



**PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK
2021-2022**

Müller Pierre

Principal

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DISTRICT PROTOCOL FOR EVENT PROGRAMS

IRVINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Irvington, NJ 07111



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Union Avenue Middle School Administration

Müller Pierre

Principal

Mohamed Baala

Assistant Principal

Shakeena Hill

Assistant Principal

Letter from Principal

August 16, 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year! I hope that everyone is safe and well during this challenging period in our lifetime. With that said, I am very proud of our parents, guardians and scholars for enduring the most recent school year with remote, hybrid and in-person schedules. You were admirably resilient in adjusting to the sudden changes in education. In September of 2021, the goal is to return to full capacity.

The first day of school for students is on Wednesday, September 8, 2021. It will be a half-day session. All students are expected to physically attend school weekly from Monday to Friday for 2021-2022 school year. The school staff and I have worked very hard to create a safe climate conducive to learning, and we are anxiously anticipating the arrival of our scholars. At Union Avenue Middle School, we strive to offer all students rigorous learning opportunities to develop academic skills while also providing social-emotional support. Now more than ever, we need parental support via parental engagement in the school.

The Parent Academy is entering its fourth year, and we hope that more parents and guardians will take advantage of the workshops and community fellowship. Union Avenue Middle School will communicate with parents via Class Dojo, flyers, letters, telephone calls and the school's website. We are also searching for parents or guardians interested in serving as PTA officers. Please contact me if you are interested in being a PTA officer. You will also receive a calendar each month and full access to your child's grades and attendance record through the Parent Portal. Please take the time to review the calendar and the Parent Portal and contact teachers or the Main Office with questions, and provide the teachers and secretaries with your email address. In addition, the Parent/Student Handbook will be posted online. Hard copies will also be made available at the school. It is imperative that you become acclimated with the information in the handbook, and I welcome any questions you may have. The staff and I are here to support the academic, social-emotional development of your children and to answer your questions. We welcome a partnership with you.

It is absolutely imperative that your child attends school daily and on time. The School District maintains an attendance policy, which you can review on the District's website. **Uniforms are mandatory!** Your child must wear the school uniform, which is a navy blue bottom and collared yellow top. Please make sure to complete all necessary updating forms, especially the lunch application and the emergency form. In addition to a working and reliable contact number, please provide us with your email address. for the new school year. No child will be released unless the person picking up the child is listed on the authorization form, which is entered in the school's computer database (**no exceptions**)!! As a reminder, all school visitors can only enter and exit the school building through the **MAIN ENTRANCE** (**no exceptions**)!!

As it relates to the pandemic, we will continue to practice state guidelines such as requiring everyone

to wear a mask and having his or her body temperature checked before being allowed in the school building. Shields will be installed on each student desk. Other protective measures as dictated by the school district may be taken.

Lastly, the staff and I are very excited to begin the school year. At Union Avenue Middle School, the students are the paragon of perseverance, and we, the staff and faculty, will continue to set high expectations for each student irrespective of nationality, religious beliefs, ethnicity, disabilities, sexual orientation or gender. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any technology problems or questions on other topics. I wish you and your child a safe and productive school year.

Sincerely,

Müller Pierre
Principal

Hours of Operation

Office Hours:	7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Eighth Graders:	8:20 a.m. - 2:50 p.m.
Seventh Graders:	8:20 a.m. - 2:50 p.m.
Sixth Graders:	8:20 a.m. - 2:50 p.m.
Delayed Opening:	10:05 a.m. – 2:53 p.m.
Half-day Hours for Students:	8:20 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Union Avenue Middle School conducts staggered dismissal daily; therefore, the dismissal times may be altered per grade level.

Telephone Directory

Main Office.....(973)-399-6885
Fax.....(973)371-0957

Administration

Müller Pierre, Principal.....(973) 399-6885 Ext.1702
Mohamed Baala, Assistant Principal.....(973) 399-6886 Ext. 1720
Shakeena Hill, Assistant Principal(973) 399-6885 Ext. 1721

Guidance Counselors

Sari Greggs, 8th Grade Counselor.....(973) 399-6885 Ext. 1710
Desirae Holt, 7th Grade Counselor.....(973) 399-6885 Ext. 1707
Alexis Allen-Penn, 6th Grade Counselor.....(973) 399-6885 Ext.1708

Medical Office

Anna Castor, School Nurse.....(973) 399-6885 Ext. 1717

Other Personnel

Michael Brown, Dean/Climate Specialist.....(973)399-6885 Ext. 1704
Marie Ganthier, Health & Social Services.....(973)399-6885 Ext. 1709

Student Attendance Policy

The Board of education of the Irvington Public Schools charges the principal of the school with the responsibility for requiring compliance with school law. The New Jersey Statutes Titles 18A:38-25, 18A:38-26, and 18A:38-31, state that: "Every parent, guardian or other person having custody and control of a child between the ages of 6 and 16 years, shall cause such child to regularly attend the public school....Such regular attendance shall be during all the days and hours that the public schools are in session, unless it is shown to the satisfaction of the Board of Education...that the bodily condition of the child is such as to prevent his or her attendance...A parent...who shall fail to comply with any of the provisions...shall be deemed a disorderly person and shall be subject to a fine...."

Attendance Call-In Program

A parent must call the main office between the hours of 7:30 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. if his /her child will be absent and provide the approximate length of absence. If a student is absent and a phone call has not been received, a call will be placed to the parent. The school must have reliable and current phone numbers to a parent/guardian at all times in case of an emergency. Please update student records when changes occur.

When a child is absent from school, a note from the parent or legal guardian explaining the reason should be given to the student's homeroom teacher or the attendance secretary. Excused absences are defined as follows: a) Take Your Children to Work Day, b) District approved religious observance, and c) District approved school bus transportation problem.

In the event a child is absent three or more consecutive days, a doctor's note must be submitted to the school nurse upon the return of the child. If a child is going to be absent for a prolonged period of time, the school must be notified as to the length and reason. Arrangements should be made to receive homework for the child.

