

Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary School

3301 Old York Road

Philadelphia, PA 19140

Aliya Catanch-Bradley, Principal

Yasmin Evangelista, Assistant Principal

Family Handbook



FROM THE DESK OF PRINCIPAL Catanch-Bradley

“Enter to learn; depart to serve”

– Mary McLeod Bethune

Dear Bethune Families,

I consider it a privilege to serve the Bethune Community as your proud principal and lead learner! I am honored to continue the legacy of closing the belief gap. I am confident that our community of learners are destined for greatness and at Bethune we provide the strong foundation of self-awareness, accountability and academic rigor needed to help all things come to fruition. I join a staff of committed educators and faculty who love and believe in our children and see our parents as partners.

My 21 years of experience have prepared me for the road ahead and we still have work to do! We will continue to be steadfast as we remove barriers to learning for all of our children. High quality education with high standards doesn't happen – it is planned and executed keeping the end in mind. We will invest sweat equity in each of our students simply because they are worth it!

This past year we have increases academic success for our scholars in significant ways. We are getting better at finding out how to bring out the brilliance of our community members.

Aliya Catanch-Bradley

Principal

Our Vision

Continuing the legacy of Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune all who enter our learning community will enter to learn and depart to serve.

Our Mission

Our mission at Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary School is to educate and nurture lifelong learners, critical thinkers and problem solvers who are college and career ready and can be successful in a global society.

Values and Beliefs

We believe that:

1. All children have a right to a superior education
2. Students need to develop an understanding and appreciation of one's own culture, as well as others
3. A safe environment is essential for learning
4. All teachers, staff, parents and students should have respect for themselves and others
5. All teachers, staff, parents and students should take responsibility for their actions

PBIS - BETHUNE BEAR

Be Safe

Engaged

Accountable

Respectful

SCHOOL HOURS

Regular full day: 8:30-3:09

Early Dismissal (1/2 day) 8:30-11:45

School Opens for morning line up in the schoolyard: 8:20am

Note: No students will be permitted to enter the building prior to 8:20 am every day. There will be no supervision of students prior to 8:20 am each day. Students are not permitted to enter through the main entrance front doors without an adult going to the office only .

PLEASE DO NOT SEND STUDENTS TO SCHOOL BEFORE 8:20AM

There is no supervision of students before 8:20 am. Students will not be able to enter the building until 8:20 am. This includes inclement weather. No students will be permitted into the building prior to 8:20 am even in inclement weather.

ADMISSIONS AND DISMISSALS

BREAKFAST PROGRAM

We are participating in the universal breakfast program. All students are able to eat breakfast from 8:30 am to 8:45 am in their classrooms.

REGULAR ADMISSION

- Students must line up for admission by 8:27 am
- Grades K-8 will line up in the yard for morning admission at 8:27 am
- Teachers will escort classes inside the building beginning at 8:30am
- At 8:35 am the gate will be closed. Students arriving after the gate is locked must enter through the late room doors

NOTE: Students are not permitted to leave the yard once they have arrived on school grounds.

LATE STUDENTS

- Students are late if they arrive after 8:35 am
- Late students will enter through the late room doors.
- The late room doors are located on the right hand side of the building facing the main entrance.
- Late arrivals are a part of your child's official school record
- All late students are released or escorted to class by a staff member.
- Parents are **not allowed** to enter through the late room to escort their child to class
- **Late arrivals after 11am count as a half day absence**

REGULAR DISMISSAL

All students in Grades K- 5 will be dismissed through the main yard

- Grades K-2 will be brought to the line up by 3:00pm.
- Grades 3-5 will be brought to the gate at 3:05pm.
- Grades 6-8 will be dismissed on the Ontario Street side of the building at 3:05pm.
- All students are to go directly home or to their assigned after school programs. Students are not permitted back into the building unless for official school clubs or programs.
- Parents must wait in the parent area inside the gate or outside the gate.
Parents are not permitted to retrieve students from the class line during dismissal. Please determine a meeting location outside of the gate for family members to meet.
- Students waiting for pick-up must remain at the gate.
- Students are not permitted to play in the yard after school, they must go straight home.
- At 3:09 students in grades K-2 who have not been picked up will be escorted to the front of the building to the cafeteria. Parents who have not picked their children up by 3:10 will be contacted and authorities will be notified.
- Students are not permitted to wait for parents or siblings in the Main Office.

INCLEMENT WEATHER ADMISSIONS

Students in grades K-2 will be admitted through the main yard into the gymnasium, beginning at 8:20 am and will walk to the cafeteria. Students in Kindergarten, and 1st grade will wait at their tables for their teachers to pick them up.

