



STEPHEN DECATUR ELEMENTARY

3500 Academy Road | Philadelphia, PA 19154 | Phone: 215.400.3050 | Fax: 215.400.3051

Dear Parents/Families and Students:

Welcome to the Stephen Decatur Family where we believe ALL children can learn and grow. Our dedicated staff and supportive Home & School Association work together to allow each child opportunities to develop to their fullest potential. At Decatur, we believe that ALL students can succeed and it is our collective goal to make that happen.

As we open up another year at Stephen Decatur, I would like to highlight a few of the great things we have accomplished as a school community already! Our focus on attendance continued to improve our overall attendance numbers. We saw another increase in students who attended 95% or more days in the 2024-2025 school year, a trend that has moved positively each of the last 3 years! The first step to improving student outcomes will always be having students consistently attending school!

We noted a slight decrease in our Reading PSSA but continued growth in our Math PSSA. Additionally, we have some highlighted areas of growth. In both Reading and Math we have reduced the percentage of students scoring Below Basic on the PSSA while increasing the number of students scoring Proficient. We look forward to continuing the work this school year!

Additionally, we have continued to focus our efforts on building improvements. To date, we have completed large scale renovations in the Gym and the Lobby. We are excited to open up the New Schoolyard, Eagles Turf and Playground for the 2025-26 School Year! We hope these improvements (and more upcoming projects!) continue to make Stephen Decatur a welcoming place to all who enter!

Educational success is greatly dependent upon the partnership forged between school and home. It is our hope that with students, parents, and teachers working together, the 2025-2026 school year will be our best yet! Please take the time to review the contents of the Student Handbook to help you become acclimated with our school. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. (215) 400-3050; then Dial 0.

We hope to continue moving from **GOOD to GREAT!**

Sincerely,

Dr. Douglas Strobel
Principal



STEPHEN DECATUR ELEMENTARY

OUR VISION

The Stephen Decatur School will provide quality instruction through a collaborative effort to ensure *ALL* students graduate from eighth grade ready for high school.

OUR MISSION

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.

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THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA

2025-2026 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Term 1

Dates: 8/25/25 – 11/10/25
Full Instructional Days: 49
Early Dismissal Instructional Days: 1
Interim Reports Due: 9/30/25
Report Card Conf: 11/24/25 – 11/25/25

Term 2

Dates: 11/11/25 – 1/21/26
Full Instructional Days: 35
Early Dismissal Instructional Days: 5
Interim Reports Due: 12/11/25
Report Card Conf: 1/29/26 – 1/30/26

Term 3

Dates: 1/22/26 – 3/24/26
Full Instructional Days: 37
Early Dismissal Instructional Days: 4
Interim Reports Due: 2/19/26
Report Card Conf: 4/9/26 – 4/10/26

Term 4

Dates: 3/25/26 – 6/12/26
Full Instructional Days: 44
Early Dismissal Instructional Days: 6
Interim Reports Due: 5/5/26

Key

- 1st Day of School for Students
- School Closed for Students/Staff
- School Closed for Students
Staff Professional Dev. (Full Day)
- 3-Hour Early Dismissal for Students/Staff
- 3-Hour Early Dismissal for Students
Staff Professional Dev. (Half Day)
- 3-Hour Early Dismissal for Students
Report Card Conference (Half Day)
- Last Day of School

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA **2025-2026**
ACADEMIC CALENDAR

August 2025

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

September 2025

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October 2025

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November 2025

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

December 2025

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

January 2026

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February 2026

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March 2026

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April 2026

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May 2026

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June 2026

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

July 2026

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

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- 3-Hour Early Dismissal for Students Report Card Conference (Half Day)

