



# **Meeting Street**

## **The Carter School**

**Family/Student Handbook**  
**2020-2021**



## Contents

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Our Mission  | 5         |
| Our Philosophy   | 5         |
| Administrative Team  | 6         |
| <b>Arrival / Departure</b>   | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>Late Arrival</b>  | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>Early Dismissal or Change in Dismissal Routine</b>  | <b>7</b>  |
| Transportation   | 8         |
| Statewide Transportation Inclement Weather/Emergency Closing/Delay Policy for Students with Disabilities | 8         |
| Transportation Exceptions  | 9         |
| Inclement Weather Closing / Disruption of Utilities Closing  | 9         |
| <b>Student Absence and Illness</b>   | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>Contagious Disease Directives not necessarily directly related to COVID-19</b>                        | <b>11</b> |
| <b>COVID-19 General Spacing and Movement Guidelines</b>  | <b>12</b> |
| Medical Episodes   | 12        |
| Medications  | 12        |
| Standing Orders  | 13        |
| Medical Records  | 13        |
| Treatments Requiring Skilled Nursing   | 13        |
| Nursing Care on Community/Field Trips  | 13        |
| <b>1:1 Nursing</b>   | <b>13</b> |
| Medical Appointments   | 14        |
| Emergencies  | 14        |
| <b>Educational/Therapy Interns, Medical Consultation and Grand Rounds</b>                                | <b>14</b> |
| Health-Related Screens   | 14        |
| Emergency Drills   | 14        |
| Family Vacation  | 14        |
| Release of Information   | 14        |
| Parent Communication   | 15        |
| One-on-One Teacher Assistant (TA) Rotation   | 15        |
| Special Education IEPs, Team Composition and Process, Progress Reporting                                 | 15        |

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Parent Involvement   | 16        |
| Parent /Teacher Conferences  | 16        |
| Visiting the Classroom   | 16        |
| Phone Calls to Classrooms during the School Day  | 17        |
| School Pictures-Cancelled at this time   | 17        |
| Uniforms   | 17        |
| Clothing and Supplies  | 17        |
| Weather Guidelines for Recess, Outdoor Activities and Field Trips                      | 17        |
| Trial Work Experiences/Field Trips-Cancelled for this year                             | 18        |
| Aqua Therapy   | 18        |
| Assessments  | 18        |
| Lost and Found   | 18        |
| <b>Breakfast and Lunches</b>   | <b>18</b> |
| <b>Lunch</b>   | <b>18</b> |
| <b>Unpaid Meal Charge</b>  | <b>19</b> |
| <b>Microwave Use</b>   | <b>19</b> |
| <b>(There will not be access to the microwave at this time.)</b>                       | <b>19</b> |
| Food and Allergies   | 20        |
| Birthdays and Other Celebrations   | 20        |
| Retention and Final Disposition of Student Records                                     | 20        |
| <b>Child Abuse Law</b>   | <b>21</b> |
| <b>Bullying Policy</b>   | <b>21</b> |
| <b>Teen Dating Violence Prevention Policy</b>  | <b>21</b> |
| <b>Technology</b>  | <b>21</b> |
| <b>Internet Acceptable Use Policy</b>  | <b>21</b> |
| <b>Sexual Harassment/Protections for Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students</b> | <b>21</b> |
| <b>Narcan</b>  | <b>21</b> |

### **Our Mission**

Meeting Street compassionately and innovatively empowers children and their families to thrive by fostering the development of the whole child.

### **Our Philosophy**

The following guiding values frame our work with students and their families:

- Respect – We treat ourselves and each other with respect and treat each other like we ourselves would like to be treated.
- Integrity – We are honest and keep our promises.
- Compassion – We treat each other with dignity, understanding, and compassion.

- Inclusivity – We acknowledge and embrace differences and incorporate these differences to form one community.
- Excellence – We strive for excellence in everything we do.

Our educational philosophy is based on creating a positive learning environment where each student is supported in their development of academic and social skills. A rigorous, research-based curriculum is provided to all students within a meaningful learning context that is cognizant of individual learning styles and needs. Classroom/program Teams work in concert to implement integrated programs focused on the whole learner.

Specifically, our approach is grounded in the following tenets:

- Students learn best through activities that challenge their abilities and encourage them to reach for new ones.
- While we teach to each student and individualize our approach to the unique strengths of each learner, we balance this approach by having our trans-disciplinary teams work with students to ensure that all children benefit from our educational community.
- Time for joint planning and collaboration is essential for effective educational programs. Planning time is built into the daily, weekly, and monthly schedules to ensure strong communication across all classroom staff (teachers, teaching assistants, therapists, and other allied professionals) and to allow for the seamless integration of practice.
- A proactive approach is key to helping each student develop. Classroom team members develop, in partnership with each child's family, intervention activities based on an assessment of the child's developmental strengths and needs as well as the family's goals, resources, and priorities.
- Students need to use their developing skills in different ways and in different settings so that they can generalize them and use their skills independently. We partner with families to help them support their children by reinforcing learning strategies at home and engaging families with ongoing communication and activities.

