



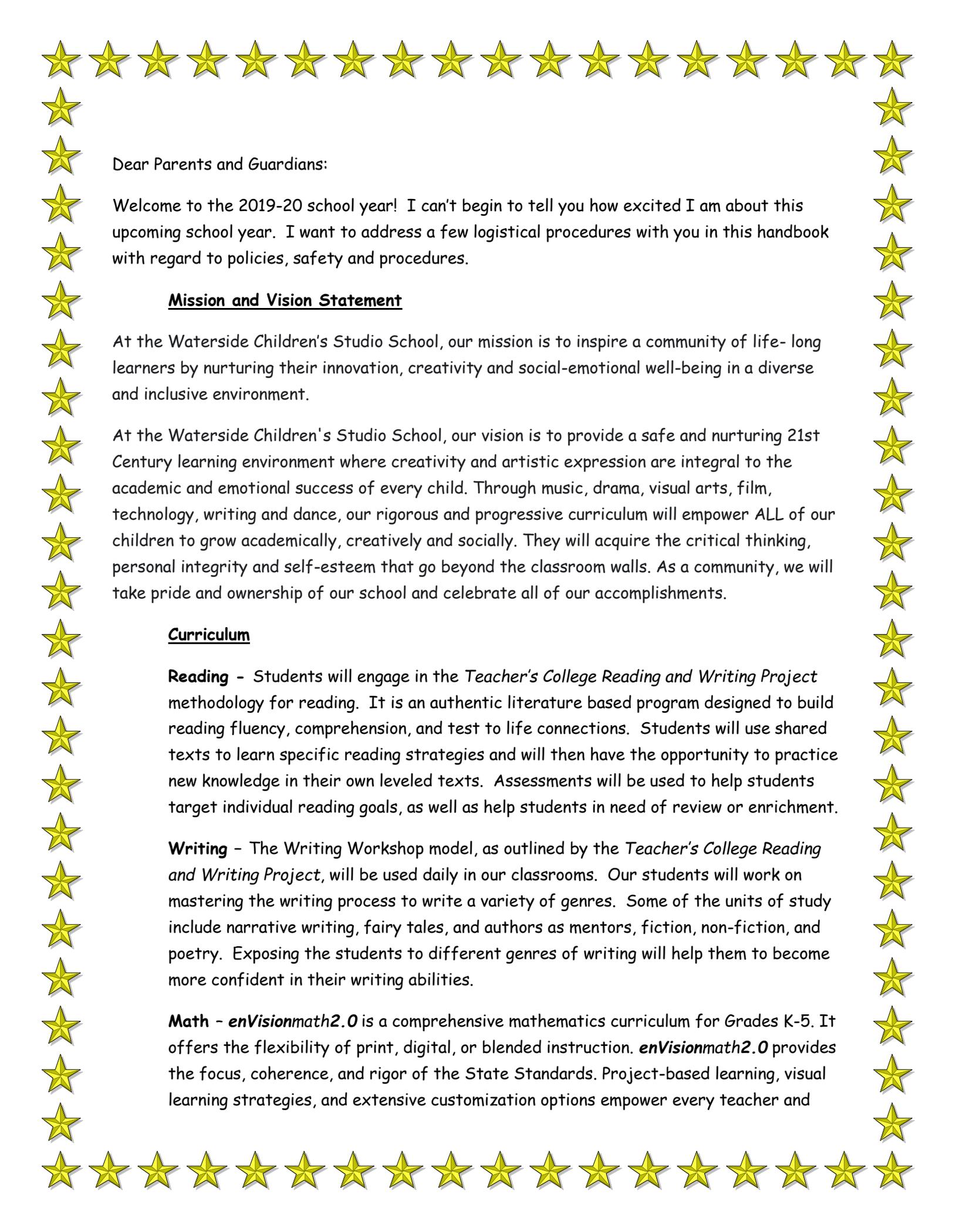
Waterside Children's  
Studio School

**P.S. 317**

**2019-2020**

**Parent Handbook**





Dear Parents and Guardians:

Welcome to the 2019-20 school year! I can't begin to tell you how excited I am about this upcoming school year. I want to address a few logistical procedures with you in this handbook with regard to policies, safety and procedures.

