



**Meeting Street**  
**The Grace School**

**FAMILY/STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
**2019 – 2020**



## Contents

Our Mission .....	5
Our Philosophy .....	5
Administrative Team .....	6
Behavior Expectations .....	6
Arrival / Departure .....	8
Transportation .....	9
Statewide Transportation Inclement Weather/Emergency Closing/Delay Policy for Students with Disabilities .....	10
Transportation Exceptions .....	11
Inclement Weather Closing / Disruption of Utilities Closing .....	11
Student Absence and Illness .....	11
Contagious Disease Policy .....	11
Medical Episodes .....	12
Medications .....	12
Standing Orders .....	13
Medical Records .....	13
Treatments Requiring Skilled Nursing .....	13
Nursing Care on Community/ Field Trips .....	13
Medical Appointments .....	13
Emergencies .....	13
Medical Consultation and Grand Rounds .....	14
Health-Related Screens .....	14
Emergency Drills .....	14
Family Vacation .....	14
Release of Information .....	14
Parent Communication .....	16
One-on-One Teacher Assistant (TA) Rotation .....	17
Special Education IEPs, Team Composition and Process, Progress Reporting .....	17
Parent Involvement .....	17
Parent /Teacher Conferences .....	17
Visiting the Classroom .....	18
Phone Calls to Classrooms during the School Day .....	18
School Pictures .....	18
Uniforms .....	19
Clothing and Supplies .....	19
Weather Guidelines for Recess, Outdoor Activities and Field Trips .....	20
Field Trips .....	20
Classroom Schedule .....	20
Homework .....	20
Assessments .....	22
Swimming .....	22
Afterschool Opportunities .....	22
What Students May Bring to School .....	22
Lost and Found .....	22
Breakfast and Lunches .....	23
Lunch .....	23
Unpaid Meal Charge .....	23
Microwave Use .....	26

Food and Allergies ..... 26  
Birthdays and Other Celebrations ..... 26  
Graduation..... 26  
Retention and Final Disposition of Student Records ..... 27  
Dismissal from School..... 27  
Tuition Payment Policy..... 27  
Child Abuse Law ..... 28  
Bullying Policy ..... 28  
Teen Dating Violence Prevention Policy..... 28  
Internet Acceptable Use Policy..... 28

## **Our Mission**

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

## **Our Philosophy**

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

- Respect – We treat ourselves and each other with respect and treat each other like we ourselves would like to be treated.
- Integrity – We are honest and keep our promises.
- Compassion – We treat each other with dignity, understanding, and compassion.
- Inclusivity – We acknowledge and embrace differences and incorporate these differences to form one community.
- Excellence – We strive for excellence in everything we do.

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

Specifically, our approach is grounded in the following tenets:

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

## Administrative Team

Head of School	Margaret Knowlton	<a href="mailto:mknowlton@meetingstreet.org">mknowlton@meetingstreet.org</a>	401-533-9240
Co-Director of Special Education	John Kershaw	<a href="mailto:jkershaw@meetingstreet.org">jkershaw@meetingstreet.org</a>	508-742-6483
Assistant Head of School	Heather Boccanfuso	<a href="mailto:hboccanfuso@meetingstreet.org">hboccanfuso@meetingstreet.org</a>	401-533-9146
Special Education Coordinator	Michelle Godfrey	<a href="mailto:mgodfrey@meetingstreet.org">mgodfrey@meetingstreet.org</a>	401-533-9142
Administrative Assistant	Kathy Hopper	<a href="mailto:khopper@meetingstreet.org">khopper@meetingstreet.org</a>	401-533-9247
Curriculum Director	Susan Vander Does	<a href="mailto:svanderdoes@meetingstreet.org">svanderdoes@meetingstreet.org</a>	401-533-9139

## Behavior Expectations

A proper educational environment must be maintained in order to provide the best educational opportunities for each child.

The following are the general expectations of conduct for all students:

- Students have primary responsibility for their actions.
- Students must observe the rules of the school to ensure their own learning and that of others.
- Students will respect the person and property of others around them.
- Students will follow classroom and school rules.

*Responsive Classroom* is the cornerstone to our behavior management plan. The program provides for continual teaching, modeling, and reinforcing of positive behaviors. Over time the strategies of Responsive Classroom create an environment for social and academic learning, reduced discipline problems, and greater productivity. The program provides a continuum of strategies to encourage positive behaviors and discourage inappropriate behaviors.

*Responsive Classroom* is a research- and evidence-based approach to education that is associated with greater teacher effectiveness, higher student achievement, and improved school climate. It has been recognized by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) as one of the most well-designed, evidence-based social and emotional learning programs. Using the approach, through the use of modeling, our teachers:

- Design **lessons that are active and interactive**
- Use **effective teacher language** to promote academic and social growth
- Encourage engagement by giving students **meaningful choices**
- Start each day in a way that sets a **positive tone for learning**
- Set **high expectations** and teach students how to meet them
- Establish routines that promote **autonomy and independence**
- Build a sense of **community and shared purpose**
- Teach students **21st century skills** such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation.