### **Administrative Team**

|   |                    |  |              |
|---|--------------------|--|--------------|
| Head of School                            | Margaret Knowlton  | <a href="mailto:mknowlton@meetingstreet.org">mknowlton@meetingstreet.org</a>     | 401-533-9240 |
| Assistant Head of School                  | Heather Boccanfuso | <a href="mailto:hboccanfuso@meetingstreet.org">hboccanfuso@meetingstreet.org</a> | 401-533-9146 |
| Curriculum Director                       | Susan Vander Does  | <a href="mailto:svanderdoes@meetingstreet.org">svanderdoes@meetingstreet.org</a> | 401-533-9139 |
| Director of Special Education             | John Kershaw       | <a href="mailto:jkershaw@meetingstreet.org">jkershaw@meetingstreet.org</a>       | 401-533-9190 |
| Director of Admissions (The Grace School) | Bethany Sosa       | <a href="mailto:bsosa@meetingstreet.org">bsosa@meetingstreet.org</a>             |              |
| Administrative Assistant                  | Kathy Hopper       | <a href="mailto:khopper@meetingstreet.org">khopper@meetingstreet.org</a>         | 401-533-9247 |

## **Arrival / Departure**

Our school day begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 2:45 p.m. If you bring your child to school he/she can be dropped off at 7:45 am. Students who take the bus to school and/or take part in our breakfast program may proceed to pick up breakfast and go directly to their classroom. For more information about breakfast, please see “Breakfast and Lunches”. All students must be wearing a mask to enter the building. Staff at student drop-off will have disposable masks available for students who forget their masks. Staff will not be responsible for unbuckling and physically removing students from the car.

If you are picking up your child at the end of the school day, please pick him/her up at the designated pick up area at 2:45 p.m. Parents will wait outside and school staff will release students to identified/authorized adults. If you are picking up your child early, please contact the school office in advance to make arrangements. If someone other than yourself is picking up your child, notification must be received prior to pick up and the individual must be on your signed list of individuals approved for pickup. This is for the safety and security of your child. Please be sure that the authorized pick up person brings a photo ID. You will not be allowed in the building unless it is an emergency. If you are late picking your child up at parent pick up, you will need to sign your child out at the front desk in the main lobby. Middle school students are allowed to walk home with written permission from their parents or guardians. This permission must be renewed on a yearly basis.

## ***Parking/Dropping off Students***

Cars should be parked only in designated visitor parking areas. **A handicap parking space should not be used under any circumstances if you do not have a handicap-parking permit.** Parking is not allowed at the bus entrance/exit areas. When dropping off your child in the morning, parking is extremely limited. Please consider using our VIP drop-off system. There will be a designated area to pull up, your child will get out of the car, and then you can proceed on your way. If you would prefer to park and walk your child into school, please park and cross your child at the designated crosswalk. A crossing guard is provided in the morning for safety and it is important that we model these behaviors/laws for our students.

## **Late Arrival**

Homeroom begins at 8:00 a.m. If your child arrives after 8:10 a.m. he or she is considered late and will need to be signed in at the front desk. Your child then will go to the classroom or wait for a staff member to bring him or her to the classroom. Parents are not allowed to bring children directly to the school office or classroom and must remain in the lobby. Tardiness is a significant problem that interferes with classroom instruction. A record is kept of lateness and parents will be contacted to resolve the situation if necessary.

## **Early Dismissal or Change in Dismissal Routine**

It is extremely important for students to have a regular routine when leaving school each day. However, there are times when that must change due to appointments, family schedules, or another unexpected reason. On a day that that your child is to be dismissed from school early or you will be changing his/her normal dismissal routine (i.e. pick up on a particular day instead of riding home on the bus) send a note to your child’s teacher with the change and/or communicate directly with the school’s administrative assistant at (401) 533-9247. We would appreciate being notified BEFORE 1:00 pm on any given day so that we are able to communicate any such changes to all necessary staff members. Your child must be signed out at the front desk. If your child is transported by bus it is a parent’s responsibility to contact

the transportation provider directly for any changes in your child's schedule. Please do not rely on bus drivers and children to let us know about any changes.

### **Transportation**

Before the first day of school your local school department should notify you about transportation for your child. If you have not heard within a week of school beginning, we suggest you contact the *Transportation Director* of your school department.

If your child will not be coming to school on a particular day, you should notify your local *transportation department* early that morning with this information. This will save the driver from making a trip to your home if your child will not be coming to school. In addition, if you will be bringing your child into school but he/she will require a ride home you must contact the *transportation department* to ensure your child arrives home on his/her regularly scheduled bus.

Concerns or questions about school bus transportation must be directed to your school district's *Transportation Office*. The Carter School has no supervisory control over transportation of students to and from our programs.

A responsible adult *must* be home when the school bus arrives in the afternoon. Each school district has its own policies and procedures should the situation arise when the bus arrives at an empty house. Please note: It is not the policy of school districts or The Carter School to have the student return to school under such circumstances.

### **Statewide Transportation Inclement Weather/Emergency Closing/Delay Policy for Students with Disabilities**

Many of the policies below are consistent with your past transportation experience but some may be different because there are students from **multiple school districts** on many of the statewide buses. In order to avoid confusion and errors during inclement weather, it is imperative that schools, parents, and guardians understand and comply with the policies.

**School Closing:** If **either** your resident public school district **or** Meeting Street is closed, no school bus transportation will be provided that day. If Meeting Street makes the choice to stay open, even though Providence Public Schools are closed, then please note that there will be **no** school bus transportation provided that day.

