

# **Stephen Decatur School**



## **Student Handbook 2017-2018**

**THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA  
STEPHEN DECATUR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**DEAR PARENTS AND STUDENTS,**

On behalf of our staff, I would like to welcome you into the Decatur family. Decatur School offers kindergarten to eighth grade students an enriching academic and social experience. Our dedicated staff and supportive Home & School Association work together to allow each child the opportunity to develop his/her potential to its fullest.

Please take the time to review the contents of this handbook with your child. Some of the items are general School District of Philadelphia policy, while others are unique to Decatur School. Each item is important for all students and parents to know.

Educational success is greatly dependent upon the bond that is forged between school and home. It is our hope, that with students, parents and teachers working together, the 2015-2016 school year will be our best yet!

Sincerely,

**Genevieve Endy-O’Kane**  
**Principal**

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**SCHOOL CALENDAR 2016-2017**

August 28	First Day for Staff – School Based Professional Development
August 31	District-wide Professional Development
September 1	Reorganization – Academic Year Preparation
September 4	Labor Day – Schools and Administrative Offices Closed
September 5	First day of Grades 1-12 Student Attendance
September 5-11	Kindergarten Parent/Teacher Interviews
September 12	First day of Kindergarten Student Attendance
September 21-22	Rosh Hashanah – Schools and Administrative Offices Closed
September 27	Back to School Night for Grades 5 – 8, 6:00 – 8:00 PM
September 28	Back to School Night for Grades K – 4, 6:00 – 8:00 PM
October 9-11	Interim Reports
October 27	Professional Development Half Day – 3 Hour Early Dismissal
November 7	Election Day – Schools closed
November 10	Veterans’ Day Observed – Schools and Administrative Offices Closed
November 20-22	Report Card Conferences
November 23-24	Thanksgiving Holiday – Schools and Administrative Offices Closed
December 8, 2017	Professional Development Half Day
December 25-30	Winter Break – Schools Closed
January 2	Staff Only
January 3-5	Interim Reports
January 15	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – Administrative Offices and Schools Closed
February 14-16	Report Card Conferences
February 19	President’s Day Administrative Offices And Schools Closed
March 14-16	Interim Reports
March 16	Professional Development Half Day – 3 Hour Early Dismissal
March 30	Good Friday – Schools and Administrative Offices Closed
April 2	Spring Recess – Schools closed
April 27	Professional Development Half Day – 3 Hour Early Dismissal

May 2-4	Interim Reports
May 9-11	Interim Reports
May 15	Pennsylvania Primary Election Day – Schools closed
May 18	Professional Development Half Day – 3 Hour Early Dismissal
May 28	Memorial Day – Schools and Administrative Offices Closed
June 12	Last Day for Students
June 13	Last Day for Staff

**DECATUR SCHOOL K – 6<sup>th</sup> GRADE PLEDGE**

Each day I will try my hardest  
And I won't do any less.

I'll be responsible for all that I do  
And I won't accept a mess.

I'll listen very carefully.  
My writing will be neat.

And, I simply won't be happy,  
Until all my work's complete.

I'll always do my homework  
And I'll try on every test.

And I won't forget my promise  
To do my very best.

I'll be cooperative and honest.  
Yes, RESPECT, this is my quest.

To be a CARING citizen  
And make Decatur School the BEST!

**WHY? BECAUSE WE ARE...DECATUR!!**

**DECATUR SCHOOL 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE PLEDGE**

Each day at Decatur,  
I'll follow the rules.  
I'll be smart with my decisions  
And I'll respect my school.

I'll be honest with everyone  
And make sure my work is done.  
I'll be responsible and serious,  
But still have lots of fun.

I'll respect all students and teachers,  
Be neat and make no mess.  
And I can surely promise  
Every day I'll try my best.

**WHY? BECAUSE WE ARE...DECATUR!!**

## GENERAL SCHOOL SAFETY

The entire Decatur School area tends to get very congested during arrival and dismissal of students to school. We encourage parents to park on some of the side streets a block away from the school and walk their children to and from the schoolyard. We encourage the parents of older students to allow their children to walk to and from school. Please map out a direct route for them avoiding shortcuts through woods, shopping centers, etc.

For the safety of our children, please do not double park at any time. Please do not block the driveways of the school or neighbors. Please do not prompt your children to run across the street unescorted. Please do not park along the curbside of the school. The Philadelphia Police will ticket cars. Please do not stop in the middle of the street to drop off your child, as well. This causes major traffic congestion and poses a safety risk for your child, as well as for the other students who are walking to school.

Decatur students must only cross streets at corners, even when accompanied by an adult.

Crossing Guards are posted on certain corners, as determined by the Philadelphia Police Department. We ask that parents and students please respect this supervisory role. Students are encouraged to come directly to school and to go directly home after school once they have been dismissed. This is for their safety. Please plan a direct route with your child and enforce that they avoid wooded areas, shopping centers, short cuts, or detours. We also ask that no children play in the Fitzpatrick Playground adjacent to the school without parental supervision before or after school. This would be considered a detour and since there are no school personnel available to monitor your child in the playground, this puts your child at risk. Parents are asked to please support this policy.

## SCHOOLYARD SAFETY

Please leave your pets at home when dropping off or picking up your children. Dogs/pets are not permitted in the schoolyard, near the fences or gates of the schoolyard or along the sidewalks outside the Decatur School. Therefore, it would be best that dogs/pets remain at home.

Parents are not permitted to enter the schoolyard during school hours without reporting to the Main Office and receiving a visitor's pass. All unauthorized visits are considered trespassing. This is to ensure the safety of every student and staff member at the Decatur School.

By order of the School District of Philadelphia, Decatur School will provide a Smoke Free environment to its students, parents, visitors and employees. No smoking will be tolerated in the building or on school property, including the schoolyard and surrounding sidewalks.