### **Mission and Vision Statement**

At the Waterside Children's Studio School, our mission is to inspire a community of life- long learners by nurturing their innovation, creativity and social-emotional well-being in a diverse and inclusive environment.

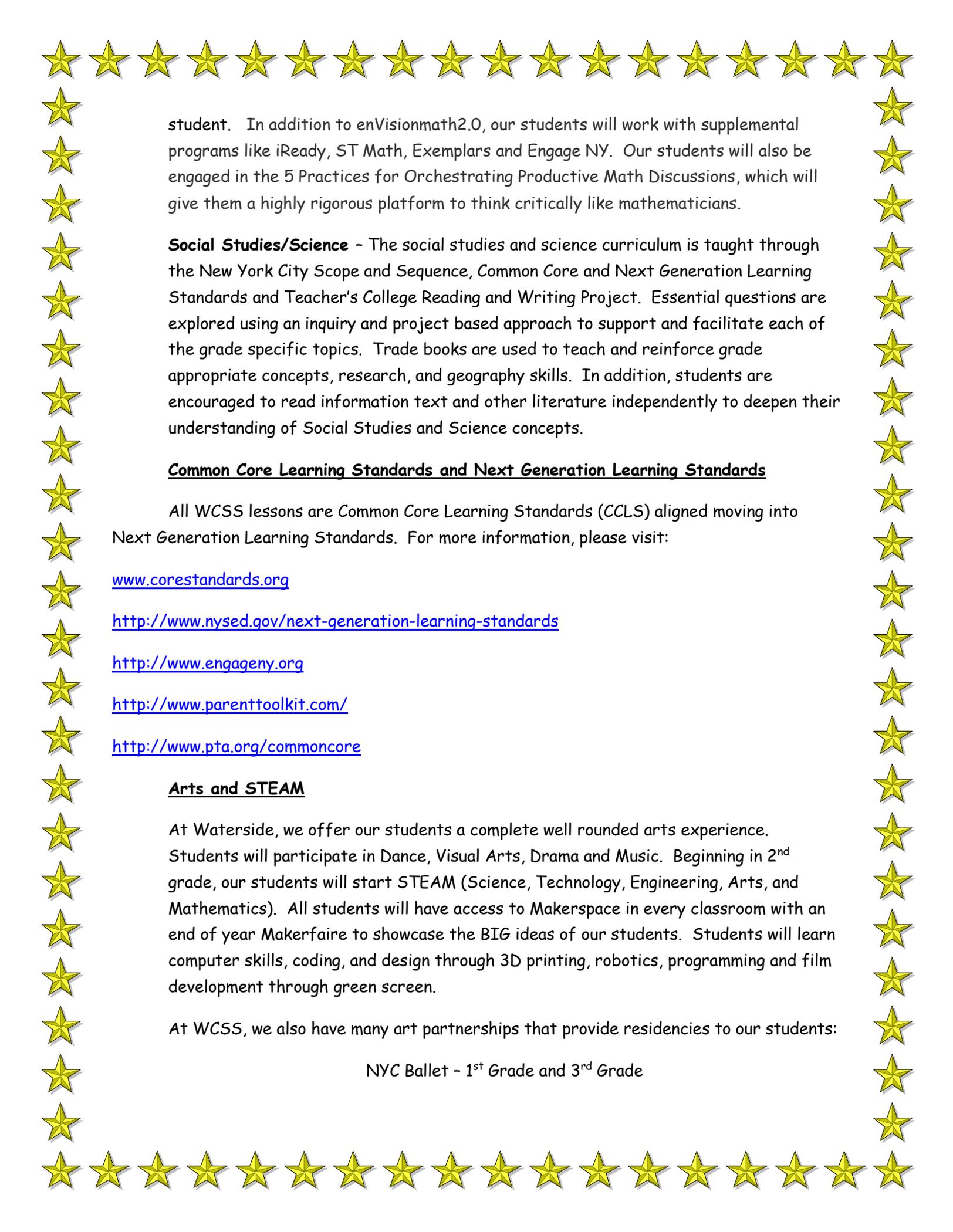
At the Waterside Children's Studio School, our vision is to provide a safe and nurturing 21st Century learning environment where creativity and artistic expression are integral to the academic and emotional success of every child. Through music, drama, visual arts, film, technology, writing and dance, our rigorous and progressive curriculum will empower ALL of our children to grow academically, creatively and socially. They will acquire the critical thinking, personal integrity and self-esteem that go beyond the classroom walls. As a community, we will take pride and ownership of our school and celebrate all of our accomplishments.

