

School District of Philadelphia
Francis Scott Key Elementary
Stephanie Stover, Principal



Student/ Parent Handbook
2013-2014

2230 South 8th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19148



Parent Pledge

I will do my best to make sure that:

- * **My child starts off the day with a nutritious breakfast**
- * **I take my child to school or at least send him/her on time—when it is the safest time to travel!**
- * **I meet my child’s teachers and exchange telephone numbers**
- * **I turn TV off at least three hours a night**
- * **I look at my child’s homework/report card**
- * **I read to my child every night or have my child read on his or her own**
- * **I talk to and listen to my child**

ACADEMIC CALENDAR FOR 2013-2014

September 3, 2013	Staff Only - Professional Development
September 4, 2013	Staff Only - Professional Development
September 5, 2013	Rosh Hashanah - Administrative Offices and Schools Closed

September 6, 2013	Rosh Hashanah - <i>Administrative Offices and Schools Closed</i>
September 9, 2013	First day for Grades 1-12 student attendance
September 9, 2013	First day for Pre-Kindergarten, Head Start & Bright Futures student attendance
September 9-13, 2013	Kindergarten parent/teacher interviews
September 16, 2013	First day of Kindergarten student attendance
October 14, 2013	Columbus Day - <i>Administrative Offices and Schools Closed</i>
November 5, 2013	Staff Only - <i>(Election Day) Professional Development Day</i>
November 6, 2013	Staff Only – <i>Professional Development Day</i>
November 11, 2013	Veterans' Day Observed - <i>Administrative Offices and Schools Closed</i>
November 28-29, 2013	Thanksgiving Holiday - <i>Administrative Offices and Schools Closed</i>
December 24 – 31, 2013	Winter Recess - <i>Schools Closed</i>
December 25, 2013	Winter Recess - <i>Administrative Offices and Schools Closed</i>
January 1, 2014	New Year's Day Observance - <i>Administrative Offices and Schools Closed</i>
January 20, 2014	Dr. Martin Luther King Day - <i>Administrative Offices and Schools Closed</i>
February 5, 2014	Full Day Professional Development Day for Staff
February 17, 2014	Presidents' Day - <i>Administrative Offices and Schools Closed</i>
April 14-18, 2014	Spring Recess - <i>Schools Closed</i>
April 18, 2014	Spring Recess – <i>Administrative Offices and Schools Closed</i>
May 6, 2014	Staff Only - <i>(Election Day) Professional Development Day</i>
May 26, 2014	Memorial Day - <i>Administrative Offices and Schools Closed</i>
June 19, 2014	Last Day for Students
June 20, 2014	Staff Only - Last Day for Staff - <i>End of Year Transition</i>

September 2013

Dear parents and guardians,

Let me be the first to say, "Welcome back to school!" I hope you have all enjoyed a restful summer and are as excited as I am to begin a new school year. I am honored and excited to be serving my first year as Principal of the Francis Scott Key Elementary School. Along with myself, we have many new staff members joining the Key team this year and I hope that you will come to the school to meet them.

I would like to take this opportunity to provide you with some updates about our school and program. School begins daily at 8:30 A.M. and ends at 3:09 P.M. A calendar of dates with the early dismissals and school closings has been included in this handbook for your information.

Our instructional program will focus on the *Common Core State Standards* which have been developed for all students in kindergarten through grade six. We will emphasize cooperative learning strategies and academic language development in all areas of the curriculum. We will also continue to implement the *Key To Success* program, which features a positive, proactive approach to encouraging, developing, and rewarding excellent student attitudes, behaviors and performances.

In preparation for the new school year, I would like to remind you of the uniform expectations. School uniforms will be *mandatory* again this year according to District policy. The required colors are navy blue bottoms and white tops. Hoodies are not permitted to be worn in the school at any time. Please note that the uniform policy and dress code are fully explained later in the handbook.

Again, we are looking forward to an exciting school year with your child at Key Elementary School and are focused on providing him/her with the best possible elementary experience.

I hope that you will attend monthly parent meetings, our Back-to-School Night, and all other scheduled family events at the school this year. You can anticipate receiving a monthly school calendar of events, and special notices throughout the year from myself and your child's teacher.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Stover
Principal

GENERAL INFORMATION SECTION

The following information has been compiled to give you easy and ready access to basic policies at the F.S. Key School. Should you have any questions or should you desire more detailed information, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the school.

