

PEIRCE

Elementary School Guide for Parents Strive to Shine: As a Student, As a Friend



www.peircschool.info

85 Park Avenue Extension
Arlington, MA 02474
781-316-3736

Welcome to Peirce Elementary

Dear Parents and Members of the Peirce Community:

We are happy to provide you with this Peirce Elementary School Guide for Parents as a handy reference to important information as well as the policies and procedures of our school. It also highlights many of the aspects that make the Peirce community special. Please use this as a supplement to the Arlington Public Schools Elementary Handbook found on the Arlington Public Schools website.

Let me extend my hopes and wishes for a productive, safe, and healthy learning experience for your child(ren) here at Peirce School. I encourage you to visit my blog on the Peirce School PTO's webpage www.peirceschool.info for updates and insights into what's happening in our community. And, as always, feel free to contact me with questions or concerns.

Sincerely, Karen Hartley
Principal
khartley@arlington.k12.ma.us

Perseverance	To keep at it despite difficulties
Effort	To try your hardest in all you do
Integrity	To behave in a truthful and thoughtful way
Responsibility	To be accountable for your actions
Cooperation	To work together in a considerate manner
Excellence	To be the best you can be

Peirce School Mission Statement

Peirce School works to provide a safe, nurturing and inclusive environment in which students strive for academic excellence. It is our goal that staff, parents and students treat each other with mutual respect and feel a sense of community. By working together, we aim to prepare students to be capable, caring, responsible, and industrious citizens in a diverse, multicultural world.

In order to achieve the school's mission, it is essential that parents, teachers and school staff work together to help students develop academic and social skills that foster confidence and build self-esteem. We expect that students will be active participants in realizing the school's mission by striving for academic achievement and by being accountable for their actions.

We, as the Peirce community of staff, parents and students will:

- respect ourselves and the rights, feelings and property of others
- cooperate and be considerate of others in words and actions
- be honest and responsible for our actions
- be caring, courteous and helpful to others
- act as positive role models for students and our peers
- support each other in our efforts to learn and teach

We, as teachers, staff and parents, will teach students to:

- honor and celebrate each other's individuality
- show respect for others regardless of our differences
- take responsibility for our actions and learning
- develop and maintain positive interpersonal relationships
- develop positive ways to resolve conflicts
- support one another to accomplish the school mission

Communication

At Peirce School, we realize that communication between parents and teachers is crucial to providing students with a positive educational experience. We keep parents informed about school events through paper notices sent home in student's folders, e-bulletins (the Peirce Weekly News), and monthly PTO meetings.

Peirce's Curriculum evening, which takes place during the first month of school, gives parents a chance to meet their child(ren)'s teachers and gives teachers an opportunity to open the line of communication.

Good communication also requires that parents have information about what happens in the classroom. It is important for children to discuss their school experience with their parents. Parents can help by asking questions, looking over schoolwork, and making sure homework is done properly. Parents are invited to set up special conferences at any time to discuss their child(ren)'s progress with their teachers.

At Peirce we strive to keep the lines of communication open between all families and the teachers and administration. Should there be any questions or concerns in the classroom, families should first contact their child's teacher. If the issue is not satisfactorily addressed, then Principal Hartley. If it is a district issue, families should contact the office of Superintendent Bodie. Our goal is to make sure that you are heard and made welcome.

School Information-District Wide

For general information pertaining to Arlington schools such as:

- Open Enrollment
- District Calendar
- School Hours
- Attendance Policy
- Inclement Weather
- Religious Observances
- Family Vacations
- Field Trips
- Lunch Programs/Free and Reduced Lunch
- Student Insurance Program
- Visitors and Criminal Offender Record Information (C.O.R.I.) Requirements
- Emergency Operations Plans and Drills
- Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Policy and Procedures
- Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Health and Wellness Information
- Curriculum, Assessments and Progress Reports
- Additional Programs (METCO and Enrichment)
- Student Support Services
- Parent Involvement
- Community Resources

Refer to the Arlington Public Schools Elementary Handbook
http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/eforms/parent_forms/Elementary_Handbook.pdf

School Information-Peirce

Safe Phone (781) 316-3298

Safe Phone is a confidential voice mailbox accessed only by staff personnel. Please leave information about your child's absence that would be helpful for the school to know, especially regarding contagious illnesses (e.g. flu, head lice, pink eye, strep throat, etc.).

