

JOYCE KILMER SCHOOL

Milltown Public Schools

21 West Church Street
Milltown, New Jersey 08850-1643
732-214-2370



William G. Veit
Principal

August 24, 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Good afternoon! We would like to happily welcome you all to the 2017-18 school year at Joyce Kilmer! We hope you all have had a relaxing, joyous, and fun filled summer with your children and families. We are very excited to be beginning a new school year, and we look forward to the academic and social challenges and growth that we are all sure to experience!

As we prepare and look ahead to the upcoming school year, we would like to highlight some of the educational items that will become the focus for our students during this year with the Google platform under our belts. We look forward to the students continued use of the many aspects of the Google platform as well as other technology related initiatives from last school year like our 3 dimensional Makerspace printer and scanner and the subject based integrated lessons that go along with them. In order to assist our teachers in maximizing our technological capabilities, and to bring our curriculum into this technology, our staff will be working with Dellicker Strategies throughout the school year. Dellicker Strategies will focus on the most current and relevant means of integrating technology into the classroom lessons given our curriculum, and our available technology. Additionally, teachers and students will be focusing on the experience of, and planning for, productive struggle. Student perseverance in problem solving, no matter the subject or topic, is an important and necessary skill that needs to be experienced and developed. Teachers will be focusing on anticipating student struggle, and subsequently planning for when this occurs. Part of this experience includes guiding the student through their struggle and frustrations while maintaining a positive attitude and highlighting that working through hardship and difficulties is a normal experience.

Please be advised that the Genesis parent portal will open tomorrow, Friday August 25th. You will be able to view your child's schedule after completing the "first day" school forms in Genesis. These forms were formerly sent home with your children during the first week of school before we made the change over to the automated forms last school year. After logging in, you will be prompted to complete the forms using a drop down menu. Completing these forms online will not only eliminate the possibility of lost or duplicated forms, but it will also assure your access to Genesis during report card openings. In the event you forgot or misplaced your password information, you will have the opportunity to reset it. Should you experience difficulties with Genesis, or should you have any questions regarding the system and its use, please do not hesitate to contact the Joyce Kilmer helpdesk at helpdesk@milltownps.org for assistance.

It is important to note, schedules for students in grades 4 and 5 will list their homeroom teacher as the main teacher for 1 of the 2 main subject areas, Math and Language Arts, and the remaining core subject areas including Science, and Social Studies. In the areas of Math and Language Arts, the grade 4 and 5 teachers will be departmentalizing, and complete homerooms will have an alternate grade level teacher for either Math or Language Arts depending on what subject area their homeroom teacher teaches.

Special classes including Art, Music, Technology, Spanish, Physical Education, and Library will be listed alongside as well. Please rely on your child's homeroom teacher when school begins to provide you with the specific daily class schedule as you may see the core subjects listed multiple times on the schedule. This is because students in grades 4 and 5 follow a traditional elementary school model, as opposed to our students in grades 6-8 who follow a traditional middle school model schedule.

We would also like to thank you for your adherence to our drop off and pick up procedures that are highlighted on our school website. Parents and guardians are not permitted to park in the staff parking lot. Please note that the official time students are permitted to arrive on school grounds is 8:30 am. This timeframe coincides with the beginning of teacher supervision. Again, please feel free to refer to the school website for this information. The first day of school is Thursday, September 7th and it is a full day. Fourth, fifth and sixth grade students will continue to line up on the sidewalk adjacent to the staff parking lot. Fourth and fifth graders will line up nearest the main office (door number 1) and sixth graders will line up further down the sidewalk, near door number 5. Seventh and eighth graders will line up in front of the media center. There will be staff outside to assist your children during this process. Should anyone have questions or concerns, please feel free to find a staff member for help.

As it relates to student attendance, please see the attachment highlighting new state policy changes related to what constitutes an excused absence. In the event of excessive absenteeism, it is important to note that the state Department of Education will not recognize excused absences as our board policy dictates. Again, this is a mandate from the NJDOE that we must comply with.

