

IRVINGTON
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Mount Vernon Avenue Elementary School



Where Scholars Learn to SOAR!
Success, Ownership, Attitude, Respect

2025 – 2026

PARENT-SCHOLAR HANDBOOK

54 Mount Vernon Avenue
Irvington, NJ 07111

IRVINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Irvington, NJ 07111



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SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Eric James
Acting Principal

Dr. Alim S. Edwards
Assistant Principal

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MOUNT VERNON AVENUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

VISION & MISSION STATEMENT

The vision and mission statement of Mount Vernon Avenue Elementary School was developed by a committee representing a wide cross-section of the Mount Vernon Avenue Elementary School staff, along with significant input from parents and scholars. Our vision and mission statement is as follows:

The mission of Irvington Public School is to inspire and instruct all students to think critically, creatively, and responsibly, embrace diversity, and pursue their dreams with purpose. At Mount Vernon, we promise to provide an exemplary education in an environment that is safe and conducive to learning. As we enter the 2025-2026 school year, our goal is to create scholarly individuals by providing an exceptional educational environment that fosters critical thinking, citizenship, self-directed learning, and lifelong learners.

Mount Vernon Avenue Elementary School's vision and mission statement is fully compatible with the vision and principles of the Irvington Public School district. Both stress the development of the whole child; that is, not just the academic aspect of schooling, but the physical, social, and emotional areas as well.

PRINCIPAL'S GOALS

1. **Enhance School Safety:** Implement and maintain safety protocols to create a secure and comfortable environment for all students, staff, and visitors.
2. **Foster Inclusivity:** Promote diversity and inclusivity initiatives to ensure every student feels valued and respected.
3. **Strengthen Parent-Teacher Collaboration:** Encourage regular communication and engagement with parents and guardians to support students' holistic development.
4. **Improve Academic Performance:** Work with teachers to develop strategies that enhance academic achievements and facilitate student progress.
5. **Enhance Professional Development:** Provide opportunities for teachers to participate in workshops and training sessions to improve their teaching methodologies.
6. **Develop Individualized Learning Plans:** Collaborate with teachers to create personalized learning plans for students with unique educational needs.
7. **Integrate Technology:** Introduce and incorporate modern educational technologies to enrich classroom experiences and prepare students for a technology-driven world.
8. **Encourage Extracurricular Activities:** Promote a variety of extracurricular programs to enhance students' creativity, leadership, and teamwork skills.
9. **Strengthen Community Engagement:** Establish partnerships with local organizations to involve the community in school initiatives and events.
10. **Improve School Infrastructure:** Identify areas for improvement and work towards creating a conducive and stimulating learning environment.
11. **Promote Health and Wellness:** Implement wellness programs to promote physical and mental well-being among students and staff.
12. **Celebrate Achievements:** Recognize and celebrate student accomplishments to boost morale and encourage continuous growth.

FACULTY & STAFF DIRECTORY

Main Office..... (973) 399-6875

Administration

Mr. Eric James, Acting Principal.....(973)399-6875 Ext. 1402
ejames@irvington.k12.nj.us

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Office Personnel

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Sharice Banks, Secretary.....(973) 399-6875 Ext. 1401
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Scholar Support

TBA, School Counselor.....(973) 399-6826 Ext. 1405
TBD @irvington.k12.nj.us

Woolianna Pierre, Health & Social Services Social Worker..... (973)399-6875 Ext. 1415
wpierre@irvington.k12.nj.us

Parent Coordinator

TBA, Parent Coordinator..... (973)399-6875 Ext. 1417/1418

Medical Office

Marcia Lewis, School Nurse..... (973) 399-6875 Ext. 1412
Florence Arias, Medical Clerk..... (973) 399-6875 Ext. 1412

Custodial Office

Derrick Barker, Head Custodian..... (973) 399-6875
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IRVINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS CALENDAR

Irvington Public Schools

July 2025 - June 2026

July 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

August 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

September 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

December 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Testing Dates 2025-2026	
Cycle 1 Testing:	TBD
High School Portfolio Appeals:	TBD
NAEP: Tentative	TBD
Cycle 2 Testing/Midterm Exam:	TBD
Cycle 3 Testing/Midterm Exam:	TBD

Jul. 4	District Closed
Jul. 7	Promotional/Credit Recovery Summer School Begins
Aug. 1	Promotional School Ends- Middle School
Aug. 8	Promotional Summer School Ends- IHS
Aug. 8	Credit Recovery School Ends
Sept. 1	Labor Day-District Closed
Sept. 2	Fall Conference- Teachers
Sept. 3	First Day for Students
Sept. 3-5	4 Hour Session for Students
	Teachers In-Service
Oct. 3	Marking Period 1 Progress Reports
Oct. 7	4 Hour Session for Students
	Teachers In-Service
Oct. 13	Indigenous Peoples' Day- District Closed
Nov. 2	Daylight Savings Ends.
Nov. 5	End of 1st Marking Period (45 Days)
Nov. 6-7	NJEA Conference- District Closed
Nov. 11	Veterans Day- District Closed (Observed)
Nov. 26	4 Hour Session- Teacher/Students
Nov. 27-28	Thanksgiving- District Closed
Dec. 1-2	Parent Teacher Conference
	4 Hour Session (Elementary/Middle)
Dec. 3	Evening Parent Teacher Conference
	(Elementary/Middle)
Dec. 4	Evening Parent Teacher Conference (High School)
Dec. 9	4 Hour Session- Teachers In-Service
Dec. 15	Marking Period 2 Progress Reports
Dec. 23	4 Hour Session- Teachers/Students
Dec. 24-31	Schools Closed
Dec. 24-25, 31	District Closed
Jan. 1-2	District Closed
Jan. 5	Schools Reopen
Jan. 19	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday
	District Closed
Jan. 27	End of 2nd Marking Period (45 Days)
Feb. 5	Marking Period 2 Report Cards
Feb. 10	4 Hour Session- Teachers In-Service
Feb. 16	President's Day- District Closed
Mar. 2	Marking Period 3 Progress Reports
Mar. 8	Daylight Savings Time Starts
Mar. 19	Districtwide SEL Day
Mar. 20	Eid Al Fitr- District Closed
Mar. 30-31	Spring Recess- Schools Closed
Apr. 1-3	Spring Recess- Schools Closed
Apr. 3	Good Friday- District Closed
Apr. 6	Schools Reopen
Apr. 9	End of 3rd Marking Period (45 days)
Apr. 20	Marking Period 3 Report Cards
May 12	Marking Period 4 Progress Reports
May 25	Memorial Day- District Closed
Jun. 16-17	4 Hour Session for Students
Jun. 18	Final Day for Students/Teachers (45 Days)
Jun. 18	Report Cards Available Online
Jun. 19	Juneteenth- District Closed

January 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
14	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	19	21	22	23	24	25
26	26	28	29	30		

May 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	26
28	29	30				

Total Days	
Students	183
Teachers	184

In the event that more than 3 emergency days are needed, adjustments will be made at the discretion of the Superintendent.

