

## JONES LANE ELEMENTARY PARENT HANDBOOK

### Introduction

This parent handbook summarizes important Jones Lane Elementary School policies and procedures. These policies are in place to ensure the safety and quality of instruction for our children at school. Please review these policies carefully with your children.

### Admittance...School Hours

Our instructional day begins at 8:50 a.m. and ends at 3:05 p.m. Students are expected to be at their designated entrance area and ready to enter the building at 8:35 a.m. The 8:35 a.m. to 8:50 a.m. time period is important for organization and preparation. By 8:50 a.m., students are expected to be in their seats and ready to begin the day.

Students are not allowed into the building before 8:35 a.m. unless they have prior permission from a teacher, are attending a supervised program or for indoor line up during inclement weather. Students must remain with that teacher or program. Students arriving before this time must line up outside in their assigned, supervised locations.

- Students have designated line up areas depending on the proximity to their respective grade level classes within the building. This can change from one school year to the next. Students will be guided to the line-up areas for their grade level by staff members on the first day of school.
- All kindergarteners and first graders will line up behind the wall by the kindergarten doors. There will be staff members and patrols on site to supervise the line-up of each grade level each day.

*Line-Up areas are subject to change depending on the situation on site and/or if deemed unsafe for students.*

The area between the double doors is not to be used. All students line up in the noted locations unless there is inclement weather, in which case all grade level lines will be moved indoors to assigned locations.

Walkers must use the steps and designated walkways and may not walk on the grassy hill. At the end of the day, all walkers must exit the front doors by the media center. Parents are asked to wait for walkers in that area outside. Bus riders exit through the main front door. Siblings should plan to meet at a designated place outside the building.

Special programs and extracurricular activities may be scheduled before or after regular school hours. Only those students involved in these programs, however, are admitted to the building during these times. Teacher supervision is only available during regular school hours and for certain extracurricular activities.

### Attendance

Attendance during regularly scheduled school days is required by law and expected of all students. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) requires students to present a parental note that explains the reason for the student's absence. Without a note, the student's absence/tardiness will be recorded as "unexcused."

**If your child will be absent or tardy, please call Jones Lane Childfinders at 301-840-8163** to report your child's name, grade, teacher, and reason for absence. If you do not call

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to report an absence, the school will call parents at home or at work to account for your child's absence. Students must also bring a note from home upon their return to school.

Prolonged illnesses and other extended absences should be discussed in advance with your child's teacher. Illnesses which span several weeks may warrant the services of a home teacher, which can be requested through the school office.

Please do not schedule family vacations or morning medical appointments during countywide testing. (See the Testing Information section and the school calendar.)

**Tardy Slips**--Children who arrive after 8:50 a.m. are considered tardy unless there is a bus problem. Late arriving students must be signed in by a parent in the office, present a note of explanation, and receive a tardy slip before being admitted to class.

**Early Dismissal**--Dismissal on scheduled early release days will occur at 12:35 p.m. If school opens late or is unexpectedly dismissed early, the time will be announced on radio, television, and the MCPS website. Please make arrangements in advance for your children in the event of unscheduled closings due to emergency or inclement weather.

**Early Departures**--While it is sometimes necessary to schedule appointments during the school day, we urge you to keep this to a minimum. Please send a note to school to alert your child's teacher of an early departure. Your child will be called from the classroom by an office staff member when you arrive to pick him/her up. Parents are expected to sign the student out when you arrive at the school. Parents or adult picking up the student may also be asked to produce some form of identification. Safety and legal requirements preclude parents from picking up students directly from classrooms.

