

Watson T. Comly Elementary School

Family Handbook

2025-2026



Comly Pledge

Today I promise to be kind.

I will treat other people the way I want them to treat me.

I will not tease, touch others, or say mean things to them.

*If someone bothers me, I will walk away,
calm down and tell an adult.*

*Today I promise to work hard,
learn all I can and be the best I can be.*

The School District of Philadelphia
Watson T. Comly Elementary School
1001 Byberry Road
Philadelphia, PA 19116

Dr. Ray Realdine
Principal

Phone: (215) 400-3010 Fax: (215) 400-3011

Mr. Renaldo Worrell
Assistant Principal

Comly students will be empowered, compassionate critical thinkers who make a positive impact on the world.

August 25, 2025

Dear Comly Families,

I would like to welcome you to the 2025-2026 school year! I hope that everyone had a relaxing and enjoyable summer and that your children are ready to learn. We are looking forward to working collaboratively with you to nurture your child's academic, social and emotional growth.

This year we will continue to work to foster open lines of communication between the school and the home to ensure student success. Here are several things you can do at home to help your child have a successful school year:

- Send your child to school every day on time.
- Make sure your child gets eight hours sleep each night.
- Establish a routine for studying. Give your child a quiet corner to read and regular time to do homework.
- Keep in touch with your child's teacher via **Class Dojo**, email, telephone, notes, or letters.
- Attend school-wide events, classroom events, and conferences.
- Celebrate your child's success (giving verbal praise), no matter how small it may seem. This will keep your child enthusiastic about learning and proud of their work.

Throughout this handbook there are checks for you to ensure you have taken the necessary steps to stay informed. There are clear directions in the appendices that will guide you through the process. A copy of this is available on Comly's district website (<https://comly.philasd.org>) and the Comly student website (<https://bit.ly/Comlystudent>).

I am confident that this will be an outstanding school year and I look forward to continuing the Comly Elementary School tradition of academic excellence!

Sincerely,

Dr. Ray Realdine

Principal

Table of Contents

[General Information](#)

[Attendance Policy](#)

[School Safety & Security](#)

[School Uniforms](#)

[Communication](#)

[Academics](#)

[Academic Support Programs](#)

[Student Behavior Expectations](#)

General Information

School Hours

School begins each day at 8:15 A.M. and ends at 2:54 P.M. Kindergarten students must be supervised by a parent/caregiver at all times prior to the school day while in the schoolyard.

Arrival

All students will line up in the school yard. For safety purposes, no parents will be allowed to pass the safety cones with their child. If a parent needs to come in for a legitimate concern they must call the main office to schedule an appointment. Students arriving by 8:05 A.M. may go to the cafeteria for breakfast. Children dropped off on the Kelvin Ave. side of the building must walk around the building to enter. The main entrance will only be open during icy or snowy conditions. The student entrance will remain open until 8:45 A.M. Any students arriving after 8:16 A.M. will be issued a late pass and sent to class. After 8:45 A.M., late students must enter through the front entrance and obtain a late pass from the main office. Teachers will pick students up from the schoolyard at 8:15 A.M.

Dismissal

Students are dismissed on a staggered schedule. Kindergarten students will be dismissed at 2:50 P.M. from the entrance on Byberry Road. Parents must sign out their Kindergarten students every day. Students in grades 1-5 that ride the school bus, will be dismissed at 2:40 P.M. and will wait in the schoolyard or gym (depending on weather). If your student will not be riding the bus for the day, you must notify the school in writing. If we do not receive written notification (a note or Class Dojo message) your child will be placed on their regular bus route. All walkers will be dismissed to the schoolyard at 2:54 P.M. Teachers will escort the students to the schoolyard.

Early Dismissal

It is imperative that your child remains in school the entire day in order to maximize the benefits of instruction. Instructional time is valuable and cannot be recouped once it is lost. Children with numerous early dismissals quickly fall behind in school so it is vital that parents schedule medical appointments after school and/or during school closures. If your child must be dismissed early, he or she must bring in a written note signed by a parent stating the time and reason for the early dismissal. *All adults must show ID* to verify they are on the list of adults approved to remove a child for an early dismissal as indicated on the emergency contact sheet. The child will then be called to the office. For the safety and security of your child, no child will be dismissed without an identified adult (21 and over) to accompany him or her. **There are no early dismissals after 2:00 P.M.**

Transportation

Students are encouraged to take the school bus to school. Our students are assigned to a bus route. The routes are identified by the name of the bus company and the route number, for example "Class 1 - 0966." In the case that a bus is late, notification will be posted via Class Dojo. Every effort is made to be as timely as possible in notifying parents of late buses. Other bus concerns should be directed to the School District of Philadelphia's transportation office at (215) 400-4350.

