

Meadow Pond Elementary School Katonah Lewisboro Schools

MPES Family Handbook
2023-2024



MPES is a joyful community of belonging that values common academic and social emotional learning opportunities. At MPES, students, adults, and Max the Moose are inspired to grow and take risks through relevant, active, and engaging experiences

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A Letter from the Administration

Dear Families,

Happy 2023-2024 school year! We are excited to partner with you this year and beyond. This handbook should serve as a reference to the policies and procedures for Meadow Pond.

We are excited to continue to bring our MPES vision statement to life: “MPES is a joyful community of belonging that values common academic and social emotional learning opportunities. At MPES, students, adults, and Max the Moose are inspired to grow and take risks through relevant, active, and engaging experiences.” Last year, we developed common behavior expectations that you can see posted all around the school. Shout out to the PTO for making this happen! Please review [THESE EXPECTATIONS](#) with your child/ren and ask them what they can do at school to help follow these expectations. When we all act in these ways, it helps our school be a welcoming place where everyone feels a sense of belonging and we can learn and grow together academically, socially, emotionally and physically. We will continue reading a new book each month throughout the school to highlight our monthly themes (identity, expectations, safety and security, emotion management, empathy and kindness, and problem solving). Again, shout out to the PTO for purchasing these monthly books for our classrooms!

In a concerted effort to become more sustainable and respect our environment, the school and the PTO will continue to limit hardcopy mailings as well as backpack mail. Our district website: www.klschools.org contains important and timely information. From the Meadow Pond website, you can easily access the Meadow Pond information, as well as the PTO website. These websites are updated frequently and are valuable resources to families. We send out a Monthly Moosage where you will get all of our school updates. In an effort to not jam up your email inbox, this once a month correspondence is PACKED FULL of important highlights and updates. Please make sure to take the time to read the monthly newsletter.

We are looking forward to having you participate in your child’s school year. Whether you have a little or a lot of time, work inside or outside the home, are a veteran or a newcomer to our school, your input is encouraged, valued, and welcomed. We all benefit from having lots of voices and everyone’s participation. We welcome any other ideas you may have on how to incorporate your unique skills and talents into our school community. Please feel free to reach out to us anytime with these ideas or thoughts on how we might further support your student. We encourage you to join the PTO or our BAM (Belonging at Meadow Pond) Committee.

A big thank you in advance for your valued input and participation!

Soon,

Ashlyn Field, Principal
afield@klschools.org

David Bournas-Ney, Assistant Principal
dbournasney@klschools.org

Directory of District Personnel

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

District Office Hours: 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Superintendent of Schools	Mr. Andrew Selesnick	914- 763-7003
Assistant Superintendent for Instruction	Dr. Julia Drake	914- 763-7043
Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources	Dr. Neill Alleva	914-763-7045
Assistant Superintendent for SPED	Dr. Alex LaFontaine-Casabona	914-763-7019
Assistant Superintendent for Business	Ms. Lisa Herlihy	914- 763-7043
Supervisor of Transportation	Ms. Nora Beltran	914- 763-7232
Director of Special Services	Ms. Meagan Sullivan	914- 763-7025
Assistant Director of Special Services	Mrs. Christine Doherty	914- 763-7022
Director of Technology	Mr. Christopher Nelson	914- 763-7080
Assistant Principal of Special Services	Ms. Monica Bermiss	914- 763-7027

PRINCIPALS / ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS

John Jay High School	Steven Siciliano	914- 763-7212
Assistant Principals	Kim Piccolino	914-763-7207
	Samir Biswas	914-763-7267
	Mallory McDonald	914-763-7209
John Jay Middle School	Jeffrey Swiatowicz	914- 763-7502
Assistant Principals	Catherine Graybosch	914- 763-7526
	Michael Pompa	914-763-7500
Increase Miller Elementary	Kerry Ford	914- 763-7155
Assistant Principal	Michael Weschler	914- 763-7170
Katonah Elementary	Cristy Harris	914- 763-7702
Assistant Principal	Kweon Stambaugh	914- 763-7705
Meadow Pond Elementary	Ashlyn Field	914- 763-7902
Assistant Principal	David Bournas-Ney	914- 763-7914

Board of Education/ Voting on School District Matters

Board of Education

The Board of Education generally meets on the first Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM in the John Jay High School Library. Study sessions of the Board are usually held on the fourth Thursday. Specific meeting dates can be found in the district calendar and on the district web site. The public is welcome to attend these meetings and to participate during open forum. The agenda and minutes for the meeting are also available on the web site at www.klschools.org. If you need to contact one of the Board members, please email them at:

BOE@klschools.org

President	Julia Hadlock
Vice-President	Elana Shneyer
Trustee	Rory Burke
Trustee	Lorraine Gallagher
Trustee	William Rifkin
Trustee	Marjorie Schiff
Trustee	Bill Swertfager
JJHS Student Representative	Shayna Kar

Voting on School District Matters

The annual vote on the school budget, school elections, and other propositions is held early in May. For residents living in the Meadow Pond community, voting takes place at Meadow Pond Elementary School. To qualify for voting, a person must be at least eighteen years of age, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of the school district for thirty days prior to the vote. You are eligible to vote in school elections if you are registered or have voted in a district or in a general election once within a two-year period. If you are not registered, you may do so at the school office on any regular school day between the hours of 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM.

District Mission Statement and Learning Commitment

Katonah-Lewisboro School District Mission Statement

The Mission of the Katonah-Lewisboro School District, a student-inspired, community-based center of educational excellence, is to ensure that each student has a passion for learning and defines and achieves individual success in a dynamic, competitive global society through a system distinguished by:

- Highly motivated active learners who continuously assess their progress and feel joy in their accomplishments;
- Faculty and staff dedicated to the success of all students;
- Rigorous curricula and innovative approaches to instruction that honor the uniqueness in each student;
- Collaboration among school, home, and community to create a stimulating environment.

