









The Children's School of Rochester (CSR) No. 15





85 Hillside Avenue
Rochester, NY 14610
(phone) 585.262.8830
(fax) 585.262.8834

STAFF HANDBOOK

CSR School Hours (K-6):

-  Buses arrive 7:15 am
-  Students enter for breakfast.....7:15 – 7:30 am
-  Students report for classes and school begins 7:30 am
-  Students are marked tardy after7:45 am
-  Dismissal.....2:00 pm
-  Buses departapprox. 2:10 pm

CSR School Hours Pre K:

-  Students enter for the day 7:45 am
-  Instruction begins 7:55 am
-  Students are marked tardy after 8:00 am
-  Dismissal.....1:45 pm

General

The Children's School of Rochester opened its doors to students in September of 1991, following one year of intensive planning. The school is rooted in the far-reaching educational reform and restructuring movement in the Rochester City Schools. The Children's School of Rochester is the first public school in the county initiated by a group of teachers (Sharyn Christman, Miriam Thomas, and Valerie Clark) and an administrator (Edward Witaszek) on the site level, rather than through a Central Office or administrative directive.

The school enrolls about 350 students, Pre-K-6. The Children's School is a citywide school open to children from all neighborhoods. Residence in the vicinity of the school, however, does not guarantee a place in the school. Placement is confirmed by the District's placement policy. Special procedures are in place to recruit students who are learning English as a new language. The District's Language Assessment and Placement Center places these multilingual learners. The student population – racially, ethnically, and economically – reflects the demography of the city. Approximately half of the students are learning English as a new language. Over 25 different language groups are currently represented at CSR. Languages spoken at CSR include Nepali, Arabic, Karen, Somali, Burmese, Swahili, Dari, and Spanish.

Mission Statement

Our Mission: CSR is a celebration of childhood where community and home culture underpin learning and where curriculum and activities are structured so that they are child-centered, hands-on, meaningful, and collaborative. Our school is nurturing, challenging, and authentic.

Vision Statement

“The Children’s School of Rochester is a *World in a School* of critical, literate thinkers and doers.”

Inclusion Statement

Inclusion of all children, as a practice, is a philosophical belief of the CSR. The mission and vision statements reflect our commitment to each child’s growth and progress. Through our values and practices, CSR seeks to provide educational support for students who are at a variety of developmental levels within the general education setting. We are committed to educating all children.

Briefings

ALL students and teachers of The Children’s School gather together as a community in the gym on A and B days from 8:00 am – 8:20 am. We share what we are learning in our individual grades. It is a time of celebration of our learning, our diversity, and our birthdays with one another. Children have opportunities to speak publicly on the microphone while making announcements and reading their own written compositions and poetry. Students put on instructional presentations; they also perform songs, skits, dances, chants, and instrumentals they have learned or created. It is not unusual to see our teachers and principal participating by singing, dancing and performing in costume; thus modeling cooperative, active learning for our children. We also use briefing time to welcome visitors to our school by singing a song to them. Briefing plays an integral part in creating a sense of family-like community that is distinctive of the Children’s School. All visitors must report to the main office, show photo ID, and get a visitor’s badge.

Morning/Afternoon Posts

- Each staff member will be assigned a morning and/or afternoon post depending on their schedules.
 - Posts include bus duty, hallway and café monitoring, and dismissal.

Absence Guidelines

- In the event that you know of an upcoming absence, please fill out a “Request for Absence” form (located in the main office) as early as possible.
 - **TEACHERS:** If you have an emergency, or are ill after office hours, please call or text **Michele** at **305.5800** either **before 8:30 pm or after 5:45 am.**
 - **PARAS AND TA’s:** If you have an emergency, or are ill after office hours, please call or text **Chanta** at **465.8737** either **before 8:30 pm or after 5:45 am.**
 - Please call before 1:30 p.m. to let us know if you will not be returning the following day. We will then be able to talk to the substitute to secure them, if necessary.
 - “Request for Absence” forms **must be filled out** for ALL absences. If you have an unplanned absence, you must complete the form upon your return. These forms are located on the counter in the copy/mailroom to the left of the sink.

Staff Sign In/Out

- All staff must sign in upon arrival for the day. The staff sign in sheet is located at the SSO station in the main entrance. If you leave the school during the day, please speak directly to Mr. Piper before leaving the building and then sign out. The office staff will not relay messages to Mr. Piper regarding staff leaving the building unless there are extenuating circumstances.