### **Bicycle, Scooter and Skate Policy**

Students in grades 4 and 5 may ride bicycles to school. State law requires persons riding bicycles to wear protective helmets when riding bicycles. The bicycle rack is near the front door. Locks are required. Please help your child/children learn to lock their bicycles to the bicycle rack. **For everyone's safety, students must walk their bikes on school property.** Please encourage your child to extend courtesy to walkers and to stay off of neighboring lawns. The school assumes no liability for lost bicycles or helmets. **Students may not ride or bring scooters or skates to school.**

### **Breakfast and Lunch**

Breakfast and lunch are available through the school food service program at our Jaguar Cafe. Menus are sent to you each month and are posted on the MCPS web site. Our SNAP computer register program assigns each student a PIN number. Food purchases are deducted from student PIN number accounts. Accounts are established by prepayment. Please make checks or money orders payable to: Jones Lane ES Cafeteria.

Children will receive a cheese sandwich, milk and fruit if they forget to bring their lunch or have a zero balance in their account. The office and staff do not lend money and children are not permitted to call home for forgotten lunches.

Each year an increasing number of students have severe allergies to peanuts and other foods. We will have a table designated as "peanut/ tree nut-free" at all lunch periods for each class. Students not eating peanut products can eat at the "peanut/tree nut -free" table. It is important that parents stay in contact with the teachers and health professionals at our school for any student with food allergies. The goal is to assure a safe eating climate for all our students.

## Class Parties and Birthday Celebrations

Class parties are held on Halloween and Valentine's Day. Please notify your child's teacher if you choose not to have your child/children participate in either of these events. Alternative activities will be provided. All food for parties must be store-bought, include ingredient labels, and be nut-free. No home-made items are allowed. Children with food allergies can bring their own food or opt to eat the treats provided, and their parents do not need to be present at parties. Always check with your child's teacher for any other special needs/instructions.

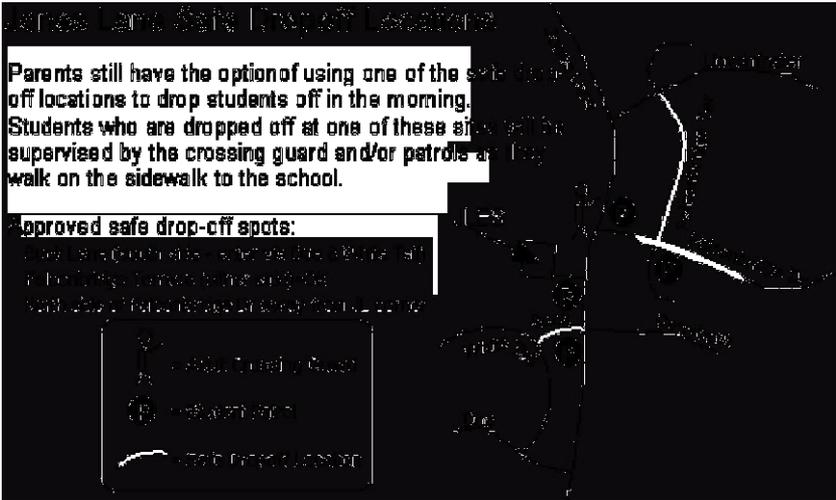
Birthdays are acknowledged by the school and classroom teachers for every student celebrating that special day. However, treats are not allowed at the school for birthday celebrations. Please do not ask your child or the classroom teacher to deliver personal party invitations or discuss birthday party plans at school. This policy helps reduce hurt feelings and promotes respect for all students.

## Driveway Access...Student Pick Up and Delivery

An adult crossing guard is present at Falconbridge Drive and Jones Lane from 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. The Jones Lane driveway will be open to general traffic all day. However, it is important that parents exercise extreme caution when dropping off and picking up students each day. You will be directed by a staff member on duty and/or designated student safety patrols as to where to drop off and pick students up each day. Parents are reminded not to drop students off before 8:35 a.m. because there will be no one to supervise your child prior to that time. Please know that you still have the option to drop off students at one of the safe drop-off sites below. However, if you choose to drop your child/children off at the school site, please exit the driveway quickly and cautiously since you will be entering and exiting with the buses in the morning. The safety of our students is paramount.

