



### **Our Mission Statement**

The mission of P.S. 85Q is to create a nurturing environment of academic excellence in which all students can and will learn. We recognize the needs of the whole child: emotional, social, physical and intellectual. We will promote the commonality in our diverse population in order to instill self-respect and respect for others. Our commitment to parents, to students, and to the community at large is to develop self-thinking, creative, productive and confident students to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

### **P.S. 85Q School Song**

Raise your voice with proud affection  
P.S. 85!  
We will always sing your praises,  
For your honor strive!  
Ever loyal is our watchword,  
Whether near or far!  
Years will pass,  
But we'll remember Queens P.S. 85!

Dear Parents:

Welcome to another school year. We hope that it will be productive and successful for you and your child.

This handbook is intended to answer some of the questions you may have concerning policies, procedures and the instructional program provided for your child. We also hope it will be a convenient source of reference for you throughout the year.

Our staff works to provide your child with the best educational environment possible. We welcome your cooperation in this venture and urge you to become actively involved in your child's education.

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

*Ann Gordon Chang*

Principal

## PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

### **ATTENDANCE**

Children are required to be in school unless they can present legal excuses such as illness, death in the family, special religious observance, special medical appointment, etc.

**It is important that you make school attendance a priority.** Your child, in turn, will see school as important. This will also help to establish the positive traits of responsibility and dependability.

**Children should not miss school for family vacations as these must be marked as an illegal absence.** The following are legal absences:

- personal illness
- illness or death in the family
- impassible roads or weather making travel unsafe
- religious observance
- attendance at a medical clinic
- approved school-sponsored trips
- quarantine
- required court appearances

**When your child is absent you are required to call the following number to report the absence (718) 278-3630. When your child returns to school after an absence, you must provide a written excuse that gives the dates and the nature of the absence. This excuse must be signed by the parent or guardian. In case of prolonged illness or excessive absenteeism, the school may request a medical report from the family's physician.**

If your child becomes ill while in school, he/she will be given attention by the school nurse. She will contact you if your child needs to be sent home.

We suggest that you should not send your child to school if he/she has:

- Fever at or higher than 100° in the past 24 hours. (Your child should be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication before returning to school.)
- Vomiting in the past 24 hours
- Diarrhea in the past 24 hours
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Strep throat (must have been taking an antibiotic for at least 24 hours before returning to school)
- Bad cold, with a very runny nose or bad cough, especially if it has kept the child awake at night

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER/BABYSITTER**

Many people change phone numbers and residence within the school district during the school year. We ask that if you do move that you immediately inform the school office. Your new phone number and address will give us the necessary information in case we need to contact you. Furthermore, if your child has a change of babysitter, please notify us of the new babysitter's name, address and phone number. **These notices are critical in the event of an emergency.**

### **CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION FOR PROBLEM SOLVING**

When parents are concerned about a student-teacher situation, the teacher should be contacted by sending a note to meet with the teacher to discuss the issue or come to the Main Office and fill out a form to be placed in the teacher's mailbox. Either a telephone or a personal conference should be arranged and the matter discussed. If a satisfactory resolution does not occur, the Guidance Counselor, Parent Coordinator, Assistant Principal should be contacted for further discussion. Please note that Tuesday afternoons from 2:30-3:10pm has been dedicated for Parent Engagement. Please write your teacher to set up a dedicated time to ensure a smooth facilitation.

Concerns about cafeteria or other situations on the school grounds where one specific teacher is not in charge should be directed to the general office. If a problem occurs on the bus, please contact the Office of Pupil Transportation at (718) 392-8855. In all cases, every reasonable effort will be made to deal with your concerns.

### **CHARACTER EDUCATION**

PS85Q is committed to helping develop good character with our students. You, the parents, remain the most important teachers of character. However, we feel that working hand-in-hand with you is the key to success.

We have a consistent K-5 set of rules governing behavior and believe it is everyone's responsibility to see that they are followed. There are many ways that we promote positive behavior. The following are some examples: letters sent to you by teachers informing you of the K-5 general rules and classroom rules; recess monitor and cafeteria monitor training; teaching proper cafeteria and recess behavior to your child; the Responsive Classroom approach; focusing on a district character trait every other month; teachers integrating literature containing character lessons; service learning projects; and **Citizen of the Month** recognition.