- Homeroom teachers, guidance counselors, and the attendance secretary closely monitor student attendance. Chronic truancy problems will be referred to the attendance office for appropriate court action. A letter will be sent to parents/guardians after the fifth unexcused absence from school. A second letter will be sent to parents/guardians after the tenth unexcused absence from school. Parents and guardians will be required to appear in court after the fifteenth unexcused absence. Student attendance is also one of the areas considered when determining the promotion or retention of a student at the end of the year.
- Students must be present in school for a legal attendance day in order to participate in an activity on that day. Failure to be present in school will jeopardize participation.
- Students are reminded that in order to participate in athletic and extra-curricular activities, they must be present in school on the day of the planned activity.

Possible Consequences for a Student Who is Chronically Absent from School without an Acceptable Reason

- Denial of participation in co-curricular and/or extra-curricular activities
- After School Detention
- In-School Suspension

Tardy Policy

A. Tardy to School

Prompt arrival to school is vital to reinforcing responsibility of students and maintaining compliance with state law. Children must be in school and in class on time. Students reporting to school after 9 a.m. must be escorted into the building by a parent/guardian. Parents must escort students directly to the main office and sign the tardy acknowledgement log. Failure to comply will result in the following:

- A phone call to parent/guardian
- Detention during their lunch period (failure to attend detention will result in a Home For-Parent-HFP- letter)
- Referred to Board of Education's attendance officer (repeat offenders)

Excuses received from a parent/guardian on the same day of the late arrival help the staff understand that circumstances were beyond the student's control, but it does not excuse his or her lateness.

Schools are required to admit students in school regardless of the time they arrive. However, students who arrive late to school must report first to the appropriate administrative office or location to be recorded late and not absent. A late pass will be given to those students before they are admitted to regular classes. If a student is late to school more than five (5) times without an acceptable reason (see below), he or she will receive the appropriate level of school discipline, which will include detention, HFP or other measures.

The District recognizes that compelling circumstances will necessitate that a student arrives late to school. The following are acceptable reasons for a late arrival.

- Medical or dental appointments which cannot be scheduled outside of school hours
- Medical disability
- Family emergency
- Court appearance
- Requirements of a student's individual health care plan

- Requirements of a student's Individual Education Program

B. Tardy to Class

If a student has no pass and arrives late to class less than fifteen minutes into the period, he or she will be disciplined according to the teacher's tardy policy. Teachers are encouraged to give warnings, call parents/guardians and assign detention.

If a student has no pass and arrives late to a class period fifteen minutes or more, it will be considered cutting or skipping that class, and he/she will be disciplined accordingly.

Note: Students are expected to make up work they have missed when they are absent or late from school.

C. Remote Learning

Teachers will present students with the expectations for the virtual learning experience, and they will review the structured routines including remote classroom rules and procedures. All students must log into the first period class by 8:30 AM. There is a 3-5 minute transition time allowed from one class period to the next.

D. Uniform Policy

Irvington Public Schools has a mandatory school uniform policy, which was approved by the Board of Education and has been in effect since September 1, 2009. Union Avenue Middle School will consistently enforce the Board approved uniform policy.

Boys – must wear yellow-collar shirts, or polo shirts. Plain uniform navy blue pants are to be worn. **Cargo pants, jeans, or shorts are not permitted at any time.** Pants should be appropriately fitting and belts are to be worn, with shirts tucked in. Shoes are preferred, but sneakers of a solid color (black, brown or navy) may be worn. Black, blue or white solid socks are to be worn. **Jeans of any color are not allowed.**

Girls – must wear yellow-collar blouses, shirts, or polo shirts. Plain uniform navy skirts or pants may be worn. Black, blue, or brown hose or socks may be worn. **Tights or leggings are not permitted when worn as pants. Hats, scarves and head coverings to cover uncombed or ill-fashioned hair are not permitted.** Shirts with any logo other than Union Avenue Middle School's logo are not permitted. **Jeans of any color are not allowed.**

Hats, scarves and other headgears are not permitted at any time for boys and girls. Shirts with any logo other than Union Avenue Middle School's logo are not permitted. Head coverings for religious reasons are permitted when documentation is presented to the Principal and/or Assistant Principals.

NOTE: Additional clothing such as tank tops, vests, scarves, bandanas, etc. are not permitted for boys or girls. Hooded sweatshirts are not permitted at any time! Failure to wear the appropriate uniform will result in disciplinary action.

Grading Policy

Grades are averaged in the following manner:

90 -100 = A

89 - 80 = B

79 - 70 = C

69 - 60 = D

Below 60 = F

Any student who fails two major academic subjects must attend summer school. If a student fails more than two subjects at the end of summer school, he or she will be retained in the same grade.

Eighth Grade Promotion Policy

In order to participate in the 8th grade promotional exercise, students must pass all academic subjects. **Students are considered ineligible to participate if they fail one major academic subject (math, ELA, social studies, science, or physical education) or two minor subjects (technology, art, music, or world language)** for the school year.

Parents are encouraged to actively monitor their children's grades and behavior to ensure academic success and participation in the promotional ceremony. Please obtain access to the **Parent Portal** in order to review your child's up-to-date grades and attendance information.

Guidance

Union Avenue Middle School's guidance counselors work with the students, teachers, and parents under the direction of the principal. The counselors also seek the assistance of the child study team and community resources when necessary.

Every student will be assigned a counselor. Guidance counselors help the students in a variety of ways. Some of the services provided by the guidance counselors are:

- Assisting with academic problems in an open and caring environment where students can learn to better understand themselves and others
- Monitoring chronic absenteeism and encouraging students to attend school regularly
- Scheduling of classes based on academic strengths and interests
- Exploring possible careers and vocations
- Reviewing academic progress reports and assisting in the adjustment to middle school
- Assisting in the development of decision-making skills
- Assisting parents in registering for the Parent Portal
- Conducting weekly guidance lessons on conflict resolution skills, social media, et al.

General School Information

Correspondence

A monthly calendar of upcoming activities will be sent home during the last week of every month. Additionally, notices are sent home frequently to notify parents/guardians of current and future events at Union Avenue Middle School. Please ask your child for any flyers/notices. When indicated, please return them on the next school day. Lastly, the school-wide telephone messaging system (robo-calls) and Class Dojo are also used as means to correspond with parents and guardians.

Student Identification Cards

Students are required to wear their identification cards at all times. If a student does not have his/her identification card he/she will get a warning, after which students will receive detention. If the identification card is lost, students will have to purchase a new identification card for the cost of \$2.00.