### **Curriculum**

**Reading** - Students will engage in the *Teacher's College Reading and Writing Project* methodology for reading. It is an authentic literature based program designed to build reading fluency, comprehension, and test to life connections. Students will use shared texts to learn specific reading strategies and will then have the opportunity to practice new knowledge in their own leveled texts. Assessments will be used to help students target individual reading goals, as well as help students in need of review or enrichment.

**Writing** - The Writing Workshop model, as outlined by the *Teacher's College Reading and Writing Project*, will be used daily in our classrooms. Our students will work on mastering the writing process to write a variety of genres. Some of the units of study include narrative writing, fairy tales, and authors as mentors, fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. Exposing the students to different genres of writing will help them to become more confident in their writing abilities.

**Math** - *enVisionmath2.0* is a comprehensive mathematics curriculum for Grades K-5. It offers the flexibility of print, digital, or blended instruction. *enVisionmath2.0* provides the focus, coherence, and rigor of the State Standards. Project-based learning, visual learning strategies, and extensive customization options empower every teacher and



student. In addition to enVisionmath2.0, our students will work with supplemental programs like iReady, ST Math, Exemplars and Engage NY. Our students will also be engaged in the 5 Practices for Orchestrating Productive Math Discussions, which will give them a highly rigorous platform to think critically like mathematicians.

**Social Studies/Science** - The social studies and science curriculum is taught through the New York City Scope and Sequence, Common Core and Next Generation Learning Standards and Teacher's College Reading and Writing Project. Essential questions are explored using an inquiry and project based approach to support and facilitate each of the grade specific topics. Trade books are used to teach and reinforce grade appropriate concepts, research, and geography skills. In addition, students are encouraged to read information text and other literature independently to deepen their understanding of Social Studies and Science concepts.

**Common Core Learning Standards and Next Generation Learning Standards**

All WCSS lessons are Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) aligned moving into Next Generation Learning Standards. For more information, please visit:

[www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)

<http://www.nysed.gov/next-generation-learning-standards>

<http://www.engageny.org>

<http://www.parenttoolkit.com/>

<http://www.pta.org/commoncore>

**Arts and STEAM**

At Waterside, we offer our students a complete well rounded arts experience. Students will participate in Dance, Visual Arts, Drama and Music. Beginning in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, our students will start STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics). All students will have access to Makerspace in every classroom with an end of year Makerfaire to showcase the BIG ideas of our students. Students will learn computer skills, coding, and design through 3D printing, robotics, programming and film development through green screen.

At WCSS, we also have many art partnerships that provide residencies to our students:

NYC Ballet - 1<sup>st</sup> Grade and 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

Guggenheim Museum - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

Center for Architecture - 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge - K and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

Creative Arts Team, Shakespeare Cluster - Grades 3-5 in Enrichment Clusters

### WCSS Grading Policy

Classwork - 40%

Assessments/Quizzes/Tests - 40%

Class Participation - 10%

Projects - 10%

65% or below = Level 1 (significantly below grade level standards)

66% - 79% = Level 2 (below grade level standards)

80% - 89% = Level 3 (on grade level standards)

90% - 100% = Level 4 (above grade level standards)