For the safety of our students, please do not discard cigarette butts on the school premises or in the school waste cans (inside and outside). Please refrain from smoking cigarettes or any form of tobacco in our schoolyard, parking lot, and/or on the sidewalk of the Stephen Decatur School. We also ask that, if you agree to chaperone our students on class trips, you refrain from smoking while in their presence.

## PARKING LOT AVAILABILITY

In order to ensure the safety of all of our students during admission and dismissal, the parking lot between Decatur School and Fitzpatrick Recreation Center will be closed during the following times: **8:10 to 8:25 for admission and 2:35 to 3:10 for dismissal**. It is at these times when the most of our students are walking and need to have access to the sidewalks free of traffic. If you are going to utilize this parking lot, you must make sure that you enter before the lot is closed and be willing to remain until the lot reopens. Please make sure that you inform anyone who picks up your child about this parking lot policy to avoid any conflicts.

The parking lot behind the school is for staff only. This lot is off limits except for School District Personnel and Home and School Board Members who must follow the safety protocols established for this area. Anyone using this lot must abide by these rules or they must find parking elsewhere. We ask that our parents do not use this lot to wait in your car for your child at dismissal. We also ask that you do not park in this lot during school hours since there are limited spaces for staff and some are designated.

## ARRIVAL

**Grades 7 and 8:** Adult supervision begins at 7:45 AM. Students are to enter the schoolyard through the gate at the back of the schoolyard near the basketball courts. At 7:55 AM students will enter the Red Annex through the door closest to the basketball courts. First period will begin at 8:00 AM. At 8:02 AM, the door will be closed and all students who are late must enter the building through the door facing the White Annex and get a late slip in Room A-2. Classes begin at 8:05 AM.

After the morning exercises have ended in the schoolyard, students who are late must enter through the front doors of the school to get a late pass from the main office. The office will call the classroom of the student so that they can gain entrance into the red annex.

**Grades K through 6:** Adult supervision will begin in the yard at 8:00 AM. Siblings of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are to report to the IMC from 7:45 AM – 8:00 AM. They must enter through the rear of the schoolyard near the basketball courts with their sibling. They will join other students in the schoolyard at 8:00 AM. Classes begin at 8:21 AM for students in Grades K – 6, immediately following the Pledge of Allegiance, the Decatur Pledge, and our Daily 7 exercises in the schoolyard. Students should be standing in their line at the first bell (8:16).

### **DISMISSAL**

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will be dismissed at 2:39 PM. They will exit from the door closest to their classrooms and leave the schoolyard down the steps next to the gym. Students will be escorted to Academy Road where they are to immediately leave campus. Those 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders who have to pick up siblings in Grades K thru 6 are to report to the classroom of their sibling and will be dismissed with their sibling's class.

If you are picking up your child, please note his/her dismissal procedures.

- All Kindergarten students will be dismissed at 2:50 PM through the Flagpole doors.
- All First Grade students will be dismissed at 2:55 PM through the Flagpole doors.
- Grades 2 through 6 will be dismissed at 3:00 PM.
  - Grades 2 and 3 will dismiss into the schoolyard and exit down the steps next to the gym. They will line up facing the parking lot inside the yellow lines.
  - Grades 4 through 6 will dismiss through the front door. They will be escorted to Academy Road where they will walk north or south on this road. Students will be instructed to cross only at the lights on Academy Road. Please support this for your child's safety.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER ADMISSION PROCEDURES**

On days when inclement weather occurs, a four-bell signal will be rung. Students are to report directly to their assigned seating in the locations listed below. Tables will be labeled in the cafeteria at the beginning of the year and areas will be clearly marked in the gymnasium and auditorium as well.

<b>Gymnasium:</b>	Kindergarten	
<b>Cafeteria:</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	<i>(Parents must exit once their children are seated at their tables.)</i>
<i>Parents are not permitted in the cafeteria after the first bell. (8:16)</i>		
<b>Auditorium:</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	<i>Students Only</i> <i>Students Only</i> <i>Students Only</i>
<b>Red Annex:</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade and 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade (same as regular admission procedure)	

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

Parents are urged to leave their children in school all day. Doctor or other appointments should be scheduled outside school hours and on school holidays, whenever possible. If a child needs to be dismissed early, he/she should bring a note to his/her teacher in advance stating time and reason. Teachers can then have the child ready, which minimizes disruptions to the classroom. Parents must sign the child out in the school office and show proper identification. In order for the early dismissal to be excused, students must bring a note in the next day from their doctor/dentist/specialist appointment. We discourage and will not grant early dismissals after 2:30 PM, because this is too distracting as classes are approaching dismissal time.

**There are no early dismissals granted after school trips, whether parents are chaperoning or not. Teachers will be conducting follow-up activities for students while the trip is fresh in their minds. Chaperones are welcome to stay**

for the follow-up activities. Early dismissals on trip days are too disruptive to the office as well as other classrooms since parents often want to take out siblings at the same time. Trip days are instructional days. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in future trips being jeopardized since trips are not mandatory. We really appreciate your cooperation with this.

### **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING**

When school will be closed due to extreme weather conditions, an announcement will be made over the radio and television stations early in the morning. The announcement will be “All Philadelphia Public Schools are CLOSED.” When it is necessary to close school during the school day, radio and television stations will also make announcements. It will be announced as “ALL Philadelphia Public Schools will close at a (Specific Time).” It is imperative that we have your current home information, emergency contact numbers and work numbers on file in the school. It is also important to review with your child the instructions for what to do in the event that you are not home when he/she arrives home from school. Make sure you have indicated on the Emergency Closing Sheet whether your child will be picked up, if they are to walk home or any other special instructions needed.

