

# Linden Public Schools



## *ELEMENTARY SCHOOL* Student/Parent/Teacher HANDBOOK

2024-2025

**LINDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS LINDEN, NJ**

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## **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

The information below is from the United States Department of Education and serves as notification regarding parental rights and privacy with student educational records.

### **Notification of Rights under FERPA for Elementary and Secondary Schools**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. These rights are:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the School Principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write the School Principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using its own employees or officials (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

[Optional] Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. [Note: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]

(4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the *School District* to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-5920

## QUICK PHONE REFERENCE

<b>Central Administration</b>		
Superintendent	Atiya Y. Perkins	908-486-2800 x8008
Assistant Superintendent for Academics	David Walker	908-486-2800 x8045
Assistant Superintendent for Support	Annabell Louis	908-486-2800 x8009
Business Administrator	John Serapiglia	908-486-2800 x8014
<b>Directors</b>		
Elementary Language Arts, Federal Programs & Early Childhood	Jennifer Smith	908-486-2800 x8027
Human Resources	Kayla Lott, Ed.D.	908-486-2800 x8040
Mathematics	Richard Molinaro	908-486-2800 x8455
Physical Education, Health, Athletics, Safety, and Medical Personnel	Michael Firestone	908-486-7085 x8562
Special Education	Marie Stefanick, Ed.D.	908-587-3285 x8680
Multi Language Learners	Danie Orelien	908-486-2800 x8029
Technology	Peter Ormon	908-587-3263 x8861
<b>Supervisors</b>		
Assessment and Data	Dariusz Kondratowicz	908-486-2800 x8039
Before & After Care	Frances Czylek	908-486-2800 x8410
Central Registration	Rokhsana Suggs	908-486-2800 x8699
Early Childhood	Jennifer Dougherty Nicole Frankonis	908-486-2668 x8163
ESL/Bilingual & World Languages	Stephanie Ross	908-486-2800 x8052
Fine & Performing Arts/Gifted & Talented	Matthew Lorenzetti	908-486-2800 x8026
Instructional Technology	Joseph Scaldino	908-486-2800 x8865
Maintenance	Jason Andersen	908-486-2800 x8552
Physical Education, Health and Medical Personnel	Barbara Brady	908-486-2800
Science	Cynthia Apalinski	908-486-2212 x8874
Social Studies/Business	Gregory Grasso	908-486-2800 x8035
Student Services/Guidance	Ryan Devaney	908-486-2212 x8025
<b>Support</b>		
Accounting	Elizabeth Nowak	908-486-2800 x8021
Transportation Coordinator	Lisa Ormon	908-486-2800 x8033

<b>School No. 1</b>	908-486-2668		<b>School No. 2</b>	908-862-3287
<b>Principal</b>	Esmeralda Cabrera Ed.D.		<b>Principal</b>	Peter Fingerlin
<b>Vice Principal</b>	TBD		<b>Vice Principal</b>	Lizzie Lemes
<b>School No. 4</b>	908-486-3286		<b>School No. 5</b>	908-486-2666
<b>Principal</b>	Suzanne Olivero, Ed.D.		<b>Principal</b>	Rachelle Crawley
<b>Vice Principal</b>	Rosalia Kolibas			
<b>School No. 6</b>	908-862-3003		<b>School No. 8</b>	908-862-4397
<b>Principal</b>	Michael Walters		<b>Principal</b>	Michelle Rodriguez
<b>School No. 9</b>	908-486-5164		<b>School No. 10</b>	908-486-2043
<b>Principal</b>	Angela Principato		<b>Principal</b>	Wayne Happel

## **LINDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

### **LINDEN, NJ**

#### **DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Linden Public School District is to promote distinction through the infinite resource that is Linden’s diversity, combined with our profound commitment to instructional excellence, so that each and every student achieve their maximum potential in an engaging, inspiring, and challenging learning environment.

#### **DISTRICT VISION STATEMENT**

The Linden Public School District is committed to developing respect for diversity, excellence in education, and a commitment to service, in order to promote global citizenships and ensure personal success for all students.

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## **STUDENT POLICIES, RULES AND PROCEDURES**

The Linden School District has established the following student rules and regulations for the safety and protection of students and to ensure a thorough and efficient education. These rules and regulations are set forth to inform parents and students of the expected behavior of students attending all Linden Elementary Schools.

### **APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR**

1. Be prepared for class.
2. Complete all class work and homework.
3. Use class time properly.
4. Take home and return necessary forms.
5. Follow rules and regulations.
6. Take care of and return all textbooks, library books and other school-owned materials loaned to them.
7. Follow directions given by teachers and staff.
8. Demonstrate respect for self, others and the environment.

### **ATTENDANCE**

#### **Policy**

The Board of Education believes that the regular attendance of students in each class and in school in general is critical to its educational mission. Continuity of instruction is an essential element in student performance and allows students the greatest opportunity to succeed at meeting the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

#### **Attendance Regulations**

A strict attendance policy is in effect throughout the Linden Public Schools. In the elementary grades, the principal and the nurse investigate all absences from the first occurrence, by telephone contact, and/or home visit. Parents are urged to always encourage regular attendance except during periods of genuine illness. A doctor's note or note from the parent stating the reason for absence is required within five days of the child's absence. Parents/guardians are responsible for notifying the school early in the day when a child will be absent and for informing the school of the reason for the absence. At the end of each trimester, parents will receive a letter should the total number of absences exceed that of a typical student.

The Board of Education considers the following as just cause for an excused absence:

1. The student's illness (documentation from a doctor is required).
2. Requirements of a student's individual health care plan.
3. A death or critical illness in the student's immediate family, or others with permission of the Principal.



4. Quarantine.
5. Observance of the student's religion on a day approved for that purpose by the State Board of Education.
6. The student's suspension from school.
7. Requirements of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).
8. Alternate short- or long-term accommodations for students with disabilities.
9. The student's required attendance in court.
10. Necessary and unavoidable medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled at a time other than the school day.
11. Such good cause as may be acceptable to the Principal.

**Unexcused absence** is a student's absence for all or part of a school day for any reason other than those listed above.

The state-mandated school year is 180 days. A pupil must be in attendance for 162 or more school days in order to be considered to have successfully completed the instructional program requirements of the grade to which he/she is assigned.

A waiver of these attendance requirements may be granted for good cause by the school principal upon recommendation of a review committee, appointed by him/her, and consisting of representative staff, including pupil service personnel and classroom teachers. In recommending the granting of a waiver of this attendance requirement, the review committee shall consider the nature and causes of all absences rather than only those in excess of the 18 days. Documentation of the nature and causes of these absences shall be the responsibility of the pupil and parent/guardian.