To ensure the safety of our children, please:

- **Do not** stop your car or allow your children to exit your car on Jones Lane.
- **Do not** come into the parking lot early and wait for the time to drop students off because it takes up limited space reserved for staff members in the morning.
- When dropping students at a safe drop-off site, cars need to be parked two car lengths back from all street corners to allow student patrols clear visibility.
- When dropping students off at school, please pull your car up as far as you can and then bring the vehicle to a complete stop before letting students out. Patrols and adult supervisors will assist in opening car doors on **curbside only**. For safety reasons, students should only enter and exit from cars on the curbside.
- **Do not** try to pass around cars that are dropping students off or picking students up at the school drop-off/pick-up site. This poses a safety hazard for everyone. Please be patient!
- **Do not** block private driveways or fire hydrants.
- If using one of the safe-drop off locations, students are to exit on the curbside of the car and walk to the nearest painted cross walk.
- **Do not** wave your children across any street.
- **Do not** make U-turns at the school entrance or nearby streets with patrols.
- Dress your children appropriately for the weather.
- Respect the student patrols and adults on duty.
- Use seatbelts at all times.



Help us avoid traffic backing up on Jones Lane. We ask for your patience and courtesy during these times.

### Emergency Closures

Please rely on TV, radio broadcasts, the MCPS website, and the MCPS taped phone message service (301/279-3673) for school closure information during inclement weather. If you have access to email, we encourage you to register your home and work email addresses with the following free school closure notification service: <http://www.schools-out.com>. Parents may also sign up for the MCPS-Quick Notes service for instant updates on all school issues and emergency situations. In order to register for this service, go to the MCPS website at [www.montgomeryschools.org](http://www.montgomeryschools.org) and click on "submit" to create your personal profile. If the school is evacuated, call 301-315-7362 (Quince Orchard HS) for information. Do not call the school.

**MCPS Connect-Ed Service** – In addition to the services above, the school will use the MCPS Connect-Ed service to inform parents of emergency closures after school has been in session. This service will also be used to provide reminders of various events throughout the school year to parents. Connect-Ed allows the school to record and send a phone message to your home phone number.

**Telephone/Address Changes**--All emergency contact information must be kept current. Please notify the school immediately with changes in address, home, or work telephone numbers (or extensions), custody agreements, baby-sitters, doctors, dentists, or emergency contacts. This information is essential if your child becomes ill, is injured, or is affected by an emergency school closure.

**Emergency Parent/Child Reunification (PCR)** -If an emergency requires students to be Sheltered-In-Place, students will be held at school, under the supervision of school staff. A completed *Authorization for Release of Student* form must be on file in order for staff to release your child to anyone other than an identified parent. The Parent /Child Reunification plan will be:

1. Come to school, report to the All Purpose Room (APR), and show identification
2. Staff will check *Authorization for Release of Student* form
3. Your child will be called to report to the APR to be reunited with you
4. You, or whomever you have authorized, must sign the Log before child is released.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

Many before, during, and after school activities are made available to students. See the publication entitled, ***JLES Before, During, and After School Programs*** for a detailed listing of extracurricular activities. After school activity buses, designated for students who are participating in after school activities only, may be provided 2 days per week and will run on a limited basis. Parents will be informed by the school when all after school extracurricular activities and the bus service will start and end.

### **Forgotten Articles/Parent Delivery**

We suggest that you permit your child to feel the consequences of forgotten homework, lunches, instruments and projects. If you need to deliver an article please bring it to the office. Staff will arrange to have it delivered to your child. As a parent you can encourage organizational skills by selectively deciding which forgotten items you will deliver to your child. Glasses are often a necessity. Delivery of fast food lunches is not permitted. Students are to pack up all personal items, books and homework at the end of the day. Please refrain from asking building service staff to open classrooms after school hours.

### **Homework and Behavior Expectations**

Each Montgomery County student is required to review and sign a Homework and Discipline/Behavior Policy. These important documents will be given to you when school starts (or at the time of your child's enrollment). Please review these policies with your child, then return the signature sections to the teacher. Your frequent reinforcement of our Discipline/Behavior policy and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) helps ensure that all students work in a safe and comfortable learning environment. The MCPS document "Student Rights and Responsibilities," will also be distributed to students at the beginning of each school year. It provides general background for parents. The staff and administration are available to discuss your suggestions and concerns.