Lost Textbooks/Chromebooks

The Irvington Board of education policy states that students are responsible for all textbooks, Chromebooks, and other non-consumable books issued to them. Students who lose or return textbooks, Chromebooks, or non-consumable materials in damaged or unusable condition shall be assessed the replacement cost for their parents to pay. Replacement costs should be paid by cash or money order made payable to Union Avenue Middle School. A second text or Chromebook will be supplied for in class use to a student who has lost or damaged a book or Chromebook. If the second book or Chromebook is lost, no replacement will be made until the issued fees are paid.

Damage to School Property

A New Jersey Law (N.J.S.A. 18A:37-3) makes the parent or guardian of a student attending a public school responsible for any damages to school property that the student intentionally causes. Under this law, the parent or guardian is responsible for paying damages even if the parent or guardian is not at fault. All money collected is recorded and paid to the proper fund for replacement purposes. Moreover, the student will be subjected to disciplinary measures up to and including an out of school suspension or expulsion.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Cell phones, recording devices, and personal listening devices must be turned off during the school day and must not be visible. If the device is visible or activated in any fashion it will be taken from the student, and a parent/guardian will be asked to pick up the confiscated item from the main office between 8 a.m.-8:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. - 4 p.m. Any student who violates this policy a second time will have this privilege revoked, and the device will not be returned until the end of the

school year. Recordings of any school event or activity will result in the device being confiscated and the immediate revocation of privileges.

Alcohol and Drugs

In accordance with state law, local ordinances, and the Irvington Board of Education policy, a student known to have alcohol, drugs, and/or related paraphernalia in his/her possession of use and/or distribution or found to be under the influence of said substance while in school or while participating or attending an approved school function or trip may:

- Be suspended or expelled from school
- Be referred to the school's Health and Social Services Coordinator
- Be subjected to supervised medical drug testing
- Be prosecuted by law enforcement

Weapons

In accordance with state law, local ordinances, and the Irvington Board of Education policy: Any student found to be in possession of any recognized weapon, objects designed to resemble or be used as a weapon, or the use of any object as a weapon, will be apprehended by the school resource police officer and transported to the police station. The parent/guardian will be notified, and legal proceedings will commence.

Terroristic Threats

Any student accused of terroristic threats, or who in any way undermines the safety of the Union Avenue Middle School population, will be remanded to the custody of the Irvington Police Department. The parent/guardian will be notified, and legal proceedings will commence. Suspension or expulsion from school will proceed in accordance with the Irvington Board of Education policy, state laws and local ordinances.

Code of Conduct

The school has an obligation to the larger society to educate young people to assume the responsibilities of adult life. The school is said to act "in loco parentis", that is in the place of the parent with respect to the supervision of the students' education and conduct while in school. This authority extends to school-sponsored functions as well as functions in other schools and sites involving approved activities. Schools have the power to enforce rules and regulations by imposing disciplinary sanctions.

Irvington Public Schools District has a student code of conduct on the District website <http://irvington.k12.nj.us/>. On the next page, you will find the behavior guidelines that are important to create an efficient and safe learning environment at Union Avenue Middle School.

Expectations of Student Behavior:

1. Students are to prepare themselves mentally and physically for the process of learning:
 - be nourished, rested, clean, and properly dressed and groomed
 - be prepared to learn
2. Students are to take responsibility for their own behavior and learning both in school and at all school related activities:
 - recognize that academic development is the primary purpose
 - complete all class work, homework, and other assigned tasks
 - make appropriate decisions
 - accept constructive criticism as part of the learning process
 - accept disagreement when necessary and appropriate
 - accept the consequences for their actions (**Be accountable!!**)
3. Students are to demonstrate respect for self and for others:
 - are honest, courteous, and polite
 - respect the opinions of others
 - are respectful of different cultures
 - settle differences peacefully and appropriately
 - display good sportsmanship
4. Students are to respect the natural and physical environment:
 - participate in the maintenance and cleanliness of school facilities and property.
5. Students are to share responsibilities when working as a member of a group or team:
 - cooperate, contribute and share in the work of the group
 - accept and assume leadership when appropriate to do so
 - listen to the viewpoints of others
6. Students are to use their time and resources in a responsible manner:
 - attend school regularly and on time
 - use learning materials and equipment appropriately
7. Students are to communicate appropriately with parents and school personnel regarding their needs and goals:
 - take time to discuss academic learning and school programs
 - transmit information to parents and return responses to school personnel (in a timely fashion) when appropriate
 - seek assistance from appropriate school personnel in time(s) of need
8. Students are to be responsible for meeting individual class requirements:
 - participate actively in learning activities
 - follow all class rules and procedures
 - arrive to class on time with all appropriate materials
9. Students are to work to their full potential, monitor their progress, and seek help when necessary.

Strategies and Consequences for Unacceptable Conduct:

It is important to note that a student may be suspended for conduct that he/she should have been aware of as a violation of school policy though not specifically listed in the statute. A school may also suspend a student for grounds where that misbehavior is detrimental to school safety, stated discipline procedures, or property.

Consequences for non-compliance can include any of the following depending upon the seriousness and or frequency of the matter: (listed in progressive order)

- Adult to pupil conference (warning)
- Demerit points
- Home contacts
- Detention (early morning, lunch, or after school)
- Parent-pupil-teacher conference
- Home for Parent (HFP)
- Loss of privileges (i.e. field trips, extra-curricular activities)
- Behavior Modification Room (BMR) Assignment
- Intervention program
- Out of school suspension
- Expulsion

Please remember that our actions involving disciplinary measures are meant to correct inappropriate school behaviors. Our goal is to produce happy, healthy, well-adjusted individuals who will lead successful adult lives. Please support our school's efforts to have students behave appropriately while at school, on a trip, on the school bus, and traveling to and from school.

Detentions

Detentions may be held before school at 7:45 a.m. or after school at 3:00 p.m. Staff members are encouraged to schedule detentions. All detentions will be held within 24 hours of the offense unless an administrator, after conferencing with the parent and referring teacher, designates otherwise. All administrative detentions will be held in a designated room and last 30 to 55 minutes. Students must bring schoolwork to occupy their time in detention. The staff member will inform parents or guardians of the assigned detention at least 24 hours in advance.