■	Schools/District Closed
■	4 Hour Session
■	End of Marking Period
■	Progress Reports
■	Report Cards

Board Approved: May 21, 2025

2025-2026 BELL SCHEDULES

FULL DAY

Period	Bell Schedule
Teacher Sign-In	8:25 am
Homeroom	8:30 am – 8:40 am
1	8:41 am – 9:26 am
2	9:27 am – 10:12 am
3	10:12 am – 10:58 am
4	10:59 am – 11:44 am (K & 1 st Grade Lunch)
5	11:45 am – 12:30 pm (2 nd & 3 rd Grade Lunch)
6	12:31 pm – 1:16 pm (4 th & 5 th Grade Lunch)
7	1:17 pm – 2:02 pm
8	2:03 pm – 2:48 pm
Dismissal	2:48 pm – 3:00 pm
Teacher Dismissal	3:05 pm

HALF DAY

Period	Bell Schedule
1	8:26 am – 8:56 am
2	8:57 am – 9:27 am
3	9:28 am – 9:58 am
4	9:59 am – 10:29 am
5	10:30 am – 11:00 am
6	11:01 am – 11:31 am
7	11:32 am – 12:02 pm
Dismissal	12:03 pm – 12:30 pm

DELAYED OPENING

Period	Bell Schedule
1	10:00 am – 10:40 am
2	10:40 am – 11:15 am
3	11:15 am – 11:50 am
4	11:50 am – 12:25 pm (K & 1 st Grade Lunch)
5	12:25 pm – 1:00 pm (2 nd & 3 rd Grade Lunch)
6	1:00 pm – 1:30 pm (4 th & 5 th Grade Lunch)
7	1:35 pm – 2:10 pm
8	2:10 pm – 2:45 pm
Afternoon Homeroom	2:45 pm – 2:50 pm
Dismissal	2:50 pm

I. DEPARTMENTS

Guidance Department

Mount Vernon's school counselor collaborates with scholars, teachers, and parents under the guidance of the principal. The counselors also seek the assistance of the Child Study Team and community resources when necessary. Rapport, both on a one-to-one and group basis, is an important part of the counseling process that helps scholars establish life skills and resolve personal, social, and emotional problems. Guidance, therefore, aims to provide an opportunity for individuals to maximize their potential for growth and development.

Parent Coordinator

The Parent Coordinator's goal is to increase parental and community involvement in the school community. The Parent Coordinator facilitates monthly parent workshops designed to provide parents/guardians with resources and educate them on matters that affect their child's academic performance and development. Such workshops have included Early Literacy Skills, Numeracy and Technology, Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Informational sessions. Parents are provided with certificates of attendance; door prizes are given at each workshop, and an annual parent dinner celebrating highly active and engaged parents/guardians.

Health and Social Services Coordinator

Scholars requiring additional counseling sessions are supported through our Health and Social Services Coordinator (HSSC). The HSSC is a master's level, clinically trained social worker that delivers services aimed at removing the roadblocks to success so that each scholar can reach their potential and have academic success. Additionally, they provide support to parents by introducing them to support agencies throughout the Irvington community.

Special Services

At Mt. Vernon Avenue Elementary School, scholars with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) receive instruction in an inclusion classroom alongside their general education peers. Following a co-teaching model, our Special Education Teachers support scholars with an IEP in ELA and Math. Regardless of a child's classification, Mt. Vernon Ave. The school encourages high expectations, variability, and flexibility in instruction to meet the unique needs of its students while addressing the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

Child Study Team

The Child Study Team consists of three members: a learning disability teacher consultant, a psychologist, and a social worker. The primary role of the team is to evaluate scholars who may experience learning and/or emotional difficulty and to provide, when necessary, supportive services.

Bilingual/ESL/ELL Programs

Many scholars come to our schools with little or no knowledge of English. However, many of them come with highly developed academic skills in their native languages. The Bilingual/ESL Program was established to build and expand scholars' reading, writing, listening, and other academic skills as they learn

English. The Bilingual and English as a Second Language Program is a transitional program. Participants receive a maximum of three years of daily instruction in Reading, Mathematics, and English as a Second Language.

Speech Therapy

Therapy in speech and language is offered to students who are experiencing difficulty with the articulation of sounds and/or the reception of language expression. The therapist provides instruction, either individually or in small groups, several times a week, depending on the needs of the scholars.

Health Services

Good health is fundamental to learning. School health services include screenings for growth, dental, vision, hearing, tuberculosis (TB), scoliosis, and physical health, 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 for all scholars, manages illnesses and injuries that occur during school hours, confers with staff and parents, participates in the child study process, counsels scholars on health matters, and serves as 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 non-urgent, it will be the parent's responsibility to come to the school and have treatment rendered as necessary. In matters of urgency, the scholars may be referred to the family physician or the 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 scholar emergency form with the name, address, and telephone number of a relative or friend who will assume responsibility in the absence of parents or a physician.

Please keep the school nurse informed of changes in your child's health (including medication) for safety and health record accuracy.

II. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND GUIDELINES

Curriculum

Scholars in grades kindergarten through grade five are required to complete the requirements in Language Arts Literacy, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Music, Art, Physical Education, and Library. World Language is offered for scholars in grades four and five only. Curricular programs and resources satisfy the criteria established by the New Jersey Department of Education using the NJ Student Learning Standards.

Grading

Scholars receive a grade in all required courses. Grades are obtained by taking an average of all classwork, homework, projects, assessments, and other factors determined by the course, curriculum, as well as the teacher and departmental requirements.

The grading scale is as follows:

Kindergarten

S	Strength
M	Meeting Learning Standards
W	Weakness
N/A	Learning Standard Not Addressed this Marking Period

Grades 1 - 5

A	(90-100) Outstanding Achievement
B	(89-80) High Achievement
C	(79-70) Average Achievement
D	(69-60) Below Average Achievement
F	(Below 60) Significantly Below Average Achievement

All scholars receive a grade for Personal and Social Development using the following scale:

O	Outstanding
S	Satisfactory
N	Needs Improvement
U	Unsatisfactory

According to Irvington Board of Education policy, “in all elementary schools the 1st and 3rd report cards will be given to parents at a scheduled conference. For the remaining reporting periods, the report card will be sent home with the child.

Super Honor Roll/Honor Roll (scholars in grades 2 – 5)

Super Honor Roll: “A’s” and not more than one “B” in an academic subject. “A’s” and not more than one B in special and/or minor subjects. No marks lower than a “B”.

Honor Roll: “A’s” and “B’s” in all four academic subjects, with no mark lower than a “B” in special and/or minor subjects. No marks lower than a “B”

A scholar receiving N or U letters on the report card is ineligible for the Super Honor Roll or the Honor Roll.

Assessments

The instructional program is evaluated annually on a district-wide basis. Each year, all elementary scholars are given a battery designed for their respective grade level. Scholars in Kindergarten through grade two are evaluated with the administration of the Foundational Reading Assessment (FRA). Scholars in grades 3, 4, and 5 are assessed annually with the administration of the New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA). For more information, please consult <https://www.nj.gov/education/assessment/resources/>. Parents who wish to discuss the test results should contact the school Guidance Counselor.