### **DELAYED SCHOOL OPENING**

Due to inclement weather or other emergencies, it may be necessary to cancel school for the day or have a “delayed opening.” If this should occur, parents and caregivers are asked to tune in to the local news, visit The School District of Philadelphia’s website at [www.philasd.org](http://www.philasd.org), or call the District’s Parent Hotline a (215) 400-INFO (4636).

In the event of a delayed opening, all schools and early childhood programs will open at 10:00 AM. Dismissal time will remain the same. Yellow bus transportation will run on a 90 minute delayed schedule. All school trips that are scheduled will be canceled. Breakfast, lunch, after school programming, and athletics will not be affected and will function as normal. We strongly encourage you to make arrangements for your child’s supervision when schools are closed or delayed and to review these arrangements with your child.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Parents **must submit** an absence note to the school **within three (3) days** of the child’s unexcused absence. After 3 days, the School Principal/Designee will make a determination if the note will be accepted. There is no guarantee that the school will accept the note. If the note has been accepted, the teacher will make the corrections on the roll sheet and then submit to the main office so that it can be changed in the SIS (Student Information System). At the 3rd unexcused absence the C-31 (Three Day Legal Notice) should be sent to the Parent/Guardian to make them aware that the child has missed 3 days (consecutive/nonconsecutive) of school. At the 6th unexcused absence the school must utilize the Online Interventions Module (MTSS) and create an attendance plan for the student. The school should also arrange a meeting with the parent/guardian of the child to inquire about the truancy and come up with a plan to help remove any barriers to the student’s truancy. At the 10th unexcused absence, the Truancy Referral should be submitted to the Office of Attendance & Truancy. Grades K-3 must be submitted on the DHS Referral Sheet, which is available on the office’s web site. Grades 4-11th must be submitted on the Family Court Referral Sheet, which is available on the office’s web site. Siblings from the same school should be submitted together on the referral sheets. **Please know that family vacations and other family trips are considered unexcused. Unexcused early dismissals and/or late arrivals will prevent students from receiving a perfect attendance award.**

### **TARDY AND TRUANT STUDENTS**

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are considered tardy and will receive late slips if they arrive after 8:02 AM in the Red Annex on regular admission and inclement admission days. For Kindergarten through Sixth Grade students, the bell rings at 8:21 AM. Students will be recorded tardy if they arrive after the yard is clear and doors are shut on regular admission days. On inclement admission days, students in Grades K through 6 will be recorded late after the Flagpole doors are closed. In both instances, all late students (Main Building and Red Annex) are to enter through the main doors and will be issued late slips before going to class. All classroom teachers will mark students with late slips “late”.

Students who are late or absent, without parental or school consent, will be considered truant. Truancy violates state and local attendance laws and is considered a serious offense. Continued truancy may result in legal action.

### **VISITORS**

All visitors, including parents, must check in at the school office and receive a pass to travel to any part of the school. Please do not follow your child to his/her classroom with the line from the schoolyard. Visitors will not be permitted to loiter in or around the school building. Parents are to schedule conferences in advance at times convenient for both

teachers and parents. Conferences will be scheduled at such times that they do not interrupt or interfere with a teacher's classes. Students are not permitted to have visitors during the school day.

The Trespassing Ordinance, Philadelphia Code of Ordinances, Chapter 10-824, was passed by City Council to prevent unauthorized entry on school premises and will be strictly enforced. Anyone who enters the school or schoolyard without authorization by the Main Office is trespassing. This ordinance is for the protection of your child. Please cooperate and report to the office upon entering Decatur School.

### **ILLNESS OR INJURY AT SCHOOL**

If a student is injured or becomes ill at school, he/she is to ask for permission to visit the school nurse. If necessary, we will contact the student's parent/guardian. All students who are injured or become ill must be signed out in the Main Office before leaving school. If your child is injured at school, we will make him/her comfortable and then call you immediately if a serious injury has occurred. If you cannot be reached, we will attempt to contact the emergency number you provided to your child's teacher. In the event that we need to call 911 for a student, **only** the parents/guardians of the child will be notified. Decatur School must enforce the HIPAA rule, which entitles any patient (child or adult) to the rights to privacy.

### **ADMINISTERING MEDICATION**

Parents must make prior arrangements with the school nurse if a physician determines that a student needs medication while at school. No Decatur School staff member may issue medication to any student. In the event of the nurse's absence, the nurse's designee and/or the principal will follow the schedule for administration of medications and will have access to medications that are stored in the nurse's office for as needed purposes. Some medications require only a registered medical health care provider to administer. The nurse works with the parents of these students to create a plan in the event of her absence. REMEMBER, it is necessary that we know where to reach you at all times at home and at work. Keep this information updated throughout the school year.

Students should not have medication of any kind in their possession. Please contact the school nurse if you have any questions about prescribed or over the counter medications that your child may need to take during the school day.

### **DISCIPLINE CODE POLICY**

To guarantee a positive social and educational climate, it is important that students understand that acceptable standards of behavior will be expected at all times. Courtesy and good manners should be the key to a student's conduct at school. A good attitude towards teachers and fellow students will make school enjoyable for all. Students are expected to have respect for school property and to take good care of books, desks and other furniture and equipment. Students follow the Decatur Student Code of Conduct, which to make them more specific to Decatur School, are modified from, but aligned to, the School District Code of Student Conduct.

Discipline may be administered when any individual's actions interfere with the right of teachers to teach and other students to learn. Depending on the infraction, this can include one or more of the following: detentions (before school, after school, during lunch), temporary or permanent removal from the lunch program, removal from club memberships (extra curricular, student government, or Golden Attitude), community service, alternative setting for "cool down," in-house suspension, out-of school suspension, or expulsion. (Progressive Discipline)

#### Rationale

At Stephen Decatur School we strive to assist our students to be self-disciplined, independent learners whose self-esteem and self-worth have been fostered as an integral part of the growth of the whole person. Our discipline is based on CARING. We hope that the students' knowledge and experience of our CARE for them will help them to know us as people who are doing our very best for their welfare. Such understanding should lead the students to developing a responsibility for their own behavior.