No talking is allowed in detention and may result in additional consequences. Those who fail to attend detention or complete detention satisfactorily (as determined by teacher or administrator) will be assigned other consequences as deemed by school administrators.

Home for Parent (HFP)

Students will receive a letter notifying parents that they have displayed negative behavior or broken a school rule. Students will not be readmitted to school without a parent conference with an administrator. If a child enters the building without a parent, he/she will be considered trespassing and may be subject to disciplinary action by the Irvington Police Department.

Behavioral Modification Room (BMR)

Students will be assigned to the Behavior Modification Room for a period of time (from 1 class period to a maximum of two days) as determined by an administrator. Students will spend their suspension time at school completing classroom work that will be collected and graded by their teacher. Parents will be notified by telephone when their child has or will serve in-school suspension time. Any student who does not follow the rules of BMR will receive an out of school suspension. The length of time assigned in BMR is at the administrator's discretion. **Additionally, there will be a mandatory meeting with the Health and Social Services Coordinator for any student referred to BMR.**

Out of School Suspension

An out of school suspension is the temporary denial of the student's right to attend school. Only the building principal or a building administrator can suspend students.

Each suspension shall be reported to the student's parent and the Superintendent of schools, who shall report the suspension to the Board of Education.

A parent conference with an administrator is necessary for a student's re-admittance to school. Students are required to make up all missed work. All assignments will be provided, and it is expected that the student will complete work while at home. Assignments must be returned upon student's re-admittance to school.

Expulsion

Expulsion is the denial of the student's right to attend public school and may be imposed solely by the Board of Education. A student may appeal an expulsion decision of the Board of Education to the Commissioner of Education and State Board of Education.

A prerequisite to any board action for expulsion of a non-handicapped student is referred to the District's child study team for preliminary determination. The purpose of this evaluation is to determine whether the student's misbehavior arises from a qualifying impairment.

District's Code of Conduct Violations and Consequences

Examples of Conduct Violations	Definition	Minimum Level	Maximum Level
Chronic Lack of Supplies	Repeatedly reporting to class without necessary materials such as books, physical education attire, supplies, etc.	1	2
Cutting Class	Failing to attend scheduled class and/or arriving to class at least ten (10) minutes beyond the scheduled start time without a valid pass.	1	3
Defacement of School Property	Participating in activity that results in substantial destruction or disfigurement of school property that is not the result of accidental behavior.	1	3
Dishonesty / Forging / Cheating	Delivering message that is untrue (verbal or written), producing a forged school document (e.g., pass), turning in academic work produced by other students as their own, plagiarizing/cheating.	1	3
Disruption	Causing an interruption in a class or activity which may include sustained loud talking, yelling or screaming, making noises with materials; horseplay or rough-housing, and/or sustained out-of-seat behavior.	1	3
Entering School Grounds Without Permission	Trespassing on school property during or outside of regular hours of building operation and/or during out of school suspension without permission.	1	3
Failure to Comply with Administrative Detention	Failing to attend administrative detention, arriving more than ten (10) minutes after the scheduled start time, or leaving administrative detention without permission.	1	3
Failure to Comply with Teacher Detention	Failing to attend teacher detention, arriving more than ten (10) minutes after the scheduled start time, or leaving teacher detention without permission.	1	2
Food Fighting	Deliberately throwing food or beverages	2	3
Gang Related Activity	Wearing of clothing or jewelry associated with a gang and/or using written, verbal or gestures that are symbolic of gang signs, or other indicators of gang related activity.	1	4
Harassment / Intimidation / Bullying	Intentionally delivering threatening messages, real or implied, (verbal, gestural, or textual) to another person with the intent of causing hurt or harm, or which has the effect of causing a disruption to the orderly operation of the school.	1	4
Inappropriate Dress	Dressing in a manner that interferes with the teaching and learning of others. Students must wear appropriate attire as determined by administration.	1	2

(Level 1 – Conference) (Level 2 – Intervention) (Level 3 – Suspension Short term 1-4 days/long term 10 days – pending expulsion hearing) (Level 4 – Expulsion) Refer to pages 60-62 for definitions of levels.

Examples of Conduct Violations	Definition	Minimum Level	Maximum Level
Lacking Supervision / Loitering	Wandering in the hallway without permission; leaving a designated area without permission or supervision; remaining in the hallway after allotted transition time; and/or if a student is in an unauthorized area of the building without permission (e.g., storage room).	1	3
Leaving Class Without Permission	Leaving class without permission.	1	3
Misuse of School Equipment	Using school equipment without permission and/or without following instructions.	1	2
Non-compliance / Defiance / Disrespect	Refusing to follow directions, talking back, or engaging in socially rude interactions toward staff and/or students that include negative verbal statements or gestures.	1	3
Obscene / Inappropriate Language / Materials	Verbalizing or writing messages, and/or making gestures that include swearing, name calling, profanity, and/or explicit messages of a violent nature.	1	3
Physical Aggression	Delivering actions that involve substantial physical contact toward another where injury may occur (e.g. hitting, punching, hitting with an object, kicking, hair pulling, scratching, etc.).	2	4
Possession or Use of Tobacco Products	Possessing or using tobacco products while on school property or in attendance at school sponsored events.	1	4
Possession of Unsafe Objects / Materials	Possessing an item that can potentially place them or others at risk for injury. Examples include sharp objects, items that may be construed as weapons and toxic substances. This definition applies even if the student has not used the item in an unsafe manner or has not threatened to use the item. Devices that contain combustible material (snaps, “stink bombs”, jumping jacks, firecrackers)	1	3
Sexually Inappropriate Activity or Behavior / Gestures / Materials	Verbalizing, writing, texting or ‘sexting’ messages, and/or making gestures that include pornographic content, mature themes, inappropriate touching, solicitation, and/or explicit messages of a sexual nature.	1	4
Theft	Removing someone else’s property without that person’s permission. (Student may have said item or may have passed identified item on to another).	1	3
Tardiness to Class	Failing to arrive to class at the scheduled start time without a pass or permission.	1	2

(Level 1 – Conference) (Level 2 – Intervention) (Level 3 – Suspension Short term 1-4 days/long term 10 days – pending expulsion hearing) (Level 4 – Expulsion) Refer to pages 60-62 for definitions of levels

Examples of Conduct Violations	Definition	Minimum Level	Maximum Level
Tardiness to School	Failing to arrive to school at the scheduled start time and/or arrives late to school without permission.	1	2
Throwing Objects	Deliberately throwing or tossing objects.	1	3
Truancy	Failing to report to school without prior permission, knowledge or excuse by the school or parent. Leaving school without permission.	1	2
Use of an Electronic Device	Using personal electronic devices such as a cell phone, MP3 players, image recorder, or electronic entertainment device at any time on school property without the expressed written permission of the school principal or noted in the IEP.	1	2

(Level 1 – Conference) (Level 2 – Intervention) (Level 3 – Suspension Short term 1-4 days/long term 10 days – pending expulsion hearing) (Level 4 – Expulsion) Refer to pages 60-62 for definition of levels.



IRVINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Union Avenue Middle School

Mr. M. Pierre, Principal

427 Union Avenue
Irvington, NJ 07111
(973) 399-6885
(973) 371-0957- FAX

Ms. S. Hill
Assistant Principal
973-399-6885 Ext. 1721

Mr. M. Baala
Assistant Principal
973-399-6885 Ext. 1720

The Merit/Demerit Program

August 25, 2021

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

The Union Avenue Middle School Staff uses ClassDojo as a vehicle by which you and your child can monitor his or her progress regarding classroom behavior and participation. There are many parents and guardians who are active users of the program and find it very useful in communicating with the teachers. You can access ClassDojo by signing up on the web at ClassDojo.com or by downloading the ClassDojo app on your cell phone.

The goal is to create an environment conducive to learning. To this end, rules and regulations have been established. With that said, the school has a Merit and Demerit Program by which staff members award merit or issue demerit points to students based on exhibited positive and negative behaviors. Please review the list of infractions and positive behaviors accompanied by the demerit and merit points on pages **22-23** of this document.

Thank you for your anticipated assistance in helping us monitor the progress of your child.

Sincerely,

Muller Pierre
Principal

Acknowledgement Form

After you have read the Merit/Demerit Program rules and requirements please sign below. **Failure to return this form will not exempt your child from the Merit/Demerit Program.**

Parent/Guardian Name (Print)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Student Name
(Print)

Student Signature

Date

This page must be signed and returned no later than Wednesday, September 15, 2021.



IRVINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Union Avenue Middle School

Mr. M. Pierre, Principal

427 Union Avenue
Irvington, NJ 07111
(973) 399-6885
(973) 371-0957- FAX

Ms. S. Hill
Assistant Principal
973-399-6885 Ext. 1721

Mr. M. Baala
Assistant Principal
973-399-6885 Ext. 1720

The Merit/Demerit System is a guide of discipline and rewards for sixth through eighth grade students at Union Avenue Middle School. The faculty and staff expect students at Union Avenue Middle School to maintain the highest standards of behavior at all times. Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct and regulations will result in the issuing of demerits and/or other disciplinary actions.

MERIT CODE

All students begin the school year with a blank slate or zero. In order to attend school functions (dances, field trips, assemblies, pep rallies, sporting events, etc.) students must earn a required number of merit points each month. For example, a student must have at least 6 merit points to attend or participate in extra-curricular activities in September and incrementally increase by 6 points each month. Students can earn additional merits from the faculty and staff for displaying positive behavior, which will be documented on the Student Merit form that briefly documents the reason for the accolade. On a monthly basis this report will be used as part of the criteria to select students of the month in each grade level. A student is not to receive more than one merit reward per staff member, per day. Positive Behavior in School team members will monitor the Merit/Demerit points program to ensure that proper procedures are followed. No student will be permitted to attend or participate in any after school functions, trips, clubs, and sports with negative merit points. **Negative merit points (demerits) will be deleted every 8 weeks in order to encourage the students who have improved on their behavior and give everyone an opportunity to participate and enjoy the activities that the school offers.** On a monthly basis, a report will be collected regarding the merit and demerit points for each student in the school. Those with the highest points will earn recognition such as student of the month, shopping coupons for the school store, and participation in raffles.

DEMERIT CODE

The Class Dojo program will also document a demerit system of discipline. A student will receive demerits based on any disrespectful, rebellious, and/or disruptive behavior. Demerits serve as a record of the scholar's inappropriate conduct and as a communication tool to parents that their help is needed to correct their child's behavior. A student is not to receive more than one demerit



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infraction per teacher per day. Again, Positive Behavior in School team members will monitor the Merit/Demerit points program to ensure that proper procedures are followed. Demerits may also be assigned at the discretion of the administration in certain cases, which are not covered by the list.

RESETTING of POINTS

The merit and demerit points will accumulate month to month. Every 8 weeks, the demerits will be reset to zero in order to give students renewed opportunities to earn positive merit points and participate in upcoming extra-curricular activities. A guidance counselor will review a student's record of his /her accumulated merit and demerit points during conference meetings each marking period.

The lists on pages **22-23** are examples of the type of positive attributes for which your child will be recognized with merit points as well as examples of infractions for which your child will held accountable and issued demerit points. The merit and demerit lists on the following pages may change based on the needs of the school building. Please regularly check the Class Dojo portal for the current lists, as well as monitor the progress of your child.

Positive Behavior	Merit(s)
Courteous and/or respectful (weekly basis)	1
Displaying school spirit (participates in an after school activity)	1
Does most (80%) homework (bi-weekly)	1
Maintains good behavior in the auditorium (weekly basis)	1
Maintains good behavior in the hallway (weekly basis)	1
Maintains good behavior in the lunch room (weekly basis)	1
Good Citizenship (weekly basis)	1
Good attendance for after school programs (bi-weekly)	1
Good attendance for Saturday School (bi-weekly)	1
Good classroom behavior (bi-weekly)	3
Maintains good attendance (95% or higher) (quarterly)	3
Volunteering (a minimum of 10 hours and maintains a log with signatures)	5
Honor Roll (quarterly)	3
Super Honor Roll (quarterly)	5
Recovering and Returning Lost Items	3



