

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
From the Director...	3
1 GENERAL INFORMATION	4
1.1 Our Mission.....	4
1.2 Our Charter.....	4
1.3 Educational Philosophy, Curriculum and Methods.....	4
1.4 Multicultural Education	5
1.5 Governance/Administration.....	5
1.6 Parent Representative to Board of Directors.....	5
1.7 Admissions.....	6
1.8 Exceptional Education Services.....	6
1.9 Counseling Services.....	6
1.10 First Name Basis.....	6
1.11 School Hours.....	7
1.12 Attendance Policy.....	7
1.13 Absences.....	7
1.14 Tardy Policy.....	8
1.15 After School Program.....	8
2 STUDENT DEVELOPMENT & LEARNING	9
2.1 Curriculum.....	9
2.2 Grade Level and Class Placement.....	9
2.3 Assessing Student Progress.....	9
2.4 Reporting Student Progress.....	10
2.5 School Policy on Homework.....	10
2.6 Student Discipline.....	10
2.7 Playground Rules.....	12
2.8 All School Recess.....	12
3 COMMUNICATION	13
3.1 Parent-Teacher Communication.....	13
3.2 Parent-Teacher Conferences.....	13
3.3 Addressing Concerns.....	14
3.4 Staying Informed.....	14
3.5 School Directory.....	14
4 WORKING TOGETHER	15
4.1 Our Commitment to You.....	15

4.2	Your Commitment to Us.....	15
4.3	Families are School Partners	16
4.4	Fundraising (Sunshine Fund and Strawberry Festival)	16
4.5	School Council.....	17
4.6	Parent Visiting or Volunteering in the Classroom.....	17
4.7	Class Parents.....	18
4.8	Home Visits.....	18
4.9	Field Trips.....	18
4.10	Birthdays.....	19
4.11	Religious Holidays.....	19
5	STUDENT HEALTH & SAFETY	19
5.1	Emergency Cards.....	19
5.2	Health Forms.....	19
5.3	Medication at School.....	19
5.4	Illness.....	20
5.5	Nutrition/Lunch/Allergies.....	20
5.6	Sleep.....	20
5.7	Work/Play Clothes.....	21
5.8	Accident Report.....	21
5.9	Building Security.....	21
5.10	Fire, Severe Weather, Emergency Drills.....	21
5.11	Inclement Weather, Opening or Dismissal changes.....	21
6	TRANSPORTATION & PARKING	22
6.1	General Notes on Transportation.....	22
6.2	Morning Drop-Off Procedures.....	22
6.3	Walking Your Child into the School.....	23
6.4	Late Arrivals.....	24
6.5	Dismissal Pick-Up Procedures.....	24
6.6	Parking at CPSC.....	25
7	FACULTY & STAFF	25
8	BOARD OF DIRECTORS	26
9	SCHOOL CALENDAR	28
10	ADDENDUM: Overview of Charter School Finances.....	30

This online edition of the Parent Handbook omits contact information, and so is a little shorter than the printed version. Please check your School Directory or call the school office.

FROM THE DIRECTOR...

June 2010

Dear Central Park School for Children Families,

We welcome you to the 2010-11 school year. Your child's year will be filled with projects, field trips, exciting celebrations and a daily schedule packed with the joy and rigor that pervades CPSC's classrooms.

Your family's choice to attend Central Park School for Children displays your commitment to our learner-centered educational philosophy, and to being a partner in your child's growth. We call this partnership "working together" (p.15, Parent Handbook), and it shines through in three distinct ways:

Participation: Your child's school year is more fulfilling when your family attends every conference and as many celebrations as possible. Your presence as a volunteer in the class or at recess and at all school events is vital to your child, to her class, and to the larger school community. CPSC is fueled by "Parent Power"!

Involvement: Each student's growth is supported by her family, teachers and classmates. Your understanding of what she is studying, exploring, and building will deepen her love for learning.

Commitment: We are determined to work together to ensure that your child flourishes this school year. Our mutual respect and trust will go a long way to support your child's academic, social, emotional and physical well-being.

This Parent Handbook provides basic yet vital information about our policies, practices and procedures. Your understanding of its contents will support our efforts to help your child, and our entire school, grow and learn together.

Yours,

John

GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Our Mission

The Central Park School for Children is committed to nurturing and guiding the natural eagerness of each child to explore, grow, and relate to others. The school is founded on three principles: that children are naturally full of life, power and confidence; that the best available research must guide our methods; and that children develop best in a community where everyone values and actively supports curiosity, challenge and learning. The school is a community of partners who seek to guide, cherish, and be amazed by the children.

1.2 Our Charter

The Charter of the Central Park School for Children, approved by the Department of Public Instruction of the State of North Carolina, is available for review in the school office or on the school website (www.centralparkschoolforchildren.org). It explains our founding concepts, organization and commitments in detail. A few key elements of our charter are also described below.

1.3 Educational Philosophy, Curriculum and Methods

The Central Park School for Children is unique among public elementary schools because of its *child-centered* educational philosophy. Child-centered means that the organization of the school and the methods we use to teach children emerge from our knowledge of how children learn best, and from our belief that, given appropriate opportunities, children actively and enthusiastically participate in developing their own abilities and identities.

Because our methods derive from a child-centered perspective, our classrooms look and feel different from traditional public school classrooms. Three research-based concepts shape our curriculum and methods:

- Our curriculum is *developmentally appropriate*, meaning that each child is introduced to new ideas and skills at a pace appropriate to that child's readiness to learn. Since children of the same age will typically reflect different levels of readiness, they may be working at different levels of complexity in our classes. Children who learn when they are ready are naturally enthusiastic and love learning.
- Our curriculum is *integrated around projects*. It recognizes the fact that the various branches of knowledge -- such as science, mathematics, social studies, and language arts to name only a few -- are actually intertwined in the world around us. These disciplines are combined in our classes around common activities. An integrated curriculum respects and nourishes individual learning styles, multiple intelligences, and the creative union of knowledge and skills in solving real-life problems.
- Our curriculum is *hands-on*; children are encouraged to experience concepts. There is an emphasis on building from children's interests and learning in a meaningful way, with opportunities to apply skills and knowledge to meaningful problems. Our classrooms include activity centers that foster learning by doing. The value of a hands-on approach is

beautifully captured in the Chinese proverb, “I hear and I forget; I see and I remember; I do and I understand.”

1.4 Multi-Cultural Education

The Central Park School values multi-cultural and socio-economic diversity among our student body, teachers and staff. Teachers and staff are expected to be sensitive to the cultural and socio-economic diversity that exists at our school and to nurture such sensitivity in our students. CPSC strives to build a school community where families from diverse races, cultures, classes and family configurations are represented within a supportive environment. We will be committed to providing cultural awareness training for the CPSC teachers, staff and parents using outside experts.

1.5 Governance /Administration

Responsibility for the overall well-being of the Central Park School for Children and attainment of the goals outlined in our Charter resides with the Board of Directors. These responsibilities include: ensuring that our focus remains on the children, that our educational goals are clear, and that there are appropriate means for measuring our progress; ensuring the financial stability of the school and its adherence to legal mandates; and ensuring the safety and appropriateness of our learning facility. Other Board responsibilities include setting policy and addressing any other issues the Board deems important to the development and maintenance of excellence at CPSC.

The Board hires the School Director who, in turn, has responsibility for carrying out Board policies. The Board is not involved in the day-to-day operation of the school. The Director oversees the administration and daily operations of the school, including hiring and supervising staff, and is charged with meeting goals relating to student learning and development. In addition, the Director is primarily responsible for communication between the school, parents, and the larger community.

