



The STEAM Bridge School

2025-2026

Family Handbook

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September 2025

Dear Families,

Welcome to *The Next Chapter* at The STEAM Bridge School – P.S. 481!

As your new principal, I am honored to be joining this incredible school community. I believe in the power of partnership, and I know that when schools and families work together, our children thrive—not just academically, but socially and emotionally as well. It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2025–2026 school year!

This year marks a fresh beginning for all of us. As we turn the page and write this next chapter together, I invite you to stay connected, stay involved, and always remember that your voice, and your child's experience, matters..

A great place to start is by reviewing this handbook with your child. It's been prepared to give you an overview of our policies, expectations, and routines, and we hope you'll find it helpful as your child begins or continues their journey at The STEAM Bridge School. Reading it together can help your child feel confident and prepared for the year ahead.

We also encourage you to stay in regular communication with your child's teacher. Together, you form a powerful team that can support your child's growth and success in meaningful ways.

Thank you for entrusting us with your most precious gift - your child. I'm excited for what lies ahead, and I look forward to partnering with you as we support every learner in reaching his or her fullest potential.

Please mark your calendars for our Back-to-School Night, which will be held in person on Wednesday, September 17th. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet your child's teacher and learn more about grade-specific content and expectations for the year.

On behalf of the entire STEAM Bridge Crew, we wish you a joyful, successful school year.

With gratitude and excitement,

Gidget Rivera

Principal

School Personnel

School Main Telephone Number 718-239-5660

School Fax Number is 718-239-5665

Ms. Gidget Rivera	Principal
Mr. Dayne McLean	Assistant Principal Ext. 1131
Ms. Jaquada Wilkinson	Parent Coordinator Ext. 5061 Cell: 929-244-0602 Email: JWilkinson4@schools.nyc.gov
Ms. Andrea Chappetta	School Counselor Ext. 5063
Ms. Marisol Feliciano	Social Worker Ext. 5063
Ms. Irene Anokute	Nurse Ext. 5131/5132
Ms. Laila Padin	Secretary Ext.1013
Mr. David Sampong	Tech Support Ext. 2001
Ms. Tabatha Santiago	Ultimate Enrichment 347-735-4161 Ext: 705

Our Mission Statement

At The STEAM Bridge School, our mission is to ensure that all students engage in a rigorous and inspiring education grounded in collaborative discussion and inquiry-based learning. Through this work, we aim to develop thoughtful, curious, and capable learners who think critically, communicate effectively, and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Vision Statement

We aspire to create an equitable educational environment where all students thrive through curricula that embed rich discourse, multiple modes of engagement, differentiated instruction, and rigorous learning opportunities. Our instructional vision is guided by the following core practices:

Discourse: We believe that strong communication skills are essential for success in both school and life. By fostering collaborative discussions rooted in inquiry, students learn to share responsibility, offer and receive feedback, and contribute to shared goals in respectful and meaningful ways.

Multi-Faceted Engagement: Students are encouraged to express their thinking creatively and take ownership of their learning. With the teacher as facilitator, students use academic vocabulary, engage in accountable talk, and challenge one another's ideas. Through daily problem solving, synthesis, and exploration, students experience learning in dynamic and impactful ways.

Differentiated Instruction: Recognizing that each learner is unique, we use data-driven strategies to tailor instruction to individual needs and interests. Our commitment to personalized learning ensures that all students have equitable access to high-quality education.

Rigorous Opportunities: We design instruction that aligns to ambitious learning goals and challenges students to think critically and apply knowledge in meaningful ways. Through real-time analysis of student work and discourse, teachers make responsive instructional decisions that deepen understanding, promote transfer, and support high-level reasoning across content areas.

Our 2025–2026 Instructional Focus



What We're Focusing On This Year

We're always working to make sure our teaching is guided by what our students need most. As of the time this handbook was printed, we are still waiting on final state test results. That data helps us see the full picture and make sure our goals are the right ones.

We'll be sharing this year's instructional focus at Back to School Night, along with what it means for your child's learning experience. You'll also receive the details in our first family newsletter in September.

As always, our goal is to support every student academically, socially, and emotionally through a strong, supportive approach to teaching and learning.

Introduction

At The STEAM Bridge School, we believe that you and your child's teacher are a team working together to support both the academic and personal growth of your child.

Keep the lines of communication open—not only to celebrate success, but also to work together through any challenges.

