

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

Dr. Hite, Superintendent

Lewis C. Cassidy Academics Plus School
Grades k-8

Neighborhood Network #2
Ms. R. Davis, Assistant Superintendent

STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK 2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR



Mrs. Tangela M. McClam
Principal

Message To Parents and Caregivers:

We are pleased to issue the Lewis C. Cassidy Academic Plus Elementary School Handbook to all of our families. We hope that this will be a valuable resource to help guide your pursuit of school excellence. It is our goal to provide a safe, nurturing, and academically challenging program for all children. We aim to foster a school environment where every student can develop to his/her maximum potential, learn the importance of responsibility and cooperation, develop self-esteem and treat everyone with respect and dignity.

You are invited to read about our unique school in this handbook. Feel free to ask questions of teachers, staff and administration. We welcome your involvement. Please visit us, volunteer, and become active in our learning community.

Yours in education,

Mrs. Tangelia M. McClam

Principal

History of Our School

The Lewis C. Cassidy Academics Plus School is located on Lansdowne Avenue east of 66th Street. The building was erected in 1923. The school was named after Lewis Cochran Cassidy who was born in New York City on October 17, 1829. When he was three years old, he moved to Philadelphia with his family. Lewis Cassidy graduated from Central High School in 1847 and studied law, receiving his degree from Princeton University.

Mr. Cassidy was active in Philadelphia politics, being elected to numerous positions. He served the state legislature as Secretary of the Judiciary Committee. He was also Solicitor of the District of Moyamensing, District Attorney and Attorney General of Pennsylvania in 1883.

When not occupied with politics or his law practice, Mr. Cassidy devoted himself to public service. He was a member of the Philadelphia Board of Education for many years. Mr. Cassidy died on November 18, 1889. He was 61 years old.

Vision Statement

Cassidy School's vision is to produce lifelong learners who are self-motivated, cooperative, respectful individuals that strive to reach their full potential as viable, contributing citizens.

Mission Statement

The staff of the Lewis C. Cassidy Academics Plus School is committed to providing a comprehensive and integrated educational experience for ALL students. The staff and community will provide a creative learning environment for every child in order to provide motivation for each student to achieve his/her own academic and social goals. The Cassidy teachers, administrators, and staff appreciate the uniqueness of each individual student and treat students with respect, care, and concern.

All of our students will master essential skills in order to become successful, lifelong learners. We recognize that high quality, relevant and appropriate learning opportunities that meet and challenge individual abilities and interests of the students is the key lever to reach our goals.

School Motto

"Cassidy is **our** learning place"

School Colors

Blue and White

School Pledge

I am a Cassidy Student
Making this pledge today.
I am here to work and learn
And grow in my own way.
I'll respect others and myself
As I do my best each day.
For CASSIDY is **our** learning place
We're making a better tomorrow---today.
HAVE A GREAT LEARNING DAY!

School Song (To the tune of "Auld Lang Syne")

Oh Cassidy, we'll do our best to make a better school
We'll always keep you proud of us and follow every rule.
Oh Cassidy, we treasure you for all that you have done,
There is no school as grand as ours; Oh Cassidy there is none.
You've helped to shape our future bright by giving us our start,
Fond memories will dwell with us in each and every heart.
Oh Cassidy we treasure you for all that you have done,
There is no school as grand as ours; Oh Cassidy there's none.

School Hours

- School begins promptly at 8:31 AM, and ends at 3:10 PM.
- **It is school policy to provide supervision in the schoolyard at 8:00AM.**

PLEASE NOTE THAT IT IS THE PARENT/GUARDIAN'S RESPONSIBILITY TO ARRANGE FOR PICK UP OF THEIR STUDENT (S) AT 3:10.

Absences

Good attendance is important for the academic progress of students. Students should attend school every day. If a student must be absent they must present a note **(within 3 calendar days of return)** that details the reason for absence.