**School Delay:** Students from multiple districts may ride on your child's bus in the morning, and if **any sending district** represented on your student's bus is delayed then all students riding that bus will be on a delayed schedule following the latest district delay time (i.e., If one district on your route has a one hour delay and another has a two hour delay, everyone on the route will follow the two hour delay). Our inclement weather page includes a link to a list of buses going to your child's school. Use your bus route number to find which other districts are on your child's route. **You must check the status of each of the school districts on your route** in order to determine if your child's bus will be delayed. The most up-to-date information for all of the statewide bus routes can be found on our website. Please always check the website for the latest information at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Finance/Transportation/default.aspx> and search for the Inclement Weather link on the right-hand side of the web page.

**Early Release:** Since students from multiple districts may ride your child's bus home, if **any receiving district** represented on your student's bus releases early then all students on that bus will be released early following the district with the earliest release time (i.e., If one district on your route releases at noon and another at 1:00 pm, then the bus will follow the noon release time.) Again, your particular bus and all the districts represented on it can be found on the website. You must **check the status of each of the districts on your route** to determine if your child has an early release.

**Please know that we are not able to contact parents individually should an emergency dismissal occur. Your child can go to his/her home, to the home of a friend, or a relative on his/her bus route as noted on his/her Emergency Dismissal Form.**

Also be aware that if your homeschool district or the district of any other student sharing the bus with your child is released early, your child that is transported by statewide busses will be released early. Historically, schools educating students with disabilities have not put students on buses for early dismissal until a parent or contact has been reached. This same arrangement will continue on the statewide busing system. Statewide buses are directed to wait for a maximum of fifteen extra minutes for a contact to be reached. In a situation where no contact has been made, the student will remain at the school and the parent must make arrangements with the school as to when the child will be picked up. Therefore, please make sure your school and transportation have more than one working contact number for your student. For safety reasons, no statewide buses will be returning to schools once they have left the grounds and are in route.

### **Transportation Exceptions**

Should there be a situation where a student cannot be safely transported home via their designated bus, we and/or the bus company reserve the right to refuse to transport. In this situation a family will be immediately called and notified that they are required to pick up their child to transport them home from school. In the event the parent/guardian or other authorized individual is not able to come and pick up the student, Meeting Street has the right to arrange alternate transportation home.

### **Inclement Weather Closing / Disruption of Utilities Closing**

In the event of inclement weather, please listen to the local radio stations WPRO-AM (630) WHJJ-AM (920), WSNE-FM (93.3), WBBB (B101) or watch WPRI CBS 12, WJAR NBC 10 or WLNE ABC 6 for this information. If the agency or school closes mid-day for any reason, we will follow the instructions you have provided on your child's Emergency Dismissal Form.

You may also call the Meeting Street weather line at (401) 533-9174 to receive an up to date message. This line is updated in the morning at approximately 5:30 a.m. Please be sure to listen for the date noted at the beginning of the message.

### **Student Absence and Illness**

Parents should notify the school office by 8:00 a.m. the morning of the absence by calling 401-533-9247 **and the reason for the absence must be disclosed.** The school administrative assistant will contact the parent/guardian of any student not accounted for in the daily classroom attendance log. For repeated or extended absences, a note from a parent and/or documentation from a doctor, stating the reason for the absence and any special instructions, may be requested.

### *COVID-19 Requirements*

Any students experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 before the school day begins must stay home. If a student develops COVID-19 symptoms while at school, they will be removed from the classroom and taken to the school health office and be quarantined in an isolation room along with a member of the school health team. Parents/guardians will be notified to pick up their child within the hour. The parent/guardian will sign in at the main desk and wait in the lobby; the student will then be brought to the lobby.

Parents/guardians must seek medical advice for their child within 48 hours and schedule a COVID-19 test as needed. If the test result is positive, the student will be required to complete a period of isolation and to take such other steps as may be directed by the Rhode Island Department of Health (DOH) prior to returning to school. Parents should contact the school with test results. Parents should refer to the list of probable case symptoms to determine if a child is ready to return to school and must have symptoms improving and be fever free without medication for 24 hours. Proof of a negative test or a doctor's note is not necessary for a return to school if it is not a probable case.

### Probable Case Symptoms

#### *Screening Students*

Parents/guardians must screen students at home using a self-attestation [Google form](#) provided. All students must stay home if they fail the screening prior to leaving for school. If a student or any person residing in the home with the student screens positive for any COVID-19 symptoms, the student's parent/guardian will need to seek medical advice from the student's healthcare provider and inform the school of the student's absence. Refer to the [probable case](#) document for guidance.

**If a student has any of the symptoms listed below and/or answers YES to any of the following questions, the student must stay home, the parents must seek medical advice and our school must be notified as soon as possible.**

*HAVE YOU HAD ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS IN THE PAST THREE DAYS THAT ARE NOT EXPLAINED BY ALLERGIES OR A NON-INFECTIOUS CAUSE?*

Cough

Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

Fever or chills

Muscle or body aches

Sore throat

Headache

Nausea or vomiting

Diarrhea

Runny nose or stuffy nose

Fatigue

Recent loss of taste or smell

1. Have you been in close contact (less than six feet) for at least 15 minutes with anyone with COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
2. Have you traveled anywhere outside the 50 United States in the past 14 days?