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Infractions	Demerit(s)
Using profanity and/or acts of vulgarity	1
Defiance (Refusal to follow directions)	1
Disrespect (Rude/insulting others)	1
Dress code violation (3 or more incidents double demerits)	3
Failure to provide identity to faculty/staff members	2
Failure to report misconduct	2
Littering	2
Running, loud talking in halls, and/or wandering in the hall without a pass	2
Unexcused tardy to class (three or more times)	2
Failure to serve detention	3
Instigating	3
Rowdy behavior (horseplay)	3
Refusal to put cell phone, music devices (including headphones), and other electronics away after being advised	3
Abusive language (Cursing at someone)	3
Cheating, including plagiarism	3
Stealing (Taking anyone's belongings without permission)	3
Cutting class and/or walking out of class	3
Failure to attend Saturday Detention	3
Classroom disruption (interfering learning and teaching)	3
Defacing property	3
Fighting	10
Setting off a fire-alarm	10
Found guilty of an HIB offense	10
Possession of illegal paraphernalia	10
Sexual Activity/Lascivious behavior	10
Use of alcohol/illegal drugs	10

Year End Incentive Trips

Students must earn the right to attend the end of the year incentive trips. Again, please be mindful of the possible consequences for a student who is chronically absent from school without an acceptable reason (see pages 8-10 of this document). Each grade level will have an end of the year incentive trip and field day. Those students who have displayed positive and appropriate behavior over the course of the school year and maintained positive merit points and good attendance will be eligible to participate. The respective grade level field trips are all day events. Additionally, grade 8 students will have a dinner dance after normal school hours at a date to be determined.

Field Trips

In order to expedite the smooth planning of approved field trips, it is necessary that all pupils desiring inclusion on said trips do the following:

- Secure and complete a signed permission slip by a parent/guardian and provide current and reliable information.
- Return the permission slip in a timely manner. No student will be permitted to attend any approved trips without a signed permission slip. The teacher/sponsor will be in charge of distributing, collecting, and accounting for all monies and permission slips.
- Complete any homework, tests, and class work missed as a result of attending the approved trip.

Lost and Found

Lost articles are kept for a period of one month. A student should report to the school office as soon as possible after discovering a loss. It is particularly helpful if nametags are placed on all items. **All students must have a lock when using the physical education locker rooms.**

General Cafeteria Guidelines

- You must arrive at the cafeteria in a timely manner.
- You must line up when and where instructed. **Do not cut in line.**
- You must sit at your assigned table. Saving seats is not permitted.
- You must remain in your seat during the lunch period unless you have been granted permission to leave by an administrator. You must ask permission to use the restroom, water fountain, or to return to the lunch line. Passes to the restroom are provided on a first come, first served basis.
- Do not leave the dining hall for any reason without permission.
- All eating must be done in the dining hall. No food or drink is to leave the dining hall.
- Eat slowly. Be neat with food, drink, and wrappers.
- Speak in conversational tones. Shouting or yelling is not acceptable.
- Be courteous and considerate of others in the dining hall.
- For safety reasons, bottles or glass containers are not permitted in the dining hall and/or in the school.
- Each student is responsible for properly discarding his/her lunch tray and any other trash.

Locker Information

• Lockers are provided to all students. Students may be required to share a locker with another student in their homeroom as assigned by the homeroom teacher. All students are responsible for their own materials.

- Students are responsible for all of their books and personal property that are kept in their lockers. **Locker combinations should not be given to anyone who is not assigned to the locker.**
- School lockers remain the property of the district even when used by students. Lockers are subject to administrative search in the interests of school safety, sanitation, and discipline.
- Any illegal materials found in a locker will be subject to seizure. Such materials may be used as evidence against the student in disciplinary proceeding. If school authorities have reasonable suspicion that a locker contains materials that pose a threat to the health, welfare, and safety of students in the school or the school environment, the locker may be searched without prior warning.
- Law enforcement officials upon presentation of a proper warrant may search lockers.
- If students are habitually using their lockers during unauthorized times, their lockers will be padlocked and they must carry their books to class.
- Students will be informed of this policy when lockers are assigned. Failure to follow school locker rules or misuse of lockers may result in loss of locker privileges.

Gym Lockers

In an effort to prevent unnecessary theft or loss:

• It is strongly recommended that students store their personal items in a locker after changing for physical education class. Students are required to bring a combination lock to school for use during gym class. Union Avenue Middle School is not responsible for stolen items.

• Student must remove the lock and personal belongings at the conclusion of each gym class.

Search and Seizure

School officials may search a student's personal possessions when there are reasonable grounds on the part of the official to believe that illegal or prohibited substances or objects are present.

Entry, Exit, and Homeroom Procedures

- Each student is assigned a homeroom by grade level.
- First period instruction begins at 8:25 A.M. All students must remain on the first floor prior to the beginning of school, except for those students who have an appointment with a teacher. Students who have an appointment must have a pass or note.
- A.M. Homeroom is incorporated into the first block. Students must be seated before the ringing of the late bell at 8:31 a.m. **Homeroom and first period are combined into the same period.**
- Morning announcements will commence at 8:30 a.m. daily. Other arrangements will be made during testing.
- During the opening announcements, students will stand, salute, and recite the Pledge of Allegiance to our flag or show respect to the flag by standing at attention while the pledge is recited.
- Students will listen to announcements via the intercom.
- Late students who are in the hallways must stop and listen to the opening announcements.

Extracurricular Eligibility Policy

The Irvington Board of Education, in accord with recent New Jersey Department of Education mandates, shall establish the following criteria for all students who wish to participate in extracurricular activities.

- To be eligible for any sport, a student must maintain a “C” average.
- At the discretion of the principal, a student may be declared ineligible for failure to comply with school rules and regulations regarding tardiness, class cutting, and proper behavior in school, during the athletic event, and in the community.
- Any student involved in the use of alcohol or drugs (not of a medical nature) will be removed from all eligibility lists for a period of time to be determined by the principal.
- All students eligible for sports must also meet the following attendance requirements:
 - a. Any student eligible for fall and winter sports becomes ineligible after seven unexcused absences from school or until an appeal is filed by the attendance office.
 - b. Any student eligible for spring sports becomes ineligible after fifteen unexcused absences or until an appeal is filed and approved by the attendance office.
- All special education students must meet the requirements outlined within his/her Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Anyone is eligible to try out for a sport providing he/she has a grade point average of “C” or better. All students are required to have a permission form filled out and signed by their parent or guardian. At that point, the school doctor will schedule the student for a physical examination provided that he or she meets the academic requirements.