SCHOOL OFFICE TELEPHONE NO. (215) 952-6216
SCHOOL OFFICE FAX MACHINE NO. (215) 952-8505
NURSE'S TELEPHONE NO. (215) 952-6417
COUNSELOR'S TELEPHONE NO. (215) 952-6416

ACT 26 VIOLATIONS (K -12)

Act 26 of 1995, amended Pennsylvania's School code Pennsylvania law requires the expulsion, for at least one year, of any student, who possesses a weapon on school property, at a school function, or on a bus to and from school. The law defines a weapon as "any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury". The law does not require that the student use or try to use the weapon. Furthermore, weapons carried for self-defense are not exempt from the provisions of the law. Possession includes weapons found on the person as well as in the school bags, desks, or lockers.

Act 26 requires that the police are notified and the student is entitled to a formal hearing. Students in Special Education also are impacted by Act 26. Although Federal law requires that special procedures must be used before students in special education may be disciplined, even with passage of ACT 26 they cannot be disciplined for conduct related to their disability. However, a student in special education who brings a weapon to school may be transferred to an alternative program for 45 days while related due process procedures are followed.

When a student is expelled, and under age 17 and cannot find another school to attend within 30 days of the expulsion, the student's family must notify the school district in writing of the need for a program. It is then the school district's duty to provide the student with an educational program. A special education student has the right to continue receiving special education services until graduation or age 21, even if expelled.

If a student registers in another school district after an Act 26, expulsion the student's "parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of the student" must give the new school district a sworn statement saying whether the student has ever been suspended or expelled from any public or private school, in any state, for offenses involving weapons, drugs, alcohol, willful injury to another person, or violence on school grounds. This statement then becomes a part of the student's record. Once the statement is provided, the student must be admitted and provided with an education on the same terms as other students in that district. Person's giving incorrect information on purpose can be charged with a third degree misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of \$2500 or one year in jail. The only exception to this requirement is that a student expelled from one district for an ACT 26 weapons offense may be excluded from the new district for the duration of the expulsion in the old district. The Superintendent of each school district has the power to recommend discipline other than expulsion on an individual basis. If a school district refuses to consider a student's individual circumstances, the parent may have grounds to appeal the expulsion in court.

ANTI-GRAFFITTI POLICY

Students are NOT permitted to bring markers and/or indelible ink pens to school. Any such items will be confiscated and not returned. **Students who write on and/or deface School District property are subject to arrest and other disciplinary action.**

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

School will begin at 8:30 A.M. All students are asked to line up in the yard by 8:30 A.M., weather permitting, with their respective classes. Once in line, students will enter the building with their classes through the four fire tower doors. *In the event of inclement weather*, students must enter the building through the main door at 8th & Wolf Streets where they will be directed to their designated lineup areas. Please note that after 8:20 A.M., all Kindergarten and First Grade students will line up on the first floor, outside of their classrooms. All students who arrive before 8:20 A.M. should report to the basement for indoor supervision during inclement weather.

Dismissal this year will be at 3:09 P.M. Fourth, fifth and sixth grade students will be escorted to the 8th Street exit and dismissed. Second and third grade students will be escorted to the Mildred Street exit and dismissed. All kindergarten and first grade students will be dismissed into the school yard behind the building.

In the event of extreme ice or snow, all students will be dismissed from the 8th Street door. Arrangements must be made for students to either go directly home or to be picked up promptly. Due to limited space and the availability of personnel, we do not have the capacity to provide after school care and supervision.

ATTENDANCE

A child who is not in school will have difficulty learning the necessary content to be academically successful. Therefore, it is most important that your child attend school on a regular basis. Time lost is very difficult to make up and every minute of every day counts. Students should not be kept home unless they are ill. You are legally responsible for sending a written explanation or doctor's note indicating the reason your child was absent from school to your child's teacher *within 3 days of the child's absence*. It is the School District's policy, that any child who does not bring in a note which explains his/her absence within 3 days of the absence, will receive an official absence code of "unexcused".

BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAMS

All of our students are entitled to free lunch and breakfast. There will be no forms to fill out. Breakfast will be served to all interested students when they enter homeroom at 8:30 A.M. Therefore, it is very important that your child comes to school every day on time. We do not want to lose critical classroom time for eating.

All students must eat lunch in school and we request that they eat the school lunch. Exceptions are made for medical and religious reasons. Students that bring their own lunch should bring it every day. The reason for this is that we are strictly audited by the government and we need to know how many lunches to order on a daily basis. Junk food, bottled drinks or soda are not permitted in school. Children are not permitted to eat candy or chew gum in school.

If you have any questions about the school's breakfast and/or lunch programs, please contact the school for additional information.