Parent-Teacher Contact Guidelines:

- Teachers are expected to respond to family outreach within 24–48 hours, excluding weekends and holidays.
- Teachers are not available for extended conversations during arrival or dismissal, as their priority is ensuring student safety. Please request a meeting at a mutually convenient time.
- You may leave a phone message or written note with the school secretary, and the teacher will respond in a timely manner.
- Individual teachers will share their preferred method of communication (e.g., Class Dojo, email, or a communication folder). Note: While some teachers may use Class Dojo, it is not a schoolwide expectation and is not mandatory.

We also recognize that life at home can impact life at school. Please let your child's teacher know if there are changes in family circumstances, such as: a new sibling, illness, relocation, or anything else that might affect your child emotionally or academically. Our school guidance counselor is available to support your family during transitions. Additionally, please make sure all health concerns are indicated on the Blue Emergency Card, and contact information is updated promptly if there are any changes.

Tools for Communication:

- Beginning in October, a monthly family newsletter, “The Parent Chapter,” will be distributed on the first Friday of every month and posted to our school’s social media platforms.
- Parent-Teacher Conferences are important—but they are not the only time to connect. Teachers are available throughout the year for check-ins and ongoing dialogue.

When families and schools partner closely, our students feel the difference. Let’s stay connected and make this year a meaningful chapter in your child’s story.

School Hours – 2025–2026

The official school day for the 2025–2026 school year is **Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 2:15 p.m.** Students who wish to eat breakfast may arrive as early as **7:30 a.m.**

We will have two half days this year to accommodate **virtual** parent-teacher conferences:


- Thursday, November 6, 2025
- Thursday, March 5, 2026

Dismissal on both half days will be at **11:15 a.m., please plan accordingly,**

The DOE parent calendar can be found at

<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/calendar/2025-2026-school-year-calendar> or by clicking [here](#).

Here is our bell schedule. Periods 4, 5 & 6 are lunch periods for students.



The STEAM Bridge School
BELL SCHEDULE

1	8:05–8:48am
2	8:48–9:31am
3	9:31–10:14am
4*	10:14–11:04am
5*	11:04–11:54am
6*	11:54–12:44pm
7	12:44–1:27pm
8	1:27–2:10pm

Morning Arrival & Breakfast: Start the Day Strong

Breakfast begins at 7:30 a.m. and ends at 7:45 a.m. Students may begin arriving at 7:30 a.m., whether they plan to eat breakfast or not.

- All students arriving at 7:30 a.m. must enter through Exit 3 on Van Nest Avenue.
- There is no supervision before 7:30 a.m. Please do not drop your child off earlier, and never leave children alone outside the building.
- If your child walks to school, please help them leave home at a time that ensures they arrive close to 7:30 a.m., rather than lingering in the park or around the school building.

On-Time Arrival Matters

- Instruction begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. Exit 3 closes at that time. Students arriving after 8:00 must enter through Exit 1 (main entrance) and will be marked late.
- Lateness disrupts your child's learning and sets a rushed tone for the day.
- Chronic lateness will be documented in the DOE iLog system. If lateness becomes a pattern, a meeting will be scheduled with school leadership and the Parent Coordinator to create an improvement plan.
- Let's set our students up for success by starting each day on time, calm, and ready to learn.

Dismissal & Early Pick-Up: Protecting Every Minute

A Note About Early Pick-Ups:

We strongly encourage families to avoid early pickups unless absolutely necessary.

- Every instructional minute counts, especially at the end of the day when important wrap-up and routines occur.

Dismissal (continued)

- Students must be signed out before 2:00 p.m.. The main office is closed between 2:00 and 2:30 p.m. to support a safe and smooth dismissal.
- Adults picking up early must present valid photo ID and must be listed on the Blue Emergency Contact Card (MyStudent account). Please ensure this information is updated and includes multiple trusted adults. (See Emergency Contact section for details)

Dismissal & Late Pick-Up: End the Day Right

- Dismissal is at 2:15 p.m. sharp.
 - Grades K–3 dismisses from the schoolyard.
 - Grades 4–5 dismisses from Exit 3.
- Please make every effort to arrive on time. Children who are not picked up by 2:15pm will be brought to the late room and then to the main office.

