

Booker T. Washington MS 54 Handbook

2022-2023



Phone Number: 212-678-2861

Website: www.ms54.org

Required Paperwork

1. Blue Emergency Contact Card – Please return it to school as soon as possible. We will need this information in case of emergency.

2. Ryan Center Health Form – (Will be sent home). The nurse's office is a branch of the Ryan Health Center.

3. Income Verification Form - This is required by the city and provides the documentation needed to secure state funding for school meals and other needs. (This replaced the lunch form.)

Attendance

Absence Guidelines

Students are expected to come to “school” on time. Students who arrive more than five minutes after the start of class and/or school are considered late. There is no such thing as an excused late!

Appointments – Under normal circumstances, appointments should be scheduled outside the school day whenever possible.

Students are responsible for making up the work they missed while they were absent. At the beginning of the year, teachers will review the procedures for making up missed work with the students and parents.

Absence Procedure

If a student is absent from school, report their absence by email to absent@ms54.org. If you do not have access to email, call the school at 212-678-2861.

The following conditions may excuse a student from school attendance:

1. Personal illness, injury, or symptoms associated with COVID. A doctor's medical verification note may be required for extensive absences.
2. Family illness - an emergency situation requiring the student to be absent from school
3. Death of a relative
4. Observance of a religious holiday consistent with student's established creed or belief

Parent or medical verification notes should be submitted to the child’s homeroom teacher via email on the day the student returns to school. Absences documented with medical verification notes will be noted in the system as an excused absence. Please be sure to note the date of the absence on the letter.

Students must be in school for a minimum of one full period to be marked present.

Students leaving school due to illness, appointments or other reasons are required to have a parent sign them out of the building. **Students will not be permitted to sign themselves out under any circumstances.** A note from a parent cannot override this regulation. Students may not leave the building during the school day unaccompanied by a parent or guardian.

Cell Phone Policy

The MS54 community is committed to fostering an educational environment that (i) promotes focused engagement, active participation, and positive interactions both inside and outside the classroom, and (ii) ensures integrity and fairness in our testing and assessments. We believe such an environment will result in positive academic and social experiences and outcomes for our students.

Accordingly, our Cell Phone Policy prohibits student cell phone use at school. While students may bring cell phones to school, they are required to turn them into their homeroom teacher during morning homeroom. The phones will be secured for the day and returned during homeroom. Students who arrive late, will turn in their phones when they arrive and pick them up at the end of the day.

We believe strongly that this policy minimizes distractions in the classroom and in other school settings and reduces cheating. In addition, we believe that this policy encourages responsible and appropriate habits regarding the use of technology.

Technology is a vital educational tool. MS54 remains committed to integrating technology in the classroom to enhance our students' educational experience and continues to invest time and resources in that effort. Additionally, MS54 remains committed to maintaining a safe and secure school environment. We believe that this policy is consistent with these objectives.

At the start of the day, every student must place their cell phone in the assigned slot in the bin. The teacher will lock the bin in the classroom closet. The teachers will return cell phones to students before dismissal.

Code of Conduct

- Respect yourself, respect others and take responsibility for all your actions.
- Always try to do your best in representing your school and community.
- Adhere to all safety protocols. Never do anything that physically or emotionally hurts another person.
- Never do anything that interrupts the learning of your peers.
- Communicate positively, maturely and clearly.

General School Rules

Disciplinary action is based on the N.Y.C. Citywide Standards of Intervention & Discipline Measures. The Discipline Code will be strictly enforced.

1. Report bullying and inappropriate behavior to adults to protect yourself and others.
2. Arrive on time to avoid missing work. Bring an excuse note when absent or late.
3. You must have permission or an escort to leave your classroom.
4. Follow social distancing and traffic markers inside and outside of the classroom.
5. Use up and down staircases to help maintain safety.
6. Line up single file along the designated area to allow traffic flow and proper social distancing.
7. Congregating or meeting in the hall or stairs creates a danger
8. Running, pushing and horseplay are prohibited as it is dangerous..
9. Loud, obscene and offensive language is unacceptable as it is rude, disrespectful, and disruptive.
10. Book bags, note books, or electronic communication with inappropriate messages or images regarding other students is prohibited.
11. Keep the school clean and orderly as it represents our school tone and reduces pest issues.
12. The school is not responsible for equipment locked up outside of the school.
13. Personal property is a student's responsibility and should be secured at all times.
14. Jumping to touch the ceiling, light fixtures, door frames or other objects is prohibited.
15. Respond in a respectful manner to the directives of all teachers and staff in the building.