Katonah-Lewisboro School District Learning Commitment

*In the KLSD, we will strive to create learning experiences for all students that are **engaging, relevant**, and take place in an **active learning environment**.*

- What do intellectually **engaging** experiences look like? How do we ensure that we are encouraging student curiosity, providing an individually appropriate level of challenge, moving towards increasing levels of independence and offering effective feedback?
- What are relevant learning experiences? How do we ensure that lessons have purpose beyond test results and make recognizable connections to the lives of our students?
- What is an active learning environment? How do we ensure that all students participate in collaborative, problem/project based activities that foster creativity, critical thinking, and increasingly sophisticated communication?

School Calendar

The Katonah-Lewisboro School District Calendar includes scheduled holidays, meetings, and other events. This calendar is available online at our school website. Calendar information may be accessed on the Katonah-Lewisboro website at www.klschools.org, under the calendar tab. If you have difficulty accessing the calendar, please contact the main office.

If you visit MPES website: [Meadow Pond Calendar Link](#), this link brings you directly to the Meadow Pond calendar that lists our events and happenings at Meadow Pond. We will also highlight upcoming events in the Monthly Moosage.

Student Attendance/ Absence/ Lateness

Regular attendance and punctuality in arriving at school are essential for a child to make continuous progress and to feel part of his/her classroom community. **PLEASE CALL THE SCHOOL AT 914-763-7950 EVERY DAY YOUR CHILD WILL BE ABSENT FROM SCHOOL - FOR ANY REASON.** If your child is feeling sick, please keep them home and call our school nurse. A written excuse is required by New York State Law each time a child is absent or late. The excuse should be sent with the child when he/she returns to school or on the date of lateness. In addition to the specific dates, the reason for the absence or lateness should be stated in the note and signed by a parent or guardian.

Attendance is monitored closely. When your child has accumulated many absences or latenesses, the teacher will contact your family. Throughout the school year, building administration will be looking at student attendance percentages and sending letters to families when attendance falls below 90%. If a student has excessive absences, the administrator will consider a CPS referral; however, this will be determined on a case-by-case basis as per District policy. The administration will monitor for both absences and tardiness throughout the year.

Arrival and Dismissal

Our arrival begins at 9:10.

Arrival:

Bus Arrival: We strongly encourage all children to take the bus to and from school. See the Parent Portal for pick-up and drop-off times at the designated bus stops. Please note, during the first few weeks of school, the buses are adjusting to their routes and may be running late. As the buses arrive, they wait in the front of the building. At 9:10, K and 1 students are released into the building. Then 2-5 grade students are released.

Drop-off Arrival: If dropping off, please note that students will independently exit cars on the right side of the building. Once the buses leave, cars can pull up through the front while students get out. Please note that when driving your child to school, students will not be permitted to enter the building until 9:10 as no supervisory coverage is available before then. Students who arrive after 9:20 should sign in at the Main Office and receive a late pass to bring to their classroom teacher.

Dismissal:

Bus Dismissal: Teachers will walk students out to the buses between 3:33 and 3:43pm. The buses will leave at 3:45. We will notify you if buses leave more than 15 minutes after 3:45. Please note, during the first few weeks of school, the buses are adjusting to their routes and may be running late.

Pick-up Dismissal: Pick up dismissal starts at 3:35PM. If picking up your child, please park in the parking lot adjacent or behind the gym and form a line next to the gym door entrance where you will be asked to sign out your child (please bring your ID). During the first few weeks, we will ask for ID until we learn your names and faces.

If your child is not going to take the bus 5 days a week for dismissal, please email Lynne before the first day of school. Include your child's name, teacher, the name of the person picking up, and dismissal schedule for the year. Any last-minute changes in dismissal require a written communication from a parent or guardian via email to llicht@klschools.org. All changes in dismissal must be received before 12PM to ensure the information is relayed and followed.

Delayed Openings/ Closings/ Early Closings

There may be times during the year when school will be closed because of heavy snow or hazardous conditions. When it becomes necessary to close the schools, the announcement will be communicated via the website and through our communication system, Connect ED. Announcements will be made on local radio stations and Channel 12 News if a power outage occurs. Occasionally during the winter months, situations arise when morning weather conditions are not severe enough to close the schools but road conditions are such that school buses experience difficulties and school opening is delayed.

The automated notification system is only as effective as the accuracy of the information provided. If any of your contact information should change during the course of the school year, please notify the Meadow Pond office so they can update your records.

Delayed Openings

The school district uses an automated telephone system that informs parents and staff of school delays and/or closings. In such situations, your home telephone number will be called and an appropriate message conveyed. You may also telephone the district hot-line number at 914-763-7000, visit the District website at www.klschools.org, or tune into TV Cable News Channel 12.

Please note: During a delayed opening, all buses will arrive at their designated stops approximately two or three hours after their normal pick-up times based on the announced delay.

Early Closings

There may be times during the year that the school must close early due to unexpected situations. These may include dangerous weather conditions (heavy snow, projected hurricanes, iced roadways, etc.) or unsafe conditions at the school (fire, lack of heat, etc.). During these times, the school's Early Closing Plan will be put into effect. If a change needs to be made to your child/children's dismissal plan, this can be done through the parent portal. Please be sure this information is kept current.

In case of an unscheduled early closing or emergency dismissal, the school district's automated telephone system (Connect ED) will telephone your home number. These calls will be placed simultaneously. The plan calls for each child's family (or responsible party) to be contacted to alert them of the early dismissal. Parents must make every effort to include phone contact numbers where a responsible adult can be reached. These are courtesy calls only.

The following will occur:

Grade K

In an unscheduled early closing, no kindergarten child will be let off the bus at their designated stop unless a parent or authorized person is there to receive them. If no one is present to receive them, these kindergarten children will be brought back to the main office at school or will be taken to another facility if the building is an unsafe place to stay. Parents will be notified, and arrangements must be made by them as to who will come and pick up the child.

Grades 1-5

All children will be sent home as directed on the "Elementary School Emergency Information Form," regardless of if contact was successfully made. Contact will be attempted for every child.

We respectfully ask that all parents abide by the plan they submitted at the beginning of the school year. Updates to the plan can always be made during the course of regular business hours throughout the year, but changes should not be made on the very day of the unscheduled early closing/emergency dismissal. Last minute "call-ins" jam the office phones and we simply cannot handle making changes in an effective manner.