At least one Board meeting per quarter will occur. Dates and times of Board meetings will be posted on the school’s website and on the school bulletin board. All Board meetings are open to the public for observation, except those meetings which are closed according to the rules of the NC Open Meetings Law. Non-Board members are not expected to speak at public meetings unless by request of the Board.

The Board Agenda is determined at least 3 days prior to the meeting by the Board President in consultation with the Director, the Business Manager and Board members. Minutes are kept in the Board Book in the front office and are available within a few days after they are adopted by the Board.

The CPSC Board is small and has no standing committees. The research that informs Board decisions is conducted by school staff with occasional consultation with Board members. The Board is looking forward to working with the School Council to facilitate the gathering and critiquing of information necessary for Board decisions.

1.6 Parent Representative to Board of Directors

Every other year, the parent body elects a representative to be a voting member of the Board of Directors. The representative serves a two year term. The next election will be at the beginning of the 2010/2011 school year. Candidates will be asked to write a paragraph about why they would like to serve in this capacity. The parent representative should be prepared to study issues that come before the Board, to serve on an active Board committee and to report to the Board on all matters relating to parents, their frustrations and their celebrations.

1.7 Admissions

The Central Park School for Children is a charter public school that does not discriminate on the basis of gender, color, religion, national origin or disability. On an announced date around the first of March each year, children are admitted from applications via a lottery system, as there are generally more applications for a particular grade than there are available spaces. Children who are not admitted at that time are placed, in lottery order, on a waiting list for their grade. Siblings of existing students and teachers' children receive priority. Students must be at least five years old on or before August 31st of the year they start kindergarten. Admission is open to any student in North Carolina.

1.8 Exceptional Education Services

Central Park School provides Exceptional Children's Services to eligible children, who are entitled to a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) as outlined by state and federal law. If your student currently has an Individualized Education Program (IEP), services will be provided upon entry to CPSC. If you believe your child may be eligible for services, please discuss this with your child's teacher. S/he can assist you with the process that may lead to a referral. If it is determined by the Student Assistance Team that a referral is needed, your child will be formally evaluated. If your child is found eligible, and if you agree to services, an IEP will be developed and services provided. For further information, please contact the school's coordinator for Exceptional Children.

1.9 Counseling Services

The school counselor plays a vital role in supporting students, teachers and families within the Central Park School community through whole class instruction, small group work and individual counseling. A child may be referred to the counselor by her/himself, by a teacher and/or by a parent. If you have a concern about the social or emotional well-being of your child, please contact the counselor. Discussions with the school counselor are confidential. In the event that a teacher refers a child for group or individual counseling, the counselor will contact the parents prior to meeting with the child.

1.10 First Name Basis

The success of each child at the Central Park School depends on a trusting, open and involved relationship between students, parents and school personnel. In the interest of emphasizing this partnership, we encourage both adults and children to address each other on a first name basis within our community. We have found that this simple informality of address contributes to a close and special bond between students, families and school employees. It reminds us, with every interaction, that we are a community, working together as equally respected individuals, to foster and delight in the development and learning of our children.

1.11 School Hours

The school day begins promptly at 8:30am and ends at 3:15pm. The building officially opens at 7:45am, with a CPSC staff person supervising children as they arrive at school and congregate in the “big room.” Since the drop-off lane is not operational before 8:00am, *if you arrive before 8:00am, you must park in the Patanjalis lot and enter the “big room” with your child.* It is important to be sure supervision has begun before leaving your child. Under NO circumstance should a child be dropped off unattended at the curb or inside the school.

In order to get all students into the building on time and to avoid traffic congestion, it is vital to stagger the arrival of cars in the carpool lane. We therefore strongly encourage parents to take advantage of this *free* before school supervision with “kid-friendly” activities.

1.12 Attendance Policy

Regular school attendance is necessary for optimal learning and is required by NC State law. To be counted present, a student must be in attendance at least one-half of the school day. Students who arrive after or leave before 11:30AM are considered absent.

1.13 Absences

According to NC state law, all absences from school must be documented as either excused or unexcused (and excessive unexcused absences result in a loss of state monies to the school!). Absence is excused for the following reasons: illness, injury, quarantine, death in the immediate family, medical or dental appointments, court or administrative proceedings, or educational opportunities. If your child’s absence does not fall into one of these categories, or you anticipate that your child will be out for an extended period of time for any reason, please discuss the issue with the school Director as soon as possible. If a student’s unexcused absences reach ten (10), the matter will be addressed by the Director with parent or guardian.

Absences relating to family trips with an educational component may be excused. If your child will be absent for an educational opportunity, please discuss the absence with your child’s teacher and fill out the Educational Leave Form. This information will help clarify the nature of the absence, formalize the request for an “excused” absence, and facilitate communication between home and school regarding the absence.

If your child has to miss school, we ask that you do two things:

- 1) Please call the school office, every morning that your child is out to inform CPSC of your child’s absence. This will keep us informed of your child’s status.
- 2) Send in a note signed by a parent/ legal guardian the same day that the student returns to school. If the child was seen by a physician, a note from the physician may be substituted for the parent note.

N.B.: If the absence extends beyond three days, send the teacher a note when your child returns, signed by a parent or legal guardian, stating the dates and the reason for the absences (procedure required by NC law). Each day of absence, beyond the first 3 days, must be marked excused or unexcused within three days of the absence. **If a note is not sent within three days, each absence is considered unexcused.**

1.14 Tardy Policy

PLEASE MAKE THE EFFORT TO HAVE YOUR CHILD AT SCHOOL ON TIME, EVERY DAY. In the first few minutes of class, routines are established and reinforced, and teachers give instruction and information that are important to understanding what will happen next in class, or for the rest of the day. When your child misses context information, she or he will start the day at a disadvantage. It may be hard for your child to have a sense of purpose about an activity not fully understood. In addition, time to work on tasks independently often occurs at the start of the day. Such time is vital to the development of self-confidence, exploration and expression of ideas. Repeated tardiness may eventually lead to a child's disengaging from classroom endeavors. **AFTER THREE TARDIES, PARENTS WILL RECEIVE A NOTICE TO MEET WITH THE DIRECTOR.** Parents should be aware that the state considers 3 tardies as 1 unexcused absence. After 6 unexcused absences, the school is required by law to call Social Services.

Other notes:

- No one will be on duty in the carpool lane after 8:30am.
- When late (after 8:30) to school, the responsible adult must accompany the child into the building and sign in the child at the front office.
- After signing in your child, please say your good-byes in the front hall rather than enter your child's classroom. This is to insure that class interruptions are kept to a minimum.
- UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE SHOULD CHILDREN BE DROPPED OFF UNATTENDED AT THE CURB!

1.15 After-School Program

The mission of our after school program is to provide a safe and nurturing after-school environment for children as they play and engage in relaxing and leisure-focused activities. Hours of operation are from **school dismissal (3:15pm) to 6pm.** During winter months, curbside pickup of students will begin at 5:30pm.

A standard fee is required with pro-rated options for siblings. Scholarships are also available on a limited basis. Please see the Director for information regarding scholarships. For further information about the after school program, please contact the main office.