Chronic Late Pick-Ups:

- We will begin contacting adults listed on the Blue Emergency Card immediately.
- If no one can be reached after a significant amount of time, your child may be escorted to the 49th Precinct for safety.
- Late pick-ups can be distressing for children—please help us prevent this by arriving promptly.

Dismissal Reminders:

- Please do not ring the bell if you're late. Wait until the School Safety Agent can assist.
- Teachers are not available for extended conversations during dismissal—they are fully focused on student safety. Please call or email to schedule a time if you need to connect.

Pets Are Not Permitted

For the health and safety of all students and staff—especially those with allergies—**pets are not allowed on school grounds.**

Thank you for your partnership in helping us maintain a safe, smooth, and caring environment for all students!

Emergency Contact (Blue Card) Information

All emergency contact information—also known as the Blue Card—is stored electronically at [MyStudent.nyc](https://mystudent.nyc.gov/).

If you need help accessing or updating your contact information, please reach out to Mr. Sampong or our Parent Coordinator, Ms. Wilkinson for support.

It's very important that we have up-to-date phone numbers and emergency contacts on file at all times. In the event of an emergency, these are the people we will contact if we cannot reach you.

Keeping this information current also helps ensure a smooth and secure dismissal process.

Student Health Requirements

To help us keep all students safe and healthy, please make note of the following important reminders:

- If your child has any allergies, please ensure all required medical documentation is submitted to the school nurse.
- Students are not permitted to carry medication. All medications must be kept and administered by the school nurse.
- Kindergarten and First Grade families: A current physical exam form must be submitted for your child.
- All students must be fully immunized and up to date with their vaccinations to attend school.
- If your child requires medication, health accommodations, or allergy-related care during the school day, please complete a 504 Accommodation Form. 🖱️ [Click here to access the DOE 504 form](#)

If you have any questions or need help completing health forms, please contact our school nurse, Ms. Anokute at 718-239-5660 Extension 5131 or 5132.

Attendance Policy

At The STEAM Bridge School, we believe that arriving to school on time and attending every day is essential to student success. Strong attendance builds academic confidence, supports social-emotional growth, and helps students develop positive lifelong habits.

Did you know that a student with 90% attendance has missed an entire month of school by June? That's 20 days of lost instruction—and a lot of missed learning. By high school, students with low attendance are less likely to graduate on time.

While we understand absences may happen for valid reasons, our goal is for every child to maintain at least 95% attendance across the school year, as required by NYS law.

We also strongly discourage extended family vacations during the school year, as they can create significant learning gaps that impact your child's academic progress.

Attendance Reminders:

- If your child is going to be absent, please call the school at (718) 239-5660 that morning.
- When your child returns, please send a note from home or a doctor's letter explaining the reason for the absence.
- Even “excused” absences (such as for a doctor's appointment or middle school visit) are still counted in your child's attendance record.
- After just one day of absence, an automated call will be sent to your home from the school office.

Our attendance teacher, school secretary, and administration closely monitor student attendance and will follow up with families if a student begins to miss school regularly. If absences become chronic, we may schedule a conference or conduct a home visit to develop a plan for improvement.

Whenever possible, please schedule appointments outside of school hours to avoid unnecessary learning loss.

Let's work together to build strong habits, support academic success, and make every day of learning count!

Uniform Policy

PS 481 is a uniform school, and wearing the school uniform is mandatory for all students each day they attend school. Please ensure your child is dressed appropriately:

- Boys: Navy blue pants and a white button-down or polo shirt
- Girls: Navy blue pants, jumper, or skirt with a white blouse

There will be special Dress Down Days throughout the year! Parents will be notified in advance via letters, our school website/app and Instagram —so stay tuned!

- Help us reunite lost items with their rightful owners! Please **label** anything that your child might remove during the day—jackets, sweaters, backpacks, lunch boxes, hats, and supplies—with their name and grade.

Visitor Policy

All visitors must enter the building through Exit 1 (the main entrance/lobby area).

- Upon arrival, visitors are **required** to **present a valid photo ID** to School Safety for check-in and clearance.
- Once processed, School Safety will **direct the visitor to the main office** for further assistance.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping us maintain a safe and secure school environment!

Birthday Celebration Policy 🎉

We love to celebrate our students—but safety comes first!

Birthday celebrations are allowed on Fridays between 1:30 p.m. and 2:00 p.m.