Scholars in kindergarten through grade five are also assessed using the district curriculum’s unit assessments. These tests serve as indicators of potential “At Risk” scholars and provide additional data necessary to develop a supportive instructional program.

Homework

The amount of homework is based on the scholar's needs and considers other activities, which make a legitimate claim on the scholar's time. The homework process acknowledges the role of parents in helping scholars carry out assigned responsibilities. We urge parents to take the time to review assignments before they are returned to the teacher and to regularly check their child's progress on completing homework and other tasks through the PowerSchool Parent Portal.

Make-Up Work

Scholars absent for any reason (illness, suspension, etc.) must make up assignments, class work, and tests within a reasonable length of time. Scholars who have been absent from school for an extended time should be permitted the same length of time to make up assignments. For example, a child absent for five consecutive school days should have five days to complete all make-up work.

Parents may call the school office to request homework assignments. These assignments may be picked up at the school office after dismissal (2:50 pm) or be brought home by a brother, sister, or "study buddy" attending our school, if requested. It is the scholar's and parents' responsibility to ensure make-up work is submitted to the teacher to ensure a grade is received.

Progress Reports and Report Cards

Progress reports are sent home during the middle of each cycle. Report cards are distributed at the end of each marking period. Parents must participate in a parent/teacher conference at the end of the first marking period, at which time, they will receive the report card. Parents should review the reports with their child and contact the school guidance office if they have any questions concerning these reports. Parental involvement is crucial when improving scholars' academic performance. Report cards serve a significant function in school/home communication. Report cards will not be issued to scholars with continued low academic performance. In this case, the parent must schedule a time to pick up the report card from the teacher.

PowerSchool Parent Portal

The Irvington Board of Education offers parents/guardians secured access to its "PowerSchool Parent Portal", which allows real-time web access to your child's educational progress. The Parent Portal provides parents and guardians with access to their child's attendance and grades. Irvington Public Schools PowerSchool Parent Portal can be accessed via the PowerSchool Parent Portal link on the Irvington Public Schools website: <http://www.irvington.k12.nj.us>. Please contact the Guidance Counselor to obtain your secure access code.

Parent-Teacher Conference

The staff at Mt. Vernon Avenue Elementary School strives to collaborate with parents to maximize opportunities for every child to achieve success. A parent-staff conference will be requested by the school when a scholar is experiencing academic difficulties, behavioral issues, or a combination of both.

To enhance the effectiveness of home and school collaboration in the education and training of scholars, a mandatory parent conference is scheduled for December. During the Open House in September, parents will have the opportunity to meet with the administration, classroom teachers, and specialists who will be interacting with their children. There will also be an opportunity to schedule an appointment for the December conferences. Before the conference, parents will receive a confirmation letter. Additional conferences may be initiated by either the parent or the teacher when they deem it advisable. Whenever a conference is required, an appointment must be made in advance so that all parties can plan their time accordingly. These conferences may be arranged through the guidance counselor's office, unless it is more convenient for both parties to do otherwise.

Classroom Visitation or School Events Observation

If you would like to observe a lesson or activity in progress that includes your child, please call the main office at least one day (24 hours) in advance. The principal will arrange for your observation with the staff member. When observing, please remember that you are there to observe, not to intervene. Recording devices are not permitted, nor is the transcript of the lesson or activity. As this is a time when the staff member is engaged in their responsibilities, it is not an appropriate time to try to engage them in conversation. If you'd like a parent-teacher conference, we'd be more than happy to arrange one at a time that suits you. The observation will be limited to one instructional period.

III. SCHOOL PROCEDURES, POLICIES, AND REGULATIONS

Attendance

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 Title 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 attend the public school regularly....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 The bodily condition of the child is such as to prevent their 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...."

School attendance is crucial for success and is the responsibility of both the scholar and the parent. However, we recognize that scholars may occasionally be unable to attend school for legitimate reasons. Scholars are not entitled to any unexcused absences. A parent/guardian providing a written notice as to why a scholar was absent does not make the absence excusable. The attendance secretary will review all notes and determine if they meet the district's criteria for excused absences. At which time, legal proceedings as required by the district will begin.

Examples of unexcused absences include:

- Absence due to parental/scholar neglect -- overslept, etc.
- Visiting a family member
- Truancy -- cutting of classes and scheduled periods.

When an absence is excused, the frequency of absences is still a concern. Therefore, verification may be required when a scholar accumulates excessive absences. Additional administrative contact may be made with the parent/guardian and/or medical or professional personnel.

Absence Procedure

The parent or guardian must call the attendance office between 7:40 a.m. and 8:25 a.m. to provide the reason and the approximate length of absence. If no one answers, a message may be left, and the secretary will obtain the information. If a scholar 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 access to a parent or guardian at all times, in case of an emergency. Please update scholar records when changes occur.

When a child is absent from school, a note from the parent or legal guardian explaining the "excused" reason should be given to the scholar's homeroom teacher upon return. 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.

While the school accepts documentation explaining the absence, the NJ Department of Education only recognizes five allowable reasons for an absence: Religious observance (N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3(h)); A college visit (up to 3 days per school year, only for students in grades 11 and 12); “Take Our Children to Work Day” (under the memo issued by the Commissioner to all districts on April 25, 2017) or other rule issued by the Commissioner; Participation in observance of Veterans Day (N.J.S.A. 18A: 36-13.2) or district board of election membership activities (N.J.S.A. 18A: 36-33); or the closure of a busing district that prevents a student from having transportation to the receiving school. Please visit the NJDOE’s website on how school districts are required to report student absences at <https://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/attendance/ChronicAbsenteeismGuidance.pdf>.

If a child is expected to be absent for a prolonged period, the school must be notified of the length and reason. Arrangements should be made to receive homework for the child by contacting the guidance office.

- Homeroom teachers and guidance counselors closely monitor scholar attendance.
- Chronic truancy problems will be referred to the attendance office for appropriate court action, commencing with the fifth unexcused absence from school. Scholar attendance is also one of the areas considered when determining the promotion or retention of a scholar at the end of the year.
- Scholars must be present in school on a designated attendance day to participate in an activity scheduled for that day. Failure to be present in school will jeopardize participation.
- Scholars are reminded that to participate in athletic and extracurricular activities, they must be present in school on the day of each planned activity.

Dress Code - Uniform Policy

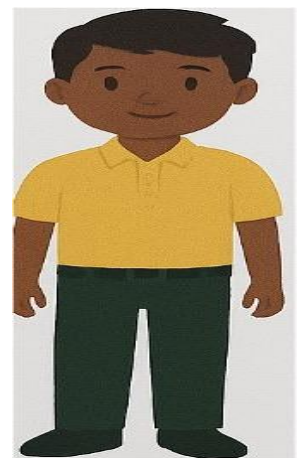
Irvington Public Schools has a mandatory school uniform policy, which was approved by the Board of Education and has been in effect since September 1, 2009. University Elementary School will consistently enforce the Board approved uniform policy; therefore, all scholars must adhere to this policy.