Students in grades 3-8 will be admitted into the gymnasium for line up beginning at 8:20 am. They are to enter the gymnasium through the main yard and stand on their line up locations.

INCLEMENT WEATHER DISMISSAL

Students in Kindergarten will be brought into the cafeteria by 3:00. Parents will be permitted into the building through the yard beginning at 3:00. Students will be seated with their teachers. No parents will be given access to the building through the front door.

Students in grades 1-2 will be brought into the gymnasium by 3:00. Parents will be permitted into the building through the yard beginning at 3:00. Students will be with their teachers. No parents will be given access to the building through the front door.

Students in grades 3-5 will be dismissed at 3:05 out into the main yard. If they have to pick up younger siblings they are to enter the gym through the yard door.

Students in grades 6-8 will be dismissed at 3:05 on the Ontario side of the building. If they need to pick up siblings they are to walk around to the yard entrance to the gymnasium.

Please speak with your children about dismissal procedures and direct them to pick up siblings and go straight home at dismissal.

Legal Custody and Release of a Child

Legal Custody

Parents/guardians are asked to inform the main office and the child's teacher when legal custody of a child resides with one parent. School personnel can only make decisions about the child based on official legal documents. It is important for the school to have a copy of the custody decree. Custodial parents/guardians likewise are asked to supply the school with copies of restraining orders.

Release of a Child

A child will not be released to a parent/guardian who does not have legal custody without the written consent of the custodial parent/guardian. To determine the custodial parent/guardian, all separated or divorced parents must provide the school with a copy of the court order or custodial agreement adjudicating that determination of custody. This court order/custodial agreement is placed in a confidential file in the Principal's office.

EMERGENCY CLOSING

In cases of severe weather conditions, which may necessitate the closing of school, please listen to the radio or television reports concerning "All Philadelphia Public Schools". The emergency number assigned to Philadelphia Public Schools is 100. School closing information can also be found on the School District's website.

In the event of an early dismissal due to weather conditions or some other emergency there should be an emergency plan for your child. Please make sure that you have filled out our emergency contact form for your child. The form outlines a place for your child to go and a responsible person to care for your child.

ATTENDANCE

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

It is important that children come to school every day prepared to learn. Regular attendance is critical to academic success. Each day your child is absent an automated voice message from the School District of Philadelphia will alert the parent of the absence. If you receive a phone call and your child was not absent, please notify us immediately. Do not delay! If an error was made we need to correct it as soon as possible!

If your student is absent for 2 days in a row, please expect a phone call from your child's classroom teacher. We want to touch base with you to see if your child will have an extended absence and to offer to send homework home with a sibling or peer. An absence report will be filed for students who are absent three or more times.

A child who has been absent from school is required to bring a written note to the teacher upon returning to school. This note must be submitted within **THREE** days of the absence, it cannot be accepted after that.

If an acceptable absence note is not received the absence will be recorded as an unexcused absence. Excessive absences may lead to truancy issues.

LATE PICK UP

- It is imperative that students are picked up on time.
- Staff members are not available after 3:09 to watch children.
- It is necessary for you to have a back-up person who can pick up your child in the case of an emergency.
- Late pick up of students will be closely monitored and parents must sign a late log for late students. Excessive late pick-ups will be treated as parental neglect.

Bethune does not have a late pick up program for students. All students must be picked up by 3:09. If students are not picked up on time the Police Department and the Department of Health Services (child protective services) will be contacted. If you need assistance locating an afterschool program, please reach out to one of our community partners.

EARLY DISMISSALS

- To ensure the continuity of the instructional program for all students, parents must keep the Early Dismissals to a minimum.
- **Early Dismissals prior to 1pm will count as a half day absence.**
- Parents must send a written note to the teacher with the expected time of arrival. Teachers will have children packed and prepared to leave.
- An authorized adult must come to the main office and sign the Early Dismissal log book. Students are dismissed from the office only. Parents may not go to the classroom to retrieve students.
- For safety and security reasons a PHOTO ID WILL BE REQUIRED.
- Children will not be released to adults who are not on the school record as authorized to pick the child up. Please update record on a regular basis to ensure that they are accurate.
- Parents are encouraged to schedule medical appointments after school hours.
- Early Dismissals will end at 2:30PM.