To ensure the health and safety of all students:

- All treats must be individually wrapped by the manufacturer.
(This means no homemade items, cakes, or cupcakes—thank you for understanding!)
- Please check with your child's teacher beforehand to find out if there are any allergies in the class.
- If multiple students have birthdays in the same week, parents can coordinate with the teacher to plan a shared celebration.
- Parents and family members do not attend this celebration.



Field Trips & Chaperone Policy

Field trips are exciting learning opportunities that help students connect classroom lessons to the real world.

What Families Need to Know:

- A signed NYC DOE permission slip is required. Verbal or emailed permission won't be accepted.
- Include a working phone number on the slip where we can reach you the day of the trip.
- Some trips may have a small fee. If you need help, contact the main office—we'll make sure every child can go.
- For some trips, students may need to bring a bagged lunch. No glass bottles.
- All students must return to school before dismissal. If you're taking your child home early, you must sign them out at the main office—no exceptions.



Safety Guidelines

- The DOE requires 1 adult for every 10 students.
- If a student has shown unsafe or disruptive behavior, a parent may be required to attend the trip.
- Some students with 504 plans may require a trip nurse. We do our best to secure one, but if we can't, a parent may be asked to attend.
- If your child needs medication (like an EpiPen or inhaler), please make sure they bring their own. School EpiPens cannot be taken off campus.

Chaperone Expectations

We love when families join us! Chaperones play a big role in keeping trips fun and safe.

Chaperones must:

- Be 18 or older
- Not bring siblings or other children
- Travel with the class both ways
- Stay alert and engaged with students the entire time
- Limit cell phone use to emergencies only
- Follow all school behavior expectations

Failure to follow these expectations may affect your eligibility for future trips.

Academics

Students are expected to come to school ready to learn each day, wearing their uniform and equipped with the supplies listed on the class or grade supply list. Please make sure your child's belongings are clearly labeled.

As a family member, your partnership matters!

- Ask your child about what they're learning—every day is a new chapter!
- Support homework routines and reach out to your child's teacher if you have any questions or concerns.
- Stay involved by attending Parent Association meetings, workshops, and school events.
- We also encourage you to look out for opportunities to volunteer or support classroom and school-wide initiatives.

Protecting Instructional Time

Classroom time is sacred. It's when the real magic of learning happens. To protect this crucial time:

- Parents/guardians are not permitted to visit classrooms during school hours unless invited for a specific event.
- Please avoid early pickups or non-essential interruptions to your child's school day.
- Whenever possible, schedule doctor's appointments and other commitments, outside of school hours.
- If you need to deliver a message or item to your child or their teacher, please stop by the main office. We will ensure it is delivered promptly.
- Each teacher will share their preferred method of communication at the start of the school year (e.g., Class Dojo, email, or a communication folder).

Middle School Recommendations

If your child is applying to a middle school that requires teacher recommendations, please allow teachers at least 10 school days to complete them. These forms often ask teachers to reflect on the student's academic performance, effort, behavior, and school engagement—as well as parent involvement and collaboration. Your support and communication throughout the year help us write thoughtful and accurate recommendations.

Homework Policy

Homework is an important extension of the classroom experience. When used effectively, it reinforces learning, fosters independence, and builds essential academic habits. An effective homework assignment may:

- Extend learning beyond the school day
- Support students in using additional resources
- Help students develop time management and organizational skills
- Reinforce skills and concepts taught in class
- Offer opportunities to explore individual interest
- Address the specific learning needs of each student

Each classroom teacher will share weekly homework assignments by Monday afternoon, either through a digital platform (such as Google Classroom) or by sending home a printed version.

We ask families to help create the conditions for homework success by:

- Ensuring your child completes assignments each night
- Reviewing homework with your child and encouraging best effort
- Creating a quiet, distraction-free space for work
- Helping your child plan their time, especially for long-term projects
- Checking in regularly with your child's teacher if you have questions or concerns
- Allowing your child to complete the work independently offering guidance, not answers
- Staying involved by attending Back to School Night, where teachers will review homework expectations
- Attend parent workshops

Remember, you and your child's teacher are partners in learning—and partners work together.

Grading Policy

At PS 481X, our grading policy reflects our belief that learning is a journey—and what matters most is how much a student grows over time.

We use a 4-point grading scale to evaluate student performance in all subject areas:

Level 1	Far Below Grade Level
Level 2	Approaching Grade Level Standards
Level 3	On Grade Level
Level 4	Above Grade Level

*An updated grading chart will be shared during our Back to School Night in September.