For a student that commits minor infractions of classroom rules, consequences consistent with Responsive Classroom may be an explicit re-teaching of the rules or a related consequence. For students who have a pattern of difficulty following school rules, a loss of a privilege may also be an appropriate logical consequence. If there are patterns of recurrence, we will schedule a parent meeting. School support staff, such as our school social worker or behavior specialist, will be a part of these meetings to help jointly determine appropriate next steps to create a successful school environment for the student. If

necessary, more formalized monitoring can be arranged in the form of classroom observations, formal behavioral assessments and individual behavior intervention plans can be developed.

Discipline and guidance will be consistent and based on an understanding of the child's needs and development. Staff will promote a safe environment for your child to play and develop, will be consistent and will use positive guidance techniques with all children. Expected behaviors will be taught, encouraged and recognized.

Positive guidance techniques that will be used with the children include:

- Teachers modeling acceptable behavior
- Redirection of children to a more acceptable activity
- Teachers recognizing and rewarding children's efforts
- Structuring the environment and schedules to maximize positive behavior

In rare circumstances, a student may be placed on out- of- school suspension for serious misconduct, which occurs on the school premises, school bus or off site during a school sponsored event.

- Using harmful or negative language including language of a racist and/or sexist nature
- Engaging in a physical fight with any student on the school premises or off site during field trips
- Leaving the school grounds without permission during school hours
- Possessing and/or using any objects that may be construed as weapons
- Misusing the Internet during school hours or after school hours as it relates to the school environment
- Harassing teacher or students
- Defacing school property
- Failure to comply with uniform policy

**The Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies Program (PBIS)** at The Grace School is a school-wide program to promote respect and responsibility for our students. The behavior expectations are modeled and taught to our students in a variety of settings and then they are given many opportunities to practice. Once the expectations have been taught, students are recognized when they meet them by receiving a BARK Paw. Students take the paw and share it with their class and add it to their classroom chart. Each class determines their goal and their reward, and then celebrate their success when they reach their goal. Students are responsible for their behavior and success, and thus share in the choice of reward. The more the students earn by their choices and their positive behavior, the more rewards they can earn.

- Students are rewarded for demonstrating kind, positive, respectful and responsible behavior.
- Reminders and rewards are presented in a positive manner.
- Expectations are consistent, positive and school-wide.
- When needed, students are redirected toward more positive behavior.
- When adults see students meeting expectations, they can give them a paw, along with verbal praise.
- Student(s) share paw with class and put with others.
- Class determines number of paws to earn for a particular reward, which they also determine.
- Once goal is met, paws are discarded and the process begins again.
- Paws are strategically located in various areas of the building.
- If students ask for a paw, they do not receive one.



Because we are **The Grace School Huskies**, we expect our students to *BARK*.

- Be Kind
- Act Responsibly
- Respect yourself and others
- Keep safety in mind

**The Grace School PBIS Teaching Matrix**

	<b>Be Kind</b>	<b>Act Responsibly</b>	<b>Respect Yourself and Others</b>	<b>Keep Safety in Mind</b>
<b>Classroom</b>	Use polite words and actions	Take care of materials	Personal space	Clean up your area
<b>Hallway</b>	Let others pass	Stay in line to the right	Quiet	Move at a safe rate
<b>Bathroom</b>	Take turns	Use time wisely	Privacy	Wash hands
<b>Cafeteria</b>	Include others in conversation	Clean up after yourself	Table manners	Remain seated
<b>School Wide Events</b>	Attend to speaker	Sit Properly	Personal Space	Stay with group
<b>Recess</b>	Help a friend	Clean up	Include others	Use equipment properly
<b>Dismissal</b>	Say goodbye to teachers and friends	Gather your materials	Calm body and voice	Go to designated area

**1-2-3 Magic!**

1-2-3 Magic is an effective method of discipline for children ages 2-12 developed by Thomas W. Phelan. The program uses proven strategies to help teachers create a climate for students ready to learn. If needed, students are counted to a 3 before taking a 5-minutes break and then return immediately back to class to rejoin the lesson or activity.

**Arrival / Departure**

Our school day begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 2:45 p.m. If you bring your child to school he/she can be dropped off at 7:45 a.m. At that time, students will be supervised in the main hallway seated by class.