### Arrival/Dismissal

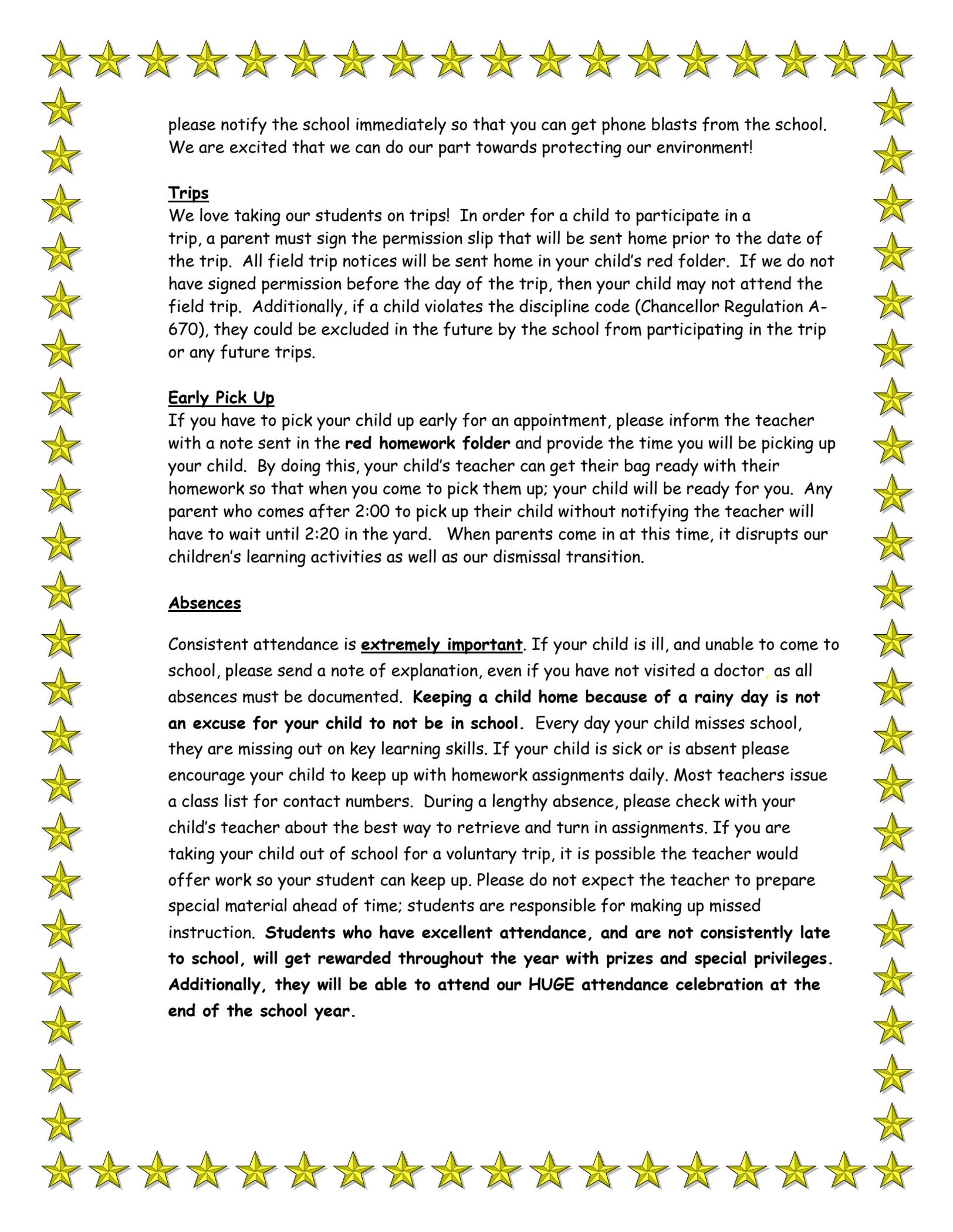
**School begins at 8:00AM Monday - Friday. Breakfast is available for students from 7:30AM - 7:50AM.** For safety purposes, all students in grades K-5 **MUST** enter the school in the back doors facing Beach 108<sup>th</sup> Street. If you come in through the front entrance, you will be told to go around to the back of the school. At that time, children will be escorted by one of our staff members to either the cafeteria for breakfast or directly to the auditorium.

**School dismisses at 2:20PM Monday - Friday.** As a safety precaution, please do not stand by the door to the school. Please wait by your child's class respective spots in the courtyard for pick up. We want our children going home with the right family members and don't want anyone to get hurt. During days of inclement weather, dismissal will be in the gym. Once all classes are down, we will start to let families into the building to pick up their children. **K-2 dismisses in the small yard and Grades 3-5 dismiss in the big yard.**

**Pre-K** arrival will begin in the classes at 7:30 where children can begin having breakfast. For Pre-K only, children will be dropped off at their classes through the small court yard of our building. Dismissal is 2:20 for our Pre-K as well.