Final report card grades reflect your child's most recent academic performance—especially from the Spring semester—because we believe grades should show what your child knows and can do now. This is a change from last year.

Promotion

Teachers assess students' academic progress toward mastery of grade-level standards using multiple measures. The purpose of using multiple measures is to provide a holistic view of each student's progress and growth over time. These may include classwork, assessments, observations, report card grades, student projects, written assignments, oral presentations, and classroom discussions.

Promotion (continued)

Please note: While absences and lateness are not direct measures of academic performance, they do impact how much instructional time a student receives—and that, in turn, can affect learning outcomes.

Student Portfolios

Each student has a portfolio, which is a collection of work gathered throughout the year. Teachers use these portfolios to reflect on student growth, evaluate mastery of grade-level skills, and guide instruction. Portfolios also help students see their own progress over time.

Progress Reports

Families will receive progress reports between the November and March report cards to provide an update on both academic and social-emotional development. Feel free to reach out to your child's teacher to discuss the next steps.

Report Cards

Report cards are distributed three times per year. Teachers determine grades using a combination of:

- Performance tasks
- Classwork and homework
- Projects
- Assessments
- Class discussions
- Teacher observations and conferences

Report Cards (continued)

The final report card grade is based on your child's most recent and reliable evidence of learning—not just an average of earlier work. This honors progress and ensures students are not penalized for early struggles if they've demonstrated growth by the end of the year.

We're committed to a grading process that is fair, growth-focused, and aligned with grade-level standards. If you have any questions about your child's grades, please don't hesitate to reach out to their teacher or contact the main office.

Marking Period	Start Date	End Date	PT Conferences (appointment only)	Report Cards Released On Myschools account
1	September 4th	October 31st	November 6th	November 10th
2	November 3rd	February 28th	March 5th	March 9th
3	March 2nd	June 24th	n/a	June 26th

Academic Supports at PS 481X

At PS 481X, we know that every child learns in their own way and at their own pace. That's why we use a school-wide approach called **MTSS—Multi-Tiered System of Supports**—to make sure each student gets exactly what they need to grow and succeed.

What is MTSS?

MTSS helps us identify which students may need extra support and provide it during the school day, early—before they fall behind. It's a proactive system that helps us meet students where they are and help them keep moving forward.

Academic Supports (continued)

What is the RISE Period?

Each grade has a dedicated time during the school day called the RISE period, where students receive targeted academic support in small groups. Here's what that might look like:

- A teacher working closely with a small group on a specific reading or math skill
- Other students practicing independently, participating in enrichment, or working in centers
- Groups that change over time based on student progress and needs


How Do We Know What Kind of Support is Needed?

We use a combination of data—like Acadience, MAP Growth, and classroom work—to determine what kind of support each child needs: **Tier 1:** Quality instruction that all students receive; **Tier 2:** Extra small-group support for students who need more practice; **Tier 3:** Intensive support for students who need the most help.

Family Workshops Coming Soon!

We're stronger when we learn together! Throughout the year, we'll host a series of family workshops, to help you:

- Understand what MTSS looks like at PS 481X
- Learn how to read your child's assessment data reports
- Discover simple ways to support your child's learning at home

We are committed to helping every student thrive—and that happens best when school and families work together. **Together, we RISE!** 

Remote Learning Expectations

In the event that schools transition to remote learning, PS 481 will follow a schoolwide schedule to ensure consistency, structure, and transparency across all grade levels. All students are expected to know how to log into Google Classroom, which will be used daily for assignments, announcements, and links to live instruction. If you need support accessing your child's account, please contact the main office or your child's teacher.

A daily remote learning schedule will be followed schoolwide. This helps families prepare for the day, supports student routines, and ensures access to both live and independent learning opportunities.

Time	Activity
8:30-9:00am	Live ~ Attendance, Class Meeting/ SEL, Review the flow of the rest of the day
9:00-9:30am	K-2 LIVE ~ Foundational Skills/Heggerty 3-5 On Your Own Independent Reading and Short Answers to Text Dependent Question
9:30-10:00am	Live ~ Read Aloud (Content, Comprehension/Vocab)
10:00-11:00am	On Your Own: Independent Work/Writing
11:00-12:00pm	On Your Own: Lunch
12:00-12:30pm	Live ~ Math
12:30-1:30pm	On Your Own: Independent Math Work and Zearn
1:30-2:20pm	On Your Own: Log onto your "Special" class for today

Please help your child maintain routines, arrive on time for live sessions, and complete independent work to the best of their ability. Teachers will provide feedback and support throughout the day, and families are encouraged to reach out with any questions or concerns.