BULLYING BEHAVIOR

Bullying is strictly forbidden. It occurs when a student engages in behavior that prevents or discourages another student from exercising his/her right to education. Bullying behavior is defined as aggressive or hurtful behavior perpetrated repeatedly over a period of time, in a relationship characterized by an imbalance of power (with regards to gender, physical or mental strength, social acceptance etc.). Such behavior includes the use of teasing; taunting; threats; coercion; repeated harassment; abuse; oppression; intimidation against students, school personnel, or school visitors; or exclusion of anyone physically, psychologically, or sexually. Students who are guilty of bullying may be suspended for up to ten days, sent to an alternative education site and/or be expelled from the School District.

COUNSELING SERVICES

Our counselor is always ready to help a child or family. She offers help and assistance to children and parents, some of whom may be referred by the teacher or the office. She will work very closely with parents and with community agencies. If you have a problem, or if your child has a problem, the Counselor is the person to see. Please stop in the Main Office, or call her telephone number directly if you wish to speak with her. Many serious problems can be resolved by having the parent, counselor and teacher working together. The Key School is also proud to offer the same counseling services, as noted above, (in the home language) for our students whose families speak Khmer, Laotian, Nepalese, Karin, Burmese, Vietnamese, Chinese (Cantonese), and Spanish.

CYBER-BULLYING

Cyber-Bullying is also strictly forbidden and means bullying through the use of electronic devices such as e-mail, instant messaging, text messages, blogs, photo and video sharing, chat rooms, mobile phones, pagers and Students who are guilty of cyber-bullying may be suspended for up to ten days, sent to an alternative education site and/or be expelled from the School District.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES/CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

When minor infractions of school rules occur, they are, in most cases, handled by the classroom teacher or the supervising staff member. A verbal reprimand or a deprivation of a privilege will take care of the large majority

of cases. In some instances, after school detentions will be issued. Parents will be notified as to the reason, date and length of time of the detention.

The Code of Student Conduct, which is a District produced document, will be distributed to all parents. It outlines the various policies that govern conduct in the District. It applies to conduct that occurs: on school grounds at anytime, off school grounds at any school activity, function or event, while traveling to and from school, etc. Rights and responsibilities, infractions, consequences and disciplinary procedures are outlined in this document.

We know that parents want to be informed about their child's behavior. We also know that by working together, we can accomplish much in the area of school citizenship. Accordingly, we pledge to do our best to keep you well informed.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND TOYS

The use of cell phones, game boys, ipods, and all other electronic devices as well as toys can be extremely disruptive to the educational environment. Cell phone usage during school hours also reduces the safety of everyone in the school building. As per the School Reform Commission, cell phones, beepers, laser pens, game boys, ipods, etc. are **PROHIBITED** in the school. Any of these items brought into the building will be confiscated. The first incident will result in a parent conference where the item will be returned (ONLY a parent/guardian can retrieve the item). A second violation will result in the item not being returned until the last day of school. *Key Elementary School will take no responsibility for any lost, stolen or damaged cell phones or any other electronic devices as it is the policy of the School District of Philadelphia that students are not to have cell phones or other electronic devices in school.*

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOLS - SNOW STORMS

1. Listen to the radio or television stations, starting at 5:00 A.M. They will announce whether or not the Philadelphia Public Schools are to be closed.
2. ***Please do not call the school office. Office lines must be kept open for emergencies. Listen to Radio Station KYW for any information regarding school closings. KYW Radio is 1060 on the AM frequency.***
3. Make sure we have on file the address and telephone number of the nearest relative or neighbor where your child may be sent in the event that schools are closed early during the school day. It is critical that we have an EMERGENCY CONTACT FORM for every child in our school.

ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES (ESOL)

The ESOL program provides intensive, daily instruction in English for all students who speak a different primary language. Children are instructed in a variety of formats to develop communication skills, ensure cultural competence, and enhance students' confidence and self-esteem. Our program also provides tutoring for students who need additional academic support.

EVERYDAY MATH PROGRAM - Grades K-5, MATH IN CONTEXT - GRADE 6

The School District is mandating that each elementary school provide 90 minutes of math instruction each day utilizing the Everyday Math Program. This math program is designed to develop conceptual understanding and procedural fluency in math. The Everyday Math Program addresses state and national standards in math and is designed to provide students with experiences in math that will help them to do their best work on the PSSA. Our sixth grade students will be working with the Math in Context Program in order to prepare them for 7th and 8th grade usage.

FAMILY NET

The School District of Philadelphia has established "Family Net" which allows families to access their child's progress data, report card grades, attendance, standardized test scores, and instructional resources. All you need is internet access and follow the steps below:

Step #1: Get your username and temporary password.