Parents may be asked to bring a change of clothing to school for scholars who are in violation of this policy. Repeated violation of the dress code may be viewed as defiance and appropriate disciplinary action will result.

Scholars at Mount Vernon Avenue Elementary School are expected to adhere to our official school uniform to promote a positive and focused learning environment.

The uniform consists of dark green pants or skirts, yellow polo shirts, or yellow blouses. Scholars may also wear dark green solid or plaid jumpers or skorts. Dark green tights are permitted; however, they must be free of any designs or patterns.



For layering, scholars may wear dark green sweatshirts, sweaters, or vests. Hooded sweatshirts or jackets in either yellow or dark green are allowed, provided they contain no designs, letters, or sayings. All shirts must be tucked in, and belts are required to complete the uniform.

It is important that all attire remains free of any decorations or embellishments to maintain uniformity and

ensure appropriateness for the school setting.

Violation of the Uniform Policy may result in: (not listed in any specific order)

- Request to remove additional clothing/change clothes (if applicable), at which time said clothing will be confiscated
- Phone call to parent/guardian to bring change of clothes to school
- Face disciplinary actions, which could include before or after-school detention
- Mandatory parent conference

The administration will determine the appropriateness of a scholar's attire if it is in question. Repeated dress code violations will result in a mandatory parent conference. The administrators shall have the right to access/appraise any current fashion or fad and determine appropriateness of the attire for school. These guidelines apply to all extracurricular activities and field trips unless otherwise stated by the administrators.

K-5 Arrival Procedures

Scholars are not permitted to enter the building until **7:30 am**. Please do not leave your child unattended outside the building before **7:30 am**. No staff member is available to supervise your child at this time. The proper authorities will be notified if you are found to be violating this policy. For the safety of all our scholars, parents are not permitted to remain in the cafetorium during drop-off and pick-up times. You may escort your child to their table and then exit the building. Please do not wait in the cafetorium for extended periods, as you will be asked to leave.

- K-5 scholars must enter through the cafetorium. All late scholars must enter through the front door and receive a late pass.
- Kindergarten through grade 2 are to be seated at their assigned tables in the cafetorium.
- Scholars in grades 3 – 5 are to line up at their assigned locations inside the gymnasium.

Inclement Weather Arrival Procedure

- o Kindergarten through grade 2 are to be seated at their assigned tables in the cafetorium.
- o Scholars in grades 3 – 5 are to line up at their assigned space in the gymnasium.

K-5 Dismissal Procedures

Scholars are dismissed at 2:50 p.m. unless otherwise notified or are participating in an after-school activity. Parents are responsible for ensuring their children are picked up from school at 2:50 pm. The proper authorities (i.e., Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCPP)) will be notified for scholars who are habitually picked up late from school. An after-care program is available in the building, managed by the Christian Pentecostal Church, for scholars until 6:00 pm.

- Parents must arrange after-care with the Christian Pentecostal at (973) 399-0004.
- Kindergarten through grade 2 are to be seated at their assigned tables in the cafetorium.
- Scholars in grades 3 – 5 must line up at their assigned area inside the playground.

Inclement Weather Arrival Procedure

- Kindergarten through grade 2 are to be seated at their assigned tables in the cafetorium.
- Scholars in grades 3 – 5 are to line up at their assigned space in the gymnasium.

PreKindergarten Arrival Procedures

Scholars are not permitted to enter the building until 8:25 am. Please do not leave your child unattended outside the building before **8:25 am**. No staff member is available to supervise your child at this time. The

proper authorities will be notified if you are found to be violating this policy. Please use Exit 3 for dropping off your child. Our dedicated teacher and/or paraprofessional will be present to receive and assist your child. In the interest of maintaining a safe environment for all our young learners, we kindly request that only parents of pre-kindergarten scholars enter through **Exit 3**. You are welcome to accompany your child to their designated classroom and then proceed to exit the building. To ensure smooth operations, we request that you refrain from waiting for an extended period, as we may need to ask you to leave.

PreKindergarten Dismissal Procedures

Scholars are dismissed at **2:50 p.m.** unless otherwise notified or are participating in an after-school activity. Parents are responsible for ensuring their children are picked up from school at **2:50 pm**. Please use **Exit 3** to pick up your child. Our dedicated teacher and/or paraprofessional will be present to receive and assist your child. In the interest of maintaining a safe environment for all our young learners, we kindly request that only parents of pre-kindergarten scholars enter through Exit 3. To ensure smooth operations, please refrain from waiting for an extended period and leave via Exit 3.

Tardy

A scholar is marked tardy at 8:35 am.

Prompt arrival at school is crucial for reinforcing the responsibility of scholars and ensuring compliance with state law. The courts recognize three (3) tardies as one (1) absence. Children must be in school and in class on time. Scholars reporting to school after 9:00 a.m. must be escorted into the building by a parent or guardian. Any scholar arriving after 8:45 must report to the main security desk and sign the tardy acknowledgement log. Failure to comply will result in the following:

- A phone call to the parent/guardian
- Detention during their lunch period. Failure to attend detention will result in a Home for Parents (HFP).
- Referral to the Board of Education's truancy officer (repeat offenders)

Excuses received from a parent or guardian on the same day of the late arrival help the staff understand that circumstances were beyond the scholar's control, but they do not excuse the lateness.

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences from school or class result in missed instructional time. Scholars who establish a history of absences (excused or illegal) may be required to produce medical verification for subsequent absences.

NOTE: A scholar who has 10 or more cumulative absences will be considered truant, referred to a court program as required by NJ Administration Office of Courts, and will be subject to proceedings under the compulsory attendance laws.

In Grades K-8, when a scholar exceeds the permitted 20 absences, the building principal has the authority to retain the scholar or require completion of specified academic responsibilities before promotion is granted.

Early Dismissal/Appointments

Early dismissal ends at 2:30 pm.

Additionally, no child shall be permitted to leave school except:

- In case of injury or sickness.
- When accompanied by his/her parent or guardian, after said person has signed for the child in the

sign-out book.

The procedures to be followed for early dismissal are as follows:

- Send a written request to your child's guidance counselor, including the child's name, specifying a date and time for pickup.
- A pass will be given to the scholar. This pass will state the reason for leaving and the departure time.
- At the stated time, the scholar should show the pass to the classroom teacher and report to the main office.
- When the parent or guardian arrives to pick up the scholar, they will sign the child out of the building at the security desk.
- Upon the scholar's return to school, a note from the doctor's or dentist's office verifying the appointment must be submitted to the nurse's office.
- If returning to school the same day after keeping an appointment, the scholar must first report to the main office, where he/she will receive an admission pass.

Only a parent or guardian may dismiss a scholar early, unless the parent has been identified on the child's emergency information or individuals who may act on their behalf; then, that individual can retrieve the child early. Please note that individuals listed as "emergency contacts" are not considered parents or guardians. Parents or guardians must present proper photo identification to ensure the safety of our scholars.

Parents or guardians must meet the child at the security desk in the main lobby and sign the early dismissal sign-out book. Children are not to be picked up from the front of the building; they must be signed out. If a note was not received prior to dismissal, teachers will release the scholar only when requested to do so by the main office.