Unexcused absences due to travel/vacation will result in the pupil being dropped from the register if the time period of absence is more than five consecutive days. Pupils will need to be re-registered at Central Registration to return to school.

### **Persistent Absences**

If a pattern of unexcused absences arises consisting of up to four absences, the principal shall schedule a meeting with the parents/guardians. The same action for nine unexcused absences as well for more than 10 cumulative unexcused absences. The purpose of this meeting shall be to develop an action plan to assist the student to return to school and maintain regular attendance. The action plan shall be developed by the "Attendance Review Team" in coordination with the parent/guardian. This team may include the classroom teacher, school nurse, guidance counselor, principal or other relevant staff. This applies to all students in pre-kindergarten through high school.

Excessive unexcused absences will warrant referral to the district Attendance Officer.

\*The principal cannot approve absences for vacations during the academic year\*

### **Excessive Absences**

Absences for any reason (except for school-sponsored activities administratively approved and excused absences for religious holidays) that exceed any of the following limits may result in **FAILURE** or **RETENTION** for the year.

1. Eighteen (18) days in a school year.
2. Nine (9) days in a half-year.

\*Students must be present for at least 4 hours to receive credit for the day\*

### **Leaving Early**

Students are expected to remain in school for the duration of the school day, unless there is a valid, unavoidable reason to cause otherwise. In the event the student is ill or needs to attend an appointment, the expectation is that this would not be on a regular basis. Parents are asked to make doctor appointments and all other appointments outside of the school day.

Parents/Guardians whose children are chronically dismissed early will face the same consequences as children whose attendance exceeds the district's requirements. Such cases will be referred to the Schools' Attendance Review Team/District Attendance Office.

### **Late Arrival (Tardy)**

Children cannot be tardy to school without a valid excuse, and it is the parent/guardian responsibility to get them to school on time. Tardiness is monitored by the school, addressed in district policy, and noted on the report card for each trimester. Your help and cooperation in improving your child's timely arrival to school is appreciated.

Timely arrival to school is expected. Students who arrive after the start time must be walked in to school by their parent and receive a late slip. At the end of each trimester parents will receive a letter should the total number of tardies exceed that of a typical student.

Parents/Guardians whose children are chronically late will face the same consequences as children whose attendance exceeds the district's requirements. Such cases will be referred to the Schools' Attendance Review Team/District Attendance Office.

### **Out of District Placements**

The district assures that each receiving school is required to report to the sending district each student with five or more cumulative unexcused absences (N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(c)i).

The district assures that for each student with five or more cumulative unexcused absences reported by the receiving school, it follows the policies and procedures pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a) and the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6 (a)4ii through iv and (b).

### **BUS RULES**

If you have a question or problem concerning the transportation of your child/children to and from school, contact the school Principal.

For the safety and well-being of all passengers, students will be required to:

1. Show respect for the driver, aide and fellow students at all times.
2. Keep the bus clean.
3. Enter and leave the bus in turn.
4. Refrain from pushing or crowding, using abusive language, or fighting on or before entering the bus.
5. Use safety belt if provided and stay seated until discharged.

The principal has the authority to exclude students from the bus for disciplinary reasons. It becomes the parent's responsibility to provide transportation to and from school if the student(s) is excluded from the bus.

### **Consequences of Broken Bus Rules**

First Offense: Warning to student. (Note: In case of fighting, a suspension may occur immediately.) Infraction noted in writing. Student is reported to school Principal.

Second Offense: Student will be excluded from the bus for THREE (3) school days. A written notification will be sent home.

Third Offense: The student will be excluded from the bus for a period of FIVE (5) school days. Absence from school during this period will be considered truancy. Immediate notification to the Superintendent of Schools shall follow.

Fourth Offense: The student will be excluded from the bus for a period of TEN (10) school days. Absence from school during this period will be considered truancy. Any further infractions will be subject to an additional exclusion of thirty (30) school days and may result in permanent removal from the bus. Notification will be made to the Superintendent of Schools.

### **CAFETERIA BILLING**

Students who do not have money for lunch or a lunch from home will be served a lunch but are expected to make payment the next day.

The School Food Service Program limits charges. If at any time your student has an unpaid balance on account, your child will not be able to purchase a la carte items when available. Students will be permitted to charge up to \$50.00 for meals before further action is taken. Repeated abuse of this procedure will result in a parental notification of the money that is owed to the cafeteria.

#### **Student Price List**

Elementary Paid Breakfast	\$1.55
Milk- pint	\$1.00
Elementary Paid Lunch	\$3.00

### **CAFETERIA/PLAYGROUND PROCEDURES/RULES**

Lunchtime should be a time when students are allowed to relax and unwind from a morning of academic learning. During nice days, before or after completing their lunch, students will be permitted to play on the playground. For safety reasons, no type of rough play will be

permitted. Proper decorum must be followed at all times. Any student misbehaving will be reprimanded, and disciplinary actions may be taken as listed in the student code of conduct.

Student conduct in the cafeteria and playground is based on courtesy, safety, cleanliness and respect.

### **Cafeteria Rules**

1. Speak quietly and respectfully.
2. Do not bang chairs.
3. Follow directions the first time they are given.
4. When waiting in line to be served, keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.
5. Do not throw food or objects.
6. Put all trash into the proper cans.
7. No fighting, name-calling, running or teasing.

### **Playground Rules**

1. Follow directions the first time they are given.
2. Stay in assigned areas.
3. No chasing each other.
4. No fighting. (This includes “play fighting.”)
5. No name-calling or teasing.
6. Use playground equipment properly.
7. Keep hands and feet to yourself.

### **CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

Schools are the only places in which children are seen daily during periods of time by professionals trained to observe their appearance and behavior. Not only does the school setting offer a continuum of time for observation, it offers the unique opportunity to compare and contrast behaviors which are unusual with those which are not unusual.

The Linden Board of Education believes that the physical and mental well-being of all children in its charge must be maintained as a prerequisite to achievement through the formal education process. The school district will cooperate with the New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P) in identifying and reporting all suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

### **CHILD STUDY TEAM SERVICES**

Students experiencing educational, emotional or adjustment problems may be referred to the school’s Intervention and Referral Services Team. This team is composed of the principal, the school social worker, teachers and the school nurse. The aim of the I&RS Team is to provide the classroom teacher with strategies in order to help the student meet with success.