Students may also participate in the before school breakfast program or the before school extra help program. For more information about breakfast or before school extra help, please see “Breakfast and Lunches” or “After-school opportunities”. **If you are picking up your child at the end of the school day, please pick him/her up at the designated pick up area located in the front lobby at 2:45 p.m. Parents will wait in the lobby and school staff will release students to identified/authorized adults. Please have ID ready.** If someone other than yourself is picking up your child, notification must be received prior to pick up and the individual must be on your signed list of individuals approved for pickup. This is for the safety and security of your child. Please be sure authorized pick up person brings a photo ID. If you are late picking your child up at parent pick up, you will need to sign your child out in the school office.

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

It is extremely important for students to have a regular routine when leaving school each day. However, there are times when that must change due to appointments, family schedules, or another unexpected reason. On a day that your child is to be dismissed from school early or you will be changing his/her normal dismissal routine (i.e. pick up on a particular day instead of riding home on the bus) you must inform us in writing and/or call the school office at 533-9247 by 1:00 p.m. on the day of the change. If you are picking up your child early, please contact the school office in advance to make arrangements or send in a note with your child. Your child must be signed out in the school office. If your child is transported by bus it is a parent’s responsibility to contact the transportation provider directly for any changes in your child’s schedule. Please do not rely on bus drivers and children to let us know about any changes.

### ***Late Arrival***

**Homeroom begins at 8:00 a.m.** It is extremely important that all students are on time for school and ready to begin instruction each and every day. When students are late, they are losing important instructional and social time, such as greeting friends and teachers, turning in homework, putting away coats and backpacks, and beginning their work. For many students, being late also makes them anxious and feeling “behind” because when they enter their classroom, their classmates are already settled-in and learning. If your child arrives after 8:15 a.m. he or she is considered late and will need to sign in at the school office. **Your child then will go to the classroom or wait for a staff member to bring him or her to the classroom.** Parents are not allowed to bring children directly to the classroom. A record is kept of lateness and parents will be contacted to resolve the situation if necessary.

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

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

### **Transportation**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Transportation Exceptions**

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

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

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

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

### **Student Absence and Illness**

Parents should notify the school office by 8:00 a.m. the morning of the absence by calling (401) 533-9247. The school administrative assistant will contact the parent/guardian of any student not accounted for in the daily classroom attendance log.

- If your child has a fever, an unusual rash, or is vomiting, he/she should remain home from school for 24 hours. If they are coughing or sneezing excessively, please assess their ability to function in class before sending them to school.
- For repeated or extended absences, a note from a parent and/or documentation from a doctor, stating the reason for the absence and any special instructions, may be requested.

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

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

### **Contagious Disease Policy**

1. **Chicken Pox:** Students may not attend school as soon as the outbreak period is suspected (fever, rash) until 5 days after the onset of the rash or all lesions are crusted and dry.
2. **Conjunctivitis:** Pink Eye is a contagious infection of the eye. Students with yellow or white discharge and with a fever and/or behavioral change will be sent home and must receive 24 hours

of antibiotic treatment before returning to school. There is no exclusion from school for the clear watery type.

3. **Ear infections:** Students who have ear infections must be free of pain or fever to attend school and are able to resume a normal activity level. If ear drainage is present they must receive 24 hours of antibiotic treatment before returning to school.
4. **Impetigo:** This is a contagious infection of the skin. Its most common symptom is crusted sores, usually appearing first in the facial area. Children cannot return to school until they have had at least 24 hours of antibiotics and the lesions have dried.
5. **Strep Throat:** The common symptoms of strep throat are fever, sore throat, and sometimes a rash. Students must receive at least 24 hours of antibiotics, be free of fever, and can resume normal activity to return to school.
6. **Head lice:** This is very common in schools. If your child is found to have head lice, inform the school nurse so that other students' parents can be notified. The student may return to school after treatment is initiated.
7. **Children with fever, loose stools, or vomiting** will be evaluated by the school nurse on an individual basis. In the case of any illness, the decision to send a student home will be made by the School Nurse or Head of School.

### **Medical Episodes**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Medications**

Every effort should be made to schedule medication administration outside of school hours. The school nurse will administer prescription medications as well as nonprescription medications with a doctor's order and parental permission. The parent's instructions must be on the permission form (i.e., time of administration). **Exception:** With short term medications such as antibiotics, the prescription label may take the place of a physician's order.

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

All medication and treatment orders may be recorded on the yearly physical form including any standing orders such as administration of Tylenol. Any written order appropriately signed by a doctor is

acceptable. Orders expire after one year and will be considered invalid for administration by school nursing personnel.

### **Standing Orders**

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

### **Medical Records**

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

### **Treatments Requiring Skilled Nursing**

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

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

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

### **Medical Appointments**

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

### **Emergencies**

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

## **Medical Consultation and Grand Rounds**

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

## **Health-Related Screens**

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

## **Emergency Drills**

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

## **Family Vacation**

The school does not endorse family vacations during the school year. If you choose to keep your child out, they will be required to complete essential pieces of work and exams that occurred during their absence. Vacation work packets will not be provided in lieu of attending classes and any work missed will be provided to your child upon return from vacation.