Parking

- Parking is available **only** in the parking lot located on the access road next to the school. Please do not park on Hillside Avenue or in the Pre K bus loop. These areas are used for student drop off and pick up and for our smaller buses.

Staff Mailboxes

- Each staff member will have a mailbox located in the copy room in Room 104. Please try to check your mailbox upon your arrival and prior to your leaving for the day.

Housekeeping Items

- There are several designated **adult bathrooms** at CSR:
 - Three are located on the main floor across the hall from the copy room (Room 104) and Room 108
 - Two are located across from the Collaboration Space
 - One is located in the new addition across from Kindergarten
 - Two are located in the lower level near the staff loungePlease be considerate of others.
- There are **refrigerators, a microwave, and a Keurig coffee maker** located in the lower level staff lounge. Please be mindful of expiration dates on your food. Also, please be considerate of others when using the microwave, coffee maker, or sink areas, and ***clean up after yourselves***.
- **Printers and Copiers** – Printers/Copiers are located in Room 104 and in Room 131. If you need to fax something, please use the Copier located in Room 104. Directions will be posted above the machine. Please be sure to have your district badge available for faxing and copies. The color printer/copier is located in Room 104, and a black and white only printer/copier is located in Room 131. Please do not use the color copier in the main office if you are copying large black and white jobs; use the black and white copier in Room 131. If you have larger copying jobs, please consider using the district Print Shop.
- **Laminator** - There is a large laminator located in the Staff Lounge. Mr. Basnet is the primary contact for using the laminator. It is very expensive to repair the machine, so please do not use it if you are not familiar with it. See Mr. Basnet for guidance.

Building Access

- Your District ID badge will allow you access to CSR from 6:30 am until 6:00 pm. Please wear your badge at all times.
- The school is available to staff from 6:30 am – 7:00 pm, Monday thru Friday on regular school days.

Custodial Request Forms

- If your room or general area needs maintenance or attention, please complete a Custodial Request Form located in the main copy room (on the counter to the far left of the sink). Place completed requests in the Custodial mailbox.

Work Group Governance

Since its inception in 1991, the Children's School community has worked to build a diverse, nurturing "family" in which all members are learners and teachers. We have built a shared leadership model that includes the teaching staff, administrators, and parent/guardians in the planning, implementation and assessment of our program. Our "school-based planning team" is comprised of seven work groups made up of parent/guardians and staff. Each work group focuses its attention on particular areas of responsibility (Teaching and Learning (Curriculum), Teaching and Learning (Briefing), Facilities, Organizational Development, Assessment, Staff Development, and Stake building). Below you will find a detailed description of the work groups. These work groups report to the entire staff at bi-monthly "Operations Meetings" (see p. 7). This governance framework was developed with the help of experts from the Eastman Kodak Company and incorporates values of collaboration, consensus, and continuous improvement within the school's governing process for the school.

The ***School Based Planning Team*** is made up of the following *work groups*:

The Organizational Development Work Group (ODWG) **is responsible for the Children's School in a holistic context. It is accountable for how the school fulfills its Mission and Belief, its Vision, and its Values.** It also determines how the school is structured and what systems and processes are used to achieve its strategic direction and goals. The ODWG acts as an interface between Rochester City School District offices and the Children's School itself, ensuring "Central Office" demands and CSR responses to them are congruent with the school's primary task. The formal CSR organization and informal "way it runs" are both agenda items for the ODWG.

Organizational Development Work Group **Roles & Responsibilities**

- Work group assignments
- Teaming packet/Teaching assignments
- Organization of school (staffing) – ways to fulfill our mission and vision of CSR
- Interviewing of new staff
- Budget
- School schedule
- Protocol monitoring
- Oversee work group participation & their documentation
- Oversee how families are functioning
- Living Contract
- Retreat
- Everything 😊
- School Improvement Plan
- Running of work groups – minutes template, binders, attendance, etc.
- Mission
- Keeping everything running well
- Aligns work to the mission and vision
- Unpack information from District and State

The Facilities Work Group (FWG) is responsible for the “infrastructure” at the Children’s School, which means it deals with physical site facilities, equipment, consumable materials, tools, and the “state” or condition of these. This work group ensures the physical facilities are present to enable the whole system (and each of its parts) to achieve its purpose.

