

Family Handbook CHASE



CHASE ELEMENTARY

#ChaseWhatMatters



SALMON P. CHASE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

JAMIE MILITELLO • PRINCIPAL

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Welcome Chase Families!

It is a pleasure to welcome all of our new and returning students and families to the 2025-2026 school year! We are honored that you have entrusted us with your child's education and will work diligently to meet them where they are at and support their growth. Because, here... We *Chase What Matters!*

This handbook is designed to introduce new families to the school and reacquaint existing families with the school policies and procedures. The success of our students relies on us working together. We will continue to make our school a positive, welcoming environment for all students and families and look forward to watching our students grow.

Kindly,

**Ms. Jamie Militello
Principal**

**Ms. Raquel Hallm-Watanabe
Assistant Principal**

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Chase What Matters

Mission: To promote the intellectual, emotional, and physical well-being of each student by providing an academic program with relevance, rigor, technology, and measurable results.

Vision: To develop a love of learning, a drive for excellence, and a compassion for humanity in our students. Students will be motivated, lifelong learners and productive, contributing members of a global society.

Three Bs at Chase

Be Safe | Be Responsible | Be Respectful

Student Behavior Expectations

Our goal is to help students navigate their social and emotional development while building problem-solving and coping skills that will help them be advocates and participants in the community. We have high expectations for student behavior. We follow a Restorative Practices approach to discipline, which is proactive and promotes positive, appropriate behaviors by setting schoolwide and classroom expectations. When necessary and appropriate, consequences will be logical, corrective and restorative. This includes, but is not limited to restorative conversations, peace circles, community service, adult-student reflections, and mediations. Chase staff and administration follow the [CPS Student Code of Conduct](#).

Inclusive Curriculum Representation at Chase

On August 9, 2019, the Governor signed House Bill 246 (Public Act 101-0227) into law. This requires public schools to include instruction and adopt instructional materials that accurately portray the political, economic, and social contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals. For more information visit [The Illinois State Board of Education](#).



School Schedule & Operations

Bell Times

- Kindergarten-8th Grade: 8:05-3:05
- Full Day Pre-Kindergarten: 8:00-3:00
- Half Day AM Pre-Kindergarten: 8:05-10:35
- Half Day PM Pre-Kindergarten: 12:35-3:05
- Paid AfterCare Childcare: 3:05-5:30*
- Out-of-School Time (OST) Enrichment Programming: 3:05-4:20*

*Enrollment for AfterCare and OST programs are limited. AfterCare begins on the first day of school and OST programs begin mid-September and end in the third quarter.

Arrival & Dismissal

Chase staff, parents, and volunteers collaborate to ensure the safety and comfort of all children during arrival and dismissal. We ask for your cooperation and patience as we safely coordinate the transportation needs of roughly 450 students and staff arriving by foot, bike, car, bus and more.

Arrival

Kiss & Go Procedures

This year we are refining the Kiss & Go Drop Off system on Point St directly in front of the school. It will operate between 7:50-8:05 each morning. This means that you (drivers) do NOT exit your vehicle at any time. Your kids hop out of the car and either head in to their designated doors for indoor arrival (when we have inclement weather) or to their designated area for outdoor arrival. If you do not want to participate in the Kiss'n Go procedure and you want to walk your child in or to their drop off area for ANY reason, please park on a nearby street (we have ample non-permit parking in the area). Please do NOT park in front of the school on Point from 7:45-8:20 UNLESS your child has a right to bus transportation due to a disability. We need to keep that lane clear for school buses.

2. We need you to pull all the way up. We know that means that sometimes you will not be able to watch your child walk to their assigned line or into the building, but it helps keep the flow of the Kiss'n Go line moving.

We know that the morning shuffle can be an intense way to start our day, but our kids are watching and we want to proceed with a community driven spirit to promote peace and kindness for our children.

Dismissal

For safety, the two major streets of Francis and Point are blocked off to traffic from 2:45-3:15. Only parents of students with IEP Transportation needs will be allowed to pass the barricades. The lane in front of the school is reserved for school buses and parents/guardians transporting students in wheelchairs. No other cars can park or stand in those areas. Double parking or blocking wheelchair ramps are not allowed. Violators create dangerous situations for students and the community and may be ticketed and towed by the Chicago Police Department. We appreciate everyone's support and patience during arrival and dismissal.

Entrance & Exit Doors

Students will use the following door at the beginning and end of each day:

- Door 4 on Francis: Half-Day PK
- Door 13 by the Learning Garden: Full-Day PK-1st Grade & Room B102
- Door 2 (Main Entrance): 2nd-4th Grade & Room A010
- Door 1 (closest to playground): 5th-8th Grade

All teachers will be outside in the morning the first week of school to help your children find the correct line and escort them into the building. Parents will not be allowed to escort children into the building. Parents that enter the building must sign in at the security desk and visit the office for safety reasons. Students in PK to 3rd grade are released to parents/caretakers.

