



FAMILY HANDBOOK

John W. Ross Elementary School

2017-2018 Policies & Procedures

Holly M. Searl, Principal

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John W. Ross Elementary School

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Holly M. Searl, Principal

SCHOOL HOURS

School hours are from 8:45 AM to 3:30 for K-5 students

PK3 and PK4 dismiss at 3:15

This handbook is to be used as a reference regarding policies and procedures at John W. Ross Elementary School. Our goal is to create a safe and joyful school experience for your family. Many of the school's policies and procedures are informed by DCPS and DC Municipal Regulations and codes. We have attempted to provide as much pertinent and useful information as possible; however, this school-wide handbook is not all-inclusive. Amendments may be necessary throughout the year and every effort will be made to maintain up to date communication on changes in policies and procedures. Should you have questions or concerns, please bring them to the attention of the administrative team at Ross for clarification.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

As is true of all District of Columbia Public Schools, John W. Ross Elementary does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, physical handicap, matriculation, or political affiliation in its programs and activities. Full text of the policy can be found on the DCPS website at www.dcps.dc.gov.

Welcome

Dear Ross Elementary Family:

Welcome back to school! We are looking forward to another year of learning with our wonderful community. We hope you find this Ross School Handbook helpful in navigating policies and procedures for both Ross and DCPS. Consider setting aside some family time to fully read and discuss the policies and procedures outlined in this document.

If you have questions about policies in the handbook, please speak with your child's teacher or Principal Searl. Effective communication is the key to maintaining our peaceful, productive school community. **When you have a concern, please direct it to the person involved in a calm and respectful manner by emailing/calling and requesting a meeting time. Please do not attempt to bring up issues of concern without scheduling an appointment first. Teachers are not able to give you their full attention as they are picking up children on the playground or preparing for their lessons before school. If you are not able to reach a satisfactory solution, please contact Principal Searl for assistance. We strive to be solution-oriented at Ross.**

You will receive communications in a variety of ways this year related to school events and the school calendar. The Principal's Bulletin goes out weekly via email. Teachers will provide regular weekly updates regarding instructional objectives and classroom events via email. Homeroom Representatives (Room Parents) are also liaisons to the PTA and School regarding communications.. The Ross PTA maintains the website (www.rosselementary.org) and Facebook page where current news and events are posted. **If you are not receiving the school and teacher emails, please sign up on the Ross website.** The DCPS website www.dcps.dc.gov is also a useful resource. Visit that website to sign up for DCPS communications and text messaging.

We are looking forward to working with all of you this school year and are committed to maintaining our safe, respectful, and joyful school community. With your help and cooperation, there is no doubt that this vision of success will become a reality.

Sincerely,
Holly M. Searl, Principal

Vision

Embraced for who you are and empowered to be more.

Mission

Every child is known. Every teacher is invested. Every family is valued.

DCPS Core Beliefs:

We believe that...

- All children regardless of background or circumstances can achieve at the highest levels
 - Achievement is a function of effort, not innate ability
- We have the power and responsibility to close the achievement gap
 - Our schools must be caring and supportive environments
- It is critical to engage our students' families and communities as valued partners
 - Our decisions at all levels must be guided by robust data

Academics: Curriculum and Instruction

Academic Curriculum

The implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for K-12 Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics ensures that students will be presented with opportunities for instructional rigor and challenge as they engage with more demanding texts, increased amounts of nonfiction reading, and greater depth and conceptual thinking. The Common Core State Standards and supporting documents are available online at www.corestandards.org.

Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts

The K-5 standards define what students should understand and be able to do by the end of each grade within the following domains of Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language. These broad anchor standards are aligned across grade levels and build in complexity from one grade to the next.

ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR READING

Key Ideas and Details:

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas, develop and interact over the course of a text.

Craft and Structure:

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences paragraphs, and larger portions of the text relate to each other and the whole.
 6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
- Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words

8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:

10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR WRITING

Text Types and Purposes

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
2. Write information /explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

Production and Distribution of Writing

4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.
5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.
7. Research to Build and Present Knowledge
8. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
9. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
10. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
11. Range of Writing
12. Write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Comprehension and Collaboration

1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.
Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas.
4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding and presentations.
6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrative command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR LANGUAGE

Conventions of Standard English

1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
3. Knowledge of Language
4. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
5. Vocabulary Acquisition and Use
6. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.
7. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
8. Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering

vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

Common Core State Standards for Mathematics

STANDARDS FOR MATHEMATICAL PRACTICE

The Common Core State Standards for Mathematics are infused with the following Standards for Mathematical Practice that all students should engage in:

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
4. Model with mathematics
5. Use appropriate tools strategically
6. Attend to precision
7. Look for and make use of structure
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

STANDARDS FOR MATHEMATICAL CONTENT

The Common Core State Standard are organized around the following domains K-5.