If these interventions are not successful, the student may be referred to the Child Study

Team. The Child Study Team is composed of the school psychologist, social worker and the learning disabilities teacher-consultant. It may also include the speech teacher and other specialists. Evaluation by the CST may result in providing the student with a special education program.

Director of Special Education – Marie Stefanick, Ed.D. (908) 587-3285

### **CLASSROOM PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS**

The assignment of students in homerooms is a serious professional task. Prior classroom teachers, school support staff, and school administration often share the responsibility in determining student placement and ensuring class balance for the coming school year. In Linden Elementary Schools, classes are configured heterogeneously (varied academic abilities). Also taken into consideration are a myriad of factors such as gender and racial parity, the specific social and emotional characteristics of each student and prior histories of student social interaction and behavior. Familial relationships may also be a consideration. In addition, there are situations in which school personnel take into careful consideration the pairing of children with teachers whose teaching styles and personalities create the most appropriate learning environment for that child.

Parental requests disrupt classroom alignment and are not accepted as a rule. Placement of children in classes based upon perceived teacher personality, perceived teacher ability, sibling experiences and a child's or parent's personal desire for a particular teacher will not be considered. Student and parent friendships are also not appropriate considerations in determining class placement.

There are, however, situations and circumstances in which parental input and participation in the selection of a child's teacher is helpful and most welcomed. On occasion, there may be social/emotional needs of which the school may be unaware that require specific accommodations. In these cases, a parent or guardian is required to submit his or her concerns in writing along with supporting documentation directly to the building principal (may include physician notes, previous 504 plans, court documentation, etc.). The principal or his/her designee will review the request and documentation and establish a follow-up in school conference with the parent/guardian.

Any decisions will be made in the best interest of the students' educational and social/emotional well-being as well as the needs of the school.

A variety of academic and social issues may evolve during the school year. It is the policy of the Linden School System to maintain open lines of communication between home and school. Any issue for which a request is being made to change classes during the school year will **not** be considered unless there has been an attempt to remediate the issue between the home and the teacher and/or school. Classroom changes require serious thought and consultation between parents and a variety of appropriate school personnel. Should such a perceived issue arise a parent/guardian is required to submit his or her concerns in writing along with any supporting documentation to the building principal. Documentation should include any previous communications with the classroom teacher, written notes, progress reports, report cards, legal documents, and any other prior steps to attempt to resolve said issues. The principal and or his/her designee will review this

request and make all efforts to remediate the problem. This will include a mandatory parental conference with the principal and classroom teacher and parent/guardian.

Any decisions will be made in the best interest of the students' educational and social/emotional well-being as well as the needs of the school.

## **CLOSING OF SCHOOLS & DELAYED OPENINGS**

### **Emergency Contact Information**

In order to notify parents and guardians regarding emergency situations or important announcements, the district will utilize the district app, mass notification and phone system. Apptegy will allow the district to record a message and send it to all home, cellular and work telephone numbers, as well as email addresses, we have on file. The system is an important tool to allow the district to communicate thoroughly and completely when necessary. *Please be sure that your child's school has the most up-to-date contact information on file so that you can be reached as soon as possible.*

School closings and delayed openings caused by severe weather conditions are announced on radio station: NJ 101.5 FM and TV Stations WCBS-2, WNBC-4, WNYW-5, WABC-7, FiOS 1 News, and News 12 New Jersey.

When it is determined that schools will have delayed openings for an emergency or due to inclement weather, all schedules, including all bus pick-ups, will be delayed two (2) hours. Dismissals will remain the same as on a normal school day. The Superintendent of Schools may decide to close for the day if the weather conditions deteriorate after a delayed opening has been announced.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

The elementary schools all have programs which offer behavioral supports that promote positive student development and the students' abilities to fulfill the behavioral expectations established by the district. Programs aimed at character education and positive reinforcement are utilized. The schools practice positive reinforcement for good conduct, supportive interventions and referral services, and the remediation of the problem behavior, takes into account the behavior's nature, student's developmental ages, and students' histories of problematic behaviors.

It is the responsibility of all students to know and obey the rules and regulations as set forth in the student handbook. Students who violate any of the established rules will be held accountable for their actions by the classroom teacher, vice principal, and principal. The following disciplinary actions may be taken:

1. Time out
2. Recess action\*
3. Removal from activities
4. Out-of-school suspension

All offenses will be handled on an individual basis according to the severity of the offense.

In addition, students may be subject to the disciplinary action of the local district as set forth by the local district policy, rules and regulations and/or by state law.

The following procedure will be followed in the implementation of discipline procedures:

1. Violations for disciplinary action must be referred to the principal as soon as possible, accompanied by Discipline Referral Form from staff member.
2. A building administrator with a description of the alleged misconduct will confront the student. The student will be given the opportunity to present his/her side of the story.
3. An administrative determination will be made on the basis of the information available.

This procedure may result in disciplinary action. If suspension is deemed necessary, the student and parent or guardian and the Superintendent will be informed directly of this decision. In addition, a suspension notice shall be mailed to the parent/guardian.

\*Recess actions will predominantly involve the practice of restorative justice activities during the recess period.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

Below is a list of behaviors that are considered severe infractions of school rules and their consequences:

<b>Violation</b>	<b>First Offense</b>	<b>Second Offense</b>	<b>Third Offense</b>
<b>Assault</b> Any action that places students or staff in danger of physical harm.	5 days out-of-school suspension/report to the Superintendent, who will determine when student returns.	Same as first	Same as first
<b>Continued and willful disobedience</b>	1 day out-of-school suspension	2 days out-of-school suspension; parent conference	3 days out-of-school suspension; possible removal from extra-curricular activities
<b>Disrespect</b>	1 day loss of recess; verbal reprimand; conference with Principal	2 days loss of recess; parent conference	1 day out-of-school suspension; possible loss of extracurricular activities
<b>Disruptive/improper behavior</b> Behavior that disrupts classroom work, school activities or school functions	1 day loss of recess; conference with Principal	2 days loss of recess; parent conference with Principal	Parent conference with Principal; possible removal from extracurricular activities
<b>Wearing prohibited items</b>	Parent contact	Parent contact	Parent contact
<b>Fighting</b> Mutual engagement in a physical confrontation that may result in bodily injury to either party (this may include “play fighting”)	1 day out-of-school suspension (2 or 3 days depending on severity of fight)	3 days of out-of-school suspension	4 days of out-of-school suspension (I&RS or CST referral)
<b>Flagrant behavior – 4<sup>th</sup> occurrence of any infraction</b>	2 days out-of-school suspension and Counseling	3 days out-of-school suspension and counseling	4 days out-of-school suspension
<b>Forgery</b>	1 day loss of recess	2 days loss of recess; parent conference	1 day out-of-school suspension; parent conference
<b>Harassment, intimidation, Bullying</b>	Consequences pending outcome of HIB investigation and review of incident	Same as first	Same as first