Attendance

Attendance in school is the most important expectation! We can't teach your child if they're not here. In order to meet and exceed grade level standards, attendance is vital. School personnel closely monitor school attendance and are in contact with school administration regarding excessive absences.

Attendance percentages are calculated on days present in school and on-time regardless of excused/unexcused status of the absence. Parents will be notified if their child's attendance is problematic or leading toward a truancy case.

Absences

The CPS Attendance Policy excuses absences for the following reasons: illness, family emergency, death in the family, observance or a religious holiday, circumstances which cause reasonable concern to the parent, or situations beyond the control of the students as determined by the principal. To report your child's absence:

- Please call the front office before 8:30 am AND send a dated note with your child when they return to school explaining the absence.
- -OR- Self-report the absence using the ASPEN parent portal.

Taking family vacations during the regular school year is highly discouraged and every attempt should be made to have your child attend everyday, on time. Plus school is super fun and even more fun when all of the students are here! Please contact Ms. Borges for attendance issues dborges1@cps.edu

Tardiness

Please make sure children are on time. It helps them start the day without stress and reduces classroom disruptions. Students will enter the building at 8:05 and should plan on being in their designated line at 8:00. Students who arrive after 8:15 need to stop at the front desk to record their name in the tardy log so attendance can be updated accordingly. Instruction starts promptly at 8:10.

Early Dismissal

If your child needs to leave school before regular dismissal time, an authorized parent or caregiver must sign in at the front desk and report to the main office with valid identification. An early dismissal form needs to be completed, and an office attendant will call for your child. Adults will not be allowed up to the classroom to minimize class interruptions and maximize student safety. Early dismissals can be accommodated until 2:45. After 2:45 there will be no early dismissals. Personnel need to be available to support bus transportation and students will need to wait until 3:05 for dismissal.

Food Services & Celebrations

Breakfast & Lunch

All students will have access to free breakfast and lunch. Students can bring food from home to be eaten in the cafeteria; however, we ask that **all food is nut-free**. Chase is an allergy-aware school, and we have students and staff with food allergies. If a student wishes to take a school lunch, they are required to take a complete lunch by CPS standards and cannot take items à la carte. More information and the school menu can be found on [CPS's Nutrition Services site](#).



Birthdays and Celebrations



Chase is *Healthy Schools Certified*, and as such, we celebrate with fun rather than food. This could be bringing in a small token to share with the class, or a favorite book to share during story hour. There is no food allowed for birthday celebrations. We encourage families to contact teachers for creative, student-centered ways to celebrate. **Parents must communicate with the classroom teacher and get approval before bringing anything in.**

As a Healthy Schools Certified Elementary, the students will identify two dates to celebrate and include food in the celebration. These dates and acceptable food items to share will be communicated in a future newsletter.

Technology Policy

Cell Phones & Personal Devices

The school is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen cell phones or electronics. Devices include, but are not limited to: cellphones, smart watches, iPads, and tablets. Students are discouraged from bringing electronics devices to school. If these items are brought to school, it is at the student's risk. Students may not use cell phones and/or personal electronics in the school building at any time. This includes programming before, during, and after school. The only exception is for students who need to call parents/guardians after school regarding pick-up; those calls must be made in the school office.



Students are required to turn in their cell phone and/or electronic devices to their homeroom teacher at the beginning of the day. Cell phones and other electronic devices will be distributed at dismissal. If a student violates this policy, the electronic device will be taken and held in the office until a parent/guardian is able to pick it up from an administrator.

School Devices

Chase makes a variety of technology devices available to students in the learning environment. Our goal is that all students will acquire and use technology and digital literacy skills that will prepare them for college and careers in the 21st century. This includes Google@CPS accounts. The use of these digital tools should be limited to instructional, school-related activities. Students are expected to follow the [CPS Acceptable Use Policy](#). There may be a fee associated with lost/damaged technology.

Safety Protocols

Emergency Management Safety Drills

CPS utilizes the following codes to alert school occupants in emergency situations: *Evacuation, Lockdown, Shelter-in-Place, and All Clear (ELSA)*. This system of plain language “Crisis Codes” ensures that students, visitors, and staff understand the severity of the situation and necessary response. Students will practice the following drills throughout the school year. Administration will inform families of the drills prior to their occurrence to the best of our ability; however, there are drills that are unannounced, like when the fire department visits the school.

