2025-2026



Park Hill School Student-Parent Handbook

East Syracuse-Minoa Central Schools District Office

407 Fremont Road East Syracuse, NY 13057

General InformationSuperintendent of Schools	
Deputy Superintendent	
Exec Director of Curriculum, Learning & Assessment	
Exec Dir.r of Employee Engagement & Accountability	
Exec Director of Planning, Development & Technology.	
Exec Director of School Business Administration	Katherine Skahen
Director of Facilities	John Young
School Information Officer	Marcia Kelley
Director of Special Education	Heidi Allen
Associate Director for Special Education	Nicole Cummings
Director of Counseling, Youth Development, & Leaders	hip Meghan Thomas
Director of Athletics, PE and Health	Michael Clonan
Coor. of Community Engagement, Data, and Fine Arts.	Thomas Decker
Director of Teaching and Learning	Michelle Gipe
Director of Dining Services (Chartwells Food Service)	Rose Montanaro
Director of Transportation	Jennifer Homeyer

Board of Education Members

BOE President - D. Paul Waltz BOE Vice President - Tracy Callahan Diana Abdella Jolie Bonaparte John Albanese Kay Gallery Susan Cain Deborah Kolod Leah Cushing

PARK HILL SCHOOL

www.esmschools.org

MAIN OFFICE: 315-434-3800

NURSE: 315-434-3801

Principal: Jordyn Brienzi

Secretary: Tiffany Spaulding

School Nurse: Katie Stark

Head Custodian: Ben Wysocki

PH office email:

PHoffice@esmschools.org

PH attendance email:

PHattendance@esmschools.org

Dear Park Hill Families,

We're so happy to welcome you and your child to a new school year at Park Hill School! Inside this handbook, you'll find helpful information to support your family as you begin this exciting journey in preschool. Thank you for taking the time to read through it.

We believe that strong communication between home and school helps every child thrive. We use ParentSquare to share classroom updates, school news, and fun ways for families to get involved.

As the Principal of Park Hill School, I'm thrilled to welcome our youngest learners and their families. Preschool is such a special time of growth and discovery, and we look forward to learning and growing together this year. We hope you'll join us for family events and get involved in our school community through our Parent-Teacher Organization.

Thank you for being part of the Park Hill family. We're excited for a joyful and successful preschool year ahead!

Warmly,

Jordyn Brienzi

Jordyn Brienzi Principal, Park Hill School

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EAST SYRACUSE MINOA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 2025-2026 SCHOOL CALENDAR

BOE Approval on 3/10/2025



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<u>LEGEND</u>	
Supt. Conf. Day - Staff Only	
Holiday	
School Recess	
Prof. Learning / Parent	
Conf. / Shortened Day	
Regents Exams R	
Regents Rating Day r ************************************	
August 28 Supt. Conf. Da	
September 1 Labor Day Holida September 2 First Day of School	
October 13 Columbus Day	
Indigenous Peoples' Day Holida	
November 4 Supt. Conf. Da	
November 11 Veterans Day Holida	
Nov. 26 & 28 Thanksgiving Reces	
November 27 Thanksgiving Holida	
December 22- 24 Holiday Reces	
December 25 Christmas Holid	
Dec 26, 29, 30 & 31 Holiday Rece	SS
January 1 New Year's Holida	ıy
January 2 Holiday Rece	SS
January 19 Martin Luther King Jr Holid	lay
January 20-23 Regents Exar	ns
February 16 President's Day Holid	ay
February 16-20 Winter Reces	
February 17 Asian Lunar New Ye	
March 20 Supt. Conf. Day EID al-Fi	
March 9-June 5 NYS Testin	_
March 30-April 3 Spring Break Recess	
April 6-May 15 Grades 3-8 Testin May 22 Memorial Day Rece	
May 25 Memorial Day Holid	
May 27 Supt. Conf. Day EID al-Ada	
June 9 & 10 Regents Exam	
June 17-26 (Except 6/19) Regents Exam	
June 19 Juneteenth Day Holida	
June 26 Rating Day	
June 26 Last Day of Scho	
June 26 Graduatio	