## **Release of Information**

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

## **Notification of Rights under FERPA for Elementary and Secondary Schools**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day *Meeting Street (both the Massachusetts and Rhode Island campuses)* receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the ***Director of School Age Programs (or Client Records department)*** a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask *Meeting Street* to amend a record should write the ***Director of School Age Programs (or Client Records department)***, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service of function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by *Meeting Street* to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student:

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent or eligible student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5))
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10))

- Information the school has designated as “directory information” under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11))

FERPA also requires that *Meeting Street*, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child’s education records. However, *Meeting Street* may disclose appropriately designated “directory information” without written consent, unless you have advised the school to the contrary in accordance with school procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow *Meeting Street* to include this type of information from your child’s education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student’s role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent’s prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student’s information disclosed without their prior written consent.

If you do not want *Meeting Street* to disclose directory information from your child’s education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the District in writing by the second week of the academic year. *Meeting Street* has designated the following information as directory information:

Student’s name	Grade level	Participation in officially recognized activities and sports	
Dates of attendance	Field of study	Photograph	Degrees, honors and awards received.

**Parent Communication**

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

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



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

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

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

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

In accordance with both Federal and State statute and regulations every student placed in the Grace or Carter School programs has an Individualized Education Plan [IEP] which stipulates the specially-designed instructional and related (e.g., therapy) services that student receives while attending Meeting Street. IEPs are reformulated on annual basis, but may be reviewed whenever warranted during the yearly period it is in effect (for such purposes as reviewing student progress or status, reviewing an independent or triennial evaluation, deliberations on accommodations, program and services or placement, other requested or recommended revisions).

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

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

### **Parent Involvement**

Parents are encouraged to become involved in our school community. We would to have parents join us on field trips, be guest readers, and help to work on special projects. In order to participate, we need a BCI completed within the past 5 years. We will also set up a time to meet with you to complete an orientation. The BCI may be obtained from your local police department or the Attorney General's office.

### **Parent /Teacher Conferences**

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

## **Visiting the Classroom**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **School Pictures**

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

Discipline and guidance will be consistent and based on an understanding of the child's needs and development. Staff will promote a safe environment for your child to play and develop, will be consistent and will use positive guidance techniques with all children. Expected behaviors will be taught, encouraged and recognized.

Positive guidance techniques that will be used with the children include:

- Teachers modeling acceptable behavior
- Redirection of children to a more acceptable activity
- Teachers recognizing and rewarding children's efforts
- Structuring the environment and schedules to maximize positive behavior

## Uniforms

All students must wear a school uniform each day, unless otherwise instructed. Please keep in mind the following:

- For Grades K-4, students will wear a Kelly green polo shirt, monogrammed with **The Grace School** purchased through Donnelly's.
- For Grades 5-8, students will wear a light blue button down oxford shirt, monogrammed with **The Grace School** purchased through Donnelly's.
- Navy blue pants, shorts, skirts, jumpers, sweatpants and t-shirts can be purchased through Donnelly's or Walmart, JC Penney, Target, Sears, etc. (In store or online)
- Plain (no logos or writing) navy blue sweaters or navy blue sweatshirts may be worn over uniform.
- Sneakers must be worn on gym days
- Plain (no logos or writing) navy blue sweatpants and navy blue t-shirts may be worn on gym or swim days only.

This policy implies that:

- Coats, jacket and vests will not be worn during the school day.
- If the navy blue sweatshirt has a hood, the hood is not to be worn.
- If the navy blue sweatshirt has writing or logos on it, it cannot be worn.
- Hats will not be worn during the school day unless it is for a religious reason such as a yarmulke, hijab, etc.
- Jeans are not considered navy blue pants.
- Electronics (including, but not limited to headphones, earbuds) will not be worn during the school day.
- Ties are optional.

As of today, if for any reason you cannot wear your uniform, please have a parent/grandparent send a note, email, or call Ms. Boccanfuso.

## Exceptions:

- Uniform free days as determined by teacher or school administrators
- To meet the individual needs of some students as determined by school administrators and parents

## Clothing and Supplies

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

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

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

*Warm Weather:* Outdoor recess, field trips and activities may be discouraged when the temperature is 90°F or over. As always, attention needs to be given to proper clothing, sunscreen application, drinking fluids and air quality. Please apply sunscreen before school. Please be aware that Meeting Street staff is prohibited from applying sunscreen to any students with no exceptions. Children in wheelchairs or who are immobile will receive close monitoring.