Sixth grade students will be able to pick up their combination lock with instructions on Wednesday, August 30th or Thursday, August 31st from 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm. Students who receive their lock can practice opening their lock at home. All students will have an extended homeroom the entire first week of school with teachers and staff members available to assist students with opening their lockers.

Student lockers will accommodate the necessary school supplies, textbooks and appropriate outerwear when the weather changes. Please keep in mind that there will not be room for extensive decorative items. Refer to page 80 of the Handbook where it states: *Students are permitted to store only school items in lockers, plus their personal outer garments for walking to and from school. Glass mirrors, aerosol cans (i.e. AXE sprays), flammable items, and any item capable of causing harm are strictly prohibited from lockers.*

Also, please consider avoiding wheeled backpacks as they are cumbersome for the students to maneuver up the stairs and through the hallways.

Please take a moment to refer to our website for complete district information including our academic calendar and the 2017-18 Handbook.

We would also like to inform you that beginning the week of September 11th, the before school Library Club will be open on Monday and will run every day during the week. Students attending the Library Club must enter through the main entrance between 7:45 am and 8:00 am. Library Club is open to all JK students. Homework Club will also begin that week, starting on Tuesday, September 12th and will run Tuesday through Thursday. Homework Club is also open to all JK students, and reminder announcements as to its location will be made daily. Students can work quietly to complete their assignments. Homework Club ends at 4:00 pm so students should have sufficient work to keep them occupied until 4:00. Students are not permitted to leave Homework Club earlier than 4:00 unless a

parent/guardian picks up the student from the Main Entrance. Please be advised that all other before/after school clubs, and before/after school academic assistance opportunities will begin in the coming weeks of September. The final schedules of these activities will be posted on the school website once they are finalized by the teachers.

I would like to take this opportunity to formally introduce several new staff members that will be joining the Joyce Kilmer family this Fall. Miss Grace Garlatti will be joining the grade 4 team. Miss Garlatti comes to us from Parkview School, and we look forward to her bringing her skills and knowledge to our new 4th grade friends entering JK for the first time. We will also be joined by Ms. Michelle Scarduffa this Fall. Ms. Scarduffa also comes to us from Parkview School with a wealth of experience and knowledge and will be working as a 5th grade classroom teacher. We welcome back Mrs. Melissa Kivowitz who will be working in the special services department. We would also like to welcome Ms. Nikki Agugliaro who will be working as a co-teacher along with Ms. Mariel Jackson in grade 5. We welcome all our new staff members to JK!

As I mentioned above, we are truly excited to begin a new school year. We welcome the academic and social challenges that it will bring, and the opportunities for growth that those challenges will provide. We look forward to the expansion of our already strong relationships with your children, and all of you. We are also excited to forge new relationships with our 4th grade students and parents, as well as any students joining us in Milltown for the first time. As always, feel free to contact me with questions, concerns, or anything that I (we) may be of assistance with.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'W. Veit'.

Mr. William Veit
Principal

WV/sb



MILLTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Milltown, New Jersey 08850-1643

www.milltownps.org



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William G. Veit
Principal-Joyce Kilmer
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September 2017

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Please see information below for regulations regarding the monitoring of daily attendance at Parkview and Joyce Kilmer School for the 2017-18 school year.

New! State Policy to Determine Chronic Absenteeism

Milltown Schools recognizes excused and unexcused absences to determine course completion, grade level promotion and truancy; however the state of New Jersey does not recognize absences in the same manner. Chronic absenteeism is defined as any child that is not present in school for 10% or more of the time they were required to be in school for any reason other than the 5 exceptions listed below. For a child to be counted as present for a full day in school, he/she must be in school for at least one hour in the morning and one hour in the afternoon.

Please be advised that the state under the newly authorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) has placed a greater emphasis and reporting requirement on chronic absenteeism. Accordingly to state regulations, any day a child misses from the approved district calendar of 180 school days, is considered absent. There are only 5 exceptions to this rule, which reduce the 180 day requirement that include:

1. Religious Observation
2. College Visits
3. Take Our Children to Work Day
4. Veterans Day
5. Specific busing issues in relation to school closings

Board Approved Absence/Tardy Procedures

Below is a brief overview of guidelines to follow which have been approved by the Milltown Board of Education. For further information please refer to the Milltown Public Schools Handbook starting under "Rules, Regulations, Procedures and Parent Involvement".