Building Security

Security of Doors during School Hours:

All doors must remain locked at all times during the school day. Once students have arrived and buses have left, the front door will remain locked. Visitors must request entry by providing identification to the Security Greeter located in the inner vestibule. Once the visitor has provided identification, they will be given a visitor's pass and be buzzed into the building. Visitors are asked to stay in the area that is indicated on their visitor's pass. All visitors should return their visitor's passes to the Security Greeter before exiting the vestibule.

Bus Regulations and Safety

Bus assignments, pick-up times, and locations are given to parents late in August. Questions regarding bus assignments should be directed to the District Transportation Department at 914-763-7232. Parents need to send notes to the school office with children who will not go home in the usual manner. Teachers are instructed that under no circumstances is a child to leave the school with any adult unless a permission slip has been approved by the office. Permanent change of bus or pick up point requires permission from the principal with consultation of the transportation department.

Please review the following transportation guidelines with your children:

- Leave home early enough to arrive at the bus stop on time.
- Wait in a safe place. Keep off the roads and highways.
- Watch traffic. Walk, do not run, to and from the bus.
- Respect the rights of nearby property owners.
- Be courteous to your driver and other passengers. Disruptions on the bus can cause accidents in which everyone on the bus can be harmed. Bus privileges may be suspended if this guideline is violated.
- Destruction of bus seats or other equipment will not be tolerated. In addition to being charged for the damage, those responsible may have bus riding privileges suspended.
- Be alert to traffic as you get off the bus. Wait for the bus driver's signal when crossing and walk ten feet in front of the bus so that the bus driver can see you.

Please review the MPES bus expectations below with your bus rider:

Be Responsible

- Follow adult directions the first time

Be Respectful

- Use quiet conversations
- Keep personal space
- Value property
- Keep areas clean

Be Safe

- Keep hands and feet to yourself
- Stay seated throughout the ride

Be Kind

- Use Caring Communication: Manner Words, Use Appropriate Language, Use a Kind Tone
- Include everyone

Emergency Plans

Emergency Evacuation

In a rare emergency, the school may have to conduct an emergency evacuation. In such instances, our automated phone system will notify you of the plan to send your child/children home. The phone system will call through the series of numbers that you have provided on through the parent portal. It is therefore essential that the information that you provide on your form be accurate and updated, as necessary throughout the school year. It is also imperative that you inform all contact persons that you have provided their name and number so that someone is available to receive your child in case of this type of emergency.

Safety Drills

Under state regulations each school must conduct evacuation and lockdown drills. These drills will ensure that students and staff are prepared in the event of an emergency. Descriptions of different types of emergency response are listed below:

Evacuation (Fire Drills): At the sound of the alarm, all occupants must evacuate the buildings quickly and quietly. Classes are assigned holding areas at a safe distance from the building. Visitors should leave through the nearest exit. No vehicles are allowed onto the school grounds during evacuation drills.

Lockdown: The Lockdown Protocol should be utilized anytime there is a perceived or actual imminent threat inside the building. An announcement will signal the beginning of this drill to all staff and students. All people in the hallways will make their way to the nearest classroom or office. Teachers will lock their doors and gather students in a designated area.

Shelter-In Place: This is to shelter students and staff inside the building, and when necessary, students move quickly to inside wall areas in the building away from glass to protect themselves from severe weather (tornadoes, high winds and severe thunderstorms).

Hold-In Place: This is to limit movement of students and staff while dealing with short-term emergencies. Under this condition, no individual will be allowed to enter or exit the building.

Sheltering Site: Each school in the district has a designated sheltering site that would be used during an emergency evacuation where students were not able to return to the building for either a short period of time or for the remainder of the day.

Lockout: A lockout is used when there is a threat to the school, students, and staff from outside the school and the school is the safest place to be sheltered. All students and staff return to the inside of the building. All exterior doors and windows are locked and blinds are closed. Individuals must show proper identification to an assigned person at the single point of entry.

MPES Guidelines

Homework

Grade level teams coordinate and have a common homework practice. This practice and format will be shared by your child's classroom teacher and at Curriculum Night. Your child's assignment may not always be the same as that of another student, as individual needs are taken into account. Homework is the responsibility of the child. Parents should provide a place and a time for study, but the child should do the assignment with, perhaps, occasional help from parents. It is not expected that the parent "teach" the child new skills or techniques. If your child consistently does not seem to understand what to do or how to do the work, we urge you to contact the teacher by writing a note or calling the school as soon as possible.

A general guideline for length of daily HW assignments is up to 10 minutes x grade level (ex. 1st grade = 10 minutes, 2nd grade = 20 minutes, etc.).

3rd, 4th and 5th grade will also be assigned "Type to Learn" as part of weekly homework to improve typing skills, as well as to help prepare for the state test.

At times during the year, we get requests for homework assignments because children are ill or because they are expected to join their families on vacation. We make a real effort to provide assignments for those with health problems that lead to longterm absence from school. However, when parents voluntarily take children out of school for non-health related reasons, teachers should not be asked to provide assignments.

On holidays when we are in school, teachers may still assign homework. If your family celebrates that holiday, reach out to your child's teacher and your child will be exempt from the homework.

Lost and Found

Parents are urged to mark all articles with nametags or indelible ink. Found items will be kept for a limited time in the Lost and Found. Items not claimed will be posted on the PTO website and if not claimed for more than a few weeks will be donated to a local charity.

School Supplies

A list of school supplies can be found on the Meadow Pond website.

Breakfast/ Lunch/ Recess

Breakfast-

We will continue implementing our breakfast program for elementary students. Please see the details below about our breakfast program:

- Students who participate will enter the building during arrival time (beginning at 9:10 am) and go directly to the cafeteria.
- "Grab and Go" breakfast bags will be available. Sample items include a bagel, muffin, or breakfast bar along with a fruit with a choice of milk.
- Students will bring their "Grab and Go" breakfast to eat in their classroom during the morning routine.
- Monthly Menus are available on the website.

Breakfast costs \$1.75. To see if you qualify for the Free and Reduced Priced Meal program (breakfast and/or lunch), please refer to [THIS LINK](#).

