

SAMUEL W. MASON PILOT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Parent/Student Handbook 2020-2021



www.masonpilotelementary.org

www.facebook.com/masonpilot

150 Norfolk Ave
Roxbury, MA 02119
Phone: 617-635-8405
Fax: 617-635-8406

Carolyn Allston, Principal

BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Mason Pilot Elementary School Carolyn Allston, Principal

August 28th, 2020

RE: Welcome Back!

Greetings Mason Pilot Community,

Welcome back to all students and families! Although 2020 has proven to be a year like no other, the beginning of a wonderful and fulfilling school year of learning is upon us! My name is Carolyn Allston and I am extremely excited to join the Mason community for the 2020-2021 school year and beyond as the Principal. Based on my knowledge of the Mason Pilot School, it is clear that the Mason is not only a school that builds strong relationships while striving for academic excellence, it is also a school that is devoted to providing a well-rounded educational experience as a way to nurture the physical, mental and social emotional aspects of the whole child. For this reason, it is an honor to join such a diverse and inclusive community of educators, supporters and learners.

My passion for this work stems from my experience during my time as a student in the Boston Public Schools. My academic potential was not unleashed until a teacher connected with me on a personal level and began to zero in on my true needs as a learner. This experience was life-changing, and showed me the value of having strong, supportive teacher-student relationships as a building block to achieve success. After my experience in BPS as a student, I worked in the Boston Public Schools in various capacities from Special Education Support to Special/General Education teacher, and most recently as the Principal of the Roger Clap Elementary School. As a principal, my daily goal is to always ensure that students and teachers are able to build strong relationships so that school becomes a place where students, families and staff members feel welcomed, supported, and respected at all times. I do this through maintaining high expectations for all with an emphasis on collaboration, transparency and growth.

At the Mason, my goal is to work with families and teachers to provide all students with learning experiences that will shift their views of themselves, their abilities, and the world around them in order to unlock their full potential. The research is in agreement that strong family-school relationships play a critical role in students' school success. Such relationships have been shown to develop out of mutual trust and respect between parents, teachers, students and other school staff. My vision is that we will work in collaboration to ensure all students have access to the rigorous curriculum through differentiation and individualized instruction. By providing students with tailored instruction and strategies to support the needs they present, students are able to build confidence in their abilities. We will use these tools to ignite a curiosity to grow and promote the development of lifelong, independent learners.

Upon my entry to the Mason, I have been taking time to review school-wide data, both academic data (MCAS, Interim Assessments, MAP, etc) and school climate data (student surveys and interviews, parent climate surveys, staff surveys and interviews, etc) which has allowed me to uncover the following:

- The Mason School is a community that operates like a family where all members communicate, are supportive of each other and work together to problem solve in order to meet the needs of our learners
- The Mason School staff is dedicated and ready to do the right work that will ensure accelerated progress school wide, evidenced by student achievement data, heightened school morale and increased students feeling of safety and happiness.
- The Mason School, although full inclusion, lacks a vision and clear definition of how to do inclusion well in order to meet the needs of all learners including those approaching grade level, those at grade level and those who are above grade level.

This school year, we will shift our focus schoolwide to address the concerns that have surfaced so that all students are faced with opportunities to grapple with challenging grade-appropriate learning tasks every day. Students will participate in learning experiences that expand their knowledge and ability to think critically both when learning face to face and remotely, as we focus on the following goals for the 2020-2021 school year:

- **The Mason Elementary staff will provide all students access to rigorous grade-level standards aligned tasks through implementation of the district-wide curriculums and through use of the instructional practices necessary to ensure all students can show mastery of grade level content verbally and in writing.**
- **School leadership will ensure there is a clear school-wide system in place to support the development of student social-emotional skills and that social-emotional supports are consistently in place throughout all classrooms in order to ensure a safe and welcoming learning space for all.**

Please take some time to review the contents of this Family Handbook, which is for the purpose of providing you with clear information, details and answers to frequently asked questions you may have this school year related to attendance, grading and school assignments and to ensure a positive learning experience for all.