Communication

The weekly email is a “must do” for every parent at BTW MS 54. Find out what is happening every week at school: important dates, updates and information from the administration and the PTA. Subscribe on the bottom of the home page of our website – look under the title “Newsletter” - there is a box to add your email address and hit the “Subscribe” button.

Contacts

We encourage you to address any concerns or issues with the teacher first. The best way to do this is for students to talk with the teacher and/or parents to email the teacher. A staff email directory is on the website. After speaking with the teacher, if you feel the issue is still unresolved, contact the student coordinator.

School Phone Number: 212-678-2861

Fax Number: 212-316-0883

Principal: Elana Elster

Assistant Principal: Laura Lynch Geraghty

Parent Coordinator: Anne McIntosh Pejovich

Dean: Deanne Orcher

Student Coordinator: Erica Williams

Special Needs Coordinator: Jodi Mafдали

IEP (Individual Education Plans): Tanya Gonzalez

Guidance Counselors and Social Worker: Shauna Chapman Dewar, Darlene Collet-Ruberte, and Nicole Miller

School Secretary: Patricia Huggins

Dress Code

The purpose of this dress code is to ensure that all students dress appropriately for school and school activities. It is not designed to inhibit an individual student's right to be creative, but to help students appreciate that what may be acceptable for one situation may not be acceptable for another situation. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that students' clothing reflects the seriousness of the school's mission and does not interfere with the learning environment.

General Guidelines:

1. The following clothes CANNOT be worn because they distract from the learning environment or cause a safety hazard:
 - Hats, hoods, bandanas, and headscarves (except for religious compliance.)
 - Clothes with offensive, vulgar, or inappropriate messages or images.
 - Clothes that expose buttocks, undergarments, and/or undergarments including bras and underwear. Cropped shirts and shirts that do not reach the waistband of pants, shorts, or skirts.
 - Outwear worn inside the building including coats and jackets.

2. We encourage students to wear footwear with a heel strap to prevent possible injuries when traveling in crowded hallways and stairwells. Students will need appropriate footwear for physical education and walking trips.

Early Academy (Office Hours)

Early Academy is designed to provide extra academic support to the students, to give students the opportunity to get assistance from their teachers. Early Academy is on Tuesday and Thursday from 8:00AM-8:40AM. While not all students are required to come for Early Academy each day, we strongly encourage students to make use of the opportunity. Students who arrive after 8:25AM will not be permitted in for Early Academy, as it is too late.

Entrances and Exits

All students enter the school in **the morning through the courtyard on 107th Street**, by the flagpole.

Upon arrival, students should report to their designated location to line up. Breakfast bags will be available next to the flagpole. Students must finish eating their breakfast before entering the building.

Students will be dismissed from the door closest to their classroom. All doors will be used. Students who are meeting parents or friends to travel together should pick a meeting spot. Because dismissal gets crowded, the meeting spot should not be next to the gate on 107th Street. Students will not be permitted to congregate on the sidewalk area. They may wait inside the flagpole courtyard.

Students who arrive after the 107th Street doors are closed, must enter through the main entrance on 108th Street.

Grades/Report Cards

All students and parents will receive a grading rubric for each class. The subject teacher will provide this during the first week of school and will review it with both the students and parents.

Report Cards are issued four times a year. Students receive numerical grades for each subject. Sixth graders receive a pass/fail grade for music and foreign language. Health is also a pass/fail class. The final grade for each subject is an average of the grades from the four marking periods.

The grade point average is weighted according to how many times a week the class meets. The overall grade point average for each marking period is used to determine honor roll status.

Marking Periods

First Marking Period: September 8- November 10

Second Marking Period: November 14 - January 27

Third Marking Period: January 30-April 5

Fourth Marking Period: April 17 -June 27

Guidance Department

Our guidance counselors are available to help students with any issues that arise. This includes learning how to get along with other children, making good decisions, controlling anger, accepting responsibility, and being aware of strengths and weaknesses. The guidance counselors work with the students and parents on the high school articulation process.

If parents have any concerns about their child's performance academically, socially and behaviorally, please reach out to the child's homeroom teacher first. Referrals to the guidance counselors should come through the homeroom teacher.

In addition to our guidance counselors, there is a full-time social worker, a psychologist and a part-time social worker. We also have a social worker from The Ryan Health Center who is on site two days a week and school psychologist interns who can see students who need at-risk services.