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6 13 20 27	7 14 21 28	ril (19) 1 8 15 22 29	19 2 9 16 23 30	3 10 17 24
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(186) Staff Days [182] Student Days

Conference Dates & Report Cards

Parent-Teacher Conference Dates for 2025-2026:

November 4, 2025 - All day conferences (no Pre-k programming)
November 18, 2025 - PM conferences only (No PM Programming, Half Day students dismiss at normal time, Full Day students dismiss at noon)

Report Cards for 2025-2026 will be available on the following dates:

January 30, 2026 June 26, 2026

- On shortened days, students in Full Day 4 year old programming will dismiss at 12 noon. Morning programs will dismiss at their original time. Afternoon programming will not occur.
- School district days off apply to all programming at Park Hill including snow days.

^{*} Program times vary by section and are communicated to families individually.

Emergency School Closings

When it is necessary to delay or close schools because of bad weather, power failure or some other emergency, the information will normally be announced by 6:30 a.m. via phone, text, and/or email on ESM's alert system, Parent Square, as well as radio, TV, and websites of local media.

A one or two-hour delay announcement means that all morning school bus stops will be one or two hours later than usual time and there will be no morning Pre-K. The remainder of the school day will follow a regular schedule. When a delay is announced, conditions might deteriorate and require the school to close. In that event, a closing announcement will be made by 7:30 a.m. and also relayed via Parent Square.

Occasionally, bad weather or other emergencies develop after school begins and force an earlier-than-normal closing. In that case, Parent Square as well as local media announcements will be made indicating the time of dismissal. The following TV and radio stations will announce school closings and delays caused by adverse weather or other emergencies. Please listen to the radio on bad weather days since phone lines are likely to be tied up at school.

TV Stations	FM Radio	
	93Q	
WSYR TV-9	95X	
WSTM TV-3	B 104.7	
WTVH-5	HOT 107.9	
NEWS 10 Now	KROCK 100.9	
	LITE 105.9	
AM Radio	POWER 106.9	
	SUNNY 102.2	
WFBL 1050	TK 99	
WSYR 570	Y94	
WHEN 620	JAZZ 88	
WNSS 1260	OLDIES 92.1	
	Z89	

Family Emergency Information

Parents are requested to update the annual student verification form with pertinent student and family information, as well as at least two names, addresses and telephone numbers of individuals who may be contacted if the school personnel can not reach either parent. This information is kept in School Tool, the district's online data system. It is extremely important to keep this information current and up to date. *Please notify the main office at 315-434-3800 when any of this information changes.*

Attendance

Students' class attendance correlates highly with success in school. Similarly, those students who miss many school days often have difficulties with the routines of the classroom. The ESM School District strongly encourages regular attendance and will actively pursue students whose attendance is less than satisfactory.

Parents are asked to call the attendance office at 315-434-3800 or email phattendance@esmschools.org when their child is absent. Please also email or use ParentSquare your child's teacher. Parents must follow up with a note or an email if the absence was phoned in. NYS Education Law requires a written or emailed communication for every absence from school. If one is not submitted within 10 school days, the absence remains unexcused.

Parents are reminded that students should only miss school for reasons that are legal and approved by the Commissioner of Education. Some of these reasons include personal illness, visits to a clinic, illness or death in the family, impassable roads, religious observance, or required court appearances.

If children need to be excused early, please send a note explaining the reason for the excuse. Whenever possible, please schedule appointments for early in the day or after school hours.

If you need to discuss any attendance problems, call Meghan Thomas (Director of Counseling, Youth Development, and Leadership) at 315-434-3306.