Acceptable reasons for absence are:

- Illness
- Quarantine
- Recovery from an accident
- Required court appearance
- Death in the family
- Educational trips (prior approval required)
- Authorized school activities
- Religious Holiday

Absences that exceed 3 consecutive days require a doctor's note.

If an acceptable note is not presented, the absence will be coded as unexcused. 8 or more unexcused absences can result in a referral for truancy court.

Lateness Policy

Students that arrive after 8:31 am will be marked late.

Classroom instruction begins as soon as school starts so it is important for children to arrive on time. When a student arrives between 8:36 and 9:30 they will report directly to class to be marked late. If they arrive after 9:30, they are to report to the main office for a late slip. Excessive lateness can result in disciplinary and/or truancy action. **Any student arriving after the daily morning entrance into the building is considered late.**

Early Dismissal

Requests by parents for an early dismissal during school hours may be made in case of emergency. However, early dismissals for private instruction in activities such as music or dance are not granted. Routine dental and medical appointments should be made after school hours.

- In order to assure a safe and prompt dismissal, please inform your child's teacher if they are leaving early.
- Students are only released to adults listed on their emergency contact form that present valid identification.
- **Early dismissals end at 2:30 pm.**

Students that arrive after 10:00 am will be marked with a ½ day absence.
Students that leave before 1:00 pm will be marked with a ½ day absence.
*****Two 1/2-day absences equal 1 whole day absence*****

In order to support families in preventing truancy, you can expect us to do the following :

Unexcused Absence #	Action
1	Automated call from the SDP.
2	Phone call or Dojo message from classroom teacher.
3	C-31 sent home by classroom teacher.
4	Parent Letter sent home from school.
6	Mandatory parent conference scheduled by the principal or designee.
8	Home visit by member of leadership team
10	Referral to truancy or DHS

School Uniform Policy

k-4

Navy blue polo-style shirt and navy blue pants, shorts, jumper, or skirt (must be at least knee length).
Navy blue sweaters are permitted.
Dark colored shoes or sneakers.

5-8

Red polo-style shirt and navy blue pants, shorts, jumper, or skirt (must be at least knee length).
Navy blue sweaters are permitted.
Dark colored shoes or sneakers.

Gym uniform:

k-8

Navy blue t-shirt or sweatshirt (**no hoodies**)
Navy blue gym shorts or sweatpants
Sneakers must be worn on gym days

Dress Down Days:

The District has a mandatory uniform policy. All students **MUST** be in uniform everyday including school trip days. Unless the school grants permission for a special occasion or event students are expected to be in uniform.

Parents Visitations

Parents are encouraged to visit Cassidy School. In order to assure the safety of all please adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Report directly to the school office to receive a Visitor's Pass.
2. **No parent or guest is permitted to go directly to any classroom at anytime.**
3. Appointments can be made by contacting your student's teacher or by calling the school office at (215) 400-7510.

Morning Admission

Students are expected to be in their classroom line at 8:31 a.m. Supervised lines will enter the building in an orderly fashion. If you would like to volunteer to support our admission office please see the Main Office.

Inclement Weather

On rainy, snowy or very cold days, all students will be admitted to the auditorium beginning at 8:00 am.

In the case of severe weather conditions, which may necessitate the closing of schools, please listen to radio or television alerts concerning "All Philadelphia Public Schools." You can also call the Snow Hotline at 215-400-INFO (4636) or visit www.philasd.org.

In the event of an early closing of schools, we must know where your child can go if you are not home. Please complete the Emergency Contact form that will be sent home during the first week of school. It is VITAL that all contact information be kept current. Please inform the office of any changes.

Dismissal

- All Grade k students are picked up from the top patio in the yard by 3:10.
 - **They must be signed out in the main office.**
- All Grade 1-8 children should be picked up promptly at 3:10 PM.
 - If they walk home or are picked up by an adult, they will be dismissed via the Atwood or Kenmore Gates.
 - If an After Care Provider picks them up, they will be dismissed out of the Haddington Gate.

