

Dear Pace Charter School Families,

Welcome to *Pace Charter School of Hamilton*. We believe that each of us has an important role in establishing and promoting academic excellence through innovative programs and community involvement, all of which nurture and encourage the child to learn and to succeed. *Pace Charter School* is designed to meet the needs of Kindergarten through Fifth Grade students. Our staff has been selected to guide the academic as well as the personal growth of your child. We are all committed to helping students have a meaningful learning and social experience. We encourage community involvement and realize that in order to be successful, the home and school must work together cooperatively. With your cooperation and support, we will be able to provide the very best educational opportunity for your child.

We hope you will find this handbook helpful in providing you with information about many of the school's policies and procedures and about the school in general.

If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to call (609) 587-2288.

We look forward to a successful year!

The Pace Charter School of Hamilton and Staff.

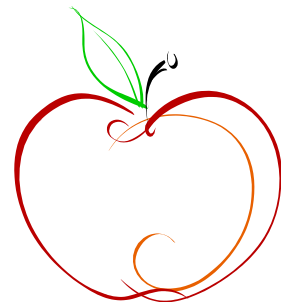


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Arrival

Students will be admitted into the building from 8:25 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. Parents arriving after 8:30 a.m. will need to report to the main office to sign in their child.

When dropping your child off, drive slowly and carefully, and never exit through the entrance. This is for the safety of all students. Please be courteous to the school buses who are loading and unloading our students.

Dismissals

- Pick up for all students on half days is 12:30 p.m.
- Pick up for Kindergarten students on a full day is 3:00 p.m.
- Pick up for First-Fifth Graders on a full day is 3:30 p.m.

Students will not be released to anyone other than the parent/guardian or someone listed as an Emergency Contact, unless there is a note of permission signed by the parent.

Students who are not picked up on time or are returned by bus as no one was at the bus stop to pick them up will be **placed in Aftercare, and will be charged at the rate of \$1 per minute. All payments are due upon pick up.**

Early Pick Ups

We ask that you make every effort to schedule appointments when they will not interfere with the school day. If you must schedule a daytime appointment, please inform the office in advance.

On the day of the early pick up we recommend that you send a note to the office informing us of the approximate time that you will be arriving and the reason for the early dismissal. This will allow for your child's teacher to prepare any work that s/he will miss and need to complete at home.

Attendance and Absence

Please notify the school no later than 9:00 a.m. if your child is going to be late or absent.

Students must be in attendance for 155 or more days of school in order to be considered to have successfully completed the instructional program requirements of the grade/course to which s/he is assigned. Failure to meet this standard for attendance shall be considered grounds for retention.

School Visitation

Parent classroom visitations to observe a child at school are welcomed but must be pre-arranged through the classroom teacher and/or the main office. All visitors must enter the school through the main doors and report immediately to the main office.

Volunteering

Parents are provided with opportunities throughout the school year. Opportunities range from serving on the Board of Trustees, joining the PTO, and chaperoning school trips. We want you to attend school functions and to get involved!

Transfers

To transfer your child from Pace, please notify the office. You will need to complete a transfer card and form.

Bus Transportation

Students are assigned to a bus by the district transportation department, not by *Pace Charter School*. The Transportation Department will make every effort to provide a pick up and drop off spot that is in close proximity to your home.

Each school year, parents will need to complete the bus transportation form to receive transportation for the following school year. This will not occur automatically.

Questions concerning bus stops or service should be addressed to:

Hamilton Twp. Transportation (609) 631-4174

Trenton Transportation (609) 656-4876

Since school bus transportation is a courtesy, students must behave in a safe, controlled manner at all times. Parents are responsible for behavior at the bus stop.

Care of Personal Property

We cannot assume responsibility for lost or damaged items. The care of personal property (money, clothing, lunch boxes, and notebooks) is the student's responsibility. Labeling of all personal items that your child brings to school will enable us to return any lost or misplaced items to the rightful owner.

Lost and Found

Any belongings that are misplaced on school grounds should be reported to the office. A lost and found box will be located in the multipurpose room, and students should look there for anything they have misplaced.

All articles that have been found will be kept until the end of each marking period. At the conclusion of each marking period, items still remaining in the Lost and Found will be donated to a Good Will Store.