Visitors to Park Hill

School safety is of utmost importance to our building and district. Visitors will be given limited access to the building during school hours. This is to ensure a high level of safety for all students and staff in the building. Since the school is a place of learning and work, we do ask that you abide by our visitation rules:

- 1. Every building in our district has a single point of entry for visitors during the school day.
- 2. All visitors will need to use the buzzer located at the main entrance of the building for admission.
- 3. Anyone who is not a regular staff member or student of the school will be considered a visitor.
- 4. All visitors need to report directly to the office. You will be required to show a valid driver's license or federal ID, which will be scanned. Once scanned, you will be given a visitor's badge. This badge should be worn at all times while on the premises. Any staff member may approach you and ask you to report to the office if you are found in the building without a visitor's badge. You must sign in to the building prior to entering.
- 5. Teachers are not permitted to take class time to discuss individual matters with visitors.
- 6. All visitors are expected to use the same door to exit the building and to sign out in the main office upon departure.
- 7. All visitors are expected to follow the rules for public conduct on school property.

General Bus Guidelines

It must be clearly understood that students must fulfill certain responsibilities when riding the bus to and from school. These responsibilities include the following:

- 1. A parent or adult needs to escort their child to and from the bus.
- 2. Be ready to board the bus quickly and safely, when it arrives.
- 3. Students must stay in their seats and be buckled at all times until the bus comes to a full stop at school or their bus stop.
- 4. Upon exiting the bus, students must cross the road at least ten feet in front of the school bus. Students must also wait when crossing in front of the school bus for the driver's signal to cross. Crossing at the rear of the bus is dangerous and not permitted.
- 5. Obey the bus driver and ESM's Code of Conduct. Drivers will address any behavioral concerns. Ongoing concerns with discipline will be reported to the principal.
- 6. Assist with keeping the bus neat, clean, and safe.
- 7. Students need to enter the bus one at a time and should use the handrail.
- 8. While on a bus, students shall not:
 - a. fight or quarrel
 - b. change seats
 - c. use profane language
 - d. mark or deface the bus
 - e. put arms, legs, elbows, and/or hands out of the bus windows
 - f. carry glass containers on the bus

Special Transportation Requests

Requests for short-term transportation to and from an address other than the home address must be approved by the Director of Transportation, Jennifer Homeyer, based on a verified hardship, ex. hospitalization of a parent. Please visit the transportation department's website to obtain this form. esmschools.org/transportation

Bus Passes

When it is necessary for your child to ride another bus home in the afternoon, a specific, written request must be sent to school with your child. This written request must state the reason for your child to take another bus, where she/he is going, and the bus number she/he is to ride. (See example below) **Incidents of students riding other buses should be kept to a minimum** (i.e. child care).

Drop-Off/Pickup Instructions

1 and 2 year olds:

Please park in the reserved spots in the front and to the right of the main office entrance. You will need to visit the main office and have your I.D. scanned on your first day. Please enter through the safety system with your child and proceed to your child's classroom.

3 year olds:

Parent Drop off: Parents please park in the reserved parking spots in front and to the right of the main office entrance. Please walk your child into school and through the safety system (parents and children will have to pass through the safety system) and drop your child to their class. We ask that you make it a quick drop off and then exit the building.

Parent Pick Up: Please park in the back parking lot or Hale Ave and utilize Door #3. All students will be waiting for pick up at this door. Please have I.D. ready to show.

Please refer to your specific 3 year old classroom for drop off and pick up times.

4 year olds:

Parent Drop off: Park in the Back Parking Lot or on Hale Ave. Please walk your child from the car to the bus loop at the front of the building utilizing the sidewalks. Please place your child in the closest line of students that are being escorted off the bus.

Parent Pick Up: Please park in the back parking lot or Hale Ave and utilize Door #3. All students will be waiting for pick up at this door. Please have I.D. ready as it is required for parent pick up.