3. Have you traveled to Rhode Island for a non-work-related purpose from a location with a high community spread rate (see list maintained by the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) at [www.health.ri.gov/covid](http://www.health.ri.gov/covid)) ?
4. Have you been directed to quarantine or isolate by the Rhode Island Department of Health or a healthcare provider in the past 14 days?
  - o If so, when does/did your quarantine or isolation period end?

#### *COVID-19 Related Travel Restrictions*

Please note, per the Governor of the State of Rhode Island, if you return to Rhode Island from one of the states listed on the DOH Current [RI Travel Restriction List](#), you are required to self-quarantine for 14 days upon return to Rhode Island. This means that your child will be unable to return to school for 14 days. Please check this list as it is updated on a daily basis.

As an exception, you may provide proof of a negative test for COVID-19 that was taken within 72 hours prior to arrival in Rhode Island. If you receive a test during your quarantine in Rhode Island and get a negative test result, you may stop quarantining; however, you are required to continue to self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days, wear a mask in public, and follow physical distancing guidelines. You also must quarantine while waiting for a negative test result.

#### **Contagious Disease Directives not necessarily directly related to COVID-19**

1. ***Chicken Pox***: Students may not attend school as soon as the outbreak period is suspected (fever, rash) until 5 days after the onset of the rash or all of the lesions are crusted and dry.
2. ***Conjunctivitis***: Pink Eye is a contagious infection of the eye. Students with yellow or white discharge and with a fever or behavioral change will be sent home and must receive 24 hours of antibiotic treatment before returning to school. There is no exclusion from school for the clear watery type.
3. ***Ear infections***: Students who have ear infections must be free of pain or fever to attend school and be able to resume a normal activity level. If ear drainage is present they must receive 24 hours of antibiotic treatment before returning to school.
4. ***Impetigo***: This is a contagious infection of the skin. Its most common symptom is crusted sores, usually appearing first in the facial area. Children cannot return to school until they have had at least 24 hours of antibiotics and the lesions have dried.
5. ***Strep Throat***: The common symptoms of strep throat are fever, sore throat, and sometimes a rash. Students must receive at least 24 hours of antibiotics, be free of fever, and be able to resume normal activity to return to school.
6. ***Children with fever, loose stools, or vomiting***: Students will be evaluated by the school nurse on an individual basis. In the case of any illness, the decision to send a student home will be made by the School Nurse or Head of School. Students must be fever free for 24 hours without medications before returning to school.

If a student becomes ill at school, the parent will be called to pick up the child.

- The parent will sign in at the main desk and be asked to wait in the main lobby. The administrative assistant will then notify the classroom to bring the student down to the school office or contact the nursing staff.
- Meeting Street does not provide services to keep a sick child in school all day, especially those who are considered contagious. Please refer to the COVID-19 policy.

## **COVID-19 General Spacing and Movement Guidelines**

Students in grades K-12+ will be assigned to one classroom and will remain in that classroom for most of the day.

- When moving about in the hallway for any reason, we will work at maintaining appropriate social distancing and wear masks.
  - Appropriate social distancing will be marked on the floors/walls and teachers will practice this with their students.
- Students will remain in their classrooms for most of the day.
  - Students will have assigned seating.
  - Clear dividers will be on each table to provide individual space/barriers between students.
  - Social distancing will be practiced, as much as possible.
  - Breakfast and lunch will be provided in the classrooms.
  - Special subject teachers will provide their lessons in the students' classrooms with the exception of library and physical education.
- Physical education (K-12+) and library classes (K-8) will be scheduled year round. All other special subjects (art, music, health, Spanish and ASL) will be scheduled by trimester, to reduce the number of staff in and out of each classroom on a daily basis.
- Common space (gym, library and playground) will be sanitized between each class.
- Middle school content area teachers will rotate into the classrooms instead of students rotating.
- High school center specific classes will rotate on a biweekly basis.
- All students will have designated paths to travel in the building for arrival, dismissal, going to recess, gym and the library.
- Recess schedules will be developed and classes will be assigned to certain areas/zones on the playground and soccer field.
  - The location that each class is assigned to will rotate on a daily basis.
- Bathroom breaks will be scheduled and bathrooms will be assigned to classrooms.
- Drinking fountains will not be used but water filling stations will remain open.

## **Medical Episodes**

Meeting Street requires medical clearance for a student's return to school when a student experiences hospitalization, medical intervention, or a medical procedure, such as:

- Administration of a general anesthetic to the student during a treatment or procedure.
- Significant injury (i.e., fracture, concussion, or sprain).

When one of the above occurs, **ALL previous medical orders are automatically discontinued, and new orders or a renewal must be obtained before medications or therapies (including nutritional, physical, occupational, or speech) are resumed.**

Use of the Meeting Street Medical Clearance Form or a doctor's note, containing the appropriate information, will be acceptable.

Prior to the student's anticipated return to school, please have the appropriate document(s) faxed to the attention of the school nursing supervisor at (401) 533-9105. The nursing supervisor will review documents and approve a child's re-admittance to school.

## **Medications**

Every effort should be made to schedule medication administration outside of school hours. The school nurse will administer prescription medications as well as nonprescription medications with a doctor's

order and parental permission. The parent's instructions must be on the permission form (i.e., time of administration). **Exception:** With short term medications such as antibiotics, the prescription label may take the place of a physician's order.