Our present programs and procedures are helping to develop good character and promote positive behavior. In combination with initiatives that will be implemented in the near future, character education will become even more effective.

### **CLASSROOM PLACEMENT**

Please be advised that we cannot accept specific requests for specific teachers. The placement procedure is an effort to maximize the following considerations:

- the classroom which will provide the best working environment for each child
- a combination of children who will work well together
- a cross section of abilities
- a balance of genders

Successful learning and steady progress are our goals for each child.

To place children in each class, the following information is gathered on each child: his/her personality traits, teacher recommendations, records of progress and special talents or strengths. Special needs such as health problems, learning problems and/or emotional problems are taken into consideration where necessary. Input from parents is also included. Each child is placed in a classroom which is made up of different abilities and different levels of achievement. Parents will be notified of students' placement in mid-August.

### **CLOSING OF SCHOOL**

If school must be closed due to inclement weather or impassable roads, an announcement will be made over our School Messenger notification system and the school website. It is advised that you should also listen to local radio stations and view television stations. The decision is made before 6:00 AM and should be announced by that time. Please **do not** call the school to inquire. Our lines must be kept open to deal with emergencies. **You can call 311 and sign up to receive all school closing and emergency notifications. You can check the NYC DOE website as well. Make sure that your child knows exactly what to do in the event that school is dismissed early due to bad weather, i.e. go home, go to a neighbor's, etc.**

When school is closed, all related activities, including athletic events and student activities will be suspended for that day and evening unless specific permission is granted by the Superintendent of Schools.

### **DRESS**

We encourage all children to be neat, clean and well-groomed. We expect the school uniform will be worn every day in alignment with the Chancellor's Regulations A665. Uniforms are requested so that the way a child is dress does not in any way interfere with the learning process. The school uniform is a blue shirt, navy blue dress pants or skirt.

We ask that, in cold weather, your child comes dressed warmly enough so he/she can go outdoors for play periods. This usually means boots, hats, mittens or gloves and snow pants.

For physical education the only requirements are comfortable clothing and sneakers.

Children are not to wear hats in the building once the school day has begun.

We strongly recommend that students wear sneakers to school each day. "Wheelies" (sneakers with built-in roller skate wheels) are **not** to be worn to school. These are a hazard, especially on the playground. This especially applies to field trips.

For kindergarten and Pre-K students, please provide an extra set of clothing in a bag labeled with your child's name. The bag will be kept in the classroom and used if the student's clothing becomes soiled.

### **EMERGENCIES**

If an emergency situation occurs regarding your child, the school will contact you. This is why emergency phone numbers, addresses and employer phone numbers and addresses are requested of you. Without this vital information, we would not be able to contact you. ***Please keep us informed of any changes in your emergency phone numbers and addresses.***

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Classes may visit points of interest in order to add dimension and enrichment to the educational program. These trips are carefully planned and supervised by the teachers. When such a trip is planned, each child **must** have **written** permission from his/her parent or guardian to participate. Phone, fax and email permission will not be accepted. Please be advised that preschool siblings are not to participate on these field trips. Parent attendance must be finalized prior to the day of the trip. At times, the number of chaperones may be limited due to the facility constraints.

Please be sure your child is adequately prepared for the weather conditions, if it is an outdoor field trip (i.e. gloves, boots, etc. in winter; hat and water bottle during hot weather.) Sunscreen should be applied to your child prior to arrival at school on the field trip day. If your child's physician has ordered an emergency medication, the medication needs to be provided prior to the field trip day.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

*Lost and Found areas* are located in the lunchroom. Lost items are displayed so children may identify their possessions. In order to reduce the number of lost or unclaimed items, please **label** your child's garments with indelible ink or name tapes. Items that are not claimed are periodically sent to Goodwill or similar organization.

### **BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAM**

A federally subsidized free breakfast and lunch program is available to all families. Information regarding this is sent home each year and is also given to all new families at the time of registration. All students are entitled to free breakfast and lunch for the 2015-2016 school year.