PLEASE NOTE THAT IT IS THE PARENT/GUARDIAN'S RESPONSIBILITY TO ARRANGE FOR PICK UP OF THEIR STUDENT (S) AT 3:10.

Emergencies

Each year the school distributes a Parent Location Form, which indicates where parents can be located in case of an emergency. It is very important that the school has this information. **If there is a change in emergency numbers, the school office must be notified.**

School Notices/Parent Communication

We will use a variety of means to communicate with you, such as email, phone calls, and our school website. However, our primary means of communication will likely be through sending notices home with the students. Please impress upon

your child the importance of bringing all notices home. Please check your child's belongings for these notices.

- Students in grades k-2 will have folders that will come home each Wednesday.
 - Please use the pockets to communicate with your child's teacher.
- Students in grade 3-8 will have agenda books that allow them to record assignments.
 - Please use the notes section to correspond with teachers
- Class Dojo- We will use this system to both track and reward students for appropriate behavior AND to communicate with parents.
 - This app can be downloaded to smartphones and tablets. Codes will be sent home within the first two weeks of school.

Breakfast Program/Lunch Program

Breakfast is offered to each student every morning, 8:00 AM to 8:20 AM.

We have thirty-minute lunches followed by 15-minute recess.

Students are expected to follow rules and demonstrate respect for each other and for the adults in charge during the lunch and recess period.

Classroom Celebrations

We value and respect the instructional time and make every effort to maximize it, as such parents are encouraged to celebrate student's birthdays outside of instructional time.

Pupil Progress Reports

In order to keep parents abreast of their student's progress, Interim reports will be sent home. These reports should be reviewed with the student, signed and returned to the teacher. A schedule of the reports will be distributed via the monthly calendar.

Additionally, Report card conferences will be held three times this year. Please see the calendar for dates. If you want to speak to your child's teacher at any other time, please feel free to call the office for an appointment.

Please visit cassidy.philasd.org and click on 'Parent' for information to register for the Parent Portal, which will permit you access your student's most recent academic performance.

Code of Student Conduct

The School District's Code of Student Conduct ensures appropriate behavior by all students at all times. The Code of Conduct is available on the SDP website. Please read through this document carefully and review it with your child. This will help us enforce all rules.

Students need to know what is expected of them and be able to identify and implement appropriate solutions to problems, as they arise. Students will be instructed on how they should resolve problems without breaking school rules.

Act 26

The Pennsylvania General Assembly has enacted legislation (Act 26) that requires all public schools to take a mandatory course of action in dealing with students who are found to be in possession of weapons.

The law permits the arrest and expulsion, for at least one year, of any student found in possession of a weapon on school property, in a school program, or while traveling to or from a school program, including time on public transportation.

The law defines a weapon to include, but not limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, firearm, shotgun, rifle and any 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 scissors to school with your children unless you receive a written request from the teacher.

The law requires that violations become part of a student's permanent disciplinary record, and will be available to any school in which the student may later enroll. **Parents will be required to sign an affidavit prior to enrolling their child in any public school to disclose the existence of any weapons violations or other serious violations.**

These measures, required by Act 26, are designed as a safeguard to ensure that all public schools are safe havens in which all students may interact in an environment and climate that fosters learning, and strongly discourages potential acts of violence.

Electronic Devices

Students must adhere to Cassidy's Electronics Policy. Additional information will be sent home for parents to review with their students. Students that violate this policy can face severe penalties that might include suspension and/or referral to an alternative placement. Electronic devices that are confiscated as part of a disciplinary and/or criminal activity will be held until the end of the investigation. Parents/guardians must schedule an appointment with the school's principal to obtain confiscated electronic devices.

Please do not call or text your student during the day.

Parental Concerns

Any suggestions, complaints or concerns are greatly appreciated. Please feel free to complete a Parent Concern Form to communicate your thoughts. Parent Concern Forms can be obtained from the main office.

Student Privacy

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records, which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a

statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

For additional information, you may call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (voice). Individuals who use TDD may use the following site [_](#)