High School Articulation

The high school articulation process begins in the 7th grade. The 7th grade grades, standardized test scores, and attendance are all admissions criteria for high school. **It is very important that students are aware of this as they begin the 7th grade.** Informational meetings about the high school articulation process will be held in the spring for seventh grade parents. There will also be a "High School PTA Meeting" in the spring, to which current 8th

grade parents and their students meet and share their experiences of the high school application process. In the fall, 8th graders will work with the guidance counselors on completing a high school application. Students will receive a directory of the high schools in New York City as well as information regarding the Specialized High Schools. A calendar with all of the important dates will be distributed to students and their parents.

High School Recommendation Letters

Recommendation letters for high school applications must be requested prior to Thanksgiving. Please be mindful of this deadline. The teachers are asked to write many letters, and late requests cannot be completed and processed in time for the deadline.

The Honor Code

We would like to ensure that all students reach their highest potential with integrity and honor. We hope to create a positive attitude towards knowledge and learning, to encourage learning for the sake of discovery and to instill the best education possible. An honor code has been established to create an understanding of these goals. This understanding is mutual between the staff, students and their families.

The Booker T. Honor Code As a student at Booker T. Washington Middle School 54:

- I will be guided by my conscience, knowing right from wrong. I will live up to the expectations of myself, my family and my school.
- I will not claim the work of others as my own, and I will not allow others to claim ownership of my work.
- I will not steal or destroy the property of others, either personal or academic.
- I will not harm or harass others verbally, physically or sexually. Nor will I harm the properties of the school.
- I vow to be honest with and respectful of the school community, and I will expect the same from others.

Penalties for Violations

Academic dishonesty includes representing others' work as your own, giving or receiving help on tests, quizzes, reports and other assignments where it is not permissible, and to share work with others.

- All students involved will receive a grade of zero for the work and will be referred to the administration.
- Parents will be notified.

- Other consequences may be given.

Honor Roll

Students receive recognition for academic achievement according to the following criteria:

- High Honors: average grade of all classes is 95 and above, no N's or U's for conduct
- Honors: average grade of all classes is 90 to 94, no N's or U's for conduct.

Grade point averages are calculated to the 100th and are not rounded for Honor Roll.

Homework Policy

Daily homework is an integral part of our curriculum and instruction. Students are expected to complete all assignments in a timely way. Regular and diligent completion of homework is an important factor in academic success. Students can expect about 1/2 hour of homework per evening in each major subject.

Policy for Make-Up and Late Work

It is the responsibility of every student to complete work in a timely manner.

Absences

In the event that a student is absent, the student will have two days, for each day the student missed, to make up the missed work.

Work Not Completed On Time

Homework assignments given to review the day's work or to prepare students for the next day's lesson may not be made up.* These could include, but are not limited to math problems, questions based on the reading or vocabulary assignments.

*At the end of each marking period, ONE missing homework grade (grade of zero) will be dropped. **Notes from parents will not waive this policy.**

When a long-term assignment is turned in late, point's equivalent to one third of a grade (for example from A to A- or from a B+ to a B) will be reduced for each day the assignment is not turned in. After five days, the assignment will not be accepted.

Inclement Weather

In the event of heavy rain, snow, or extreme cold, we will try to let the students enter the building early. This will not always be possible, however, as we do not always have sufficient supervision or space for distancing. On those days, try to arrive on time and not excessively early.

Independent Reading Requirement

It is our expectation that students will read 25 independent books per academic year. Although your child's literacy teacher and our librarian will monitor this goal, please help by encouraging your child to read silently every day. The goal is 30 minutes of silent reading per day. Your child's progress towards this goal will be tracked and documented on each report card.

Interscholastic Extracurricular Activities

MS 54 strives to provide opportunities for students to achieve a well-balanced and rewarding education while enrolled in our school. MS 54 recognizes the values that can be gained by participation in interscholastic extracurricular activities and the incentives these activities provide to students to achieve success in the classroom. In order to participate in an interscholastic sport, a student must be in good academic standing. Students with repeated disciplinary issues may also be excused from these activities. Eligibility for certain sports is also dependent on a physical clearance by a physician or clinic. Individuals declared academically ineligible **MAY NOT** attend practices, games or travel with the team during the period of ineligibility.

Library Media Center

The library is open during the school day, during Early Academy, and during after-school on some days. The library catalog is available online at <https://www.ms54.org/library.html> Students will use the library with their classroom teachers and on their own. Please help us maintain our collection by returning books on time.