*Cold Weather:* Outdoor recess, field trips and activities may be discouraged if the temperature is 20°F or below. Special attention should be given to proper clothing including hats and mittens/gloves. In the case there is snow on the playground, snow gear including snow boots, snow pants, a warm jacket, hats and mittens/gloves may be sent in. Please make sure all clothing is labeled.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips will be chosen to enhance the academic curriculum and to compliment school-based work. Students who do not meet the behavior expectations may be asked to stay back from a scheduled field trip. Permission slips will be sent home at least 48 hours prior to the field trip. Transportation for field trips will be provided by a school van or bus which will be driven by a qualified licensed operator.

## **Classroom Schedule**

While the actual schedule varies daily and weekly based on the lesson plans and related activities your child's educational team has planned, our teachers follow the basic guidelines below in planning the educational day.

Morning Meeting

Language Arts activities: Reading, Writing and Word Study

Mathematics

Social Studies and Science with emphasis on place-based learning, including inquiry based units of study and hands-on projects

Health Education

Special Subjects: Art, Library, Music, Physical Education, American Sign Language, Spanish, and Social Skills

## **Homework**

Homework is an important part of a student's education. It contributes toward building responsibility, self-discipline and lifelong learning habits. It is designed to provide students with the opportunity to practice and apply information they have learned in school or to prepare for the next day's lesson. Parents are expected to provide assistance to their child to make sure the assigned work is completed neatly, correctly, and returned to school. It would be helpful if each student has a quiet, distraction-free environment at home to read and study.

Homework will be assigned every Monday-Thursday night for 10-90 minutes and occasionally over the weekend for students in middle school (grades 5-8). The amount of time your child will need to spend completing homework will depend upon your child's grade level. Homework may include but is not limited to: nightly reading (read aloud, independently and silently, or listen to a story being read), writer's or reader's notebook entry, math, work on a portion of a long-term project, study for a test, or complete unfinished class work.

The following is a guideline for homework completion though your child's teacher will share with you his/her expectations for homework and assignments.

*Elementary:*

Kindergarten: Listen to a story or read independently for 10 minutes.

Grades 1-2: 10-15 minutes in addition to independent reading

Grades 3-4: 15-30 minutes in addition to independent reading

*Middle School:*

Grades 5-8: 30-90 minutes nightly, including independent reading.

**Grades K-1**

Assuming that a weekly homework packet is sent home on Mondays and returned on Fridays, teachers will:

- Call home if homework is missing for 1 week.
  - Student does not receive credit for assignment.
- Hold a parent meeting if homework is missing for 2 weeks
  - (They do not have to be consecutive weeks.)
- School administrator will call home if homework is missing after 3 weeks and/or after a parent meeting and an additional missing week of homework.

Assuming that homework is sent daily and returned the following day, students will:

- Not receive credit for assignment.

**Grades 2-4**

Assuming that a weekly homework packet is sent home on Mondays and returned on Fridays, teachers will:

- Call home if homework is missing for 1 week.
  - Student will not receive credit for homework.
- Hold a parent/student meeting if homework is missing for 2 weeks
  - (They do not have to be consecutive weeks.)
- School administrator will hold a parent/student conference if homework is missing after 3 weeks.

Assuming that homework is sent daily and returned the following day, students will:

- Not receive credit for assignment
- Miss up to 10 minutes of recess to work on missing homework. If still not complete, homework will be sent home to finish.

Teachers will:

- Make parent contact after 2 missing assignments. (They do not need to be consecutive assignments.)
- Hold a parent/student conference after 3 missing assignments. (They do not need to be consecutive.)
- School administrator will contact parent and/or hold a parent/student conference after 4<sup>th</sup> missing assignment.

**Grades 5-8**

*Homework grades comprise 10% -20% of the content area grade.*

Assuming that homework is assigned nightly, teachers will:

- Make parent contact after 2 missing assignments. (They do not need to be consecutive or in the same content area.)

- Hold a parent/student conference after 3 missing assignments. (They do not need to be consecutive.)
- School administrator will contact parent and/or hold a conference after 4<sup>th</sup> missing assignment.

Students will:

- Not receive credit for assignment (zero)
- Complete missing homework at recess and take home to finish if incomplete.
- If homework is returned one day late and/or completed due to recess and at home, partial credit will be awarded.

### **Assessments**

Teaching staff will closely monitor your child's progress. We utilize an assessment system which includes collecting work samples, anecdotal records/teacher observations, and curriculum assessments. **Students will receive progress reports and/or report cards on a trimester basis.** If at any time you would like to meet with your child's teacher, please let us know.

### **Swimming**

We are fortunate to have our salt-water, 92 degree therapy pool here at Meeting Street. Swimming instruction and/or aqua therapy is part of our physical education curriculum, grades K-4, and therapy program, grades K-8, at The Grace School. You will be informed of when your child is scheduled to use the pool and he/she is expected to participate. **If your child does not bring a swimsuit or towel on a scheduled pool day, he/she will borrow one and we will not call home to inform you.** Our "extra" suits and towels are washed on a daily basis. Your child can only be excused from swimming if you provide us with a note or phone call with a medical or other valid reason.