Please feel free to email Ms. Gittens (lgittens@bostonpublicschools.org), a member of the leadership team, with any questions or concerns.

Be well,
Principal Allston

Samuel W. Mason Pilot Elementary School

Faculty and Staff

2020-2021

Carolyn Allston, Principal
 Jacqueline Posley, Administrative Assistant
 Lynette Gittens, Operations Manager/Student Support
 Michelle Morrissey, Instructional Facilitator

Level	Room	Teacher	Paraprofessional
K0-K1	102	Isabel Sorice	Theresa Davis
	104	Aimee Cheney	Theresa President
K2	206	Catherine Keeler	Anthony Johnson
	209	Jennifer Kenney(Harris)	Lisa Lodge-Stuckey
Grade 1	103	Kathleen O'Leary	Sandra Centeio
	208	Caroline Tino	Olivia Ransom
Grade 2	101	Brianna Isabelle	Valeria Chance-Niles
	205	Lisa Pendleton	Valeria Mayers
Grade 3	310	Samoina Gacheru	Waleska Brown
	311	Karolyn McNeil	Rochalla Paul
Grade 4	312	Noah Burnett	Raylyn Cheek
	313	Andrea Keogh	Gianna Carchia
Grade 5	314	Asaad Fulton	Iram Akhtar
	207A	Alexandria Porter	Daphne Bernard

Specialists and Support Staff

Medical Services

Andus Torgenson Nurse

Family & Community Engagement

Maria Pontes Community Field Coordinator
 Gloria West Family Liaison

Special Education/Support Services

Dawn Boston Coordinator of SpEd
 Chenna Webb Clerk of SpEd
 Christine Anderson Psychologist
 Donna Marie Pare OT
 Doreen Giammarco Speech
 BethAnn Schechet PT
 Diana Kerkorian Social Worker

Food & Nutrition Services

Yolanda James Cafeteria Manager
 Rukinia Bruton Cafeteria Attendant
 Iris Pegeuro Cafeteria Attendant
 Willie Mae Cross Lunch Monitor
 Loida Casillas Lunch Monitor
 Alicia Bascombe Lunch Monitor

Support Service Teachers

Michelle Wilkins Inclusion Specialist
 Carol Litif Resource Room Teacher
 Maria Mendes K-3 Support Specialist
 Aadina Goncalves Inclusion/ESL Teacher
 Kimberlee Carroll ESL Teacher
 Sarah Hastie (Frank) ESL Teacher
 Kathleen Smith ESL Teacher

Specialists

Lawrence Mazzola Swimming/Science 1-2
 Saadia Coleman Science/Technology
 Carlos Mangum Physical Education
 Becky Chen City Connects Coordinator

Custodians

Peter Sealy Senior Custodian
 Michael Cokes Evening Custodian

Welcome to the Samuel W. Mason Pilot Elementary School! We are excited to welcome you and your family to our school community. This handbook was created to help you with any questions you may have about school and district policy. Much of this handbook was taken directly from BPS protocols. For more information and to access “The Guide to BPS for Students and Families 2020-2021” please go to: <https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/Page/8249>

Samuel Mason Vision Statement

The Mason School is a united community dedicated to providing equitable and rigorous learning experiences that ensure mastery of core academic skills and build the tools necessary to foster critical thinkers, risk takers, and powerful leaders.

Samuel Mason Instructional Priorities 20/21

The Mason Elementary staff will provide all students access to rigorous grade-level standards aligned tasks through implementation of the district-wide curriculums and through use of the instructional practices necessary to ensure all students can show mastery of grade level content verbally and in writing.

Samuel Mason Mindset Pledge

I am a student seeking to be a scholar.
The standard is excellence, today and tomorrow.
I am disciplined, focused, and on time.
I am organized, respectful, and responsible.
I am on a mission to elevate myself, my community, and humanity.

School Contact Info

Samuel Mason Pilot Elementary School
150 Norfolk Ave
Roxbury, MA 02119

Phone: 617-635-8405
Fax: 617-635-8406

Principal: Carolyn Allston

Student Health and Community Safety

Due to COVID-19, there are precautionary measures we are taking at the school level to ensure the safety of all members in the Mason building. We need your support to ensure the safety of all students, staff and families. Please read below for more information.