Breakfast

Free breakfast is offered to all students at Comly daily. Students who wish to eat breakfast at school may arrive at 7:50 A.M. and enter the cafeteria to enjoy breakfast. They must arrive by 8:05 A.M. to participate in the breakfast program.

Lunch

All students are entitled to a free school lunch through a grant from the US Department of Agriculture. Comly's kitchen is a full service kitchen so students are offered healthy meals made on the premises. A monthly menu is sent home listing all breakfast and lunch offerings for each day. Students are also welcome to bring lunch from home. Menus can also be found at www.nutrislice.com

Bathroom Policy

Policy 252 states, "Students shall have access to the restroom that corresponds to their gender identity. Any student who has a need or desire for increased privacy, regardless of the underlying reason, should be provided access to a single stall restroom, but no student shall be required to use such a restroom." There will be single-stall gender neutral bathrooms identified throughout the building accessible to all students.

[Return to top](#)

Chromebooks

Students must bring their School District of Philadelphia issued Chromebook to school every day. Please charge the device at home each night. Families should contact the school if they do not have a Chromebook or if the Chromebook is in need of repair.

Parents, did you...

- ☐ Find out what bus route your child is on?
- ☐ Complete your child's emergency contact form with the full and correct information on any adult that may pick up your child (including you)?
- ☐ Sign up for the Parent Portal and ensure that a current contact phone number and email address is on file?
- ☐ Sign up to receive phone, text and email alerts through the Parent Portal?

Drop-Off & Pick-Up Procedures

In an effort to protect our children, families and staff, we have worked with the 7th Police District to create a set of safe and specific procedures for student drop off and pick-up. These procedures will be effective immediately. People who are not able to follow these procedures may be ticketed by the Philadelphia Police.

Byberry Road Driveway:

- **No vehicles are allowed to drive into the schoolyard** off of Byberry Road. Only the school buses may drop off and pick up students in the schoolyard.
- **No one should walk up/down the bus driveway on Byberry Road at any time.**
- All students and parents **MUST USE THE STAIRS on Stevens Road or WALKING PATH on Kelvin Ave.** and Lindenhurst St. to access the school yard.

Stevens Road:

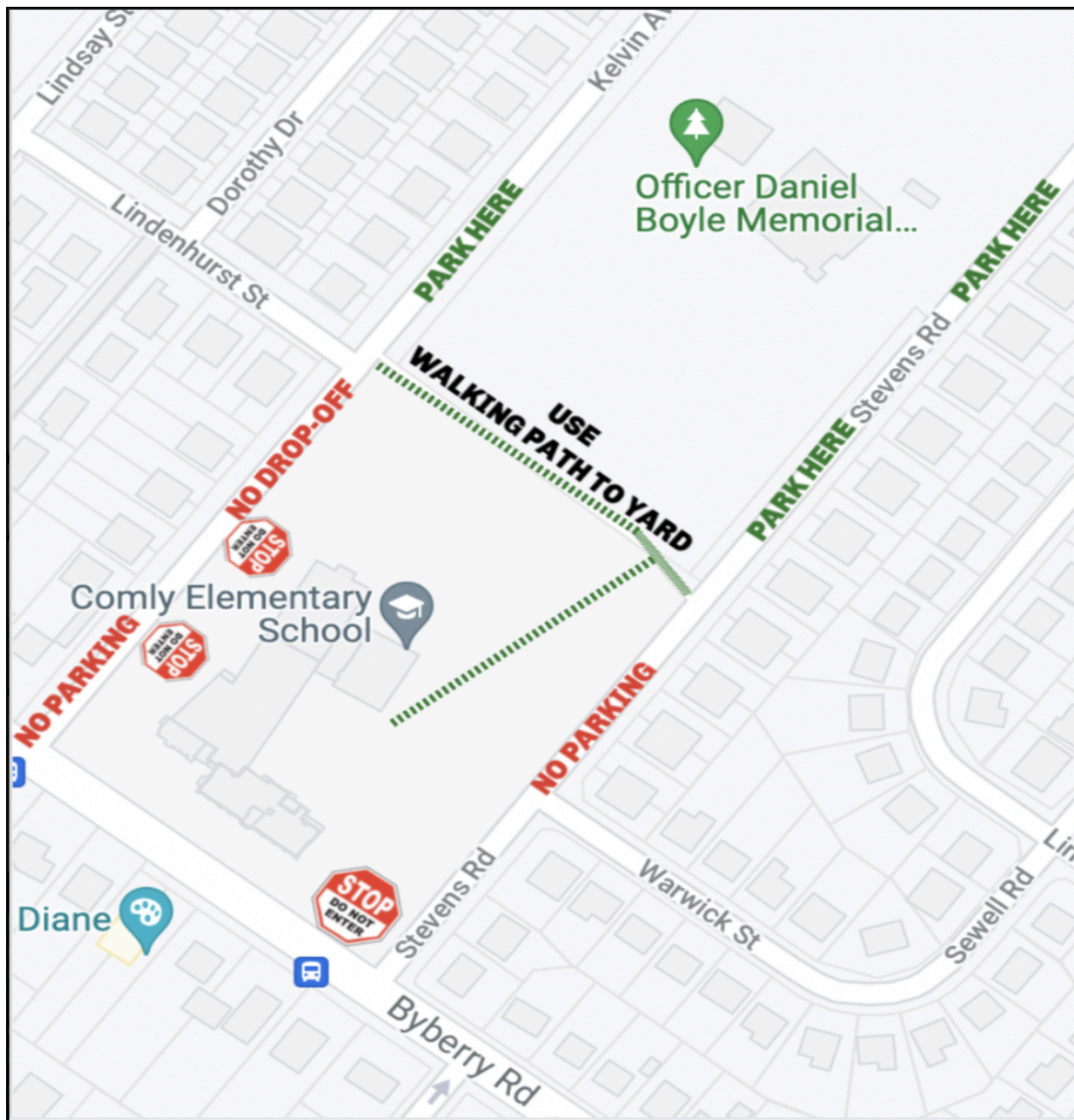
It is recommended that **all students be dropped off on Stevens Road**, where students can take the staircase up to the walking path that leads into the back schoolyard.

- **DO NOT MAKE U-TURNS** in the middle of the street

Kelvin Avenue:

- **No one should be using the Staff Parking Lots to park and/or drop-off or pick-up students at any time during the day**
- The school curbside on Kelvin Avenue from Byberry Road to Lindenhurst Street is clearly marked as a NO PARKING ZONE during school hours.
 - Parents should follow these clearly posted signs - all vehicles are *required by law* to follow these posted signs. **DO NOT PARK IN FRONT OF THE SCHOOL on Kelvin Avenue from Byberry Road to Lindenhurst Street.** Your car will be ticketed if you park illegally.
 - **Park North of the Stop Sign** (located at Kelvin Ave. and Lindenhurst St.- *along the Boyle Playground property- not along the school's property or across the street* (blocking the neighbors' driveways).
 - **Use the walking path** (located at the end of the fence closest to the corner of Kelvin Avenue and Lindenhurst Street) to access the schoolyard in the back of school. - **NO ONE SHOULD BE WALKING THROUGH THE STAFF PARKING LOTS AT ANY TIME!**
 - **Cross the street at the stop sign** and not in the middle of the street.
 - **DO NOT MAKE U-TURNS** in the middle of the street.

In addition, the legal speed limit around our school during admission and dismissal is 15 mph. ALL vehicles are required by law to follow these limits. Please control your speed around our school for everyone's safety.



Attendance Policy

Attendance

Each child's goal is to reach a 90% attendance rate. That means they cannot miss more than 9 days in the school year (excused or unexcused.) We take this very seriously. Punctuality and good attendance are two of the basic principles of good work habits and ensure a student's success in school. Poor attendance and lateness become barriers to learning.

In the event of an absence, the caregiver must send Mrs. Wolf (secretary) a Class Dojo message explaining the dates and reasons for the absence. Failure to provide a note will mean a child's absence is coded as an unexcused absence. Be advised that an absence note does not excuse a student if a pattern of absences or lateness exists. Children are not excused for attending trips with parents. Being absent from school to go on vacation will not be excused. The parent should notify the school if a child is expected to be absent for an extended period of time for medical reasons or some other urgent concern.