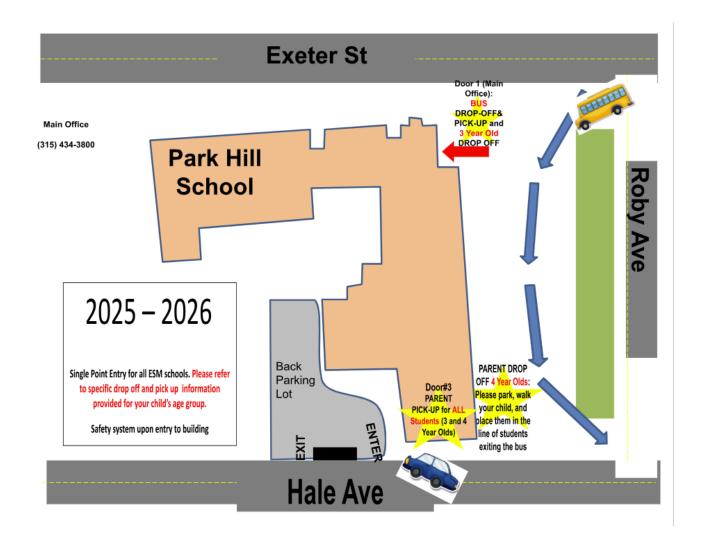
4s Full Day Drop off is 8:50-8:55 am - Pick up is 2:55-3:00

4s Half Day- AM Drop off is 8:50-8:55 - Pick up is 11:25-11:30

4s Half Day- PM Drop off is 12:25-12:30 - Pick up is 2:55-3:00

* If you miss your parent drop off time, children must be escorted to the main office and checked in.

ESM students must be 4 to ride the bus. If they are not 4 yet, they will need to be dropped off and picked up. They may start riding the bus on their 4th birthday. Please call the transportation office at **315-434-3460** a few days before their 4th birthday to verify.



If you need to pick up your child during the school day or at dismissal time a written note should be sent with your child or call the main office. In lieu of a note, dismissal requests can be communicated via email to

phattendance@esmschools.org or by calling the office at 315-434-3800. To pick up your child early, you must enter the building and sign your child out at the main office. Proper ID (valid driver's license or federal ID) is required to pick up students as well.

Food Services

When a student requires special foods because of allergies to food, dairy products, or has a special diet requirement, a request signed only by a doctor must be on file in the school cafeteria that the student attends, and also a copy must be sent to the high school food service office. Please send this to the nurse, Katie Stark, and she will attend to the situation. Feel free to call food services with any questions or concerns at 315-434-3441.

School Breakfast and Lunch Program

Students may bring their lunch from home or they may obtain a school-prepared lunch. Monthly menus are available on the District website but at times it is subject to change. Breakfast or snack will be provided to half day students.

You may also access menus through another free app by searching "Nutrislice" in the app store. For further information, the district's food service website is www.esmschools.org/food. Direct contact is available by email at esmfood-service@esmschools.org or by phone at 315-434-3304.

Classroom Parties and Snacks

Both students and staff look forward to celebrations, and we also enjoy acknowledging your child's birthday. Each classroom teacher will set forth his/her own policy on birthday celebrations. Please contact your child's teacher in advance if you plan to send in a birthday snack. Once you make contact with the teacher, you may either send treats in with your child or drop them off at the Main Office.

Our district-wide Wellness Policy dictates the kinds of snacks permissible for students:

- Snacks need to be store bought, prepackaged, and individually wrapped.
 No homemade items can be accepted.
- Snacks must be **peanut-free** (check with the classroom teacher for any other allergy needs that may need to be accommodated)

We ask that you **do not** send in gifts, balloons, flowers, or stuffed animals to be presented to your child at school.

Health Services

Dispensing Medication

Whenever possible, medication should be given at home. Every effort should be made to avoid dispensing medication during school hours. In the event a medication must be given at school, New York State law mandates the following information be given to the school before any medications can be administered:

- 1. Written permission from the doctor, including dosage and times of administration. This includes over-the-counter medications such as aspirin, Tylenol, or ibuprofen.
- 2. Written permission from the parent or guardian.
- 3. Parents or guardians must bring the medication to school along with both written requests. **Children are NOT allowed to bring medication to school.**
- 4. Medications must be in a pharmacy-labeled container with only enough medication needed for dispensing in school. Medication sent to school in unlabeled containers cannot be given.