Safety Procedures

At PS 481, student safety is always our top priority. We follow all **NYC DOE and NYPD School Safety protocols** and work closely with city agencies to ensure a safe and secure school environment for all.

Fire Drills & Emergency Evacuations

To ensure preparedness, we conduct **regular fire drills and evacuation exercises** throughout the year. During these drills, students are expected to:

- Exit the building **quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner** using the assigned route.
- Remain in their assigned evacuation area until they are instructed to return.
- Refrain from talking, playing, stopping for water/restrooms, or leaving the group.

 **Failure to follow safety procedures may result in disciplinary action.**

In the event of a real evacuation, families will be notified once students arrive safely at the off-site evacuation location. For security, students will **only be released to individuals listed on the Blue Emergency Contact Card**.

Shelter-In, Lockdown Drills and Holds

We also conduct **Shelter-In, Lockdown drills** and **Hold in Place drills** during the year, in accordance with DOE safety mandates. These drills help prepare staff and students for potential safety threats inside or outside the building.

During a Shelter-In or Lockdown:

- All exterior doors are secured.
- Instruction may continue (Shelter-In), or students and staff will move to safe positions (Lockdown).

A **Hold in Place** is a temporary procedure used to keep hallways clear while instruction continues in classrooms, typically due to a medical, behavioral, or facilities-related situation.

✓ Creating a Safe School Environment

We ask families to partner with us in keeping our building safe by:

- Following traffic and parking rules near the school.
- Entering only through the main entrance and signing in at the security desk.
- Showing ID to the School Safety Agent upon entry.
- Not entering classrooms unannounced during instructional hours.
- Dropping off items (e.g., lunch, homework) at the main office.
- Coordinating dismissal plans in advance and sending any changes in writing.
- Signing students out through the main office if leaving early (no “early” pickups after 2:00 PM).
- Ensuring the Blue Card remains current.
- Only adults over age 18 listed on the Blue Card pick up your child.

Behavior Policy

At P.S. 481X, we are committed to creating a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all students.

We follow the **NYC Department of Education’s Citywide Behavioral Expectations**, which outline the standards for student behavior across all public schools. You can view the NYC Department of Education's Citywide Behavioral Expectations [here](#).

In addition, we proudly implement PBIS—Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports—as part of our school culture. You’ll find our PBIS matrix displayed in every classroom and throughout the school building.

A copy of the PBIS matrix is attached to this packet. Please take a few moments to review it with your child so they understand how we show respect, responsibility, and readiness every day at PS 481X.

Behavior Policy (continued)

All students are expected to:

- Follow PBIS expectations (see Behavior Expectations Chart at the back of this handbook)
- Treat others with kindness and respect
- Refrain from teasing, name-calling, or pressuring others
- Tell an adult if someone is being mistreated or bullied
- Respect personal and cultural differences
- Never enter or exit a vehicle that is not on the school side of the street
- Never go with someone they don't know
- Report anything unsafe to a trusted adult

Lunchroom Behavior Expectations

We want lunchtime to be a safe, calm, and enjoyable part of your child's day—a time to eat, recharge, and socialize respectfully. To help students eat their lunch and enjoy time with friends, we follow this routine:

- **The first 10 minutes of lunch are quiet eating time.** This gives all students a chance to focus on eating before chatting with friends.
- After that, students are welcome to talk with peers at their table using kind words and indoor voices.

All students are expected to:

1. Enter the cafeteria quietly and go directly to their assigned table.
2. Wait patiently while on line for lunch.
3. Stay in their seat unless given permission to move.
4. Clean up their area and throw away trash when directed.
5. Check their table and floor before leaving.
6. Show respect by:
 - Using kind words and a calm voice
 - Keeping food and objects to themselves
 - Staying seated until dismissed

Technology Safety

Technology is an incredible learning tool—but with it comes responsibility. We encourage all families to talk with their children about safe and respectful technology use at school and at home.

Refer to our Student Cell Phone & Internet Enabled Device Policy (see page 32) for school-specific guidance.