Go to <http://www.phia.k12.pa.us/parents/familynet> and click on "Register Now". **Note:** You will need your child's name, date of birth and ID (the student ID number can be found on your child's report card).

Step #2: Log into SchoolNet

Go to <http://phila.schoolnet.com> and click on the blue button that says “Parents/Guardians” and then click on the yellow button that says “Log onto FamilyNet”. You will also be asked to create your real password.

Note: After you create your real password, you can forget your old one.

Step #3: Finding your child’s information

Click on your child’s “student profile” in the middle of the page. Once in your child’s profile, you will be able to view your child’s Enrollment and Academic Record, Standardized Test Scores, Programs, and Benchmark Tests.

Note: Click on HOME in the yellow bar near the top of your page to find activities for your child.

If you have questions regarding familynet, e-mail familynet@philasd.org

GUIDELINES FOR DELAYED OPENING OF SCHOOLS DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather, the School District may make the decision to have a delayed opening of schools. The decision to delay the opening of schools will be based on input from the Mayor’s Office and from various city support agencies. When the decision to delay the opening of schools is made, an announcement will be made via local media and school district communications. When there is a delayed opening, all schools and early childhood programs will open at 10:00 A.M. Dismissal time will remain the same (3:09 PM).

HEALTH SERVICES

Our School Nurse Practitioner is responsible for checking all students’ vision, height and weight on a yearly basis. Audio metric readings are done on those children in Kindergarten through Grade Three, and also, for those children having hearing problems. Physicals and dental screenings are required upon entry to the School District and for 6th grade students. Scoliosis screenings are also required for 6th grade students. Our Nurse Practitioner will perform these screenings.

In addition, the Nurse Practitioner will assist in obtaining clinic appointments, dental care, insurance and glasses for those requesting this type of assistance. Pursuant with District policy, you are **required** to meet with her if your child requires prescription medication, or if your child has health issues.

Immunizations are **required** and must be kept up-to-date. A schedule of the required immunizations, along with their frequency, can be obtained from the Nurse.

The Nurse Practitioner through the course of a school day will also check on those children who are not feeling well or will administer first aid when necessary. When the situation requires it, parents will be called to take children home and/or be advised to seek additional medical assistance. Since our Nurse Practitioner is available to us only 2 days a week, we urge you to keep children who are ill in the morning at home. If a child becomes ill during the school day, provisions must be made to have the child officially released from school by having a responsible adult come to the main office to pick up the child and sign for an early dismissal. **It is critical that you provide the office with accurate information, including the proper address, home, work and/or cell phone numbers, and the names of emergency contacts.**

HOMEWORK AND BOOKS

The District’s homework policy states that children will have some kind of written homework assignment at least FOUR DAYS A WEEK. Different teachers will evaluate the work done in different fashions. We trust that parents will check with their child’s teachers. All children are expected to read for a minimum of twenty minutes each night. Parents should read to children, especially while they are in Kindergarten and First Grade.

Every child is expected to carry the necessary books and supplies to and from school to enable him/her to complete the homework assignments. Backpacks are the safest and most convenient means of transporting these articles. Every child should carry a copybook or an assignment book, in addition to other school texts that may be sent home.

Books are expensive. Please encourage your child to take care of their books. When they are lost or stolen, you will be required to pay for the cost of the replacement book. A list of your child’s books and their costs will be provided for your information.

LATENESS

Late arrival interferes with school and class procedures, and is a poor habit to develop. Our admission bell rings at 8:30 A.M. Every boy and girl should be in line when the school session officially starts. The first few minutes in homeroom class help the teacher and class get off to a good start. Preparing needed books and materials, checking attendance, making announcements, putting away articles of clothing, etc., are all important items that should be taken care of before the instructional program begins. Let's give your child the opportunity to start the day right.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parents are encouraged to schedule conferences with the Principal, Counselor, Nurse or child's Teacher whenever there are questions or concerns. You may come at any time. However, school policy requires that you stop in at the Main Office. An appointment in advance is desirable because a teacher may not always be able to speak with you immediately.

READING/LANGUAGE ARTS

The School District is mandating that a Comprehensive Literacy Framework be implemented in all of its schools for 120 minutes a day. The components of the Comprehensive Literacy Framework provide structure for teaching and practicing the skills and strategies of effective reading and writing. The components of the Comprehensive Literacy Framework are: Read Aloud, Shared Reading, Guided Reading, Independent Reading, Modeled Writing, Interactive Writing/Shared Writing, Guided Writing and Independent Writing.