Lunch

Students may purchase or bring their own lunch to school each day. More information about lunch and snack purchase can be found on the parent portal.

Please review the MPES lunch expectations below with your child:

Be Responsible

- Follow adult directions the first time
- Recycle
- Make healthy choices
- Balance time eating and talking
- Follow routines: arrival, clean up, line up, kitchen line

Be Respectful

- Use quiet conversations
- Keep personal space
- Value property
- Be considerate of allergies and food choices
- Keep areas clean

Be Safe

- Keep hands and feet to yourself
- Stay seated while eating/Raise hand to get up
- Use walking feet when given permission to move

Be Kind

- Use Caring Communication: Manner Words, Use Appropriate Language, Use a Kind Tone
- Include everyone

Recess

Students will go outside daily for recess, weather permitting. Children will have the opportunity to play with their peers from across the grade level on the playground.

Children are expected to go outside at recess unless the weather is extreme, or the nurse has received a note from a child's parent or physician stating otherwise. Children who have a medical excuse that excludes them from physical education class (physician note on file in the Health Office) will also be excluded from active recess.

Please be certain your child comes to school in clothing that is appropriate for outdoor play. If the temperature is less than or equal to 40 degrees, students will not be able to participate in outdoor recess if they are wearing short sleeved shirts or shorts. If there is snow on the ground, students must be appropriately dressed with hats, gloves, boots and snow pants in order to play outside in the snow. If the weather does not permit outdoor recess, the children play indoors.

Please review the MPES recess expectations below with your child:

Be Responsible

- Follow adult directions the first time
- Put away recess equipment before going inside

Be Respectful

- Keep personal space
- Value property
- Keep areas clean
- Walk around others' games and activities

- Follow game rules
- Share equipment and space

Be Safe

- Keep hands and feet to yourself
- Use equipment correctly

Be Kind

- Use Caring Communication: Manner Words, Use Appropriate Language, Use a Kind Tone
- Include everyone (and peers sitting on the buddy bench)

Communication and Family-School Connection

Communication

Communication and collaboration go hand in hand. Two-way communication is a priority. Informal Coffees with the Principal are scheduled throughout the year. Newsletters are sent via email monthly and posted on the website along with email addresses of school administrators. Coffees and other forums are directed toward creating an open dialogue for discussions regarding educational issues, defining goals, formulating policy, and implementing and assessing activities to help students reach standards of excellence and enjoy their elementary school experience.

Our partnership with parents and families is valued and open communication is important to us. You may contact us by phone, email, or written note.

The District and school communicate in a variety of ways.

- District's Connect Ed System: We use this system to send out school and District communications via phone calls, emails, and text messages. School events, notices, school closings, and family letters are among the types of communications sent out by District Administration, MPES administration, Technology Department, and Transportation.
- Classroom Teachers may send out communications using Seesaw or Schoology
- MPES administrators send out a Monthly Newsletter (The Montly Moosage) with important updates and highlights.
- The MPES PTO sends out a weekly communication via email called MaxMail.

If a parent wishes to email a teacher, he/she will respond as soon as possible. Please be aware that teachers generally have limited time and access to email during the school day and may not be able to email back on the day received. Every attempt will be made to respond to the email as soon as possible.

If you wish to speak via phone to a teacher, please call the main office so that a staff member may connect you. You may also call the teacher's voicemail and leave a message. Please know that phone calls will not be directed into the classroom unless there is a scheduled appointment as instruction may not be interrupted during the school day.

When the main system is down, please refer to the district website for updates.

The main office is open between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Messages may be left on voicemail outside these work hours. A staff member will return your call as soon as possible.

Communication Protocol

During the course of the school year, questions or concerns can arise. If the question relates to a child's classroom program, the first person to contact is the classroom teacher. Voicemail, email, or a note are means to communicate with the teacher. Meeting with the teacher might be helpful if the issue is complex. If the question relates to concerns outside the classroom, the Assistant Principal can be contacted through the main office. If the question relates to a larger issue

or if minimal progress is being made, the Principal should be the next step in the process. If the issue or problem is not resolved to the parent's satisfaction, the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction may be contacted for additional assistance.

The chain of communication is 1) classroom teacher; 2) assistant principal, principal or their designee who may involve other support personnel; 3) assistant superintendent or superintendent; 4) Board of Education.

Class Placement

Our goal is to form cohesive, balanced classroom groupings that provide students with maximum opportunities to learn. Our process for creating these groupings includes input from classroom teachers, special area teachers, clinical staff, Special Services, administration, and parents. Academic, emotional, and social development are factors in student placement.

Parents who may have specific information that they feel would be helpful to staff making placement decisions for the upcoming school year must fill out the Parent Input form in the spring. In fairness to all students, we cannot honor requests for specific teachers.

Compact Team/ BAM Committee

The Commissioner of Education's regulation 100.11 mandates that all school districts must develop and adopt a plan for the participation of parents and teachers with administrators in school-based planning and shared decision making. This plan is referred to as "The Participation Plan" and is part of the State's "New Compact for Learning". This year the committee will continue to focus on bringing Meadow Pond's vision statement to life through the "Belonging At Meadow Pond" (BAM) committee.

The goal for the Belonging at Meadow Pond (BAM) Committee is to reinforce the vision of creating a joyful community of belonging by giving students, staff and families the opportunity to understand how each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences in celebration of what we all bring to the table. Our school population includes many different cultures, and we want to acknowledge how culture impacts our everyday modern life in order to further strengthen our community and appreciation of all our families.

Who is in this committee: Families members and school staff!

PTO

The Meadow Pond PTO is a group of parents, teachers, and administrators that strive to increase communication between home and school and to work cooperatively towards enhancing the educational experience of all our children. The PTO website includes information about the committees and events which result from this cooperation. Please visit www.meadowpondpto.org for more information.

PTO meeting dates are listed in the school calendar. In addition, reminders are sent home via email through newsletters called "MaxMail". Please make sure your directory information is up to date to receive communication from the PTO. Parents and teachers are encouraged to attend and participate in the meetings. Please feel free to contact any member of the PTO Executive Board if you have any questions.