If these requirements are met, the nurse will safely administer medicine during school hours. To protect your children, all medications will be kept under lock and key. An *Authorization for Dispensing Medication* form may be obtained from the Park Hill health office webpage. Your child's unused medication must be picked up by the last day of the school year or it will be disposed of.

Medications on Field Trips

If your child is going on a field trip and requires an injection medication, a treatment such as a nebulizer, or is unable to take his/her own medication, you must accompany your child on the field trip. If a parent is unable to attend, you may (1) designate someone else to accompany and dispense medication to your child. In this case, a note identifying your designee and a statement that he/she is properly trained to dispense the medication is required. OR (2) present a "change in medication order" from your child's physician for the days of the field trip. If no one is able to accompany your child, the school nurse will make arrangements to insure that your child receives his/her medications from a nurse while on the field trip.

Student Health Alerts

Under FERPA (Family Educational Right to Know Privacy Act), the school nurse may disclose health alerts involving individual students to individuals who have a "legitimate educational interest" or "need to know" the student's health situation. If you do not want your child's medication information shared with the appropriate staff, please do not hesitate to contact the school nurse, Katie Stark, at 315-434-3801.

Permanent Withdrawal Procedure

Please call the Park Hill Office (315-434-3800) if you are moving outside of the district.

Library

All Park Hill students will have library scheduled once a week starting in October. Please be sure to return library books weekly.

Photo Opt-Outs

If you would not like your child to be pictured in any photographs please be sure to update the annual student information verification form. These forms are sent out annually in the fall for updating. If you opt-out your child will not be included in the yearbook.

Initial opt-out forms are provided at initial registration and are automatically renewed every year.

Also, please refrain from posting pictures of other children, including whole class pictures on social media. Many parents do not want their child's picture posted online.

Field Trips

Over the school year, your child may have the opportunity to partake in a field trip. In order for them to attend, parents/guardians must sign and date the field trip form. Parents of students requiring medication, please see "Medications on Field Trips" for important information.

Children's Belongings

Please mark your child's property with his/her name or initials. Raincoats, jackets, lunch boxes, water bottles, footwear, backpacks, etc. should be marked. *Teachers will provide tags for backpacks - please keep them on all year.

Positive Behavior Expectations

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports is a proactive approach to help establish a positive culture needed for all students in a school to achieve social, emotional, and academic success.

Specific rules will be established in each classroom, and along with the school-wide behavioral expectations as noted in the chart below. They reflect the building guidelines of treating everyone with courtesy and respect, acting in a way to promote a positive and safe environment, coming to school ready to learn, and acting responsibly.

Please note that conflict between students is typical, particularly at an early age. We work to foster productive conversations, problem-solving, and emotional regulation skills. This allows students to learn essential pro-social skills to set them up for success later in life.

Parents will be notified and encouraged to assist with any behavior issues that persist. All students have a right to learn and all teachers have a right to teach. We want to provide the best learning environment for every student.

	Calm Body	Focus Attention	Be a Good Friend	Be Ready
Bus	*Safely wait with a grown up for the bus *Keep your seatbelt buckled *Sit on your bottom *Use a level 2 voice	*Listen to the bus driver *Sit facing forward	*Wait for your turn to sit/exit *Use kind words and actions *Use a strong, respectful voice	*Keep everything in your backpack *Use helper rail, walking feet, look both ways *Use self-talk
Arrival/ Dismissal	*Use walking feet *Use a level 2 voice	*Eyes forward *Follow the person in front of you	*Greet others with a smile, wave or hello *Keep hands and feet to yourself	*Go to your classroom *Use self talk to complete morning routines
Hallway	*Use walking feet *Give others space *Hands at your sides *Use a level 0 voice	*Stay in your space *Eyes looking forward	*Keep hands and feet to yourself	*Think about where you are going *Use the railing
Meal Times	*Sit in your chair on your bottom *Use a Level 1 voice	*Stay in your space *Trash goes in the garbage	*Keep hands and feet to yourself *Use kind words and actions *No sharing food and drinks	*Use walking feet *Wash with one pump of soap and water *Keep water in the sink *Use three pumps for paper towels and put in the garbage can *Clean up your space