New medication must be sent to school in the original prescription bottle, properly labeled by a pharmacist. Over-the-counter medications must be in the original container and labeled with the child's name. Medications are stored in a locked cabinet in the nursing office. Parents are responsible to provide all medications that are to be given at school.

All medication and treatment orders may be recorded on the yearly physical form including any standing orders such as administration of Tylenol. Any written order appropriately signed by a doctor is acceptable. Orders expire after one year and will be considered invalid for administration by school nursing personnel.

### **Standing Orders**

Our Medical Director, Dr. Robert Griffith, MD, has provided standing orders for the Grace and Carter school programs. The school nurse may honor the request of a parent to administer to a child a dose of over the counter FDA approved medication if a written request is provided specifying the dose, route, and time of administration. Other treatments for rashes, itchy areas, insect bites, cut, abrasions, etc may include hydrocortisone cream, Ivy-dry, first aid spray, burn spray, first aid cream, or antibiotic/diaper ointment. In addition, acetaminophen and ibuprofen may be administered by mouth one time via appropriate route for child based on dosing recommendations on the bottle with parent/guardian verbal permission.

### **Medical Records**

Forms that require annual updates, such as Medical Treatment Authorization and Emergency Contact Information, School Physical (if specified), and Medical Issues & Medications, will be sent home at the end of the school year. Doctor's and parents/legal guardians need to **sign the appropriate forms and return them to school as soon as possible. All medical forms must be completed before your child can attend school.**

### **Treatments Requiring Skilled Nursing**

A doctor's order is required for any skilled nursing treatments (tube feedings, catheterizations, tracheostomy care, etc.) Orders may be written on the School Physical, Medical Issues & Medication Form or any appropriately signed doctor's order form. In addition, all treatment equipment must be sent in by the parent such as tube feeding supplies, catheters, and tracheostomy care needs.

### **Nursing Care on Community/Field Trips**

A school nurse will be provided for those students on community/fields trip who have specific protocols that require nursing intervention, such as medication administration, administration of liquid diets through G-tubes/Peg-tubes, and respiratory measures,(e.g., tracheal suctioning).

### **1:1 Nursing**

Nurses provided to students by their school district based on their IEP are not employees of Meeting Street. However, they are expected to follow all of our guidelines for appropriate behavior that reflect the values of our school.

### **Medical Appointments**

So that we may appropriately incorporate any medical recommendations into your child's program, whenever possible, please notify our nursing supervisor or your child's nurse when he or she will be seeing a doctor. In addition, it is helpful to us to have a copy of any reports the physician writes. Please have them send a copy to the school in care of the school nurse supervisor. If there are any medications or treatment changes made at any appointment, please inform the school nurse as soon as possible. Our fax number is (401) 533-9105.

### **Emergencies**

If your child becomes ill or has an accident at school that is an emergency, you will be contacted at once and your child will be taken by ambulance to the emergency room at the Hasbro Children's Hospital. If a student requires medical attention during a community activity, rescue personnel will be called. Parents will be notified immediately when such a call is made and given information on the emergency facility the student is being transported to for treatment. A staff person will accompany the student to the emergency facility and remain with the student until a family member arrives.

### **Educational/Therapy Interns, Medical Consultation and Grand Rounds**

As part of our program offerings at Meeting Street, and in order to better meet the therapeutic and academic needs of our students with IEPs, Dr. Robert Griffith, Meeting Street's Medical Director, regularly meets with educational and therapy team members to review and discuss a student's medical needs. In addition, therapy teams also conduct Grand Rounds which involve team members' observation of a child for a short period of time in order to gather information to inform their delivery of therapeutic services. Meeting Street is also a training site for therapists and educators. At various times throughout the year an intern may be working with your child and have access to certain medical and academic information, under the direct supervision of an educator or therapist.

### **Health-Related Screens**

All health-related screens as mandated by the Rhode Island Department of Education, such as hearing, vision and dental, will be conducted annually. Parents of students at selected grade levels will be informed in writing of the screen that will take place and the date on which it will occur.

### **Emergency Drills**

Practice fire, evacuation and lockdown drills occur at least 15 times during the school year, per Rhode Island Department of Education Regulations. Your child is always supervised during these drills.

### **Family Vacation**

The school does not endorse family vacations during the school year. However, if you choose to keep your child out for this reason, please notify the school office in advance.

### **Release of Information**

It is imperative we have on file any custody papers involving your child. In cases where school departments or other educational institutions request information regarding your child we will ask for written permission from a parent or guardian before filling the request. Student records are maintained and are available in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (Section 438, Public Law 90-247, Title IV). Policy is available [here](#).

