



Clark Mills School
Manalapan, NJ

August 2019
www.mersnj.us/cm

Clark Mills School: "Stepping Up to Learning Each Day"

"Let's Get Ready to S.O.A.R."

At Clark Mills School, we take pride in establishing a **twenty-first century learning environment** where students in first through grade five can come together and "learn and grow" in a **safe, secure, and caring** setting. Our school community has embraced the following ideals into its daily growth mindset: "S.O.A.R. (Be a social thinker, Show on-going respect, Always be safe, and Be responsible.)" This mindset, consisting of preferred behaviors, sets the foundation of school expectations and procedures throughout the school.

Educating the **whole child** is of utmost importance, and teaching children how to give the best of themselves each and every day -- inside and outside of the school environment -- is as important as the excellent academic instruction they receive. We are committed to ensuring that this environment continues to flourish because we want the best for our students.

By creating an **open, communicative partnership** as a school community, we can continue to achieve success. We are confident that by working collaboratively with all stakeholders, students will have the knowledge and supports necessary to **give the best of themselves each day**, while learning and engagement are maximized.

Contact Clark Mills School

Main Office: Ms. Joy Silver and Mrs. Michelle Totillo
732.786.2720

Principal: Mrs. Jayme Orlando
732.786.2720/jorlando@mersnj.us

Assistant Principal: Mrs. Jessica Gent
732.786.2720/jgent@mersnj.us

School Counselor/Anti-Bullying Specialist: Mrs. Patty Cavanagh
732.786.2732/pcavanagh@mersnj.us

School Nurse: Mrs. Jackie Fellouris
732.786.2726/jackiefellouris@mersnj.us

Clark Mills PTO Information

At Clark Mills School, we are very fortunate to have such a hardworking, supportive PTO and the involvement of so many families to further strengthen the "village" that is needed to educate the whole child.

What is a PTO and what does the PTO do?

PTO stands for Parent Teacher Organization, and it consists of parents and teachers who all work hand-in-hand to support and enrich all students. The PTO supports school staff, helps enhance daily student activities, and assists in efforts to solve school needs through volunteering and funding.

PTO MEMBERSHIP

Membership dues are \$12 per family and provide you with constant communication from the PTO via the new interactive PTO website (www.clarkmillspto.com). This website houses everything you need to know about the CMPTO, upcoming events, volunteering opportunities and so much more. Please be on the lookout in your child's first day folder for more information on how to sign up for this amazing website.

Members of the PTO are provided with the opportunity to volunteer at events throughout the school year. Whether you have one hour, ten hours or an unlimited amount of time, the PTO will help to find the perfect opportunity for you to get involved. The PTO has both daytime and nighttime activities to accommodate stay-at-home parents and those who work.

Please come and attend the first PTO meeting on September 24th at 7:00 PM to find out exactly how you can make a difference at Clark Mills.

You can contact the Clark Mills PTO via email at ClarkmillsPTO@gmail.com. The PTO President is Mrs. Kristeen Iacono.

What's New?

This school year, like every year, we welcome some new faces to our staff. Here is a list of our newest and highly qualified Clark Mills staff members, many of whom have worked in the Manalapan-Englishtown Regional School District during previous school years.

Mrs. Rachel Valenzano -Long Term Sub for Mrs. Widener/5th Grader

Mrs. Jill Sukoff- Long Term Sub for Mrs. Jessica Campanile/3rd Grade

Mrs. Alison Kern – Special Education Teacher

In addition, some teachers have changed grade levels and/or roles. These changes are as follows:

- Ms. Melissa Cantin will be the district Writing Coach.
- Mrs. Lorraine Ottaviano will now be teaching Grade 3.

Teacher email addresses are accessible via the school website under "Staff Directory."

The five district elementary schools will continue to run on a six-day rotation for special subjects. Your child's teacher will provide you specific information regarding your child's individual class, but to access a yearly calendar of the rotation, please go to the CM website.

The first day of school is Day B (not Day A).

Recognizing Good Character and Positive Behavior

Clark Mills School will continue to recognize students each month who have exhibited great strength in a set of identified character traits also known as the six pillars of character. These pillars include trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. At the end of each month, one student from each class is recognized as an outstanding role model of the traits and he/she receives a Student of the Month certificate and coupon for a free snack in the lunchroom courtesy of the PTO.

A Clark Mills Student of the Month:

- Treats other students with kindness
- Demonstrates responsibility
- Demonstrates pride in the school community
- Demonstrates good manners consistently
- Exhibits self-discipline



Teacher Welcome Letters

Teacher welcome letters to you and your child **are in the process of being mailed!** Keep an eye out as you will receive these introduction letters between now and September 5th! If your child is placed in an **"allergy classroom,"** please make sure to read that letter carefully. It will be enclosed with the welcome letter your child's teacher sends to you.

In addition, you will learn more about your child's classroom, teacher, and academic program at **Back to School Night on September 26th**. We look forward to seeing you then! You will receive more information about Back to School Night in the folder of information your child will receive on the first day of school!



Important Upcoming Dates

Friday, September 6th **Band and Orchestra Information Assembly for Grade 4 and New Grade 5 Students**

Monday, September 9th **Wear #chooseKIND shirt or shirt that depicts kindness.**

Wednesday, September 11th **Wear red, white and blue in commemoration of Patriots Day .**

Friday, September 13, 20th, 27th **School Spirit Day- Wear School colors (green, black or gray)**

Tuesday, September 17th – August Birthday Bash 1:45

Thursday, September 19th- September Birthday Bash 1:45

Tuesday, September 24th at 7:00 PM in the Cafeteria **First PTO Meeting/Meeting on Integrated Pest Management**

Thursday, September 26th. **Back to School Night -See letter in first day of school folder with times for your child's grade level.**

Friday, September 27th **PTO Walk A Thon**

Monday, September 30th **No School for Rosh Hashanah**

A Year of Kindness at CM

This year at Clark Mills School, we will be hosting our first annual **"Year of Kindness Campaign."**

Once a month on selected Mondays (the list of dates is posted below and will also be indicated on the Clark Mills website, we will be sharing messages about kindness over our morning announcements, and we will celebrate the importance of knowing that each and **every one of us is an individual** with special talents and qualities. We will also encourage our students and staff to wear a shirt that relays a message about kindness. Of course, with any spirit day activity, participation is always encouraged, though optional.