Positive Behavior Support in School (PBSIS)

Union Avenue Middle School will incorporate the PBSIS program. The purpose of PBSIS is to help the school create positive learning environments that lead to a reduction of discipline problems, and increase opportunities for all students to learn. Positive proactive and practical interventions are used to produce socially desired behaviors at the school wide, classroom and individual student levels.

The success of an educational program relies on the involvement of the entire school community: students, parents, staff, and community stakeholders. The professional staff will handle routine discipline matters through: individual student conferences, parent conferences, phone calls home, teacher detentions (lunch/after school) and referrals to the school dean and assistant principals. The role of the school administration is one of support for the professional staff in disciplinary matters. Administrative staff will work with pupils, staff and parents to resolve disciplinary issues. Students are to follow these clear expectations in all school areas.

Parent Information

Lunch Program

Union Avenue Middle School has a closed lunch program where students are not allowed to leave the school premises. Lunch applications are sent home at the beginning of the year for parents to complete. **Parents can also complete the lunch application via the Internet address, nlappscloud.com, which can be accessed through the District's website.** All information must be answered for the application to be processed. Parents will be notified if their child qualifies for free or reduced lunch. Students also have the option to bring lunch from home or purchase the daily lunch at full price if they do not qualify for the program. **Lunch is not served during four-hour session days (half days). Please note that all students must submit a lunch application.**

***Anyone who does not return a lunch form by the assigned date will be assigned a Home for Parent (HFP) letter.**

The government requires the school to thoroughly verify the lunch applications. Therefore, it is imperative that you submit the requested application by the due date.

Breakfast Program

A “Breakfast in the Classroom Program” is offered to all students regardless of their lunch application status. The breakfast is delivered in each homeroom for students to enjoy beginning at 8:25 a.m. The serving of breakfast ends at 8:45 a.m.

Emergency Pickup

Once a student enters the building in the morning, he/she will not be permitted to leave before the official dismissal time unless he or she is picked up by a pre-approved adult(i.e., an adult listed on the Updating Sheet).

Parent Conference

In order that home and school may work more effectively for the education and training of the students, a mandatory parent conference is scheduled in November. **Due to the special circumstances effectuated by Covid-19, the conference may be scheduled online.** Additional conferences may be initiated either by the parent or the teacher when either deems it necessary. These conferences may be arranged through the guidance counselor's office unless it is more convenient for both parties to communicate via email or the Class Dojo.

The Open House date for the 2021-2022 school year is to be determined. Parents will be given the opportunity to make an appointment for the November conference. Prior to the conference, parents will receive a confirmation letter.

Parent Academy

Union Avenue Middle School offers a series of meetings and workshops once a month to engage families and provide them with tools that will help their children. Examples of planned workshops are Social-Emotional Learning, Restorative Practices and Available Family Resources.

Parent-Teacher Association

Union Avenue Middle School has a functioning PTA that provides an important link between home and school. The PTA organizes and sponsors school activities to support education and build school community. All parents and guardians are encouraged to join the PTA. Additional information will be provided during the Open House Night.

Homework Policy

The purpose of homework is to help students become self-directing and independent learners. It is intended to extend and reinforce the learning experience of the school. It provides students with practice in the mastery of skills, experience in data gathering, and an opportunity to remediate learning problems. The homework process recognizes the role of the parent in helping the student carry out assigned responsibilities. Therefore, parents and students will have online information about homework assignments. Grade 6 scholars will have 60 minutes, grade 7 will have 70 minutes, and grade 8 will have 80 minutes of homework. **Please note that students receive a grade for homework as per the District's Uniform Grading Profile.**

Make-Up Assignments

Pupils absent for any reason must make up assignments, class work, and tests within a reasonable length of time. Students who have been absent from school for an extended time are permitted the same length of time to make up assignments. For example, a child absent for five consecutive days will have five days to complete all make-up work.

Special Education

We have a population of students with special educational needs that cannot be met in regular classrooms by standard academic programs and regular classroom teachers. It is the goal of special education to provide programs and personnel to help these exceptional students achieve their full potential. At Union Avenue Middle School, every effort is made to educate special needs students in a least restrictive environment.

Early Dismissal

If an emergency arises in which a student must be taken out of school, a parent or legal guardian must present himself/herself at the school and personally sign the student out. **No telephone calls will be accepted, and anyone picking up a child before dismissal time must show a valid identification card, which will be copied and kept on file before a student is released to his/her care.** No child will be released in the care of a person whose name is not on the emergency form.

Open House

The Open House schedule will be announced. All parents are encouraged to attend Open House, and it is a great opportunity for parents to meet with the administration, classroom teachers, and specialists who will be interacting with their children.

Observation of a Classroom or School Activity

If you would like to observe a lesson or activity in progress that includes your child, please call the main office at least a day in advance. The principal will arrange for your observation with the staff member. Please remember that you are present to solely observe and will not be able to meet with the teacher at the time. Recording devices are not permitted, nor are transcripts of lessons or activities. As this is a time during which the staff member is engaged in his/her responsibilities, it is not an appropriate time to engage the staff member in conversation. If you would like a parent-teacher conference, we would be more than pleased to arrange for one at another time. The length of the observation will be limited to one instructional period.

Transfers

Transfer cards will be issued only to the student's legal parent/guardian. The parent/guardian of a student transferring from the school district must give the school's secretary the following information:

- the date that the student will be leaving the district
- the name and address of the student's new school
- the student's new home address and telephone number

The transfer card and all other pertinent information will be issued to the parent/guardian after the

student has completed a Transfer Clearance Sheet (TCS). The TCS must be signed by the student's teachers indicating that all books, fines, etc. have been properly accounted for. The TCS requires the signature of the guidance counselor, school nurse, register clerk, and the appropriate administrator.

Updating Sheets

Each September an information packet is sent home for parents to complete. It is necessary to return the packet as soon as possible so that the school can update students' records. The packet includes the following information: personal information, medical information, insurance form, emergency information, lunch application, an Internet permission slip, and a press image release form. **This school year, it is an absolute necessity for parents and guardians to provide their email addresses to the school.** Students will not be issued their first cycle report cards unless an updating sheet is on file. Any student who does not return this packet in a timely manner will receive a Home For Parent letter until it is returned.

