53 MacAfee Road
Somerset, New Jersey 08873
Tel: (732) 249-9097

Parent/Student Handbook

2019-2020

WEB SITE:  www.franklinboe.org
Office Hours:  8:30 a.m. to 4:05 p.m.

OPPORTUNITY, EXCELLENCE, and
AFFIRMATION FOR EVERY CHILD
ABSENCES

Please follow these procedures when your child is absent from school

• Parents are requested to call the main office – 732-249-9097
• Calls should be made before 9:30 AM – or the evening before the morning of the absence.
• Parents should give the student’s name, teacher’s name, and the reason for the absence.
• A note must accompany the student when they return to school. Please note that vacation is not an excused absence. After three days of consecutive illness a doctor’s note must be provided.

_Students are to be kept home until they are free from fever, diarrhea, or vomiting for 24 hours. If medication at school is necessary, please contact the nurse (732 249-6632) for the appropriate forms. Medication is not to be brought to school by students at any time (this includes over-the-counter medications, i.e. cough drops, Tylenol, vitamins etc.). If you need to speak to the school nurse pertaining to a medical issue with your child you can reach her on the above number._

School achievement begins with regular attendance. Parents/guardians must ensure that all school aged children in their care are in school on time daily. Additionally, school personnel must communicate any attendance problems or concerns to parents/guardians in a timely manner.

It is important to remember that parents/guardians should submit a note or medical documentation explaining each student absence. Such notes must be submitted _within five (5) days_ of the student’s return to school in order to consider the period of absence as excused.

Under New Jersey law and regulation, individual Boards of Education may determine categories of absences which the District will consider “excused”. Franklin Township Board of Education Policy 5113 on absences is available on the district website. Any absence that does not fall into one of the categories listed in the policy is considered “unexcused.”

Absences for family travel or vacations; performance of household or babysitting duties; and other daytime activities unrelated to the school program are considered “unexcused” absences. _Parental permission is no longer considered an excused absence._

When a student accumulates four (4), eight (8), and ten (10) days of unexcused absences, parents/guardians will be notified. It is hoped that through communicating and working together, the parent/guardian, student and the school will be able to develop and implement effective strategies that will result in improved student attendance and academic achievement.

It should be noted that students who accumulate ten (10) unexcused absences or who show a pattern of truancy will be referred to the Family Crisis Intervention Unit. Additional unexcused absences or truancy will result in referral to the Franklin Township Municipal Court.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Official school hours for the 2019/2020 school year are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades Pre-K, K, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5</td>
<td>9:30 AM to 4:05 PM</td>
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Certain days on the school calendar are listed as **Minimum Session Days**. The school hours on those days are:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades Pre-K, K, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5</td>
<td>9:30 AM to 2:25 PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On days when school is in session, MacAfee Road School opens its doors at 9:15 AM. Students should not arrive at school before that time. Classes begin at 9:30 AM. Students arriving before 9:15 AM are required to wait outside the school until the doors open **even in inclement weather.**

School dismissal is at 3:55 p.m.; buses leave the school approximately at 4:05 PM

**ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance is essential to a student's success in school. Most subjects are taught in sequence, requiring the understanding of each concept in the order of its presentation. Frequent absenteeism can result in gaps in learning and can create a genuine hardship for a student. The school regards this as a very serious problem. The following circumstances are the only accepted excuses for absence from school:

1. Student illness  **(Just a phone call to office does not excuse the absence, a note must be received the day your child returns to school)**
2. Professional Appointment
3. Death in the Family
4. Religious holiday/Bring your child to work day.

**Absence for any reason other than those listed above is an unexcused absence.**

**BIRTHDAY AND HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS SNACKS**

MacAfee Road School Staff are always happy to celebrate a student’s birthday and holiday celebrations. Snacks should be healthy. Simple and easy to distribute snacks are appreciated by all. Following is the list of healthy snacks celebrations: raisins, cut fruits, dried fruits, popcorn, cut vegetable, Fruit juice 100%, water, pretzels, string cheese, crackers, muffins. As you may know, New Jersey recently enacted a new School Nutrition Policy to promote healthy food alternatives to students in public schools. In addition to changes to the cafeteria menu, the new policy affects foods that are served during parties and birthday celebrations. Soda is completely prohibited, as is all candy and all items that contain sugar as the primary ingredient. Please DO NOT send goody bags (a bag containing candy, small toys and other goodies) with your child. Due to the various allergy concerns at MacAfee, please do not send in any food products to be sent home.

