

Castle Hill 127

*Parent Partnership
Handbook*

23 - 24





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THE CASTLE HILL MIDDLE SCHOOL MS127x

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Bryant Jackson

Principal



VISION

Castle Hill Middle School 127 Family is dedicated to equity, high expectations, and dignity for all children. Through student empowerment, community partnerships, and collaboration we will develop critical thinkers ready for the real world challenges of the 21st century.

MISSION

Castle Hill Middle School 127 is a student centered community of stakeholders, educators, families, and children that embraces the diversity and individual value of all. We commit to providing a challenging, safe and respectful learning environment where everyone is not only seen but also heard, supported, and celebrated.



OUR VALUES

EQUITY

We always have and will continue to ensure our students are receiving what they need to be successful. This will look different depending on the needs of each student and we tailor our resources to make sure students are supported in all areas

HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Every student learns differently but one thing we do not waver on is our expectations of them. We focus on GROWTH for every student at every stage. This allows for high expectations and confidence building while learning.

WINDOWS AND MIRRORS

Our school has a diverse student body as well as staff. In order to best serve the community, we provide many opportunities to share in the experiences of various ethnicities and cultures. This allows for "windows," seeing into the lives of others, and "mirrors" being affirmed in their own experiences



WE GOT THIS!

GRADE SKILLS

Middle school is a HUGE transition for our students. At each grade level we prioritize the socio-emotional skills necessary to thrive and adapt. Mental health and a safe learning environment are both necessary for academic achievement.

6th Grade

"How to" Middle School

Entering in 6th grade requires students to learn many new skills. They transition from one teacher to many teachers and they learn to be a little more self-sufficient. This year, we focus on self-management and relationship building, and learning the school community agreements.

7th Grade

Who am I as a Middle Schooler?

During 7th grade, students are undergoing a lot of changes within their adolescence. They become more aware and inquisitive about what's going on in their world as well as environment. This year we add on to the skills and focus on social awareness. Their grades this year are used for HS.

8th Grade

High School Bound/ College & Career

Senior year is the time for students to transition to a high school ready mindset. Our seniors have a high school program where they travel with personalized personal schedules. We also work on the skill of responsible decision-making to aid in their development as young adults.



SCHOOL WIDE COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

School Swag

We understand students who feel comfortable and safe in their classroom environments are able to focus on their learning and engage in their academics in a positive way. We want students to focus on relationships with their peers and achieving success at their own pace.

As a result, students will be required to wear one piece of school swag (sweatshirt, hoodie, crewneck, t-shirt, etc.) in addition to *black pants*. The expectation is students will wear this daily and they will receive rewards for doing so! Please encourage and support. See school website, teacher, or AP for information on how to buy

Grading

Research shows students learn better when they are focusing on attaining a skill versus being consumed with their number grades. Our students are more than numbers and we want them to understand important concepts versus what their score says about their ability. We are a MASTERY BASED GRADING school. Students receive grades based on their level of understanding with a skill.

For example: If the skill is writing a SUMMARY, students are rated using a rubric. Scores are "NOVICE," "APPRENTICE," "PROFESSIONAL," or "MASTER" based on how they perform with that skill.

More on this will be discussed in future parent meetings. Rubrics will be provided



SCHOOL WIDE COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

Homework

At 127, homework is used to reinforce a skill taught during the day or as preparation for the next day's work. Students will have weekly reading assignments to complete as well as work from their teachers. Homework will be sent home hard copy or via google classroom. Please ensure you are checking the student google classroom to support completing assignments. This helps with preparedness for the next day. Students will also receive incentives for completing reading and assigned homework!

Phone Policy

We live in a digital age where we understand the importance of wanting to have access to your child at all times. In the classroom however, phones can play a negative role in academics and also impact student-to-student interactions.

We are a YONDR school. Students are required to bring their YONDR pouches to school daily and lock the phones in them at the entry door. They keep the phones on them but are not able to use them until unlocked at dismissal. This keeps their phones safe but also allows for focus during the day.

Attendance

Attendance is an extremely important factor in student success. Every day a student is absent or excessively late, it impacts their ability to engage with their teachers, peers, and learning. Students who are excessively late or absent will receive weekly calls from our outreach team and it will impact their ability to be promoted to the next grade level. Please reach out if there are challenges with attendance and punctuality. We are here to support and help!