- Counting and Cardinality
- Operations and Algebraic Thinking
- Number and Operations in Base Ten
- Number and Operations – Fractions
- Measurement and Data
- Geometry

DCPS Science Domains

1. Earth and Space Sciences
2. Physical Sciences
3. Life Sciences

OSSE recently adopted the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Information about the NGSS can be located at: www.nextgenscience.org

DCPS Social Studies Disciplines

1. History
2. Geography
3. Economics
4. Politics and Government

Balanced Literacy

Our literacy work is informed by educational researchers Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell. In Reading, students are explicitly taught the strategies and habits of effective reading. They learn to talk, think, and write well about their reading, and to live literate lives.

For more information about this instructional approach, please log onto:

www.readingandwritingproject.com.

The key components of Balanced Literacy at Ross include:

- Independent Reading in Just Right Books
- Interactive Read Aloud
- Shared Reading
- Small Group Guided Reading
- Responding to Reading
- Phonics and Word Study

READING LEVELS AND JUST RIGHT BOOKS

Students learn to read most effectively when they read a lot of books at their independent reading level. Our teachers use a variety of assessments to understand each child's individual reading level to maximize learning. Students are provided a variety of books and reading materials at their *Just Right* level. For more information about reading levels and *Just Right* books, please see your child's teacher and the Ross Library website.

Textbooks

Textbooks and most related consumable workbooks are provided for students free of charge either through DCPS or the Ross PTA. Students are responsible for the proper care and handling of textbooks issued to them. If textbooks are lost, stolen, or damaged beyond reasonable use, parents/guardians may be charged for replacement.

The Nelick School Library

We are indebted to our generous community for creating and funding a high quality, diverse collection of children's literature and nonfiction books for our school library. Library books are available for all Ross students and high circulation is encouraged. Every grade level has a regularly scheduled library class each week and the library is also open at 8:15am before school and at 3:30pm after school for book check out. Lost or damaged books must be returned, replaced, or paid for before the school year ends.

All families may access a variety of the following online resources using their child's log in information.

Homework Policy

Students in Grades 2-5 will receive homework on a regular basis. Students in PK3 through First Grade are expected to read with their families at home on a regular basis and learn through experiences and play such as board games, counting tasks, household chores,

and family outings. K-5 students will receive log in information for blended learning accounts that may be accessed at home. Homework provides children with opportunities for additional practice and reinforcement of skills previously introduced in school.

Sometimes, homework will require children to work independently (a math worksheet or independent reading) and sometimes it will provide an opportunity for children to collaborate with family and friends (playing a math game, interviewing a relative.) Either way, the assignment/activity should be a review of previously taught material. Your responsibilities as a parent/guardian include providing your child with a quiet work space and appropriate materials, encouraging/monitoring for completion, and creating a system of organization so that the homework gets back to school the next day. If your child is unable to complete homework independently in a reasonable amount of time, or if managing homework is creating undue stress on your family, please notify the classroom teacher, school psychologist, or principal for support.

Assessment and Report Cards

Curriculum, assessment, and instruction are inextricably linked. Instruction must be based on frequent, formative assessment. At Ross, teachers assess students in a variety of ways in order to inform instructional planning and ongoing flexible groupings. A variety of staff members in addition to your child's classroom teacher are involved in assessing students. Assessments are varied and may include observations, demonstrations, exit cards, running records, writing samples, quizzes and tests. In addition, DCPS requires schools to administer additional instruments such as the PK3 and PK4 GOLD assessment system, a variety of K-5 reading assessments, and paced, interim assessments (ANET) for Grades 2-5 in Reading/Language Arts and i-Ready testing in Mathematics. In the spring, students in the 3rd -5th grades will take the PARCC, a standardized, online test required by federal law. DCPS has three parent-teacher conference days scheduled throughout the year and report cards will be issued and distributed quarterly for all K-5 students. If your child is not making satisfactory progress in a subject area, you will be notified in writing prior to the issuance of report cards.

Responsive Classroom

Our faculty and staff actively practice the Responsive Classroom philosophy. This approach to classroom life and learning emphasizes an environment that builds social and academic skills. The physical space in classrooms, morning meetings, closing meetings and class and school rules are organized to facilitate opportunities for positive interactions.

Seven Principles of the Responsive Classroom:

1. The social curriculum is just as important as the academic curriculum.
2. How children learn is just as important as what they learn.
3. The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
4. There is a set of social skills that kids need to be successful (cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, self-control).

5. Work in the classroom should be rooted in the science of child development.
6. Parents are partners in the education of their children.
7. How adults interact and model is extremely important for lasting change.

Components of the Responsive Classroom Model:

- **Classroom Organization** that provides for active interest areas for students, space for student-created work, and an appropriate mix of whole class, group, and individual instruction.
- **A Morning Meeting** that provides children the daily opportunity to practice greeting, conversation, and sharing.
- **Rules and Logical Consequences** that are generated, modeled, and role-played with the children and that become a cornerstone of classroom life.
- **Choice Time** for all children each day that provides them with the necessity of taking control of their own learning in some meaningful way.
- **Guided Discovery** of learning materials, areas of the room, curriculum content, and ways of behaving—which moves children through the deliberate and careful introduction of each new experience. There is no assumption that children know how to do something before they begin.
- **Assessment and Reporting to Parents** that is an evolving process of mutual communication and understanding.