Makerspace	*Enter and sit on carpet *Use a level 2 voice *Use walking feet	*Follow directions *Use materials safely/appropriately	*Hands and feet to yourself *Use fair ways to play	*Clean up and leave the space ready for the next class *Think creatively
Library	*Use walking feet *Enter and sit on carpet *Use a level 2 voice	*Follow directions *Treat books with care	*Hands and feet to yourself	*Think about what kind of book you might want *Bring book back to school
Bathroom	*Use walking feet *Wash with one pump of soap and water *Keep water in the sink *Use three pumps for paper towels and put in the garbage can *Use level 1 voice	*Use self-talk to follow bathroom routines *Flush toilet when finished	*Give others privacy *Respect personal space	*Return to class right away *Ask for an adult's help if you need it
Outdoor Play	*Use equipment safely and appropriately	*Follow directions *Keep your eyes forward *Respect personal space	*Take turns-use fair ways to play *Include everyone *Keep hands and feet to yourself	*Clean up *Line up when you're called *Ask for an adult's help if you need it.
Gym	*Use equipment safely and appropriately *Follow arrows on the floor	*Follow directions *Keep your eyes forward *Respect personal space	*Take turns-use fair ways to play *Include everyone *Keep hands and feet to yourself	*Clean up *Line up when you're called *Ask for an adult's help if you need it.

ESM Code of Conduct

The East Syracuse Minoa Central School District Board of Education, administration, teaching, faculty, and support staff are dedicated to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students may receive and district personnel may deliver quality educational services without disruption or interference. Responsible behavior by students, teachers, support staff, parents and visitors is essential to achievement of this goal. To support this concept, the Board of Education, working with administrators, teachers, parents, and students, has created a new Code of Conduct and written this summary of the district's long-standing principles contained in the Code.

These expectations, based on a philosophy of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, tolerance, honesty, and integrity, are established by the district and explained in detail in the unabridged Code of Conduct found on the esmschools.org website.

Parent Communication

ParentSquare is the primary communication tool used throughout all classrooms and across the Park Hill building. Important updates and information will be shared regularly on this platform. Please ensure you have access to ParentSquare before the school year begins.

If you have any questions or concerns, please first reach out to your child's teacher. Many questions, concerns, and other issues can typically be resolved to the satisfaction of both parties by starting with these staff members. If a parent/guardian is in need of further assistance, the building administrator will work to resolve the issue.

Bell-To-Bell Requirements

Starting September 2, 2025, a new New York State law takes effect that restricts student cell phone use during the school day. This means ESM will implement a "bell-to-bell" ban on all personal cell phones and internet-enabled devices during school hours.

What Does "Bell-to-Bell" Mean?

From the moment students arrive at school until they are dismissed, cell phones and other personal internet devices including smart watches (Ex. Gizmo watches) must be turned off and put away. The ban also applies during field trips and other off campus, school-related activities held during the school day.

Once students are dismissed, the ban no longer applies.

Why Is This Happening?

This new state law is meant to help students stay focused and support their mental health. Research shows that phones and internet-enabled devices can be a big distraction during learning time and may contribute to issues like cyberbullying and reduced face-to-face interaction.

At ESM, we also heard from students, staff and families through our Community Café conversations this spring. Their input helped shape how we'll put this new law into practice.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The Park Hill PTO works tirelessly and cooperatively to bring special events and performances to the building. We welcome you to join the PTO as a way to become involved with your child's schooling, become acquainted with the building and be a part of a larger community.

2025-2026 Park Hill School PTO

President: Erica DeForge **Vice President:**

Treasurer: Meaghan Landry **Secretary:** Nicole McCarthy

Please join us for PTO meetings that take place throughout the year at 6pm