Children of separated or divorced parents or guardians will be released to either parent or guardian, except in cases where a court order specifies which parent or guardian has custody. A copy of a court order must be on file in the child's folder.

Visitors Policy

Parents and guardians are welcome to visit the school at any time. They may visit with teachers at pre-arranged times. Additionally, they may meet with administrators by appointment or when the administrator is available during their visit. Your child's team of educators can only be available for scholar learning during instructional periods.

Types of Visits

- a. Meeting with the teacher – The teacher will confirm the appointment and meet the visitor in the main office.
- b. Visit the class – The teacher will confirm the appointment, and the office staff will wait for a security guard or paraprofessional to escort the visitor to the requested class. The teacher will call for security to escort the visitor back to the main office or security desk at the conclusion of the class visit. Parents or guardians who wish to observe a class must make arrangements with the classroom teacher at least 24 hours prior to the requested visit. The teacher and/or parent/guardian should confirm the visit with the Principal.
- c. Meet with a student – Office staff will ask about the nature of the visit and call the teacher to send the student to the office with a pass.

- d. Requests from outside agencies to visit or sign out students require the production and copying of identification, as well as contacting the administrator for permission to proceed.
- e. Sign a student out – The office staff will inform the teacher and request that the student be released to the office for dismissal. The visitor must sign the student out in the Student Sign Out book.

For the protection of our scholars:

- The main entrance (Mt. Vernon Avenue) will remain our only entrance into the school from 8:25 am to 2:45 pm.
- Presentation of valid identification is mandatory upon entering the building.
- The security guard will take your ID and enter your information into our login system.
- You will sign your name after he/she has done so.
- You must report to the main office to receive a pass for a scheduled visit to the classroom.
- Under no circumstances should you walk to the classrooms.

Scholar Birthday Celebration/Parties

Classroom birthday parties or celebrations are **not permitted** at school. To ensure that we maintain a safe, inclusive, and focused learning environment, scholars may not bring in or distribute food, candy, party bags, balloons, or other party-related items. We appreciate your cooperation in supporting our school's policies and helping us prioritize instructional time.

Families who wish to recognize a scholar's birthday in a meaningful, school-appropriate way are encouraged to consider the following alternatives:

- **Donate a book** to the classroom or school library in honor of your child's birthday, with a dedication label inside.
- **Birthday shout-out** during morning announcements or a classroom birthday song.
- **Wear a birthday crown, sash, or badge** provided by the teacher or school.
- **Select a special classroom privilege** for the day (e.g., line leader, classroom helper, choose a read-aloud book).
- **Create a class birthday card** signed by classmates with kind messages.
- **Enjoy extra reading or art time**, such as choosing a book for the teacher to read aloud or leading a drawing activity.
- **Non-food treat (optional)** — Small items such as pencils, bookmarks, or stickers may be shared with prior teacher approval.

Please contact your child's teacher in advance to coordinate any birthday recognition in alignment with the school guidelines.

Cell Phone Policy

Scholars are permitted to bring cellphones to school; however, cell phones must remain off and out of sight during the school day. Cell Phones should not be used for calls, texting, or any other purpose while in school.

If a parent or guardian needs to get an important message to their child during the day, they should contact the main office. The school will ensure that the message is delivered promptly.

Consequences for not following the cell phone policy are as follows:

- **First violation:** The cellphone will be collected by school staff and returned to the scholar at the end of the school day.
- **Second violation:** The cellphone will be held until a parent or guardian comes to school for a conference with an administrator to retrieve the device.

We appreciate your partnership in helping us maintain a focused and respectful learning environment.

Toys and Personal Items

Toys, trading cards, electronic games, and other personal items are not allowed in school. These items can create distractions and may be lost or damaged. If brought to school, such items will be collected and returned only to a parent or guardian.

Internet and Chromebook Use

Scholars are expected to use school devices and internet access only for educational purposes. Inappropriate use of the internet or technology, including accessing unauthorized websites or content, is not allowed and will result in disciplinary action.

Each scholar will be issued a Chromebook for school use. The following guidelines apply:

- A **Chromebook User Agreement** must be signed by the parent/guardian and scholar and returned before the device is issued.
- Scholars are responsible for the care and appropriate use of their Chromebook.
- Lost, damaged, or broken Chromebooks will result in a **replacement cost of \$300.00**, which will be the responsibility of the parent or guardian.

PROGRAMS, CLUBS, and ACTIVITIES

Breakfast Program

All scholars will have an opportunity to participate in our breakfast program. Breakfast is served in the classroom. The same payment process that a scholar has for lunch will apply to the breakfast program.

Lunch Program

Mount Vernon Avenue School has a closed lunch program where scholars are not allowed to leave the school premises. Lunch applications are sent home at the beginning of the year for parents to complete. All information must be answered for the application to be processed. Parents will be notified if their child qualifies for free or reduced lunch. Scholars also have the option of a “brown bag” lunch from home or purchasing the daily lunch at full price if they do not qualify for the program.

After-School Academic Enrichment/Skills Enhancement Program

Mount Vernon’s after-school academic skills-enrichment program begins for scholars in grades 2 through 5. The program will be held on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:05 p.m. to 4:05 p.m. Scholars are

identified for the program based on their 2022-2023 NJSLA scores and/or reading Lexile levels. A kindergarten to grade 2 program will be offered to students who demonstrate a need for support in basic reading and math skills. Letters will be sent home to qualifying scholars; all others will be placed on a waiting list.

Celebrity Read

Celebrity Read, coordinated by the Parent Coordinator, is an annual event at Mt. Vernon Avenue Elementary School and across the Irvington Public School District. Celebrity Read was established by the United Way of Essex and West Hudson in 1991 as a community-building initiative to diversify the United Way volunteer base while inspiring elementary school children to read, dream, and set and accomplish goals. Recruited from all occupations, Celebrity Readers travel to local schools where they read a brief passage about the accomplishments of notable people of color who have made significant contributions to American or world history.

Student Council

The purpose of the Scholar Council Committee is to develop and practice attitudes of good citizenship. Members serve as role models for their peers. The Scholar Council also enhances scholar-teacher relationships and fosters harmonious relations throughout the entire school. Additionally, the Scholar Council offers a platform for scholars to express themselves. It welcomes scholars' ideas for the school, ultimately, to improve school morale and assist in the management of school activities for scholars.

National Elementary Honor Society

The National Elementary Honor Society (NEHS) at Mount Vernon Avenue Elementary School is an honorary organization that recognizes scholars who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of Scholarship, Leadership, Service, Character, and Citizenship. Chapter membership not only recognizes scholars for their academic accomplishments but also challenges them to develop further through active involvement in school activities and community service.

The following principles drive the organization:

- Scholarship - the abilities and adaptability of knowledge through learning
- Service - an act of helpful activity
- Leadership - the ability to lead, guide, and direct
- Citizenship - the character and behavior of an individual as viewed as a member of the school.
- Character- the moral or ethical qualities within a person

Newsletter Club

The Mount Vernon Avenue Newsletter Club meets twice a month for one hour to publish three editions of The Eagle. The newsletter is distributed to scholars and parents/guardians and is published on our school website. The newsletter includes school updates, messages from clubs and activities, highlights programs, scholars, and staff, includes a calendar of upcoming events, and a message from the principal. The club is open to scholars in grades three through five. Participation in the program is based on the scholar's academic performance and behavior.