### **Afterschool Opportunities**

*YMCA* provides after school care and will be located at Meeting Street. If you are interested, you are required to register with the Greater Providence Y and establish a contract/payment with them. Their office is located at 640 Broad Street and their number is 401-456-0604.

*CDL-Center for Dynamic Learning* is our after school theater program available for students in The Grace School in grades K-8. Theater meets twice a week after school for rehearsal. There will be a performance in the fall and in the spring. More information will be sent home as well as available at the Welcome Back Bash.

*After-School Enrichment Clubs* will be available at times. The clubs are led by our staff members. If/when they run, registration and information will be sent home.

### **What Students May Bring to School**

School time is learning time. Toys or other items from home serve as a distraction and should not be brought to school. If your child's teacher will be hosting a "show and share" notices will go home with information about when and what type of item can be sent in. **At no time should students bring in any electronic games or devices other than those used for communication and program needs.** If you feel that your child needs a cell phone, it must be kept in his/her backpack, turned off and not used on school grounds or the school bus.

### **Lost and Found**

Families are strongly encouraged to mark every item of outerwear and lunch boxes with the student's name. We will attempt to return all marked items to the student. Remaining items will be placed in the

lost and found area with the Receptionist at the front desk. Any unclaimed items left longer than 30 days will be donated.

### **Breakfast and Lunches**

Breakfast is provided daily at a cost of \$2.00 for those register and wish to participate. Lunch is available for purchase at a cost of \$3.00. **Breakfast and lunch are not included as part of any tuition plan, including tuition paid through a school district.** Reduced and free lunch is available based on federal financial guidelines. Free and reduced priced meals family application will be sent home with all students at the beginning of each school year. **If you have a letter of Direct Certification for free meal benefits it must be turned in to the school office by October 1<sup>st</sup>.** **If we do not receive this form, you will be billed for all meals provided to your child.**

### **Lunch**

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

1. Lunches can be paid by check or money order, made out to Meeting Street or charged to your credit card. If you would like to use a credit card, please ask for a Credit Card Charge Authorization Form. **Cash will not be accepted for milk or lunch orders.** You are able to pay ahead and establish a line of credit. Each time that your child orders a lunch or milk, the cost will be deducted from your account. You can send in a check at anytime to keep your balance accurate and you will only receive a bill at the end of the month if your account is overdrawn. Please put the check in an envelope, mark it "Lunch Money" and have your child turn it into the office or give to his/her teacher.
2. If your account is overdrawn, you will receive a lunch bill every month and you will have 30 days to pay it, unless you have a credit on your account or if you have selected the credit card option. If your bill is 30-60 days past due, you may need to provide a lunch for your child until your balance is paid in full.

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

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

### **Unpaid Meal Charge**

#### **Purpose:**

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

#### **Policy:**

It is the policy of Meeting Street to ensure that eligible students have access to free/reduced meals and to protect children from stigma and embarrassment associated with eligibility and account status. Unpaid meal charges shall be directed to students' parents/caregivers. Under federal law, debt that cannot be

collected from families shall be written off as bad debt, with costs being covered by funds outside of the school meals program. Meeting Street shall adhere to the following guiding principles in addressing unpaid meal charges:

1. Meeting Street shall work directly with parents/caregivers to address financial matters. Children should not feel as though they are being punished for their parents' financial difficulties.
2. Meeting Street shall proactively ensure that charges are not being applied to children who actually are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.
3. Meeting Street shall weigh the cost of collecting school meal debt with what a household owes, especially with regards to families that Meeting Street is aware are under financial strain.

**Procedure:**

1. Families will be notified of the school Unpaid Meal Charge Policy in writing at the start of the school year when the initial application is sent home and with each new transfer student.
2. Families shall be encouraged to apply for free and reduced price meal benefit. To ensure that all eligible families are certified for free and reduced-price school meals, school personnel shall:
  - a. provide all households with school meal applications at the start of the school year;
  - b. provide school meal applications in the primary language of the parent or guardian, when available, and provide assistance with completing an application for any household that requests assistance;
  - c. promptly utilize data provided by the state or other school officials to certify eligible children without an application; and
  - d. ensure that any child for which the school is not able to obtain a completed school meal application, but becomes aware of their eligibility for free or reduced-price school meals shall be certified based on an application submitted by the appropriate school official, as permitted by USDA guidance.

**Note:** Any family that accrues a delinquent balance will receive a written notification to encourage them to apply for free or reduced price meal benefits.