CURRENT PTO EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS:

President	Erin Lee	mpptopresident@gmail.com
Vice President	Barbara Williams	mpptovp@gmail.com
Co-Vice President	Heller Donaton	mpptovp2@gmail.com
Treasurer	Sean McLaine	ptotreasurermpes@gmail.com
Secretary	Christina Powell	mpptosecretary@gmail.com
Teacher Representative	Amy Hoaglund	

SEPTO

Katonah-Lewisboro Special Education PTO (SEPTO) is a district-wide Parent Teacher Association organized for the specific purpose of providing information and support to parents of all children, including those with special needs. We are a welcoming community of parents who support each other in this journey we share in raising a child with special needs. Please visit www.klsepto.org for more information.

Parents of children involved in any aspect of Special Services provided by the Katonah-Lewisboro school district are encouraged to become part of the Katonah-Lewisboro Special Education Parent Teacher Organization (SEPTO). If your child is a classified student, is being considered for special services, or receives extra help through the resource program or speech and language program, you may wish to be a part of the Katonah-Lewisboro Special Education PTO. SEPTO is a support group for parents, providing information on the educational needs of children and a network for addressing questions and concerns parents have. SEPTO sponsors bi-monthly meetings, library resources, and a parent support network. A schedule and description of the meetings will be announced. All are welcome. For information call 914- 763-7024. E-mail: info@klsepto.org

2023-2024 SEPTO Officers

President, Liz Mailman, pres1@klsepto.org

Vice President, Marina Zale, vpevents@klsepto.org

Treasurer, Leigh Woods, treasurer@klsepto.org

Secretary, Anne Wetzel, secretary@klsepto.org

Member at Large, Angela Garofalo

Meadow Pond Rep: Valerie Cancro, vcancro125@gmail.com

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Communication between home and school is vital to the success of your child's education. Scheduled conferences, both afternoon and evening, are held in November. We schedule one parent conference per child at those times. See the District calendar for specific dates. Appointments will be scheduled online after Curriculum Night using the website: ptcfast.com. Information about how to sign up for a Parent/Teacher Conference will be communicated via school communications. In addition, parents may request an appointment to meet with their child's teacher if there are questions or concerns.

Interim and Progress Reports

Children receive two Progress Reports and two Interim Reports per year. District communications will inform parents about their availability on the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. Additionally, children receive Progress Reports in Art, Music, and Physical Education twice a year.

Volunteers

We welcome visitors into our school building to support!

When volunteering, please follow note the following:

- All volunteers and field trip chaperones must follow district policy. Please visit the district website [HERE](#) for more information.
- When arriving, nametags/visitor's passes are issued to all non-employees between the hours of 8:30AM and 4:00PM. This is required and maintains the safety of the students and staff in our building. Visitors must request entry by providing identification to the Security Greeter located in the inner vestibule. All visitors should return their visitor's pass to the Security Greeter before exiting the vestibule.
- We ask that when you are volunteering, you support students in following the MPES expectations. This demonstrates consideration for each other and for our school facilities.
- We encourage parents to visit when invited to special class activities but ask that you refrain from visiting at other times including lunch and recess.
- Please do not interrupt another classroom by taking a younger (or older) sibling to a special class activity. This can be disruptive to your child and others in his/her class.

Curriculum, Assessments/RTI, and Social Emotional Learning

Curriculum:

All curricula adhere to the New York State Department of Education guidelines and are enriched to meet both the collective and individual needs of students in the building. Our curriculum has been realigned to adhere to Common Core Learning Standards for ELA and Mathematics. A grade-level curriculum guide outline is posted on the district's website that you can find [HERE](#).

Assessments:

Rtl (Reading, Writing and Math)

All students in grades K-5 will be benchmarked in Reading and Math in the fall, winter and spring to identify students who may need additional support in the area of reading and/or math. Benchmarking results are only one of the criteria used to make this determination. The Rtl services provide additional instruction for children who are having some difficulty in reading and/or math. The children meet with an interventionist in small groups on a regular basis in order to improve skills and develop strategies so that they may perform more successfully in the general education classroom.

MPES SEL:

As part of our vision, we are committed to offering students common experiences surrounding social emotional learning. We are committed to monthly themes each year that support student social emotional development such as identity, kindness, empathy, problem solving, and more. The themes reflect the components of the CASEL framework and the scope and sequence of Second Step. Each month and for each theme, the school has a common read, the clinician will push in and deliver a lesson, and the teachers will be provided with resources to support students in their classroom. Additionally, we are promoting and prioritizing relationships and community building through morning meeting (see details below) and through SEL time in the schedule.

Finally, we are committed to helping our students learn to identify and regulate their emotions through the use of the Moose Meadow and Moose Meter.

Moose Moolah

We have a schoolwide PBS management system in which students receive Moose Moolah for meeting behavior expectations. All adults have Moose Moolah and can give them to any student in the school. The students put the Moose Moolah in a bucket in their classroom and work towards a group reward with their class. The buckets are also brought to Community Meeting, where one name is pulled from each bucket for recognition and a MPES pin. There are also schoolwide Moolah celebrations, such as dunk tank events and dress your teacher as a snowman day.

Moose Meadow

The Moose Meadow is an area in each classroom that is a positive, respectful, and supportive safe space for a child to go to when they feel their emotions are running high and they need to regain their emotional and/or physical control. The Moose Meadow consists of a comfy bean bag, Moose Meter posters, and other fidgets and calming tools.

Moose Meter

The Moose Meter uses the Zones of Regulation approach to teach children self-regulation and emotional control.

Morning Meeting

Morning Meeting is a commitment to a belief in children's capacity to take care of themselves and each other as they learn academic skills and social-emotional skills. Morning Meeting also creates opportunities for teachers to model these skills and give children valuable feedback. Time committed to Morning Meetings is an investment that repays through the

sense of belonging and the skills of attention, listening, expression, and cooperative interactions developed as a foundation for every lesson, transition time, and learning opportunity. *All KLSD elementary classrooms will embrace a daily commitment to Morning Meetings.*

Purpose of Morning Meeting:

Sets a tone for respectful and engaged learning in a climate of trust

Builds and enhances connections among students and between students and teachers.