BUILDING SECURITY

GENERAL SECURITY

The security of our students and staff is of the utmost importance. To that end security measures have been enacted and will be followed:

- The front doors will be locked at all times. Upon gaining entry of the building you will have to sign in at the front desk. After signing in please proceed directly to the main office. **Parents are not permitted to go to any classrooms without receiving a pass from the main office FIRST.**

- Pre-Kindergarten doors will be open from 8:30-9:00 and from 2:50-3:10 for entry of our prekindergarten students. ONLY pre-kindergarten students will be allowed to enter the building through these doors. Kindergarten and grade siblings must line up and enter the building with their classes. Pre-Kindergarten parents MUST walk their children around to the 11th street entrance. They may not transition through the building.
- Exterior gates will be locked at 8:35am and at 3:15pm

Parental Exclusion

If it is determined that a parent's behavior poses a threat to the school climate or is in consistent violation of building policies, that parent will be excluded from the building. A formal exclusion letter will be provided to the parent and to the 25th district of the Philadelphia Police Department. If a parent violates that exclusion letter, the police department will be called to have the parent removed from the building. Trespassing charges will be filed.

MATERIALS

BOOKS

Students are expected to take care of their belongings, including their books and learning materials. Every student must carry his/her own books and supplies to and from school in a suitable schoolbag. All notebooks should be clearly labeled with the student's name, grade and room number.

The student must pay all lost or damaged books, which belong to the school, in full. This includes textbooks, workbooks, independent reading books and all electronic equipment. A charge will be made at the cost of a new item.

SUPPLIES

Students are given a supply list in June and September. All students are expected to obtain the appropriate supplies to be kept in the classroom for use during the school day. In addition, students must have appropriate supplies at home with which to complete their homework.

If additional supplies are needed throughout the school year, Kindergarten through second grade classroom teachers will send a notice home. Third through Eighth grade students should replenish supplies at the close of each marking period as necessary.

UNIFORMS

Uniforms are mandated by the School District of Philadelphia. All students (PreK-8) are required to wear the Bethune uniform. During gym days students may wear a solid light blue or dark blue T-shirt (NO PRINTS OR PICTURES) blue sweatpants and sneakers. If there is a hardship in obtaining the uniform please see the counselor.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN -5TH GRADE

	Boys	Girls
TOPS	Collared light blue solid shirt Or golf style shirt (long or short sleeve)	solid light blue blouse or golf style shirt (<i>long/short sleeve</i>)
BOTTOMS	Solid navy blue long pants	Long navy blue pants, skirt or jumper
SHOES	Rubber sole shoes or sneakers	

MIDDLE SCHOOL (6th-8th GRADE)

	Boys	Girls
TOPS	Collared NAVY blue solid shirt Or golf style shirt (long or short sleeve)	solid NAVY blue blouse or golf style shirt (<i>long/short sleeve</i>)
BOTTOMS	Solid khaki long pants	Long khaki pants, skirt or jumper
SHOES	Rubber sole shoes or sneakers	

ATTIRE NOT PERMITTED:

Tee shirts,

Tank tops

****Hooded sweatshirts**

INSTRUCTION

CLASSROOM VISITS

Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit their child's classroom, however to limit interruption of instructional time, parents/guardians who wish to schedule a visit must make an appointment at least 24 hours in advance. Pop up classroom visits will not be permitted.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an important reinforcement of skills. Homework is assigned Monday through Friday. It provides an opportunity for our students to strengthen basic skills, reinforce study and encourages independent thinking and creativity. Parents are encouraged to take an active interest by checking to make sure assignments are completed. Some teachers may require that homework be signed by a parent. Approximate suggested homework times are:

Kindergarten
20 minutes

Grades 3-5
45 minutes

Grades 1-2
30 minutes

Grade 6-8
60 minutes

Parents must assist and monitor the completing homework. Students are required to complete missed assignments if he/she is absent from school. All students should read every night for a minimum of 20 minutes.

Report Cards and Progress Reports

- Academic interim reports are distributed 4 to 6 weeks before a report card is issued.
- All children in danger of failing will get a report. Behavioral interim reports may be issued at any time.

Report card conferences are held three times a year: November, February, and April. You will receive an appointment notice. If you cannot make the appointment, reschedule with the teacher. This conference is when you and the teacher look at your child's achievement and behavior, and plan what is best for your child. Come prepared with any questions you may have or information you feel the teacher needs to know. Teachers can only be helpful if they are informed of a problem.