25-26 Decatur Home and School Events

- FRIDAY Snack Line
- Monthly Dress Down Days to support Field Day

Date	Theme	\$\$ Donation
9/12 (Early Dismissal)	Phillies/Baseball	Field Day
10/9	Eagles/Football	Field Day
11/27 (ED)	FREE - Thanksgiving	
12/12 (ED)	Winter Holiday	Field Day
1/16 (ED)	Winter Blues	Field Day
2/13 (ED)	Sweetheart/Valentine	Field Day
3/17	St. Patty's/Green/good luck	Field Day
3/27	Disney/Marvel	Field Day
5/22	Red, White, and Blue	Field Day

September

- BTS Night (K-4) - H&S Meeting
 - Tuesday, 9/2 @ 5pm
- Decatur Hoodie Sale: 9/3-9/17
- BTS Night (5-8)
 - Thursday, 9/2 @ 5:30 pm
- SOCKtober Fundraiser Begins: 9/24

October

- Joe Corbi Pizza Sale: 10/1-10/22
- Fall Fest Ticket Sales begin: 10/8
- Fall School Pictures: 10/15
 - Grade K-7
- Fall Fest: Saturday 10/25
 - Decatur Lower Lot

November

- Red Robin Fundraiser: 11/10
- Home and School Meeting: 11/24 @ 12:00pm

December

- Fall Picture RETAKES: 12/3
- Holiday Bazaar - 12/8-12/11
 - Afternoon 12/10, 3-5pm

January

- BINGO Ticket Sales begin: 1/7
- Sweetheart Gram Sales begins: 1/21
- Krispy Kreme Sale begins: 1/21
- Home and School Meeting: 1/29 @ 12:30pm

February

- 8th Grade Graduation Photos: 2/4
- Family Bingo: Friday, 2/6
 - St. Anselm's Gym
- Sweetheart Grams: 2/13
- Krispy Kreme Delivery

March

- Spring School Pictures and 8th Grade RETAKES: 3/5

April

- COLOR Run Kick-Off: 4/6
- Home and School Meeting: 4/9 @ 5:00pm
- 8th Grade Graduation Dance: 4/10
 - St. Anselm's Gym

May

- COLOR Run: 5/1
- Mother's Day Flower Sale: 5/7
- Spring Fling Dance (approximately 5pm-7pm; TBD)
 - Grades 3-5: 5/15
 - Grades K-2: 5/29

June

- Field Day - Wednesday June 3rd

DECATUR SCHOOL K – 5th 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 6th – 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!!

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.

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, vaping 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 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 6, 7, and 8: Adult supervision begins at 7:50 AM. Students are to enter the schoolyard through the gate at the back of the schoolyard near the basketball courts. At 7:50 AM students will enter the Red and White Annex buildings through the door closest to their homerooms. The school day will begin at 8:00 am. The doors will remain open until 8:30 am. After 8:05 am, students must get a late slip from staff in order to enter class.

After 8:30 am, 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 5: The doors will open with adult supervision beginning at 8:00 AM. K-2 students are expected to enter through the flagpole door; Students in grade 3-5 will enter through the Main Door. 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.

Cafeteria:	Kindergarten 1 st Grade 2 nd Grade
Auditorium:	3 rd Grade 4 th Grade 5 th Grade
White Annex:	6 th Grade
Red Annex:	7 th and 8 th Grade

DISMISSAL

6th, 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 6th, 7th and 8th graders who have to pick up siblings in Grades K through 5th are to report to Room A1 to wait until 2:55 in order to be dismissed with their siblings. *6th, 7th and 8th graders are not permitted to wait outside for siblings or to leave and return for pick up.*

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 5 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 and 5 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 policy for your child's safety.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Parents are urged to leave their children in school all day. Doctor or other appointments should be scheduled outside school hours, weekends 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 the next day from their appointment. Early dismissals will not be granted to persons on the emergency contact list without the consent of the parent. There are no exceptions to this rule. (SDP Policy)

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.