Visitor Policy

Due to the special circumstances brought forth by the Covid-19 Pandemic, there will not be any classroom visits. Please review the Visitor Policy below:

- All visitors will be deterred from entering the building unless they are essential to the operation of the building.
- For the protection of our students and staff, all visitors are required to **enter and exit** the school building through the **Main Entrance** door only. All visitors must sign in at our receiving desk and follow the instructions of the security guard in charge. Visitors will be required to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and issued a visitor's badge while in the building.
- Student visitors are prohibited; we cannot accept responsibility for their safety or behavior while in the school.
- Visitors will announce their business before being allowed entry into the building. Once a visitor enters the building, he/she must wait for the security guard's direction to sign-in and to receive further instruction.
- All visitors must wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Parents or guardians cannot sign out children unless it is an extreme emergency. Otherwise, parents must make prior arrangements, and security will assist with the identification, sign-out and release of the child.

Notification of Change of Status

If you plan to change your address or phone number, please notify the Main Office at 973-399-6885, ext. 1703. This information is vital in case of emergency.

Telephones

The office may take messages for students in emergency situations only. Parents that constantly call the school to leave messages will be referred to the principal. Since office telephones are constantly in use for school business, students may not use an office telephone to call home unless it is an emergency.

Parents are encouraged to call and/or email teachers when they have questions. Teachers will return calls and emails during their preparation period.

Illegal Residents

If you know of a suspected illegal resident attending Union Avenue Middle School or any district school please call 973-399-6885, ext. 1719. All calls will be confidential. A parent of a student found to be an illegal resident might be subjected to a monetary fine.

Calendars

Each month, a calendar listing all of the month's activities and special events will be posted on the Union Avenue Middle School Website and on ClassDojo. Please display this calendar in a central location in your home. The calendar will also assist you in planning to participate in the school's monthly activities and special events.

Drop-off Zone

Students who receive a ride to and from school must notify the driver that the only drop-off zone is on Rutgers Street. **Do not drop/pick up pupils on Union Avenue or the staff parking lot. Also, please remember that jaywalking is both unsafe and illegal.** Students must cross at each corner according to the traffic signal. Students must also respect and follow the instructions of the crossing guards.

Health Services

Good health is basic to learning. School health services include growth, dental, vision, hearing, tuberculosis, scoliosis, and physical screenings, as required by state law and in accordance with District policy. These services are coordinated and/or carried out by a full-time certified school nurse in consultation with the school physician.

In addition, the school nurse maintains accurate health records on all students, manages illnesses/injuries occurring during school hours, confers with staff and parents, participates in the child study process, advises students in matters of health, leads the Wellness Committee, and is a resource person in health education.

The primary responsibility for health rests with the parent or guardian. In school, management of illness and injury is limited to first aid. The parent or guardian will be contacted in situations that may need further attention. If not urgent, it will be the parent's responsibility to come to the school and have treatments rendered as necessary. In matters of urgency, the student may be referred to the family physician or emergency squad. Therefore, since there is a possibility of parents/guardians not being home in such instances, it is necessary to have parents/guardians complete and sign the student emergency form with the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of relatives or friends who will assume responsibility in the absence of a parent or a physician.

Please do not request that the school nurse "check" an injury that occurred outside of school, since this can only result in a referral to a physician. In addition, please keep the school nurse informed of changes in your child's health (including medication) to ensure the accuracy of health records.

Medication Policy

Administration of medication is not the responsibility of the school. All requests for the administration of a prescription medication must be in the form of a written note from a doctor. All prescription medication to be dispensed in the health office must be in the original container and clearly labeled with the name of the student, medication, doctor, and the times to be administered.

The following describes the policy of the Irvington Board of Education regarding the dispensing of medication to students.

Students are not permitted to carry or take medication in school. This includes over the counter medicine such as aspirin, cough drops, etc.

If a student has to take medication during school hours, it will be necessary to provide:

- the medication labeled by the pharmacy
- a statement from the private physician indicating the diagnosis of the condition for which the medication is prescribed, and the length of time during which medication should be taken
- written permission for dispensing medication (Please note the time that prior doses are given and if the student is to receive more than one dose a day)
- non-prescription medication is never dispensed at the school
- the school nurse and the parent are the only persons authorized to administer medication.

A child who is absent for three (3) consecutive days or more due to illness must be readmitted by the school nurse with a note.

Required Immunizations

Students will not be permitted to attend school unless immunization requirements have been met. All students must present records of complete immunization against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, and rubella for enrollment in the Irvington Public Schools.

Adjustments

State and District protocols in relation to the Covid-19 Pandemic may require changes to be made to the Parent/Student Handbook. Parents, guardians and students will be notified of any changes. In the interim, please note that everyone (students and adults) is required to wear a mask at all times once inside the school building. Everyone's body temperature will be checked in order to enter the school building. Below is the point of entry and exit.

- **All faculty, staff and visitors:** Main Entrance on Union Avenue (Entrance and Exit #2)
- **Grade 8 Students:** Rutgers Street Entrance on Rutgers Street (Entrance and Exit #3)
- **Grade 7 Students:** Main Entrance on Union Avenue (Entrance and Exit #2)
- **Grade 6 Students:** Door G on Union Avenue (Entrance and Exit at Door G)

PARENT AND STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

2021-2022

The administration of Union Avenue Middle School has created this handbook to help students be successful in school. Parents/guardians must take responsibility for the actions of their children and should be involved in their education.

The school is in need of your cooperation and assistance. Please review and discuss this handbook with your son/daughter; sign this sheet and return it to the school. This form will be kept in your son/daughter's personal folder.

FAILURE TO RETURN THIS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WILL NOT RELIEVE A STUDENT AND/OR THE PARENT(S) FROM THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR KNOWLEDGE OF THE CONTENTS IN THIS HANDBOOK.

PARENT AND STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

AGREEMENT

2021-2022

Parent/Guardian Signature_____ Date_____

Address_____

Home Phone #_____ Work Phone #_____

Cell Phone#_____

Parent/Guardian Signature_____ Date_____

Student
Signature_____

Date _____ Homeroom _____

PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN THIS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO YOUR CHILD'S HOMEROOM TEACHER BY THE NEXT SCHOOL DAY.