2019 - 2020 Report Card Conferences

Quarter 1: November 20th, November 21st and November 22nd

Quarter 2: February 5th, February 6th, February 7th

Quarter 3: April 15th, April 16th, April 17th

CELL PHONE AND ELECTRONICS

- Students are not permitted to use cell phones for personal reasons during school hours. While in school, cell phones must be completely turned off.
- Students are permitted to use cell phones before school and after dismissal for communication with parents or for academic purposes only.
- Students who violate this procedure will have his/her cell phone confiscated.

1st confiscation: Returned at the end of the day

2nd confiscation: Returned to a parent

3rd confiscation: Returned at the end of the school year.

Middle Years Cell Phone Policy:

Middle years students have been provided with a locker to safely secure their cellular phones and electronic devices. We are also working to teach students appropriate use of their cell phones as educational devices. They are expected to use their electronic devices responsibly and to store them safely. The Bethune Elementary School cell phone policy does not assume responsibility for lost or stolen devices.

1st improper usage confiscation: Returned to a parent

2nd improper usage confiscation: Parent meeting

3rd improper usage confiscation: Daily Collection by administration

Electronic devices (MP3 players, tablets, handheld video games, etc) are a distraction from the educational process and instructional delivery. Unauthorized electronics will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day. If electronics are repeatedly brought to school they will be held by administration until the end of the year.

Bethune is not responsible for lost or stolen electronic devices. We will not devote instructional time to the search or investigation of lost or stolen electronic devices.

Lockers

We are fortunate to be able to provide students in 7th and 8th grade with lockers this year. Access to school lockers is an important part of the middle school experience and imperative to preparing students for high school. Use of the lockers is mandatory for personal items including sweatshirts, coats and bookbags. However, it is a privilege and a responsibility. Students who do not meet expectations may have their locker privileges revoked temporarily or permanently as needed. A locker contract will be sent home with students that will need to be signed by the student and parent. Only school issued locks will be permitted on the lockers. Any other locks will be removed with bolt cutters, compensation will not be provided.

All lockers are subject to search without notice. Any student found with contraband in their locker will be subject to the school's disciplinary matrix.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Students committing any of the offences in the Student Code of Conduct Handbook, shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Please refer to the Student Code of Conduct for a detailed explanation.

PROGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT PLAN

We are confident that Bethune Elementary students will attend daily to learn, be productive, and adhere to the Student Code of Conduct for Philadelphia School District Students experiencing difficulty adhering to the Student Code of Conduct will follow the process described below:

Minor behavioral issues will be handled by the teacher (classroom, or specialist). They will use their discretion when they believe the classroom behavior requires a referral. The following is a sampling of the consequences teachers may use:

- Redirection
- Removal to a restoration station within the classroom
- Written referral
- Conference with student
- Note to a parent
- Phone call to a parent
- Teacher detention (morning or afternoon)
- Removal to another setting (no longer than 30 minutes)

Major offenses will be handled by an administrator. Each child is an individual whose needs will be considered when determining the consequence. The following is a sampling of the consequences administrators may use:

- Natural consequence (clean desk that student wrote on, letter of apology, etc.)
- Parent phone call
- Referral to Discipline Team to develop a behavior improvement plan
- Alternative recess (only used when issue takes place during recess)
- Detention (morning/afternoon/lunch)
- Suspension (out of school)
- Referral for further consequence.

**Level II violations will follow the EH-21 Process in grades 6-8

** Serious incidents may require immediate suspension

DETENTION

In an attempt to stress constructive citizenship and improve academics, your child may be required to remain after school for short periods of time during the school year.

If improper behavior or uniform non-compliance is observed, your child will be given 24-hour notice prior to serving detention.

FIGHTING

Fighting will not be tolerated. Students involved in fighting will be disciplined in accordance with the **Philadelphia School District's Student Code of Conduct**.

BULLYING & HARASSMENT

Bullying and Harassment will not be tolerated. Students who engage in any type of bullying, or harassment will be disciplined in accordance with the Philadelphia School District's Code of Conduct.

Bullying Definition

Bullying occurs when someone repeatedly and purposefully says or does mean or hurtful things to another person who has a hard time defending him or herself.

Harassment Definition

Harassment is defined as unwelcome verbal, written, graphic and/or physical conduct that is related to one's gender, age, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity expression, national origin, religion, disability, English language proficiency, socioeconomic status or political beliefs.

ACT 26-WEAPONS

The Pennsylvania General Assembly has enacted legislation (Act 26) which requires all public schools to take a mandatory course of action in dealing with students who are found in possession of weapons. The law defines a weapon to include, but not limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, firearm, shotgun, rifle and any other tool or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. There is no requirement that the student use or try to use the weapon; and possession for self protection is not a defense. Parents are encouraged not to send tools or supplies such as metal or pointed scissors to school with your children unless you receive a written request from the teacher. Students found with weapons of any kind or any article used as a weapon are in violation of the law and subject to arrest and expulsion from the school district for at least one year.

