

Dear Parents/Guardians:

As we embark on this new 2010-2011 school year, it is very important that we work cooperatively for the success of all our children. Cooperation, hard work, and respect are the cornerstones of what makes Ridgway a great place to learn, play and grow. We pride ourselves on being a school community that fosters a strong sense of self and community, where everyone is valued and appreciated and diversity is certainly embraced. Here at Ridgeway we certainly strive to be our B-E-S-T!

This year we will be implementing PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Supports), which is a school wide approach to positive student discipline and supports. In the meantime, we expect all our students to follow our “success rules.”

Our “success” rules are:

(Grades Pre-K – 2):

- *We listen to each other*
- *Our hands are for helping, not hurting*
- *We use “I care” language*
- *We care about each other’s feelings*
- *We are responsible for what we say and do*

(Grades 3-4):

- *We cooperate for peaceful purposes*
- *We speak with respect*
- *We listen with an open mind*
- *We act with kindness*
- *We care about each other’s feelings*
- *We are responsible for what we say and do*

Our school handbook accompanies this letter. I’ve developed this family handbook with you, our families in mind. Please review it with your child. Please use this as a reference as to how we will work together . It contains a great deal of information that will help to make this a successful year. Please sign and return the form stating that you have read the handbook.

Here are a few pieces of information that are very important, and will be useful as we begin a year of learning:

- Starting this school year, students will ***line up outside on the primary playground***. In the event of inclement weather and during the winter months, we will have students line-up in various locations inside the building as we have done in the past.
- Walkers, or students being brought to school by a parent or guardian, should arrive **no earlier than 8:15am** unless you are part of the before school program which is being offered this year through the YMCA. We serve breakfast starting at 8:15am. ***No one is available to supervise your child before this time.***
- Students picked up prior to dismissal must be signed out through the office. **After 2:00pm please wait at the designated area. This will be strictly enforced.**
- Visitors are always welcomed, but only if they sign in at the school and wear a visitor’s badge for the duration of their visit.
- If you pick up your child from school, **you must be here no later than 3:30pm.**
- Students and/or parents should not use any outside doors other than the main entrance for both arrival and dismissal.

We’re delighted to have the opportunity to work with your child this school year. Let’s make this an outstanding year for everyone who studies, works, or volunteers at YOUR school. Yes, Ridgeway Elementary belongs to all of us.

With children first,  
Tashia Brown  
Principal

# RIDGEWAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2010-2011

This Family Handbook  
Belongs to:

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**RIDGEWAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

***We have received and reviewed the 2010-2011 RIDGEWAY  
Elementary Family Handbook with our child.***

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Child's Name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**ClassroomTeacher's Name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent's Signature**

**(Please sign and return this page)**

## **RIDGEWAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

### **School Board Members**

Rosemarie Eller, President  
Charlie Norris, Vice-President  
Peter Bassano  
Sheryl Brady  
James F. Hricay  
Donna McLaughlin  
Dr. Randy Stein

### **Elementary Administration**

Tashia Brown, Principal  
Assistant Principal

### **Elementary Office**

Mary Brennan  
Fran DeFreitas  
Eileen Levy

### **Administration**

Dr. Chris Clouet, Superintendent  
Dr. Lenora Boehlert, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources  
Jessica O'Donovan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction  
Fred Seiler, Superintendent for Business

## **PHONE NUMBERS**

<b>ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</b>	<b>422-2081/422-2082</b>
<b>ELEMENTARY NURSE</b>	<b>422-2084</b>
<b>CAFETERIA</b>	<b>422-2077</b>
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>422-2056</b>
<b>CENTRAL OFFICE</b>	<b>422-2000</b>

## **WHITE PLAINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT**

To educate and inspire all students, while nurturing their dreams, so they learn continually, think critically, pursue their aspirations and contribute to a dynamic world.

## **Ridgeway Elementary School Mission**

We pride ourselves on developing active, life-long learners who will eventually become the global leaders of tomorrow. Our theme of Global Understanding empowers our students with the necessary skills to succeed in our increasingly diverse and challenging world.

### **HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

Communication between home and school is an important element in determining a student's success. You are encouraged to contact the school anytime you have a question or a problem that involves your child. A line of communication has been established for your convenience. To ask a question, share a concern, or celebration:

Contact the teacher first.

Contact a principal.

Contact a central office administrator.

Contact the Superintendent.

If you follow the above steps, we believe you will successfully resolve your questions or concerns. Please remember that the teacher is the first step in this process and most concerns can be resolved with a conversation or conference.