Note: This is not the mailbox in which to leave information for a classroom teacher. For all other concerns, call the school's main number (781) 316-3736.

Allergy Policy

We strive to make Peirce a healthy, safe place for all students. At lunch, we offer a “nut-free” table, where any child whose lunch is nut-free may eat. All lunches sold in the cafeteria are nut-free, and classrooms are nut-free as well.

Peirce adheres to the Arlington Public Schools’ allergy policy, which can be found at: <http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/asc/policies/jlccb-e.pdf>

PowerSchool

Arlington Public Schools utilizes PowerSchool as its secure web-based student information system. It is critical that families keep this information up to date. In cases of school closings and other emergency announcements, all parents and guardians (up to 10 unique phone numbers) will be called automatically. Incoming Peirce families receive a notice to submit their information for input into the system at the start of the year. If you have any issues or questions about this system or your log in, please contact the main office.

The system provides teachers and administrators real-time access to course assignments, classroom rosters, seating plans, student attendance and grading. The system also provides parents and students access to grades, assignments, attendance records and more.

Lunch and Snacks

Students have a 40-minute lunch and play period, which is supervised by lunch aides. Lunch aides help at lunchtime and supervise (or even participate in) playground activities, such as basketball and kickball.

Students have the option of bringing lunch from home or purchasing lunch at school. A hot lunch is available at a set cost. Children from households that meet Federal income guidelines are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. The current lunch menu is posted on the Peirce website <https://peircschool.info/lunch/>. Students can decide on a daily basis whether to buy lunch based on the menu choices for that day.

Most classes also have a designated snack time during the day (this varies by grade). Please send your child(ren) to school with nutritious and allergen-free snacks.

Extended Day Program at Peirce

Peirce is home to an on-site Extended Day program, Mrs. T’s Playcare. Hours are 7:15-8:15 a.m. and 2:00-6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. For more information, please contact Mrs. Jane Torregrossa directly at: 781-316-3742 or visit the Peirce website (<http://peircschool.info/after-school-programs/>) where you will find information about this on-site program as well as other off-site alternatives.

Classroom Placement

Each spring teachers meet with the principal to discuss classroom placement. They consider each child's academic performance, social development, need for special services and learning style. Class lists are composed with the goal of creating well-balanced classes in which each child will thrive. All final placement decisions are made by the school principal.

Special Services and Programs at Peirce

Peirce students have access to all of the Arlington school system's educational services, including the following:

- Art enrichment
- English Language Learners (ELL) program
- Instrumental music instruction
- Reading Intervention
- Education specialists
- Speech/Language pathologist
- Title 1 assistance

For more information about any of these programs, please contact your child(ren)'s teacher or visit the Arlington Public Schools' Web site at: www.arlington.k12.ma.us/home/

Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO)

Peirce School participates in the METCO program, a nonprofit organization whose goal is to place minority children from metropolitan Boston schools into suburban schools. The purpose of METCO is to attempt to racially balance suburban schools, while enriching the host community through the exposure to diverse cultures.

METCO seeks to break down commonly held stereotypes while providing a quality education to Boston children. There is no cost to Boston families, and parents of METCO children are encouraged to participate in any and all Peirce School functions. If you are interested in hosting a METCO student for after school activities see, <http://peirceschool.info/>.

Responsive Classroom

Peirce is in the process of becoming a Responsive Classroom school.