Our four basic behavior rules are:

1. We will walk in the hallways.
2. We will use words and actions in a kind way.
3. We will keep hands, feet and objects to ourselves.
4. We will follow directions given by Jones Lane staff.

PBIS rules and expectations are based on our school motto: **Jones Lane students are respectful, responsible and ready to learn.**

## Homework

Homework is an integral part of the instructional program at Jones Lane. It is assigned regularly (approximately 3-5 times per week). The nature and length of each assignment will vary according to the needs of the students, the grade level and the instructional objectives being addressed. Homework extends and enriches learning, provides practice, promotes independence, and strengthens concept and skill development.

It is the responsibility of the student to complete and submit homework on time. Parents play an important role in this process by providing an appropriate study environment, encouragement, supervision and/or assistance. If your child has difficulty with an assignment, please write the teacher a note making him/her aware of the specific problem. This will alert the teacher to revisit the instruction. Homework is NOT assigned to parents.

Students who are absent will be given an opportunity to complete all assignments, however, assignments will not be provided in advance of a scheduled absence related to family travel.

Your child will be excused from class work and homework for short term illnesses. Completely missed work will be discussed with the teacher upon return. If your child is ill for three or more days, please send a note to your child's teacher through the school office to request a homework packet. Teachers need time to assemble appropriate materials. Please understand that they cannot stop their duties or respond to requests on a drop-in basis.

**Homework and Religious Holidays**--Board of Education (BOE) policy states that homework is not to be assigned on designated religious holidays when students are absent because of religious observances. Homework and important class or field trip activities will be avoided on designated religious holidays. Regular class instruction and activities will go on as usual, without penalty to the students who are absent because of religious observances. Absences during these times are excused, when accompanied by a note, and students will be allowed to make up missed work.

## Immunizations

The State of Maryland requires proof that two doses of the measles vaccine and one dose of the mumps vaccine have been administered to your child by his/her first birthday. Enrollment in school will be denied if parents fail to provide proof of immunization or if parents fail to make an appointment with a doctor to have your child immunized within 20 calendar days from the date of school entrance.

## Lost and Found

Students misplace many items during the school year. Found items are placed in the large bin in the hall near the courtyard. Students and parents need to check the bin for lost items. Glasses, keys and other small and valuable items are to be turned in at the office. Please help us by clearly labeling clothing and other personal items with the family name. Unclaimed items are collected by parent volunteers and distributed as donations to community agencies.

## Mascot

We are known proudly as the Jones Lane Jaguars.

## Medication

Children are not permitted to bring prescribed or over the counter medications to school or to medicate themselves without supervision. MCPS Form 525-13, *Authorization to Administer Prescribed Medication* is available at school for parents and physicians to complete. We also will accept a written order from the physician on his/her letterhead or prescription pad. Prescription medications must be in the original labeled bottle. All medications kept in school are secured and accessible only to authorized administering personnel. Medications must be delivered and picked up by an adult. The school nurse/health room technician will dispense medication to teachers for students attending field trips. For more information, please contact the school nurse/health room technician via the main school number.

## Recess

Students have a 30-minute recess period each day. Students are expected to go outside unless they have a note from a doctor excusing them from outside activities. Students should dress appropriately for the weather and respond promptly to directions given by lunch aides, classroom teachers, or other staff members. Students are expected to play approved sports and games using rules and equipment provided by the school. Play equipment from home is not permitted. During inclement weather recess is held indoors.

## Recycling

Keeping the building clean and recycling appropriate materials is everyone's responsibility at Jones Lane. Children should place trash in proper containers and not abuse school materials and facilities. Please reinforce the importance of caring for school property with your child. This includes recycling paper, trays, cans, and bottles, care for school materials, and for the building and grounds. Good manners are also important during the school day, in restrooms, the halls, and especially at lunch. Please reinforce your expectations regarding your child's table manners and consideration for others to help support a congenial atmosphere in the Jaguar Café.