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**STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

It is very important that unless your child is ill, that he/she attends school everyday. In accordance with the district's attendance policy, please call the school to report your child's absence. If we do not receive a phone call, we will call your home. When your child returns to school, please send him/her with a note so the absence will be documented as a "legal" absence. If we do not receive a note, then the absence is considered "illegal." In the event that your child has a prolonged illness and you would like to request homework from the classroom teacher, please contact the main office before 11 a.m. with your request and you will be able to obtain the homework at the end of that instructional day.

### **CLINIC (STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES) AND MEDICATION**

If a student is hurt or ill, he/she should tell a teacher or other school personnel and ask for a pass to the school nurse's office. Students must "sign out" *from the nurse's office* if they are released from school early. The nurse will notify parents when necessary.

All new entrants, students in grades Pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, second, and third must have physical examinations. All physical forms must be turned in by October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Anyone involved in a school-related accident should report it immediately to the school nurse.

**If a student needs to take medication (including over the counter medication, medicated lotion, cough drops, Anbesol, sunscreen, bug spray, eye drops, etc.) during the school day, he/she must follow these procedures:**

- A parental/guardian permission form that gives the nurse permission to administer and store the medicine must be signed in the nurse's office.
- Bring a doctor's note with instructions about dosage, times given, etc. to the nurse
- Bring medication in the prescription box with the pharmacy label on the box.
- All medications should be handed to the school nurse by a parent/guardian. **No student should have medication in his/her possession while at school.**

### **EARLY DISMISSAL/LATE ARRIVAL: PARENT REQUESTS**

We are responsible for the safety of all students. Therefore, no child will be released from school unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. Always write a note to the teacher when you plan to release your child(ren) before the scheduled dismissal time.

It is very disruptive to the classroom when children are called to the office immediately before dismissal. Teachers are helping children pack their belongings, reviewing last minute assignments, noting changes in transportation, etc. **Therefore, children will not be called to the office after 2:00. If you must pick up your child(ren) early, please arrive by 2:00.** When you arrive to pick up your child(ren), report to the main office. Please be prepared to show identification. The secretary will call for your child(ren). Whenever possible, make medical and/or other appointments after school.

### **EMERGENCY INFORMATION: EARLY DISMISSAL, DELAYED START, SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

In the event school has to be closed, or released early due to inclement weather, you may tune into channel 77 for information. The school district or Ridgeway will also initiate the phone call out system to inform you of this change. The information will also be posted on our district website: [www.wpcsd.k12.ny.us](http://www.wpcsd.k12.ny.us)

### **Early Release Days(ERD)**

All White Plains Elementary Schools including Ridgeway, will release 65 minutes earlier two Wednesdays in each month, to allow teachers an opportunity to participate in professional development. We will dismiss at 2:05 on the dates listed below. Please make a note of this.

September 15, 29	October 13, 27	November 10	
December 8, 22	January 12, 27	February 9	
March 9, 23	April 6, 27	May 11, 25	June 8

### **FAMILY INFORMATION**

It is very important that we have the most current information on record for your family. Please always provide us with your new address and or phone number when there has been a change. This will help us to get important information to you in a timely manner. You can stop by the main office to inform us of any changes.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are an important part of the educational program. By providing students with hands on experience and exposure to the larger community, field trips can greatly enhance a student's educational experiences.

A signed permission slip from the parent or guardian is required for each child for each field trip. A child who does not provide a signed permission slip will be prohibited from participating and will be given an alternative assignment on the day of the field trip.

The classroom teacher will provide parents with specific instructions for lunch, appropriate dress, and arrival and departure times. If the weather is bad on the day of a scheduled field trip, parents should contact the main office to inquire on the status of the trip.

All students are expected to exhibit proper behavior on field trips. While field trips take place outside of school, school rules still apply. Students are expected to abide by the school's student code of conduct while on a field trip. In addition, students who are unable to maintain appropriate behavior in the classroom may jeopardize their opportunity to go on a field trip. Parents will be notified prior to the trip if there are any concerns about their child's behavior.

### **FIELD TRIP RULES**

1. Parents that have been randomly selected to chaperone in some situations may be able to ride the bus with an assigned group, however other times, parents may have to provide their own transportation. Please remember siblings are not allowed. (The chaperones will be notified by the classroom teachers).
2. Due to safety regulations, parents who are not chaperoning **may not** follow the bus to meet up with the classes, unless prior approval was obtained from the principal.
3. A written note is required if your child is walking home unattended or riding with another parent (after the trip).

4. All students must return to Ridgeway to be signed out from the school if they are leaving prior to dismissal. Students **are not allowed** to depart from the field trip location. **All students are expected to return to Ridgeway.**
5. Parents must be on time.
6. No glass bottles are permitted in bag lunches. (Remember to pack extra drinks and snacks.)
7. Dress for the weather. Bug spray and sunscreen must be applied at home.