1.16 Intersession and Summer Camps

Camps will be available during two weeks of each intersession (for a fee). Participants may sign up for one or two weeks. Our camps will be housed at CPSC and led by our after-school director and staff. Mornings activities focus on various integrated art themes. Afternoon activities include indoor and outdoor games, field trips, sports and plenty of time to share the day's events with friends. Drop off will begin at 7:30am, with pick up by 6:00pm

A standard fee is required, with a discounted rate for siblings. Scholarships may be available on a limited basis. More information regarding camp hours and fees, as well as summer camp, will be sent home.

2

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

2.1 Curriculum

The Central Park School is committed to following the North Carolina Standard Course of Study as a minimum guideline for student objectives. It is an expectation that this curriculum will be richly expanded and taught in a manner consistent with a child-centered educational approach.

2.2 Grade Level and Class Placement

According to North Carolina law, students must be at least five years old on or before August 31 of the year they start kindergarten. Within the parameters of this law, the appropriate grade level of a student is determined by the Central Park School in consultation with parents. We will use all available information to make the best decision for each child, including age, academic achievement, social and emotional development, and parent and teacher perceptions.

Class placement within a grade level is determined by the Central Park School using the above information in conjunction with an effort to balance classes by gender and diversity. Current and prospective teachers along with the Director decide on class placement. Parents who wish to have input regarding their child's placement should fill out the Parent Input Form, which will be sent home in May. Because there are many factors that must be balanced in determining class placement, requests should not be made for a specific teacher. Families will be notified of class placement before the end of June; the Director reserves the right to amend the class lists as needed.

Classes are generally limited to 16 students with one teacher, with an occasional extra student/class. There is a regular flow of additional adults and volunteers interacting with the children in each class.

2.3 Assessing Student Progress

Non-traditional assessment requires students to apply the information they have learned to "real world" problems and issues. It involves observation of each child as he or she goes about daily work, and an evaluation of each child's ability to perform standard developmental tasks. In addition, teachers assess each child's ability to engage in processes such as critical and creative thinking, problem-solving, decision making, goal setting, cooperation, relating to others, leadership, and management of various challenges.

Informal tests or tests on a particular concept may be given as elements of instruction, but tests in general do not form the primary basis for evaluation of student learning. Although the school will administer the standardized tests required by the NC Department of Public Instruction, the results of this testing will not be used as the primary factor in assessing the growth of a student or the student's readiness to move to the next grade level. Likewise, there will not be a great emphasis placed on 'teaching to the test' prior to its administration.

Teachers will give students regular, constructive written and oral feedback on their creations and accomplishments that will allow students to enrich their understanding of what is being learned. A formal, lettered grading system is not used as a means of evaluating or

commenting on students' work. Teachers maintain portfolios on each child that contain samples of student work from each quarter as well as observational charts, behavior checklists and incidental notes the teacher makes during the quarter.

2.4 Reporting Student Progress

Teachers will provide formal written narrative reports regarding student progress in the major areas of learning and development two times over the course of the school year, at the end of the second and fourth quarters. Two additional checklist reports will be provided, along with a formally scheduled parent-teacher conference, at the end of the first and third quarters. The checklist will assess a student's academic, social/emotional, and physical growth. The conference will allow for questions to be answered, work samples and portfolio to be shared, and goals and plans to be generated and reviewed. At times, a student may be invited to participate in the conference. The fourth quarter narrative will be mailed to parents unless the parent or teacher wishes to schedule a conference at that time. (See Parent Conferences, section 3.2)

In addition to conferences, checklists, narratives and portfolios, student productions of all kinds may be showcased at various celebrations and culminating events throughout the year. Students are motivated to achieve the highest standards when they realize that their work is valued and of interest to school, family, and community members outside of their own classroom.

2.5 School Policy on Homework

Research shows that children who read daily with an adult become better readers, writers and overall learners than those who do not. Therefore, **the only routine 'homework' your child (and you) will have is to read together for 30 minutes each day.** On occasion, other assignments may be given when related to the accomplishment of project work. Some students may also need additional assistance with organizational or study skills that require daily assignments and communication between home and school. Parents will be notified on an individual basis when additional assignments are necessary. Because our students are very busy each day in their classes, it is important that they have time to engage in other activities outside of school, or simply have 'free time.'

2.6 Student Discipline

Our school-wide discipline plan is based on the Peaceful Schools program. The Peaceful Schools goals include instilling self-esteem, respect and compassion in our students through the acquisition of social skills. All students, parents and staff are to become knowledgeable regarding the bully-victim-bystander power dynamics and be given tools for solving conflicts in nonphysical ways, using effective coping skills. CPSC will not tolerate bullying or disruptive behaviors. Quick and consistent responses, reinforced by education and coordinated efforts, are the keystone of the Peaceful Schools program.

Within the bully-victim-bystander dynamics, Peaceful Schools identifies several types of misconduct: disrespectful bullying toward adults and peers; disruptive bullying in the classroom, all school recess and in common spaces; bullying resulting in major rule-breaking; victim behavior; and bystander behavior (See chapter four of Peaceful Schools Manual, "Creating a Peaceful School Learning Environment," pg. 43). When students act in a bullying, disrespectful

or disruptive way, teachers will respond with one of the responses outlined below in order to provide logical consequences, prevent future misbehavior and support the student's overall social/emotional growth.

First Step Response: Classroom Teacher deals with inappropriate behaviors

If classroom instruction is stopped, play at all-school recess interrupted, or common space guidelines broken, the teacher will use strategies from the Peaceful Schools manual (pg. 63) to redirect the student(s) involved and reinforce the messages of the Peaceful Schools. Responses can include but are not limited to: discuss with student(s) how disruption is a form of bullying and bystanders are being cheated out of creative learning time, discussion with class that no one wants bullying behavior, etc...)

Second Step Response: Referral to School Counselor, Behavior Specialist, or Administrator

At times a student may be persistently disruptive or disrespectful and will require a more thoughtful and coordinated plan. The teacher will complete a behavior referral form and a plan will be developed based upon a meeting with parents and an outside support person (counselor, behavior specialist, or administrator) who will assist in the evaluation of the root causes of the student's misbehavior. Components of the plan could include, but are not limited to, time-outs, buddy class breaks, written and verbal processing of his/her behavior, additional evaluations (Functional Behavioral Assessment) and behavior contracts. The ultimate goal is to replace the child's disruptive, disrespectful and bullying behaviors with internal strategies that are built on self-awareness and self-regulation.

Third Step Response: Referral to Director

In the event that a student is in need of special adult supervision because s/he is violent, volatile, losing control, or at risk of harming self and/or others, the child should be taken to the Director, and the traditional behavior referral form will be completed by the teacher. At the Director's discretion, the parent or guardian will be required to remove the child for the remainder of the day. **A student may be suspended for persistent bullying or behavior that risks harm to self and/or others.** Whatever the Director's response to the situation, an assignment will be provided for the child to complete and for the family to review. The parent/guardian must arrange a conference that includes the child, parent/guardian, the child's teacher, support staff (counselor, behavior specialist) and the CPSC Director before the child can return to class. A follow-up meeting with the behavior specialist and/or counselor will be necessary to insure that the student's plan for re-entry and prevention of misbehavior is successful. At this conference, the child and his or her parent/guardian will sign a behavior contract and will clearly understand the next steps. In the exceptional case that the behavior persists, new evaluative measures will be requested, as well as heightened parent participation and possible support from internal/external mental health services. This process may or may not lead to the development of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). A course of action will be determined which best supports the student's growth and success at CPSC.

If the violent or inappropriate behavior continues thereafter, the school may deem it necessary to remove the student on a permanent basis. The Central Park School for Children has the authority to take such action, according to NC state law.