### **DISMISSAL**

When you are planning to pick up your child prior to the regular dismissal time at 2:30 pm, please send written permission with your child to be given to his/her classroom teacher. This note will be sent to the office. All Pre-K-5 students must be signed out from the Main office prior to leaving the school early.

**Your children will be called and will come to meet you.** Teachers are not allowed to let you or legal guardians take children from the classroom.

**If you wish to have someone other than yourself pick up your child (such as a sitter, grandmother, etc.), we need to have a note with that information signed by you or the legal guardian.** This person also needs valid identification. It is important to keep the office informed if this information changes during the year. **We cannot accept telephone authorization, faxes or email notes to have someone but yourself pick up your child(ren). This must be in writing.**

Your child may not leave the school during the day without specific consent from you. Permission to leave early must be in writing. .

Bus students will be placed on the bus daily, except upon occasions where a written note is sent to the main office indicating that the parent or guardian will pick up the child.

**Walkers and children who arrive to school by car are not admitted to the building until 7:35 AM.** They should not arrive at school before 7:35 AM as no supervision is provided prior to that time.

Promptness is important to the smooth operation of our program and also to the development of each child's personal habits. If your child is tardy, he/she must bring a written excuse signed by you.

### **EDUCATIONAL SCREENING PROCEDURE FOR NEW STUDENTS**

State Education Department Law requires that all new entrants into our school system be screened to determine proper placement in the classroom. The screening procedure used in our schools is designed to obtain information on a student's physical, language and motor skills development

### **SCHOOL MATERIALS & SUPPLIES**

All books are furnished to students. Students are expected to take care of all materials issued to them. In a case where a book is lost, destroyed or mutilated, you may be required to pay for the damage.

Supply lists are posted on the school's website at [www.ps85q.org](http://www.ps85q.org).

### **STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **A. Student Rights**

Our school is committed to safeguarding the rights accorded to all students under local, state, and federal law. In addition, to promote a safe, healthy, orderly, and civil school environment, all students have the right to:

1. Take part in all School activities on an equal basis regardless of age, race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability or socio-economic status.
2. School that is free of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.
3. An explicit and consistently-administered discipline code.
4. Courtesy and respect from one another and from school personnel.
5. Present their version of the relevant events, at an appropriate time, to school personnel before imposition of penalty and be afforded due process before removal from an instructional program.
6. Access school rules and, when necessary, receive an explanation of those rules from school personnel.

#### **B. Student Responsibilities**

All students have the responsibility to:

1. Contribute to maintaining a school environment conducive to learning and to show respect to other persons and to property.
2. Comply with all school and NYC Department of Education policies, rules, and regulations regarding student conduct.
3. Attend school every day unless they are legally excused and be in class, on time, and prepared to learn.
4. Work to the best of their individual ability in all academic and extra-curricular pursuits and strive toward their highest level of achievement possible.
5. React positively and responsibly to directions given by teachers, administrators, and other school personnel.
6. Display their emotions in an appropriate manner.
7. Ask questions when they do not understand.
8. Seek help in solving problems that might lead to discipline.
9. Dress appropriately for school and school functions.
10. Accept responsibility for their actions.
11. Conduct themselves as representatives of the District when participating in or attending school-sponsored extra-curricular events and to hold themselves to high standards of conduct, demeanor, and sportsmanship.

### ***Parent Statement***

Parents are vitally important to the success of their child's education. As such, they must also assume the responsibility to see that their child attends school regularly and is well-rested, well-nourished, and appropriately dressed. Parents are expected to support high academic expectations by overseeing the regular completion of homework. Parents should help their children understand and obey school rules, regulations, policies, and procedures. Maintaining open lines of communication with school personnel is essential.

### ***RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE CHILDREN***

We are proud of the behavior of our students in kindergarten through grade five and we are continually looking for improvement. It is our intent that seeing and hearing the same language will help our students to focus on good behavior. Classroom teachers work with their students to develop classroom rules. Please reinforce these rules with your child at home. In addition all students must follow the NYC code of conduct issued in September.