- Evacuation Drills- 3 per year When conditions outside of school are safer than inside. Examples include fire, a suspicious item, hazardous materials, or bomb threats.. The first fire drill will be in the first month of school.
- Bus Drill-1 per year When conditions outside the bus are safer than inside the bus. Examples include fire, suspicious items, or hazardous materials incident.
- Shelter in Place-1 per year When conditions require refuge for students and staff in an emergency. Examples include severe weather such as shear winds, lightning, tornadoes, earthquakes, hazardous materials, biological, chemical or nuclear weapons.
- Lockdown/Law enforcement Drill-1 per year When law enforcement involvement is necessary to protect school occupants and it is safer inside the school rather than outside. Examples include shooting incidents, suspicious persons, or hazardous material release. When possible, this drill will be conducted with law enforcement personnel.
- Asthma & Allergy -1 drill per year Examples include a student having an allergic reaction to food, insect venom, or asthma related problem where a student has problems breathing.

Anti-Bullying Policy

CPS is committed to ensuring all students have access to a safe, supportive learning environment free from bullying and harassment. We have detailed investigations that take place to determine if bullying is occurring. (See [Section 4](#) for the Student Rights and Responsibilities Booklet for more information.)

Bullying is defined as:

- 1) An observed or perceived imbalance of power exists between the person(s) engaging in the bullying behavior(s) and the targeted student(s).

2) The behaviors are severe or pervasive (repeated over time), or there is a high likelihood that behaviors will be repeated. While bullying is often characterized by repeated acts, sometimes a single incident constitutes bullying depending on the severity and if other elements of bullying are present.

3) The intent of the person(s) engaging in the behavior is to cause physical or emotional harm to the targeted student(s).

4) The behavior has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the following effects:

- a) placing the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property;
- b) causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health;
- c) substantially interfering with the student's academic performance
- d) substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation, one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

Examination Requirements

Physical exams must be completed within one year prior to entry to:

- Pre-K and kindergarten (physical exam and lead screening through age 6)
- 6th grade and 9th grade
- Any student entering CPS for the first time

Vision exams are required for:

- Any student entering kindergarten
- Any student entering the State of Illinois for the first time

Dental exams are required for:

- kindergarten, 2nd, and 6th grade.

Medical forms can be found in the main office or at [CPS Office of Health & Wellness](#).



Recess Weather Policy

Recess is a non-instructional activity that takes place during non-instructional time. This is a great time for students to get fresh-air, exercise, and practice communication skills learned in the classroom. Recess will not be with-held as a punishment. Chase will abide by the [CPS Recess Policy](#) when determining if it will be held in-door or out-door. If recess is outdoors, all children will be expected to be outside for recess in order to ensure adequate supervision. Please send your child to school with gear appropriate for the weather and reach out to the office if you need support providing weather-appropriate apparel.



Recess Weather Guidelines:

- Above 32 degrees Fahrenheit with or without windchill, recess will be held outdoors.
- Between 15 and 32 degrees Fahrenheit, administration will use their discretion to determine whether to hold recess outdoors.
- Below 15 degrees without windchill, recess will be held indoors.
- Heat index between 91 and 94 degrees, administration discretion.
- Heat index above 95 degrees, recess will be held indoors.

Dress Code

Prekindergarten - no uniform

Monday-Thursday

Kindergarten-5th grade: blue bottoms and blue/white tops.

6th-8th grade: blue or khaki bottoms and blue/white tops or polos. 8th graders may wear maroon polos.

Friday

Students may wear uniform colors on Friday, but it is not required. Please remember that the clothing must still be school appropriate, which means:

- Any top (shirt, sweater, sweatshirt, hoodie) covering the shoulders and midriff with appropriate logo or graphics - no graphics that display violence, drugs, alcohol, or anything illegal.
- Any bottom (jeans, pants, sweatpants, shorts, skorts, dress) that covers the bottom and is worn comfortably
- Any footwear (athletic shoes, boots) that allows students to move around the building safely.

Students are not permitted to wear flip-flops, high heels, hoods or hats (unless required for religious reasons). Clothing should be appropriate (no rips, no undergarments showing, no vulgar language) and comfortable. We do our best to ensure all students are in uniform and have access to school colors. We humbly ask that families support us by ensuring their child is dressed in school colors Monday through Thursday.

Parent Involvement

Bilingual Advisory Committee (BAC)

The BAC is a group of parents who have children enrolled in the transitional bilingual and Dual Language programs at Chase. [Bilingual Advisory Committees \(BACs\)](#) empower parents of English Learners (ELs) to participate in their student's education and advocate for the academic, social, and cultural development of all ELs. The committee meets monthly to participate in the governance of bilingual education and the school community.