1. Notify your child's school by 9:00 AM the morning of **every** absence/tardy.

Attendance Line	Parkview	732-214-2360 – Option 1, Option 1
Attendance Line	Joyce Kilmer	732-214-2370 – Option 2, Option 1

Leave a message which includes:

- a. Name of Caller
- b. Name of Student
- c. Date of absence or tardy
- d. Reason for the absence or tardy

- The attendance lines are a messaging system available to you 24/7. Please call as soon as you determine your child will be absent or tardy.
- If a student is sick for several days, a call must be placed **each** day until the student returns.
- In the event that you are aware of an upcoming absence or tardy in advance, you may leave a message detailing the information above at any time prior to the absence or tardy.

Failure to leave a message by 9:00AM will result in a truancy alert to Guardian 1 and Guardian 2 via phone, text, and e-mail.

2. Submit a follow-up absence or tardy note to the office upon student's return.

The note must include:

- a. Name of Student
 - b. Date(s) of absence or tardy
 - c. Reason for absence
 - d. Parent/Guardian **or** Doctor Signature (Either will be accepted when a student is ill)
- Notes for unexcused absences will only be accepted within 7 days of returning to school.
 - All absences are considered **unexcused** until a note with a parent/guardian or doctor signature is submitted for **review**. (*A note does not guarantee an excused absence.*)
 - Notes that are e-mailed will not be accepted.
 - After review of the absent or tardy reason, a decision will be made in accordance with school policy to determine if the absence/tardy is excused. (Please see box below.)
 - In the event that you are aware of an upcoming absence or tardy in advance, you may submit a note to the office detailing the information above at any time prior to the absence or tardy.

The following reasons are considered **excused absences**:

All other absences will be considered unexcused

- a. Disabling illness
- b. Recovery from accident
- c. Required court attendance
- d. Death in the family
- e. Religious observance (in accordance with statute)
- f. Such good cause as may be acceptable to the principal

****Milltown Public Schools recognizes absences as excused/unexcused but the state does not ****

Homework Request

- If absent for one day, please get assignments from a classmate.
- If absent for **more than one day**, assignments may be requested on the attendance line.
- Work may be picked up at the Parkview Office after 2:30 p.m.
- Work may be picked up at the Joyce Kilmer Main Entrance after 3:30 p.m.

Reminders

- A student may not participate in extracurricular activities unless he/she arrives by the start of third period or has been absent or tardy for an excused reason other than sickness.
- If a child leaves school early due to illness he/she will not be permitted to participate in any after school activities on that day.

Procedures for Monitoring Unexcused Absences/Tardies

Attendance records are available for review on the Parent Portal all year.

1. Quarterly Unexcused Absence Letters

- Unexcused absences are added cumulatively from September to June.
- Notifications are sent home after every marking period as follows:
 - a. 5-9 unexcused absences = Letter e-mailed to the Parent Portal
 - b. 10+ unexcused absences = Letter mailed home with copy of attendance report

2. Quarterly Unexcused Tardy Letters

Parkview School

- Students arriving at or after **8:30 a.m.** are considered **late** and must be signed in at the Main Office by a parent/guardian.
- **Unexcused** tardies are added quarterly (Every marking period starts with a "clean slate").
- Parents will be notified in writing if a student exceeds **3** unexcused tardies in a single marking period. If subsequent infractions occur, parents will be requested to come to school for a conference with the principal.

Joyce Kilmer School

- Students arriving at or after **8:45 a.m.** are considered **late**.
- **Unexcused** tardies are added quarterly (Every marking period starts with a "clean slate").
- Any student who exceeds **3** unexcused tardies in a single marking period will make up the number of minutes they've missed after school.
- Letters will be mailed home with the date(s), time, and location.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Smith
Attendance Officer and School Secretary
732-214-2370 Option 2, Option 2 - Jsmith@milltownps.org