Lost and Found

Items left throughout school will be placed in Lost and Found which can be found in the copy room on the first floor. **The Lost and Found is emptied once a month and the clothes are donated. Labeling items such as water bottles, lunch bags, sweatshirts, coats and jackets is essential.**

Lunch and Breakfast

Students may either bring lunch and breakfast to school or get a bagged one from school. Students do not have to pay for school food. Breakfast must be finished before entering school.

Notebooks and Materials

We will be following a consistent notebook format throughout the school. The teachers will review this with the students. See the school website for a complete supply list. A notebook grade will be part of the class rubric.

Parent Conferences

Parent conferences are scheduled two times a year. Parents will schedule their conferences using an electronic sign-up prior to the conferences. You will be notified when the sign-up page will be open. Although the five-minute conference with a teacher is brief, it is important that teachers keep to this schedule so many parents can be accommodated. We understand that these scheduling requirements are sometimes difficult to meet. If you feel that you need more than five minutes, please schedule a separate conference with your child's teacher.

Fall Conferences: November 17, 2021 (evening) and November 18, 2021(afternoon with an early dismissal for students)

Spring Conferences: March 9, 2022 (evening) and March 10, 2022 (afternoon with an early dismissal for students)

Parent Involvement & Communication

Contact the Parent Coordinator – Anne McIntosh Pejovich with your questions and concerns - amcintosh6@schools.nyc.gov

Register to receive weekly school/PTA emails! Subscribe on the bottom of the home page of our website www.ms54.org –look under the title “Newsletter” - there is a box to add your email address and hit the “Subscribe” button. Parent involvement is a vital part of the educational process. Children whose parents/guardians participate in school see by example that school is both valued and valuable. Parents are encouraged to become involved in many aspects of the school, from helping out in the library, serving as class parents and chaperoning classes on trips. A weekly email is sent to our parents with information pertaining to our school and community.

The school website (www.ms54.org) is also a source of information. Visit the website often as we update the content on a regular basis.

Class Parents are another source of communication at Booker T. They act as liaisons between the school, the homeroom teacher and the other parents in the class. Volunteer to be a Class Parent in your child's homeroom!

Planners

All students will receive planners on the first day of school. Students will be required to use the planners to keep track of their assignments and to have them with them each day. The teachers will help the students improve their organizational and time management skills using the planners. The planners are purchased for the students by the PTA. There are only a limited number of replacement planners. Each costs \$8.00.

Ryan Health Center

The William F. Ryan Community Health Center operates a health center at Booker T. Washington MS 54 that provides comprehensive health care to our students. We encourage you to register your child as a Ryan patient by filling out and returning the registration form so that your child can benefit from the wide range of services provided. The services include: complete physical exams, immunizations, testing, health screening and acute care and management of chronic illness. If your child already has a primary care doctor, he/she can still benefit from our acute care services if a problem should arise in school.

Safety Issues

Please report all safety concerns to Ms. Orcher, the Safety and Mediation Specialist, extension 3451. We make every effort to stay on top of any issues that may arise. It is therefore critical that you alert us as soon as possible.

Signing Out Early

Students are not permitted to leave school by themselves before dismissal. **A parent, a guardian or an adult listed on the emergency blue card must pick the child up and sign them out in the Main Office.**

Style Guide

Booker T. Washington follows the MLA format.

Supplies

Students need to have the following supplies with them each day:

1. Pens and pencils (small sharpener or mechanical pencils)
2. Notebook for each of their in-school subjects
3. Other required materials as directed by the teacher.

Visitors

All persons who are not regular members of the school personnel must report to the front desk on arrival. All visitors need photo identification.

Website

Visit our website: www.ms54.org often to get information and event details! Our website is sponsored and maintained by the PTA.

Technology Addendum

Jupiter Ed

Jupiter Ed is our online grade book and messaging system. Students and parents have separate access to Jupiter Ed. A link will be sent via Jupiter Ed to create your account. From that email, you may set a password. We recommend that students use their OSIS number.

Once you have set a password, to access Jupiter Ed:

1. Navigate to login.jupitersed.com
2. Click on student or parent
3. How to fill out the login form:
 - a. Name or ID = First AND Last Name (for parents, use your student's name)
 - b. Password = what you have previously set it for
 - c. School = MS54 Booker T. Washington
 - d. City = New York
 - e. State = New York
 - f.

Use the navigation bar on the left of the screen to access messages from teachers, gradebooks, and your personal settings. You may and should update your contact information here at any time. You may select the frequency with which you receive notifications from Jupiter about your child's academic progress. **We strongly suggest that you opt in to receive emergency text messages from the school.**