3. Families shall be encouraged to pre-pay for meals and money shall be accepted in the school office daily for payments on the day of service. If a child has money to purchase a reduced price or paid meal at the time of the meal service, the child must be provided a meal. Meeting Street shall not use the child's money to repay previously unpaid charges if the child intended to use the money to purchase that day's meal.
4. Meeting Street is committed to ensuring that all students are served in a manner that prevents embarrassment to the child in the meal service line. Practices, such as putting stickers or wristbands on children to remind parents to pay unpaid fees, are stigmatizing and are **prohibited**. Children with unpaid meal debt **shall not** be required to work off their debt, including, but not limited to, wiping down tables or cleaning the cafeteria. Meeting Street **shall not** throw away food that has been served to a child.



### ***Payment and Collections:***

Prior to contacting households about unpaid meal debt, Meeting Street shall ensure that the student is not participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, or other federal programs, which would confer categorical eligibility for free school meals, or is not homeless, migrant, or in foster care, and would allow them to be certified without an application.

If it has been determined that the student is **not** participating in a program that would confer eligibility, contact shall be made by a representative from the billing department to address the student's delinquent account balance. **All communication regarding unpaid meal debt shall be directed to parents/caregivers.** Calls on delinquent accounts shall be made on a regular basis to try to collect payment. Additionally, Meeting Street may send students home with a letter in an unmarked envelope to facilitate communication. To ensure that households are aware of delinquent account balances and the potential to accrue meal debt, Meeting Street, at its discretion, may also:

- send out low balance notices prior to students needing to charge meals;
- notify and/or work with school personnel to understand the student and parent's situation and if a school meal application is needed; use an automated calling system to notify parents of delinquent balances; and/or
- use automated email alerts to notify parents of delinquent balances.

For households that cannot afford to pay their school meal charges, Meeting Street shall first work with the family to determine if they are eligible to be certified for free and reduced-price school meals. Households that are subsequently certified for free or reduced-price school meals shall not immediately be required to repay school meal debt accrued in that school year. Meeting Street will submit retroactive claims for any meals charged to the household from the date of application to the date of certification, to the extent allowed by USDA guidance.

Should a household be ineligible for certification, Meeting Street shall work with the family to address the delinquent balance. If the family is unable to pay the delinquent balance in-full, a payment plan shall be established that is affordable to the family. This plan will remain in place until the delinquent debt has been paid in-full, the family qualifies for free and reduced price meal benefit or the debt has been forgiven.

All delinquent accounts at the beginning of May of the current school year shall be subject to collection for payment unless a determination has been made by the Director of School Age Programs (or her designee) and Billing Manager to carry the debt over at the end of the school year (i.e. beyond June 30). Such a determination shall be based on such factors as:

- the family's compliance with the established payment plan;
- the amount of the balance;
- whether or not the student will be re-enrolling for the subsequent school year; and/or
- other factors as determined by the Director of School Age Programs.

Such discretion will allow Meeting Street to work with individual families to establish longer repayment plans and to continue pursuing collection efforts when children leave Meeting Street. When school officials determine further collection efforts for delinquent debt are useless or too costly, the debt will be reclassified as "bad debt" as a last resort.

### ***Ongoing Communication***

In order to ensure that this policy is communicated effectively and applied consistently, Meeting Street shall ensure that all members of the school community (faculty, staff, parents/caregivers, etc.) are educated about this policy and its implications. To do this, Meeting Street may incorporate the following steps into ongoing communications within the school community:

- reference the policy in the school newsletter;
- make use of listservs to notify parents and let them know where they can obtain a copy either online or in the school office;
- communicate the policy to all teachers and staff at staff meetings and through email;
- provide training for all cafeteria managers and staff on their role to prevent stigma, overt identification, and embarrassment for children

### **Microwave Use**

A microwave is available in the cafeteria for students to heat up their lunch. Students will be limited to one minute at the microwave in order to allow adequate time for all students to eat. Meals such as Macaroni & Cheese, frozen dinners, etc are not permitted due to time. Please plan accordingly.

### **Food and Allergies**

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

### **Birthdays and Other Celebrations**

The Grace School celebrates students' birthdays at our community meetings which are usually held on the last Friday of each month as well as during our daily morning announcements. July birthday are celebrated in June. August birthdays are celebrated at the end of September. Each child will also be recognized in his/her classroom for his/her birthday. Out of fairness to all of our students please do not send in any food for birthday celebrations.

Your teacher will be sending information home from time to time about holiday celebrations. If, for religious reasons, you wish your child to refrain from any of these celebrations, please indicate such in writing to your child's teacher and the school office.

### **Graduation**

As we are growing our K-8 school program, when students complete grade 8, they will participate in a graduation celebration/ceremony.