## **Parent Communication**

Parent and staff communication is an important part of each child's experience. We make every effort to keep parents informed of school news. Information to parents and notices about upcoming events will be sent home with your child or via e-mail or the Remind app. Teachers will be able to push out information directly from the classroom. Families will also be able to contact teachers and therapists during scheduled hours. The school hours are Monday-Thursday from 7:45-4pm and Friday from 7:45-3pm. Please know that contacting one of the teachers during school hours does not mean they will return a message immediately as they may be teaching. This will allow us to provide you with information about classroom and school events in a more timely manner. We will also continue to push out notifications via MailChimp. Monthly newsletters will be sent from school administration to communicate upcoming events, new information and highlights. We want you to communicate with your child's teacher(s) as often as you would like. Teachers will be reaching out to parents via a preferred method (email, phone, Remind) on a regular basis. Important information such as changes in dismissal or absences must be reported directly to the main office. Phone calls can be directed to the school office or you may email your teacher directly. Email addresses at Meeting Street all follow the same format, which is first initial, last name @meetingstreet.org. Example: [jsmith@meetingstreet.org](mailto:jsmith@meetingstreet.org). All of your child's teachers and therapists will provide you with their email addresses within the first week of school. You will also be able to contact them via Remind. For parents of students with an Individualized Educational Plan, we will also implement a daily note that will be sent home with your child. Please remember that all communication should primarily take place with your child's classroom teacher or therapist.

In order for us to ensure compliance with state and federal laws, protect student information and provide open communication with parents, the following guidelines are in place for all students:

- Detailed medical, educational or personal information regarding specific child/children will not be shared via email. This information will be shared by a phone call or during face to face conversation between the parent and the classroom teacher. Responses to detailed emails from parents/guardians will be addressed via phone or scheduled meeting. In addition, texting is inherently non secure and non-compliant with safety and privacy regulations under HIPAA and FERPA.
- Additionally, Meeting Street employees are prohibited from taking pictures with iPad's or devices privately owned by students, without prior approval by administration. These devices should be used only for educational/communication purposes.

## **One-on-One Teacher Assistant (TA) Rotation**

As part of an ongoing initiative, the rotation of one-on-one teacher assistant assignments will be in effect. In keeping with best practice, such rotation promotes the benefits of fostering independence and increasing the generalization of social-emotional as well as other skills being worked on.

## **Special Education IEPs, Team Composition and Process, Progress Reporting**

In accordance with both Federal and State statute and regulations every student placed in the Grace or Carter School programs has an Individualized Education Plan [IEP] which stipulates the specially-designed instructional and related (e.g., therapy) services that student receives while attending Meeting Street. IEPs are reformulated on annual basis, but may be reviewed whenever warranted during

the yearly period it is in effect (for such purposes as reviewing student progress or status, reviewing an independent or triennial evaluation, deliberations on accommodations, program and services or placement, other requested or recommended revisions).

Meeting Street strives to make sure that a duly-comprised IEP Team is in attendance whenever an IEP meeting is convened. Typically all special education instructional and related service providers (i.e. teacher and therapists), the parent(s), a representative from the sending school district, an administrator from the Grace and/or Carter Schools (serving as Chair) are 'at the table'. Other attendees may be those who have knowledge essential to the development of the IEP or who may have been invited to the meeting by the parent.

In both the Grace and Carter Schools, the reporting of progress towards the annual goals and objectives specified in a current IEP is on a quarterly basis, paralleling the periods that trimester report cards are issued as well as at the conclusion of the Extended School Year [ESY] term (for those students eligible to participate in ESY). 'Off-cycle' progress reporting is available at parent request.

### **Parent Involvement**

Parents are encouraged to become involved in our school community. We would have parents join us on field trips, be guest readers, and help to work on special projects. In order to participate, we need a BCI completed within the past 5 years. We will also set up a time to meet with you to complete an orientation. The BCI may be obtained from your local police department or the Attorney General's office. **Due to social distancing and the need to limit exposure during this time, we will not allow parents/visitors beyond the vestibule.**

### **Parent /Teacher Conferences**

Parent /Teacher conferences will be scheduled in the fall and in the spring. These are important times for you to meet with your child's teacher to ensure his/her sufficient progress in school. Conferences will be held via Zoom or on the phone.

### **Visiting the Classroom**

**(During this time, all classroom visits will be suspended.)**

We welcome and encourage parents to visit the classroom throughout the school year. During your visits, we ask that you please follow a few procedures that will ensure a safe and secure environment for all students and staff:

- Please have a scheduled appointment made with the Assistant Head of School.
- All visitors must wear a mask at all times.
- Visits will not last longer than 30 minutes, but may not be scheduled at this time.
- Enter the building through the Main Lobby entrance only.
- **Identify yourself to the receptionist and sign our visitor's register. The receptionist will provide you with an ID badge to wear during your visit and will direct you to the school office.**
- The administrative assistant will contact the classroom and arrange for an escort.
- Following your visit, return the ID badge to the receptionist and sign out in the visitor's register.

**Please remember that the sign in/sign out policy when you are visiting is not only used for security purposes but it also advises us of who may be in the building in the event of an emergency that requires complete evacuation.** If you have not signed in, we will not know to account for your whereabouts under these emergency conditions.

- If you come to the school at a regular time each day (e.g., to pick up/drop off your child), you do not have to sign in but we do ask that you wait in the lobby or designated pick up area for a staff member to bring your child to you.

Also, if at any time during the school year your specific instructions for us regarding family member(s) visitation and/or pick up arrangements should change, please communicate them in writing to the Head of School and your child's teacher. We will notify the appropriate staff of the new instructions.

### **Phone Calls to Classrooms during the School Day**

To minimize disruptions to the classroom setting, all calls to classroom staff will be forwarded to the School Office. If you need to leave a voice message, please know that the phone is checked frequently throughout the day and that will assure any emergency being brought to the appropriate staff person's attention in a timely manner. When you are connected to the School Office and if your call is not an emergency in nature, the Administrative Assistant will take a message and deliver it to the appropriate staff person and he/she will call back at the earliest time possible.