Responsive Classroom (RC) is an approach to teaching based on the belief that integrating academic and social-emotional skills creates an environment where students can do their best learning. The RC approach consists of a set of practices and strategies that build academic and social-emotional competencies. These core classroom practices are the heart of the RC approach:

- ***Interactive Modeling:*** An explicit practice for teaching procedures and routines (such as those for entering and exiting the room) as well as academic and social skills (such as engaging with the text or giving and accepting feedback).

- **Teacher Language:** The intentional use of language to enable students to engage in their learning and develop the academic, social, and emotional skills they need to be successful in and out of school.
- **Logical Consequences:** A non-punitive response to misbehavior that allows teachers to set clear limits and students to fix and learn from their mistakes while maintaining their dignity.
- **Interactive Learning Structures:** Purposeful activities that give students opportunities to engage with content in active (hands-on) and interactive (social) ways.
- **Morning Meeting:** Everyone in the classroom gathers in a circle for twenty to thirty minutes at the beginning of each school day and proceeds through four sequential components: greeting, sharing, group activity, and morning message.
- **Establishing Rules:** Teacher and students work together to name individual goals for the year and establish rules that will help everyone reach those goals.
- **Energizers:** Short, playful, whole-group activities that are used as breaks in lessons.
- **Quiet Time:** A brief, purposeful and relaxed time of transition that takes place after lunch and recess, before the rest of the school day continues.
- **Closing Circle:** A five- to ten-minute gathering at the end of the day that promotes reflection and celebration through participation in a brief activity or two.

In-School Volunteering

Peirce School gladly welcomes parent participation. Many in-school volunteer opportunities are available, from assisting students with arts and crafts projects to reading aloud. Please check with your child(ren)'s teacher to see how your skills could be put to use in your child(ren)'s classroom!

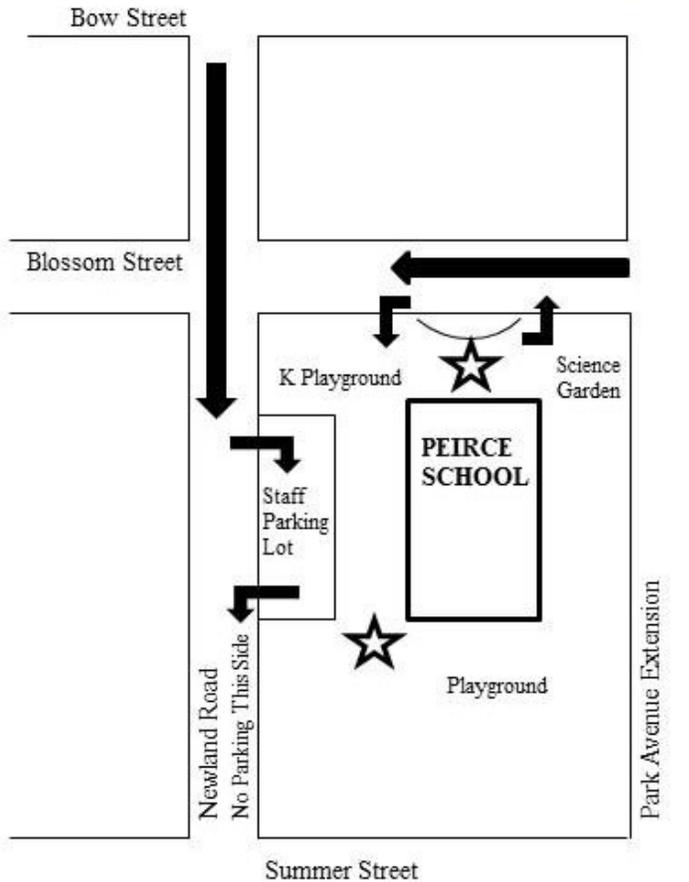
For the safety of our students, all volunteers must complete a CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) form prior to volunteering. Please ask at the main office for more details.