<b>Illegal activation of fire alarm</b>	Out-of-school suspension 2 days, I&RS referral, police complaint	Out-of-school suspension 4+ days, I&RS referral, police complaint	Out-of-school suspension 5+ days, I&RS referral, police complaint, possible Expulsion
<b>Indecent exposure</b>	Age appropriate consequences pending review of incident; parent conference	Age appropriate consequences pending review of incident; parent conference	Age appropriate consequences pending review of incident; referral to I&RS and/or CST
<b>Leaving class without permission</b>	1 day loss of recess	2 days loss of recess	1 day out-of-school suspension
<b>Leaving school or school grounds without Permission</b>	Immediate police notification; parent conference; 1 day of out-of-school suspension	Immediate police notification; parent conference; 2 days of out-of-school suspension; I&RS referral	Immediate police notification; parent conference; 3 days of out-of-school suspension
<b>Misuse of internet/school issued electronic devices</b>	1 day loss of recess and privileges to use device; parent contact	2 days loss of recess and privileges to use device for 3 days; parent contact	2 days loss of recess and loss of privileges to use device for 5 days; parent contact
<b>Obscenities, abusive language or gestures</b>	2 days loss of recess; parent conference	1 day removal from extracurricular activities; parent conference	2 days out-of-school suspension; parent conference
<b>Obscenities, abusive language or gestures toward staff</b>	1 day out-of-school suspension	3 days out-of-school suspension	4 days out-of-school suspension; referral to I&RS, CST; possible removal from extra-curricular activities
<b>Possession of controlled dangerous substances</b>  (aligned with Board Policy 5530)	2 days out-of-school suspension; parent conference; police notification	3 days out-of-school suspension; police notification	Possible expulsion hearing in addition to consequences of second offense
<b>*Possession of or use of weapon or realistic facsimile defined by N.J.S.A. 2c:39-1</b>	3-5 days out-of-school suspension, police notification, CST, possible expulsion	5 days out-of-school suspension; police notification, CST	5 days out-of-school suspension; police notification, CST, possible expulsion hearing

<b>Possession of obvious toy Weapon</b>	2 days loss of recess; counseling; parent conference	1 day out-of- school suspension, police notification; parent conference	3 days out-of-school suspension, police notification; referral to I&RS, CST
<b>Possession of and/or use of pepper spray</b>	3 days out-of-school suspension, police notification, parent conference	4 days out-of-school suspension, police notification, parent conference	5 days out-of-school suspension, police notification, parent conference
<b>Sexual Harassment: verbal/physical violation of any individual's well-being, including "pantsing"</b>	3-4 days out-of-school suspension, counseling	3-5 days out-of-school suspension; I&RS and/or CST referral; police notification	5+ days out-of-school suspension; I&RS and/or CST referral; police complaint; possible expulsion
<b>Theft Taking or attempting to take personal property or money from another pupil or teacher</b>	Parent conference; 1 day out-of-school suspension	Parent conference; 3 days out-of- school suspension	Parent conference; I&RS referral; 4 days out-of-school suspension
<b>Threat- Depending on severity</b>	1-3 days out-of-school suspension; police notification; possible expulsion hearing; counseling; parent conference	Same as first; I&RS and/or CST referral	5 days out-of-school suspension; I&RS; and/or CST referral; possible expulsion hearing
<b>Truancy – application of attendance policy</b>	Referral to attendance officer	Referral to attendance officer, DCP&P and Municipal Court	Same as first
<b>**Unauthorized/improper use of electronic devices (cellphones, MP3 players, and other devices)</b>	Principal will confiscate device and return to parents	Parent notification; 1 day loss of recess; Principal will confiscate device	Parent notification; 2 days loss of recess; Principal will confiscate device
<b>Unsafe physical actions: During recess, rough playing: e.g. throwing objects, pushing, etc.</b>	1 day loss of recess	2 days loss of recess; parent conference	2 days out-of-school Suspension
<b>Vandalism Willfully causing or attempting to cause damage to school property.</b>	Conference with Principal; 1-2 days loss of recess depending on severity; possible restitution	Conference with Principal; 2 days out-of- school suspension; possible restitution	Conference with Principal; 3 days out-of-school suspension; possible restitution

**\*Possession or use of any weapon defined by NJSA 2C:39-1 will result in five days out-of-school suspension, police notification and a possible expulsion hearing.**

**\*\* Toys and electronic devices are discouraged from being brought to school. Schools shall assume no responsibility for items that are lost or stolen. It is understood, however, the necessity some parents may have to remain in contact with their child via cellphone. Cellphones are to be powered off and placed in book bags/purses upon entry into school and are to remain out of sight during the school day. Should they be taken out, they will be confiscated. The only appropriate method for emergency contact with the student during the school hours is to call the main office. No calls will be accepted by students during school hours via cellphone.**

**All infractions require parental notification.**

While every effort is made to be fair, firm and consistent, the principal may modify or alter the recommended outcomes for infractions of school rules depending on extenuating circumstances. In each case, parents, teachers, and the student(s) will be offered an explanation.

In accordance with P.L. 2016, Chapter 45, all attempts will be made to proactively address students in preschool through Grade 2 through programs and behavioral supports and interventions rather than suspension, unless the conduct is of violent or sexual nature.

Most out-of-school suspensions are an indication that the severity of the student's behavior requires parental involvement, responsibility, and cooperation to affect a change in the student's behavior.

The district assures that physical restraint and seclusion techniques on students with disabilities are only used in an emergency in which the student is exhibiting behavior that places the student or others in immediate physical danger in accordance with the provisions at N.J.S.A. 18A:46-13.4 et seq.

### **DRUGS, ALCOHOL, WEAPONS AND FIREARMS**

The possession, use, distribution, or sale of drugs, alcohol, weapons, and/or firearms on school district property or in a 1,000-foot Drug-Free School Zone is illegal and shall be cause for automatic suspension of the student(s) until reinstatement by the Board of Education. The Board of Education may expel a student for violations in this area. Law enforcement will be contacted if offense occurs.