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 (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 inform the secretary of the correction 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/non consecutive) 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. (SAIP - Student Attendance Improvement Plan)
- 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

6th, 7th and 8th grade students are considered tardy and will receive late slips if they arrive after 8:05 AM in the Red and White Annex buildings on regular admission and inclement admission days. For Kindergarten through 5th Grade students, the bell rings at 8:21 AM. Students will be recorded late after the Flagpole and Front doors are closed at 8:30am. In both instances, all late students (Main Building and Red and White Annex Buildings) 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 with ID and receive a pass to travel to any part of the school through our ScholarChip Visitor Management System. Parents must also still sign in the Visitor Log. 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.

CELL PHONES

School District of Philadelphia Code of Student Conduct policy states that if a student displays or uses a cell phone 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 at school and every day afterward, the student will be required to turn the cell phone into the secretary in the Main Office.

Students in Grades 4 through 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 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. Items lost and not retrieved will be bagged up and taken to good will in January and June.

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.

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, Child Abuse Clearance and FBI Clearance if you have not lived in the state of Pennsylvania for 10 years. If you have lived in Pennsylvania then sign the Volunteer Affirmation Form. You must also sign the Volunteer Code of Conduct and print your Volunteer Orientation Certificate in order to complete your packet). Only individuals with complete packets will be permitted to volunteer.

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. Evacuation drills are conducted at a minimum monthly or as needed.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

PBIS is a decision-making framework for school systems to implement in order to improve student academic and behavioral outcomes by using universal language and expectations, consistent behavioral teaching practices, consistent behavioral response guidelines, and data to guide procedural and policy decisions.

Research suggests that by having consistent expectations across the school, explicitly teaching behavioral expectations, acknowledging expected behaviors, and handling behavioral violations consistently, the school environment can be positively impacted. PBIS is not a curriculum or a single intervention – it is a change in the school system's climate.

STEPHEN DECATUR DECREES

The Stephen Decatur Decrees are school-wide expectations/rules that we explicitly teach, practice, and reinforce. They are universal for the entire Stephen Decatur community.

Students will be taught how to be respectful, responsible and safe at all times in all settings at the Decatur School. Teachers will ensure that students know and understand these expectations and that they are enforced and practiced by every student and adult in the school.



Stephen Decatur Elementary School PBIS Teaching Matrix

Settings	Classroom	Luncheon	Hallways & Stairs	Yard	Bathroom/Water Fountain	Auditorium
Expectations						
Respectful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen and follow instructions of adults Use appropriate language Seek first to understand then to be understood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen and follow instructions of adults Use appropriate language Eat your own lunch Talk with an inside voice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen and follow instructions of adults Use appropriate language Remain in straight and quiet lines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen and follow instructions of adults Use appropriate language Use equipment properly Place trash in receptacle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen and follow instructions of adults Use appropriate language Give others privacy Keep the restroom clean Wait patiently before and after turn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen and follow instructions of adults Use appropriate language Talk with an inside voice Focus on speaker
Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring all supplies Be proactive in actions Use the 7 Habits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bottoms on benches Up only twice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be ready with eyes forward Display hall pass/note 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Line up when bell rings Return equipment when whistle blows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flush toilet after use Wash hands Use quickly and quietly Report vandalism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sit in assigned rows Take what you bring
Safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands and feet to self Keep chair on floor Use slow and deliberate movements Follow computer rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands and feet to self Walk at all times Keep food or drink at tables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands and feet to self Walk at all times Report concerns Stay with your line at all time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands and feet to self Report concerns Be alert and aware of your surroundings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands and feet to self Walk at all times Report concerns Keep food or drink at tables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands and feet to self Sit upright and back

The above expectations have been developed into lessons that adults will teach through modeling and practice to ensure that every student knows and understands what these expectations look like and sound like in each setting. Every student and adult at the Decatur School will take nothing for granted, which is why each expectation is clear, concise and sustainable.