If students arrive at school after 10:00 AM without a note or leave before 1:00 PM without a note, they will be marked half a day unexcused absence. The half day unexcused absences will accrue to full days.

Absences of 3 or more consecutive days will require a doctor's note in addition to a parent or caregivers' Class Dojo message.

After the 8th non-doctor's note absence, every subsequent absence must have a doctor's note in order to be excused. It is the parent and/or child's responsibility to check with the teacher about make-up work and/or tests and assignments.

The 10th unexcused absences, will result in a referral to truancy court/DHS and suspension of student participation in a range of school activities.

Late Policy

Punctuality sets the tone for the school day. Students who are constantly late disrupt the instructional program and quickly fall behind in school. Students arriving at school after 8:15 A.M. are considered late and must enter through the front doors and obtain a late note from the front desk. *Chronic lateness will be investigated.*

Emergency School Closing

When school is closed due to extreme weather conditions, an announcement will be made over KYW RADIO 1060 and television stations early in the morning. The announcement "ALL PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED" will be posted on the School District's website. When it is necessary to close school during the school day, television and radio stations will also make announcements. It will be announced as, "ALL PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS WILL CLOSE AT (time)." In the event of an emergency closing at Comly Elementary School, parents will be notified by telephone messenger and School District website. It is imperative that we have current home information, emergency contact numbers, and work numbers on file. It is important to review with your child the instructions for what to do in the event that you are not at home when he or she arrives home from school.

FID (Flexible Instructional Days)

It is the School District of Philadelphia expectation that learning occurs each and every day. New for the 2025-2026 school year, Comly will be implementing procedures in the event of a FID (Flexible Instructional Day) which include virtual learning expectations and student/family support. In the event of an FID students will work asynchronously. Accommodations will be made for students without internet access.. The following information will be provided to families in the event of an FID:

- Office hours in which teachers are available for student consultation. Office hours for Comly are 8:15-9:30 (advisory) and begin again at 1:00 P.M.
- Asynchronous assignments in which student learning can continue.
- A [Comly Virtual Directory](#) to provide families with instant access.

Parents, did you...

- ☐ Did you sign-up for Class Dojo?

[Return to top](#)

School Safety & Security

Safety Drills

The safety of your child and all children in our schools as well as the safety of the school staff and support personnel is very important to us. In order to maintain a safe environment for our children to study and learn, it is necessary that we practice our emergency and crisis response plans by having drills designed to exercise our procedures. We will be conducting various drills throughout the school year.

FIRE DRILLS - The school will conduct a “fire drill” each month that school is in session. This is a Fire Code requirement. We want each student to understand and be aware of the importance of this drill and not be afraid when the fire alarm is sounded. By practicing they will know what to do and how to do it.

LOCKDOWN DRILLS - The school will conduct one “Lockdown” drill each semester of the school year. This type of drill will secure the school building and safely shelter all students, staff and visitors inside the building. The purpose of this drill is to keep the students safe from any danger outside or inside the building. During a “Lockdown” drill all of the perimeter doors to the school building will be locked and will remain locked until the danger or issue outside or inside the building is removed. To enable everyone to remain safe, no one will be allowed to enter the building or leave the building until the authorities authorize such a release.

SHELTER-IN-PLACE DRILLS - The school will conduct one “Shelter-in-Place” drill each semester of the school year. The purpose of this drill is to be prepared to move to a safe location within the building in case of a severe weather situation.

Visitors

For the safety and security of staff and students, all visitors are required to sign-in and show identification at the front desk and obtain a visitor’s pass before gaining access to any part of the building. They must also sign-out prior to exiting the building. It is imperative to maintain an accurate record of who is in the building at all times. Visitors are not permitted to enter the building through school yard doors. At this time, parents and other visitors without an appointment will not be allowed in the building.

Special Release

The safety of your children is paramount. School district employees are required to follow strict guidelines for releasing students from school. Please read the letter and policy from the district at the end of this handbook. Children will only be released to an adult with proper photo identification that is also listed on the child’s emergency contact form.

Volunteer Clearances

The Pennsylvania Department of Education requires volunteers to obtain the following clearances:

- Report of criminal history from the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP); and
- Child Abuse History clearance from the Department of Human Services (Child Abuse)

Additionally, the School District of Philadelphia requires volunteers to complete the following:

- Volunteer Code of Conduct
- Volunteer Affirmation or FBI Background Check (if volunteer has lived outside of PA in the past 10 years)
- Volunteer Orientation (online or in-person)
- <https://www.philasd.org/face/volunteer/>

Copies of the volunteer packet must be on file in Comly’s office. ***You must complete these steps in order to chaperone field trips.***

Parents, did you...