The Director has the discretion to send home immediately any student who is at risk of harm to self and/or others. This policy may inconvenience parents and guardians, but the safety of our school community is our first priority.

2.7 Playground Rules

The playground is a large space where CPSC children can run, jump, and take part in team and group activities, or simply walk and talk with friends when appropriate. We also have access to the Old North Durham Park behind the school, a landmark we share with the City of Durham, neighboring residences, and non-profit organizations bordering the park. Because we share the park with other parties, it is important that the playground rules described below be followed for the sake of order and safety. Please remind your child(ren) to:

- stay out of the large bushes lining the perimeter of the park;
- play in “teacher monitored” zone areas – teachers will clarify these areas;
- leave untouched any inappropriate items found on the playground and tell a teacher about them immediately;
- avoid areas that are slippery when wet, hard concrete, or areas with a jagged surface;
- walk -- do not run -- around concrete level changes near the stairs or near sloping grounds;
- treat the playground and the outside environment with care and respect.

2.8 All School Recess

All School Recess (ASR) is the one period of the day when **all** students are outside playing - on the upper playground, lower playground and big field. Only during extreme inclement weather, does ASR move inside.

We have created ASR to accomplish the following objectives:

- allow students to use unstructured time in productive, creative, imaginative, and purposeful ways
- form multi-age bonds, build friendships and a sense of community
- provide physical activity and fresh air
- interact with nature and play creatively with natural materials
- problem solve with respect to social interactions and physical materials

Our Behavioral Expectations for ASR include:

- respect others, their bodies, feelings and creations
- respect the environment
- agree to the rules of the game before you play
- have fun and be safe

Recess Attire:

We believe that play, including outdoor play, is an essential part of learning. Recess is a time to run, jump, play, breathe the fresh air and enjoy a break from classroom activities in ways that are positive for all students. In order to feel that they may enjoy, explore and learn during outdoor activities at school, students should wear or have at school appropriate clothes/shoes to play outside in all weather. Drizzle, mud, snow flakes, etc. are opportunities for children to learn more about the natural world. Parents are encouraged to send in extra clothing to be kept at school for their children, so that they are always prepared for all kinds of learning...even when it gets a little messy.

“For children, play is serious learning!”--Fred Rogers, Mr. Rogers’ Neighborhood.

Note: After exiting the school building for All School Recess, children are expected to remain outside until the recess period is over. Bathroom and water breaks should occur *before* students exit the building. A child will need a teacher’s permission to re-enter the building. Permission is typically reserved for emergencies.

3 COMMUNICATION

3.1 Parent-Teacher Communication

The Central Park School encourages and expects parents to be vital supporters of their children’s school experiences and to communicate with teachers about issues affecting their children. Open, honest communication is in everyone’s best interest as we all have the same goal – the positive growth and learning of our children. If you have a concern about your child’s experience at school, *please approach your child’s teacher first.*

Please note that during school hours, a teacher’s phone calls are routinely sent to voicemail. We will interrupt teachers during their instructional day only in case of emergency.

3.2 Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent–teacher conferences may be scheduled at any time during the year by the parent or the teacher. You may, of course, communicate very brief messages to your child’s teacher without an appointment before or after school, but please schedule a conference for communications that will require more than a few seconds. Please do not try to communicate an important message while the teacher is on duty, which includes drop-off and pick-up.

There are three formally scheduled parent-teacher conferences per year. These will be held during the quarterly intersessions when children are not in school (please see the calendar for specific dates). Early in the first quarter, please refer to the school calendar for the scheduled conference days. Teachers will contact parents about specific conference times. See Reporting Student Progress section 2.4. Please do not ask teachers to conference over intersessions, as this is their much deserved time off.

Please note that in cases of parental separation or divorce, CPSC may not be able to offer separate parent-teacher conferences for each parent. Please speak to the Assistant

Director regarding concerns or individual needs for this situation. If desired, the Director or Assistant Director will both schedule and attend parent-teacher conferences to facilitate the presence of all parties.

We look forward to 100% participation in parent-teacher conferences. This is one of the most important commitments you make as a Central Park School parent. A parent's willingness to collaborate with the teacher, share information, and play an integral part in the progress of their child is critical to the successful partnership between parent and teacher.

3.3 Addressing Concerns

If you have a concern you wish to discuss with the school, please take the following steps:

1. Address your child's teacher if it pertains to your child's classroom;
2. Address your concern to the teacher and to the Director or Assistant Director if it involves something outside of your child's classroom or with another student or adult.

If you are not satisfied after meeting with your child's teacher, you may request a meeting with the Director regarding your child's classroom experiences. A meeting with the Director about your child will take place, however, only after a meeting with the teacher has taken place. The Director may facilitate a meeting with all parties concerned if reasonable cause is determined.

3.4 Staying Informed

In order to facilitate and encourage parent involvement in the activities of the school, CPSC shares information with our school family in several ways:

- The *Weekly Update and Parent Page* comes out on Tuesday and is sent home with your youngest child. To get these updates on email, please contact Paula Januzzi.
- *CPSC's School Website* (www.centralparkschoolforchildren.org) includes general information about the school and timely announcements such as school closings due to inclement weather.
- *Weekly newsletters* from your child's teacher.
- The *Board Notebook* with meeting *minutes* is kept in the school office.
- *Posted Announcements* relevant to the school community are on display at the school. Parents can call the school office for further instruction on posting.

PLEASE NOTE: All notices regarding parent activities that involve or represent the school community must be first pre-approved in writing by the school Director. This includes activities within and outside of the school community. No communications involving CPSC staff, students, teachers, board members, etc., should be posted without clearance from the Director.

3.5 School Directory

In order to promote communication among all members of our school community, CPSC distributes a School Directory with names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of students, staff and board members. The ability to contact each other is essential for community building.

CPSC must have permission from all families/individuals to be included in the Directory. Permission statements are on the re-enrollment form and the application for admission. Families who do not initially sign the permission for inclusion will be asked again for specific instructions regarding the directory. We understand that under certain circumstances, to ensure a child's safety, it is important not to disclose this information.

If you need to change your instructions concerning the Directory, please notify the Registrar, Caroline Weaver, in writing.

4 WORKING TOGETHER

The Central Park School is founded upon the principle of partnership between the school and the families of our students. A major factor in the positive development of our children is the quality of parental involvement in the life of the school and of each student. Because the involvement and interdependence of school and family are so critical, some commitments from both school and family are expected.

4.1 Our Commitment to You

Recognizing the enormous potential within each of your children, we will:

- provide a safe and supportive environment;
- encourage your child to explore, analyze, challenge and develop all of his or her capabilities and gifts – intellectual, artistic, physical, ethical and social;
- allow your child to experience the joy of learning;
- teach your child to be pro-active, self-directed, and to take responsibility for his or her learning;
- help your child realize that he or she can choose to learn anything;
- teach your child to set goals and to measure success;
- encourage your child to develop healthy habits of eating and exercise;
- communicate regularly with you regarding the progress of your child.

In addition, your child will:

- be a part of a community that values diversity;
- learn to respect others;
- learn that revealing shortcomings is an opportunity for curiosity and growth;
- learn to respect property;
- learn to respect and protect the environment;
- demonstrate, at a minimum, a year of academic growth for each year of instruction as defined by the NC Standard Course of Study.