**CAFETERIA**

The same general expectations for proper behavior apply in the cafeteria as in any other area of the school. Students are to follow the direction of the lunch room aides.

**CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL**

Cancellation of school takes place only during circumstances such as extreme weather, equipment failure or public crisis. Every practical means is used to notify parents of a cancellation, including radio, Franklin Township Board of Education website posting and automated phone message service. Also the Franklin Board of Education information line at 732 873-2400 ext. 555. Tune in to one of the following radio stations to learn of school cancellations:
WCTC - New Brunswick 1450 AM
WMGQ-New Brunswick 98.3 FM
WJWH-Princeton 1350 AM
WOR-New York 710 AM
WPST-Trenton 97.5 FM
WKXW-Trenton 101.5 FM
WBUD-Trenton 1260 AM
WNJO-West Windsor 94.5 FM
CHAT RADIO 1040 FM
(HUNDERDON/SOMERSET/WARREN COUNTIES)

CARE

MacAfee offers a fee-based before and after school program for parents/guardians who require childcare for their children before or after school hours. The program runs from 7:00 AM for the AM CARE program and from dismissal to 6:30 PM for the PM CARE program, Monday through Friday. For more details on fees and/or enrollment, please call the CARE office at 732-873-1227.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones are prohibited for use in school but if a student has one it must be concealed in a book bag and turned OFF until the student is not on school premises.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If a student is moving to another address within the school district, the parent/guardian must go to the Parent Information Office at the Board of Education to report the change of address. 1755 Amwell Road, Somerset, NJ 08873–732-873-1373

Students who are transferring to another school district must obtain a transfer card from MacAfee Road School. Please call in advance so that the school office staff will have the transfer card ready for you.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/TELEPHONE

It is very important that every student maintain an up-to-date address and telephone number record at the school office. Please notify the school/Parent Information Center at 732 873-1373 immediately if you have a change of address or telephone number during the school year. In addition, please remember to contact the school if your work phone number or the phone number of your emergency contact person(s) changes.

CLASS CELEBRATION POLICY

At MacAfee we pride ourselves on having created a family community. We would like to maintain this atmosphere when it comes to times of celebration, by allowing parents/guardians to attend classroom events.
In order to have control of knowing who will be entering MacAfee on celebration days we have instated the following party policy.

Parent participation in classroom celebrations will be on a rotating basis. Up to 5 parents/guardians will be allowed to help with each class celebrations. Parents will work with their child’s teacher in determining which parent will attend which celebration.

All homeroom teachers will be required to submit the names of the parent/guardian who will be entering the building on the day of the party, to the front office 2 days before the celebration. This complete listing will be located at the front security desk. These parents will be required to sign in at the security desk and the teacher’s class visitor list MUST include said parent. Parents who are NOT on the list will not be admitted.

CONFERENCES

Formal parent/teacher conferences are held once a school year. Parents will receive a specific appointment with the teachers of their children. These conferences are highly valuable to the overall educational program. It is not necessary, however, to wait for the regular conference time if a parent has a special concern. Parent conferences are encouraged and can be arranged at any time during the school year. Please call the school for an appointment if a conference is desired. Also you can communicate with teachers through email. The teacher will inform you of the email address.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Franklin Township schools operate on a six day cycle (letters A through F) as opposed to a Monday through Friday schedule.

For example, if a given Friday is an ‘A’ day and the following Monday is a school holiday, Tuesday, when school is back in session, would be a ‘B’ day. In another example, if a given Monday is an ‘F’ day and on Tuesday and Wednesday school is closed due to snow, Thursday will be an ‘A’ day.

DELAYED OPENING

In the event that there is a two-hour delayed opening announced, the following schedule will be followed at MacAfee: **In the event of a delayed opening, there will be no AM CARE.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Starting Time</th>
<th>Dismissal Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-K, K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
<td>11:30 AM</td>
<td>4:05 PM</td>
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DISCIPLINE

Teachers have the authority and responsibility to maintain discipline in the classroom. School discipline policies have been established by the Board of Education and are consistently enforced. When a student is having a problem, the teacher will have a conference with the student, conference with the parent, use classroom disciplinary procedures, and then, if need be, refer the situation to the building principal.