- ☐ Review the drills with your child and explain that we practice them to keep everyone safe?
- ☐ Complete your volunteer registration packet?

[Return to top](#)

School Uniforms

School Uniform

- Light yellow or navy blue shirt (short or long sleeves), this can be a tshirt or a shirt with a collar
- Navy blue sweaters (cardigans or pullover for colder weather)
- Navy blue bottoms

Gym Uniform

- Navy blue Comly gym shirt (order forms will be sent home)
- Navy blue sweatpants or gym shorts
- Sneakers

For safety reasons students are not permitted to wear open-toe shoes.

Parents, did you...

- ☐ Purchase enough uniforms for each week?
- ☐ Purchase a Comly gym shirt?

[Return to top](#)

Communication

Class Dojo

The administration sends important information through the School Story on Class Dojo. Teachers also regularly communicate with parents through Class Dojo. Please be sure to check Class Dojo frequently for updates and announcements regarding school related issues and activities.

Comly Student website

The Comly Student website is a great resource for up to date information on Comly events as well as key resources for students and families. This website will be updated regularly. The address is <https://bit.ly/Comlystudent>

Parent Portal

The Parent Portal is accessible through the School District of Philadelphia's homepage: [Parent and Family Portal – Family & Community Engagement](#). Through this portal you are able to access the Student Information System (SIS) to check your child's grades and absences. If you need a parent portal code you can send Mrs. Wolf a message on Class Dojo.

Student Portal

Students have access to the Student Portal where they can access online programs and resources. Students access this using their student ID number.

School Messenger

Comly will send important messages via all-calls, text messages and emails. These messages will be sent to the phone number and email addresses on file. If you are not receiving these messages, please log into the Parent Portal to ensure the correct information is on file.

School Advisory Council

SACs are peer-elected, collaborative teams composed of family members, the school principal, teachers or other school-based staff, and community members. SACs champion the work for improved student achievement, effective teaching in the classroom, parent and community engagement in the educational process, and communication and support between home and school. SAC meetings must be held at least every other month, and SACs must have data-driven, strategic conversations that center on the three primary focus areas for SACs.

Translation & Sign Language Interpretation Services

Translation and sign language interpretation services are available. Please inform the teacher or main office to take advantage of these services.

Parents, did you...

- ☐ Provide updated and accurate phone numbers and email addresses to the school?
- ☐ Sign up for messages via the Parent Portal?

[Return to top](#)

Academics

Comly teachers will provide your child with a rigorous standardized curriculum in a student-centered learning environment. Students' interests, and learning styles will be assessed in order to meet the needs of individual learners and to motivate students. Our teachers participate in ongoing professional development that will enhance their professional practice.

The core subject areas of Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies will be taught daily, with many of the content areas being woven in through thematic units based on the Common Core State Standards. These standards increase the focus on critical thinking in reading and writing and authentic problem solving and conceptual understanding in math. In science and social studies, students will learn like the experts in these areas.

Students will also have Physical Education, Art, Music and Computers as special classes.

Report Card Conference Dates

The full academic calendar can be found [here](#) and on the School District of Philadelphia's website. Students are dismissed at 11:54 PM on report card conference days.

1st Marking Period - November 24 & 25, 2025 (**Half Day Early Dismissal**)

2nd Marking Period - January 29 & 30, 2026 (**Half Day Early Dismissal**)

3rd Marking Period - April 9 & 10, 2026 (**Half Day Early Dismissal**)

Final report cards will be available on the Parent Portal at the end of the year.

Parents, did you...

- ☐ Mark your calendar with important dates such as days off, half days and report card conferences?

[Return to top](#)

Academic Support Programs

MTSS

It is the school district's vision that all students receive a high quality education using a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). To that end, **all** students receive Tier 1 instruction. Students who are at-risk either academically and/or behaviorally will receive Tier II support which involves a research-based intervention, in addition to Tier I instruction. Parents will be informed of the process and are invited to be active participants. These include:

English Language Arts

**iReady Reading*
Reading Mastery
Corrective Reading

Math

**iReady Math*
Corrective Math
Connecting Math Concepts

*Denotes a program that can be accessed at home via the Student Portal.