4.2 Your Commitment to Us

We cannot accomplish these goals alone. As our partner, you will be asked to:

- read to (or with) your child for at least 30 minutes every day;
- limit your child's television viewing to appropriate children's programming for as little time as possible, and certainly no more than eight hours a week;
- ensure that your child gets a good night's sleep – young children need between 10-12 hours of sleep each night;
- attend school meetings and functions, and all scheduled parent-teacher conferences;
- send your child with nutritious lunches and snacks -- no sodas or candy -- in reusable containers;
- support Central Park's work ethic – all children will clean up after themselves and each other;
- support Central Park's commitment to learning and practicing sound environmental methods;
- provide appropriate work/play clothes and shoes – Central Park School children get very messy and play outside in all weather;
- teach your child to respect him or herself and others;
- enthusiastically participate in your *required* four hours of school service per month. (*Looking for something to do? We can supply you with a list of service opportunities.*)

4.3 Families are School Partners

CPSC depends on our parent partners to accomplish our goals, just as you depend on CPSC to provide the best possible education for your child. The quality of our school is significantly enhanced by the involvement of our families, and such involvement is therefore an essential element in our charter and mission. ***By registering your child at CPSC, your family is making the commitment to spend at least four hours per month participating in school related projects.*** We and your child appreciate the time you spend on behalf of CPSC, and welcome old and new ideas for support of your child's education! Please complete the Parent Participation form provided for you in the CPSC June information packet. More detailed information regarding participation opportunities for parents/families will be made available prior to and throughout the school year. For more information on how you can become involved, please contact the Assistant Director.

4.4 Fundraising

Since Charter Schools do not receive as much public funding as district public schools, it is vital that we regularly raise funds in our community to try to provide the necessary support for our curriculum. Fundraising is managed through the Central Park School for Children Foundation, a separate non-profit corporation that supports the CPSC non-profit corporation which holds the charter. The CPSC Foundation coordinates two large fundraisers each year. We need every member of our CPSC community to participate in these efforts, described below.

The **Sunshine Fund** is CPSC's annual fund drive that takes place in the fall of each year. This fund sponsors artists in residence, field trips, outdoor learning, and math and science development. The Foundation will invite (and remind) all families to participate. While we greatly appreciate large donations, the amount of the gift is not as important as the percentage of

families participating. It is easier to ask for gifts from corporations and foundations if we can show that those who benefit most from the school's success are also committed to its financial health.

The **Strawberry Festival**, our "berry special day for children," is always the first Saturday in May and is planned and carried out entirely by CPSC volunteers in concert with our Assistant Director (Paula). The Festival provides wonderful entertainment and food for our own families and for the larger community beyond our walls. All proceeds from the Festival are committed to improving the Old North Durham Park behind the school. In order to coordinate such a large and important event, all members of the CPSC community are asked to help prepare for the Festival and to work at the Festival itself. Festival work is divided into shifts; each family should plan to work at least two shifts, one in their child's classroom booth and one in a general capacity. Two shifts from each family make it a busy but not overwhelming day for anyone. We thank you in advance for your contributions of time and talent to the Festival. This exciting and vital event cannot happen without everyone's committed involvement.

Other fundraising options will be presented to parents. We welcome participation in any of these you might choose to support. Parents who wish to make additional gifts to CPSC and their child's education may do so through the CPSC Foundation. A complete "Fund Raising and Gift Acceptance Policy" is available from the School's Development Office.

We have attached as an addendum an explanation of charter school funding that should help parents understand the necessity of our fundraising activities.

4.5 School Council

Our School Council meets monthly to discuss issues of importance to the school community. It serves as:

- a bridge between board level and classroom level
- a "central hub" for our many school committees
- a sounding board for new ideas
- a way to ratify new programs
- a forum for concerns that need to be addressed from a broad range of perspectives

School Council membership is comprised of : parent representatives, teacher representatives, administrative representatives, CPSC committee representatives and community members. An election for parent and teacher representatives is held during the first quarter of the school year.

SC Representatives are expected to be a voice from the perspective of their constituent groups; to keep constituents informed of issues/topics discussed at SC and solicit information to bring back to SC; and to serve as an avenue for constituents to bring topics to the SC and/or CPSC administration.

Check the Events Calendar on the school website for meeting dates and times.

4.6 Parent Visiting and/or Volunteering in the Classroom

Parents are encouraged to visit and/or volunteer in classes at Central Park School. If you wish to do so, please let the teacher know ahead of time, be sensitive to what is going on in the classroom, and remember that the teacher will not be available to engage in discussion with you at that time. Your presence is sure to be a special event for your child and, we hope, for you!

Note: Before bringing younger siblings to the classroom, please think about whether or not they will be a distraction to students or will require your attention to the extent that you would not be able to assist the teacher or other students. Parent visitors and volunteers should always check with the teacher regarding younger siblings before coming to the classroom.

Parent help in the classroom is immensely valuable and parents have an open invitation to be a part of the school process. Your expertise wonderfully enriches the curriculum. Please make a commitment to help share your knowledge in some way. If you are interested in volunteering in a classroom, please arrange this ahead of time with the teacher. A teacher may want regular help with classroom activities, including assistance with field trips, preparing for special projects, or being an extra set of hands at various times of the day. Parents who do not have time to assist on a regular basis are encouraged to speak with their child's teacher to see how they can contribute to the learning community.

Each classroom will have one or two *class parents* to help parents become involved in the classroom in the most constructive manner and to facilitate class communication.

Whether visiting or working at school, please remember to stop at the front office to sign in upon your arrival and to sign out upon your departure. Remember that privacy is important to many young children and their parents. It is inappropriate to discuss with others an individual child's classroom activities.

4.7 Class Parents

CPSC is committed to building strong partnerships among parents, teachers, students and the larger community. Class parents meet regularly with their teachers and work with them throughout the year to clarify classroom needs, address goals, and help organize and encourage the participation of other parents in classroom and school activities. Some of these activities include field trips, class picnics, special class projects, and the development of a phone tree to distribute information quickly. The class parent(s) will also take a leadership role in assisting the Strawberry Festival Parent to organize the class activities and recruit volunteers. If you are interested in being a class parent, please speak with your child's teacher, who will let you know of next steps.

4.8 Home Visits

Because we want to facilitate a comfortable, positive transition for your child to the Central Park School, teachers typically visit each of their students in the student's home before the opening of each school year. In exceptional circumstances, home visits during other times of the year may also be appropriate.

4.9 Field Trips

When enrolling your child at CPSC, you are also committing to chaperone at least one class field trip per year. We strive to have male and female chaperones, so we encourage both

fathers and mothers to join field trips. Your teacher will inform you about upcoming field trips, so you can plan accordingly. Parents will be asked to sign a blanket permission for walking field trips that may arise spontaneously. Parent volunteers will be needed for every field trip. Teachers are responsible for ensuring that each of their students participating in a field trip has appropriate written consent of a parent or guardian. Volunteer drivers must have a completed Volunteer Driver's Form on file in the office.

4.10 Birthdays

Each class will determine how it will celebrate birthdays. Please arrange for such celebrations with your child's teacher. Presents and party invitations should be given outside of school hours.

4.11 Religious Holidays

The Central Park School recognizes the importance of religious beliefs for its students, parents, and staff. While the school is sensitive to religious observances and uses elements of religion to explore diverse cultures and customs, it does not celebrate religious holidays or promote or endorse any particular religious belief. Though it may not always be possible, every effort is made to schedule school functions, including field trips, meetings, fundraising activities and workdays, on days other than major religious holidays. Please inform your teacher of any religious traditions that may impact your child's day at school.