#### Whole School Commitment

Only when a school discipline system is integrated with the whole school philosophy, as reflected in the school vision, organization and structures, will it be successful. In devising a whole school system, it is important that equity and objectivity be maintained. Students must see fairness. Our motto is "Be firm, but fair." Rules and responsibilities need to be heeded by both staff and students, with the support of families. The behaviors described in the Student Code of Conduct embedded in this policy, must be reinforced consistently. This responsibility falls on every teacher and each teacher is expected to support this policy at all times, in keeping with the aims of the school, in support of colleagues, and

to meet the needs of students. Parents are also expected to give consistent support to this policy in keeping with the values expressed by most parents.

Decatur has a zero tolerance policy for bullying, harassment, intimidation, and violence.

As a result of the sensitive and cooperative implementation of the Decatur School Discipline Policy, students will be equipped to participate fully in the learning activities being offered at our school.

### **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS**

1. I have the right to be happy and to be treated with understanding.
  2. I have the right to be treated with respect and politeness.
  3. I have the right to be safe.
  4. I have the right to expect my property to be safe.
  5. I have the right to obtain maximum benefit from all lessons and classes.
  6. I have the right to be proud of my school.
  7. I have the right to have a pleasant, clean and well-maintained school and grounds.
  8. I have the right to develop self-discipline.
  9. I have the right to my own opinion.
  10. I have the right to an educational program that is challenging and that recognizes individual learning needs.
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1. I have the responsibility to treat others with understanding; I must not hurt others' feelings.
2. I have the responsibility to treat others with respect and politeness.
3. I have the responsibility not to hurt or hit anyone.
4. I have the responsibility not to take or destroy the property of others.
5. I have the responsibility to cooperate with teachers and other students and to make sure that lessons proceed and to always do my best.
6. I have the responsibility to be punctual, to attend school regularly and to participate actively in all school activities.
7. I have the responsibility to behave appropriately, so as to bring credit to my school.
8. I have the responsibility to care for the school environment.
9. I have the responsibility to exhibit self-control.
10. I should respect the opinion of others.

## **STEPHEN DECATUR SCHOOL**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

We will grow as leaders continuously aspiring to achieve our greatest potential and establishing the collaborative, nurturing environment necessary to affect positive change while influencing a better world for all.

### **VISION**

*The Stephen Decatur School will provide quality instruction through a collaborative effort to ensure ALL students graduate from 8<sup>th</sup> grade ready for high school.*

### **Stephen Decatur School Rules**





The students of Stephen Decatur School ALWAYS:

1. Strive for excellence in all areas of school life
2. Are honest and trustworthy
3. Follow instructions
4. Show respect for all their property and the environment
5. Play safely

WHAT WILL THIS LOOK LIKE?

If the students of Decatur School ALWAYS

**Strive For Excellence In All Areas Of School Life They Will:**

- Work quietly
- Cooperate with others
- Finish all work to the best of their ability
- Take pride in their work
- Seek assistance when necessary
- Use the full range of resources available
- Inquire, question and challenge themselves
- Set personal goals
- Maximize their learning potential

**Are Honest And Trustworthy, They Will:**

- Tell the truth
- Report serious incidents to an adult
- Carry out responsibilities sensibly and promptly
- Represent the school with pride, showing the highest standard of behavior

**Follow Instructions, They Will:**

- Speak quietly inside
- Observe the school's uniform code
- Sit in appropriate assigned areas to eat lunch or participate in recess
- Play appropriately during recess
- Place trash in the bins provided
- Walk inside
- Walk sensibly from one area to another with their teacher
- Use the appropriate staircases (Up/Down) except for admission/dismissal/ evacuation drills
- Leave valuables at home: (large sums of money, electronic games, toys, iPods, etc.)
- Keep cell phones off and out of sight at all times on school property

**Show Respect For All, Their Property And The Environment, They Will:**

- Make sure that their actions are non-violent
- Make sure they act sociably
- Use appropriate, polite language only
- Speak politely to adults and children alike
- Support each other by discouraging bullying, teasing or name-calling
- Allow other children to play games without interference
- Leave other children's belongings alone

**Play Safely, They Will:**

- Play in socialized recess areas only, staying away from fences, gates or buildings
- Use bathrooms appropriately
- Leave stones/debris on the ground
- Play where they can be seen at all times
- Play sensibly when using playground/recess equipment
- Have permission to leave the schoolyard or to enter the buildings other than the bathrooms

NOTE: During the first quarter of the school year, each of the five rules will form the basis for class discussion during the first full five weeks of school, one rule per week. This program will be supported by providing information to parents about the “rule of the week” via the school’s newsletter/calendar. Each class will then establish a set of “Standard Statements” for their class, describing those behaviors that represent acceptable behavior for children at that particular grade level and stage of development.

### **BEHAVIOR CALENDAR**

Every student in Grades 1 through 8 will receive a monthly behavior calendar. This calendar is sent home weekly in the Wednesday Communication Folder. Infractions are listed with codes and teachers record any infractions that the student may have earned during that week. When a child receives three infractions in one area, “We Care” notes are sent home to inform the parent that if the child receives 5 infractions in that area, a detention will be scheduled. Usually the “We Care” note is sufficient to deter the student from receiving any more infractions, especially when there is support from home. If a detention needs to be scheduled, parents will receive a phone call and/or a detention notice informing the parent of the date/time of the detention. Parents are asked to review the calendar with their children weekly to avoid any surprises. Please know that any Level 2 Offenses result in an automatic detention, unless more serious consequences are warranted. The Behavior Calendar is also used to determine which students can attend the Principal’s Dance Party for Good Citizenship. It is also used to select the one boy and one girl from each class for Student of the Month. Also, the calendar is used for teachers to select students to receive the “Good Citizenship Awards” distributed at the Awards Assemblies after each report card period. However, the Behavior Calendar alone is not used to determine who is nominated into the Golden Attitude Clubs. Please refer to the criteria under “GOLDEN ATTITUDE CLUBS”.