### **FIRE AND SEVERE WEATHER DRILLS**

Ridgeway Elementary School is required to have fire and other emergency drills each year to prepare students for possible emergency situations. We expect our students to follow their teacher's directions. If passing in the hallway by themselves when the fire emergency bell rings, students are instructed to go to the nearest exit and report to an adult.

### **HOMEWORK**

Homework provides excellent opportunities for developing good study habits, providing for individual differences and abilities, and encouraging self-initiative on the part of the student.

Parents and the school share the responsibility for student learning. Parents can assist their child(ren) with homework by:

- providing a study area free of distractions and with good lighting.
- asking questions about the content of student homework.
- giving requested assistance, but letting the student do his or her own work.
- avoiding undue pressure.
- helping to create a "homework habit" by having your child(ren) work at the same time each night.

At the discretion of the teacher, students may be assigned homework each night. Each teacher will notify parents of his/her homework expectations.

### **INTERNET SAFETY**

The White Plains School District is committed to safeguarding children's access to the Internet and World Wide Web on district computers. Although the District cannot totally guarantee the effectiveness of selected filtering and blocking technology, the district will use such measures that block or filter Internet access to visual depictions that are obscene or otherwise harmful to minors, as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act.

### **LIBRARY-MEDIA CENTER**

Students have the opportunity to use the library media center regularly both for checkout and research. Students who return books late may not continue to check out books from the library until the late books are returned. Checkout privileges can be withheld until damaged or lost books are paid for by the student.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Our lost and found is located in the rear of the gymnasium. Once the area becomes filled and lost items are not claimed, all articles are donated to charities. Students are urged to cooperate by turning in articles found and to inquire for articles that have been lost. All personal belongings, athletic equipment, and books should be clearly marked for easy identification. *The school is not responsible for lost articles.*

### **MONEY, VALUABLES, TOYS, PETS, AND PARTIES**

The learning atmosphere can be interrupted by the indiscriminate use of electronic devices. These items are temptations for theft as well. Therefore, all radios, MP3 players, pagers, cellular phones, CD players, tape recorders, toys, digital cameras, and electronic games are to be left home unless they are to be used in class. Baseball cards or any trading cards should be left at home. If they are brought to school, they will be confiscated.

We understand the attachment that students have to their pets; however, pets of *any kind* are not allowed in classrooms.

Class parties are held at the discretion of the classroom teacher. Children may celebrate birthdays at school, but in accordance with the district's wellness policy, we encourage healthy party treats and ask that they be delivered in the beginning of the school day if possible. Invitations to home parties or activities are NOT to be handed out at school.

### **PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION** **WE WELCOME YOUR PARTICIPATION**

The Ridgeway Elementary PTA is comprised of individuals who are vitally concerned about the education program. We are very fortunate to have an extremely supportive PTA. Members of the organization meet periodically to discuss educational matters and plan various functions for students, faculty and volunteers. Some PTA activities/services include assembly programs, fund raising, book fairs, author/illustrator week, and the holiday boutique just to name a few.

2010-2011:	President:	Caroline Quattrochi
	Recording Secretary:	Jane Berger
	Corresponding Secretary:	Kristin Mulvey
	Treasurer:	Denise Serra
	Assistant Treasurer:	Tara Friend

### **PLAYGROUND**

The playground is an ideal place for students to practice sharing, friendliness and develop cooperation. Playground supervision is provided at all times. Please help us keep your children safe by dressing them with the appropriate foot gear and clothing to have a safe and fun outdoor experience.

### **STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES**

To support our educational program we arrange two-parent conference sessions each year: one in November and one in April. During the conference, parents will discuss the progress of their child and receive their child's report card. We will provide translations for parents who request it in advance.

Teachers will always be available to conference with parents, so if you have any questions concerning your child, don't hesitate to call. Report cards will be distributed quarterly.

December 13, report cards go home

December 14, Evening Conference, 6-8      December 16, noon dismissal, parent conferences

March 28, report cards go home      March 29, Evening Conference, 6-8

March 31, noon dismissal, parent conferences      June 20, report cards go home

### **SCHOOL DRESS**

All students are expected to dress appropriately for school and school-sponsored functions. The district believes that to do otherwise is a distraction and takes away from the learning process. It is the responsibility of both parents and students to ensure that the student's dress (including jewelry) is safe and appropriate, and does not materially and immediately disrupt or interfere with the educational process. A student should:

- Not wear items that are vulgar, obscene, libelous, or denigrate others.
- Not wear items that promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.
- Make sure that underwear is completely covered with outer clothing.
- Not wear low-riding pants that expose underwear and/or the upper part of the buttocks.
- Not wear head coverings except for a medical or religious purpose.
- Not wear suggestive or revealing garments such as, but not limited to, tank tops, tube tops, net tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps, plunging necklines (front and/or back), midriff tops, see-through garments, nor shorts, skirts, and dresses of inappropriate length.