DECATUR SCHOOL UNIFORM POLICY

We have ONE STANDARD uniform policy. This includes solid Navy/Khaki bottoms (pants, shorts, skirts, etc.) and Navy/White collared shirts. On days where students have Physical Education, students may wear their GYM Uniforms (navy blue shorts or navy blue mesh basketball shorts and gold/yellow t-shirts, or other Decatur Club/Event T-Shirts). Please wear sneakers or closed-toe shoes.

CARE OF TEXTBOOKS, LIBRARY BOOKS, CHROMEBOOKS, ETC.

Students are responsible for all textbooks and library books issued to them during the school year. Money will be collected for damaged books.

****Student Chromebook Policy****

Students will receive a replacement laptop if one is damaged or not working properly. In the event that a laptop is determined to have been intentionally damaged, families are required to bring the third damaged laptop to the repair center located at the Fitzpatrick annex (4101 Chalfont Dr, Philadelphia, PA 19154).

It is important to note that a school-based intervention will be initiated when a student has a pattern of damaging multiple Chromebooks. In such cases, the student will collaborate with the School Technology Coordinator (Mr. Asman) to gain a better understanding of the importance of proper care for technology devices. This engagement will also highlight the impact that a high number of damaged devices can have on the school community. Interventions will take place during lunch and recess or from 2:30 PM to 3:00 PM.

Adhering to this policy ensures the responsible use of school technology and supports a positive learning environment for all students.

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.

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 May. 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 a complete Volunteer Packet. *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.

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!

Stephen Decatur School
Parent and Family Engagement Policy

School Year 2025-2026
Revision Date: 05/28/25

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, Stephen Decatur School receives Title I, Part A funds and therefore must jointly develop with, agree on with, and distribute to parents and family members of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy that contains information required by section 1116(b) and (c) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The policy establishes the school's expectations for parent and family engagement and describes how the school will implement a number of specific parent and family engagement activities, and it is incorporated into the school's plan submitted to the local educational agency (LEA).

The Stephen Decatur School agrees to implement the following requirements as outlined by Section 1116:

- Involve parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of programs under Title I, Part A, including the planning, review, and improvement of the school parent and family engagement policy and the joint development of the schoolwide program plan under Section 1114(b) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).
- Update the school parent and family engagement policy periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school, distribute it to the parents of participating children, and make the parent and family engagement policy available to the local community. ESSA in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- Provide full opportunities, to the extent practicable, 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 ESSA in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- If the schoolwide program plan under Section 1114(b) of the ESSA is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, submit any parent comments on the plan when the school makes the plan available to the local educational agency.
- Be governed by the following statutory definition of parent and family engagement and will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition:

Parent and Family Engagement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring:

- (A) Parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning
- (B) Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school
- (C) 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
- (D) Other activities are carried out, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESSA

DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE SCHOOL WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED SCHOOL PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

Section A: JOINTLY DEVELOPED

Stephen Decatur will take the following actions to involve parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely manner in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs, including opportunities for regular meetings, if requested by parents, to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their child and respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible.

Parents were invited to a specially held Title I meeting virtually in April 2025 to gather input and write the parent and family engagement policy for 2025-2026.

- Parents are invited to complete a Google Survey to gather input during the school year.
- Parents will be invited to a specially held Title I meeting in April 2025 to gather input and write the parent and family engagement policy for SY 2025-2026.
- Input is also 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 parent and family engagement policy. The date and time will be advertised. Suggestions will be included in the updated plan.
- 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.

Section B: ANNUAL TITLE I MEETING

Stephen Decatur will take the following actions to conduct an annual meeting, at a convenient time, and encourage and invite all parents of participating children to attend to inform them about the school's Title I program, the nature of the Title I program, the parents' requirements, the school parent and family engagement policy, the schoolwide plan, and the school-parent compact.

- At Back-to-School Night in September 2025, information will be disseminated to inform parents of the requirements of Title I and the school's participation as well as the parents' rights to be involved. This meeting will include a presentation to parents about teacher qualifications, parents rights to know, state academic content standards and assessments, how to monitor student progress and work with educators, and school curriculum. The revised Parent and Family Engagement Policy will be distributed to all students as well as posted on the school webpage.