Merges academic, social and emotional learning.

Motivates students by addressing the human need to feel a sense of significance and belonging, and to have fun.

Through the repetition of many ordinary moments of respectful interaction, enables some extraordinary moments.

A person who can demonstrate self-control and listen well, who can frame a thoughtful question and pose it respectfully, and who can examine a situation from a number of diverse perspectives will be a stronger learner.

Format:

The components intentionally provide opportunities for students to practice the skills of greeting, listening and responding, group problem solving, and noticing and anticipating. Practice of the four components gradually weave a web that binds a class together. Although there is much overlap, each component has its own purposes and structure. Morning Meetings can last up to a half hour and have four sequential components:

Greeting- Students greet each other by name, often including a handshake, singing, movement, and other activities.

Sharing- Students share some news or information about themselves and respond to each other, articulating their thoughts, feelings, and ideas in a positive way.

Group Activity- The whole class does a short, inclusive activity together, reinforcing learning and building class cohesion through active participation.

Morning Message- Students practice academic skills and warm up for the day ahead by reading and discussing a daily note to the class posted by their teacher.

Community Meeting

At the end of each month, we come together as an entire school community to celebrate the prior month. Our community meeting, which is mostly run by our 5th grade student Ambassadors, highlights our monthly themes, school expectations, student performers, and Moose Moolah recipients. If we are lucky, Max the Moose even makes an appearance! At the final community meeting of the year, students pass grade level banners down to the next year's students. Community meeting days also align with our school spirit days.

Special Programs and Special Services

(The following is provided as an overview of special education services. Please refer to the District Plan found on the KLSD Special Services webpage for complete information about Special Education services provided in the Katonah-Lewisboro Unified School District. Questions regarding matters related to special education services should be referred to the Office of Special Services.)

Referral to the Committee on Special Education

- The referral of a student to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) usually begins after the realization that the student's needs cannot be addressed through building level services.
- RtI team meetings provide a forum for the staff to discuss the student and to arrive at a plan to address the problem.
- If the student's lack of progress is due to a suspected handicapping condition and the student does not make the expected progress as a result of building level intervention services, a referral to the CSE may be made.

A referral may be made by:

- A student's parent
- Physician or judicial officer
- The commissioner of a public agency
- As a result of a decision of the RtI Team

A Building Level referral to the Committee on Special Education includes the following information:

- Written Statement of the learning difficulties
- Documentation of RtI interventions and supports
- Student Registration Form
- Student Cumulative Health Record
- Student Cumulative Academic Record
- Summary of parent contact regarding the referral
- Summary of the types of regular education intervention attempted with supporting documentation.
- Parental Consent

If a parent requests a referral to the CSE, the Building Principal will request a meeting with the parent to rule out whether building level services may be immediately put in place to address the concerns. This plan shall specify any alternative methods to resolve the identified learning difficulty as well as a time frame for monitoring progress. Also, specified in the agreement is the date of the follow-up conference. A copy of this agreement is filed in the student's cumulative educational file. Parents are not required to agree to withdraw a referral to the CSE, even if they agree to the building level plan. **Please note, the referral must go forward unless the parent agrees in writing to withdraw the referral.**

The case manager's responsibility is to gather the referral material for the initial presentation. Individual evaluators have the responsibility for preparing their evaluations in a timely manner, within thirty (30) days from the initial referral to the Committee on Special Education.

Included for the Committee are:

- Evaluations and Reports
- Education Summary Forms (including goals/objectives and evaluation criteria)
- Physical Examination (cumulative health records)
- Educational Evaluation Reports (reading, math & writing)
- Psycho-educational Evaluations (four areas – educational, psychical, social and management)
- Social History
- Other suitable examinations and evaluations (speech/language, psychiatric, neurological, etc.)
- Classroom Observations (written)
- Test and Assessments – Report Cards (current, previous year). Transcripts (credits earned, RCT's passed). Tests tailored to the specific area(s) of educational need.
- Summary of CAP/COPS (or other vocational plan) as applicable.

The tests and other assessments must:

- Be in the child's dominant language
- Be validated
- Be administered by trained personnel
- Be made by a multidisciplinary team
- Must include an observation of the student

If a parent cannot physically attend the meeting, alternative means, such as a conference telephone discussion will be offered or an alternative date. If the student is found to be eligible for classification and placement and approved by the CSE, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be developed and include special education programs and/or services necessary to meet the student's needs.

Parents provide the CSE with written consent to implement the recommendations of the IEP before special education services are delivered.

Parents may disagree with the proposed IEP and invoke their right to Due Process.

IEPs are legal documents that describe education plans for students classified with a disability under the Individuals with Education Act (IDEA) and in compliance with NYS Regulations. All teachers, regular and special education, are responsible for ensuring implementation of a student's IEP within their classroom.

Continued Placement - Each classified student's IEP shall be reviewed at least annually by the Committee on Special Education (CSE). Parents are notified of the intent to review the student's progress at least five (5) days prior to the proposed date of the meeting.

Integrated Co-Teaching

Co-teaching is a collaborative approach to instruction in which two teachers, a general education teacher and a special education teacher, work together to plan and then implement instruction for a class that includes students with and without disabilities. The curriculum is the same as other non-coteach classrooms.

This is part of our continued initiative to have inclusive classrooms where all students can learn within the least restrictive environment. Because students have different learning styles and preferences, coteaching allows specific needs to be met through a variety of learning models.

Student Code of Conduct and District Policies

MPES Expectations

At Meadow Pond, we believe in implementing positive behavior strategies to support students in demonstrating acceptable behaviors. We strive to develop common understandings, consistency in practice throughout the school, and enhanced communication to foster the development of student self-discipline. Meadow Pond's expectations derive from our expectations of "Kind, Responsible, Respectful, and Safe." Each teacher emphasizes and integrates **KIND, RESPONSIBLE, RESPECTFUL, and SAFE** into their classroom discussions and routines. As mentioned throughout, we have clear behavior expectations that can be found [HERE](#).