Parents and guardians should receive the document entitled **Student Discipline Code**, produced by the Franklin Township Public Schools. This document explains in detail the district-wide
disciplinary procedures. If you have any questions, please contact your child's teacher or the principal.

School rules are enforced in all aspects of the school day. This includes the school bus and after school clubs and activities.

**Chewing Gum/Toy and Water Guns/Electronic Toys**

Chewing gum is not permitted in school at any time. Toy guns, electronic toys and water guns of any type are not permitted in school. If a student is found in possession of these items, they will be confiscated. These items will only be returned directly to a parent or guardian.

Electronic toys are very popular and very expensive. To ward off potential problems regarding loss or theft, these toys, as with other toys, are not to be brought to school.

**DRIVEWAY SAFETY RULES**

1. During the morning drop off, the entire driveway is reserved for buses. AFTER the morning buses have departed, passenger vehicles will be allowed to pull up at approximately 9:20AM. Vehicles who attempt to enter the driveway before it is free of buses will be turned away.

2. Passenger vehicles cannot enter the driveway until buses have dropped off the children. Passenger vehicles are expected to follow Township traffic rules on MacAfee Road as established by the Department of Traffic.

3. During the afternoon pick-up, the entire driveway is reserved for buses. The buses begin to line up and receive students at 3:55pm. Once the buses have departed, passenger vehicles may enter the driveway. They are to stop beyond the front door, towards the end of the driveway, before picking up passengers at the curbside.

4. Staff members are on duty during drop-off and pick-up times. Please follow their instructions and directions.

In addition, please remember the following safety measures to be followed at all times while in the school driveway:

1. Children should not be let out or picked up from the driving or passing lane. Drivers must pull to the curbside.
2. Children should not be let out on the driver’s side of the vehicle at any time.
3. Please do not stop or stand to drop off or pick up any longer than necessary. Passenger vehicles should move in and out, in an orderly fashion, to keep traffic moving.
4. Parking is not permitted in the driveway at any time during the day. Should you need to come into the building, please use the school parking lot or park across the street from the school.
5. As parking is not permitted on the driveway, the drivers of passenger vehicles should not leave their cars unattended.
6. Passing a school bus that has its flashing lights on is not permitted and is a violation of state law.
7. Please use caution and your turn signals when departing from the curb.
8. Please watch for walkers.
9. Please be patient and courteous.
EARLY EMERGENCY CLOSING

If there is an early closing due to an emergency situation or severe weather conditions, grades Pre-K, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 students at MacAfee will be dismissed at 2:25 PM.

Parents and guardians will be made aware of an early emergency closing in two ways:

1. An announcement is placed on the radio stations listed earlier.

2. An automated call system that will place a call the parent/guardians primary phone number with a message regarding the early dismissal.

In the absence of specific directions to the contrary, the school assumes that a child’s normal mode of transportation will continue to be in effect during an early emergency closing. For example, students who usually ride the bus will be transported home on the bus; walkers will be picked up as usual.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Note: It is imperative that the emergency card (which is distributed to each student at the beginning of the school year) be filled out and/or includes any changes and returned promptly to the school. The office should be notified of any change of address and phone numbers.

FIRE/SAFETY DRILLS

Fire drills/Safety Drills and or building evacuations are conducted twice each month. Detailed escape plans are posted inside the door of each classroom. Students are reminded to obey the school safety rules.

GENERAL SCHOOL PROCEDURES AND EXPECTATIONS

1. Students should always walk in the school and on the way to buses.

2. We expect students to act courteously and respectfully to all adults, including visitors to the school. We expect all students to address all personnel by their last names preceded by the proper title (Mr., Mrs., Miss).

3. We expect students to act courteously to their peers.

4. We expect students to say “excuse me” or “pardon me” when interrupting anyone. We expect the use of “please” and “thank you”.

5. We expect children to act like children. However, it is our responsibility to guide them in acting in socially acceptable ways.