Section C: COMMUNICATIONS

Stephen Decatur will take the following actions to provide parents of participating children with (1) Timely information about the Title I programs, (2) Flexible number of meetings, such as meetings in the morning or evening, (3) transportation, child care or home visits, as such services relate to parent and family engagement and may use Title I funds and (4) 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.

- 1) The Parent and Family Engagement Policy will be distributed at Back to School Night/Annual Title I Meeting as well as posted on the school webpage.

- 2) Monthly newsletter and calendar
- 3) Home and School meetings and activities and Chat-n-Chew sessions with the Principal held monthly in evening sessions provide opportunities for parent communication with school staff.
- 4) Weekly communication folder
- 5) Decatur Facebook page
- 6) Decatur Home & School page
- 7) All communications are sent home in parent-friendly language and can be translated into multiple languages upon request and as necessary in partnership with the district Office of Family and Community Engagement.
- 8) School-wide Robo calls
- 9) All postings sent via Class DOJO

Section D: SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT

Stephen Decatur will take the following actions to jointly develop with parents of participating children a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the state's high standards.

- Parents were given the opportunity to give input into the development of the compact at a virtual meeting on April 16, 2025 and will be invited to a specially held Title I meeting in April 2026 to gather input and write the School-Parent Compact.
- 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-Parent Compact. The date and time will be advertised. Suggestions will be included in the updated plan.

Section E: RESERVATION OF FUNDS

Stephen Decatur will take the following actions to 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 parent and family engagement is spent by:

- Title I budget information for parent and family engagement will be disseminated at the Winter Title I Parental Input meeting held in Winter 2026.
- Parental input into how funds are used will be solicited at the Winter Title I Input Meeting, including the use of the 1% parent set aside.. This year's meeting was held in February 2025.

Section F: COORDINATION OF SERVICES

Stephen Decatur will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement programs and activities with other Federal, State, and local programs, including public preschool 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:

- Train and deploy staff with parental involvement duties (e.g., Family and Community Engagement Liaison and Bilingual Counselor Assistants) to assist school sites in implementing parent involvement
- Make available the staff of the Office of Family and Community Engagement for technical assistance to parents and coordination of professional development efforts

Section G: BUILDING CAPACITY OF PARENTS

Stephen Decatur will build the parents' capacity for strong parent and family engagement to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school and the community to improve student academic achievement through the following:

1. Providing parents with a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessments used to measure student progress, and the achievement levels of the challenging State academic standards; and
2. Materials and training to help parents to work with their child to improve their child's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy), as appropriate, to foster parent and family engagement
3. Providing assistance to parents of participating children, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following:
 - a) The challenging State's academic standards
 - b) The State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments
 - c) The requirements of Title I, Part A
 - d) How to monitor their child's progress
 - e) How to work with educators to improve the achievement of their child
 - Workshops on Social Media apps for Preteens and Teens, High School Selection for Middle Schoolers, LGBTQIA+ Education and Inclusivity, Engaging Teenagers, Anxiety & ADHD, Navigating the Parent Portal
 - At Back-to-School Night, information is disseminated to inform parents of the requirements of Title I and the school's participation as well as the parents' rights to be involved. This meeting will include a presentation to parents about teacher qualifications, parents rights to know, state academic content standards and assessments, how to monitor student progress and work with educators, and school curriculum.

Section H: BUILDING CAPACITY OF SCHOOL STAFF

Stephen Decatur will provide training to educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school by:

- Professional Development with staff reviewing parent survey results/parent input as well as effective methods of communication with parents and ways to promote positive parent engagement will be shared with staff during a district PD day in the Fall 2025 or Winter of 2026.