Cheerleading/Step Team

The Mount Vernon Avenue Cheerleading/Step Team promotes team building. It fosters active membership within the school and community through its support of athletic events, community service events, schoolwide assemblies, and various programs. The Mount Vernon Avenue Cheerleading/Step Team meets

twice a month. Participation in the program is based on the scholar's academic performance and behavior.

Basketball Club

The Mount Vernon Avenue Basketball Club is open to both girls and boys. Like the Cheerleading/Dance Team, it promotes team building, sportsmanship, discipline, and fosters active membership of the school and the community. Scholars in grades four and five will have the opportunity to participate in a district basketball unified game in the Spring. The Basketball Club meets twice a month. Participation in the program is based on the scholar's academic performance and behavior.

Field Trips

Each year, scholars may have an opportunity to take one or more field trips, which are arranged to provide additional educational experiences. Parents/ Guardians must approve their child's participation by signing a permission slip. Scholars' dress and behavior on field trips are expected to be exemplary. To ensure the safety of the scholar and their peers, scholars with multiple discipline referrals, suspensions, Home for Parents (HFP) placements, and fewer than 100 Class Dojo points during the marking period of the scheduled trip will not be permitted to attend. Each case is looked at on an individual basis. When applicable, the school administration reserves the right to require a parent or guardian to chaperone scholars whose behavior poses a risk to the safety of others or themselves.

Fundraising

With the support of the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), Mount Vernon Avenue Elementary School hosts numerous school dances and other events to raise money for student activities and incentives. Such activities include picture day, movie nights, game nights, school store items, and candy sales. Each scholar is asked to support fundraising efforts as they are scheduled.

Year-End Incentives

Scholars must earn the right to participate in the end-of-year incentive activities (e.g., administrative field trips, Fun Day). Those scholars who have demonstrated exceptional behavior throughout the school year will be eligible to attend the planned events. The field trip is an all-day event; depending on the venue, scholars may be required to report to school earlier than the regularly scheduled time. Please note that school administration reserves the right to require a parent or guardian to chaperone scholars whose behavior jeopardizes the safety of others or themselves.

Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)

PTAs focus on what students need to be successful in their learning, including nutrition, [health](#), school [safety](#), physical fitness, and general well-being. The PTA works with the school to ensure students are successful and that the school's culture and climate meet the needs of its students and families. Involved parents understand the challenges schools face and become part of the solution. By developing a closer relationship with parents, student achievement improves, and the school develops a positive reputation in the community. Please contact PTA President Lenon Peterson at mtvschoolpta@gmail.com to learn about becoming an active member of the PTA.

Meeting dates for the **2025–2026** school year will be published and shared with the school community at the start of the academic year.

- October 20, 2025

- November 18, 2025
- December 16, 2025
- January 20, 2026
- February 17, 2026
- March 17, 2026
- April 21, 2026
- May 19, 2026
- June 16, 2026

SAFETY, ORDER & DISCIPLINE

Expectations for Scholar Behavior

Safety, order, and scholarly discipline are fundamental to learning at Mount Vernon Avenue Elementary School. We are guided by the belief that children receive a challenging curriculum, dedicated teachers, and proper materials in an environment that is safe and conducive to learning. As such, no tolerance for classroom distractions or behaviors outside of the classroom that negatively impact the school's climate. Suppose scholars are disruptive, disrespectful, or are off-task. In that case, they will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in the District's Student Code of Conduct and/or Mount Vernon Avenue policies and protocols.

1. Scholars are to prepare themselves mentally and physically for the process of learning:
 - a. Be nourished, rested, clean, and appropriately dressed
 - b. Be prepared to learn
2. Scholars are to take responsibility for their own behavior and learning both in school and at all school-related activities:
 - a. Recognize that academic development is the primary purpose
 - b. Complete all classwork, homework, and other assigned tasks
 - c. Make appropriate decisions
 - d. Accept constructive criticism as part of the learning process
 - e. Accept disagreement when necessary and appropriate
 - f. Accept the consequences for their actions
3. Scholars are to demonstrate respect for self and others:
 - a. Be honest, courteous, and polite
 - b. Respect the opinions of others
 - c. Be respectful of different cultures
 - d. Settle differences peacefully and appropriately
 - e. Display good sportsmanship
4. Scholars are to respect the natural and physical environment
 - a. Participate in maintaining and cleaning school facilities and property.
5. Scholars are to share responsibilities when working as a member of a group or team:
 - a. Cooperate, contribute, and share in the work of the group
 - b. Accept and assume leadership when appropriate to do so
 - c. Listen to the viewpoints of others.
6. Scholars are to use their time and resources in a responsible manner:
 - a. Attend school regularly and on time
 - b. Use learning materials and equipment appropriately
7. Scholars are to communicate appropriately with parents and school personnel regarding their needs and goals:
 - a. Take time to discuss academic learning and school programs
 - b. Transmit information to parents and return responses to school personnel (in a timely fashion) when appropriate

- c. Seek assistance from appropriate school personnel in times of need
- 8. Scholars are to be responsible for meeting individual class requirements
 - a. Participate actively in learning activities
 - b. Follow all class rules and procedures
 - c. Arrive at class on time with all appropriate materials
- 9. Scholars are expected to work to their full potential, monitor their progress, and seek help when needed.

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING POLICY (HIB)

The Irvington Public School District will enforce a Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy in compliance with New Jersey State law P.L. 2010, Chapter 22. The Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy prohibits any gesture, any verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national, origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on or off school grounds that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school and/or the rights of others. Likewise, the incident or series of incidents could result in actual or potential physical or emotional harm to the pupil or his/her property and/or create a hostile educational environment that interferes with learning. All reported incidents of harassment, intimidation, or bullying will be thoroughly investigated by the administration and handled in accordance with applicable state laws. Furthermore, all bystanders will be subject to investigation and may be subject to remedial or disciplinary action. Bystanders enable HIB behavior by encouraging a bully to physically attack a scholar, spreading rumors, or shunning a scholar who a group has ostracized. Any scholar or scholars who retaliate against the individual who reported the original HIB incident or who falsely accuse an individual of HIB will be subject to administrative action. All reported cases of HIB are to be referred to the building Principal or designee. Reports can be made in person, via a district form posted on the website, or anonymously via phone call, email, or letter. Cases will be investigated by the School Anti-Bullying Specialist, reviewed by the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, and reported in closed session to the Board of Education on a monthly basis.

The Anti-Bullying Specialist may be reached at (973) 399-6875 Ext. 1403. The District Anti-Bullying office Contact information is (973) 399-6897 Ext. 1823. For further details regarding HIB, please visit the district website.