RETHINKING SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

Restorative Justice

"Restorative justice is an approach that seeks to repair harm by providing an opportunity for those harmed and those who take responsibility for the harm to communicate about and address their needs in the aftermath of an incident or issue."



We realize that student behaviors each have different driving forces. For this reason we have a tiered approach to student discipline. This approach holds students accountable for their actions but also repairs harm caused. More information on this to follow in parent meetings.



RETHINKING SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

Community NON_NEGOTIABLES

Bullying [In Person AND Social Media]	Bullying takes many forms and can be extremely harmful to students' self-esteem, school experience, and overall disposition. Bullying (online and in school) is a non-negotiable we stand by
Physical Disagreements	Disputes happen as we are all learning to be in community with one another. However, we should work to prevent them from happening using our restorative process
Verbal Assaults	Utilizing speech that is hateful, harmful, or disrespectful towards a peer or adult is not what we want to see from our students. We offer many different avenues to address disputes

NOTE:

BEING IN "COMMUNITY" MEANS EVERYONE FEELS SAFE AND VALUED.

FOR STUDENTS WHO STRUGGLE TO ADHERE TO COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS AND BEING IN COMMUNITY WITH THEIR PEERS, ADDITIONAL MEASURES WILL BE TAKEN TO SUPPORT THEM.

THIS CAN MEAN REMOVAL FROM ACTIVITIES FOR COUNSELING, RESTORATIVE PROJECTS FOCUSED ON LEARNING PEER TO PEER ENGAGEMENT SKILLS, ETC.

WE OFFER STUDENT TRAINING IN:

**PEER MEDIATION
RESTORATIVE CIRCLES
CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

THIS MEANS STUDENTS WILL HAVE A LARGE ROLE IN HOW DISPUTES AND PEER TO PEER CHALLENGES ARE ADDRESSED. ALL OF THIS HAPPENS ALONGSIDE THE SUPERVISION OF A TRAINED ADULT.

THE GOAL IS FOR STUDENTS TO HAVE OWNERSHIP OF THE PROCESS SO THE SKILLS ARE TRANSFERRABLE!



Step 1: Teacher Responsiveness

Behavior intervention will first start within the classroom with teacher responsiveness. If there are intervention efforts that are documented and have been unsuccessful, teachers can request a circle with the student and student will remain in the classroom. If there is a behavior a student is presenting such as fighting, bullying, sexual harassment, threatening staff or students, other verbally or physically aggressive behavior (including possession of a weapon); Expression of self-harm or ideas about self-harm, expression of severe stress, agitation, or anger, "throwing a tantrum," expression of extreme grief or trauma, teachers can contact a dean or guidance counselor to de-escalate the situation.



Step 2: Request Approval

Teachers who request a circle will fill out a google form and receive a response from Mr. Ray. If a teacher request a circle with the student and it is approved they will be given a time and date in which the circle will take place.



Step 2: De-Escalation

A dean or guidance counselor will come to the classroom, and take the student(s) down to the restorative room for de-escalation. After the student(s) and dean/guidance counselor go through the process, if a circle is necessary one will be scheduled for a time to be determined. The student will then be brought back up to class.

OUR PROCESS AT 127



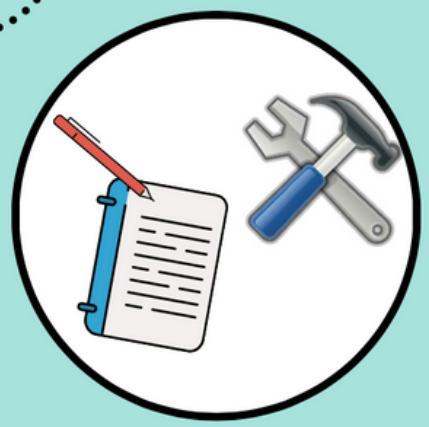
Step 3: Restorative Circle

Restorative Circles will be scheduled by Mr. Ray, Deans or Guidance Counselors and take place in the restorative room or an empty classroom. The circles will be facilitated by someone in our learning community who is trained in restorative circles. Participants of the circle will be notified of the appointment via email.



Step 4: Next Steps to Repairing

After the restorative circle concludes, the facilitator will communicate to Mr. Ray the next steps for all parties involved in the circle. He will then create a document of clear next steps to send to the student(s) and their teachers to follow up with, to make sure the repairing element of this process is being followed.