Stephen Decatur will provide other reasonable support for parent and family engagement activities under Section 1116 as parents may request by:

- In collaboration with the Family and Community Engagement Office, 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
- During April 2026, input for the 2026-2027 Comprehensive 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 be gathered from staff members through Common Planning Time meetings that are held weekly. Parents will also be invited to the planning session.

Stephen Decatur School
School-Parent Compact

2025-2026 School Year
Revision Date: 5/28/25

Dear Parent/Guardian,

JOINTLY DEVELOPED

The parents, students, and staff of Stephen Decatur partnered together to develop this school-parent compact for achievement. Teachers suggested home learning strategies, parents added input about the types of support they needed, and students told us what would help them learn. Parents are encouraged to attend annual revision meetings held in the Fall and Spring each year to review the compact and make suggestions based on student needs and school improvement goals. This year, the parent input meeting was held on April 16, 2024. Parents are also encouraged to participate in the School Family Engagement survey that is also used as a tool to collect parent feedback regarding the current Title I programs, policies and family engagement.

To understand how working together can benefit your child, it is first important to understand the district's and school's goals for student academic achievement.

[The Board of Education's updated Goals and Guardrails are available on the School District Website at \[www.philasd.org\]\(http://www.philasd.org\).](http://www.philasd.org)

STEPHEN DECATUR GOALS:

- At least 65% of students will score at Proficient or Advanced on the ELA PSSA
- The percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced will grow to at least 40% on the Math PSSA
- At least 70% of students will attend 95% or more of school days, and no more than 5.0% of students will attend less than 85% of days.

To help your child meet the district and school goals, the school, you, and your child will work together:

SCHOOL/TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES:
STEPHEN DECATUR will:

- Provide parents with resources to support learning of the Pennsylvania Common Core Standards
- Hold Parent-Teacher Conferences at least three times a year to discuss their child's academic progress and ways in which the parent can provide support.
- Provide parents opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class as well as observe classroom activities.
- Provide uninterrupted class time.
- Provide timely notification about school and community events such as awards assemblies.
- Provide timely notification about students' performance with the opportunity for the parent to provide feedback/ask questions
- Provide timely communication with parents and families via Class DOJO within the virtual setting

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

We, as parents, will:

- Monitor the amount of time our children are engaged with video games and other forms of technology such as iPads and iPhones.
- Support skills learned at school and at home both with and without the use of technology
- Provide support with 21st Century skills to be able to compete in a global society
- Monitor our children's daily attendance
- Support the Decatur Code of Conduct and Decatur Decrees (PBIS)

- Shadow their child when behavior interferes with the learning of the child or other students.
- Provide updated information to the school and/or monitor student(s) progress via the Parent Portal
- Engage and/or attend parent workshops and trainings at the school and district level.
- Participate in volunteer activities to support school-wide initiatives, activities and events.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Complete my homework daily by doing it well and doing it thoroughly
- Learn and expand our opportunities for academic growth outside of the school day
- Provide my parent(s) and/or guardian all notices and information received by me from my school regularly
- Abide by the Decatur Pledge, Decatur Decrees and SDP Code of Conduct

COMMUNICATION ABOUT STUDENT LEARNING:

STEPHEN DECATUR is committed to frequent two-way communication with families about children's learning. Some of the ways you can expect us to reach you are:

- Class newsletters to parents
- Parent Portal
- Teacher or Decatur websites
- Parent Teacher conferences
- Emails to parents on student's progress
- Text messaging
- Phone calls and Robo-calls
- Class Dojo
- Google Classroom and Google Meet
- Decatur Facebook page
- Decatur H & S Facebook page

ACTIVITIES TO BUILD PARTNERSHIPS:

STEPHEN DECATUR offers ongoing events and programs to build partnerships with families.

- School Advisory Council
- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Parent Workshops
- Curriculum Nights
- Bingo Nights
- Family Bazaar
- Teddy Bear Picnic
- Volunteering / Observing
- Open House
- Home and School Meetings
- Online/virtual activities (webinars, online chats)
- Special Olympics
- Thematic events and celebrations