Very important to the development of positive behavioral supports is to acknowledge students exhibiting the appropriate behaviors. The first and most effective level of providing positive support is the use of specific praise. Praise that is immediate and specific is extremely important in increasing the reoccurrence of appropriate behavior. In addition, student behavior is recognized by various other means including the distribution of "Moose Moolah". This system is designed to support community positive behavior. Most students will succeed when a positive school culture is promoted, informative corrective feedback is provided, academic success is maximized, and use of prosocial skills is acknowledged.

When student problem behavior is unresponsive to preventive school-wide and classroom-wide procedures, information about the student's behavior is used to (a) understand why the problem behavior is occurring (function); (b) strengthen more acceptable alternative behaviors (social skills); (c) remove antecedents and consequences that trigger and maintain problem behavior, respectively; and (d) add antecedents and consequences that trigger and maintain acceptable alternative behaviors. This process includes consultation and communication with parents, teachers, and school clinicians.

KLSD Code of Conduct:

Please visit the district website for the full code of conduct [HERE](#). We have highlighted some of the code of conduct (Items from home, dress code, and gum chewing) below:

Items from Home

Students are not permitted to bring any items of value from home to school. This includes but is not limited to electronic devices such as cell phones, handheld electronic games, personal TVs, and music players. Students are not permitted to use a cell phone at school or on the school bus. Under certain circumstances, Kindles, Nooks, iPads and other educational devices may be permitted for students for use as e-readers. Use of these devices must be for educational purposes with the consent of the student's teacher. *See Article 5695 from the District Code of Conduct regarding students and personal electronic devices.* Students are prohibited from bringing in dangerous and distracting items. In accordance with Westchester County Department of Health recommendations, no one is permitted to bring animals of any kind on school premises. Exceptions are made when a nature center or animal specialist visits the classroom. The school is not responsible for lost, broken, or stolen personal property. Should a student bring in a prohibited item, the item may be confiscated, and appropriate disciplinary actions will follow.

Student Dress Code

All students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. Students and their parents have the primary responsibility for acceptable student dress and appearance. Teachers and all other District personnel should help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting. At all times, dress must be safe, appropriate and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.

A student's dress shall:

- Not include items that are vulgar, obscene, and libelous or denigrate others on account of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.
- Cover undergarments (waistbands and bra straps are allowed to show).
- Cover all private parts and the fabric covering private parts must not be see through.
- Include footwear that must be worn in the building on school campus and at school events at all times.
 - Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco, vape products, or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.
- Not include jewelry that can be dangerous such as spiked bracelets or neck collars.
- (in the elementary schools and middle school only) Ensure that hats or other headgear are not worn in hallways, dining room/cafeteria, classrooms, or any instructional areas. The administration may make allowances for special days such as spirit week. Exceptions will also be made for medical or religious requirements.
- Ensure that the student is personally identifiable at all times. Exceptions will be made for medical or religious requirements.

This student dress code shall be enforced consistently across the district. It shall be enforced with all respect for student privacy and confidentiality, and infractions will be handled on an individual basis. Each building Principal or his/her designee shall be responsible for informing all students and their parents of the student dress code at the beginning of the school year and any revisions to the dress code made during the school year. The determination of whether or not a garment is appropriate for school is in the discretion of the building administration. Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending items and, if necessary or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item. Any student who refuses to do so shall be subject to discipline. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the dress code shall be subject to further discipline.

Gum Chewing

Gum chewing is not permitted in school unless a specific need has been identified. This also includes time on the buses, in the cafeteria, on the playground, and on field trips.

KLSD Policies:

Please visit the district website for a full list of policies [HERE](#). We have highlighted some of the policies (DASA, Bullying, Wellness, Use of Protective Holds) below:

Kindergarten Entrance (Policy #5140)

Children who will be five years of age by December 1st of the calendar year in which they enter school are eligible for kindergarten. Parents will be notified through the press and school publications of the dates and time of registration. When registering, proof of birth date and immunization records must be submitted as well as two proofs of residency. The law requires that all children entering school must have a physical examination and be immunized. (Please refer to the **Medical** section.) The district believes its program meets the developmental needs of most kindergarten age children. Kindergarten children are screened by the school nurse, speech therapist, classroom teacher and a school psychologist in May/June. This process helps to identify the child's individual strengths and needs.

Wellness (Policy #5405)

The Board of Education recognizes that physical activity, nutrition, and technology use can have an impact on health, wellness and academic achievement. The Board of Education is committed to the health and well-being of all students and fostering their healthy decision-making in the long term. The district is also governed by State and Federal Regulations including the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act that are reflected throughout this policy. The Board of Education adopts the following goals and authorized the following actions to provide district students with a school environment that promotes student health and wellness and reduces childhood obesity.

A "Wellness Policy" was adopted by the Board of Education in July of 2006 and has most recently been revised and adopted in May 2018. The policy, which was the product of the work of a Districtwide committee of parents, teachers, school nurses and school administrators, focuses on a variety of specific issues regarding nutrition and physical activity. This policy can be found on www.klschools.org under resources, "KLSD Policy Handbook" then "Policies" "5400 Student Welfare" for more information.

The adoption of this policy (Policy 5405) guides how our food service operates and the choices that it offers. Our policies are routinely reviewed and may be modified. Generally, we ask that you consider healthy daily snacks for your children. Each grade level has a consistent manner of celebrating birthdays and other special occasions.

Use of Emergency Protective Holds and Time Out Rooms (Policy #4321.21)

The Board of Education believes in the use of positive and supportive strategies to meet the needs of all students in all classrooms. In those instances, however, when harm to a person appears imminent, the Board recognizes that emergency interventions may be necessary when all other intervention strategies have been exhausted.

The use of emergency protective holds or a time out room will be in conformance with the Commissioner's Regulations. Staff will adhere to governing statutes and regulations in the administration of these measures.