### **DRESS CODE/STUDENT DRESS**

The Board of Education, supported by court rulings, upholds its right to impose student dress codes that prohibit immodest or suggestive clothing, dress that would create a disturbance or distraction, and clothing that is unsanitary or creates a health hazard. Students are prohibited from wearing dress that contains obscenities or leaves the student scantily clad. Clothing that conveys messages that are obscene, vulgar or refer to alcohol or illegal substances are prohibited. Clothing that contains messages of hate and violence is also prohibited. This restriction on student speech will be imposed only where there is a well-founded expectation of disruption to the educational process or on the legitimate rights of other students or staff.

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:11-9, the Board of Education prohibits students from wearing, while on school property, any type of clothing, apparel or accessory that indicates that the student has membership in, or affiliation with, any gang associated with criminal activities.

As supported in N.J.S.A. 18A:11-7 and N.J.S.A. 18A:11-8, the Board of Education confirms its desire to authorize uniform school dress for students. The Linden Board of Education supports this policy for the following reasons:

1. To instill discipline and create a positive educational atmosphere.
2. To help with issues of peer pressure.
3. To increase classroom concentration.
4. To promote a sense of identity and improve security.
5. To increase school spirit and school unity.
6. To help families with economic issues regarding costs.
7. To enhance community image.
8. To assist students in preparing for the work world.

The Linden Board of Education will not adopt policies regarding uniform student dress in order to regulate appearance or to establish a sense of good taste. Uniform student dress policies will not interfere with a student's right to religious expression or other rights of expression.

Students may not wear:

1. Short shorts, shorts or skirts with unfinished hems, hats, sports headbands, sunglasses, ski goggles, and bandanas.
2. Midriff, tube tops, strapless tops/dresses, halter-tops, tank-tops, camisoles, see-through articles, or articles that expose cleavage or stomach.
3. Garments that reveal under garments or buttocks, pajama pants, ripped jeans, pants or sweatpants with graphics or writing across the back, or any pants with holes.
4. Clothing and/or accessories that have any associations with illegal substances, violence, or gangs.
5. Clothing that is offensive to any nationality, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
6. Clothing that has any obscene writing or promotes suggestive, indecent, or unacceptable school behavior whether stated or implied.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to enforce school regulations prohibiting student dress and grooming practices which:

1. Present a hazard to the health or safety of the student or to others in school.
2. Materially interfere with schoolwork, create disorder, or disrupt the educational program.
3. Cause excessive wear or damage to school property.
4. Prevent the student from achieving his or her own educational objectives because of blocked vision or restricted movement.

Rubber-soled shoes are recommended for students participating in physical education and recess. Furthermore, students may not wear Crocs, flip flops, slides or sandals without a back.

### **EARLY DISMISSALS**

When it is determined that schools will have an early dismissal, for any emergency or due to inclement weather, the procedure is as follows:

1. Parents will be notified via the Blackboard Connect phone and email system.
2. Students will be dismissed based on the early dismissal time schedule listed below.

<b>Without Lunch Served</b>			<b>With Lunch Served</b>		
School 1	PreK-5	12:25	School 1	PreK-5	12:55
School 2	PreK-5	12:40	School 2	PreK-5	1:10
School 4	PreK-5	12:25	School 4	PreK-5	12:55
School 5	PreK-5	12:25	School 5	PreK-5	12:55
School 6	PreK-5	12:25	School 6	PreK-5	12:55
School 8	PreK-5	12:25	School 8	PreK-5	12:55
School 9	PreK-5	12:45	School 9	PreK-5	1:15
School 10	PreK-5	12:45	School 10	PreK-5	1:15

### **EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

Each parent/guardian is required to **COMPLETELY** fill out the emergency contact form for each child. Valid phone numbers are also necessary in order for you to receive important school emergency messages from our district’s automated notification system. Please list reliable adults as alternate contact people in case you cannot be reached. This person should be someone who has a way to pick up your child from school in an emergency. **Your child will not be released to anyone whose name is not listed on the emergency card.**

Please notify the school immediately if there is any change in the information listed.

### **FIRE DRILLS**

Fire drills are held at irregular intervals throughout the school year. Remember these basic rules during fire drills:

1. Move quickly and quietly to an exit.
2. If in the lavatory or hallway, one should exit the building by the closest door and then report to the first member of the school staff he/she sees.
3. Last one out of exit closes the door.
4. All persons (service workers, visitors, parents, etc.) must vacate the building through the nearest exit immediately upon hearing the fire alarm.

## **FOOD/ DRINKS**

Food and drinks including chips, gum, candy, etc., are not allowed in the classroom while school is in session. Bottled water is allowed. A party situation is the only exception to this rule. Permission for parties must be obtained from the Principal/Vice Principal. See District-wide Wellness Policy regulations, page 26 for more information.

## **FREE BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAM**

A **new** Free and Reduced lunch application for the 2024-2025 school year must be submitted and processed between approximately August 10, 2024 and October 18, 2024, in order to determine if students are eligible for benefits that begin for the FY 2024-2025 school year. An eligibility notification letter informing students of their status (**Free or Denied**) will be mailed within five (5) school days of submission. Please submit only one application per household.

If you receive a **Direct Certification letter** before the start of the school year, you do not have to submit an application for the students listed on the letter. They automatically receive benefits. Free lunch applications received after October 18, 2024, can take up to ten (10) days to process. Benefits will not begin until an eligibility notification letter is received. You are responsible for payment of lunches during this period. Benefits will not begin until an eligibility notification letter is received.

**\*\*IN ORDER TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR FREE MEAL BENEFITS YOU MUST REAPPLY EVERY YEAR\*\***

## **GANG ACTIVITY AND GANG PARAPHERNALIA**

Gang-related activity is strictly prohibited in all school buildings, on school transportation, and during school extracurricular events. Students are prohibited from wearing gang-related paraphernalia and other symbols of gang membership. This includes symbols that communicate hate and violence against any person and/or groups, whether worn on the body or through graffiti that defaces school buildings or property.

## **GENESIS PARENT PORTAL**

The Genesis Parent Portal is a service that is offered to parents that allows them to view their children's records via the Internet. At the elementary level, parents of students in kindergarten through Grade 5 can view their child's progress report, report card, and attendance. To sign up, contact the school to ensure that your email is properly entered into the system. Once in the system, you will receive an email with login instructions and a temporary password.