Technology Safety Tips for Families:

- Initiate regular conversations about digital habits
- Set clear family expectations around device use
- Consider parental controls or filters
- Set healthy time limits for screen use

Together, we can ensure our students are safe—**physically, emotionally, and digitally.**

Student Cell Phone & Internet-Enabled Device Policy

School Year 2025–2026

District 11 is committed to optimizing our school learning environments for all students. We believe in the importance of fostering meaningful interpersonal interactions and distraction-free classrooms, encouraging play, and cultivating moments of joy throughout the school day. These values help support the overall well-being and development of our students. To ensure that we are maximizing our instructional time and supporting all students' interpersonal development, our cell phone and electronic device policy is a standard expectation across all schools in the district. This electronics-free policy is in alignment with [Governor Hochul's Bell-to-Bell Smart Phone Restrictions](#) and NYC [Chancellor's Regulation A-413](#).

All personal electronics (including phones, smart watches, tablets, personal gaming devices, smart glasses, iPads, AirPods, etc.) are not to be taken out, turned on, or used during the school day. This includes lunch, recess, hallways, and bathrooms. All personal electronic devices must be turned off and securely stored in accordance with school policy below from the first bell (upon entrance to the school building) to the final bell of the school day (dismissal).

In case of an emergency during the school day, please call Ms. Padin in the main office at 718-239-5660. If you have any questions about the Cell Phone and Electronic Device Policy, please contact Assistant Principal McLean at 718-239-5660 extension 1113.

PS 481 Daily Device Storage Procedure

To support compliance with this policy, students must follow the steps below each morning:

1. Power off all internet-enabled devices before entering the building.
2. Place the device in a labeled baggie with the student's name.
3. Drop the baggie into the classroom's designated cell phone bin.
4. Bins will be transported to classrooms and secured in a locked space for the day.
5. Students will retrieve their devices from the bin at dismissal.

***Students arriving late turn in their device at the main office and it will be transported to their classroom. Students leaving early will retrieve their phones from the classroom teacher.**

Exceptions: Students who need internet-enabled devices to manage medical conditions are exempt from the restrictions. Parents must provide official documentation, such as a 504 Accommodation Application from a licensed healthcare provider, that clearly outlines the student's medical condition and the necessity of using an internet-enabled device for management (for example, for glucose monitoring or seizure tracking). This request should include the medical documentation, and a brief explanation of how the device supports the student's health and well-being. Requests for exceptions must be made in writing and approved by school administration.

Disciplinary Policies

Disregarding the Electronics-Free policy is a violation of both New York State Law and Chancellor's Regulation A-413. Below are some sample disciplinary responses. Please review the New York City Public School's Discipline Code for a full explanation of the disciplinary policy.

Sample Cell Phone/Device Infraction	Possible School Response/Action
1. Having a personal cell phone/ electronic device out 2. Having a personal electronic device turned on 3. Using a personal electronic device	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Device will be held by school staff• Parent/Family will be contacted• Device will be returned at the end of the school day
If the student uses their phone to: 1. Take pictures 2. Record classmates and/or staff members (on or off campus) 3. Share inappropriate content with classmates 4. Cyber-bully, e.g., posting negative comments on Facebook or any social media outlets	Please review the New York City Public Schools Citywide Behavioral Expectations . These sample infractions constitute serious offenses to student safety and well being of our school community. <u>These harmful activities can constitute school-based discipline, even if they occur off school grounds or with students from other schools.</u>
The school reserves the right to create an individual intervention plan for students who consistently and habitually do not follow the district wide cell phone policy.	

Why This Policy Matters

This school-wide policy helps us:

- Maximize academic learning time
- Protect student privacy and reduce cyber distractions
- Promote respectful, face-to-face communication
- Reduce opportunities for social media conflicts, unauthorized recordings, and other disruptions

A Message to Families

Thank you for supporting this important effort to protect our learning environment. We encourage all families to monitor their child's cell phone usage and content at home, as this helps reinforce responsible digital habits that align with our school values of respect, focus, and responsibility.