Facilities Work Group
Roles & Responsibilities

- Oversee rooms in the building
- Oversee shared areas such as playground, Café and halls
- Maintain our school inside and outside
- Collaboration with Technology Focus Group
- Central Office facilities – bridge with our Custodial staff
- Aesthetics of building
- Placement of equipment in building
- Capital Improvements Plan
- Room assignments done in June
- Playground protocol
- Parking lot
- Microwaves, stove and refrigerators
- Assign bulletin boards
- Building safety and security – including entrances & staircases
- End of the year clean up procedures
- Manage Custodial Requests
- Organize materials)
- Beautification/cleanliness of the building
- Parking lot protocol
- Oversee repairs, exterior, issues around school campus
- Address graffiti
- Yearly updates

The Staff Development Work Group (SDWG) focuses on the human resource capabilities required at CSR. Included in this work are training plans, specific training events for staff, use of articles, books, and videotapes that are available to the teaching staff. Teaming and organization development are also responsibilities of the SDWG.

Staff Development Work Group
Roles & Responsibilities

- Provide PD to staff
- Organize annual Retreat
- Keep track of school PD for PD incentive
- Organize areas to address throughout the school year
- Superintendent’s Conference Days – organize and plan
- Parent Workshops after school
- Using best practice to provide SD
- Surveys staff on what they need
- Training for programs
- Network Team
- School-wide staff development proposal for upcoming school year (annual professional development plan)

The Assessment Work Group (AWG) **concentrates on the measurement parts of the system at CSR. Typically this work group covers all data and information acquisition, and assessment and planning activities (e.g., student report cards, teacher assessments, and school reports).** It deals with BOTH internal efficiency AND external effectiveness. In addition, it includes the notion that none of these measurements bring great value to the organization or to the school unless there is a built-in drive to upgrade our performance. The school views itself as a community of continuous learning.

Assessment Work Group
Roles & Responsibilities

- Report cards – update each year, as needed
- Share data
- Town Meeting
- Report card calendar - Semester dates and timeline
- Survey every 2 years – for students, staff and parents
- Analyzing data from the NYSED assessments, local assessments, Benchmarks and plan future action
- Staff Development – on writing report cards
- Survey results
- Progress monitoring
- Evaluating student achievement
- Report card conferences
- Testing support
- Reporting out to parents
- Oversee assessments building-wide
- Conference protocols
- With T&LWG – standardize test scores and drive what topics/areas to target academically building-wide
- Data collection
- Distribute sibling list
- Meet with the State
- Decisions about assessments used in building
- Longitudinal studies through years at CSR and beyond CSR
- Formal assessments

The Stake-building Work Group (SWG) **works on, continuously increasing the commitment of all significant parties (stakeholders) to the Children’s School of Rochester’s MISSION AND BELIEF, VISION, and VALUES statements.** Primary stakeholders are the children themselves, guardians of these children, and teachers at CSR. Associated stakeholders are The Board of Education and the RCSD along with its employee unions: RTA, BENTE, ASAR and RAP. Peripheral stakeholders are the Rochester community at large, Rochester area businesses, and other education institutions. Distant stakeholders are the New York State Education Department, the United States Department of Education, the National Center on Education and the Economy. All stakeholders are important to the school as a “system” and therefore to the SWG.

Stake Building Work Group
Roles & Responsibilities

- Communication with parents
- Organize a sign-up for staff parties and special lunches
- Volunteer Party
- Family Fun Nights
- New Staff Orientation/Tea

- Open House
- CSR Handbook & brochure
- Bus Driver appreciation
- School EXPO – Bridge between District and school
- Arrange teacher participation at PTO
- Sunshine Club
- CSR Website
- Spirit Week – hat day, pj day, etc.
- Increasing staff morale
- Building stake with parents, staff, students, community and CO
- International Dinner – coordinate with PTO
- Invited Board members/Superintendent to visit CSR
- Supports Family Literacy Center
- Peace Ambassadors
- Coordination of Community Events, such as World Refugee Day
- Unitarian Church Coordination
- Staff and Parent Handbooks

The Teaching and Learning (Curriculum) Work Group (T&LCWG) **provides for instructional excellence for each student. It strives to integrate the materials and resources used within and across the teaching families at the CSR.** It also strives to scaffold the curriculum itself (at the grade level as well as across all grades K-6). It focuses on structures, strategies and methods for teaching and learning designed for all children (those with special needs, as well as those for whom English is a second language) so that the learning process meets the needs of children, parents, teachers, the RCSD, and the broader community.