**Electronic devices are not allowed in school (phones, games, etc.**

**Party Invitations – Unless there is an invitation for every child in the classroom, we will not pass out party invitations for your child.**

### ***PARTY FOOD***

Please consider sending a healthy snack for celebrations. All snacks must be in its original sealed packaging. Examples of healthy snacks include: raisins, yogurt covered raisins, granola bars, fruit cups, veggies and dip, cheese and crackers, cheese sticks, grapes, apples or yogurt. Please consider portion sizes; a small cookie or an individual serving size cupcake. **PLEASE CHECK WITH TEACHER FOR ANY FOOD ALLERGIES.** Please do not bring balloons. **If a parent would like to send in a homemade food item, they must be in attendance for distribution.**

### ***STUDENT GOVERNMENT***

There is a Student Government which is composed of elected representatives from grade five. The group meets periodically with the guidance counselor to discuss school affairs, to organize various programs and to suggest possible changes. The Student Government also operates a school store.

### ***VISITORS***

Close communication and supportive relationships between parents/guardians and school personnel is essential to increasing student achievement and enhancing school climate. We welcome visitations to our schools by parents/guardians.

It is requested that your visitation occur in a way that avoids or minimizes disruption to the normal learning process and the usual classroom routine. The date and time of your visit should be mutually agreed upon ahead of time directly between you and the teacher.

Upon entering the building, you must sign in with the Safety Agent, you will be given a visitor's badge. You will then be asked to proceed to the main office where you will be given a floor pass that specifically states the floor you will be visiting. Please wear your visitor's badge visibly and have your floor pass throughout your visit. Upon leaving the building, please return the floor pass to the main office.

### ***VOLUNTEERS***

Parent volunteers play a vital role in our educational program. We invite your participation in your child's schooling. Volunteers sign in with the Safety Agent desk and are given a volunteer badge to wear while they are in the school. Volunteers serve our school by: reading to the children, performing clerical tasks, organizing materials and helping with special projects.

Please note that your preschool child(ren) are not to accompany you when you volunteer. If you would be willing to serve a few hours each week as a volunteer, please do not hesitate to call the school or come in to see us.

## PART II: HEALTH SERVICES

### **IMMUNIZATIONS**

New York State Public Health Law requires immunizations for all children entering school. The required immunizations are: DTaP- 3 doses, Polio-3 doses, MMR-2 doses, Hepatitis B-3 doses and Varicella-1. If your child has had the chicken pox virus, written verification from your child's physician is required. A complete copy of your child's immunization record from his/her physician must be submitted in order for your child to attend school. Children without the required immunizations will not be permitted to attend school. A Tdap is required for entry into 6<sup>th</sup> grade as well as proof of Varicella if born before 1994.

If you have any questions, please call the Primary School Nurses at (718) 545-6681.

### **MEDICATION IN SCHOOL**

Any student who is required to take prescribed medication during school hours *must* comply with the following New York State/school regulations:

Written orders from a physician must detail the name of the medication, dosage, time interval that the medication is to be taken and diagnosis or reason for the medication to be given.

Written permission must be provided by parent or guardian requesting that the school comply with the physician's orders.

**Medication can only be brought to school by an adult in an original container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician. Please do not send medication to school with your child.**

Please note this includes **ALL** medication, both prescription and nonprescription. It is important that you follow these procedures so that your child receives **only** the medication prescribed and in the correct dosage.

### **HEALTH SCREENINGS**

The district's School Health Services program supports your student's academic success by promoting health in the school setting. One way that we provide care for your student is by performing the health screenings as mandated by the State of New York. During this school year, the following screenings will be required or completed at school:

#### **Vision:**

- Distance acuity for all newly entering students and students in PreK, Kindergarten, Grades 1, 2, 3, & 5.
- Near vision acuity, hyperopia and color perception screening for all newly entering students.