Local School Council (LSC)

The [Local School Council's](#) primary responsibilities include: developing and approving the school based academic work plan known as the Continuous Improvement Work Plan (CIWP), approving the school budget, engaging in the annual evaluation of the principal, and playing an active role in decision making processes. It is comprised of 12 voting members: the Principal, 6 parent representatives, 2 teacher representatives, 1 non-teaching staff and 2 community representatives. The parent and community representatives are elected in two-year terms by parents and members of the community.

The 2025-2026 LSC Members are:

- Chairperson: Ms. Minerva Bello
- Vice Chairperson: Ms. Vanessa Guridy
- Secretary & FOIA Officer: Ms. Ayerim Duenas
- Parent Representatives: Ms. Dannia Camacho,, Ms. Rosondunnii Marshall, Ms. Adriana Sosa, and TBD
- Community Representatives: TBD
- Teaching Staff: Ms. Jessica Hernandez, Mr. Matthew Villanueva
- Non-teaching Staff: Ms. Ayerim Duenas
- Student Representative: Diego Lorenzo

Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)

[Parent Advisory Councils \(PACs\)](#) works to provide parents/legal guardians, teachers/ staff, and concerned community individuals with the opportunity to work with their principal in the planning, design, implementation, and evaluation of the Title I Program. The PAC serves as an advisory group by providing input on amendments and future Title I programs. PACs also provide and share NCLB Title I information updates received from the New Region PAC.

School Volunteers

We encourage and appreciate parent support. Speak with your child's teacher about volunteer opportunities within the classroom. All parent volunteers, including field trip chaperones and classroom visitors, must complete a [volunteer application form](#), and turn in a copy of their identification to the front office. All visitors must sign in at the security desk and report to the main office upon arrival, even familiar faces. Visitors should keep in mind that we want to avoid any disruption to the education process and protect the safety and welfare of the students and staff.

Communication

Parent Portal (Aspen)

Parent Portal is a unique, web-based tool that allows you to view your child's grades and monitor their progress. It has many tools including email and text reminders. The Parent Portal has now fully migrated to Aspen. To set up your account make sure that you provide the school with your email. Once we enter your information, you will receive an email from CPS. To complete the process, follow the instructions in the email. We have found that smartphones and iPhones cause errors in the account setup. Login information is found on the [CPS Parent Resource site](#).

Your child(s) teacher should be the first point of contact when you have questions or concerns about your child's academic progress, classroom events, and behavior concerns. You and the teacher are partners in your child's academic career. You are asked to bring issues to the attention of the administrators only if no resolution has been reached after speaking with the teacher(s). Communication with staff should always be kind, courteous, and respectful, as we expect with our students. Your child's teacher will advise you of the best mode of communication and what forms of communication you can expect.

Lost & Found

Please label your students' lunchboxes, sweaters, hats, gloves, coats, etc. Any labeled lost materials will be returned to their owner. Unlabeled materials will be placed in the lost & found, a rack between the link and the office. [The lost & found will be donated monthly.](#)

School Fees

Due to budget changes, we're relying on student fees more than ever this year to purchase essential materials for student success. This year, the fee is \$50.00 per student. These fees help provide the resources needed to enhance student learning. While we are a public school, current funding does not cover all our needs, and these fees help bridge that gap.

At Chase, student fees, combined with funds grants and community partners, ensure that we can supply all necessary school materials and cover field trip costs. We understand that these fees may be a burden for some families. If you need assistance, a fee waiver form is available from Ms. Doyle.

Student Supports

Diverse Learner Supports

Find out more information around special education support and services [here](#). Please reach out to our Case Manager, Tracy Tossi tjtossi@cps.edu, with questions regarding special education and other diverse learner supports.

Counseling

We have a significant focus on social-emotional learning for our students. Ms. Doyle Elizabeth Doyle elrosenfeld1@cps.edu, will work with students in various ways including whole group lessons, small group and individual support. If you feel your student needs SEL support, please reach out.

Academic Interventionist

Students in need of academic interventions to help get them on a path of grade level attainment and growth will work with Jenny Ford jmford@cps.edu, our Interventionist. Please email, if you would like to consult with Ms. Ford about potential support.

Dual Language Coordinator

Ms. Eva Gonzalez Heredia coordinates the dual language program, ensuring students have access to high quality materials and vibrant, rigorous learning. If you have any questions on how to support your bilingual learner please email egonzalezheredia@cps.edu.

STEAM Coordinator

To become involved in the STEAM Advisory Committee or support our STEAM programming, please contact Jen Cardona Barton. They are responsible for school-wide projects, STEAM integration, and many of our enrichment programs.

Jen Cardona-Barton , jecardona@cps.edu.

Clerical Support

Most people already know Ms. Borges from her smiling face in the office. She can support with student fees, attendance, records, and most things 😊, Diana Borges dborges1@cps.edu.