BPS families must monitor their children for symptoms of COVID-19 every day before school. Some symptoms of COVID-19 are the same as the flu or a bad cold; please do not assume it is another condition. When in doubt, **stay home** and call your primary care provider. **YOUR CHILD MUST STAY HOME** if your child or anyone in the home has any of the symptoms listed below:

- Fever (100.0°F or higher without fever-reducing medicine), chills or shaking chills
- Cough (**not due to other known cause, such as asthma or allergies**)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Headache (*when in combination with other symptoms*)
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Fatigue (*when in combination with other symptoms*)
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (*when in combination with other symptoms*) (**not due to other known causes, such as allergies**)

OR

- If your child is in contact with a household member who has a positive COVID-19 diagnosis who has not yet been cleared from isolation by the Boston Public Health Commission.

Any student that is a close contact of a COVID-19 positive person, must stay home from school and quarantine for 14 days from the date of the last interaction with that person. Contact your primary care provider, the Boston Public Health Commission, or your school nurse for further guidance.

If your child has any symptoms:

- they must remain home and be evaluated by their primary care provider to consider testing for COVID-19.
- parents/guardians must report the absence to the school administration and school nurse, noting if the absence is COVID-19 related.
- inform the school nurse of the medical provider's recommendations in writing before returning to school.

- if your child is not tested, they must remain home for at least 10 days from the start of symptoms, have no fever for 24 hours without medicine, and other symptoms have improved.
- *If testing results in a positive result, parents/guardians must report to the school nurse and follow the recommendations of the medical provider including isolation for at least 10 days from the start of symptoms, have no fever for 24 hours without medicine, and other symptoms have improved and be released from isolation by the local board of health.

Testing Procedure

- Call your child’s primary care physician, local community health center, or local COVID-19 testing site. A list of test sites across Massachusetts is available [here](#) and test sites throughout Boston can be found [here](#). Some sites may require a pre-screening, referral, and/or appointment.
- Call your child’s school nurse for help. Every school will have a list of available test sites for children and families.

Out of State or Country Travel

All travelers arriving in Massachusetts – including Massachusetts residents returning home – are required to self-quarantine for 14 days. There are exceptions to the [current order](#): travelers from a small list of close or adjacent states arriving in Massachusetts are exempt from this directive and need not quarantine for 14 days. Please refer to the [Mass.gov](#) website for the most up to date information related to the Governor’s travel restrictions.

Student Daily Attendance

At the Mason, we believe strongly that in order for our Scholars to make progress, they MUST be present in school daily, and for the duration of the school day, 8:30am to 2:20pm. If you are experiencing challenges with getting your Mason scholar to school or logging on to Zoom, daily, we must be notified immediately. Mason staff members are mandated reporters, and are required to report any signs of abuse or neglect (educational neglect included). We are here to partner with you, however all Mason scholars are required to attend school daily unless an excuse note is provided for a specific day. If there is a pattern or concern raised, Mason staff members will reach out to you to problem solve at an attempt to remedy the issue with hopes that attendance improves. If attendance does not improve, Mason staff members will be required to take additional next steps in support of Mason scholar’s education.

Attendance Policy

The Mason follows the Boston Public Schools policy on student attendance. A student must be present for at least half of the school day in order to be marked present for the day. A student with more than four (elementary school) unexcused absences in a marking term, or more than 12

unexcused absences for the year, will receive a grade of NC (no credit) if the student otherwise earned a passing grade. If the student has not earned a passing grade, he or she will receive a “1” (fail).

During remote learning, attendance will be taken daily by classroom teachers. Being marked present includes participating in synchronous remote learning instruction. Please continue to communicate with your child’s teacher if your child will be absent or tardy.

Excused Absences

Students must bring in a note after each day they are absent. The note must include the date absent, the reason for the absence, a phone number for the parent or guardian, and the parent or guardian’s signature. **If you are only able to email a note, please send it to: mason@bostonpublicschools.org** Students may make up work they missed during excused absences. Excused absences may include:

- An illness or injury that prevents the student from attending school.
- A death in the immediate family or other significant personal or family crisis
- Court appearances
- Medical or psychological tests during the school day
- Religious holidays

WHAT IS AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE?

