

Stephen Decatur School

**3500 Academy Road
Philadelphia, PA 19154
215-281-2606**



PARENT - STUDENT HANDBOOK

2015 - 2016

Principal: Mrs. Genevieve Endy-O'Kane

**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

=====

Home and School Officers

President	Barbara Parker
Vice-President	Elizabeth Murphy
Secretary	Jen Nice
Treasurer	Linda McNulty

We invite you to join our Home and School Association. The annual membership fee is \$5.00. These funds go to directly support our students.

The Home and School Association is located in Room A12 in the White Annex. Please feel free to stop in and visit at any time. Please make sure that you call first to make sure that someone is there and when you arrive and please check in with the Main Office to get a visitor's pass.

Our Home and School Association always welcomes parents for input, questions, and help with our activities and fundraisers. Your assistance and support are appreciated.

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2015-2016

September 2	Academic Year Preparation - First Day for Staff
September 3 - 4	Staff Only - Professional Development
September 7	Labor Day - Administrative Offices and Schools Closed
September 8	First day of Grades 1-12 Student Attendance
September 8 - 11	Kindergarten Parent/Teacher Interviews
September 14-15	Rosh Hashanah - Administrative Offices and Schools Closed
September 16	First day of Kindergarten Student Attendance
September 17	Back to School Night for Grades 5 - 8, 6:00 - 8:00 PM
September 21	Back to School Night for Grades K - 4, 6:00 - 8:00 PM
September 23	Yom Kippur - Administrative Offices and Schools Closed
September 25	City-wide Papal Visit - Administrative Offices and Schools closed
October 9	Staff Only - Professional Development Day
October 12	Columbus Day - Administrative Offices/Schools Closed
October 14-16	Interim Reports
October 28	PD Half Day - 3 Hour Early Dismissal
November 3	Staff Only - Professional Development
November 11	Veterans Day Observed - Administrative Offices/Schools Closed
November 25	PD Half Day - 3 Hour Early Dismissal
November 26-27	Thanksgiving Holiday - Administrative Offices/Schools Closed
December 2-4	Report Card Conferences, 3-hour Early Dismissal
December 18	PD Half Day - 3 Hour Early Dismissal
December 24-31	Winter Break - Schools Closed
January 1	New Year's Day - Schools and Administrative Offices Closed

January 4-6	Interim Reports
January 18	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - Administrative Offices and Schools Closed
January 22	PD Half Day - 3 Hour Early Dismissal
January 25-March 4	Access Testing Window
February 10 - 12	Report Card Conferences (Afternoons Only) 3-hour Early Dismissal (11:39 AM - Grades 7 & 8 / 12:00 PM - Grades 1-6)
February 15	President's Day Administrative Offices And Schools Closed
February 16	PD Half Day - 3 Hour Early Dismissal
February 23-25	Report Card Conferences, 3 Hour Early Dismissal
February 26	Staff Only - Full-Day Professional Development
March 14	PD Half Day - 3 Hour Early Dismissal
March 14-16	Interim Reports
March 21-25	Spring Recess - Schools Closed
April 11 - May 6	PSSA Math, ELA, Science and Make-Up Days - Grades 3 to 8
April 26	Staff Only - Professional Development
April 27 - 29	Report Card Conferences - 3-hour Early Dismissal
May 10	PD Half Day - 3 Hour Early Dismissal
May 16-18	Interim Reports
May 30	Memorial Day - Administrative Offices/Schools Closed
June 22	Last Day for Students
June 23	Last Day for Staff



DECATUR SCHOOL K - 6th 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.

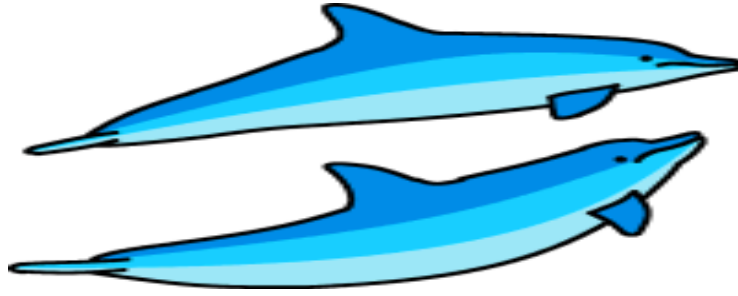
I'll always do my homework
And I'll try on every test.

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 7th – 8th 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!!