SUPPORT STAFF

SPECIAL EDUCATION LIAISON

The special education liaison, (SEL) is the contact point for the special education department at Bethune. She processes all requests for evaluations and oversees the evaluation process. If you would like to request an evaluation for your child, a letter of request should be written and submitted to the SEL. Please note that the first step in the process is to have a parent meeting. A request does not guarantee an evaluation will be conducted or that an IEP will be issued.

COUNSELOR

The Counselor is an important link between the students and the school. A student may visit the Counselor's Office for assistance in many areas including personal concerns, social issues, etc. If an appointment is needed, please feel free to contact the Counselor at 215.400-3890. Our counselor is also our attendance designee and will be working with students who have attendance challenges.

NURSE

Bethune Elementary School has a full time nurse. She is available if a student has been injured or is ill. A student must receive a permission slip from their teacher to see the nurse. Any student who is sick will not be sent home unless accompanied by a parent or an adult authorized on the child's Emergency Contact Form.

The school nurse provides student services aimed at the identification and assessment of student health problems. Through ongoing communication and contacts with students, parents, and staff, the school nurse acquires first-hand knowledge of health problems and the availability and accessibility of services.

As an advocate for children, the school nurse communicates daily with students to ensure optimum health for academic success.

A. Contact

The school nurse and the staff of the Bethune Elementary depend on the cooperation and partnership between the home and the school with the assistance of the following:

- Emergency cards and forms need to be completed and returned promptly. Any changes in telephone numbers, addresses, emergency contacts, or employment must be reported to the school nurse and office.
- Updated immunizations, communicable diseases, surgery, or special medical conditions should be reported, in writing by the physician, to the school nurse. Also, inform your child's teacher of any specific health-related conditions.
- Please keep students out of school if they experience a temperature above 100 degrees, vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24-hour period pre-school start.

B. Physical Examinations

The Pennsylvania School Health Act (Section 1402) requires each pupil to have a health examination upon admission to school in sixth and ninth grades. This is required for all public schools. Remind your physician that vision, hearing screenings and updates of immunizations are important components of a physical and must be completed as designated on the physical form. Physical forms can be obtained in the school nurse's office or the main office.

NOTE: If your child isn't up-to-date when school starts, you will have 5 days to get the next dose of the vaccine that they need, and provide a medical plan to get up-to-date. Failure to have all required vaccines may result in your child being excluded from school.

C. Administration of Medication

Ideally, the administration of medication or utilization of equipment should take place at home. However, students with health problems may require medication (administered at prescribed intervals) or suction, oxygen, or other types of equipment in order to permit them to function at as close to a normal level as possible in the classroom. The School District of Philadelphia does not diagnose student conditions or prescribe medication/treatment. (No medication/treatment will be administered in school without a completed and approved request for administration of medication or use of suction, oxygen, or other equipment in school). All approved requests will expire on June 30th of each year. The procedure must be carried out in its entirety every year. The certified School Nurse will contact the prescribing provider for clarification, when necessary.

- All medication must be prescribed by a qualified healthcare provider on the appropriate form.
- The prescription must be approved by the Certified School Nurse or a School Nurse Supervisor.
- The parent will supply the medication, properly labeled and packaged.
- The school only will retain medication if it has been packaged and labeled by a Registered Pharmacist according to accepted pharmaceutical standards. The medication label must include: Patient name, pharmacy name, address and telephone number, prescription number, prescription date (must be current), name of medication-dosage-form and expiration date, instructions for administration, name of prescribing health care provider.
- All medication must be packaged with a Safe-T closure Cap.
- Equipment and machinery must be prescribed by a qualified healthcare provider on the appropriate form.
- Children may not carry medication on their person, in their lunch bag or schoolbag.

Please contact the Certified School Nurse if you have any questions or concerns.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK
and STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

Please return this form signed to school

By signing below my child and I acknowledge that we:

1. Received the Bethune Elementary School Family Handbook;
2. Read through and understand the contents of the Handbook;
3. Received The School District of Philadelphia Student Code of Conduct;
4. Read through and understand the contents of the Student Code of Conduct;
5. Understand that any violation of the policies and procedures will result in certain consequences.

Parent/Guardian (Print)

Parent/Guardian (Signature)

Date

Student (Print)

Student (Signature)

Date