Some parents think that any absence will be excused as long as the parent sends a note. This is not true. Here are a few examples of unexcused absences—even if the parent sends a note:

- Repetitive and chronic absence due to illness or injury. In these cases, for the absence to be excused, the parent must submit a letter from a health care provider verifying that the student was too sick or injured to go to school.
- Student needed to baby-sit
- Family vacation
- Trip to the homeland
- Extension of a religious or cultural holiday beyond the designated calendar days

Whenever possible, parents should check with the principal before allowing a child to miss school if they are not sure the absence will be excused. Students are responsible for making up the work they missed when they are absent. However, the school is not required to help a student make up tests and assignments the student missed due to unexcused absences.

Supervisor of Attendance

The BPS Supervisors of Attendance coordinate with school-based staff to investigate attendance problems primarily outside the school environment. They work in the community, visit homes, and counsel students and their families. When necessary, the Supervisors of Attendance file and represent chronic cases in the Boston Juvenile Court.

Arrival- Face to Face/Hybrid

Every day the school building will open at 8:20am. At 8:20am, students will enter the school building from their assigned entrance based on their homeroom. Before the 8:20am opening, we are unable to allow students who are not in the before school program into the building.

Unfortunately, with us being a small school, we do not have anyone on staff prior to the 8:20am opening time to supervise students. **Please note: The Mason school yard is not supervised by Mason staff before 8:20am.**

Arrival – Remote

As students are learning fully remote, we follow the same school schedule, as well as daily start and end time as listed on the Mason and BPS website. The school day for all learners is from 8:30am to 2:20pm or 2:30pm, daily. This is dependent on the classroom teacher's end of day procedure. Please check in with your child's teacher for a copy of the schedule and more information.

Tardy Arrival – Face to Face/Hybrid & Remote

In preparation for a positive and productive school day and year, it is important that your child arrives to school on time and/or joins the class session on time by 8:30am, daily. This year, we have many students who are not attending class sessions on time or consistently. This type of pattern can directly impact academic growth and grade-level promotion due to excessive absences, tardies and early release from class sessions. Punctuality is an important work habit that must be learned from the time a child begins school. In all cases of tardiness (except bus issues), children should bring in a note signed by a parent or guardian.

Tardy Arrival - Face to Face/Hybrid - DUE to COVID-19, students who arrive tardy will be met at the school door by a Mason staff member, and escorted to class. For students who are repeatedly tardy or absent, a parent conference will be requested.

Early Dismissal – Face to Face/Hybrid & Remote

Students should not be dismissed from class except in cases of illness or injury. Doctor and dentist appointments should be scheduled after school hours. If a child must be dismissed during the school day, please send in a note on the morning of the dismissal specifying the time that the student will be picked up, the reason for the dismissal and by whom. **The person picking up the child must meet the child at the school office and sign out in the log provided.** The secretary may ask that person to show some identification. If the child returns to school that day, he/she must sign the log indicating his/her return. As we strive to maintain a secure building, we ask that parents DO NOT GO to the classroom or playground to pick up their child.

Dismissal – Face to Face/Hybrid

Our school hours are from 8:30am to 2:30pm every day. In order to ensure all students are dismissed by the 2:30pm end time, dismissal procedures begin at 2:20pm. Please wait for your child in the Mason School Yard on the Cedrick Street side of the building, or please wait by the entrance/exit assigned to your child’s classroom. We ask for your patience and flexibility due to the additional minutes dismissal may take as we get to know all families and all of our students and we encourage you to use this daily opportunity to connect with teachers and ask any questions that you may have regarding the school day or academics. Between the times of 2:00pm and 2:20pm, students are packing up bags, writing down homework and wrapping up the day. **We ask that you wait until 2:20pm for students to be released. If on occasion (due to an emergency or appointment), your child needs to be released prior to the 2:20pm end time, please give us a call at 617-635-8405 on the day of the dismissal to alert us so that your child can engage in end of the day activities before being dismissed.** Leaving early impacts student learning, and our goal is to ensure quality learning experiences all day long so that all students can perform at high levels by the end of the school year. For safety reasons, visitors will not be granted access to the school building between 2:00pm and 2:20pm without advance notice.