Definition of HIB: (Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying)

“Harassment, intimidation or bullying” is defined as any gesture, written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, any whether it be a single act or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other scholars, and that: (a) reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a scholar or damaging the scholar’s property, or placing a scholar in reasonable fear of emotional harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; (b) has the effect of insulting or demeaning any scholar or group of scholars; or (c) creates a hostile educational environment at school for the scholar by interfering with a scholar’s education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the scholar.

How to Report Incidents of HIB

Call/ or email the school Anti-Bullying Specialist, TBA (973) 399-6875, ext. 1403 or email at describing the incident(s).

The Investigation Process

1. The Anti-Bullying Specialist will consult with an administrator.
2. Collect and review all statements related to the incident.
3. Interview the victim/offender/witnesses. (separately)
4. Call the parents of the victim and offender.
5. Set up conferences with the victim(s) or offender(s) and always have parents and administrators present.
6. Make a notation in PowerSchool for all actions taken, including the victim and offender. (meeting/phone calls/emails)
7. Document all anonymous reports and investigate.
8. Submit all complaints against a staff member to the Principal and
9. Log in to PowerSchool.
10. Offer counseling to the victim(s) and the offender(s). (Health & Social Services Coordinator (HSSC) or
11. Child Study Team (CST) NOTE: HSSC must see the victim within 48 hours.

Disciplinary Action

1. If the case has been substantiated, an administrator will assign the appropriate level of discipline
 - 1st Offense: HFP/Parent Conference
 - 2nd Offense: 1 day Out of School Suspension
 - 3rd Offense: 2-3 days Out of School Suspension
 - 4th Offense: 5 days Out of School Suspension (Possible Central Office intervention)
2. Notify CST if applicable.
3. Set up reentry meeting with parents, scholars, teacher, counselor, HSSC, and CST, if applicable.
4. If necessary, begin the process for Intervention & Referral Services (IR&S)
5. Follow up with counseling for the victim and offender.

Positive Behavior Supports in Schools (PBSIS)

Mount Vernon Avenue Elementary School will continue to incorporate the PBSIS program using our motto Where Scholars Learn to SOAR! (Success, Ownership, Attitude, Respect). The purpose of PBSIS is to help the school create positive learning environments that lead to decreases in discipline problems, increase opportunities for all scholars to learn the use of positive, proactive, and practical interventions, produce socially desired behaviors, and encourage and support pro-social scholar behavior at the school wide, classroom, and individual scholar levels.

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

Any disciplinary action taken by the administration is intended to ensure the safety and welfare of everyone at Mount Vernon Avenue School and benefit the scholar through improving attitude and subsequent behavior. Law and school district policies regulate the disciplinary options available to the administration and are strictly enforced to maintain a safe learning environment for all. The disciplinary option chosen depends on: (1) the nature of the offense, (2) the nature of the scholar's previous behavior, and (3) stated policy or precedent based on previous action.

Disciplinary Options

It is essential to note that a scholar may be suspended for conduct that they should have been aware of as a

violation of school policy, even if it is not explicitly listed in the statute. A school may also suspend a scholar for misbehavior that is detrimental to school safety, violates stated discipline procedures, or damages property. Consequences for non-compliance can include any of the following, depending upon the seriousness and/or frequency of the matter: (not listed in progressive order)

Adult to scholar conference (warning)
Parent-scholar-teacher conferences
privileges (i.e. field trips, dance, etc.)
Out of school suspension

Time out Home contacts
Detention (early morning or after school) Denial of
Home for Parent (HFP)
Expulsion

Please remember that our actions involving disciplinary measures are meant to correct inappropriate school behaviors. Our goal (the school and parents) is common: to produce happy, healthy, well-adjusted individuals who will lead successful adult lives. Please support our school's efforts to ensure that scholars behave appropriately while at school, on trips, and the school bus.

ClassDojo

Our school-wide behavior and performance-tracking tool will again be implemented during the 2020-2021 school year. ClassDojo is a communication app used by our teachers, allowing parents and guardians to share in their child's classroom experiences through videos, photos, and messages. Scholars earn points by demonstrating SOAR attributes throughout the day. Parents and guardians can access the app through a smartphone, tablet, or computer using their email address and the secure login code provided by their child's homeroom teacher.

Detention

The classroom teacher may hold detentions before school at 7:30 a.m. or after school at 3:00 p.m. Administrative detentions are held after school for one hour for two days a week. Scholars will be allowed to call their parents to notify them of the assigned detention.

Home for Parent (HFP)

Scholars will receive a letter notifying parents that they have displayed negative behavior or have not followed expectations. Scholars must report to school the following day with a parent or guardian to meet with an administrator. Failure to report to school with a parent or guardian will result in suspension.

Out-of-School Suspension

An out-of-school suspension is the temporary denial of the scholar's right to attend school. Scholars can only be suspended by the building principal or his/her designee. Each suspension shall be reported to the scholar's parent and the Superintendent of Schools, who shall report the suspension to the Board of Education. Parents have the responsibility of guaranteeing that the scholar remains in the confines of the home during the time of suspension. A parent conference with an administrator is necessary for a scholar's re-admittance to school. Scholars are required to make up for all missed work. All assignments will be provided, and it is expected that the scholar will complete work while at home. Assignments must be returned upon scholar's re-admittance to school.

Expulsion

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

Commissioner of Education and the State Board of Education. A prerequisite to any board action for the expulsion of a non-handicapped student is referral to the district's child study team for a preliminary determination. The purpose of this evaluation is to determine whether the scholar's misbehavior arises from a handicapping condition.

Physical Restraint

In accordance with state law, physical restraint or reasonable force may be used for the following reasons:

- To quell a disturbance
- To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects.
- For the purpose of self-defense.
- For the protection of persons or property

Code of Conduct

The administration reserves the right to skip the sequence of disciplinary options outlined in this section if the offense warrants it.

CONDUCT VIOLATIONS & 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 at 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 messages that are untrue (verbal or written), producing a forged school document (e.g., pass), turning in academic work produced by other scholars 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 roughhousing, 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. Scholars 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 53-56 for definitions of levels.

CONDUCT VIOLATIONS & CONSEQUENCES

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 scholars 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 53-56 for definitions of levels

CONDUCT VIOLATIONS & CONSEQUENCES

Examples of Conduct Violations	Definition	Minimum Level	Maximum Level
Tardiness to School	Failing to arrive to school at the scheduled start time and/or arriving 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 53-56 for the definition of levels.