The First Six Weeks of School

The first six weeks of school are an essential time to build classroom and school communities. Routines and expectations are set and emphasis is put on how the class will work together as a community. During this period, parents and visitors are discouraged from visiting classrooms as their presence can hinder this group development. After this initial period, visitors are welcome to come into classrooms. In fact, parents are encouraged to participate in a Morning Meeting during the school year. For more information about Responsive Classroom, visit: www.responsiveclassroom.org.

Admissions Requirements

K-5 students who reside within the Ross boundary have the right to attend the school. Other children residing in the District of Columbia may apply through the out-of-boundary lottery process, which is conducted online through a common lottery at www.myschooldc.org. All PK3 and PK4 students must secure a placement through the common lottery. This is required for both in and out-of- boundary students.

All enrolling families must produce a variety of documentation to verify birthdates,

immunizations, and DC residency in order to fully register. All information is available on the DCPS website at www.dcps.dc.gov and www.myschooldc.org. Children must turn three by September 30th to be eligible for PK3, turn four by September 30th for PK4 and turn five by September 30th to be eligible for Kindergarten.

A DCPS “Annual Student Enrollment Form” must be on file for all enrolled students. It is crucial that all contact information is current. If a change is made, please notify the main office immediately and update your contact information.

After School Programming

Ross partners with the local EDCJCC to provide students with after school programming and enrichment.

Contact Stacey Herman:
(202) 777-3276
StaceyH@edcjjcc.org

Contact Justin Love:
(202) 777-3245
JustinL@edcjjcc.org

Attendance and Tardiness

Regular attendance is critical to a child’s academic and social/emotional success at school. We expect all Ross students to attend school every day, on time. Students are expected to be present on all school days, except in the case of illness, death in the immediate family, court appearance, in-home quarantine, observance of religious holy days, or lawful suspension or exclusion from school. Children who miss school due to excused or unexcused absences are required to make up any missed class work and homework assignments. The Ross Attendance Intervention Team is led by Principal Searl and Ms. Williams and reviews all attendance/tardiness data on a weekly basis.

Excused Absences

An absence is considered excused when a student was absent with parent/guardian permission due to:

- Illness or medical appointment
- death in the immediate family
- court ordered appearance
- in-home quarantine
- observance of religious holy days
- lawful suspension or exclusion from school

Unexcused Absences

An absence is considered unexcused when the student has no valid reason (see above) for being absent from school and/or has not presented documentation from the parent or medical provider within one week of the absence. Absences can be documented on a form available on the Ross website. Click on the “Ross Life” tab and click on forms. Kindly note that DCPS does not consider family vacations and travel to be excused

absences.

Frequent unexcused absences or tardiness indicate a failure to comply with DC compulsory school attendance laws and will be reported to the DCPS Attendance Office and Child and Family Services, as required by DCMR Chapter 21. Families will be notified of attendance/tardy records via US Mail and may be invited to attend an Attendance Intervention Meeting. In accordance with the DCPS attendance policy, Out of Boundary students (OOB) with ten or more unexcused absences or twenty or more unexcused tardy arrivals will be asked to return to their home schools at the end of the school year.

Tardiness

- All students who enter the building after 8:45 AM are tardy and must sign in at the security desk or main office. We understand that some late arrivals are excused (medical appointments) and some are not but all tardy arrivals will be documented. In order to have a medical appointment excused, you must present a note from the doctor/dentist, etc.
- Students will receive a Tardy Slip that they will give to their teacher as they enter the class so the tardy is noted on the Attendance Sheet. Children who arrive late and go to class without a Tardy Slip will be sent back to the main office/security desk.
- Children who eat breakfast at school should arrive by 8:15 AM so they will be in line outside by 8:40 AM. If they arrive to their classrooms after 8:45 AM, they will be counted as tardy.

Arrival & Dismissal

ARRIVAL

We do not offer childcare before school. Playground supervision begins at 8:15 when breakfast opens. If children arrive early, parents/guardians are responsible for supervising them. Teachers have contractually protected collaborative planning time from 8:00-8:40. Students and parents should not be entering the classrooms or coat closets prior to 8:40 without a pre-arranged appointment with a teacher. Please sign in at the security desk and check in with the main office before school when requiring assistance or when you have an appointment. In inclement weather, the building will open at 8:15 for indoor line-up.

K-1 students line up in the lower level, PK3/PK4 students gather on the main floor outside their classrooms, and Grades 2-5 wait quietly on the second floor.

Breakfast: FREE breakfast is available to ALL Ross students every morning. Breakfast begins at 8:15 and ends at 8:40. Parents and caregivers are welcome to attend breakfast. Children should proceed directly to breakfast without stopping at classrooms to put backpacks and jackets away. If children finish breakfast between 8:30 and 8:40, they will join their classmates back outside and enter school at 8:40 with their respective grade level lines. Children should not be sent into the classroom at 8:40 with breakfast brought in from outside school. This includes donuts, muffins, hot chocolate, etc. If you are buying

breakfast on the way to school, please plan to arrive early enough for your child to finish eating by 8:40.