School Visitors

DUE to COVID-19 Pandemic –Outside visitors are not permitted inside of the Mason school building at this time. If you need to bring something for your child at school, please let us know ahead of time by giving us a call at 617-636-8405. Once you arrive, a Mason staff member will meet you at the front door to retrieve the item, ensuring it is delivered directly to your child’s classroom.

Uniform Policy - Face to Face/Hybrid

Mason Pilot Elementary Uniform: *burgundy shirt with Khaki bottoms. If your Mason scholar did not receive a free uniform top this school year, please let us know.*

The Mason Pilot School uniform is one way for students to demonstrate pride in their school and their education. The Mason has a **mandatory** uniform policy. It is important that students are in uniform every day for behavioral, safety and financial reasons. Please make sure that your child follows the school uniform policy every day. We have donated uniforms if you are in need of uniforms for your child to ensure the dress code can be followed. If you have any specific questions/concerns regarding the uniform policy, please contact us at 617-635-8405.

Flip Flops and Tank Tops are not allowed

Uniform Policy - Remote

We ask that your child prepares for school as if they were preparing to enter the school building on a school day during a regular school year. All students should be dressed appropriately for

school when joining their class session. Although uniforms are not being strongly enforced at this time, we encourage all students to wear their Mason uniform because wearing the school uniform for class sessions can be one way to ease anxieties and save time in the morning when preparing to login to school each day.

Remote Learning Expectations

Remote learning is a challenging time for us all. As we work to alleviate some of the anxieties you may be experiencing due to your scholar learning from home, we ask you to do the following:

- **Prepare your scholar for school each morning as if they were getting ready to enter the school building** - eat breakfast, get dressed, move to a designated work space with good internet connection, limited distractions and few interruptions
- **Be mindful of the Zoom class session in progress** - be sure people passing by in the background are fully dressed, using appropriate language, and acting in school-appropriate ways
- **Encourage your scholar to keep their video on for their class sessions** although we are not requiring students to keep their videos on, having your video on is a great way to ensure your learner is engaged and paying attention. It is also a way for students to see their peers, participate, and feel part of a classroom community, while we are all forced to socially distance. If your child has their video off, they will still be called on to participate so that we can assess their understanding of the lesson and content covered. Our goal is to make sure all of our scholars are learning, and the only way to do this is to check their understanding by asking questions, and reviewing completed assignments
- **Allow your child to productively struggle;** when students are faced with a challenge, educators expect that they will struggle and be challenged before mastery. In order for teachers to assess whether or not students have reached mastery, they review student work, tests and answers submitted. If parents/guardians are helping with or completing student work, teachers are unable to fully identify the learning needs of the student, which could potentially have a negative impact on the instruction your child receives. Please allow your child to work through challenges on their own.
- **Toys are a distraction during synchronous instruction;** please remind your scholar to rid their space of all distractions so that they are able to focus on the instruction presented to them each day.
- **When it is a break time, use this opportunity to turn off the video and move around.** Due to COVID-19, all students are looking at screens way more than ever before. We suggest you use every teacher-provided break as an opportunity to get away from the screen and to do some stretches or a movement exercise.

- **The school day ends at 2:30pm;** all scholars are expected to return to their class sessions after lunch to complete their learning and to close out for the instructional day.
- **Ask your scholar about their daily learnings from class** to encourage consistent participation and excitement around their learning experiences.

Although this school year is abnormal, our goal is to provide all Mason scholars with a learning experience that is as close to normal as possible. We need your help by observing the remote learning expectations above so that all learners can succeed. If you have questions or need support with upholding any of the expectations above, please give us a call at 617-635-8405.

Promotion Policy

The Mason school follows the attendance and promotion policy as set by the Boston Public Schools. For more information on the policy, visit the Boston Public Schools website or talk to your child's teacher.