### **School Pictures-Cancelled at this time**

Individual student pictures and class pictures will be taken each year during the fall. A make-up picture day is also scheduled for those who missed the original day or who were not satisfied with their pictures.

### **Uniforms**

The Carter School students will wear navy blue monogrammed polo shirts and khaki bottoms. All students must wear a school uniform each day, unless otherwise instructed. Please keep in mind the following:

- Navy blue polo shirt monogrammed with **The Carter School** purchased through Donnelly's
- Khaki pants, shorts, skirts, jumpers or navy sweatpants and t-shirts can be purchased through Donnelly's or Walmart, JC Penney, Target, Sears, etc. (In store or online)

### **Clothing and Supplies**

If your child needs any personal care items, i.e., diapers, powder, etc. please know that we have a limited amount of storage space so large quantities cannot be sent to school. Please communicate with your child's teacher to ensure that an adequate amount of supplies are available to meet your child's needs.

Please send in a complete set of extra clothes if you anticipate a need for your child. All articles of clothing should be labeled. Please notify your child's teacher if the clothes are to remain in school or must be sent back and forth daily. However, only one change of clothes can be kept at school due to limited storage space. Please send bibs or an apron with your child each day if they need to be worn. The staff will send them home each day for cleaning.

### **Weather Guidelines for Recess, Outdoor Activities and Field Trips**

*Warm Weather:* Work experiences, field trips and outdoor activities may be discouraged when the temperature is 90°F or over. As always, attention needs to be given to proper clothing, sunscreen application, drinking fluids and air quality. Please apply sunscreen before school. Please be aware that

Meeting Street staff is prohibited from applying sunscreen to any students with no exceptions. Children in wheelchairs or who are immobile will receive close monitoring.

Cold Weather: Work experiences, field trips and outdoor activities may be discouraged if the temperature is 20 F degrees or below. Special attention should be given to proper clothing including hats and mittens.

### [Weather Guidance](#)

### **Trial Work Experiences/Field Trips-Cancelled for this year**

Trial work experiences and field trips will be chosen to enhance the curriculum and to compliment school-based center work. Permission slips will be sent home at least 48 hours prior. Transportation will be provided by a school van or bus which will be driven by a qualified licensed operator.

### **Aqua Therapy**

(Swimming will be suspended for the 2020-2021 School Year at this time.)

We are fortunate to have our salt-water, 92 degree therapy pool here at Meeting Street. Aqua therapy is part of our adaptive physical education curriculum and therapy programs. You will be informed of when your child is scheduled to be in the pool and he/she is expected to participate. **If your child does not bring a swimsuit or towel on a scheduled day, he/she will borrow one and we will not call home to inform you.** Our “extra” suits and towels are washed on a daily basis. Your child will only be excused from swimming if you provide us with a note or phone call with a medical or other valid reason.

### **Assessments**

Teaching and therapy staff members will closely monitor your child’s progress. Students with an Individualized Educational Plan will receive progress reports on a trimester basis.

### **Lost and Found**

Families are strongly encouraged to mark every item of outerwear and lunch boxes with the student’s name. We will attempt to return all marked items to the student. Remaining items will be placed in the lost and found area with the receptionist at the front desk. Any unclaimed items left longer than 30 days will be donated.

### **Breakfast and Lunches**

**(Meals will be eaten in the classroom at this time. No nut products are allowed.)**

Breakfast is provided daily at a cost of \$2.10 for those registered and wish to participate. Lunch is available for purchase at a cost of \$3.10. **Breakfast and lunch are not included as part of any tuition plan, including tuition paid through a school district.** Reduced and free lunch is available based on federal financial guidelines. Free and reduced priced meals family application will be sent home with all students at the beginning of each school year. **If you have a letter of Direct Certification for free meal benefits it must be turned in to the school office by October 1<sup>st</sup>.** **If we do not receive this form, you will be billed for all meals provided to your child.**

### **Lunch**

For all students that pay for a full or reduced priced lunch or milk:

1. Lunches can be paid by check or money order, made out to Meeting Street or charged to your credit card. If you would like to use a credit card, please ask for a Credit Card Charge

Authorization Form. **Cash will not be accepted for milk or lunch orders.** You are able to pay ahead and establish a line of credit. Each time that your child orders a lunch or milk, the cost will be deducted from your account. You can send in a check at any time to keep your balance accurate and you will only receive a bill at the end of the month if your account is overdrawn. Please put the check in an envelope, mark it “Lunch Money” and have your child turn it into the office or give it to his/her teacher.

2. If your account is overdrawn, you will receive a lunch bill every month and you will have 30 days to pay it, unless you have a credit on your account or if you have selected the credit card option. If your bill is 30-60 days past due, you may need to provide a lunch for your child until your balance is paid in full.

Your child may also qualify for a free or reduced priced lunch at anytime throughout the year, as a family’s financial situation may change. This can be done in one of two ways:

1. Complete a Free and Reduced Priced Meals Family Application. Once this is received in the school office and reviewed, you will be notified if your child qualifies to receive a lunch at no cost to you or at a reduced price.
2. Submission of the Letter of Direct Certification for Free Meal Benefits that you receive from the RI Department of Human Services.