Examples of Conduct Violations	Definition	Minimum Level	Maximum Level
Arson	Intentionally starting, or attempting to start a fire or combustion.	3	4
Assault	Causing or attempting to cause bodily injury to another person. Assault includes an attempt by physical menace to put another in fear of imminent serious bodily injury.	3	4
Bias Incident	Acting, at least in part, with ill will, hatred or bias with a purpose to intimidate an individual or group of individuals because of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation or ethnicity.	1	4
Bombs/Explosives	Possessing or using a device containing combustible material and/or a fuse, including fireworks.	3	4

Burglary	Unauthorized entrance into a school District building (unoccupied) with the intent of committing a criminal act when the building is closed to the scholars and the public.	3	4
Computer Violations	Stealing computer hardware or software, reproducing unauthorized information (fraud), viewing or obtaining pornography or sexually explicit materials, introducing computer viruses, threatening /menacing, sending or receiving hate materials, committing a bias offense, harassing, 'sexting' (sending sexually explicit messages/photos electronically).	3 3 3 3 1 1 1 2	4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4
Disorderly Conduct	Behaving in a violent or seriously inappropriate manner, which disrupts the educational process. (NOTE: This category is used when the police are called to cite a student for extreme disruption).	3	4

LAW-RELATED VIOLATIONS & CONSEQUENCES

Drug/Alcohol/Chemical Use (NJSA 18A:40A-12(a))	Using any controlled substance, intoxicant or alcohol or substance alleged to be a drug regardless of its content. (Mandated HSSC Intervention)	2	4
Drug/Alcohol/Chemical Possession (NJSA18:40-1011;NJAC:29-6.3(c) (2))	In possession of any controlled substance, alcohol or intoxicant includes transfer of a prescription drug or substance alleged to be a drug regardless of its actual content. (Mandated HSSC Intervention)	3	4
Drug/Alcohol/Chemical Sale/Distribution(NJSA 18:40A-10, 1NJAC:29-6.3(c) (2))	Selling of any controlled substance, alcohol, intoxicant or prescription drug or substance alleged to be a drug regardless of its actual content. (Mandated HSSC Intervention)	4 3	N/A 4
Possession of Drug Paraphernalia:	In possession of pipes, rolling papers, needles or other paraphernalia.		
Extortion	Using threats or intimidation to demand money or something of value from another.	3	4
False Fire Alarm/Bomb Threat	Reporting a fire to school or fire officials or intentionally setting off a fire alarm or fire extinguisher without a reasonable belief that a fire exists or making statements that a bomb is on the premises.	3	4
Gambling	Playing any game of skill or chance for money or anything of value.	1	4
Robbery	Taking property from a person by force, violence or threat of immediate bodily injury.	2	4

Sexual Assault/ Offenses	Participating in intentional sexual contact of a harmful or offensive nature.	3	4
Terrorist Threats	Committing a crime of violence with the purpose to terrorize another or to cause evacuation of a building, place of assembly, or facility of public transportation, or otherwise to cause serious public inconvenience. Threatening to kill another with the purpose of putting him in imminent fear of death under circumstances reasonably causing the victim to believe the immediacy of the threat and the likelihood that it will be carried out (Both of these terrorist threats are crimes of the third (3rd) degree).	3	4
Stealing/Extortion/Fraud	Unlawful taking and carrying away of property belonging to another person with the intent to deprive the lawful owner of its use.	3	4
Threatening/Menace	With criminal intent, the act of threatening to strike, attack or harm any person in school or at any sponsored or supervised activity, including the use of internet websites and electronic devices.	2	4
Vandalism/Graffiti	Willfully or maliciously destructing or defacing public or private property belonging to another. Parents/guardians will be held liable for damages and the district will seek appropriate restitution.	2	4

Examples of Conduct Violations	Definition	Minimum Level	Maximum Level
Firearms	Possessing, using, or threatening to use a firearm on school property, on a school bus or other contracted transportation service, or at a school-sponsored function. A firearm is defined as any handgun, rifle, shotgun, machine gun, automatic or semi-automatic rifle, or any gun, device or instrument in the nature of a weapon from which may be fired or ejected any solid projectable ball, slug, pellet, missile or bullet, or any gas, vapor or other noxious thing, by means of a cartridge or shell or by the action of an explosive or the igniting of flammable or explosive substances. It shall also include, without limitation, any firearm which is in the nature of an air gun, spring gun or pistol or other weapon of a similar nature (including BB guns and pellet guns) in which the propelling force is a spring elastic band, carbon dioxide, compressed or other gas or vapor, air or compressed air, or is ignited by compressed air, and ejecting a bullet or missile smaller than three eights of an inch in diameter, with sufficient force to injure a person.	4	N/A

Other Pellet Guns & BB Guns	Possessing, using, or threatening to use a pellet gun, BB gun, or any other facsimile thereof, which ejects a projectile of three-eighths (3/8) of an inch or more in diameter, on school property, on a school bus or other contracted transportation service, or at a school sponsored function. A pellet gun is defined as a gun, which uses compressed air or carbon dioxide to propel a projectile. A BB gun uses the same compressed air or carbon dioxide to propel a copper plated sphere, known as a BB.	3	4
Paintball Guns	Possessing, using, or threatening to use a paintball gun on school property, school buses or other contracted transportation services. Paintball guns use compressed air to propel large diameter paint filled projectiles.	3	4
Toy Guns and Imitation Firearms	Possessing, using, or threatening to use a toy gun or imitation gun on school property, school buses, or other contracted transportation services.	1	4

*(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 53-56 for definition of levels.

If...

1. You have a question, which is not answered in this book, ask your homeroom or classroom teacher for assistance.
2. You have been absent, report to your homeroom teacher with a written note from your parent/guardian.
3. You have been absent for more than three days, you must see the school nurse before you will be admitted to school.
4. You are going to be excused for a religious observance, you must bring a note from your parent/guardian.
5. You are tardy to school, you must sign in at the front desk and obtain an admittance pass.
6. You lose something, check in the Main Office or the Lost and Found area.
7. You need help in a subject, talk it over with your teacher or the guidance counselor.
8. You need to leave the classroom, you must have permission from the teacher, and you must have a hall pass.
9. You need to see the Nurse, you must have a pass to the Nurse's office.
10. You are not sure of an assignment, check with your teacher before you leave school or call upon a "study buddy" from your class.
11. You want to join a club or take part in an after-school activity, contact the teacher in charge or sign up at any meeting. Listen to announcements for meeting dates and times.

Formal Acknowledgment of 2025 – 2026 Parent-Scholar Handbook Receipt and Review

The undersigned acknowledges receipt of the **2025–2026 Mount Vernon Avenue Elementary School Parent & Scholar Handbook**. This handbook contains essential information, policies, and guidelines for the reference of parents, guardians, and scholars.

By signing below, I affirm that I have reviewed the contents of the handbook and that I am expected to comply with the policies and behavioral expectations outlined within. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in disciplinary action as described in the handbook.

Failure to return this signed acknowledgment does not release any parent, guardian, or scholar from the responsibility of complying with the school's or district's policies, procedures, and practices.

It is understood that the administration of Mount Vernon Avenue Elementary School reserves the right to amend policies and guidelines at any time, in alignment with district policies and procedures. The *2025–2026 Parent & Scholar Handbook* is accessible online at <http://irvington.k12.nj.us/schools/mount-vernon/>.

Please return this page to your scholar's homeroom teacher by **September 22, 2025**.

New and transfer scholars who register after the start of the school year must return this acknowledgment form within one week of receiving the handbook.

The school counselor will keep this form on file in the scholar's folder for the school year.

Mount Vernon Avenue Elementary School Parent & Scholar Handbook Acknowledgment of Receipt

Scholar's First & Last Name: _____

Grade Level: _____ Homeroom Teacher: _____

Parent/Guardian (Print First & Last Name): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date