DECATUR LUNCH SCHEDULES

REGULAR LUNCH SCHEDULE/PERIOD(S)		
FIRST LUNCH	4 th & 5 th GRADES Room 107	10:15 AM - 11:00 AM
SECOND LUNCH	1 st & K/6 th GRADES Rooms 109	11:00 AM - 11:45 PM
THIRD LUNCH	7 th & 8 th GRADES Room A8	11:45 PM - 12:30 PM
FOURTH LUNCH	2 nd & 3 rd GRADES Room 108	12:30 PM - 1:15 PM

HALF-DAY LUNCH SCHEDULE/PERIOD(S)		
FIRST LUNCH	7 th & 8 th GRADES Room A8	9:15 AM - 9:45 AM
SECOND LUNCH	1 st & K/6 th GRADES Room 109	9:55 AM - 10:25 AM
THIRD LUNCH	4 th & 5 th GRADES Room 107	10:35 AM - 11:05 AM
FOURTH LUNCH	2 nd & 3 rd GRADES Room 108	11:15 AM - 11:45 PM

2015-2016

7TH AND 8TH GRADE SCHEDULES

Staff Start Time: 7:50 (7th /8th)

(Elementary schools have a 10 minute lead time.)

7 th AND 8 th GRADE REGULAR SCHEDULE		
Admission	8:00 AM	Start Bell
1 st Period	Start/End Time	8:00 AM – 8:45 AM
2 nd Period	Start/End Time	8:45 AM - 9:30 AM
3 rd Period	Start/End Time	9:30 AM - 10:15 AM
4 th Period	Start/End Time	10:15 AM - 11:00 AM
5 th Period	Start/End Time	11:00 AM – 11:45 PM
6 th Period	LUNCH	11:45 PM - 12:30 PM, A8
RTII	Start/End Time	12:30 PM – 1:00 PM
7 th Period	Start/End Time	1:00 PM - 1:45 PM
8 th Period	Start/End Time	1:45 PM - 2:30 PM
ADVISORY	Start/End Time	2:30 PM - 2:39 PM
Dismissal	Start/End Time	2:39 PM

DAILY – 90-MINUTE RELA BLOCK & 90-MINUTE MATH BLOCK

7 th AND 8 th GRADE HALF-DAY SCHEDULE		
Admission	8:00 AM	Start Bell
1 st Period	Start/End Time	8:00 AM - 9:15 AM
	LUNCH	9:15 AM – 9:45 AM and A8
2 nd Period	Start/End Time	9:45 AM - 10:45 AM
3 rd Period	Start/End Time	10:45 AM - 11:30 AM
ADVISORY	Start/End Time	11:30 AM - 11:39 AM
Dismissal	Start/End Time	11:39 AM

KINDERGARTEN - 6TH GRADE SCHEDULES

Staff Start Time: 8:11 AM (K - 6th)

2015-2016

K - 6 th GRADE REGULAR SCHEDULE			
Admission	8:16 AM	Warning/Line Up Bell	K - 6 th Grade Only, A8
	8:21 AM	Start Bell	K - 6 th Grade Only, A8
Morning Routine	Start/End Time	8:21 AM - 8:45 AM	
1 st Period	Start/End Time	8:45 AM - 9:30 AM	
2 nd Period	Start/End Time	9:30 AM - 10:15 AM	
3 rd Period	Start/End Time	10:15 AM - 11:00 AM	
4 th Period	Start/End Time	11:00 AM - 11:45 PM	
5 th Period	Start/End Time	11:45 PM - 12:30 PM	
6 th Period	Start/End Time	12:30 PM - 1:15 PM	
7 th Period	Start/End Time	1:15 PM - 2:00 PM	
8 th Period	Start/End Time	2:00 PM - 2:45 PM	
Advisory	Start/End Time	2:45 PM - 3:00 PM	
Dismissal	Start/End Time	2:50 PM	K Only (From Flagpole Doors)
Dismissal	Start/End Time	2:55 PM	1 st Gr. Only (From Flagpole Doors)
Dismissal	Start/End Time	3:00 PM	2 nd - 6 th Grade Only, A8

DAILY - 120-MINUTE RELA BLOCK & 90-MINUTE MATH BLOCK

K - 6 th GRADE HALF-DAY SCHEDULE			
	8:16 AM	Warning/Line Up Bell	K - 6 th Grade Only, A8
Admission	8:21 AM - 8:30 AM	Start Bell	K - 6 th Grade Only, A8
Classes	Start/End Time	8:30 AM - 12:00 PM	K - 6 th Grades, A8
2 nd LUNCH	Start/End Time	9:55 AM - 10:25 AM	1st and K/6 th Grades Rooms 109
3 rd LUNCH	Start/End Time	10:35 AM - 11:05 AM	4 th and 5 th Grades, 107
4 th LUNCH	Start/End Time	11:15 AM - 11:45 PM	2 nd and 3 rd Grades, 108
Dismissal	Start/End Time	11:50 AM	K Only (From Flagpole Doors)

Dismissal	Start/End Time	11:55 AM	1 st Gr. Only (From Flagpole Doors)
Dismissal	Start/End Time	12:00 PM	2 nd – 6 th Grade Only, A8

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 7th and 8th 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.