6. Students are encouraged to respect and care for our school. When children leave a classroom, it should be left in good order and all papers cleaned from the floor.

7. Students are not to bring toys to school.
8. Students are not to bring/eat candy or gum during school hours.

9. Students are not permitted to wear hats in the school building unless for medical reasons.

10. Students are expected to bring an absence excuse to school when returning from any absence.

11. Students are to use the lavatories as they would the ones in their own home. Students will be reminded to place toilet paper in the toilet and paper towels in garbage cans. Inappropriate behavior in the lavatories will result in discipline referrals.

12. Students generally conduct themselves in a manner consistent to the way in which they dress and groom. Any type of dress or grooming which is disruptive will not be permitted in school.

**HOMEWORK**

Homework is important. It is an extension of the learning that takes place in school. Homework can provide practice and drill that reinforces classroom learning and can provide opportunities for independent study, research and creative thinking. Parents can help their children by arranging a quiet comfortable place for the student to work and by making certain assignments are completed.

While parents should help their children with assignments, they should not do the child’s homework. If a child is having difficulty with a topic or a concept, one way for the teacher to see that is through the homework.

When students are absent from school due to illness or injury, classroom teachers will, upon request from the parent or guardian, provide assignments and homework for make-up activities. Please allow at least 24 hours from the time the request is made to the teacher for the teacher to be able to comply with the request. Also, please remember that your child has two days to make up assignments for every day of absence.

**ILLNESS OR INJURY**

In case of illness or injury, a student will be cared for temporarily by the school nurse or a member of the school staff. School personnel will render first aide treatment only. If emergency treatment is necessary, parents will be contacted. Remember, an emergency telephone number where parents can be reached must be on file at the school.

**LEAVING SCHOOL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

Parent/Guardian must send a note to the homeroom teacher indicating that the student is leaving school early so that the teacher can prepare the student for dismissal. Parent/Guardian will sign student out of school in the main office.

**LIBRARY**

The library is open on a regularly scheduled basis and is supervised by the librarian. Classes are held for the purpose of library instruction as well as for the enjoyment of the materials and books.

Students are allowed to use the library during library hours with the permission of the librarian. They may use the library to read, check out books, return books, use audio-visual materials, do reference work, or work on a special project. Each student may check out one or two books for up
to two weeks. There is no fine for overdue books, but **students must pay for lost or damaged books.**

**LOST AND FOUND**

All lost clothing, lunch boxes and other such items found in school, regardless of its value, is placed in a lost and found box in the school office. Money, jewelry or any other articles of value are turned in to the office. Items placed in the lost and found box are put on display in the main hallway of the school once a month (on school spirit day). Any items not claimed on that day are donated to charity.

**LUNCH MONEY**

The price of lunch/breakfast is on the school menu. Students may buy lunch/breakfast and/or milk on a weekly basis. If applicable it is encouraged Parents/Guardians fill out free and reduced lunch forms on the Franklin Board of Education website. For those who do not have access to the internet, forms are available in the school office to apply for free or reduced-price lunch. Please do not hesitate to complete the form if you believe that you qualify for this benefit. Students who forget their lunch or lunch money are permitted to get a lunch charge. **Lunch charges should be repaid promptly as no more than two outstanding charges (regardless of amount) are permitted per student.** Parents/Guardians can also put money on their child’s account by calling 732-873-2400 Ext: 505 OR Log onto www.mypaymentsplus.com or call them at Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM until 5:30 PM at 1-877-237-0946.

For other ways to put money on your child’s account go to www.Franklinboe.org to the Food and Nutrition shortcut and then prepayment options.

**PTO**

MacAfee Road School has an active Parent/Teacher Organization. All parents are urged to become members and to actively participate. Meetings are announced in advance. Each year, the PTO sponsors several fundraising activities. With the help of all parents, these projects can be very successful. They allow the PTO to fund many important activities at the school.

**REPORT CARDS**

**New Grading and Reporting**

Our district has recently revised our elementary report card. For the 2019-2020 school year, students in **grades one through five** will receive trimester, standards-based report cards.