To comply with the United States Department of Agriculture - Food and Nutrition Service requirements associated with participation in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs as well as expanded local school wellness policy requirements consistent with those set forth in the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

Please find our Health and Wellness Policy [here](#).

If we are out of school again during this time, we will be providing meal distribution. Details will be shared at that time.

### **Unpaid Meal Charge**

#### **Purpose:**

To establish a consistent process for addressing unpaid meal charges when students do not have money to pay, establishing strategies for preventing unpaid meal charges and ensuring eligible children are certified for free and reduced-price school meals as appropriate.

Read policy [here](#).

### **Microwave Use**

**(There will not be access to the microwave at this time.)**

Please plan accordingly.

## **Food and Allergies**

If your child has allergies, is allergic to specific foods, or is on a special diet, please notify the school nurse and the classroom teacher. This information, as well as which lunch your child attends, is provided to our chef. We will do our best to accommodate students with allergies. There are no peanut or peanut facility products used when preparing meals. It is the responsibility of the parent to check the menu daily for possible allergens such as lactose or gluten. Lunches provided for field trips will be listed on the permission slip. **Latex balloons are not allowed in our school and our classrooms are nut-free environments.**

## **Birthdays and Other Celebrations**

Please check with your child's teacher to see how that particular classroom celebrates birthdays. Your teacher will be sending information home from time to time about holiday celebrations. If, for religious reasons, you wish your child to refrain from any of these celebrations, please indicate such in writing to your child's teacher and the school office. Out of fairness to all of our students **please do not send in any food for birthday celebrations.**

## **Retention and Final Disposition of Student Records**

### *Regular Education Student Records:*

As the local education agency (LEA), The Grace School shall retain the permanent record card for your student in perpetuity in hardcopy and/or electronic format, as mandated by the State of Rhode Island. All other materials shall comprise your student's temporary record and shall be eligible for destruction five (5) years after your student reaches the age of 18. While you may request a full or partial copy of your student's record at any time during his/her enrollment in The Grace School, should you wish to take final possession of the record, it shall be your/your student's obligation to notify The Grace School of your desire to obtain the record in advance of his/her 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday in order to make transfer arrangements. If no transfer arrangements are made within 30 days of the student's birthday, Meeting Street shall destroy or contract with a third party to destroy the records so as to render them unreadable/irretrievable following the expiration of the required retention period.

### *Special Education Student Records:*

Parents/caregivers of a student enrolled in The Carter, Grace and/or Schwartz Schools at Meeting Street who has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) through their home school district may request a full or partial copy of their student's record at any time during his/her enrollment. All special education student records maintained by Meeting Street comprise the student's temporary record; the permanent record resides with the LEA. For students attending The Grace or Carter Schools, the temporary record shall be maintained for five (5) years after the student reaches the age of 21. For students attending the Schwartz School, the temporary record shall be maintained for seven (7) years after the student turns 21. Should you wish to take final possession of the record, it shall be your obligation to notify the program of your desire to obtain the record in advance of his/her 26<sup>th</sup> birthday (The Grace and/or Carter School) or 28<sup>th</sup> birthday (The Schwartz School), respectively, in order to make transfer arrangements. If no transfer arrangements are made within 30 days of the student's birthday, Meeting Street shall destroy or contract with a third party to destroy the records so as to render them unreadable/irretrievable following the expiration of the required retention period.

### **Child Abuse Law**

Rhode Island State Law mandates the staff of The Grace School and Meeting Street to report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child to the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families or a law enforcement agency. Child Abuse and Neglect Tracking System (CANTA) a division of the Department of Children, Youth and Families, requires human service providers who suspect a child has been abused or neglected to contact the proper authorities as soon as they have any relevant information. Delaying the report to monitor the situation or to gather more information can result in more serious harm to the child. Confidential reports may be made by calling the 24-hour toll free Abuse Hotline at 1-800-742-2253. Staff members who report are not expected to prove that abuse or neglect has definitely occurred; they only must report the suspicion of such.

### **Bullying Policy**

The Grace School has adopted the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Safe School Act Statewide Bullying Policy, in its entirety. Please see policy [here](#).

### **Teen Dating Violence Prevention Policy**

The Grace School has adopted a Teen Dating Violence Prevention Policy that pertains to our middle school students. This policy is mandated by the Rhode Island Department of Education and includes direct instruction to all middle school students on teen dating violence prevention as part of our health curriculum as well as staff training for all adults in our school who have contact with middle school students. Please see policy [here](#).

### **Technology**

- All students will have access to a device as appropriate.
- Devices will be available for students to take home as distance learning occurs.
- It is the student's responsibility to use the device responsibly. Please review the "Acceptable Use Policy" below. If an issue occurs, please contact the assistant head of school immediately.
- If a wifi connection is not available, please reach out to the assistant head of school immediately.
- Students will be responsible for completing all work.
- Devices should be returned to school when the student returns to school.

Please see policy [here](#).

### **Internet Acceptable Use Policy**

#### ***Guiding Principle***

Our schools provide access to our computer network to students to promote and enhance the learning of our students through communication, innovative learning practices and the sharing of resources.

Read policy [here](#).

### **Sexual Harassment/Protections for Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students**

### **Narcan**