We are sponsoring a special fundraiser about purchasing a **#chooseKIND** t-shirt, and we will work along with the other schools throughout the district to spread the **#chooseKIND** message in all that we do and say each and every day.

While we will have various schoolwide activities planned throughout the year to reinforce this special message, we ask that every day, our school community prioritizes kindness and will **#chooseKIND**. **We ask for your support in reinforcing this important lesson with your children, too!**

*A simple, yet powerful message
#chooseKIND
You are brilliant, amazing,
a very special version of YOU
and no one else can do what you do!*

Kindness Spirit Days

Monday, September 9th
Monday, October 7th
Monday, November 4th
Monday, December 2nd
Monday, January 6th
Monday, February 3rd
Monday, March 9th
Monday, April 6th
Monday, May 11th
Monday, June 8th
Last Day of School

If interested, you may purchase a shirt for your child or your child can wear his/her own shirt to show kindness for these spirit days. Shirts will be sold 9/24-10/3. More information will be sent home through email.

What's New?

New additions for the 19-20 school year to our already awesome school culture:

1. Fostering A #DynamiteDragon Culture. **Stop by at Back to School Night to take a picture in front of our step and repeat screen.**
2. A Brain Break Sensory Hallway
3. Daily Morning Announcements Focused on Character Education
4. Daily Mini-Lessons/Modified Morning Meetings to Follow-Up to Morning Announcements Reinforce Character Education
5. Home-School Communication Regarding the Morning Messages to Bridge What is Learned in School With Home
6. New Positive Behavior Classroom Management Systems
7. Fostering A #ChooseKind Mindset through the "Year of Kindness" Activity
8. Creating a "Calm Corners" in Classrooms

**We cannot wait to welcome
back our students, staff, and
families to another great year!
#CMDRAGONSRULE!**



Reminders

Drop-off and **arrival** each day is at 8:10 AM; we encourage all students to take the bus.

In the event of a **delayed opening** due to inclement weather, drop-off and arrival would be delayed by 90-minutes. In such an occasion, the school start time is at 9:40 AM.

If you are driving your child to school, please do not drop your child off earlier than 7:50 AM. **Drop-off is done in the "drop-off lane"** located at the front parking lot. For the safety of your child, please do not release your child until you see staff present.

Dismissal for students taking the bus is at 2:30 PM each day. If you are picking your child up and not having him/her take the bus home, then **parent pickup** is at 2:20 PM at the double glass doors at the rear of the school. A note must be sent in for the Main Office if you are picking your child up from school. In the event of a **4-hour day**, dismissal is at 12:10 PM. Parent pickup is at 12:00 PM.

Visitors to the School: School safety is of utmost priority. Any person looking to visit the school during school hours is required to provide advance notice via the Passage Point System. Visitors who register will be required to ring the front bell, state their first and last name and their purpose for visiting, show proper ID, and obtain a visitor pass which is to be worn throughout the entire approved visit. Unexpected persons will not be permitted entry to the building.

Additional procedures and policies are located on the school and district website (The district website is www.mersnj.us)

On the First Day of School:

Teachers wait outside their classroom to greet students and to take attendance.

Staff is outside to assist all students as they get off the bus. Students in grades K and 1 are exited first and guided to their classroom.

*****Please be reminded buses may run late for arrival and pickup during the first week of school.**

Special Instruction

Once every six days (per the six-day rotation), students receive instruction in **art** and **music** from our art and music specialists. Students in grades 1-5 receive instruction from the **media specialist** once every six days. Every other six-day rotation, 1-5 students receive instruction from the school counselor and on the alternating six-day rotation, students in grades 1-5 receive instruction in their classrooms with the **technology** teacher. **Twice per six-day rotation**, students receive **physical education** instruction from our physical education teachers. Sneakers are required to be worn during P.E. The physical education teachers will also send out a newsletter when school starts regarding safety and additional procedures and guidelines. **Family Life instruction is built into the physical education teacher's program for students in grades 4 and 5.**

Additionally, students receive **health** and **character education** lessons from their classroom teacher. The school counselor will also be instructing students on **character education/anti-bullying** concepts during her meetings with classes.

Response to Intervention (RTI) services are available to eligible students in reading and mathematics. If you have concerns regarding your child's academic progress or social, emotional, or behavioral well-being, please do not hesitate to contact the school principal for guidance and support.

Important Websites and Links

Passage Point Visitor Management System (Register Your Visit as a Guest to CM)

<http://passagepoint.mersnj.us:2080/pp/wi1>

Genesis Parent Portal (Access Your Child's Placement, Report Card, Test Scores)

<https://parents.mersnj.us/genesis/parents?gohome=true>

Pay for It – Add money to your child's lunch account or check his/her balance.

<https://www.payforit.net>

Start With Hello Week Spirit Days

- *Monday, September 23rd: "No One Eats Alone" or Plays Alone" Day/Wear a Kindness T-Shirt, if you have one!*
- *Tuesday, September 24th: "Wear Green" Day*
- *Wednesday, September 25th: "Say Hello" Day*
- *Thursday, September 26th: "Be You" Day*
- *Friday, September 27th: #DynamiteDragon Day!*