While some of these garments are inappropriate under this Code for older students, they might be appropriate for children in the prekindergarten or the early primary grades. In administering this Code, principals/directors (or their designee) will use their discretion in enforcing the policy in these early grades.

While these garments are inappropriate for wear during the school day, some might be appropriate attire at school dances and proms.

***Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item and, if necessary or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item. Students who refuse to modify their dress or who repeatedly fail to comply with the dress code shall be subject to a range of disciplinary actions listed in Section V.***

### **SCHOOL HOURS**

- 8:15 Breakfast is served.
- 8:40 Students may enter their classrooms.
- 8:45 Announcements begin(Students are marked tardy after 8:45)
- 11:30-2:00 Lunch Periods
- 3:20 Dismissal

Students are **not** expected to arrive before 8:15 and must be picked up by 3:30.

### **SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM**

To apply for free and reduced price meals for your children, please fill out the application sent home the first few days of school, or request one from the main office. If you have any questions, please call 422-2077. A full lunch program is offered. Student lunches presently cost \$2.00. Milk can be purchased for \$.50. Breakfast is currently available for \$1.00. We strongly encourage healthy foods and snacks and so each grade level can purchase ice-cream as dessert, once per week.

### **SCHOOL CONDUCT REGULATIONS: BUS**

School bus transportation is an extension of the school day. It is expected that students will ride on the school buses in an orderly and respectful fashion. When students misbehave, their actions tend to distract the drivers of the buses and create a potentially dangerous situation.

Most of the rules for bus conduct are merely common sense and good manners but since everyone forgets from time to time, the rules are as follows:

- Be ready when the bus arrives.
- Obey all requests of the bus drivers. (Students may be assigned a specific seat)
- The younger children will receive first consideration in seating.
- Students are to REMAIN SEATED while the bus is in motion.
- Heads, arms, and hands are to be kept inside the bus.
- Students are to refrain from:
  - eating or drinking
  - vandalism
  - harassment of others
  - rowdy behavior
  - use of profanity
  - throwing objects from bus windows
  - fighting
- Students are not to board or leave the bus while it is in motion.
- Students must ride their assigned bus and are to board and disembark ONLY at assigned stops.
- Skateboards, walkmen, water guns, radios, tape players and electronic games are prohibited.
- Pass (approximately 10 feet) in front of the bus. Never pass behind the bus.

Bus Conduct Reports may be issued to students who fail to follow the rules of bus conduct. The parent will be notified if their child may be in danger of losing transportation after he/she has received Bus Conduct Reports.

### **STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

Ridgeway Elementary will provide a safe and positive atmosphere both during the school day and at all school-related functions. We will always treat children with dignity and respect. Our approach to discipline is to help children understand their

behaviors, take responsibility and learn from their mistakes. If an incident arises that warrants some form of student discipline, we will document the incident on a referral form and the parent will be contacted. The district encourages students to be the best they can be. School personnel will guide students to become individuals who consider all issues, analyze differences, comprehend choices, and reach decisions through thoughtful reasoning. Students should also exhibit responsible citizenship and strive for excellence within the school setting as preparation for adult success.

We believe that parents/legal guardians are an integral part of their children's success in school. It is important for parents, staff, and students to work together. Students shall be expected to comply with the District-wide Code of Conduct, and to the extent the Code of Conduct conflicts with the provisions in this handbook, the Code of Conduct will govern.

### **TARDINESS**

Students cannot benefit from our program if they come to school late. If a student is tardy (after 8:45), he/she must have a written excuse from a parent/guardian. Please support your child in receiving the best education possible by getting him/her to school on time.

### **TELEPHONE USE**

We have over 690 students in attendance at Ridgeway Elementary School. We allow students to make phone calls in emergency cases. If you call your child's teacher during instructional time, a message will be taken and the classroom teacher will return your call within 24 hours.

### **VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers are an important part of our school and are always welcome. Adult volunteers must fill out an application through the Office of Human Resources and be fingerprinted, then approved by The White Plains School Board. This is to ensure the safety and well being of our students and staff. Please contact the main office for more information if you are interested in being a regular volunteer here at Ridgeway.

Parents and other citizens are encouraged to visit the school during the course of the school year. All visitors should report to the main office first. To ensure a positive, learning atmosphere, we encourage all visitors to conduct themselves appropriately.

### **WALKERS**

Walkers in grades K-2 must be picked up at school at the walker door at the side of the building. Walkers in grades 3 and 4 must have *written parental permission* if they are to walk home on their own, and will be expected to proceed directly home and follow pedestrian safety rules. The person/s picking up children at the walker door should have some form of photo identification readily available.