Protective Holds: Emergency Interventions: Staff will not use protective holds as a substitute for systematic intervention to modify inappropriate behavior. A protective hold should never increase (or create more) risk than the behavior it is trying to contain. A protective hold should never be used as disciplinary consequences, or for classroom maintenance. Staff who may be called upon to place a student in protective holds will be trained in safe, effective ways to do so in a manner consistent with the Commissioner's Regulations. The District's emergency interventions never include the use of mechanical restraints. During emergencies, immediate intervention by staff involving the use of reasonable physical intervention may be necessary, either to protect people or property from injury or damage, or to restrain or remove a student whose behavior is interfering with the orderly functioning of the school, if that student has refused to comply with a request to refrain from further disruptive acts. The District shall document the use of emergency interventions for each student. This shall include the student's name and date of birth, date and time of incident, the setting and location of the incident, the staff members involved, other persons involved, a description of the incident and the intervention

used, the duration of the incident, a statement as to whether the student has a current behavioral intervention plan, and details of any injuries sustained by either the student or others as a result of the incident. Documentation of emergency interventions shall be reviewed by school supervisory personnel and, as necessary, the school nurse or other medical personnel. The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified verbally of each incident of emergency intervention as soon as possible but not later than the end of the same calendar day. In the event the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) cannot be reached verbally, they will be electronically notified of the incident. Additionally, no later than the end of the next school day, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be provided the written documentation described above.

Time Out Rooms: A time out room is an area for a student to safely deescalate, regain control, and prepare to return to their educational program. Time out rooms are not in general use within the District. In the event the District decides to implement a time out room as a behavioral strategy for a student with a disability, it will only be used in conjunction with a behavioral intervention plan, as part of the student's IEP or when it is necessary to remove a student from a potentially dangerous situation, or in an unanticipated situation that poses an immediate concern for the physical safety of a student or others. The room will provide a supervised area in order to facilitate self-control. If implemented, time out rooms will be used in a manner consistent with the Commissioner's Regulations.

Description of Time Out Room: A time out room shall provide a means for continuous visual and auditory monitoring of the student. District staff shall continuously monitor the student in a time out room. Staff must be able to see and hear the student at all times. The room shall be of adequate width, length, and height to allow the student to move about and recline comfortably. Wall and floor coverings should be designed to prevent injury to the student. There shall be adequate lighting and ventilation. The temperature of the time out room shall be within the normal comfort range and consistent with the rest of the building. The room shall be clean and free of objects and fixtures that could be potentially dangerous to a student. All local fire and safety codes shall be observed. The time out room must be unlocked at all times and the door must be able to be opened from the inside. Under no circumstances may a locked room or space be used for the purposes of a time out.

Behavioral Management: If implemented, a time out room will only be used as part of the District's behavior management program. A student's IEP shall specify when a behavioral intervention plan includes the use of a time out room, including the maximum amount of time a student will need to be in a time out room as a behavioral consequence. Such maximum amount of time shall be determined on an individual basis based on the student's age and individual needs. Except for potentially dangerous situations described above, the time out room shall be used only in conjunction with a behavioral intervention plan that is designed to teach and reinforce alternative appropriate behaviors. The District shall inform the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) prior to the initiation of a behavioral intervention plan that will incorporate the use of a time out room. The District shall further give the parent(s) or guardian(s) the opportunity to see the physical space that will be used as a time out room and provide the parent(s) or guardian(s) with a copy of the District's policy on the use of such rooms.

Factors Precipitating the Use of a Time Out Room: The District may place a student in a time out room when: (1) the student's behavior significantly impacts the teacher's ability to teach and/or the ability of the other students in the classroom to learn and the student's removal is necessary to maintain or restore control over the classroom; (2) the student's behavior poses a threat to the student or another individual; (3) the student requests a break in the time out room to regain composure or self-control; or (4) a potentially dangerous situation arises. Except for unanticipated situations that pose an immediate concern for the physical safety of the student or others, the placement of a student in a time out room shall be in conjunction with that student's behavioral intervention plan.

Staff Training: The District shall provide staff training on the policies and procedures related to those staff members who may be called upon to implement time out interventions or the use of protective holds.

References: 8 NYCRR §19.5(a)(3) 8 NYCRR §200.22(d) Adoption: July 7, 2011 Revision & Adoption: May 6, 2021 Revision & Adoption: June 17, 2021

Health Services

Illness

A student should be fever free (temperature under 100° F) for 24 hours before returning to school following an illness. A student suffering from diarrhea; persistent cough; large amount of congestion or nasal discharge should not attend school until symptoms resolve. A student with purulent discharge from eyes or dried discharge upon awakening, tearing and redness of the white of the eye needs treatment before admission to school. Please consult your physician.

Special Health Needs

The nurse should be informed of any special health history that might be significant in the school setting, for example: asthma, allergies, heart condition, vision or hearing problems, injuries, surgery performed or being planned, etc. Parents must also provide documentation from the physician regarding the diagnosis.

Physical Education Excuses

Students unable to participate in PE must bring a note from home signed by a parent/guardian indicating the reason for not participating. If more than two consecutive gym classes will be missed because your child has sustained an injury or has been diagnosed with a significant illness, a note from a physician is required.

Medication

New York State Law prohibits the administration of any medication during school hours without doctor's orders. If your child needs to take medication during the school day, please contact the Health Office for a medication form to be completed by both physician and parent. The medicine must be brought to school in its original labeled container by a parent or guardian and should **not** be transported on the school bus. Please note that cough drops are a choking hazard and do not belong in school.

Physicals and Immunizations

To be sure that your child's enrollment in school will go smoothly, it is important that you understand the New York State requirements pertaining to immunizations that your child will need prior to enrollment.

DTaP	4-5 doses with final dose after 4 years of age
Polio	3-4 doses with final dose after 4 years of age
MMR	2 doses
Hepatitis B	3 doses
Varicella	2 doses

It is important that parents understand that kindergarten students will not be allowed to attend class until all public health requirements have been met. Physicals are required for grades K, 1, 3 and 5.

Health Screening

Vision and hearing tests are given annually based on grade level. If a child fails to meet the New York State screening guidelines criteria, the nurse notifies the parent and a written referral is sent recommending a professional evaluation. If the screening is passed, parents are not notified, but all parents are welcome to call the nurse for their child's screening results. Scoliosis screening is performed on 5th grade female students.