



July 25, 2023

Dear R.N. Harris School Family,

Welcome back! We hope you are enjoying a wonderful summer. We also hope you are relaxed, recharged, and ready to start the 2023-2024 school year. The students will begin the new school year Monday, August 28th. We are so thrilled that you are part of our incredible learning community. We welcome and value your positive energy. Our staff is dedicated to excellence in education and ensuring that we teach to the whole child. We look forward to working with you and your children.

As a school community, we have made some incredible accomplishments. Many of you are well aware that we are a nationally recognized blue ribbon school of excellence. This was an award that was given to us in May 2023. You played a crucial role in that recognition and for that I say “THANK YOU!!!” Most recently, our school has moved from being a letter grade of “C” to a letter grade of “B!” THIS IS HUGE!!!!!! Again, I must say “THANK YOU!!!” Absolutely none of these accomplishments would have been possible without you. Our school community is critically important to our success. We will continue to be UNSTOPPABLE in our quest to educate, nurture, and care and we will do it in partnership with you. Our motto this year remains, “Together We Are Unstoppable!”

Once again, all signs point to another incredible and productive school year at R.N. Harris Integrated Arts/Core Knowledge Magnet School. Our skilled and devoted staff is already planning and preparing for your child(ren). Our enthusiastic office team is registering new families, walking families through the registration, outlining the different programs offered at R.N. Harris, among so many other things. Our hard working and conscientious custodians have spent the entire summer thoroughly cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting the building to ensure that it is safe. Of course, our much-appreciated PTA is gearing up to welcome families, provide volunteer opportunities, and offer other exciting events and programs. Our goal is to offer events where everyone can take part in in-person while remaining safe. We are indeed a joyous and caring community with the common goals of nurturing responsible, caring students and promoting excellence in learning.

This letter will help you prepare for the upcoming school year. Our goal is to make certain that everyone is well acclimated to our “Eagle Village”. Please take note of the following.

## Open House

Open house will take place on Thursday, August 24<sup>th</sup> 2023 from 5:30-7:00 p.m. Each teacher will be stationed in their classroom!. You will meet your child's teacher, pick up your child/children's information specific to their classroom, and have an opportunity to receive assistance with buses. Transportation will be stationed in the gym. We have a new system, therefore the process should be a lot smoother. Please make sure that you update your information in the parent portal. Our data manager (Mr. Jarrell) and our assistant principal (Catherine Lucas) will be there to assist.


Classroom teachers will hold two 45 minute sessions. Session One will be held from 5:30-6:15 p.m. and Session Two will be held from 6:15- 7:00 p.m. You will only need to attend one session. However, if you have children in multiple grade levels, you have an opportunity to meet with that teacher. It will also give you an opportunity to meet with transportation to ensure that your child(ren) have the correct information for buses.

Members of the Sidekicks Academy will be stationed in the cafeteria. They will be meeting with parents to provide information about this year's program. If your child is a member of the Sidekicks Academy or if they are interested in participating, please take some time to meet.

Please note that our pre k/kindergarten team will be stationed in the cafeteria. You will receive additional information at their meet and greet session, "Popsicles on the Playground. Below you find information specific to kindergarten.

## Kindergarten

**\*\*\*Kindergarten students will begin school using the staggered entry process. It allows the teachers an opportunity to get to know your child better and understand their personal strengths and needs.\*\*\***

Date	Event
Aug 8-10, 2023	<b>DPS is hosting a kindergarten readiness program at RN Harris. All rising kindergarten students are welcome to attend the event.</b>   Kindergarten Readiness Program at R...
August 29, 2023	<b>Popsicles on the Playground for Kindergarten Families</b>
August 30, 2023	<b>First half of Kindergarten Report (A-L)</b>

August 31, 2023	<b>Second half of Kindergarten report (M-Z)</b>
September 1, 2023	<b>All kindergarten students report to school</b>

### **Parent Portal**

Many of you have already enrolled in Parent Portal and we are grateful! It is important that you set up an account because it will provide you access to your child's academic success. Your child's report card as well as semester grades will be located on this secured site. **VERY IMPORTANT: Bus Information will be updated through Parent Portal.** This is very different from what we have done in years past. Again, most of you have enrolled last spring, however, if you have not done so already, please enroll. You may confirm with our data manager, [Kwai Jarrell](#), if you have any questions. He can be reached at (919) 560-3967 ext. 67224.