## **GRADING**

A weighted grading system is utilized in the elementary schools. Class assignments will account for 70%, while assessments (tests) will account for 30% of the final grade. The purpose of this reporting system is to provide parents, teachers, and students with more accurate information about students' progress toward meeting grade level expectations in all subject areas. Report cards can be viewed after the end of each trimester through Genesis. If you have an email address on file, you will be sent information on how to access the portal along with a unique password. If you do not receive this information or cannot access the portal, please contact the school.

### **Grading Scale:**

<b>100-90</b>	<b>A</b>
<b>90-80</b>	<b>B</b>
<b>79-70</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>69-60</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>59 and below</b>	<b>F</b>

## **HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING**

The Board of Education expects all pupils to treat each other with civility and respect and not to engage in behavior that is disruptive or violent. This type of behavior interferes with a pupil's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its pupils in a safe environment. Therefore, the school district will not tolerate acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying. "Harassment, intimidation or bullying" is defined as any gesture; any written, verbal or physical act; or any electronic communication that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race; color; religion; gender; a mental, physical or sensory disability; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; national origin or ancestry; power imbalance; or by any other distinguishing characteristic that takes place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored function or on a school bus and that:

1. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of harming a pupil or damaging the pupil's property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property.

or

2. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any pupil or group of pupils in such a way as to cause substantial interference with the orderly operation of the school.

"Electronic communication" means a communication that is transmitted by means of an electronic device, including but not limited to a telephone, cellular phone, computer or pager, that takes place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored function or on a school bus

**Refer to Linden Board of Education Policy 5131.1 on the district website for the complete policy regarding Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying or a copy can be obtained from the main office.**

## **HEALTH INSURANCE**

Students who are not covered by health insurance are eligible for either free or low-cost coverage through the NJ Family Care Program.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

In order to ensure an educational environment that is safe, comfortable and conducive to learning, your assistance is necessary.

1. Illegal parking in bus zones, handicapped areas, faculty parking areas and on yellow curbing is not permitted. Please do not double park. **TRAFFIC FINES MAY RESULT FROM ILLEGAL PARKING.**
2. Exercise the utmost caution when discharging and picking up children, especially during inclement weather. Please use seat belts. **CROSS IN CROSSWALKS.**
3. Illegal parking in bus zones, handicapped areas, faculty parking areas and on yellow curbing is not permitted. Please do not double park. **TRAFFIC FINES MAY RESULT FROM ILLEGAL PARKING.**
4. Bus students must ride their assigned bus home unless written permission is received and approved by the school office for alternate transportation. Students must be signed out by the parent/guardian at the school main office if a change takes place.
5. All students who are picked up outside school should go home **ONLY** with parent/guardian or designated person. Students should not be taken home by anyone else.
6. Students who are walking home must have written permission filed at the school main office.
7. If students are not picked up after school, they should return to the school main office to wait.
8. Students must be picked up on time. In the event a child is not picked up, the Linden Police Department's Juvenile Bureau will be contact

### **Bed Bugs**

If a suspected bed bug is found in school, it should be placed in a plastic bag if possible, for positive identification. The student along with their belongings will be sent to the school nurse to be checked further. If nothing is found, the student may return to class. The parent will be called, and a letter will be sent home for a parent signature in order for the student to return to school. Maintenance will be notified, and the exterminator will be called. If bed bugs are found in the classroom, a letter will be sent home notifying the parents/guardians.

### **Lice**

When a case of lice is found, all children in the classroom will be checked, as well as any siblings in the district. If the student rides a bus, those students on the bus will also be checked. The child found to have lice will be sent home for appropriate treatment and may return to school after all eggs have been removed. Clearance must be obtained from



the school nurse. Parents/guardians of the children in the class will be notified by a letter that head lice were found and provided with the guidelines for controlling an outbreak.

### **Ringworm**

A student with suspected case of ringworm will be sent home to begin treatment. A physician should be consulted. The student may return to school with a doctor's note or evidence of appropriate treatment. While the student is in school, the area must be covered. Exclusion may occur if the infection is spreading or is not under medical care. A student with ringworm of the scalp must wear a clean cap during school hours and have a doctor's note to return to school. Students in the class will be sent home with a letter notifying the parents/guardians of possible exposure and information about ringworm.

### **District-Wide Wellness Policy #3542.1**

In keeping with the district-wide Wellness Policy #3542.1 pertaining to all schools, the following items shall not be served, sold or given out as free promotion anywhere on school property at any time before the end of the school day:

1. Foods of minimal nutritional value as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture.
2. All food and beverage items listing sugar, in any form, as the first ingredient.
3. All forms of candy.

Food and beverages served during **special school celebrations** or during curriculum related activities shall be exempt from this policy, with the exception of foods of minimal nutritional (FMNV) value as defined by USDA regulations.

Specific FMNV defined by USDA include soda, water ices, chewing gum, hard candy, jellies and gums, marshmallow candies, fondants, licorice, spun candy, and candy-coated popcorn.

### **Procedures for school celebrations**

We do not celebrate individual student birthdays in school. Holiday classroom parties and PTO/PTA sponsored events are permissible and will be handled separately.

Any parent who does NOT want their child to participate in a particular school event or celebration should notify the principal in writing.

### **HOME INSTRUCTION**

The Linden Board of Education, in compliance with state law, provides home instruction to those children who are certified, in writing, by a physician, as disabled. When a parent requests home instruction, a letter from the attending physician must contain (1) a specific request that home instruction be provided; (2) the nature of the disability; (3) approximate length of student absence.

### **HOMEWORK**

Homework is an important extension of the classroom. It should be used for reinforcement and enrichment. Homework should reflect individualization and should

provide the teacher with another indicator of pupil progress towards meeting the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

When homework is carefully planned and constructed as a meaningful part of learning, and with an emphasis on creativity, it can be another step in the direction to bring the school, the student and the community closer together in a common quest for quality education. ALL CHILDREN ARE EXPECTED TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMPLETING HOMEWORK.

### **INTERVENTION AND REFERRAL SERVICES (I&RS) TEAM**

I&RS is a process available to assist teachers and faculty members to better meet students' needs with academic, emotional, or behavioral concerns. I&RS is a multidisciplinary team which may consist of the principal, school social worker, general education and special education teachers, support service professionals and the school nurse. The I&RS Team provides the classroom teacher with strategies to best support students who are experiencing difficulties. In accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8.1. & 8.2, the goal of the committee is to see measurable student improvement in the identified target areas.