#### **Appraisals:**

- New York State Education Law Section 903 and the Regulation of the Commissioner of Education require physical examinations on all children newly entering school and students entering Pre K, Kindergarten and grades 2, 4, 7 and 10. Your child's health care provider will perform the required physical. The exam needs to be completed within 12 months prior to the start of the school year. A copy of the exam with the health care provider's signature is to be submitted to the school health office. Health appraisals will be completed by the school physician if necessary.

Nurses will assess and perform basic first aid and will notify parents if further medical evaluation or intervention is warranted.

### **TOILETING**

For those children entering PreK and K, it is the expectation of the school that children who enter the school are toilet trained **PRIOR** to entry. Pull-ups are discouraged unless the child has a medical reason for using them. If the parents believe that the student is unable to self-toilet, the school will request that the parents provide written medical documentation from their health care provider explaining the student's toileting difficulties.

### **SMOKE FREE CAMPUS**

PS 85Q operates totally smoke free campuses. There is no smoking in any building or on any district owned property by faculty, staff, students and visitors at any time. This policy reflects the district's concern for the health and safety of all our students and employees.

## PART III: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

### GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

The New York State Common Core Learning Standards are emphasized. Core areas include reading, writing, math, social studies and science. In addition, we provide instruction for art, music, physical education, library, health and technology.

Each day your child is offered instruction in one special class: physical education, music, art, computer or library. Additional instructional support is provided when appropriate.

The school day includes a variety of learning experiences and activities for your child. The teachers differentiate their instructional programs based on individual and/or group needs.

### INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAMS

#### RtI Response to Intervention

Part of the PS85Q vision is to create academic success for every child we serve. To do this, we conduct benchmark assessments in reading and math. State assessment results are used in grades 3-5. From these assessments, we determine which students qualify for more intensive support in reading, math, or both. Following the guidelines set forth by New York State and Response to Intervention (RtI), student assessment scores fall into three tiers of instructional intensity. Intensity can be described as conditions of time, group size, instructional targets, instructional methods and/or strategies, support by instructional personnel, and/or a specific intervention program.

- **Tier I Instruction:** All students participate in Tier I core classroom reading and math programs. Core programs include 90 minutes of reading instruction and 60 minutes of mathematics instruction. Within these instructional blocks, teachers have been trained to differentiate to help meet the needs of each student in their classroom.
- **Tier II Instruction:** This applies to those students who are not fully responding to Tier I instruction. These students will receive more in-class support to target their specific needs through methods that could include computer-assisted instruction and targeted instruction provided in small groups by the another professional.
- **Tier III Instruction:** This level provides intensive interventions to support students that are *non-responders* to Tier I and II instruction. A variety of push-in or pull-out support options are available to students in grades kindergarten through five based on identified individual student needs. This Response to Intervention (RtI) would be in addition to the classroom reading or math block. Student participation may be on a short term or long-term basis determined by performance in relationship to state and school benchmarks. Parents are notified via mail if their child requires supplemental push-in or pull-out services.

All students who fail to meet the designated state assessment criteria are required to receive services, including those with disabilities and/or limited English proficiency. Additionally, ELL students who do not achieve the annual designated CR Part 154 performance standards as stipulated are eligible as well.

Both the Primary and Elementary Schools have an Instructional Support Team (IST). These teams function as collaborative units to support classroom instruction. The team includes trained instructional support teachers, administrators, teachers and support staff. Instructional support teachers may also work individually with students that are not responding to Tier II and III instruction. Certified teachers and teaching assistants provide instructional support services in reading and/or math. Parents may request information regarding teacher certifications through the District Human Resource Office.

## **Special Education Services**

PS85Q provide a continuum of services for students with disabilities where the systems of special and general education are merged into one collaborative, well-supported system that is able to educate children with a range of needs. Students are provided special education services specified on their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Our special education services provide for the individual needs of the student including academic, social, physical and management needs. These services are provided with the continuing commitment of serving the student in the least restrictive environment.

The placement of an individual student with a disability in the least restrictive environment shall:

- Provide the special education needed by the student
- Provide for the education of the student in a setting with other students not having disabilities
- Provide services in the student's home school when possible

Some of the programs and services available include:

- Related Services such as speech and language services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, counseling services and other appropriate services
- Consultant Teacher Services
- Resource Room
- Special Classes
- Adaptive Physical Education

## **SPECIAL SERVICES**

Supportive services include the following:

**School Nurse** - The school nurse coordinates the healthcare of students and is a link between home, school and the student's physician. They promote increased classroom attendance and academic achievement by providing specialized nursing care.