Special Education

As a parent, you are uniquely qualified to know your child's learning *strengths* and *areas of concern/challenge*. If it is determined that your child is eligible for special education services, school professionals will utilize your knowledge in designing a special education program for your child's benefit. Your child may be eligible for special education if your child:

1. Has an intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, an orthopedic impairment, deafness, a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment (including blindness), autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities *and*
2. Needs special education, as determined by an evaluation team.

Your child must meet both qualifications in order to be eligible for special education. In Pennsylvania, all children eligible for special education have the right to a free, appropriate, public education (FAPE).

Students who have been identified with special needs will receive special education services in the Least Restrictive Environment as indicated in the Evaluation Report and Notice of Recommended Educational Program and as delivered by the Individualized Education Plan. In some cases, the Least Restrictive Environment will mean services must be provided at another location. Please see the resources section of this handbook for additional resources.

English to Students of Other Languages

Students in grades 1 through 5 whose primary language is not English are considered English Language Learners (ELL). Students identified as language learners will receive language instruction from an ESOL teacher, in addition to Tier 1 instruction.

504 Plans

Section 504 service agreements also known as 504 plans are formal documents that schools develop to give students with disabilities the support they need. These plans prevent discrimination and protect the rights of students with disabilities in school. Students are covered under the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which is a civil rights law that protects individuals from discrimination based on disability. Under this law, individuals with disabilities may not be excluded from or denied the opportunity from certain programs. If you believe your child is in need of a 504 Plan please reach out to the school nurse and/or school counselor.

Parents, did you...

- ☐ Notify your child's teacher of any of the above supports that he or she should be receiving?

[Return to top](#)

Student Behavior Expectations

At Comly we take a restorative approach to resolving conflict and preventing harm. Restorative practices are the procedures of proactively building healthy relationships and a sense of community to prevent and address conflict and wrongdoing. One method of resolving conflict with student voice is through peer mediation. Another restorative practice utilized at Comly is community conferencing which is a practice that provides students and educators with effective ways to prevent and respond to school conflict. Our behavioral expectations and norms are centered around [PBIS \(Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports\)](#). [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 norms**, consistent **behavioral teaching practices**, consistent behavioral **response guidelines**, and **data** to guide procedural and policy decisions.

Parents, as an important part of the Comly team, can assist by teaching their children appropriate and proper behavior, respect and responsibility. What your child learns at home, can and will be carried into the school day. All students are expected to behave in an acceptable and responsible manner while at school, on field trips, riding the bus, in the school yard, lunchroom and other school related situations. Positive behavior, courtesy and cooperation are essential to learning.

Comly takes reports of bullying and/or harassment very seriously. In an effort to be as responsive as possible the School District of Philadelphia has created a centralized reporting form. This system ensures a consistent, immediate response and allows for collection of data to further inform our decision making. This procedure starts by filling out the Bullying and Harassment Reporting and Investigation form which can be found on the school district website. Schools are required to investigate all reports within two (2) school days after receipt of the form.

The correct definition of bullying is as follows:

- It is aggressive behavior or intentional harm doing
- It occurs between people where there is an imbalance of power (e.g. physical strength, mental capacity, popularity, or social skills)

Bullying, as defined in the policy, refers to direct or indirect action, which may include but is not limited to:

- Physical: hitting, kicking, pushing, shoving, getting another person to hurt someone
- Verbal: racial slurs, name-calling, teasing, taunting, verbal sexual harassment, gossiping, spreading rumors
- Non-Verbal: threatening, obscene gestures, isolation, exclusion, stalking, cyber-bullying

There are clear expectations for student behavior in the cafeteria. Please review these with your child.

1. Enter quietly and sit in your seat
2. Remain seated at all times
3. Line up quietly to get your lunch when you are told.
4. Eat your lunch with appropriate table manners.
5. Speak in a calm and quiet voice at your table.
6. Clean up the area around you.
7. Wait until you are told to throw out your trash.
8. Raise your hand if you need help.
9. Line up quietly to exit the cafeteria.

A brief overview of the code of conduct can be found [here](#). The full School District of Philadelphia's Code of Conduct can also be found [here](#). For more information please visit the [Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) website.

The School District of Philadelphia's Policy 249: Bullying & Cyberbullying can be found [here](#) as well as the

Parents, did you...

- ☐ Review the Code of Conduct with your child?

[Return to top](#)