### Go Green/Paperless Initiative

In an effort to move our school into the *GO GREEN* initiative, we will be moving to mostly paperless with regards to notices sent home. We will send calendars and monthly principal newsletters home, but any additional notification will be sent through BLOOMZ, Facebook, phone blasts, and our website. If you change your phone number,



please notify the school immediately so that you can get phone blasts from the school. We are excited that we can do our part towards protecting our environment!

### Trips

We love taking our students on trips! In order for a child to participate in a trip, a parent must sign the permission slip that will be sent home prior to the date of the trip. All field trip notices will be sent home in your child's red folder. If we do not have signed permission before the day of the trip, then your child may not attend the field trip. Additionally, if a child violates the discipline code (Chancellor Regulation A-670), they could be excluded in the future by the school from participating in the trip or any future trips.

### Early Pick Up

If you have to pick your child up early for an appointment, please inform the teacher with a note sent in the **red homework folder** and provide the time you will be picking up your child. By doing this, your child's teacher can get their bag ready with their homework so that when you come to pick them up; your child will be ready for you. Any parent who comes after 2:00 to pick up their child without notifying the teacher will have to wait until 2:20 in the yard. When parents come in at this time, it disrupts our children's learning activities as well as our dismissal transition.

### Absences

Consistent attendance is **extremely important**. If your child is ill, and unable to come to school, please send a note of explanation, even if you have not visited a doctor, as all absences must be documented. **Keeping a child home because of a rainy day is not an excuse for your child to not be in school.** Every day your child misses school, they are missing out on key learning skills. If your child is sick or is absent please encourage your child to keep up with homework assignments daily. Most teachers issue a class list for contact numbers. During a lengthy absence, please check with your child's teacher about the best way to retrieve and turn in assignments. If you are taking your child out of school for a voluntary trip, it is possible the teacher would offer work so your student can keep up. Please do not expect the teacher to prepare special material ahead of time; students are responsible for making up missed instruction. **Students who have excellent attendance, and are not consistently late to school, will get rewarded throughout the year with prizes and special privileges. Additionally, they will be able to attend our HUGE attendance celebration at the end of the school year.**



### Fire and Lockdown Drills

All NYC schools must complete 12 fire drills and 2 lockdown drills for the year. These drills are conducted to ensure that our students know what to do in case of an emergency as their safety is our priority. The students are never told when the drill is going to happen, but the teachers work with the students to teach them what to do during the drills throughout the year.