DISMISSAL

7th and 8th 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 7th and 8th 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 posts and chains.
 - Grades 4 through 6 will dismiss through the front doors of the school. 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.

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

Red Annex: 7th Grade and 8th 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, 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

To receive the maximum benefit from classroom and instructional participation, it is important that a child report to school each day. However, when the student must be absent from school, the student's parent or guardian must provide a written explanation concerning all absences upon his/her return to school. If the child is absent for more than three days consecutively, a doctor's note must be provided. If the school does not receive a note excusing the absence within three days from a parent or guardian or after three days from a doctor, the absence will be considered unexcused. After three unexcused absences, your child may be considered truant and referred to a support organization. In the event that your child is absent from school for a period of time due to a family vacation, please be aware that your child will be marked absent for the days he/she is not attending school and that the absences will be documented on your child's permanent attendance record as unexcused. Parents please put absence notes on 3" x 5" index cards or use the school's absence form, unless a doctor's note is provided. It is the student's responsibility to make up all assignments and tests missed during an absence. **Unexcused early dismissals and/or late arrivals will prevent students from receiving a perfect attendance award.**

TARDY AND TRUANT STUDENTS

7th and 8th 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.

IMMUNIZATION CERTIFICATE

Pennsylvania law requires all students enrolled in a Pennsylvania school to be completely immunized or be deemed exempt before admission to school. The Pennsylvania Department of Health, the Philadelphia County Board of Health and the Philadelphia School District require this. This law is strictly enforced at the Decatur School. Any students not in compliance will be issued letters of exclusions until rectified.

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 the school. If your child is injured at school, we will make him/her comfortable first and then call you in a timely manner. You will be called 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.

BEHAVIOR CODE/CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

The Principal Will:

- Provide strong and effective leadership of the school, staff, students and wider community in establishing and maintaining the highest tone and clear direction for the school
- Provide a safe and harmonious, effective learning environment for students and staff

The Staff Will:

- Provide a stable, safe, and ordered environment within which students learn effectively and behave responsibly
- Foster in students a sense of belonging to the school and its community
- Promote national and school pride and inspire in students a sense of common purpose
- Promote in students a respect for the values that underpin our society and its laws
- Insist upon responsible student behavior
- Provide effective classrooms that promote scholarship and enthusiasm for learning in an atmosphere free from disruptions
- Develop and implement learning programs that provide high expectations for all learners
- Develop practices that ensure responsible student behavior

The Students Will:

- Abide by the school rules
- Develop self-discipline by accepting responsibility for their own behavior
- Value the personal dignity and worth of themselves and others
- Strive for excellence in all areas of school life

The Parents Will:

- Enter into a partnership with the school to achieve a productive and harmonious learning environment based on shared responsibility and mutual respect
- Share a commitment to provide opportunities for students to take responsibility for their actions and their own learning
- Share a responsibility for students developing socially acceptable behavior
- Support the school in the application of the School Discipline Code and Policy
- Ensure that students attend regularly, punctually and remain in school all day

WE ARE DECATUR!

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.

.....

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

The Mission of Decatur School is to teach children so that they will be educated, informed, problem-solvers in order to create a school community of mutual respect and acceptance. This is accomplished through a collaborative effort amongst teachers, parents, staff, students, principal and community partners, who all contribute to the social, emotional and academic success of students. All stakeholders are invested in obtaining success for the students by believing that this must be a community effort in order to achieve this goal. By creating this culture of respect, acceptance, collaboration, success, we are modeling and preparing the youth and future leaders of our society to be productive, caring citizens in a diverse and inclusive world.

VISION

The Stephen Decatur School will provide quality instruction through a collaborative effort to ensure ALL students graduate from 8th 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.



WE ARE DECATUR!

Other Important Information

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 child 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 without authorization, 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/Dean in the Main Office or Room A2.

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. These items are expensive and 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 not 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

School Uniforms are mandatory in the Philadelphia School District. Uniforms can be purchased at any neighborhood store, including K-mart, Wal-Mart, or Forman Mills.

Listed on the following pages are the official school uniforms for Decatur School for 2015-2016, which are mandatory. There will be no exceptions.

Grades K – 6 (Colors are khaki and navy blue)

Girls:

Navy Blue collar polo shirt (short or long sleeves)

Tan Khaki skirts, skorts, jumpers, docker-style pants (i.e., loose-fitting) No skinny jean/tights, etc.