Inappropriate Items

Students are not allowed to bring in items that have no reasonable use in school as defined by the principal.

- Toys/electronics/balls from home that are not connected to academics or learning
- Any items that could potentially injure a child are not allowed in the school or on the school bus.
- Any visible cell phones will be confiscated
- Possession of any unsafe materials, devices or substances to/from/in school will result in referral to the BPS Code of Discipline.

Student Behavior

It is the expectation of the Mason School community that all students will arrive at school each day ready to learn and show pride in their school, both when hybrid and remote. School rules are established to ensure the safety of all students and staff. Students who choose to break school rules may be subject to discipline according to the BPS Code of Discipline.

Fighting

Creating a safe school environment is key to student learning. Fighting of any kind, "fake" or real creates an unsafe environment. Students engaged in any kind of violent act in school, on the bus, or walking to/from school may be subject to the BPS Code of Discipline and will require a parent/guardian to come to the school.

Harassment

All students and families have an expectation of a safe and healthy school environment. Harassment of any kind by a student is unacceptable and disciplinary action may be taken. This includes any type of racial, sexual, ethnic, religious, or any other type of offensive remarks.

Bus Behavior

It is expected that all students will maintain safe behavior on the school bus. Students who violate the Code of Discipline on the school bus may be denied transportation. School bus rules are created for student safety and are meant to ensure that all students arrive at school and home safely.

Students are required to:

- Remain seated
- Keep hands and feet to themselves
- Talk quietly
- Be respectful of all students—no harassment or inappropriate language
- Be respectful of the bus driver
- Keep hands inside the window
- Refrain from throwing any items inside or outside of the bus

Students who **receive 2 or more** behavioral incident write-ups on the bus may receive a bus suspension at the discretion of the Principal. In the event of a bus suspension, copies of the incident reports will be provided to families. On the day of the bus suspension, families will be responsible for coordinating student transportation.

Field Trips

Field trips support the curriculum to promote learning. Classroom teachers and other chaperones accompany students on field trips. You must sign a permission form before your child can attend a field trip. If you do not wish for your child to take regularly scheduled medication on the day of the trip you must provide a written note to the nurse.

A **CORI** form must be in place before you are allowed to chaperone a field trip. **CORI** forms are available in the office and take about 6 weeks to process. It is strongly suggested that you complete the form in September. If you have completed a form in a prior year, please verify that the form remains current with the Main Office in September of each year. **CORI** information will be updated at least every two years.

School and class field trips are scheduled throughout the school year to increase educational opportunities for students. Field trips are a privilege and will have student guidelines to attend. Students who are acting unsafe will not be allowed to attend field trips without a parent/guardian present. During student field trips, students must:

- Come to school dressed in their Mason uniform
- Have a written permission slip signed by the parent/guardian; we will not be accepting verbal permission
- Follow the guidelines and meet the criteria set by their teacher for that field trip

Parent/Teacher Meetings

Please contact your child's teacher through email, ClassDOJO or contact the school directly at 617-635-8405 if you would like to schedule a meeting with your child's teacher.

Volunteers

Currently, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are not permitting outside visitors inside of the Mason school building, so we are not welcoming visitors at this time. However, if you would like to volunteer to join a class Zoom session (to read a story, share about your career/job, etc, please talk to and coordinate with your child's teacher. All volunteers must fill out a CORI form with the main office before volunteering.

Open House

On **Thursday, October 29, 2020 from 4:00pm to 6:00pm** we will have our first Open House of the school year where families will have the opportunity to meet and connect with classroom teachers and Mason staff members. We hope to see you all there!

Mason Governing Board

The Mason Governing Board is the governing body of the school made up of teachers, elected parents, community partners and the principal. **Parent elections will be held on Wednesday, November 4th from 6pm to 7pm on Zoom: <https://k12-bostonpublicschools.zoom.us/j/86489421855>**

Please feel free to call us with any questions or concerns at 617-635-8405. Our goal is to partner with you to ensure a positive, successful educational experience for both you and your Mason scholar throughout the school year and beyond.

#TransforMASON #Trans4Mason #TheMasonWAY