Strollers, Scooters, and Bikes: Students must get out of strollers and off of scooters and bikes at the school gate and walk them onto the property. This promotes safety and independence. Bikes should be secured on bike racks on R Street or on the bike rack inside the gates. Strollers and scooters may be stored outside at the bike rack near the basketball court.

Morning Line-Up and Entry: The entry bell rings at 8:40, which signals K-5 students to move into their respective grade level lines on the field. Teachers will pick students up at 8:40 in order to start the instructional day with the Morning Meeting by 8:45. Students are expected to enter the school with grade level lines and carry their own backpacks and lunches into school. Parents and caregivers should not be following the lines into the coat closets or classrooms. Please say good-bye to your child on the playground and let your child leave you. It is more empowering to your child and creates less of a disruption for other children and teachers. All PK3 and PK4 children should be checked into their respective classrooms between 8:30-8:45 am.

Late Arrivals: We expect all students to arrive at school on time. It is disruptive to teachers and other students to have students enter the classroom during or after Morning Meeting. Give your child the gift of a smooth transition to the classroom and help develop the important life skill of arriving for work and appointments on time. If your child arrives after 8:45, you and your child must check into the main office and receive a tardy pass. Your child should then proceed to the classroom quickly. It is expected that all students can take care of their backpacks, lunches, jackets, and homework folders without parental involvement at the beginning of the school day. Please note that out of boundary students who accumulate twenty unexcused tardies will lose their right to return to Ross and will need to enroll back in their home school for the following school year.

DISMISSAL

We have a rolling dismissal for safety and efficiency. All PK3 and PK4 students may be checked out of their classrooms beginning at 3:15. All students going to the EDCJCC for after school programming will be dismissed at 3:20. Please do not take your child before he/she checks out and says good-bye to the teacher. Students not picked up by 3:35 will be brought into the main office to call their parents.

We will not release students to persons unknown to us. We will ask for ID and may call you for verification if a new person is collecting your child. If there is a change in after school arrangements or pick up plans, please complete the online form by 11:00am of the same day or in advance. If you allow your child to walk home unaccompanied by an adult, please send a note into school. Please keep all emergency contact information current. There should be no balls or play on the turf field until Ross staff members have

completed dismissal. Once students have been dismissed after school, they should not be re-entering the building.

Early Pick-Up: If you need to pick your child up early, you must sign out at the security desk and inform the main office. Parents who are consistently taking children out of school before dismissal will be scheduled to meet with the Attendance Intervention Team. Please also complete the early dismissal form online.

Awards and Recognition

Every classroom will schedule “Learning Celebrations” throughout the school year for students to share new learning and skills with the Ross community. In keeping with the implementation of Responsive Classroom, we do not offer individual, extrinsic awards (certificates, medals, stickers, trophies, candy, etc.) and focus on more intrinsic “recognition without rewards” to promote effort and a growth mindset. We will, however, participate in special competitions such as the Science Fair, Geo-Plunge, Math Bowl, Chess Tournaments and Spelling bees.

Birthday Celebrations

At Ross, *birthday celebrations will be held once on the last Friday of the month to recognize all children with a birthday that month.* We request that celebrations be kept “low-key” in nature including a simple, preferably healthy treat. The celebration can be coordinated by the Room Parent for each class.

We do not permit entertainment, decorations, soda, candy, nuts, chewing gum, pizza parties, or cakes/candles, etc. We are a nut free school. Celebrations of this nature need to occur outside of school and unless the entire class/grade is invited, please refrain from distributing invitations at school or talking about parties at school. We are a small community that strives for inclusiveness. Excluding children leads to hurt feelings and unnecessary drama in the classroom. We recommend that you ask your child’s teacher about any food allergies in the classroom when scheduling the celebration.

Closings

At the Chancellor’s discretion, schools may be closed or delayed in opening due to weather or emergency conditions such as snow, rain, and excessive heat. Parents can stay informed about such situations via television news stations, radio, social media and www.dcps.dc.gov. Information may be available on local radio and television stations.

Radio Stations: WAMU (88.5 FM), WHUR (96.3 FM), WMAL (630 AM), WTOP (1500 AM, 107.7 FM), WETA Radio (90.9)

Television Channels: 4, 5, 7, 8, and 9 as well as DCPS’ Cable Channel 99

Please DO NOT call the school office to make inquiries about delays and closings. The Ross faculty and staff receive the school closing and delay information the same way DCPS families receive it: through television, radio, or social media.

Emergency Preparedness

Throughout the year we conduct several fire drills and emergency evacuation drills. We conduct these drills to prepare our students, faculty, and staff in the event of a real emergency situation. Therefore, you should be aware that your child may discuss the occurrence of these drills with you.