Navy Blue, Black or White Knee Socks or tights

Navy Blue Cardigan or V-neck Pullover Sweater, ALL navy blue zip up hoodie Sneakers (preferably) or enclosed shoe with rubber sole. (No boots)

Boys:

Navy Blue collar polo shirt (short or long sleeves)

Tan Khaki docker-style pants

Navy Blue, Black or White Socks

Navy Blue Cardigan or V-neck Pullover Sweater, ALL navy blue zip up hoodie Sneakers (preferably) or enclosed shoe with rubber sole. (No boots)

Gym/Summer Uniform: (Shorts may be worn from September 8th to October 13th, 2015 and from May 1st until the last day of school.)

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

100% **all Navy Blue** shorts, basketball mesh shorts (May or may not have “Decatur” on them.)

Sneakers

(Gym) Navy Blue Sweatpants (from 10/14/15 to 4/30/16) *Gym/Summer Uniforms are available from the Decatur Home and School.*

Grades 7 & 8

Girls:

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

Navy Blue skorts or docker-style pants (Loose fitting! Absolutely no tight or legging-style pants)

Navy Blue or White Knee Socks or tights

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

Sneakers or enclosed shoe with rubber soles (No boots)

Boys:

White collar polo shirts - long or short sleeves

Navy Blue docker-style pants

Navy Blue, Black or White Socks

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

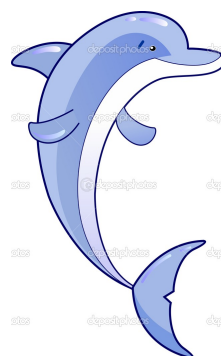
Sneakers or enclosed shoe with rubber soles (No boots)

All Grades:

All staff will enforce the Decatur School Uniform Policy during the 2015-2016 school year. Tight fitting pants (for girls) will not be accepted. At Decatur, it is traditional for teachers to ask students to tuck in their shirts. This tradition will continue. 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. Cell phones or any electronic device cannot be visible or heard in school or on school grounds. These items will be confiscated and returned only to a parent/guardian.

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.



WE ARE DECATUR!

Please do not hesitate to contact Mrs. Endy-O'Kane if you have any questions or concerns related to Decatur's uniform policy,

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

If you are interested in becoming a school volunteer, please call 215-281-2606. Your interest and involvement are always appreciated. In order to be a volunteer on a consistent basis, 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. There will an evening conference schedule in December. 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.

BREAKFAST PROGRAM

All students have an opportunity to eat free breakfast daily in school. Breakfast is served in the classroom after opening exercises and admission. Breakfast is served in the cafeteria for Grades K and 1.

LUNCH PROGRAM AND SOCIALIZED RECESS

Lunch periods are divided so all students have sufficient time to eat lunch in our cafeteria and sufficient time for socialized recess outside on the schoolyard.

UNIVERSAL LUNCH: All students receive free lunches. There is no longer an application process. Our cafeteria is a full service program. If you have any questions regarding Food Services, the menu or the cafeteria, please consult the Food Service Manager, Stacy Sweeney.

Students are expected to behave appropriately throughout the lunch program, both in the cafeteria and on the schoolyard. In the event they do not, they may be temporarily removed from the lunch program and given an alternate placement during the lunch period. If inappropriate behavior continues or is chronic, the students may be removed from the lunch program for extended periods of time or permanently, depending on the seriousness of the offense.

Socialized Recess

During socialized recess, students participate in structured games and activities on the schoolyard either prior to or after they eat their lunches. Some of these activities include: Basketball, Soccer, Dodge Ball, Four Square, Hopscotch, Hula Hoop, Walking, Football, Wall Ball, Dancing, etc. Games are added/deleted based on student interest.

HOMEWORK

Your children will have homework daily. There are several reasons for this homework:

1. To provide extra practice on learned skills.
2. To provide further learning in areas covered in the classroom.
3. To provide an opportunity for students to learn good work habits.
4. To provide opportunity for developing responsibility.
5. To provide you with an opportunity to see what your children are studying and how well they are doing.

We believe learning is important and that learning should continue after school hours. The daily homework in no way is to be viewed as punishment, but rather as a way to encourage and extend learning. Please communicate with your child's teacher if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's homework.

IDEAS FOR HELPING YOUR CHILDREN

Parents can do their part to improve homework when they:

- Provide children with suitable study conditions (desk or table, lights, books and supplies).
- Reserve a time for homework and turn off the television, radio, or cell phone.
- Encourage children, but avoid undue pressure.
- Show interest in what your child is doing, but DO NOT do the work for them.
- Understand that the school expects homework to be completed and returned.

- Understand that, in many cases, homework is a part of your child's grades.
- Check to make sure that your child's homework is complete each night.

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.

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. 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.

Classroom teachers give applications to students in Grades 2-8, after a school discipline panel has approved their names. 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 6th, 7th, and 8th 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 6th, 7th, and 8th grade classroom. Other student volunteers participate in activities sponsored by the Student Government.

=====

CONCLUSION

It is hopeful that the information in this 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!