### **WEEKLY COMMUNICATION FOLDER**

Every Wednesday students are expected to bring home their Weekly Communication Folders for parents to review. In addition to the Behavior Calendar are important papers that may need parental attention. The Home and School Association also sends most of their information home in these folders. Other important notices, flyers and forms from the school are also sent home via the folder. We urge parents to look for this folder weekly and to address all items in it. Please sign the calendar each week and make sure that your child has the folder in his/her book bag to return to his/her teacher the next day. Make sure you have removed all items after you have reviewed them and only return the ones that are required. Please know that you may send correspondence to your child’s teacher on any day and you do not have to wait for Wednesdays to use the folder. The school uses the Weekly Communication Folder to streamline the amount of material being sent home to parents.

### **CELL PHONES**

School District of Philadelphia Code of Student Conduct policy states that if a student displays or uses a cell phone/iPod in school, it will be confiscated and returned only to the parent or guardian of the student.

Decatur School has a three-strike policy for cell phones. Students who violate this rule for the first time will have their phones confiscated. They will be given a warning and the phone will be returned at the end of the school day. However, upon a second violation, the school will confiscate the device and it will only be returned to a parent/guardian. No exceptions.

If the student has a third offense, the student will no longer be permitted to have his/her cell phone during the school day. Upon arrival to school and every day afterward, the student will be required to turn the cell phone in to the secretary in the Main Office.

Students in Grades 4 thru 8 will turn their phones into the teacher at the beginning of the day to be secured until phones are returned at dismissal.

### **MONEY/EXPENSIVE ITEMS/CONTRABAND**

Please do not allow your child to bring large sums of money or expensive items to school. If we find that your child has an excessive amount of money, it will be taken and parents will be notified so that they can retrieve it.

Personal electronic equipment (iPads, game systems, etc.) and other electronic items/toys are not allowed in school. We cannot be responsible for the loss of those items.

Your children are not to bring dangerous or distracting articles to school, such as cap guns, knives, scissors, rock picks, toys, radios, jewelry, articles of clothing, etc. Please check your children’s book bag regularly to make sure that there is no contraband of any kind in there.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Children's names should be sewn or written onto items of clothing that may be easily lost. Lunch boxes, books, book bags, boots, sneakers, outer clothing, etc. should be labeled. The Lost and Found is located in the rear of the cafeteria. Please encourage your children to check the Lost and Found in the lunchroom for lost items. Parents may check the lost and found as well after checking in at the Main Office to obtain a visitor's pass.

## **CHEWING GUM, CANDY AND SNACKS**

Students are not allowed to chew gum at any location in school. Students who bring their lunches from home may have candy or snacks as a part of their lunch. Students will not be allowed to sell or trade snacks, gum, candy, or drinks at school. Parents are encouraged to choose healthy snacks for their child to bring to school. The Home and School Association will sell snacks at special events and activities or on SNACK FRIDAYS throughout the school year.

## **STEPHEN DECATUR SCHOOL DRESS CODE**

### **GRADES K – 6 (Colors are khaki and navy blue)**

#### **Girls:**

Navy Blue collar polo shirt (short or long sleeves)

Any undershirt worn must match the school shirt.

Tan Khaki skirts, skorts, jumpers, docker-style pants (i.e., loose-fitting) No skinny jean/tights, etc. (Shorts may be worn from 9/5/17 – 11/1/17 and 4/15/18 – 6/12/17.)

Navy Blue Cardigan or V-neck Pullover Sweater, ALL navy blue zip up hoodie, Decatur School Pull-over Hoodie Sneakers or enclosed shoe (No boots)

#### **Boys:**

Navy Blue collar polo shirt (short or long sleeves)

Any undershirt worn must match the school shirt.

Tan Khaki docker-style pants (Shorts may be worn from 9/5/17 – 11/1/17 and 4/15/18 – 6/12/17).

Navy Blue Cardigan or V-neck Pullover Sweater, ALL navy blue zip up hoodie, Decatur School Pull-over Hoodie Sneakers or enclosed shoe (No boots)

#### **Boys and Girls Gym Uniform:**

Gold or Yellow T-shirts (May or may not have "Decatur" on them.) No other writing is acceptable.

Navy Blue Sweatpants (from 11/1/17 to 4/15/18)

Navy Blue Shorts, basketball mesh shorts (May or may not have "Decatur" on them.) (From 9/5/17 to 11/1/18 and 4/15/18 to 6/12/18)

Sneakers

*Gym Uniforms are available from the Decatur Home and School*

## **MIDDLE YEARS UNIFORM POLICY**

### **Grades 7 & 8**

#### **Girls:**

White-collar button-down blouse – long or short sleeves or white-collar polo shirt – long or short sleeves

Undershirts must match the school shirt.

Navy Blue skorts or docker-style pants (Loose fitting! Absolutely no tight or leggings-style pants) (Shorts may be worn from 9/5/17 – 11/1/17 and 4/15/18 – 6/12/18.)

Navy Blue Cardigan or V-neck Pullover Sweater or ALL navy blue zip up hoodie, Decatur School Pull-over Hoodie Sneakers or enclosed shoe (No boots)

#### **Boys:**

White collar polo shirts - long or short sleeves

Undershirts must match the school shirt.