## Staff Specialists and Services

Our school nurse, counselor, reading specialist, speech pathologist, staff development teacher, ESOL Teacher, and principal are available by appointment to answer your questions. **All problems regarding students should first be addressed with the classroom teacher.** If the problem is not resolved at that level, the parent, student, or the teacher may request consultation with the principal.

**Grouping and Teaming**--Teachers at every grade level are encouraged to work together to meet the needs of their students. Students may be regrouped or assigned to a different teacher for some subjects or assignments. In addition, some assignments or projects may occur on a grade level basis within a single class. Every effort is made to group students in ways that best promote their learning.

**Guidance and Counseling**--Classroom guidance, small group counseling, short-term individual counseling and character education are available to students through the services of the school guidance counselor. Counseling is a regular component of the school program. The counselor is also available as a resource to parents. Parents are invited to call the school to speak with the guidance counselor about family and/or home or school concerns that impact students.

**High Performance/Gifted and Talented**--Provision is made for the delivery of appropriate instruction to students who demonstrate strong interest and high performance ability as well as those students meeting the identification criteria for gifted and talented. Instruction at Jones Lane is differentiated in a variety of ways within the classroom and in flexible groupings. The formal screening process for gifted and talented occurs each year for all students in grade 2. New students to Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) in grades 3-5 are also screened. Parent information is provided through the Principal's newsletter, the PTA newsletter and by MCPS correspondence. Formal testing is part of the screening process. A school committee, using several sources of data, determines identification of gifted and talented students. Students not identified during one school year may be re-screened during another.

**Special Needs and Services**--Students who may benefit from services in addition to the classroom program receive these from the reading specialist, ESOL teacher, resource teacher, and/or the speech and language pathologist. Students are referred to these specialists by the classroom teacher through the school Education Management Team (EMT) working in consultation with parents. The EMT meets weekly to discuss instructional concerns. Parents are invited to meetings concerning their children. The EMT includes classroom teachers, Special Education teachers, and support staff. Jones Lane hosts the Elementary Learning Center (ELC) program for the Quince Orchard Cluster. The ELC provides specialized teachers and self-contained classrooms for children with specific learning and academic disabilities. Specialized training and experience with children with learning disabilities is a valuable resource for all staff and parents.

## **Student Dress**

Appropriate clothing allows students to participate in all school activities. Art assignments can be messy. Physical Education class requires attire and footwear that permit active movement. Flip-flops, thong sandals, clogs, platforms, backless shoes and shoes with skates in the sole make running and playing unsafe. Hats, halters, see-thru crop tops, belly shirts, sport bras (as an outer garment), short shorts and skirts, long flowing skirts, and dragging long pants are not appropriate attire for school. Please monitor the appropriateness of T-shirt decorations.

## **Student Insurance**

Student accident insurance for incidents which occur at school or on the way to and from school is available at a reasonable price. Information regarding this insurance is sent home during the first week of school.

## **Student Use of Telephones**

Office telephones and staff assistance are always available to students on an emergency basis. All students should come directly to the office if they become ill or miss the bus so that staff can notify parents.

To avoid confusion by students, please communicate with the office and/or your child's teacher regarding any change in after school plans or activities. The office telephones are generally not available to students for personal calls related to play dates, after school arrangements, forgotten homework, lunches, musical instruments, or projects. These arrangements need to be discussed with your child before the school day begins and, if necessary, confirmed via a written note presented to the teacher.

Elementary school students are not allowed to have cell phones at school.

## Teacher/Parent Communications

Parents may contact teachers by note, telephone or e-mail. Teachers will try to answer messages and notes within 48-hours. The best time to communicate with teachers is before and after school -- not during school hours. Teachers may not be called out of class to answer parent phone calls. If you need to meet with a teacher, please call to make an appointment or send a note with your child. Time is not available during the school day for unscheduled drop-in conferences. It is disruptive when parents come to the classroom and try to speak with teachers during the times they are responsible for students.