5

STUDENT HEALTH & SAFETY

5.1 Emergency Cards

Parents will be asked to complete emergency information cards at the beginning of every school year. Since it is critical that the school be able to reach you, please remember to update your information with your child's teacher, the CPSC administration, and your class parent during the year as soon as any changes occur. Always use the *red information update form*, available in the foyer, for any updates.

5.2 Health Forms

Good health is crucial to learning. Before the first day of school all new students or returning students with changes since the original form was filed must submit a health form, signed by a physician, that identifies any health issues important for the school to know about and certifies that your child has all appropriate immunizations. North Carolina state law requires that documentation of immunization be provided to the school within 30 days of a student's first day of school. Parents who do not wish to have their child immunized based on religious beliefs, or advice from their doctor that immunization poses a risk to their student's health, must submit their request for a waiver in writing, including their physician's statement.

5.3 Medication at School

Medication will be given to students by employees only with proper authorization by a physician and the student's parent or guardian. If deemed necessary by a physician, the teacher and school will work out a schedule for administering the child's medicine on a case-by-case basis. Students on medication during the school day must have their medicine brought to school

by the responsible adult, in the original prescription bottle. These policies apply to over-the-counter as well as prescription medications. Appropriate forms are available in the school office.

If a child must self-administer medication while at school, by law, the school must have written authorization from the child's parent or legal guardian, a written statement from the doctor accompanied by a written treatment plan and an emergency protocol. Parents must also sign a waiver stating that the school is not liable for any injuries arising from the use of the self-administered medication.

5.4 Illness

If your child contracts a communicable illness, please inform CPSC immediately so that we may inform other parents of their child's possible exposure and help parents make informed decisions about their children's health.

If your child has a fever, nausea, diarrhea or other adverse symptoms, please keep your child at home to recover for at least 24 hours. If such symptoms develop at school, you will be asked to pick up your child. Before sending your child to school, be sure he or she feels well enough to have a positive, productive day in a manner considerate of the health of others.

5.5 Lunch/Nutrition/Allergies

Students should bring a snack and lunch to school each day. Please bring nutritious foods and drinks, such as sandwiches, fruits, vegetables, milk or fruit juices, and avoid bringing candy and sodas. Nutritious foods fuel your child's work and play -sweets do not. Please send food ready to eat with appropriate cutlery. Teachers should not be expected to peel or cut. Microwaves are not available for student lunches.

CPSC is working to reduce trash. Please send "green" lunches that are packed in washable, reusable containers. CPSC staff will send home all containers for reuse and all leftovers to give parents a sense of what is and is not being eaten by their child. Please keep this in mind when packing lunches and make sure your child can secure containers before taking them back home.

Families who need financial help providing lunch should speak with the school Director. Although the school does not participate in the Federal Free Lunch Program, there are provisions for confidential support with lunches.

Parents who wish to bring food for the whole classroom should always arrange this first with the teacher. This is especially important for the safety of students with food allergies.

Parents of children with allergies must provide the school office with a completed allergy history form in addition to the health emergency card, and give a copy of the allergy form to the child's teacher to have on hand in the classroom.

5.6 Sleep

Elementary aged children need 10 to 12 hours of sleep at night in order to function at their best during the day. Even mild sleep deprivation can have a significant toll on a young

child during the day. In addition, it is often the case that behavioral problems are related to sleep deprivation. Please make sure your child gets adequate sleep.

5.7 Work/Play Clothes

Much of children's work/play and exploration is messy. If children are afraid of "messing up" their clothes, they cannot participate fully in many exciting activities. Please send children to school in work/play clothes that can be stained or discolored by paint, red clay, garden dirt, strawberry juice, etc. In addition, children should wear clothes that allow them to play outside in all kinds of weather. Keep in mind "there is no bad play weather, only bad play clothes." Please provide good play clothes.

Please also send extra clothes/shoes for your child in case s/he becomes uncomfortable after an adventure. Clothes should be labeled with your child's name and replaced as needed. Please judge carefully whether your child will manage water, dirt, mud, paint etc. on his/her clothes without distress. If your child is uncomfortable after a messy activity and does not have a change of clothes, you will be called to bring clothes or to take your child home to change.

5.8 Accident Report

Any serious accidents that occur at the Central Park School for Children will be documented in an Accident Report by the responsible adult present at the time of injury. The usual bumps and scrapes requiring a band aid and/or a bit of sympathy will not generate an Incident Report. Accidents that require parent notification will generate an Accident Report that will be sent home with the child. The teacher or office personnel will make every attempt to contact you personally on the day of the accident before your child gets home.

5.9 Building Security

The front door will be the only door of entry to anyone other than school personnel. All visitors to the school will be required to register in the front office and to sign out at the front office upon leaving. All visitors, including frequently visiting parents, are required to wear name tags during the course of their visit. This precaution is for the safety of our school and children.

5.10 Fire/Severe Weather/ Other Emergency Drills

Drills for fire, severe weather (tornadoes, hurricanes, etc.), and other emergencies will be carried out on a regular basis as prescribed by the Fire Marshal and the school's Emergency Preparedness Plan. Our Emergency Preparedness Plan follows the procedures mandated by the State of North Carolina.

5.11 Inclement Weather/Changes in Opening or Dismissal Times

In the event that inclement weather creates a transportation or other safety hazard for students, school will be cancelled or delayed. In addition, certain emergencies may require students to be dismissed early.

Late Openings and School Closings are announced:

- 1) On our **Website** (www.centralparkschoolforchildren.org) and on our answering machine

682-1200;

2) On the following **TV and radio stations** (by 7 am for late opening):

Television/Cable	Radio
WRAL -- channel 5 (www.wral.tv.com)	WPTF -- AM 680
WNCN -- channel 17 (www.nbc17.com)	WQDR -- FM 94.7
WPTF -- channel 28	
WTVD -- channel 11	

Since we do not have buses, we will be open more often than regular public schools during inclement weather. Parents must therefore use their own judgment (considering car capabilities, condition of route, and driving comfort) to decide when transportation is safe for them.

Unscheduled Early Dismissal will be communicated via the emergency phone tree organized by the class parents. Because school phone lines are tied up during these times, it is essential that both your teacher and your class parent have your emergency contact information as well as your plan for early dismissal in case we cannot reach you. Also remember that you can always pick up your child early if you decide that is the safest process for you.

6 TRANSPORTATION & PARKING

6.1 General Notes on Transportation

When we set priorities regarding the use of resources at CPSC, we chose to emphasize teacher quality and a safe facility over an elaborate transportation system for students. This means that CPSC does not provide bus service or other transportation to school. All parents who can provide transportation to and from school are asked to do so.

Traffic during drop-off and pick-up times can become excessively congested, causing unnecessary wait times, and in some cases, dangerous situations. Carpools are therefore strongly encouraged and will be facilitated by the school with pleasure.

If a family is unable to arrange transportation, the school will facilitate arrangements. A student's parent or guardian is responsible for requesting assistance in this area. These requests should be made to the Director. All requests are confidential.

Please *do not forget* that some Central Park children walk and bike to school. Please drive slowly and take special care when near the school.

6.2 Morning Drop-Off Procedures

Please make every effort to relieve drop-off zone congestion by carpooling and by taking advantage of the early arrival opportunity from 7:45-8am. Please also remember that the school day begins promptly at 8:30am. Allow your child enough time to settle into his or her classroom comfortably prior to 8:30.

- 7:45am - 8:00am: walk your child all the way into the “big room.” (Be sure there is supervision before leaving your child).
- 8:00am - 8:30am: school personnel will be on hand to escort children from the drop-off zone into the building.