Safety

Driving to School

When driving your child(ren) to and from school, please use caution and follow the Peirce traffic flow map called "Stop Drop & Roll". Please note, there is no parking or idling on Park Avenue Extension. Some guidelines to follow:

- On school days, treat Newland Road as one-way from Bow to Summer Streets.
- On school days, treat Blossom Street as one-way from Park Avenue Extension to Newland Road.
- Remember, the drop-off area at the side of the school is a one-way loop. Enter at the driveway closest to Blossom Street and exit from the driveway closest to Summer Street.
- There is NO PARKING on the east or school side of Newland Road.
- NO PARKING in either drop off areas as they are fire lanes.
- No adults should get out of the car in the drop off areas. If you need to get out to either pick up or drop off a child, then you must go find a legal parking space.
- NO PARKING in the teacher's lot. This is strictly for their use.



Walking to School

Peirce School encourages all of its students to walk to school as often as possible. Parents should walk with children, at least initially, to point out traffic signals and crosswalks.

Pets on School Grounds

For safety and health reasons, parents and children are reminded that pets are not allowed on school property at any time, including at both drop off and pick up times.

Screen time policy

At Peirce Elementary School, we strive to make the most of every school day. This philosophy extends to the use of media in the schools as required under the Massachusetts Department of Education’s Frameworks.

Movies/Television

Careful consideration is given to every program or movie shown during school hours. The faculty and staff strive to use television or movie screen time to promote academics, citizenship and community by utilizing educational movies and programs that have a substantive connection to the curriculum. All movies shown at Peirce will be age appropriate based on standardized rating systems. If a teacher chooses to show a program, or a portion of a program, that is

intended for older audiences, or is not rated, that teacher will contact parents and, if necessary, allow children to opt out of viewing the film.

Computer/Screen time

Computer screen time is given equal consideration at Peirce. Students will use computers and tablets to advance their technological skills pertinent to becoming learners in the 21st Century. They will also use computers to advance academic skills.

Computer or other screen time also may be used as rewards or incentives on occasion for individuals or groups of students at the teachers' discretion.

Parents are encouraged to contact their child's individual teacher, specialist or main office with any questions.

PTO at Peirce

The Peirce School Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) organizes most of the fundraising and special events at Peirce. Parents and teachers are strongly encouraged to join the PTO and become active members.

- 1. Dues/donations** Every school year families are asked to donate to the annual fund drive. Keep in mind, all donations are tax deductible and voluntary!
- 2. Fundraisers** Throughout the year, the PTO sponsors a variety of fundraisers, with an emphasis on fun community events rather than traditional fundraising products. A list of the planned fundraisers is included on the PTO calendar. We encourage you and your family and friends to support these events.

The PTO also manages a number of programs that with a little time and effort provide a lot of revenue for our school without dipping into your pockets. With products you have already purchased for your home, you can:

- Clip BoxTops4Education coupons (10 cents/coupon)
- Clip Tyson A+ Labels (24 cents/label)
- Clip Campbell's Labels (equipment for our school)
- Recycle used ink cartridges and cell phones (we earn cash)
- Drop Off Your Unwanted Books to Peirce School's Library (we either use or redeem at the Book Rack for in store credits)
- Shop using BoxTops4Education website (we earn cash)
- Join Menotomy Beer & Wine's Wine Club (we earn cash)

- 3. Grants** Some of the PTO committees seek grant money to support the enrichment activities of the PTO. In years past, these have included a grant from the Arlington Educational Enrichment Fund to subsidize some of the Science Garden activities and one from Cambridge Savings Bank to bring the Mass Audubon Society's science enrichment programs to the school.

Where does PTO money go?

PTO funds help cover the costs of enrichment needs for Peirce students, teachers, and families that are not covered under the Arlington Public Schools' budget. The PTO budget gets voted on annually with the goal to best meet the current needs of the school. At the beginning of the school year, the PTO typically provides a classroom supplies budget to each teacher and specialist.

The PTO sponsors a variety of enrichment activities, including: theater, live music, dance performances, animal encounters, and author visits. For field trips, the PTO usually subsidizes the cost of the bus. The PTO sponsors social activities such as Movie Nights and Ice-cream Socials to bring the Peirce community together.