In the case of an emergency evacuation, all Ross students and staff will proceed to the Jewish Community Center (16th & Q Streets, NW). If an emergency is declared “shelter-in-place,” children will remain in the school building under the supervision of faculty and staff. Practice Fire Drills and other emergency drills are held once a month as required by DCPS. All students, staff, and visitors must follow directions and actively participate in all drills to ensure safety.

Discipline

EXPECTATIONS

FOR ROSS ELEMENARTY STUDENTS & PARENTS Student Responsibilities/School Wide Rules

Ross Elementary School operates under all discipline guidelines governing the District of Columbia Public Schools and maintains a zero tolerance policy for fighting and bullying. We expect all parents to support the school policies and to encourage their children to abide by the rules at Ross Elementary School.

Ross follows the DCPS Tiered Progressive Discipline Plan and the suggested progressive disciplinary response will be applied when a demonstrates disregard for the school rules. The Tiers and resulting consequences are established by **Chapter 25 of the DC Municipal Regulations** and the DCPS Philosophy and Approach to Student Behavior and Discipline for a Safe and Effective Learning Environment. Our implementation of the Responsive Classroom approach aligns with the “Safe and Effective Learning Environment” components. You can find Chapter 25 DCMR on the Ross website and hard copies are available in the main office upon request.

Philosophy and Approach to Student Behavior and Discipline in DCPS

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>A) Intentional School Culture</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every school and classroom cultivates a welcoming, positive, safe orderly and healthy environment that is student-centered, developmentally appropriate and supports teaching and learning. • All people in schools actively build positive community, fostering academic, behavioral, and social-emotional growth. • School-wide procedures and classroom instruction are structured to support positive student behavior. |
| <p>B) Comprehensive Student Support</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students and their families are connected to support services necessary to engage students in school. • All school staff works collaboratively to provide comprehensive support for students’ academic and social-emotional needs. • Staff provides targeted support to students who have difficulty meeting behavior expectations, especially students returning from suspension. |
| <p>C) Instructional Approach to Behavior & Discipline</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School staff communicates and models clear, high expectations for appropriate behavior for every person in the community. • School staff provides explicit and intentional instruction, structures and support to help students learn how to meet these expectations, including social and emotional skills to empower them to make good choices about their behavior. • School staff works with students to correct misbehavior and prevent occurrences by re-teaching behavior expectations. |
| <p>D) Consistent, Progressive Discipline Responses</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention and remediation strategies are used along with disciplinary responses. • Student discipline data is systematically analyzed to inform policies and practices. • Discipline policies are developmentally-appropriate, equitable, and consistently enforced school-wide. |

Student Behavior Tracker (SBT)

In accordance with DCPS policy, all discipline code violations are entered into the Student Behavior Tracker (SBT). This tracker is a centrally-maintained database that will allow individual schools to fully implement and comply with the DC Municipal Regulation (DCMR) Chapter 25, the Student Discipline Code. SBT will allow the Ross Administrative Team to properly record, track and respond to specific behavior incidents beginning on the first day of the school year. It will streamline the process for implementing Chapter 25, provide for alignment between behaviors and consequences, and create a complete disciplinary file for Ross students.

Dress Code/Uniforms & Free Dress Day Calendar

ALL students are expected be in a neat and clean uniform Monday through Friday. Students will have “free dress” on early dismissal days and on additional days as designated by the Ross Administration Team. The free dress day schedule for the school year is sent home at the beginning of the year and posted on the website.

Uniforms: The official uniform for Ross Elementary School consists of the following, worn in any combination:

Tops: **Ross t-shirt** or solid white, navy blue, or light blue; blouses or polo-style shirts only; ***no t- shirts or sleeveless shirts except for the Ross t-shirt.***

Bottoms: solid navy blue or khaki; shorts, pants, skirts, or skorts only; ***no jeans or athletic pants***

Dresses: solid navy blue or khaki; polo-style dresses or jumpers (with a uniform top worn underneath) only

Extra layer to be worn in the classroom for warmth: **Ross sweatshirt** or solid navy blue, light blue or white only (no designs); button or zipper cardigan sweaters or pullover sweaters/sweater vests only; no hoodies except for the Ross sportswear.

Socks, tights, and leggings: solid navy blue, khaki, or white (no designs)

Shoes: closed-toe and appropriate for PE and playground activity (i.e., safe and comfortable) only; no sandals, flip-flops, croc-type shoes, or high heels. If your child wears snow or rain boots to school, please send a pair of shoes to wear inside during the day.

Outerwear: any type of outerwear may be worn to/from school and on the playground, but jackets, coats and hats are not part of the uniform and may not be

worn in the classroom.

“Free dress”: Uniforms are not required on free dress days. However, shoes must be closed-toe and appropriate for PE and playground activity (i.e., safe and comfortable); no sandals, flip-flops, croc-type shoes, or high heels. ***Students may not wear costumes on free dress days.*** Extremes in style and fit and extremes in style of grooming, as determined by the Principal, will not be permitted, including, but not limited to, bandanas, hats, non-prescriptive glasses/sunglasses, clothing that exposes armpits, bare backs or midriffs, and see-through clothing. This applies to uniforms and to clothing worn on free dress days.