### Lateness

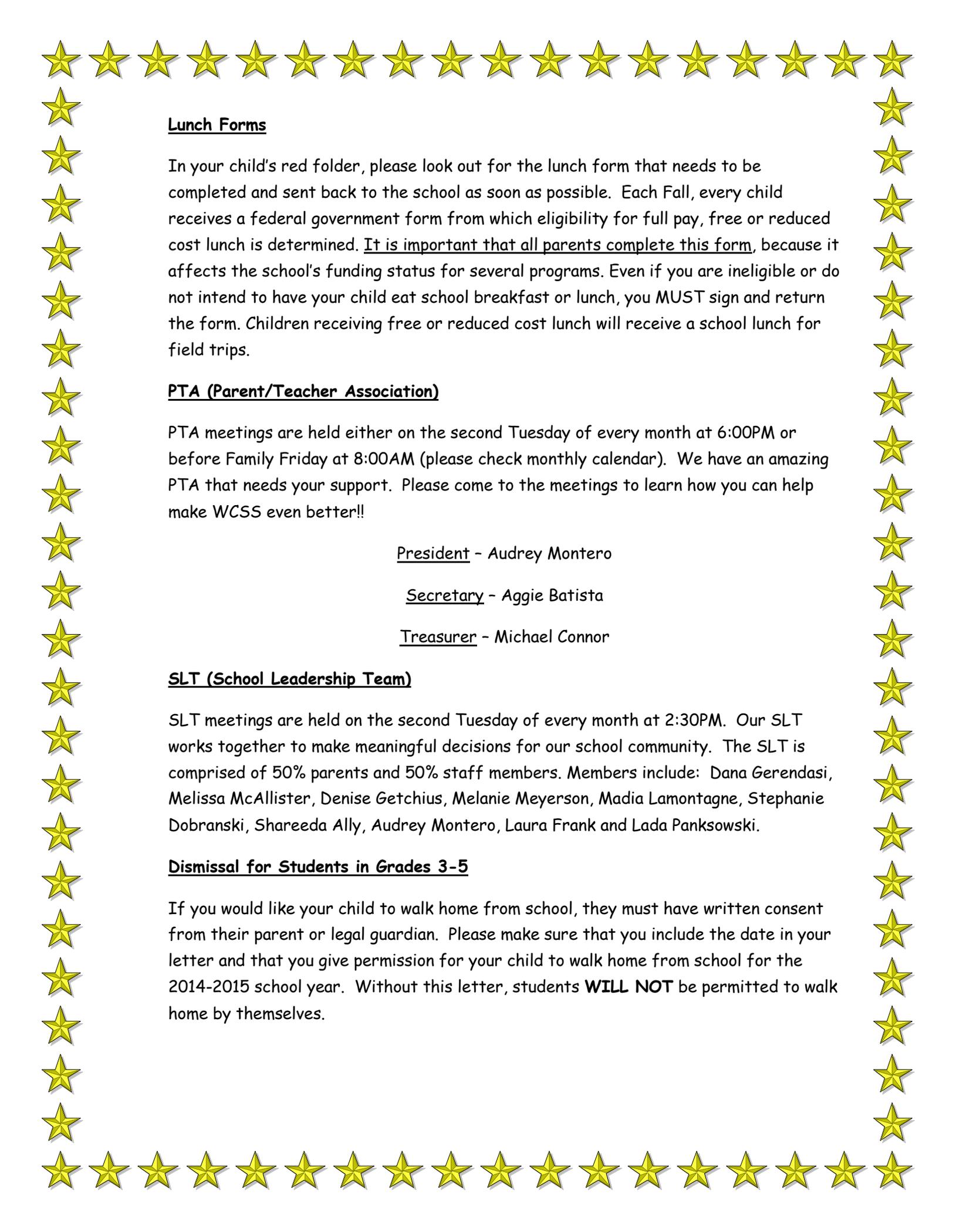
When children arrive at school after 8:00AM, they not only miss important instruction themselves, they interrupt instruction for their classmates. There is less time in the school day for academic instruction and the fun stuff - arts, social studies, trips, and celebrations. Lateness is part of a student's permanent record, and may have a detrimental effect when it comes time for test scores and middle school placement. If your child is chronically late for school, you need to start the morning earlier. **If your child is consistently late, but has excellent attendance, they may not be part of the attendance awards celebration at the end of the year. Please have your child to school on time so that their positive learning experience is not interrupted.**

### Blue Cards

It is extremely important that you fill out the BLUE CARDS and return to our school via the red folder as soon as possible. If your child gets sick or we need to get in touch with you, the blue cards are the way to do this. On the blue cards you will see an area where you are to put names of people we can contact in case we cannot get a hold of you. These are the people that we can release your child to. For your child's safety, please be very selective with who you put down. If someone comes in to pick up your child **that is not** on the blue card, we will not release your child to them without special written permission from you. **If you change your phone number, YOU MUST INFORM THE OFFICE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, so that we will be able to reach you.**

### Updating Personal Information

If at any time you move or change your phone number during the school year, please come into the school office and update your information. Often times, families move and don't tell the office and when a staff member needs to get in touch with that family, we can't reach them and that becomes a safety issue. Your cooperation with this is very much appreciated.



**Lunch Forms**

In your child's red folder, please look out for the lunch form that needs to be completed and sent back to the school as soon as possible. Each Fall, every child receives a federal government form from which eligibility for full pay, free or reduced cost lunch is determined. It is important that all parents complete this form, because it affects the school's funding status for several programs. Even if you are ineligible or do not intend to have your child eat school breakfast or lunch, you **MUST** sign and return the form. Children receiving free or reduced cost lunch will receive a school lunch for field trips.