**School Psychologist** - The primary responsibilities of the school psychologist are the evaluation of children who are experiencing difficulty learning and to make recommendations for modification of the child's program.

**School Guidance Counselor** - The emphasis is on in-class programs and small counseling groups to address social/emotional issues. The guidance counselor serves as resources for the staff and parents. They also provide information on outside resources. Goals focus on prevention and healthy mental development.

**School Social Worker** – The school social workers assist children, families, school staff and administrators by serving as an outreach liaison to families and community agencies. He also obtains social histories for the Committee on Special Education (CSE), to discuss concerns and to help with referrals to community support organizations. Referrals are made for such things as medical, social, mental health.

**Occupational & Physical Therapists** - Occupational and physical therapy are provided for children who have been diagnosed as having small and/or large motor difficulties.

**Speech/Language Therapists** - Speech/language therapists are available to work with children in need of speech and/or language services.

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES**

**Schoolwide Enrichment** - The Enrichment Program coordinates special activities for students. These activities and services are offered in grades 1-5 and are referred to as *Enrichment*. All *Enrichment* classes are developed and implemented according to the needs of students and their teachers. Programming options are considered to address the needs of our students. We strive to provide many students with a menu of options to meet a variety of academic and creative needs, within the limitations of our staffing and scheduling. Enrichment is offered 2 times a year, in our fall and spring semesters on Friday afternoons. Your child is given three Enrichment options and placement is dependent upon the size of the class.

The Enrichment Teacher will provide the following kinds of services:

- working directly with students individually and in small groups
- organizing and implementing school-wide programs, providing collaborative planning sessions with teams and individuals that include recommending materials, modeling strategies, securing resources and offering staff development workshops.

### **REPORTING TO PARENTS**

A **Curriculum Night** has been scheduled for September 17, 2015 from 4:30 PM to 7:30 PM. Parent/Teacher Conferences are scheduled for November 5, 2015, March 3, 2016 and May 12, 2016. At that time, you will receive a full report of your child's progress. Report cards will be issued in November, January/February, March and the end of June. Number grades indicate your child's academic achievement. Numerical grades indicate effort. All teachers are available on Tuesdays from 2:30-3:10 PM to address your concerns.

### **Academic Key**

#### **Achievement**

- 4- Excels in standards
- 3- Proficient
- 2- Below standards
- 1- Well below standards

**New York City Department of Education sends home a Fitness gram Report** that state specific areas of concentration in the physical education classes and your child's progress in these areas..

In Art, students complete specific assignments aligned with **Blue Print for the Arts** in grades Pre-K -3.

### **HOMEWORK**

**Vision Statement:** The staff of PS85Q believes that there is a relationship between meaningful homework and student success and achievement. Homework should:

- have clear and concise directions
- be relevant to classroom learning
- be assessed to inform teaching
- receive timely and specific feedback, and
- not undermine success

#### **Guiding Principles K-5**

- 1) Teachers will have clear and reasonable homework policies that include expectations and consequences. These should be explained and modeled to children and parents in the beginning of the school year.
- 2) Teachers should have respectful procedures and routines in place to meet the needs of children who are struggling to complete their homework.
- 3) There is homework that requires students to memorize or work at the knowledge level but teachers will strive to find a balance of homework assignments that encompass many of the levels of Bloom's Taxonomy.
- 4) Teachers recognize the many needs and pressures families face and acknowledge homework can at times have an adverse impact on other responsibilities. Both parties need to take an active role in communicating their homework concerns.
- 5) Homework should involve the practice and application of skills learned in class and may at times be challenging to children and parents
- 6) Feedback **MUST** be given in a timeframe appropriate to the length and sophistication of the assignment. There may be a variety of form of feedback including but not limited to:
  - conferencing,
  - teacher corrected,
  - rubrics,