Failure to comply with this Policy: If a student reports to school out of uniform or otherwise not in compliance with this policy, parents/guardians will be contacted and asked to bring compliant clothing. If parents/guardians are unreachable or unable to come to school, the student will be issued a compliant uniform, which should be returned. Failure to report to school in compliance with this policy is addressed in the tiered progressive discipline code at Ross.

If you need assistance obtaining uniforms, please speak with Principal Searl or the school psychologists.

Safety and Security

All District of Columbia Public Schools are designated as closed campuses. As such, all visitors to the school must report to the security guard and sign in and out using the Visitor’s Log. Children are not allowed to leave the school unless accompanied by an identified parent or guardian. Students may not be signed out to minors. Every student leaving school early must be signed out at the security desk in the Early Dismissal Log. There is no supervision on the playground before school. As such, students should not be left unattended prior to the start of school. ***After school, children must be directly and actively supervised by a parent/guardian/care-giver to play on the playground. All Ross rules and expectations remain in place after hours on the property. Students who are not playing safely and following Ross rules will lose the privilege of playing before/after school.***

Field Trips

Field trips are planned by teachers to provide students with authentic experiences in support of the DCPS instructional standards being taught in the classroom. When necessary, a fee may be charged to cover the cost of transportation services or admission to an event. The PTA raises funds to offset the cost of trips. If field trip expenses create a hardship for your family, please see Principal Searl for confidential support. We want all students to attend field trips and do not want lack of finances to prevent student participation. All participating students will receive a field trip permission slip describing the DCPS instructional standards, destination, and date of the trip. This form must be signed by a parent-guardian and returned to school (with payment, if required) in order

for the child to participate in the trip. **Verbal consent from the parent-guardian will NOT BE ACCEPTED in lieu of a signed parent consent form.** Students who exhibit behaviors not in accordance with DCPS and Ross school rules may lose the privilege of attending field trips. We need to ensure the safety of all students when leaving campus for a field trip and if students are exhibiting unsafe behaviors at school, they may not be able to operate safely during an off-campus trip. When possible, we will encourage a parent/guardian to attend with the child to provide an extra measure of safety and support. Kindly note that parents who are chaperoning field trips may not bring younger siblings or other children on the trip. Chaperones are directly responsible for the group of Ross children they are supervising on the trip.

Fillmore Art Center

All K-5 Ross students attend Fillmore Arts Center once a week for instruction in the visual and performing arts. PK3 and PK4 students receive instruction from Fillmore teachers at Ross. Fillmore Arts Center offers instruction in dance and movement, drama and theater, music, and the visual arts. Students are offered a variety of classes that usually change at the semester, depending on the student's grade level. Questions or concerns regarding the Fillmore Art Center program should be directed to the Director of Fillmore, Maggie Meenehan.

Email: Margaret.meenehan@dc.gov Phone: 202.442.9439 Fillmore is located at 1819 35th Street NW (adjacent to Hardy Middle School). For more information about Fillmore Arts Center, log onto: www.fillmoreartscenter.org.

Food Services

The contact number for DCPS Office of Food and Nutrition Services is 202.719.6599. Ross Elementary offers a breakfast and lunch program. Breakfast for all Ross students is FREE and is served from 8:15-8:40 each morning in our cafeteria. Lunches may be purchased on a daily basis by enrolling in www.mySchoolBucks.com or calling (1-800- 479-3531). Forms to apply for free and reduced meals (FARMS) are available in the main office and on the DCPS website. The cafeteria staff may not handle cash so you must enroll in myschoolbucks.com to purchase meals. The cafeteria provides families with a monthly online menu from our assigned food services provider, Sodexo Magic. Students may also bring meals from home but please note that we do not allow any foods with nuts, gum or candy at school nor do we permit students to heat lunch items up in a microwave. If your class has a food restriction (such as nuts) due to allergies, you will be notified in writing and asked to return a signed form. Parents may not bring food into the cafeteria for birthdays or other celebrations. Due to the small size of our cafeteria, some grade levels eat lunch in the classrooms. The contact number for DCPS Office of Food and Nutrition Services is 202.719.6599.

Health and Medical

Health Room (202) 671-0405

Immunization

All children attending DC Public Schools are to be fully immunized in accordance with District of Columbia law. Parents and legal guardians are responsible for ensuring that children receive all required doses, including booster shots, at the appropriate age. Please consult with your child's doctor each year to make sure your child's immunizations are up-to-date. If your child is absent due to a communicable disease, you must inform the Principal and the school nurse and submit a doctor's note to the nurse upon returning to school.

Required Medical Forms

Each child entering DCPS is required to have a current dental and physical examination report on file, in addition to a current immunization record. Health concerns, including but not limited to allergies, epilepsy, asthma, heart problems, juvenile diabetes, hearing loss, etc., must be brought to the attention of Principal Searl and the Ross Nurse.