#### **I&RS Process**

1. After a staff member or parent concludes that there is a student in need of support with a learning, behavioral or health challenge encountered in the general education setting, the staff member will begin documentation of implemented interventions for the student's identified area of need. In addition, the teacher will contact the parent/guardian to inform them of the student's area of concern.
2. The teacher will contact the school's I&RS coordinator to complete the Request for Assistance form. The form will reflect the reasons for the request, observed behaviors and all prior interventions to begin the I&RS process.
3. Once the I&RS coordinator receives the completed Request for Assistance, the coordinator will notify the students' parents/guardians to invite them in for a meeting with the I&RS Team to discuss the areas of concern.
4. At the meeting, the I&RS Team, along with the parents/guardians, will sit together to further discuss the areas of concern and develop a written action plan, including strategies to best assist the student.
5. After an action plan is developed, the teacher will implement the interventions which have been suggested; data will be collected based on the formulated action plan to determine if additional support is still warranted.
6. After a designated period of time, the data and the implemented action plan will be reviewed and assessed for effectiveness. At this time, it may be necessary to modify the action plan to better meet the student's needs if initial action plan is not found to be successful.
7. This process will continue as additional support is needed.

I&RS is not an automatic route for Child Study Team involvement - I&RS is a continual process. This process helps support teachers to increase the achievement of students who are

experiencing academic, emotional, or behavioral difficulties during their academic day. The continued support of parents/guardians during this process is imperative to achieving student success.

### **LOCKERS (where applicable)**

Lockers are the property of the Linden Board of Education. Lockers must remain unlocked. School administrators and school personnel have the right to inspect the contents of a student's locker at any time. Random locker inspections may take place any time during the school year.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Articles found in and around the school should be turned in to the main office. The school cannot assume responsibility for lost articles. However, if a loss is reported immediately, every effort will be made to help find the missing article.

PARENTS ARE URGED TO LABEL ALL LUNCHBOXES, SWEATERS, JACKETS, HATS, ETC.

Students should not bring valuable items to school. Children should never carry large amounts of money to school.

THE SCHOOL IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST OR STOLEN ITEMS.

### **MAKE-UP WORK**

Students must complete all missed schoolwork. Missed work may be made up at a time when the student and teacher are mutually available. Missed written work not made up will affect the student's grade in that marking period.

### **PARENT CONFERENCES**

Parents are cordially invited to visit the school and to consult with the principal and/or teachers. Conference appointments are made through the school office. Please call in advance for an appointment. Refer to school entry procedures.

### **RESIDENCY CHECKS**

Attendance officers will from time to time check the residency status of students. All students who attend Linden Public Schools must reside in the City of Linden with a parent or legal guardian. In Accordance with Board of Education Policy #

### **SCHEDULING**

As a district, we follow all curriculum guidelines set forth by the state and will continue to maintain those standards. The intent of the variations to the schedule is strictly to optimize student learning, improve school culture, and provide time for teacher collaboration.

1. Departmentalization of the core subjects in Grade 3-5. This means that:
  - a. Students in the departmentalized grade level with an even number of classes will have two teachers:
    - i. Teacher A — Language Arts & Social Studies
    - ii. Teacher B — Mathematics & Science
  - b. Students in a grade level with an odd number of classes will have three teachers:
    - i. Teacher A — Language Arts
    - ii. Teacher B — Mathematics
    - iii. Teacher C — Science & Social Studies
2. Electives (specials) for students in Grades K-5, including Art, Music, PE/Health, Technology, and World Language.
3. The “school week” operating on a six-day rotation schedule commences the first day of school and will continue through the entire school year.
4. Health taught by the Physical Education teacher.
5. School-based Gifted & Talented programs.
6. AM and PM homeroom periods.

### **SCHOOL ENTRY PROTOCOL**

For the safety of our students and staff, the district has implemented a new school entry protocol. They are listed below for your reference.

1. All visitors to our schools will need to have an appointment (advanced notice) to enter the building.
2. No visitors will be granted building access (unless they have a scheduled appointment) between the following times:

Schools	Arrival Window	Dismissal Window
1, 4, 5, 6, 8	8:10 am – 8:40 am	2:45 pm – 3:15 pm
2	8:25 am – 8:55 am	3:00 pm – 3:30 pm
9, 10	8:30 am – 9:00 am	3:05 pm – 3:35 pm

3. Any parent/guardian, who needs to pick up a child early, must notify the office in writing/email prior to dismissal. If it is an emergency, the parent/guardian must call the office and notify the school.
4. If a visitor must drop off an item for a student (lunch, homework, etc.), they will be directed to deposit that item in a bin outside the main entry. All items must be clearly labeled with the student’s name, grade, and teacher and will be retrieved by office staff. Entry into the school building is not permitted.
5. It is imperative that visitors do not hold the door open for others behind them. Each visitor must be acknowledged individually through the intercom system.
6. Through the intercom, all visitors must state the purpose of their visit and/or specify with whom they have an appointment prior to entering the building.
  - a. If the appointment is verified, the visitor will be buzzed in and must report directly to the main office or designated sign-in area immediately.
  - b. All visitors will be required to show photo identification when signing into the building and will be required to wear a visitor’s pass while in the building.

- c. Front-office secretaries will be required to call 911 and notify school administrators if the visitor is uncooperative, does not adhere to the procedures, or becomes threatening.
7. Failure to follow these procedures may result in a lockdown for the safety of students and staff, and the Linden Police Department may be notified that an intruder is in the building.

You are still welcome in our schools, but with parameters. We ask you make every effort to schedule appointments when wishing to see a teacher or the principal. Of course, emergency situations arise, but our intention is that upon arrival we can be sure to give you the proper attention and dedication your concern deserves while still upholding the integrity of our safety protocol.

Large scale events will adhere to the same protocol; however, specific guidelines will be communicated.

### **SCHOOL INSURANCE**

An optional insurance plan is available to all students. An insurance packet is available for each student early in the school year. Although precautions are always taken to promote the health and safety of our children, accidents in school may occur. PLEASE CONTACT THE SCHOOL NURSE FOR ADDITIONAL INSURANCE DETAILS.

### **SCHOOL ISSUED MATERIALS**

Books are assigned to a student for his/her personal use. Each student is responsible for the care and protection of all other school issued materials such as, but not limited to: iPad, workbooks, supplies, etc. and will be required to reimburse the school for the loss of a book or damage beyond normal wear.

