from you, you will not receive the notification.

### **HOMEWORK**

The staff of PS85Q believes that there is a relationship between meaningful homework and student success and achievement. Homework should:

- have clear and concise directions
- be relevant to classroom learning
- be assessed to inform teaching
- receive timely and specific feedback, and
- not undermine success
- will not be given on weekends or long holidays

## Guiding Principles K-5

- 1) Teachers will have clear and reasonable homework policies that include expectations and consequences. These should be explained and modeled to children and parents in the beginning of the school year.
- 2) Teachers should have respectful procedures and routines in place to meet the needs of children who are struggling to complete their homework.
- 3) There is homework that requires students to memorize or work at the knowledge level but teachers will strive to find a balance of homework assignments that encompass many of the levels of Bloom's Taxonomy.
- 4) Teachers recognize the many needs and pressures families face and acknowledge homework can at times have an adverse impact on other responsibilities. Both parties need to take an active role in communicating their homework concerns.
- 5) Homework should involve the practice and application of skills learned in class and may at times be challenging to children and parents
- 6) Feedback **MUST** be given in a timeframe appropriate to the length and sophistication of the assignment. There may be a variety of form of feedback including but not limited to:
  - conferencing,
  - teacher corrected,
  - rubrics,
  - shared class examples and
  - identification of common mistakes with students
- 8) Homework will be assessed to identify individual and group weaknesses and strengths.
- 9) When assigning homework, the teacher should consider:
  - The availability of materials at home differs from child to child.
  - The availability of parental support differs from child to child.
  - Independent skill levels differ greatly from child to child.

### **MAKE-UP WORK**

If your child has a legal reason to be absent from school, we will help him/her make up important work which has been missed.

### **NEW YORK STATE ASSESSMENTS**

The testing program in the elementary school consists of curriculum-based assessments used to inform instruction. Common curriculum-based assessments are done throughout the year by all teachers. The data gives us ongoing information as to the instructional needs of the child. The elementary school testing program consists of curriculum based assessments and state testing. You will be notified in advance of the actual testing. The following is a list of the schedules of our yearly testing given by the State.

#### **Schedule:**

Grades 3-4 New York State ELA	April 10 – April 12
Grade 5 – New York State <b>ELA Computer Based</b>	April 8 – May 17
Grades 3-4 New York State Mathematics.	May 7 – May 9
Grade 5 – New York State <b>Math Computer Based</b>	April 8 – May 17
<b>Grade 5 Science – Computer Based</b>	April 8 – May 17
<b>Grades K-5 NYSESLAT Speaking</b>	April 15 – May 24
Grades K-5 NYSESLAT Listening, Reading and Writing - May 13 – May 24	

The results from the State tests will be sent home to parents by the New York State Department of Education.

**TO SIGN UP FOR A NYC SCHOOL ACCOUNT** where you will be able to access key information about your child's progress in school, including attendance, report card grades assessments, general student information, and academic schedule in one of ten languages on a computer, phone or tablet, please contact Michela Migliaccio, Parent Coordinator at [parentcoordinator@ps85q.org](mailto:parentcoordinator@ps85q.org)

**PS 85Q**  
**SCHOOL HOURS**

**LINE UP OCCURS IN SCHOOL**

**ARRIVAL SCHEDULE**

**Morning Line-up 8:00-8:10 AM – ALL GRADES**

**GRADES 1-5 – STUDENTS ENTER EXIT 3 - BEHIND SCHOOL**

**GRADES PRE-K AND K – STUDENTS ENTER EXIT 4 in GARDEN AREA TO THE GYM**

**DISMISSAL SCHEDULE**

PRE K – EXIT 4 GARDEN AREA	2:30 PM
Kindergarten – EXIT 4 GARDEN AREA	2:30 PM
Grades 1-2 – EXIT 3 BEHIND SCHOOL	2:30PM
Grades 3-5 – EXIT 3 BEHIND SCHOOL	2:30 PM