Read Aloud - The teacher selects written pieces and reads to students in order to share a wonderful piece of writing, to model fluent, expressive reading or to model and teach a needed skill or strategy.

Shared Reading - The teacher directly teaches skills and strategies of effective reading. Students have a copy of the selection and can follow as the teacher reads.

Guided Reading - The teacher provides small group instruction for students who have similar needs and instructional reading levels.

Independent Reading - Students spend time each day quietly reading books that they select to read. As they read they are practicing and perfecting strategies and skills needed to be effective readers.

Modeled Writing - The teacher demonstrates how he/she thinks about and composes writings while students watch and listen.

Interactive Writing/Shared Writing - The teacher works with a small group or whole group of students to compose a message or piece of writing together. The teacher directly teaches the skills and strategies of effective writing by demonstrating and/or inviting students to participate in the writing.

Guided Writing - The teacher provides small group instruction for students with similar instructional need.

Independent Writing - Students spend time each day writing. As students write they are practicing and perfecting strategies and skills needed to be effective writers.

REPORT CARDS

Student report cards will be issued four times a year and report card conferences will be held twice during the year so that you will have the opportunity to meet with your child's teacher to discuss his/her progress. Conferences will be held on the following dates: December 4 and 5 and February 12 and 13. Final Report Cards will be sent home on the last day of school in June. Interim reports will be issued by teachers periodically throughout the year.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

In order to best provide for the safety and security of your children, we are asking that you assist us by following some basic guidelines. If you walk your child to or from school, it is important that your child arrive on time to school each day and be picked up promptly at 3:09. Because of the limited amount of space at Key, and the fact that we are required to keep the stairways and halls open to traffic, we are requesting that you leave your children when the bell rings for admission, and that you wait outside for your child at the end of the day. Exceptions will be made during extreme weather conditions. If you send your child to school, please do not send him/her to school much before 8:30 A.M. because we do not have much space for indoor supervision.

Please note, as part of our School Safety Program, we will be conducting the required Fire Drills and Shelter In Place Drills. During the Fire Drills, we ask that everyone evacuate the building. During the Shelter In Place Drills, we ask that everyone who is in the building remain inside, and everyone who is outside of the building remain outside until the drill is completed.

We have fourteen security cameras that monitor activity both inside and outside of the school. Additionally, there is a camera located outside of the 8th and Wolf Street door. On that note, all doors will be locked to outside entry shortly after 8:30 AM. Therefore, all visitors must press the button located on the camera to be given entry via a buzzer.

SCHOOL TRIPS

All school trips must be approved by the Principal. A permission slip for a student to take a trip must be signed by the Parent/Legal Guardian and returned to the school prior to the class trip. **No child will be permitted to attend a class trip without a signed permission slip. Making a telephone call to the teacher to give consent is not acceptable.** In some instances, transportation costs for school trips may need to be paid by parents. School District personnel may never use their private vehicles to transport pupils on trips. To assist in supervision, one adult for every ten pupils is required on school trips. Parents and other adults are encouraged to volunteer to assist school personnel on school trips when needed. Students who have been disciplined for disruptive and inappropriate behavior may be refused permission to attend trips. The **school uniform** is required on all trips unless specifically stated otherwise on the permission slip.

TECHNOLOGY AND INTERNET USAGE

We use Apple computers in all classrooms. We have a fully automated library. All classrooms are cable ready and our school is wired to provide internet and intranet computer operations. Our website is filled with wonderful resources that help to extend the learning opportunities for you and your child. Our home page address is: <http://www.philasd.org/schools/key>.

UNIFORM POLICY -- DRESS CODE

The School District of Philadelphia approved a mandatory school uniform policy for all students. This policy requires that the uniform shall be defined as clothing of the same style and color and that each school would be responsible for determining its uniform program. In keeping with this mandate, the Key School, based on the results of our parent surveys, will implement the following uniform policy. Our uniform colors are navy blue and white. Boys must wear navy blue pants and white shirts. Blue jeans and undershirts worn as a dress shirt are not permitted. Girls must wear navy blue slacks, skirts or jumpers with white tops. Shorts, culottes and halter tops will not be permitted. Closed toed shoes and sneakers are acceptable. Sandals and flip flops are not permitted. Clothing with obscene words or pictures is strictly forbidden.

VISITOR SIGN IN PROCEDURE

All visitors are asked to report to the Main Office. Visitors will be asked to sign the "Visitor's Book" and receive a "Visitor Badge" before traveling to any other part of the building. A Parent Greeter at our Welcoming Desk will direct all visitors to the Main Office.