Parents are STRONGLY encouraged to enroll in the district Tech Care accidental coverage program for the iPads. This will cover damages (cracked screens, water damage) that may occur. Otherwise, you will be responsible for paying the full cost. Please note that this is a change from the previous school year. All payments for Tech Care must be made online at [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com) during renewal July 1<sup>st</sup> - October 15<sup>th</sup>. If you have any questions about the enrollment process, please contact LaTonya Brown in the Technology Department at [lbrown@lindenps.org](mailto:lbrown@lindenps.org) or (908) 587-3263 ext. 8345.

### **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

Suggested grade level school supply lists have been posted on the district website and sent home in the summer mailing packet. Keep in mind this is a suggested list and not mandatory. However, it will be sent home as a guide to help parents/guardians.

## **SEARCH OF STUDENT PROPERTY**

The Principal/Vice Principal may conduct a search of student property, if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the intended search will reveal evidence that the student has violated or is violating the law or the rules of the school.

### **SECTION 504: An Overview**

Section 504 is a federal civil rights law under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It provides protection against discrimination for individuals with disabilities. Section 504 guarantees the right to full participation and access to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) as enforced by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR). Section 504 ensures that students with medical or other disabilities have equal access to an education. Qualified students may receive accommodations and modifications planned by persons knowledgeable about the students. Section 504 is designed to provide equal access and fairness in general education to students with disabilities through an accommodation plan. It is **not** a plan designed to enhance a student's performance, or modify the general education curriculum expectations, but rather a way to provide fairness and equal access to education.

### **Who is Eligible under Section 504?**

A student may be considered eligible under Section 504 regulations if he or she:

1. has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities,
2. has a record of such an impairment, or
3. is regarded as having such impairment.

“Substantially limits” is defined as unable to perform a major life activity that the average person in the general population can perform or significantly restricted to the condition, manner, or duration under which an individual can perform a particular major life function as compared to the condition, manner, or duration which the average person in the general population can perform that same major life activity. Major life activities include caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. The disabling condition need only substantially limit one major life activity for a student to be eligible.

### **Section 504 – Referral Process**

In compliance with federal law, students must be identified, referred and evaluated by a 504 Committee to determine eligibility. Parents, guardians, and school staff should refer students to the 504 Coordinator if they know, or suspect, that a student may benefit from accommodations in the general education program.

1. The referral process begins when the school receives notification from an adult who is knowledgeable about the students' specific situation. Once a request for 504 accommodations is received, the 504 Coordinator will schedule a meeting with the parent/guardian and the committee to further discuss the students' limitations based on

- their impairment.
2. At the meeting, information will be collected from both the family as well as the students' teacher to determine eligibility. Information requested may include reports from physicians, observations, standardized tests, etc.
    - a. If the student is found eligible, a 504 plan will be developed to assure accommodations provided to the student are proportionate with their peers.
    - b. Once developed, the 504 Coordinator will schedule a meeting to review the implementation of the 504 Plan with all relevant parties. If in agreeance, all members will be asked to sign the 504 Plan indicating their agreement.
    - c. It is then 504 Coordinator's responsibility to disseminate the information to teachers with educational responsibility to the student and to monitor the 504 Plan.
    - d. The students' 504 Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis to determine continued eligibility and documentation.
  3. If the student is found ineligible, the 504 Team will discuss alternative interventions to best assist the student.

### **SECURITY DRILLS**

In accord with state guidelines, all schools must practice one fire drill and one security drill per month.

School Security Drill is defined as follows:

*An exercise, other than a fire drill, to practice procedures that respond to an emergency situation, including, but not limited to, a non-fire evacuation, lockdown, or active shooter situation and that is similar in duration to a fire drill.*

### **STUDENT RECORDS**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act enables parents and guardians to have certain rights with respect to their child's education records. Additional information about this federal act can be obtained through the principal's office and the U.S. Department of Education.

### **SUDDEN ILLNESS (DURING SCHOOL)**

Should your child become ill while in school, you or your emergency contact person will be called to take the child home. For this reason, **IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT EACH CHILD HAVE A COMPLETED, UPDATED EMERGENCY CONTACT FORM ON FILE IN THE MAIN OFFICE.** If this information changes during the school year, please call the office and/or school nurse with up-to-date emergency information.

### **TEACHER CONTACT**

Communication between parents and teachers is extremely important to the educational process. Without communication between the home and school, the educational process is not complete. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's education,

please speak with the teacher. You do not have to wait for the scheduled Parent/Teacher conferences to speak to a teacher. Please call the school office to set up an appointment with your child’s teacher.

All teachers have access to the Internet. If you wish to communicate with your child’s teachers via email, type in the first initial of their first name followed by the teacher’s last name with this address: @lindenps.org.

For example: Barbara Smith = bsmith@lindenps.org

**TRIMESTERS**

The Linden Elementary Schools operate on a trimester schedule, composed of three per school year. Students’ grades shall be determined on the basis of tests, classroom participation, quizzes, homework, and special assignments. Students receiving an incomplete grade must make up the missed work within a period of time designated by the teacher.

<b>Trimester</b>	<b>Beginning Date</b>	<b>Progress Reports</b>	<b>End Date (Report Cards)</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	9/5/24	10/18/24	12/9/24
<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	12/10/24	1/29/25	3/14/25
<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	3/17/25	5/7/25	6/24/25

Report cards are to be viewed by parents via Genesis Parent Portal after the conclusion of each trimester.

**Elementary Parent/Teacher Conferences: EARLY DISMISSAL W/ LUNCH SERVED**

- Tuesday - October 22, 2024 (Afternoon Conferences)
- Wednesday - October 23, 2024 (Evening Conferences)
- Thursday - October 24, 2024 (Afternoon Conferences)

- Tuesday - March 18, 2025 (Afternoon Conferences)
- Wednesday - March 19, 2025 (Evening Conferences)
- Thursday - March 20, 2025 (Afternoon Conferences)

**TRIMESTER INTERIM PROGRESS REPORTS**

At the midpoint of each trimester, parents will receive an *Interim Progress Report* documenting their child’s progress. These are electronic for students in Grades K-5 and may be accessed via the Genesis Parent Portal.



## **TRIPS**

Some grades or groups may be scheduled to take part in a class trip. Students are expected to abide by the code of conduct on class trips. The school reserves the right to determine whether parents are necessary as additional chaperones as well as set forth chaperone guidelines to be followed. If approved to be a chaperone on a class trip, parents are not to bring additional children from home, must remain with the group, respect the privacy of all students, and follow the directives from the teachers in charge of the trip. A full list of guidelines will be made available.