Medical Emergencies

A parent/guardian or emergency contact person will be notified should your child become ill during the school day. Sick children must be picked up from Ross by an adult who is listed on enrollment documents as having permission to pick up. Children must be signed out in the main office in order to be dismissed early. Please make every effort to make arrangements for your child to be picked up if you are notified that he or she is ill. If your child needs emergency medical treatment as a result of an illness or injury at school, the school will immediately call 911 for emergency assistance and then contact the parent. The child will be taken by ambulance to the nearest hospital and a staff member will remain with the child until the parent arrives. **It is extremely important that the school have current home, work or cell phone numbers as well as an identified emergency contact person for your child in the event of an emergency.**

Please remember to update these phone numbers as necessary.

Medication at School

Students are not permitted to have any prescription or non-prescription drugs at school, including in their backpacks, handbags, or lunch boxes. This includes, but is not limited to, cough drops, pain relievers such as Advil or Tylenol, supplements and over-the-counter allergy medications. Medications with instructions from a child's medical doctor can be kept in the nurse's office. Please speak with the nurses if your child needs medication at school as we must have required forms/documents on file.

Internet Safety

The District of Columbia Public Schools has a policy of Internet Safety to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Selected grade levels will complete a Digital Citizenship course during their Ross library time. The three key principles that underpin

the use of the Internet in education are:

1. **Acceptable Use:** all use of the network must be in connection with education and research that is consistent with the educational goals and policies of DCPS.
2. **Privileges:** The use of the Internet is a privilege. Inappropriate use will result in the cancellation of that privilege for an appropriate time commensurate with the misuse.
3. **Netiquette:** Users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. Be polite. Use of vulgar or obscene language is an absolute violation of this contract. Users are not to reveal their address or phone number to others.

LOST AND FOUND

All students' articles should be clearly labeled with their name. Any articles found in and around the school will be placed in the lost and found which is through the doors near the security desk. At the end of each quarter, any unclaimed articles will be donated to a social services agency.

Parent/Family Involvement

We encourage and welcome the ongoing involvement of our Ross families in school activities. All parents and visitors must sign in at the security desk when entering the school. We request that parents respect the work of teachers and not interrupt the school day by entering the classrooms without advance appointments/invitations. We will welcome classroom visits/observations after the first 4-6 weeks of the school year. At that time, we welcome parents to attend Morning Meeting in the classroom at least once an advisory. Other classroom visits/observations should be scheduled through the Principal in collaboration with the classroom teacher. We hope that all parents will attend conferences with teachers, join the Ross PTA, and attend regularly scheduled PTA meetings, open houses, parent education meetings and fundraising events. Parent volunteer opportunities are coordinated through the Room Parents and the PTA with the guidance and approval of Principal Searl. In addition to serving our school through membership in the PTA, parents may also be elected to serve on the Local School Advisory Team (LSAT) an advisory group to the Principal. Parents can stay informed about school events and opportunities to volunteer through a variety of sources: Principal's Weekly Bulletin, bulletin board postings outside of each entry door, the Ross Elementary website www.rosselementary.org, and the John W. Ross Elementary Facebook page. Additional information can also be found at www.dcps.dc.gov

VOLUNTEERS

Ross Elementary welcomes volunteers. Volunteers can contribute to Ross in a variety of ways including: assisting in the library, sharing your family's culture, reading, chaperoning, photocopying, organizing clean-up days, donating food for special events, translating, etc.

In order to volunteer in our schools on a regular basis, individuals need to follow the ***DCPS volunteer application process:***

1. Complete the volunteer application (available on the DCPS website).
2. Complete a tuberculosis test.
3. Bring the completed application, TB test result, and photo ID to the district office to be fingerprinted. Please note that volunteers for Beautification Day or other weekend or one-day service events do not need to complete the process.

Phone: (202) 442-5447

Email: dcpsvolunteers@dc.gov

Communication with Teachers and Classroom Visits

If you would like to have a conference with your child's teacher in order to discuss issues or concerns, please make an appointment in advance. We request that you call/email the school to schedule conferences so that we can give you the undivided time and attention that your questions or concerns warrant.

We urge you to keep in contact with your child's teachers, review all schoolwork and information that your child brings home, and call/email the teacher if any questions or concerns arise. Teachers will strive to return phone calls/emails within 24 hours. In order to encourage and maintain a productive dialogue, please seek clarification directly from the source of your concern, and approach the conversation with an open-mind, assuming positive intent. For example, if you have a concern about math, make an appointment to speak directly to your child's math teacher. If you are not able to resolve your concern directly, please speak to Principal Searl. If something is bothering you, please seek clarification from the source instead of letting the concern grow. We all need to take responsibility for creating a positive culture of trust and open communication. All classroom visits and observations need to be scheduled in advance through Principal Searl.