Report Card Distribution dates are as follows:

- December 20, 2019
- April 3, 2020
- June 25, 2020

Although you will have the opportunity to speak with your child’s teacher during their conference, the following hyperlink is meant to be a guide of how your child’s performance will be evaluated.

For our Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students, the district will use the KEA GOLD reporting tool.

Research shows that the first three years of life lay the foundation for all future learning and development. GOLD’s expanded progressions highlight the critical importance of those foundational skills and how they build upon each other to support children’s development and learning through the early years.

Our main goal is developing the whole child. By using GOLD, the teachers of our youngest learners are given the tools to expand their role in supporting children’s development and learning, which is essential to the child’s future development and learning. All teaching and learning is scaffolded to meet children’s individual needs. We are placing as much importance on social–emotional skill development as we are on mathematics, language, literacy development, and cognitive development, as all of these skills are equally essential for future success in school and life.

With GOLD, teachers can meet children where they individually are along the progression and clearly set a path for supporting their development and learning moving forward.

Parents will be able to see progression in development and learning when viewing the report card.

**SCHOOL CALENDAR**

Students will be bringing home a school calendar. Please save the calendar, as you will need to refer to it for scheduled closings and events.

**TARDINESS**

Prompt arrival at school is expected of all students. Late arrival disrupts the class and causes loss of instructional time. Any student who arrives at school after 9:34 a.m. is considered tardy. Parents must accompany the student into the school office for a tardy slip and are responsible for making office staff aware of the student’s arrival at school. Please do not walk a tardy student right to class--the student must report to the security guard for a pass.

**TEXTBOOKS**

All basic textbooks are loaned to the students for their use during the school year. Textbooks are to be handled with care and kept clean. Students should make sure their name and grade are written on the book label in case the book is misplaced. Students are required to pay for lost or damaged books.

**TRANSPORTATION/SCHOOL BUS**

School bus routes and stops are planned and established by the Transportation Department of the Franklin Township Public Schools. Safety, economy, efficiency and allocation of resources are some of the considerations that are evaluated when determining bus routes and bus operation procedures.

Please contact the Transportation Department directly for any request for a change in bus route or stop. These types of requests cannot be handled by the MacAfee Road School Office. The Transportation Department phone number is 732-828-6620. Parents and students are encouraged to notify the school immediately of any safety concern that they have observed regarding transportation operations.
Bus Rules

To ensure the safety of all students, the following rules have been established:

1. Students should use only the bus and bus stop assigned.
2. Orderly behavior is required at the bus stop.
3. When the bus is in motion, students are to remain seated, facing front.
4. Students are to talk quietly and make no unnecessary noise.
5. Students are to keep arms, legs and heads inside the bus.
6. Students are not to throw objects out of the bus window.
7. Fighting is prohibited.
8. Students are not to litter inside the bus.
9. Students are to remain quiet when the bus is crossing railroad tracks.

Infractions of the above rules will be brought to the attention of parents by the school principal. Consequences for inappropriate behavior on the school bus may result in bus suspension for one or more days.

Changes in Transportation Arrangements

Sometimes changes in transportation arrangements for students need to be altered by parents. The procedure for making these changes is as follows:

1. Any request for change that involved changing buses (either permanently or short term) must be handled through the Transportation Department. For example, this would include a request for a child to be dropped of at a new address for after school child care.

2. Students who normally are transported on a bus will return home on the bus unless they have a written and signed note from their parent or guardian. This is for your child’s protection as young children often become confused regarding after school arrangements.

Please note that without a written and signed note indicating a change in dismissal arrangement, the usual transportation or dismissal arrangement will be followed. In order to change bus arrangements, you must contact the transportation department at 732 828-6620. The school office does not have the authority to make bus changes. A student who attends CARE may not ride the school bus.

VALUABLES

Common sense and consideration is the best guide whether or not a student should bring personal possessions to school. The school administrator or school staff is not responsible for any valuables, including designer clothing, which students bring to school. It is recommended that students leave all valuables at home. If special circumstances make it necessary for a student to bring substantial cash or other important possessions to school, these items can be safeguarded by registering them and leaving them at the main office.

VISITORS

All visitors and parents are required to report to the security guard/ school office and obtain a visitor’s badge upon entering the school building. Visits to your child’s classroom should be scheduled by appointment with the classroom teacher.