The library is always in need of new and updated materials. Enhancing the collection is a priority for the PTO.

PTO Meetings

PTO meeting nights vary from year to year, but typically occur once monthly from 6:30-8:00 pm in the Library.

Co-presidents facilitate the meetings, with a portion of the meeting dedicated to a prepared agenda and another portion for questions/open discussion. Committee heads and teachers report on and evaluate past activities and discuss current and upcoming activities' needs. Although members are encouraged to attend as many meetings as possible, attendance is not required.

Advisory Council

The Peirce School Advisory Council is a representative, school-based committee composed of the principal, parents, teachers, and community members. School Councils were established by the Massachusetts Education Reform Act to improve and provide support for public schools. The School Council acts under the supervision of the Arlington School Committee.

The School Council members are elected to fixed terms, with members elected by the parents at Peirce School for two-year terms and teachers elected by their peers for two-year terms.

The School Council is charged with planning, goal setting, and budgeting for improvements at Peirce. Specific responsibilities of the Peirce School Council include:

- adopting educational goals for the school that are consistent with local educational policies and statewide student performance standards
- identifying the educational needs of students attending the school
- formulating a school improvement plan

Meetings are open to the public and all interested members of the Peirce community may attend.

Diversity and Inclusion Group

In 2018, parents, teachers, and administrators at Peirce joined to create a a group whose goal is to raise awareness about diversity and inclusion in order to provide a safe learning space and welcoming environment for all our children and their respective families -- regardless of race, color, religious views, national origin, sex, gender identity and expression, citizenship, age, ancestry, family/marital status, sexual orientation, disability, source of income, and military status. Early steps have included a listening session with APS consultant Carlos Hoyt, meetings with Principal Hartley, and naming of co-chairs.

Social Media Policy

At Peirce, teachers, students, staff, and other school community members use social networking/media (Twitter, Facebook, blogs, etc.) as a way to connect with others, share educational resources, create educational content, enhance the classroom experience, and network within and outside of the school community. We also know that families also turn to social media to share information within our school community and wider networks. While social networking is fun and valuable, there are some risks we need to keep in mind when using these tools. In the social media world, the lines are often blurred between what is public or private, personal or professional.

Below are guidelines to follow when members of the Peirce community (students, faculty, administrators, staff and families) are representing Peirce Elementary in social media spaces, regardless of whether these are considered professional or personal spaces.

Use good judgment

- We expect good judgment in all situations (from the teachers/staff and parents). Behave in a way that will make you and others proud and reflect well on the school.
- Regardless of your privacy settings, assume that all of the information you have shared on your social network is public information.

Be respectful

- Always treat others in a respectful, positive, and considerate manner.
- Use good digital citizenship when interacting online. Always read your comments before you post to be sure that you are respecting individuals or the school district.

Be responsible and ethical

- Be sure to post truthful and sincere interactions. Do not post secrets and respect the privacy of others. Do not post anything that could harm the reputation of an individual or the school.
- Raise questions, concerns and complaints directly with the school rather than posting them on social media – whether on an individual page, in closed groups (e.g. groups set up for school parents to communicate with each other) or on the school's pages.
- Do not post anything malicious about the school or any member of the school community.

Respect private and personal information

- Never share or transmit personal information online.
- Always respect the privacy of school community members.
- Do not post photos, videos or comments that include other children at the school without their permission.

Be Proactive

- Report any abuse of the Peirce Social Media Policy immediately.
- Do not be a bystander to cyberbullying or any negative online interaction behaviors.
- Report this behavior to the principal, teacher, parent or guidance counselor.

Peirce Elementary Contacts

Main Office 781-316-3736
Fax 781-316-3748
Safe Phone 781-316-3298

Karen Hartley khartley@arlington.k12.ma.us 781-316-3737
Principal

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Secretary

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Nurse

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Arlington Public School Contacts

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