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

### *Regular Education Student Records:*

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

### *Special Education Student Records:*

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

## **Dismissal from School**

The Grace School at Meeting Street reserves the right to release a child from the school at any time, if the educational team members feel the child has behavioral, educational or medical needs that cannot be adequately addressed in our program. Other reasons that a child maybe released from the Grace School are:

- Excessive absences or tardiness
- Student or family not supportive of our inclusive program and practices
- Failure to comply with uniform policy
- Uncooperative behavior of students or family members
- Disregard for school and Agency policies and procedures
- Delinquent in tuition or lunch payments
- District or LEA agreement of change in placement and/or program, determined through an IEP meeting

## **Tuition Payment Policy**

All tuition agreements are entered into prior to the start of the school year and parents are expected to fulfill their financial responsibility. Payments must be made according to the payment scheduled developed. Failure to comply with the payment plan may result in your child being dismissed from the school.

### **Child Abuse Law**

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

### **Bullying Policy**

The Grace School has adopted the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Safe School Act Statewide Bullying Policy, in its entirety. Please see:  
<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Statewide-Bullying-Policy.pdf>

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

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

### **Internet Acceptable Use Policy**

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

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

#### ***Purpose***

We support student access to the rich educational resources available on the Internet. The use of the Internet must be for educational activities and be consistent with our school's educational objectives.

#### ***Guidelines***

Students will be instructed on the appropriate use of the Internet and all school staff and students take full responsibility for their own actions in regard to the use and handling of technology and the use of the Internet network, Social Media site which includes all Blogs, Social Walls, and e-mail. We make no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service being provided. We are not be responsible for any damages the user suffers including, but not limited to a loss of data, delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its negligence or the users' errors or omissions. Individual users are solely responsible for all charges and fees that they may incur using the network, including merchandise purchases made through the network. We are not a party to such transactions and shall not be liable for any cost or damages, whether direct or indirect, arising out of network transactions by the user.

The school computer network belongs solely to the schools and any files, records, electronic mail or other communication may be examined, edited, or deleted by the schools at any time, in accordance with

a school's policy or regulations. In general, electronic mail in personal accounts will be inspected without the consent of the sender or a recipient.

### ***Filtering***

Our schools comply with CIPA, the Children Information Protection Act. CIPA requires that schools and libraries that receive specific federal funds must certify to the funding agency that they have in place an Internet Safety Policy. This policy requires blocking access to obscenity, child pornography, or, as to students, material harmful to minors, in accordance with all elements and regulations of CIPA. This policy also prohibits hacking, use of non-approved chat rooms, disclosure of personal information concerning children, and unlawful activities involving children on line. It also provides for the safety and security of minors while using electronic mail and other forms of electronic communication.

The Internet will be filtered, in accordance with CIPA to limit users to educationally appropriate sites, as determined by the schools. At the same time the schools are aware that material on the Internet will be reliable or inoffensive. The filtering system may be disabled by a teacher for a student and by the Administration for student research projects or other lawful purposes.

### ***Acceptable Use***

Acceptable use of computers and related devices, networks, and internet access is any use which is consistent with the educational objectives of the schools. The internet offers a wealth of information, the opportunity for exchange of ideas and information, and the possibility of collaborative work.

All communications should be polite, with appropriate language use. Use of computers, networks, network equipment and internet access is a privilege for staff and students and not a right. We expect staff and students to use these tools in a responsible manner for educational purposes and to be considerate of all users.

Students' personal information (including, but not limited to, names, phone numbers, addresses, etc.) will not be entered transmitted, or posted over the Internet for public use without prior written authorization by School Administration.

Students will never agree to meet someone they have met on-line without parents' written approval. Parents who agree to such a meeting are responsible for arranging appropriate supervision.

Staff and students will not use the network or Internet in such a way as to disrupt access by others (such as downloading huge files, sending mass e--mails messages, or annoying/harassing other users) and will respect the privacy of other users. All communications and information are the property of the schools.

### ***Unacceptable Use of the Internet***

It is unacceptable to use the network and the internet in any way to promote or engage in any activities which are deemed criminal under federal, state, or local laws, including but not limited to, copyright, credit card and electronic forgery laws or anything that is not within the scope of educational use.

It is unacceptable use to maliciously attempt to harm or destroy the hardware or data of another user, whether in school or at any site connected to the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, the creation and spreading of computer viruses. It is also unacceptable use to attempt to use another's password or account. Personal use of the computers for non-work related activities such as game playing is not acceptable during the school day.

It is unacceptable use to send or receive any data, which is profane or obscene, that advocates illegal acts that advocate violence or discrimination towards people or organizations, or that is not within the scope of educational use.

It is unacceptable use to connect any personal computing device to the school's network without written permission from the network supervisor or technology coordinator. It is unacceptable use to engage in activity for private or financial gain on the network.

***Violation of Policy***

General school rules and policies apply to all school computer use, Internet activity and communication. If a user is found to be in violation of any of the above mentioned policy, all network and Internet rights and privileges will be suspended until an investigation is conducted. Upon completion of the investigation, a decision will be made by the Director of IS or his or her designee, to revoke or reinstate the computer user's privileges. Such violations may also result in further disciplinary measures or legal actions.