Navy Blue docker-style pants (Shorts may be worn from 9/5/17 – 11/1/17 and 4/15/18 – 6/12/18.)

Navy Blue Cardigan or V-neck Pullover Sweater or ALL navy blue zip up hoodie

Sneakers or enclosed shoe (No boots)

#### **Boys and Girls' Gym Uniform:**

Gold or Yellow T-shirts (May or may not have "Decatur" on them.) No other writing is acceptable.

Navy Blue Sweatpants (from 11/1/17 to 4/15/18)

Navy Blue Shorts, basketball mesh shorts (May or may not have "Decatur" on them.) (From 9/5/17 to 11/1/17 and 4/15/18 to 6/12/18)

Sneakers

*Gym Uniforms are available from the Decatur Home and School.*

#### **All Grades:**

**All staff will enforce the Decatur School Uniform Policy during the 2017-2018 school year. Tight fitting pants (for girls) will not be accepted. Absolutely no UGGs, boots, moccasins, flats, sandals, and open-toed shoes will be acceptable. During inclement weather, students may wear boots to school; however, they must bring their school shoes or sneakers with them to change into inside the building. Wearing boots throughout the school day poses tripping hazards and are not healthy footwear for active student mobility. If there is a change in schedule and students are sent to P.E., students without sneakers cannot participate.**

**Our dress code also requires that all hats are removed in the building and girls not wear head coverings or scarves, unless for religious reasons. No hoop earrings larger than one inch, dangling earrings, or large jewelry can be worn. Absolutely no facial or body-piercing jewelry will be permitted in school. Modest highlights of color will be accepted, as long as it does not pose a distraction to instruction. Students are not to wear heavy makeup at school.**

#### **SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS**

If you are interested in becoming a school volunteer, please call 215-400-3050. Your interest and involvement are always appreciated. In order to be a volunteer, you must have your clearances (Criminal Background Check, FBI Clearance, and Child Abuse Clearance).

#### **EVACUATION DRILLS**

Evacuation drills are necessary for the safety of the students and staff. Everyone should know the specific directions for reaching a point of safety from those areas of the building in which he or she may be. Specific information for all drills is posted in each classroom and/or area.

#### **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards will be issued four times a year. Report cards will contain both academic and behavior evaluations. Attendance will be reported on the report card, as well.

Parents are issued an appointment time for a parent/teacher conference for the first three report cards to discuss their child's progress with his/her teacher. You must adhere to the time stated on the appointment slip, unless you and the teacher have mutually agreed upon a more convenient time. Everyone deserves the opportunity to have the teacher's undivided attention. Afternoon conferences begin at 1:00 PM. Evening conferences may be scheduled during either their first or second report card period. If you must make other arrangements, contact your child's teacher immediately upon receiving your appointment time.

#### **CARE OF TEXTBOOKS, LIBRARY BOOKS, ETC.**

Students are responsible for all textbooks and library books issued to them during the school year. Money will be collected for damaged books. If a child owes a textbook or library book, report cards may be withheld until they are returned or paid for in full. If a lost book is found, money paid will be refunded.

#### **CLASS TRIPS/FIELD TRIPS/NEIGHBORHOOD WALKS**

The School District of Philadelphia (SDP) recognizes that class trips, field trips, and neighborhood walks are an educationally sound and important ingredient in the instructional program of the school. Field trips can supplement and enrich classroom procedures by providing learning experiences in an environment outside of school. All class/field trips and neighborhood walks have educational value and are geared to extend the instructional program. They are an integral part of an approved course of study and are conducted for the purpose of affording a firsthand educational experience not available in the classroom.

Trips are taken between October and June. For reasons of security and curriculum, students not enrolled in the class participating, i.e., siblings and/or children of chaperones may not attend. The nurse makes arrangements for students' medications for the time students are away from the school.

In order for parents to chaperone, you must have your clearances. (Criminal Background Checks, FBI and Child Abuse Clearances) \*Information on how to obtain these is on the School District of Philadelphia website.

**No child will be excluded from a field trip without the Principal's permission.**

Parents/guardians must provide written permission allowing their children to participate in classroom trips and neighborhood walks. Adequate supervision is needed – 1 adult per 10 students – so please consider attending one or more of your child's trips.

**IMPORTANT:**

If you are a chaperone on a trip, please do not remove your children for early dismissal when the class returns to the school. Trips are not mandatory and failure to comply with this policy could result in the cancellation of future trips for your child's class. Trip days are instructional days. Teachers plan important follow-up instructional activities that your child needs to attend. The field trip and the follow-up lesson make the learning relevant to the student, thus culminating the lesson. You are more than welcome to remain and participate in the follow-up activity.

**OFFICE SUPPORT**

Please remember that the office is the support for the **entire school**. Our school has over 1,000 families and over 100 staff members. That is a lot of support to give to a lot of people. There is only **one secretary**. Unnecessary, frequent interruptions affect the work of the secretary and impact your child. Deadlines cannot be met and things cannot get done when too much time is spent on interruptions. Please make sure that you send your child to school on time daily with everything that he/she needs for the day. Late arrivals, drop offs of forgotten things, phone calls to relay messages are all distracting and time consuming. **WE** would appreciate your support and cooperation with this.

**GOLDEN ATTITUDE CLUBS**

The Decatur School Golden Attitude Club is a club that recognizes respectful, reliable and responsible students in Grades 2-6. A special Golden Attitude Plus Club exists for students in Grades 7-8. Special club activities are held once a month and all students receive a T-shirt. The Golden Attitude Committee plans these events and establishes the criteria for the clubs. Classroom teachers give applications to students in Grades 2-8. Students write an essay to submit with their applications explaining why they should become a member. All teachers and staff members with whom your child comes in contact during the school day must sign their applications.