**PTA (Parent/Teacher Association)**

PTA meetings are held either on the second Tuesday of every month at 6:00PM or before Family Friday at 8:00AM (please check monthly calendar). We have an amazing PTA that needs your support. Please come to the meetings to learn how you can help make WCSS even better!!

President - Audrey Montero

Secretary - Aggie Batista

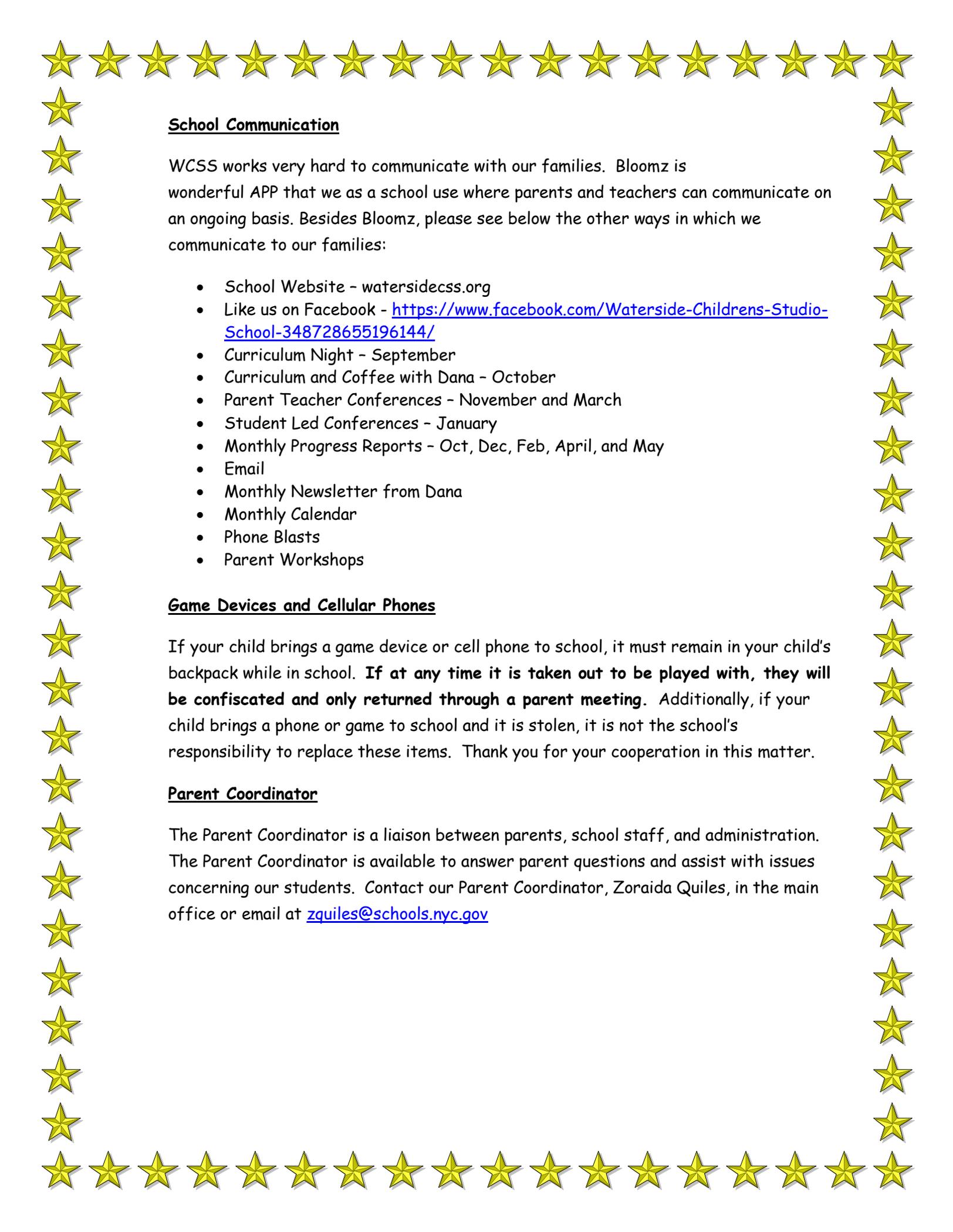
Treasurer - Michael Connor

**SLT (School Leadership Team)**

SLT meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month at 2:30PM. Our SLT works together to make meaningful decisions for our school community. The SLT is comprised of 50% parents and 50% staff members. Members include: Dana Gerendasi, Melissa McAllister, Denise Getchius, Melanie Meyerson, Madia Lamontagne, Stephanie Dobranski, Shareeda Ally, Audrey Montero, Laura Frank and Lada Panksowski.