Families as Partners in Education

At PS 481, we believe students thrive when schools and families work together. Your involvement makes a real difference—and we invite you to take an active role in your child's learning and school experience. Here's how you can partner with us:

- Review your child's classwork, test results, progress reports, and report cards together.
- Support daily homework routines with encouragement and consistency.
- Talk about school rules, routines, and behavior expectations at home.
- Prioritize **on-time, consistent attendance**—every day counts.
- Attend Parent-Teacher Conferences and check in with your child's teacher regularly.
- Join the Parent Association and get involved in events, initiatives, and volunteer opportunities.
- Participate in family workshops and school learning experiences.

Stay Connected!

We'll keep you in the loop—and we ask that you stay plugged in, too! Look for updates:

- In your child's **bookbag**
- On our **school website**: www.TheSTEAMBridgeSchool.org
- On **Instagram**: [@ps481](https://www.instagram.com/ps481)
- Through our **school app** and monthly calendar

Together, we'll make this a successful, joyful, and connected school year!

Who to Call If...







This list is not an all inclusive list but is intended to serve as a guide.

Situation	Person to Speak To
You are concerned about homework	Your child's teacher
You have a concern about your child's progress, content of class work social interactions with their peers	Your child's teacher
You lost your permission slip for the trip (try not to wait until the day of the trip)	Your child's teacher
You need to take your child out of school early	Main office ~ Ms. Padin
Your child is home sick	Main office ~ Ms. Padin
Your child needs to take medication at school	Nurse
You unexpectedly are running late to pick up your child	Main office ~ Ms. Padin
You need an appointment with the Assistant Principal	Main office ~ Ms. Padin
You need to leave a message for the teacher	Main office ~ Ms. Padin
A missing item	Parent Coordinator ~ Ms. Wilkinson
Your child is having adjustment difficulties	School Counselor/Social Worker
Your family circumstance (birth, job, illness)	School Counselor/Social Worker
You need school event information	Refer to the school calendar, School webpage, School App, Parent Newsletter ~ The Parent Chapter
You want to know if school transitioned to remote due to inclement weather	Call 311 or School App
You are interested in attending a parent workshop	Parent Coordinator ~ Ms. Wilkinson
You have a classroom concern that you have tried but have been unable to resolve with the teacher	Assistant Principal ~ Mr. McLean
You have a classroom concern that you have tried but have been unable to resolve with the Assistant Principal	The Principal ~ Ms. Rivera
You don't know who to call	Parent Coordinator ~ Ms. Wilkinson



The STEAM Bridge School Behavioral Expectations



	In the Classroom 	In the Cafeteria 	In the Hallway 	During Recess 	Gym 	In the Bathroom 
Be SAFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use tools the right way -Keep hands and feet to myself -Walk, don't run -Stay in my personal space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stay in my seat - Walk carefully - Eat my own food - Have a calm body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walk in a straight line -Stay to the right side - Hands are to my side -Eyes are looking straight ahead 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use equipment correctly - Keep hands and feet to myself -Stay within my space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use equipment the right way - Keep hands and feet to myself -Follow the rules of the game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Keep feet on floor -Wash my hands -Keep water off the floor
Be RESPECTFUL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Listen to teacher and classmates -Use inside voice -Use kind words - Stay in my personal space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use inside voice -Raise hand for help -Say "please" and "thank you" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Listen quietly - Look but don't touch displays -Respect other's personal space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Stop when I hear the whistle -Play fair -Take turns -Use kind words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ask for help when I need it -Listen when the whistle blows -Treat equipment with care -Be a good sport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use quiet voices -Give others privacy -Keep my eyes and hands to myself
Be RESPONSIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Take care of the supplies -Clean up my space -Always try my best -Ask for help if I need it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Clean up after myself -Remember my things -Follow directions -Make space for others on the table 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Go straight where I need to be -Follow adult directions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Tell an adult if someone is not being safe -Line up when it's time -Follow the rules of the game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Tell an adult if someone is not being safe -Follow directions -Follow rules of the game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use bathroom only when I need to -Be quickly -Clean up after myself

The STEAM Bridge School ~ Family Handbook

2025-2026 Acknowledgment Form

Please sign and return this page by Monday, September 8, 2025

I acknowledge that I have received the P.S. 481 Family Handbook. I have reviewed the information carefully with my child(ren) and will support them in upholding the policies, expectations, and procedures outlined within.

Together, we have specifically discussed:

- The **2025-2026 Student Cell Phone and Internet-Enabled Device Policy**
- Our schoolwide **Behavior Expectations**
- The section on **Remote Learning**

Child's Name: _____

Class Number: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____