Students may be removed from the clubs, for an activity or entirely, for misbehavior or for not maintaining the established criteria during the school year. Students must adhere to the criteria established by the staff of the Decatur School in order to gain and maintain participation in this club. Criteria consist of good attendance (present daily and on time with no unexcused early dismissals), completion of homework and class work and good behavior. Below is the established criteria agreed upon by the Decatur School Staff:

**Golden Attitude Club (GAC)/Golden Attitude Plus Club (GAC+) Membership Criteria**

**Academics:**

- All homework and class work is completed daily
- Student receives A's, B's and C's and works to potential

**Attendance:**

- No unexcused absences
- Only 1 lateness per month
- Only 1 excused absence occurrence per month (with the exception of extended illnesses)
- Only one excused early dismissal from school per month.

**Behavior:**

- No suspensions (in or out of school)
  - No fights or disruptive verbal altercations with staff, students, parents, or visitors
  - No instigation between others
  - No instances of cyber-bullying or Facebook "fighting" or abuse.
- **0-4 misbehavior marks on monthly calendars and no lunch or after school detentions.**

**Uniforms:**

- **No uniform infractions.**
- **Must be in uniform everyday, with the exception of official**

### **school dress-down days**

Students are not guaranteed admittance into the GAC/GAPC Clubs just because they were in the club in previous years. There is a limit to the number of students that a teacher can nominate per month up until December. Nomination is strictly up to the homeroom teacher and then the child needs the approval of all the other staff members they see to gain entrance.

Teachers are expected to review the records of GAC/GAPC students monthly to ensure they are meeting the criteria for club membership. Failure to do so in any given month will result in exclusion from the next GAC/GAPC activity.

***PLEASE NOTE!! If a student does not continue to abide by the school's rules, he or she will be eliminated from the club.***  
**PLEASE ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILDREN TO WORK TOWARD ADMISSION INTO THESE ESTEEMED CLUBS.**

### **STUDENT GOVERNMENT**

Decatur 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students have the opportunity to participate in our Student Government. The purpose of Student Government is to build leadership skills in our students and to give them opportunities to help develop and organize selected school activities.

Two representatives are elected to represent their classmates from each 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade classroom. Other student volunteers participate in activities sponsored by the Student Government.

### **CONCLUSION**

It is our hope that the information in this condensed version of our Parent/Student Handbook will assist parents and students in knowing what to expect and what is expected of them if they attend the Decatur School. Please contact us if you need additional information on anything covered in this handbook or areas that may not have been covered.

We look forward to working TOGETHER to make this a successful year for ALL!

## **THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA STEPHEN DECATUR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY**

**2017 - 2018**

#### **PART I GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

Each school in its School-wide Parental Involvement Policy must establish the school's expectations for parental involvement. [*Section 1118(a)(2), ESEA.*]

The Stephen Decatur School agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- The school district will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents in all of its schools with Title I, Part A programs, consistent with section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Those programs, activities and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.
- Consistent with section 1118, the school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parental involvement policies meet the requirements of section 1118(b) of the ESEA, and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with section 1118(d) of the ESEA.
- The school district will incorporate this district wide parental involvement policy into its School District of Philadelphia plan developed under section 1112 of the ESEA.

In carrying out the Title I, Part A Parental Involvement requirements, to the extent practicable, The School District and its schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency,

parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under section 1111 of the ESEA in an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.

- If The School District of Philadelphia plan for Title I, Part A, developed under section 1112 of the ESEA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school district will submit any parent comments with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the State Department of Education.
- The School District will involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parental involvement is spent, and will ensure that not less than 95 percent of the one percent reserved goes directly to the schools.
- The School District will be governed by the following statutory definition of parental involvement, and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities and procedures in accordance with this definition:

Parental involvement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring—

- parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;
- parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;
- parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child;
- the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA.
- The School District will inform parents and parental organizations of the purpose and existence of the Parental Information and Resource Center in the State.

## **PART II. DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE SCHOOL WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED DISTRICT WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS**

- [NOTE: The School- wide Parental Involvement Policy must include a description of how the school will implement or accomplish each of the following components. *[Section 1118(a)(2), ESEA.]* Regardless of the format the school chooses to use, a description of each of the following components below must be included in order to satisfy statutory requirements.]

The **Stephen Decatur School** will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its school-wide parental involvement plan under section 1112 of the ESEA:

- Parents were invited to a specially held Title I meeting in the spring of 2017 to gather input and write the parent involvement plan for 2017-2018.
- Input will be gathered at the annual Back to School Night meetings held on September 27, 2017 and September 28, 2017.
- Parents will be invited to a specially held Title I meeting in April 2018 to gather input and write the parent involvement plan.
- Input is gathered at monthly Home and School meetings.
- Parents will be asked to provide input at Principal Chat & Chew meetings for reviewing and amending the school-wide parental involvement plan. The date and time will be advertised. Suggestions will be included in the updated plan.