**Dismissal for Students in Grades 3-5**

If you would like your child to walk home from school, they must have written consent from their parent or legal guardian. Please make sure that you include the date in your letter and that you give permission for your child to walk home from school for the 2014-2015 school year. Without this letter, students **WILL NOT** be permitted to walk home by themselves.



### School Communication

WCSS works very hard to communicate with our families. Bloomz is wonderful APP that we as a school use where parents and teachers can communicate on an ongoing basis. Besides Bloomz, please see below the other ways in which we communicate to our families:

- School Website - [watersidecss.org](http://watersidecss.org)
- Like us on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/Waterside-Childrens-Studio-School-348728655196144/>
- Curriculum Night - September
- Curriculum and Coffee with Dana - October
- Parent Teacher Conferences - November and March
- Student Led Conferences - January
- Monthly Progress Reports - Oct, Dec, Feb, April, and May
- Email
- Monthly Newsletter from Dana
- Monthly Calendar
- Phone Blasts
- Parent Workshops

### Game Devices and Cellular Phones

If your child brings a game device or cell phone to school, it must remain in your child's backpack while in school. **If at any time it is taken out to be played with, they will be confiscated and only returned through a parent meeting.** Additionally, if your child brings a phone or game to school and it is stolen, it is not the school's responsibility to replace these items. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

### Parent Coordinator

The Parent Coordinator is a liaison between parents, school staff, and administration. The Parent Coordinator is available to answer parent questions and assist with issues concerning our students. Contact our Parent Coordinator, Zoraida Quiles, in the main office or email at [zquiles@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:zquiles@schools.nyc.gov)



## School Calendar 2019-2020

**SEPT 5** FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR ALL STUDENTS (Partial school day for pre-kindergarten public school students)

**SEPT 12** Back to School Night - 4:30-7:30

**SEPT 30-OCT 1** Rosh Hashanah (Schools closed)

**OCT 9** Yom Kippur (Schools closed)

**OCT 14** Columbus Day (Schools closed)

**NOV 5** Election Day/Chancellor's Conference (Students do not attend school)

**NOV 11** Veterans Day Observed (Schools closed)

**NOV 14** Parent Teacher Conferences - 12:00-2:30 and 4:30-7:30

**NOV 28-29** Thanksgiving Recess (Schools closed)

**DEC 24-JAN 1** Winter Recess (Schools closed)

**JAN 20** Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Schools closed)

**FEB 17-21** Midwinter Recess (Schools closed)

**MAR 5** Parent Teacher Conferences - 12:00-2:30 and 4:30-7:30

**APR 9-17** Spring Recess (Schools closed)

**MAY 7** Parent Teacher Conferences - Spring Arts Festival

**MAY 25** Memorial Day (Schools closed)

**JUN 4** Chancellor's Conference Day (Students do not attend school)

**JUN 9** June Clerical Day for Lower Grades Only

**JUN 26** LAST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR ALL STUDENTS



# Waterside Children's Studio School

P.S. 317

190 Beach 110<sup>th</sup> Street

Rockaway Park, NY 11694

(718) 634-1344 (Main Number)

(718) 634-3884 (Fax)

[www.watersidecss.org](http://www.watersidecss.org) (website)

[watersidecss@gmail.com](mailto:watersidecss@gmail.com) (email)



Don't forget to connect with us on BLOOMZ! If you need help with logging on,  
please email [watersidesteam@gmail.com](mailto:watersidesteam@gmail.com)

Dana Gerendasi, Principal

Katie McGillicuddy, Assistant Principal

Zoraida Quiles, Parent Coordinator

(718) 634-1344 ext. 1193 or (347) 563-4130 (Cell)