**Parent/teacher conferences** are scheduled for all students in November. In addition, teachers will communicate regularly with parents using a weekly folder, assignment book or contract.

**Progress Reports and Report Cards**--Friday folders, assignment books and interim notices help inform parents about their child's daily/weekly progress. Formal report cards are issued four times annually to students in grades 1–5 and twice a year to kindergarten students. **The final report card are mailed home to the students but could be withheld if a student has any outstanding obligations.**

## Summative Testing Information

Second graders will no longer be assessed on the Terra Nova 2. The Maryland School Assessments (MSA) will be administered to students in grades 3, 4, and 5 in March of each school year. Parents are asked to please refrain from scheduling family vacations or morning medical appointments during these state mandated testing periods.

## Toys in School Policy

Toys can be a powerful distraction to learning and a nuisance to others. Please help your child understand that toys need to remain at home. This includes electronic games, virtual pets, stuffed animals, laser pointers, trading and playing cards, personal radios, CDs, ipods, head sets, personal sports equipment, aerosol dispensers, look-alike weapons, dice, etc. Toys are not allowed on buses or at recess.

## Visitors to the Building

We enjoy seeing parents and encourage visits to our school. However, all doors to the school are kept locked all day for safety and security of our students and staff members. Parents must ring the bell at the front door to alert the office staff of your arrival at the school. An office staff member will provide entry to visitors into the building after the purpose of the visit is known. School policy requires all visitors to report to the school office upon arrival. This includes parent volunteers, parents picking up children during the school day, outside workers, and guests of staff or students. **All visitors must receive guest badges from the school office before proceeding to any classroom.** Your cooperation with this policy is appreciated. No unauthorized persons are permitted in classroom areas. During an emergency or drill, visitors are required to follow staff to a room or exit the building through the nearest door. They are then required to report to the nearest staff member so their safe exit can be verified.

## Weapons in School Policy

The MCPS Board of Education Weapons Policy is very specific. The following items are not allowed on school grounds: firecrackers, weapons, toys resembling weapons, and sharp implements misused as weapons. This includes water pistols, pocketknives, letter openers,

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and rockets. Please prepare lunches that do not require the use of a knife for cutting or spreading. Scissors need to remain in the classroom and may not be carried back and forth to school. Please be sure to review this section of the school behavior policy carefully with your child.

Requirements for automatic expulsion as the minimum action have been implemented for the most serious behavioral offenses. The following **require expulsion** as a minimum action:

- Bomb/ facsimile possession or bomb threat,
- Distribution of intoxicants,
- Possession of firearms,
- Violent physical attack on a staff member, and
- Weapons used to cause bodily harm or injury.

## Yearbooks and Pictures

Individual school pictures are taken in the fall and spring. Information about the purchase program is sent home with each student. Group pictures are taken during the second semester. Announcements and written information will be provided about this program. Our yearbook is distributed at the end of the school year. Order forms will be sent to you.

## Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

The JLES PTA is very active in the school lives of our children and is nationally recognized for its parent involvement programs. The JLES PTA is active in five important areas: School Community, Cultural, Educational, Recreation and Family, and Fundraising. For additional information visit our website at [www.jlespta.org](http://www.jlespta.org) or call one of the listed Board members or committee chairpersons.

The Mission of the National PTA is as follows:

- To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community, and place of worship.
- To raise the standards of home life.
- To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.
- To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth.
- To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education.

## Jaguar Express

The **Jaguar Express** is the bi-monthly newsletter published by the JLES PTA. It features information about school programs, PTA activities, and community events. Each JLES family receives a copy of the Jaguar Express.

## PTA Volunteers

Volunteers are an integral part of the instructional program at Jones Lane. There are many opportunities throughout the school year to volunteer for PTA events and activities, on committees, at school, and from home. Please respond to the volunteer sign up forms distributed by the JLES PTA or contact the PTA 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President if you are interested in volunteering.