### **School Hours**

Our school hours are **7:45 a.m.- 2:15** p.m. Students can begin arriving at school by **7:30 a.m.** They will be considered late by **7:45 a.m.** Our instructional day begins at **8:00 a.m.** Attendance will be taken daily. Please make sure that your child reports to school on time and remains in school for the duration of the instructional day. We will begin allowing students into the building at **7:30 a.m.** Students are NOT to arrive at school before **7:30 a.m.** unless they are bus riders. Breakfast is served between 7:30 a.m. -7:45 a.m. Exceptions are only made for buses that are late arrivals. Our instructional day ends at 2:15 p.m. and dismissal is 2:15 for car riders and walkers. Bus riders are dismissed as their buses arrive (~2:25 p.m.) Please make sure that your child reports to school on time and remains until 2:15 p.m. It is critical for your child to be involved and actively participate daily. We want our students to receive full instruction each day.

**Students are involved in instruction until 2:15 p.m. each day. Intensive intervention occurs from 1:30 p.m. -2:10 p.m. each day in the area(s) that they are not proficient in. Please schedule all routine medical and dental appointments on days students are out of school or on early dismissal days.**

### **Student Check Out Procedure Prior to Dismissal**

In order to ensure your child's safety, parents must report to the main office to check students out. Please do **NOT** go directly to your child's classroom. Your child will be called to the office for dismissal once they have been signed out by the parent or adult whose name appears on the student's data form. We will **NOT** call students to the office for dismissal after **2:00 p.m.** You must utilize the carpool line in an orderly fashion. If there are any changes that need to be made in the manner in which your child goes home, please notify the office no later than **12:30 p.m.** or send a written note to the school to your child's teacher which will be given to the front office. We will not accept any verbal notification from a student. Students are not allowed to make that decision. Parents must call or send in written notification of any changes. There are no exceptions.

Once again, you must utilize the carpool line if you are picking up your child after 2:00 p.m. No exceptions will be made. We appreciate your cooperation and patience.

### **Attendance/Tardiness**

Students are expected to attend school each day and be on time. We have a full instructional day planned for your child(ren). It is important that they are present and on time to receive it. Signing in late or leaving early impedes the learning process. Bits and pieces of missed instruction result in huge learning gaps that cannot be recaptured. Parent cooperation is requested during this trying time to ensure that students are actively involved in their educational experience. **Please parents, we NEED you to make this happen. Attendance will be taken daily. If your child is sick and will not attend, please contact Mr. Jarrell, Data Manager at (919) 560-3967 ext. 67224 on the first day of your child's absence.** A written notice is required when your child is absent. Having your child present and on time for instruction will help to avoid such unnecessary measures.

### **After School Care**

**Ms. Dominique Taylor is our afterschool manager. However, if you have any questions regarding the program, please contact Community Education at P.O. Box 1967, Durham N.C. 27703 or call (919) 560-3816 for more information regarding the registration process.**

### **Car Riders/Loading and Unloading**

All car riders must be dropped off and picked up at the cafeteria entrance. Late arrivals (after 7:45 a.m.) must use the front entrance and report to the office to receive a tardy slip. Parents must accompany students arriving late so that they can be signed in electronically. It is extremely important that an adult accompany the student(s) that are arriving late. **Please do not drop your child off and leave if they are tardy.**

### **Free and Reduced Lunch**

Applications are available through the online enrollment portal at the DPS website. We are participating in a grant and now all children eat breakfast and lunch free. We would like for everyone to fill out the lunch forms. This ensures that we continue to receive assistance. If your child brings lunch to school, please pack a balanced meal. Students will not be allowed to eat unhealthy snacks during lunch.

### **Supplies**

The school supply list is available on our school's website and on class dojo.

### Technology/Electronics/Toys

**Students are not permitted to bring electronics (tablets, cell phones, etc.) to school unless permitted by the principal.** Our school is equipped with all the technology needed throughout the day. If students bring their cellphones to school they **MUST** remain in their book bags and remain off until they are dismissed from school. If cell phones are seen by the staff during the school day, they will take the cell phone and turn it into the principal. Parents must come and get the phone. Toys are not allowed. We are trying to eliminate all distractions that will impede academic success. If your child decides to bring any of these items and they are lost, we will not be responsible for their recovery.