Teaching & Learning (C) Work Group
Roles & Responsibilities

- Curriculum Night/Meet the Teacher Night
- Common Core Support
- Aligned Interventions
- Curriculum
- Vet curricular materials
- Make decisions about curriculum pilots
- Student Heading – scaffolded across grade levels
- Scaffolded math fluency skills across the grades
- Scaffolded Science curricula across the grades
- Long range plans – collected these from grade levels and had teams share out
- Collaborate with Assessment Work Group
- Oversees Briefing
- Cursive writing
- Helps procure materials
- Research best practices and prospective teaching programs
- SWPBS
- Response to Intervention
- With AWG – standardize test scores and drive what topics/areas to target academically building-wide

The Teaching and Learning (Briefing) Work Group (T&L(B)WG) All students and teachers of The Children's School gather together as a community on A and B days from 8:00-8:20 a.m. in our gym. It is a time of celebration of our learning, our diversity, and our birthdays with one another. Children have opportunities to speak publicly on the microphone while making announcements and reading their own written compositions and poetry. Students give instructional presentations; they also perform songs, skits, dances, chants, and instrumentals they have learned. Students often present their own writings, artwork, and interdisciplinary projects. The T&L(B)WG supervises, coordinates, facilitates, and plans Briefing.

Teaching & Learning (B) Work Group
Roles & Responsibilities

- Provide the structure for CSR to *'come together to learn and grow as a school family'*
- Ensure that connections are being made to academic learning and the behavior matrix at briefing (community building, public speaking, music, art, culture, language development, showcase of classroom learning, etc...)
- Connect with parents, district leadership, community partners, and alumni to take an active role and/or present at briefing
- Continue to develop more opportunities for students to lead at briefing
- Develop and maintain a briefing binder each year to provide documentation of academic content
- Create the briefing calendar for each month (student artwork, copy/distribute to staff & students, submit to bulletin)
- Oversee the presentation sign up calendar
- Develop/manage a master yearly calendar of reoccurring briefing events
- Make decisions regarding any briefings presentations proposed outside of the regular briefing time frame
- Oversee student tech crew
- Develop new slides for display screen
- Review and revise briefing forms (announcement template, facilitator script, standard bearer script)
- Create protocols and expectations for briefing
- Develop a reference sheet for staff with protocols and facilitation duties
- Organize/manage stage storage
- Seek funding through grants, etc... for stage needs (sound, lighting, equipment, tv's for either side of the stage, etc...)
- Create protocols and manage the front hallway TV displays – content may be submitted to TL(B)WG by any staff member or work group
- Archive standard briefing music (piano parts)
- Provide musical components for briefing
- Set up music, screen, microphones, equipment for briefing presentations
- Create the script for each briefing presentation
- Greet facilitators and/or outside presenters the morning of briefing
- Assist and coach standard bearers for the Pledge of Allegiance
- Tear down briefing materials prior to the start of PE class
- Facilitate the creation of student generated thank you gifts for outside presenters
- Connect with custodial staff regarding any specific needs for briefing presentations

Operations

The Operations Group is not a decision making body, but is comprised of the entire faculty and administration and meets monthly. At Operations Meetings, decisions are addressed. The Operations Group focuses on those aspects of the operation of the organization that take place through time.

The Operations Meetings offer a forum for the entire staff to share information, solicit input on any matter regarding the staff, and discuss general issues regarding the school. Operations Meetings are scheduled after school, usually on a Wednesday. These meetings are not a forum for decision making. When issues arise and decisions have to be made, the staff is asked for input into the decision. Then the staff decides the appropriate Work Group to make the decision. These decisions, once made by the Work Group assigned, are binding on the operations group. Operations cannot overturn, overrule, or ignore decisions made by subgroups or individuals with that responsibility. For many decisions, a protocol is written stating the length of time before the decision is revisited.

- *The Technology Group is comprised of faculty and parents. The Technology Group focuses on organizing, developing, planning and requesting equipment, wiring, placement and use guidelines for entities that keep Children's School on target with technological requirements. These requirements include consideration for computers, printers, software, equipment integration and timing. Children's School plans as well as The District's policies on technology dictate the priority of tasks. This group is not a formal group.*
- *The I Care Team is not a decision-making body, but is comprised of staff and parents and meets regularly each month. The I Care Team focuses on the proactive approach to discipline that promotes appropriate student behavior and increased learning through teaching, monitoring and supporting students. The I Care Team emphasizes a positive school climate. This group is not a formal work group.*