If you need to speak with your child during the school day, please report to the main office and the office staff will assist you. Children not enrolled at Ross are not permitted to visit during the school day and are not permitted to be in the building before or after school hours without the direct supervision of a parent. If you plan to pick up your child before dismissal time, you must report to the main office and sign him or her out. The office staff will notify your child's teacher and your child will meet you in the main office. Do not report directly to your child's classroom to pick him/her up.

PTA

The Ross Elementary PTA serves as an advocacy/support group for the school. The PTA is governed by a set of by-laws, which includes an elected Executive Board. The PTA supports DCPS and local school initiatives that benefit all Ross students and staff.

Annual events include the Tree Sale and the Auction. The PTA holds regularly scheduled general body meetings throughout the year and relies on the support of Ross families (financially and through volunteer hours) to carry out their mission. PTA by-laws and meeting notes are available on the Ross website.

Ross PTA Executive Board

President: Nora Rigby
Vice President: Kari Cunningham
Secretary: Kate Gardner
Treasurer: Matt Adinolfi
Lower School At-Large Representative: Shanti Sale
Upper School At-Large Representative: Debra Olson
Principal: Holly Searl (non-voting member)

Local School Advisory Team

will be posted on the school website within 20 days from the meeting date.

A Local School Advisory Team (LSAT) is a group of elected and appointed members whose purpose is to advise the principal on matters that promote high expectations and high achievement for all students. The team meets a minimum of four times per year and minutes **Ross LSAT Parent Members**

Shailee Adinolfi
Eugenia Agia
Alison Brody
Allison Rabin
Nora Rigby, PTA President
Holly Searl, Principal
Community Member: TBD
Ross Faculty Reps: TBD

Student Support Team

Students sometimes experience challenges and need additional support beyond what the classroom teacher can provide. These challenges may be academic, social, and/or emotional. Ross Elementary School employs a team of student support specialists to meet the diverse academic and social/emotional needs of students. Team members may include the psychologist, special education teacher, speech-language pathologist, ESL teacher, school nurse, classroom teacher and other staff as necessary and appropriate. Members of the team will work directly with students, collaborate with classroom teachers, and serve as resources/supports to families. Team members are also able to connect families to outside agencies for additional supports.

The Student Support Team meets regularly to analyze a variety of metrics (academic achievement, attendance, behavior, etc.) and will schedule meetings with families as necessary.

Special Education Referrals

The goal of special education is to enable students to work successfully in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) as defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). All students must first go through the Student Support Team process before a referral for assessment by the special education team. When the Student Support

Team makes a referral, the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) convenes and formally evaluates the student to determine eligibility for special education services. The Multi-Disciplinary Team includes the special educator, general educator, administrator, and service providers such as speech language pathologists, and school psychologists.

The special education assessment may include the following evaluations:

- Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Family Psycho-Educational
- Speech and Language
- Occupational History

As well, student work samples are evaluated as part of the assessment process. Recommended assessments are administered by the appropriate professionals and their reports are written and presented at the Multi-Disciplinary Team Meeting. These professionals, the special education teacher, the parents, Principal, and classroom teacher meet together to determine if the child meets eligibility criteria for special education services. If it is the consensus of the team that the child is eligible then an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is written specifying the nature of the needs, goals to be achieved, and the services that will be delivered to support the child. It is the responsibility of the Multi-Disciplinary Team to ensure that these services are provided to the child. For more information about special education, please speak to Principal Searl or our Special Education Teacher, Ms. Katie Peters.

Toys, Electronics, and Cell Phones

Toys, electronics (game devices, MP3 players, cameras, etc.) and cell phones are not permitted to be used at school during the instructional day, during the morning line up, during afternoon dismissal, and during the afterschool program time. Riding the bus back and forth to Fillmore is part of the instructional day at Ross ES. These items are unnecessary for the smooth functioning of the instructional program at Ross ES and they have the potential to invite disruption and loss due to their appeal and value.

Principal Searl reserves the right to allow selected grade levels to earn the privilege of using specific toys during recess. This privilege will be communicated directly to students through the grade level teachers.

Toys and Electronics

If toys and electronics are brought to school, they will be held by Principal Searl or her designee until a parent makes arrangements to collect the items personally.

Cell Phones

Cell phones need to be turned off upon arrival and kept in backpacks during the school day. Ross staff cannot be responsible for lost or stolen electronics such as cell phones, iPods, e-readers, etc. and we recommend that expensive electronics not be brought to school.

Transportation and Safety

We are continually exploring ways to improve and promote student safety during arrival and dismissal times at Ross.

Please note the following expectations:

- students who arrive by car on R Street should exit the car from the passenger side in the drop-off zone (driveway in front of the school gates)
- parents who wish to park and enter the schoolyard need to find a legal parking spot; do not double park on R Street and do not park in the drop-off zone
- **students arriving by bike, scooter, or stroller must dismount at the school gate and walk into the school yard.** Bikes and scooters are not to be ridden inside the school yard at arrival, dismissal, or during after school hours. All bikes need to be locked on the bike racks on R Street or on the racks on the Ross playground. Scooters and strollers can be stored near the bike racks as well.