The drop-off zone is on Foster Street in front of the school. The zone extends from the Patanjalis Lot driveway (south side of school property) to the service alleyway (on the north side of the school) There will be at least two staff members at the curb helping children out of cars.

Drop off Rules: A safe and efficient school drop-off procedure depends on *absolute* rules with everyone following them! Please read and follow the instructions below with particular care.

- **Adults! DO NOT get out of your car when in the drop-off lane.** This lane is only for cars with children who are prepared to exit quickly and without parental assistance. Please be sure your children have all belongings together and are ready to exit the car *before* entering the drop-off lane.
- Children must be unloaded from the passenger side of the car while the car is stopped within the drop-off zone. Never allow children to get out of the car on the street traffic side of the car.
- Never double-park to unload children.
- Always stop the car completely before letting children out.
- Always double-check to make sure your children are on the sidewalk securely and away from the car before pulling away.
- When leaving the drop-off zone, yield to regular traffic on Foster Street before proceeding north. U-turns are extremely unsafe and highly discouraged.
- **Please do not try to converse with teachers during this challenging process. Please park and come in the building to discuss very brief concerns with a teacher, or schedule an appointment.**

6.3 Walking Your Child into the School

If you wish to walk your child into the building for extra time to say goodbye, you may park in the Patanjalis lot (adjacent to the school on the south side of the building) or in the Agricultural Extension parking lot directly across from the school on Foster Street. As you

escort your child from the car and the parking lot, please be mindful of surprises (i.e., darting children, unyielding automobiles, noise, traffic, etc.) and hold your child's hand. If crossing the street, please walk to either street corner and cross with the light. CPSC discourages jay-walking, but if you do so, be sure to firmly hold your children and look both ways before crossing.

Parking in the drop-off zone between 8:00am to 8:35am is not allowed.

6.4 Late Arrivals

A late arrival is any time after 8:30am. The carpool lane closes and parents may park their car in front of the school, but must walk with their child into the building and sign in. **Under NO circumstance should children be dropped off unattended at the curb!**

6.5 Dismissal Pick-up Procedures (3:15pm to 3:45pm)

School is dismissed at 3:15pm, and parents can begin picking up their children at that time. In the afternoon, the morning drop-off zone becomes the pick-up zone. (Parents follow the same driving procedures as for drop-off, see 6.2) All children except those attending after-school must be picked up between 3:15pm and 3:45pm. **After 3:45pm, any student not yet picked up will be sent to After School, and a late fee will be incurred.**

Pick-up Rules:

- Only those individuals designated by parents in writing may pick up a child from school, either during the school day, or after school. If a person other than a parent will *regularly* pick up your child, you must fill out a permission form (available from school office) and return it to the office. Once the school has your pick-up instructions in writing, it will issue you an “authorized card” that should be displayed during pick-up. Children should know the name of their carpool for reasons of safety and efficiency.
- Always prominently display in the right window of the car the “authorized card” issued to you by the school (includes your child's name or the name of the carpool group). Display of the “authorized card” is imperative for safety reasons. Staff assisting in the carpool lane may not be familiar with children, family relationships or carpool groupings. If your card is lost, please immediately request a new one from the front office.
- If your child is to leave with *anyone other than his/her parent or regular driver*, including another Central Park School parent, you *must send a note* to the teacher indicating the name of the person who will pick up your child. Please plan ahead.
- If you must change transportation arrangements after your child is at school, please notify the school office no later than 2:30pm. For safety reasons, the school office will call the authorized adult and verify changes for pick-up of the child.
- If an authorized card is not displayed, and there is no note or phone call from a parent requesting a change in arrangements, **the child(ren) will not be permitted to get into**

the car. The adult driver must park in a lot and enter the office to provide identification and explain the situation.

- Please be sure that “going home” arrangements are clear to all parties involved, including your child, sitters and carpool drivers. Additional copies of drop-off and pick-up procedures are available in the office. Please give them to those expected to drive, and explain the procedures to novice pick-up drivers.
- If a student needs to leave school during the day, the adult who is authorized to pick up should go to the school office and ask that the child’s teacher be notified of his/her presence. The child will be brought to the office and signed out before being allowed to leave.
- If for any reason your pick-up will take extra time, you should park in a lot and walk inside the building to get the children you are picking up.

6.6 Parking at CPSC

CPSC is an urban school and owns NO parking spaces. Our neighbors need parking spaces as well, so we must carpool when possible and share.

Brief visits (15 minutes):

- Parents can park in the lot south of the school (Patanjalis Parking), but only in the 12 CPSC designated spaces on the north side of the lot (closest to the school).
- Between 9am and 2:45pm, parents can park in front of the school.

Longer Visits:

Between 9am and 2:45pm, parents can park in front of the school on Foster Street as well as in the 12 spaces on the north side of the Pantanjalis Parking lot. There is street parking along the west side of Foster just south of the school and along the south side of Geer. There is parking on the east side of Washington St. (one block west of the school, behind the Agricultural Extension Bldg.) and along the south side of Trinity Ave. (just north of the school).

FACULTY & STAFF

We are extremely proud of our faculty and staff, whose experience and interests are described on-line and in a separate flyer, available in the front office. Below is contact information, in alphabetical order. To reach individuals at school, please use the school’s main number: 919-682-1200.

For this downloadable version of the Parent Handbook, contact information has been removed. Please see your School Directory.

Vicky Patton, Chairman: Vicky served as an assistant to President Terry Sanford at Duke University and led the effort to relocate the American Dance Festival from Connecticut to Durham. She was a founding Board member, then president of the Duke School for Children. Just before CPSC, Vicky was the Executive Director of The Governors Center at the Sanford Institute for Public Policy.

Bob Chapman, Facilities Chair: Bob is a new urbanist developer who builds walkable mixed-use neighborhoods. His urban infill projects include Trinity Heights in Durham. Bob currently serves on the board of the Triangle Film Office and chairs the Trading Path Association. He has served on the boards of Preservation Durham, the North Carolina Smart Growth Alliance, Durham Central Park, Duke School for Children, the Carolina Theater, St. Joseph's Historic Foundation, Friends of the Duke Art Museum and the NC Art Society.

Helen Conrad, Policy Chair: Helen is an experienced teacher with certification in Exceptional Education and French. She holds master's degrees in education and in counseling and has worked as a marriage and family counselor and researcher in addition to teaching. Helen currently volunteers for the Orange County Literacy Council and is a professional artist with a special interest in botanical and animal subjects. She was a founding board member of the Duke School for Children.

Edward B. Fiske, Communications Chair: Formerly the Education Editor of the New York Times, Ted is the author of *Smart Schools, Smart Kids: Why Do Some Schools Work* (Simon & Schuster). He is author of *The Fiske Guide to Colleges* and numerous other books on college admissions and has written widely on education in developing countries. He and his wife, Helen Ladd, a professor of public policy at Duke, have written books on education in New Zealand and South Africa and recently completed a study of school finance in the Netherlands.

Toni Hill: Toni worked for 30 years in the Durham Public Schools – as classroom teacher, reading coordinator, AIG supervisor, ELS coordinator, elementary educator director, and most recently, principal at Forest View Elementary School. With degrees in education and statistics, she is certified in K-12 Instructional Supervision and Curriculum, Reading, Mentoring and as a Principal. Toni also has a Doctorate in Education in School Administration at the Superintendent and Principal levels from Teachers' College at Columbia University in NYC.