Step 5: Follow up

After a month to the date of the initial circle, the facilitator will do a quick check in to see how things are going with all of the involved parties to determine if there needs to be any further action taken.

Parent Partnerships



There is no Castle Hill 127 community without the partnerships of parents and families. Below are the opportunities where we intend to build our partnership. We hope you can volunteer!

Cultural Celebrations	<p>We have celebrations for EID, Winter Recess, Fall Harvest, and many others!</p> <p>We would love for you all to volunteer time to help set up and participate in activities!</p>
Monthly Meetings for 6th Grade	<p>Each meeting will have a specific focus such as: 6th grade events, grading policies, curriculum, volunteer upcoming volunteer opportunities, etc.</p>
"Talk about it" Tuesdays!	<p>Bi-weekly, teachers will reach out to discuss "Bright Spots" (Student successes) and "Opportunities" (ways we can support students) specific to your child</p>
"Family Days"	<p>We want to get to know you and the family! We will host monthly events to spend time in community with one another. Some past events are: Carnivals, Block Parties, Movie Night, etc. We will send out surveys for those who want to volunteer!</p>
Parent School Leadership Team (SLT)	<p>It is important for our parents to be part of the decisions taking place in the school. Interested in being part of the SLT?</p>
Parent/Teacher Book Clubs or Literacy Circles	<p>This year we are looking to start a parent book club aligned to themes, ideas, or challenges faced by our students. This can be 2x per month or more but we'd like parent input on this. Want to be part of this? Email AP McGee (Smcgee@schools.nyc.gov)</p>

THERE WILL ALSO BE CONTENT SPECIFIC SESSIONS FOR ELA, MATH, ETC.

PLEASE STAY TUNED AND CHECK EMAIL FOR THESE EVENTS!

Parent Partnership Meetings



Below are ZOOM sessions ONLY that will take place throughout the year. Be sure to check your DOE parent email for links and information regarding dates

(ZOOM: VIRTUAL)

Welcome to the Castle: Need to Know

- NYC DOE Grading system
- DOE Messenger
- Parent Handbook Overview

SEL Competencies

- **What is Social Emotional Development?**
- **How do the skills vary by grade and development?**
- **How can we partner to help students?**

CHAT GPT

- **What is it?**
- **How is it being used?**
- **What are the implications for education?**

Restorative Justice

- **What is it?**
- **Is restorative justice discipline?**
- **How is it implemented here at 127?**

Mastery Based Grading

- **What is it?**
- **How do we compare to school's who don't use it?**
- **Why mastery versus number grades?**
- **Does this cause an issue for high school competition?**

Parent Partnership Meetings



Below are IN PERSON community sessions that will take place throughout the year. Be sure to check your DOE parent email for links and information regarding dates

(IN PERSON COMMUNITY BUILDING)

SEPT.

Back to School Carnival

- Giveaways
- Order uniforms
- Sign up for parent book clubs/events

NOV.

Cocoa and Paint small entrance fee

- Fundraising
- Hot Chocolate and Paint-by-Numbers for Parents
- Movie and Snacks in auditorium for kids

DEC.

Family Game Night small entrance fee

- Games and Snacks in Auditorium
- Win Prizes to take home!
- We want to raise enough money to buy ONE gift for every child before break. \$5 EACH

MAR.

Parents Night Out! small entrance fee

- Kids can stay from 3:30-6pm for activities on a Saturday and bonding
- Parents can enjoy a few extra hours to themselves on a Saturday!

Parent Partnership Meetings



Below are IN PERSON community sessions that will take place throughout the year. Be sure to check your DOE parent email for links and information regarding dates

(IN PERSON COMMUNITY BUILDING)

MAY

**Staff and Families vs. Students
\$5 to participate or \$2 to spectate**

- There will be giveaways, raffles, etc.
- Includes a snack and a beverage; will also be additional to be purchased

JUNE

Final Family Survey

- Complete survey regarding parent engagement throughout the year
You will be entered into raffle to be reimbursed for all trip money PAID for school year!
- Sign up for parent roles for the following school year!

Many, many more!

Are there events or opportunities you'd like to see or lead that aren't here? Let's us know! We are happy to add to this list.



6TH GRADE Staff

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8TH GRADE Staff

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Ms. Jahan	Mr. Faiz	