Communication

Communication is an essential part of an effective educational program. It is very important for parents/guardians to keep close contact with their child's teachers concerning academic and behavioral progress. It is equally important that parents/guardians keep open lines of communication with the school.

If ever you should find that you have concerns regarding your child's academic progress or social interactions in the classroom, you should first contact the classroom teacher. Through open and effective communication, parents/guardians and teachers can work together to provide the best educational experience for each child. If for some reason you do not feel that your problem has been resolved after meeting with your child's teacher, you should then call to schedule a meeting with the Principal.

Discipline Policy

To help ensure a good social educational climate, it is important that students understand that good character and self-discipline is expected at all times. Disciplinary action will be taken when any individual's actions interfere with the right of teachers and students to learn.

Emergency Closings

Changes in the school's hours or closings due to inclement weather are broadcast on Hamilton Township Public Schools TV channel, Facebook, email, or automated communication system. *Pace Charter School* will follow all delays or closings for **Hamilton Township Public Schools**.

Field Trips

Teachers schedule field trips for the purpose of supplementing and enriching classroom instruction.

Students will be given a blanket Field Trip Permission Slip to cover the entire year. Students must return the signed Parent Permission Slip, or they will not be allowed to participate. As trips arise, teachers will advise parents of the itinerary for each trip. If a parent/guardian does not wish his/her child to go on a trip, s/he must inform the teacher prior to the day of the trip.

When students go on field trips they represent our school. **Should a child's behavior prior to the field trip and/or the previous field trip be considered unacceptable in terms of student conduct, that child will not be allowed to participate in the field trip unless accompanied by a parent or guardian.** If a parent/guardian is unable to accompany the child on the field trip, an instructional day will be planned for the student at the school. Parents/guardians can request a meeting with the classroom teacher and Principal to discuss the above issue prior to the field trip.

Parents/guardians are welcome to chaperone the trips however, for insurance reasons, we cannot allow younger siblings to accompany our classes on the trips.

Birthday Celebrations

Parents/guardians may wish to send in a healthy snack, ice cream, cupcakes or cookies to recognize their child's birthday. Parents are urged to contact their child's teacher before sending treats.

Concerning invitations to private parties, we ask that you NOT pass them out at school unless the entire class will be receiving one.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

The school calendar includes dates for a parent/teacher conference beginning the first marking period. The conference allows parents/guardians and teachers to discuss the student's progress in school on a one-to-one basis.

Conferences with teachers and administrators may also be scheduled throughout the year by calling the teacher or office. All conferences must be arranged in advance.

Report Cards

Report cards will be distributed three (3) times a year in November, March and June.

Promotion from one grade level to the next depends upon a student's academic progress. Students must demonstrate that they mastered the required proficiencies in order to be promoted to the next grade.

For any students who are struggling to maintain a passing grade in a subject level, a letter will be sent home prior to the end of the marking period indicating areas needing improvement in order to afford the parent/guardian the opportunity to provide for extra help.

If in the teacher's judgment retention is necessary, the parent/guardian may appeal the decision to retain or promote the student by contacting the Principal.

Emergency Contact Forms

The main purpose of this form is to help us locate you in the event of illness or an emergency involving your child. **It is important that we are able to locate you at any time!**

Please list working phone numbers of neighbors and/or family members who will know where you are for emergency calls and who may pick up your child when s/he feels ill and you are not home. In special cases, you may wish to call the school and give a number where you can be reached during the day.

If any information listed on the Emergency Contact Form (addresses, phone numbers, emergency contacts) should change during the school year, please inform the office and your child's teacher immediately.

Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO)

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) at *Pace Charter School* believes students learn best when the significant adults in their lives—parents, teachers and community members—work together to encourage and support their development. As such, we believe that parental involvement in a child's education is paramount.

The PTO membership drive begins the first week of school. Memberships are \$5.00 per family. Our goal is 100% participation of all parents/guardians and teachers each school year!

Throughout the year, the PTO will sponsor several *optional* fund-raisers. All monies collected will directly benefit the school and the students.

General meetings are held at the school on dates established by the PTO Executive Board. All parents/guardians are encouraged to attend the monthly meetings.