



Clark Mills School
Manalapan, NJ
September/October 2020
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: Mrs. Michelle Totillo and Mrs. Ilysa Pugliese
732.786.2720

Principal: Mrs. Jayme Orlando
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Assistant Principal: Mrs. Jessica Gent
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School Counselor/Anti-Bullying Specialist: Mrs. Patty Cavanagh
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School Nurse: Mrs. Jackie Fellouris
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School Psychologist/CST: Mrs. Meagan Longo
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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 \$14 per family and provide you with constant communication from the PTO via the 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.

You can contact the Clark Mills PTO via email at ClarkmillsPTO@gmail.com. The PTO President is Mrs. Kim Fox Rosenblum.

The PTO has been working hard to come up with new, virtual activities this year. We are very fortunate to have such a dedicated PTO.

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. Melissa Bellafronte- Long Term Sub for Mrs. Ashley Trohalides/5th Grade
Mr. Nick Cullen/School Custodian
Mrs. Laura Igardeburu/ESL Teacher
Mrs. Jaclyn Klask/Reading Coach
Mrs. Amanda Menendez/Title I RTI Teacher
Mrs. Ilysa Pugliese – Secretary

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

For the 2020-2021 school year, specials will be conducted via a quinmester schedule. Students will have the same special subject every day for eight weeks before switching to a new special subject.

We are also following the A/B calendar for the Hybrid Program. Please refer to the A/B schedule that was sent home on the first day. It is also posted on the Clark Mills Website at www.mersnj.us/cm.

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.

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



Halloween at Clark Mills

This school year, our students and staff will continue to celebrate Halloween at Clark Mills. Since we are working on different schedules, different groups will dress up on different days.

- Thursday, October 29th
 - Hybrid Day B students will wear their costumes to school.
- Friday, October 30th
 - Hybrid Day A students & 100% Virtual will wear their costumes.

As in the past, students are to wear their costumes to school. However, students should NOT wear any costume-related masks, big shoes, or any other items that might obstruct their vision or ability to safely walk/board the buses. In addition, please do not send in toy weapons, such as swords or play guns as part of your child's costume.

PLEASE NOTE:

Please be advised that (even with costumes on), in-school students are required to wear face masks throughout the school day which are required as part of the reopening plan and the executive order for schools.

While we will not be able to celebrate with the traditional class parties conducted in the past, teachers will be encouraged to incorporate Halloween-related activities that adhere to social distancing regulations which ensure that the health and safety of our students is prioritized. In addition, all classrooms will be asked to take pictures of their students who can be photographed per the Media Release. We encourage parents of 100% virtual students to email us pictures as well. We will compile these photographs into a special presentation which we will share with you in early November.

Please also be advised that food items are never permitted to be distributed to students by staff or other students. Many of our students, in previous years, have enjoyed handing out goodie bags with non-edible items to their classmates; however, to ensure the health and safety of all persons due to current circumstances, such cannot be distributed at all this year. We hope to be able to encourage this practice again when regulations change.

Thank you in advance for supporting our efforts to ensure that students and staff still have the opportunity to celebrate Halloween in a safe manner. We look forward to seeing those who wish to participate all dressed up in their selected costumes!!



A Year of Kindness at CM

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

Once a month on selected Mondays (the list of dates is listed 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 selling a **#chooseKIND** t-shirt and spiritwear along with the PTO spirit wear sale, 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 school wide 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, October 5th
Monday, November 2nd
Tuesday, December 1st
Monday, January 4th
Monday, February 1st
Monday, March 1st
Monday, April 12th
Monday, May 3rd
Monday, June 7th
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 through 10/3. Shirts are available now for purchase through the PTO.

Purchase online at:
<http://www.scrappydappydoo.com>

SEL/Character Ed Corner

This year, we will continue the following SEL supports and motivators within our school community.

1. Fostering a #DynamiteDragon Culture. **We encourage you to share pictures of your remote learners. You can email Mrs. Orlando at jorlando@mernj.us.**
2. Hallway "street" signs will guide the way to "learning and growing day-by-day."
3. Daily morning Announcements will continue to focus on character education.
4. Daily mini-lessons/modified morning meetings to follow-up to morning announcements and reinforce character education.
5. Home-school communication regarding the morning messages will help to bridge what is learned in school with home.
6. Positive behavior classroom management systems will be fostered in the remote and in-school settings.
7. Fostering A #ChooseKind Mindset through the "Year of Kindness" Activity
8. Teachers will continue to build in sensory, brain breaks in the physical and remote classrooms.

We are so proud of our outstanding staff and students for being recognized as a 2020 National Blue Ribbon School! We will be hosting a spirit day soon to celebrate this amazing achievement! #CMDRAGONSRULE!



Reminders

Drop-off and **arrival** each day is normally 8:10AM. However, we are allowing parents to begin to line up in the parent drop –off lane at 8:00AM due to the number of parent drop-offs this year due to Covid-19.

Drop off is done in the “Drop-off lane” located in the front parking lot. For the safety of your child, please do not release him/her until you see staff present. In addition, please make sure your child is wearing a mask before he/she exits the car.

Dismissal for hybrid students taking the bus is at 12:10 PM each day. If you are picking your child up and not having him/her take the bus home, then **parent pickup** is at 12:00 PM at the gym door 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.

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, and show proper ID. Please note due to Covid-19, we will not be allowing visitors in the building at this time. A staff member will bring your child outside to you if he/she needs to be released early.

Additional procedures and policies are located on the school and district websites. (The district website is www.mersnj.us). Many of these policies were part of your required reading on the Genesis Parent Portal prior to receiving teacher assignments.



Important Dates to Remember

PTO Fall Mums Sale pick-up in the parking lot

Thursday, October 1st

Wear Pink for Lee National Denim Day

Friday, October 2nd

Week of Respect Week (See spirit days at the bottom of the page)

October 5th-October 9th

Columbus Day- Schools closed for teacher in-service

Monday, October 12th

PTO Blaze pizza “take out” night

Thursday, October 15th

Clark Mills Spirit Day- wear spirit wear or school colors

Friday, October 16th

Student of the Month Recognition

Tuesday, October 20th & Wednesday, October 21st

Baseball Shirt Day- Wear a shirt to recognize your favorite team

Friday, October 23rd

PTO Virtual Book Fair

October 27th-October 29th

End of Quinmester 1 for special subject- October 29th

BNL Picture Days for Clark Mills

The Clark Mills picture days will take place on November 11th and November 12th. More information will be sent out closer to the date.

Students who physically attend school during the Hybrid Model will have their individual pictures taken during their in-school day following social distancing parameters and safety guidelines. Group pictures will not be taken this year.

Clark Mills students who attend the 100% virtual program will have their pictures taken in the CM gym on November 11th between 12:45-2:30. A letter and Sign-Up Genius will be sent out soon with more information and a link to sign up for a time.

Week of Respect Week Spirit Days

- *Monday, October 5th: Sock it to Bullying- Wear decorative socks.*
- *Tuesday, October 6th: Be on the Right Team, support positive choices. Wear a team jersey or shirt.*
- *Wednesday, October 7th: Be an Upstanding Superhero. Dress like a super hero.*
- *Thursday, October 8th: Keep Movin’ and groovin’ with great choices- wear tye dye*
- *Friday, October 8th: Dreaming of a kind and respectful world! Wear PJs*