The **Stephen Decatur School** will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA:

- During April, input for the 2017-2018 School Improvement Plan will be gathered and a draft copy of the plan will be developed. Our Title I Liaison will facilitate the process. The three main sources used as a foundation for our plan will be data from various student assessments including PSSA, report card grades, and authentic assessments. Data sources such as the Performance Management Dashboard, Student Information System (SIS), and MTSS will be reviewed as well for attendance, Climate, and growth of at-risk students. Input will also gathered from staff members through the PLC meetings that are held bi-weekly. Parents will be also invited to the planning session.
- Parent Bulletin Board
- Monthly newsletter and calendar
- Chat-n-Chew sessions with the Principal
- Home and School meetings and activities
- Weekly communication folder
- Weekly letters from the Principal
- Decatur Facebook page
- Decatur Home & School page

The **Stephen Decatur School** will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance:

- In collaboration with the Philadelphia Home and School Council, provide workshops to schools on parent involvement
- Provide professional development by parents/caregivers for new and existing Principals and other administrators on how to involve parents/caregivers effectively
- Train and deploy staff with parental involvement duties (e.g., Community Builders and Bilingual Counselor Assistants) to assist school sites in implementing parent involvement
- Make available the staff of the Office of Educational Equity, Office of School Support, and Office of Language Access Services and Community Outreach and regional staff for technical assistance
- Coordinate through regional NCLB District Liaisons technical assistance to schools and parent organizations, including Home and School Associations
- Provide coordination of professional development efforts through the Office of Professional Development

The **Stephen Decatur School** will coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies in Part A with parental involvement strategies under the following other programs: local preschool programs by:

- Inviting preschool parents to attend all assembly and workshop programs.
- Inviting preschool parents to attend the Spring Open House.

The **Stephen Decatur School** will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parental involvement policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A programs. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background). The school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its parental involvement policy and activities to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parental involvement policies.

- Parents will be provided a survey during the quarterly report card conference period in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement within the school community.
- The School Advisory Council and Home and School Association will play a role in identifying the needs of our students and parents as we evaluate the effectiveness of the programs.
- Parental contact with the principal and Stephen Decatur staff will identify needs in evaluating school effectiveness.
- Parents are invited to monthly Chat-n-Chew sessions with the principal to provide feedback.
- At Back-to-School Night, a special Title I meeting is held to discuss the purposes of the budget and how student achievement is supported through the purchase of personnel and supplemental materials.
- We share PSSA home reports, interim reports and grades with families. Meetings with teachers can be arranged at any time at parent request.



The Stephen Decatur School will build the school's and parents capacity for strong parental involvement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities specifically described below:

- The Stephen Decatur School will, with the assistance of the School District, provide assistance to parents, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following, by undertaking the actions described in this paragraph --
- The State's academic content standards,
- The State's student academic achievement standards,
- The State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments,
- The requirements of Title I-Part A,
- How to monitor their child's progress, and
- How to work with educators.
- On September 27, 2017 and September 28, 2017 the Principal and Title I liaison will explain and review the components of the Title I program including but not limited to funding, the annual budget, purchases, and federal requirements, rights, and responsibilities of all parties involved.

The Stephen Decatur School will, with the assistance of the School District, provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement, such as literacy training, and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement, by:

- Health & Safety Workshops- ongoing
- Utilizing Google Classroom- Fall 2017
- High School Selection – September 2017
- Internet Safety for Parents Fall 2017
- Blended Learning Station Rotation- October 2017
- The Leader in Me- Fall 2017
- Curriculum nights- Spring 2018

The Principal, Stephen Decatur staff, District Support Personnel or Community Based Partners, will facilitate meetings.

The Stephen Decatur School will, with the assistance of The School District, educate its teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff, in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools, by:

- Professional development topics will be determined on an as needed basis as the Decatur Leadership Team conduct informal and formal needs assessments.
- The following topics will be revisited throughout the 2017-2018 academic year:
  - Internet Safety - Fall 2017
  - Science STEM - Spring 2018
  - Children's Literacy Initiative - September 2017
  - Response to Instruction and Intervention - ongoing
  - Google Classroom - ongoing
  - Using data to inform instruction - October 2017
  - Differentiating instruction - January 2018

The Stephen Decatur School will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Teachers Program, and public preschool and other programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children, by:

- Kindergarten teachers will list local Pre-K programs that Decatur students have attended after entering the ECEI Interview data.

- *Welcome to Decatur* Day will be held in the spring for the Pre-K students to visit and participate in activities led by the Decatur Kindergarten team such as the Teddy Bear Picnic
- Kindergarten Preview Day Open House to be held in March and again in May

The Stephen Decatur School will take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent- programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand:

- All communication/ information is sent home in parent-friendly language.
- Translations as required will be provided with the support from the Office of Multilingual Curriculum and Programs. P.H.L.O.T.E. list is maintained by the ESOL teacher and kept current.
- Principal's Open Door Policy- parents may contact the principal with any questions, comments, or concerns regarding communication sent home. Contact may be made via email, phone, note, or in person
- Bilingual translator will be provided as needed
- Offer a Phone Town Hall meeting

### **PART III. SCHOOL WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS**

NOTE: The School's Parental Involvement Policy may include additional paragraphs listing and describing other discretionary activities that the school, in consultation with its parents, chooses to undertake to build parents' capacity for involvement in the school and school system to support their children's academic achievement, such as the following discretionary activities listed under section 1118(e) of the ESEA:

- Involving parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of that training;
- Providing necessary literacy training for parents from Title I, Part A funds, if the school district has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for that training;
- Paying reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parental involvement activities, including transportation to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions;
- Training parents to enhance the involvement of other parents;
- In order to maximize parental involvement and participation in their children's education, arranging school meetings at a variety of times, or conducting in-home conferences between teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend those conferences at school;
- Adopting and implementing model approaches to improving parental involvement;
- Establishing a district wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in Title I, Part A programs;
- Developing appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in parental involvement activities; and
- Providing other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under section 1118 as parents may request, and opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children, and responding to any such suggestions as soon as is practicably possible.
- A School-Parent Compact has been developed which outlines how parents, the entire school staff and students will share in the responsibility for improved student achievement.

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**PART IV. ADOPTION**

- This Stephen Decatur School Parental Involvement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents as evidenced by

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*(Signature of Parent)*

- The school will distribute this policy to all parents on or before November 17, 2017.

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*(Signature of Principal)*

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*(Date)*