Kathryn Meyers, Vice Chairman: Kathryn has been a PTA President and long-time member and Chairman of the Durham School Board. Kathryn has also served as a member of the NC Charter School Advisory Committee. She is presently Business Manager at Ellis Winters LLP, a Cary law firm.

Ted Queen, Parent Representative 2009-2010: Ted has worked in Transportation Management for nearly twenty years. Motivated by his active involvement with Central Park, he is currently studying to receive a Teaching License in Elementary Education from NC Central University.

Dexter Richardson: Dexter Richardson pastors two congregations – one in Chapel Hill and one in Haw River, NC. Prior to this, he worked as an attorney in Chapel Hill and Durham. Dexter has served on the CPSFC school board since its inception.

Queron Smith: Queron is currently Vice President and City Executive for M&F Bank covering the Durham market. In addition to his responsibilities with the bank, Queron serves as a board member for Habitat for Humanity, Downtown Durham Incorporated and the United Way African American Leadership Initiative.

Alan Staple, Treasurer: Alan has 20 years of senior executive experience and is presently a manager with the William J. Clinton Foundation. Previously he was for six years a Vice President at RTI International and prior to that an executive with several technology businesses in the RTP area. He received his undergraduate degree in economics from Oberlin College and an M.Sc. from the London School of Economics.

Jacqueline Terrell, Recruitment Chair: Jackie is the administrative manager and program coordinator at the Research Network on Racial and Ethnic Inequality at Duke University. The Network’s researchers examine the causes of and the policies to remedy group-based disparities in wealth, income, employment, education, politics, health (both physical and mental), and transmission of advantage or disadvantage across generations.

Aileen Clougherty & Scott Larson, Faculty Representatives

Parent Representative for 2010-11: to be elected at the beginning of the school year.

Non--voting Board Members:

John Heffernan
Aileen Clougherty
Scott Larson
Karen Stinehelfer

(see staff directory)
School Director
Faculty Representative
Faculty Representative
Business Manager



2010-2011 YEAR-ROUND CALENDAR

Please note:

- Early dismissal days are the second Wednesday of each month.
- If you use Google Calendars, you can also subscribe to the CPSC Google Calendar for updates on CPSC events. Go to google.com/calendar; click "Add" under "other calendars"; select "Add friend's calendar"; type "centralparkschool@gmail.com" in 'Contact Email' box.

JULY

19 Monday
25 Sunday

Quarter 1 begins - All students must attend
All School Picnic, 4-7pm at Forest Hills Park

AUGUST

11 Wednesday

1:30pm Early Dismissal of all students

SEPTEMBER

6 Monday
8 Wednesday
11 Saturday

Labor Day Holiday – no school
1:30pm Early Dismissal for all students
All School Workday, 9am -12 noon

17 Friday

Last Day of Quarter 1

20 - Fri, October 8

INTERSESSION

20-21 Mon & Tues

Parent/Teacher Conferences

OCTOBER

11 Monday
13 Wednesday

Quarter 2 begins
1:30pm Early Dismissal of all students

NOVEMBER

5 Friday
10 Wednesday
11 Thursday
24 Wednesday
25-26 Thu-Fri

All School Workday, 9am-12 noon
1:30pm Early Dismissal of all students
Veteran's Day Holiday - no school
Half day of school - 8:30 am to 11:30 am - No Afterschool
Thanksgiving Holidays

DECEMBER

3 Saturday
8 Wednesday
17 Friday

All School Workday, 9am -12 noon
1:30pm Early Dismissal of all students
Last day of Quarter 2

20 Mon - Fri Jan 7

INTERSESSION

20-21 Mon & Tues

Parent/Teacher Conferences



Central Park School for Children

2010-2011 YEAR-ROUND CALENDAR

JANUARY

10 Monday **Quarter 3 begins**
12 Wednesday 1:30pm Early Dismissal of all students
17 Monday Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday – no school

FEBRUARY

9 Wednesday 1:30pm Early Dismissal of all students

MARCH

5 Saturday All School Workday, 9am -12 noon
9 Wednesday 1:30pm Early Dismissal of all students
11 Friday Last day of Quarter 3

14 Mon-Fri, April 4 INTERSESSION

14-15 Mon & Tues Parent/Teacher Conferences (March 14-15 Snow Make-Up Days)**

APRIL

4 Monday **Quarter 4 begins**
13 Wednesday 1:30pm Early Dismissal of all students
22 Fri & 25 Mon Vacation Days

MAY

7 Saturday Strawberry Festival 11am-5pm
11 Wednesday 1:30pm Early Dismissal of all students
30 Monday Memorial Day Holiday – no school

JUNE

8 Wednesday **Last day of School**

An Overview of Charter School Finances

NC Charter Schools receive state money for annual operating expenses based on the number of students enrolled during the first 20 days of school. In theory, a Durham charter school receives the same amount per child as the Durham Public Schools but in actuality we get less.

Charters, such as Central Park School for Children, also receive annual operating money from the LEA (Local Education Authority) where the child is a legal resident. Again in theory, CPSC should get an amount equal to the amount the LEAs of non-charter school districts receive per child. Most studies conclude that we receive less.

The Thomas Fordham Institute's 2005 study of charter school funding estimates that NC charters receive 5.5% less public funds than do regular public schools. For CPSC, that's approximately \$132,000 less each year. Also for reference, Charter Schools do not get any of the N C Lottery money earmarked for education. The funding inequity that hurts most is the complete absence of funding for charter school facilities.

The Durham public school bond that passed in the fall of 2007 included funding for four new elementary schools. The average cost for each new elementary school was \$21,000,000. Yes, that's *twenty--one million dollars* for one new elementary school. Charters get NO facilities funding! Charters must pay for facilities out of their already unequal operating funds.

Facilities costs vary from school to school. CPSC has spent approximately \$1.5 million on its facility and pays just under \$100,000 annually for its mortgage/loans. Regular public schools do not have this expense.

So, for all the reasons listed above, CPSC does not have as much annual operating money to spend on our children as regular public schools have.

CPSC was created knowing all of the above (except the lottery piece). We believed we could be creative and put our limited resources where they mattered most and create a wonderful child-centered school. We chose to focus our resources on two important educational factors:.

1. Class size – We chose to put an “average” of 14 children in each classroom, because research shows that small classrooms facilitate learning. Obviously, we could have a lot more money if we put twenty children in the classroom. But we believe small classrooms are important for children.
2. Teachers -- We hire the best teachers in NC, pay them according to the NC state salary scale (usually one step behind) plus a 12% supplement, and provide health insurance and retirement benefits. We also focus on teacher training with a healthy per teacher professional development budget to help them stay at the top of their game.

NC Charter Schools receive state money for annual operating expenses based on the number of students enrolled. Given all of the above, we were advised by several school finance experts that the CPSC business plan was unsustainable. We have thus far proven them wrong by

balancing our budget each year. We have done this by staying focused on these two most important choices, small classrooms and great teachers, and by not trying to stretch beyond our resources.

Looking to the future, we remain committed to our two most important teaching ideals. However, CPSC must create a reasonable facilities replacement and emergency fund which we do not have at present. We must be able to respond when the roof leaks, when the 60-year-old boiler dies or an air conditioner goes kaput. We will create this fund, as we create all funds, out of our annual operating income.

Managing the limited finances for an ambitious project is not an easy task, but we believe we have found ways to hold on to the essence of who we are. With care, CPSC will continue to have a secure financial future while providing an excellent child-centered, project-based curriculum.