### Dress Code Guidelines

The DPS dress code will be followed. **Please note that there have been updates to the dress code. We will distribute updates as soon as they are made available.**

**4301Rule I.A-3 Student Dress Code:** The primary goal of Durham Public Schools is to provide a safe learning environment where all students are able to achieve at their highest potential. The personal appearance of every student is an important component of establishing a safe environment for optimal learning and respect for one another. Students are expected to adhere to standards of dress and appearance that are compatible with an effective learning environment. In support of these goals and expectations, the Board establishes the following dress code for students:

- a. Students are prohibited from wearing clothing, jewelry, book bags, or other articles of personal appearance which:
  1. **depict profanity, vulgarity, obscenity, or violence;**
  2. **promote use or abuse of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol;**
  3. **create a threat to the health or safety of the student or others;**
  4. **are prohibited under the Gangs and Gang Activities Policy (III-7);**
- b. The following specific items are also not permitted:
  1. **clothing worn in such a manner so as to reveal underwear, cleavage, or bare skin between the upper chest and mid-thigh;**
  2. **bare feet, bedroom slippers;**
  3. **spaghetti straps, strapless tops, halter tops;**
  4. **see-through, mesh garments;**
  5. **trousers, slacks, shorts worn below hip level;**
  6. **clothing that is excessively baggy or tight;**

- 7. skirts and shorts shorter than mid-thigh;**
- 8. sunglasses worn inside school building;**
- 9. hats, caps, hoods, sweat bands and bandanas or other head wear worn inside school building; and**
- 10. any other article of appearance that is physically revealing or provocative**

- c. If a student's dress or appearance violates this dress code, the principal or principal's designee may require the student to change his or her dress or appearance. A second or repeated violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Please make sure that your child is following the dress code. Sagging pants are not allowed. Belts are required. If the student is in violation of the dress code parents will be called to bring appropriate apparel.

### **Parent Involvement**

We need all of our school families to be actively involved. We ask our students to “actively listen and learn” so as adults we must “actively participate and support” our school community. They are a number of ways in which you may participate and they are but not limited to the following:

- PTA (Parent Teacher Association)
- SIT (School Improvement Team)
- School Volunteer
- Class Parent

Parents and other family members are welcome in our school. During Open House, you will have an opportunity to join our PTA and sign up to volunteer with our school based on your interest, talents, etc. We are in need of parents to come in and read to our students, volunteer in the classroom, participate in the beautification of our school with our nature trail, wetlands, garden upkeep, etc.

Parents, we really need you to stay in touch with your child's teacher. You are needed to help ensure that the line of communication is open. We are a school family that have, can, and will accomplish astonishing feats when we combine our efforts. Beautiful things are happening for our “Eagle Village.”

### **Healthy Living and Eating**

In a continued effort to fight childhood obesity, we continue to embrace a healthy living and healthy eating program. As we continue to follow this program, we are requesting that students only bring healthy snacks to school. Items such as chips, candy, sodas, chewing gum will be taken if they are brought to school and given back at the end of the day. A list of suggested

snacks will be posted on the school’s website. Classroom celebrations should consist of healthy items. Thank you in advance for helping us prevent childhood obesity.

**Mark Your Calendars**

Please mark your calendar school family for the important dates noted below. All events are in-person.

Date	Event
August 7th- August 10th 2023	R.N. Harris Sidekicks Leadership Camp (by invitation only)
August 8th-August 10th 2023	Kindergarten Readiness Camp (All rising kindergarten students)
August 24, 2023	Open House (5:30 p.m.-7:00 p.m.)
August 28, 2023	First Day of School
August 29, 2023	Popsicles on the Playground for Kindergarten Families
August 30, 2023	First ½ Kindergarten Report (A-L)
August 31, 2023	Second ½ Kindergarten Report (M-Z)
September 1, 2023	All Kindergarten Students Report
September 4, 2023	Labor Day Holiday-NO SCHOOL
September 7, 2023	Title I Meeting (6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.)
September 8, 2023	Grandparents Day-Grandparents are welcome to come and eat lunch with your grandchild
September 14, 2023	Blue Ribbon Pinning Ceremony for Staff (5:30 p.m.-7:00 p.m. This event is open to the school community. Please come to celebrate our AMAZING staff)
September 25, 2023	Teacher Workday
October 11, 2023	Early Release Day (Dismissal is at 12:15 p.m.)
October 12, 2023	Literacy Night
October 19, 2023	Hispanic Heritage Program
October 26, 2023	Storybook Character Day (This event will take place

	during the school day)
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### **Expressions of Gratitude**

I want to take this moment to express how grateful I am to have you as a part of our school community. Your patience, hard-work, and dedication is greatly appreciated. We have battled our way back as a community. Our school made profound academic gains. The students, staff, and most of all you (FAMILIES) remained focused! Your dedication to excellence made the difference. Thank you for your continued support in helping to educate your children. We know that it is not easy, but once again, you have been resilient. YOUR resilience yielded success.

We are so excited to begin this WONDERFUL journey into the 2023-2024 school year. We have so many wonderful school initiatives that will further the success of our students. Our goal is to provide an amazing educational experience for your child.

Sincerely,

Mshinda Middleton-Brown, Principal