



Meeting with Prospective Parents

PS 321

Welcome!

- **Tonight's Meeting**
 - Overview of PS 321
 - Our Philosophy and Curriculum
 - Tour
- **We Are One School with Two Buildings**
 - Lower School—opened in September 2024—grades 3K, PreK, K, 1
 - Upper School—180 7th Avenue—grades 2-5
- **About our Team**
 - Liz Phillips, Principal—Split Between the Two Buildings
 - Tu Harris, Assistant Principal—Site Supervisor in Lower School, Supervisor of 3K, PreK, K, 1 and Supervisor of Math School Wide
 - Other Assistant Principals (Split between the two buildings)--Liz McCormack—AP in Charge of Special Education, ENLs, Intervention and grades 4 & 5; Simone Fraser—AP in Charge of Literacy and Social Studies and grades 2 & 3
 - One Lower School Guidance Counselor: Rachia Hazel; Two Upper School Guidance Counselors: Jon Alvarez & Ben Halioua
 - Parent Coordinator: Deb Orr—Split between the two buildings
- **About You**
 - Do you have a child who will be entering 3K or PreK in September?
 - Kindergarten?
 - First Grade or Above?

Some Statistics

- 1331 Students in Grades 3K-5
- In this building we have approximately 520 students in grades 3K, PreK, K, and 1.
- Class Size and Staffing in the Lower School This Year
 - **3K–15 students–1 class–1 full time teacher; 1 full time paraprofessional**
 - **PreK–18 students per class–3 classes–1 full time teacher; 1 full time paraprofessional**
 - **Kindergarten–24-25 students per class–9 classes–**Seven of the classes have 1 full time teacher; 1 part time PTA funded teaching assistant. Two classes ICT (Integrated Collaborative Team Teaching) with approximately 15 general education students and 10 children with IEPs. Two full-time teachers and two full time paraprofessionals in each class. Generally have at least one paraprofessional in K ICT classes.
 - **First Grade–Reduced class size 20-21 students per class–11 classes–**Eight of the classes have 1 full time teacher and there are PTA funded TAs shared between 4 classes. Three classes ICT (Integrated Collaborative Team Teaching) with approximately 12 general education students and 8 children with IEPs. Two full-time teachers and 1-2 paraprofessionals per class.
- Class Size and Staffing in the Upper School–All ICT classes have 2 full time teachers; otherwise 1 full time teacher. This year's class size:
 - 2nd grade–Reduced Class Size–19-20 students per class–11 classes–3 ICT classes
 - 3rd grade–Reduced Class Size–19-20 students per class–11 classes–4 ICT classes
 - 4th grade–26-27 students per class–8 classes–3 ICT classes–we are hoping for reduced class size next year with 23 students and 10 classes–4 ICT
 - 5th grade–26-27 students per class–7 classes–3 ICT classes–we are hoping for reduced class size next year with 23 students and 9 classes–4 ICT.

Some More Statistics

- Demographics

- 64% White
- 9% Asian
- 10% Hispanic
- 3% Black
- 12% Other/Mixed Race/Did not indicate
- 1% ENLs
- 20% Students with IEPs
- 7% Students who Qualify for free or reduced lunch

- High Performing by a Variety of Measures

- Approximately 89% score at or above grade level on state ELA exam (grades 3-5)
- Approximately 90% score at or above grade level on state Math exam (grade 3-5)
- Academic Screener data for fall 2025 for K-5-ELA-87% met or exceeded benchmark
- Academic Screener data for fall 2025 for K-5 Math-84% met or exceeded benchmark

- High Marks from Parents and Teachers on our Annual School Survey

- 98% of families say they feel respected by their child's teacher and the principal.
- 98% of families are satisfied or very satisfied with the education their children received, the quality of the teachers, the IEP planning process.
- 98% of families say their child's teacher treats them as a partner in educating their child.
- 100% of teachers said they had the resources they needed to plan for instruction.
- 99% of teacher in the school say the principal sets high standards for student learning.

- Attendance Rate for Sept, Oct, Nov 2025-97.5%

Our Approach to Teaching and Learning

- Our curriculum is aligned to the New York State Next Generation Standards.
- We have consistency across a grade and build in a lot of planning and professional development time for teachers, but also give teachers the freedom to make some choices themselves.
- In 3K and PreK we have a play-based approach to learning and follow the New York City Creative Curriculum which includes many integrated curriculum units (such as buildings and vehicles).
- A workshop approach to much of the curriculum. Brief whole class lessons followed by small group work, work in pairs, and independent work.
- Combine academic rigor and attention to social emotional learning
- Commitment to the arts
- Choice/Center time daily in 3K, Prek, Kindergarten; 3x a week in 1st grade

Our Approach to Teaching and Learning Continued

- Math–K-3 Eureka Math Squared–combines conceptual understanding and math fluency; 4-5–Eureka
- Handwriting instruction in K and 1st grade
- Integrated curriculum units in all grades.
- Science of Reading based approach to literacy
 - What is the Science of Reading–Importance of Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Comprehension, Vocabulary Development
 - Heavy emphasis on teaching phonemic awareness in Prek and phonemic awareness and phonics in grades K-2.
 - Reading time daily in K-5.
 - Differentiation and choice, as well as some common units of study.
 - Small groups with decodables and other books
 - Read Aloud
 - NYC Reads–Integrating some Wit and Wisdom
 - Writing time
- No written homework in Prek, K, 1st or 2nd Grade
- Commitment to the arts.

Specials and Services

- Once a day the students are with another teacher for a special or cluster program.
- For K/1/2–specials are
 - Art
 - Music
 - Physical Education/Movement
 - Library
 - Science
- For 3K–Art, Music, Movement
- For PreK–Art, Music, Movement, Science
- For 3/4/5–specials are Art, Music, Physical Education, Science, Technology
- Services for children who need them.
 - ENL
 - Children with IEPs
 - ICT
 - SETSS
 - Related Services (Speech, OT, PT, Guidance)

Social Emotional Learning

- An essential part of our school in all grades.
- Focus on equity and inclusion.
- In Lower School done in a variety of ways
 - Read Aloud
 - Special recognition of acts of kindness
 - Morning Meetings
 - Recess
 - Playroom
 - Routines
 - Tools for problem solving (Friendship Jar in K-1)

Parent Engagement

We are a school deeply committed to collaborating with families.

- Teachers communicate often with families, as does the administration.
- Committees
- Family Nights
- Family Fridays
- Workshops
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Friendraisers

Joyful Learning

- Top priority for us is for children to love school. We want them to grow as learners and as people and to feel that they can make a difference in the world.
- Some quotes from 5th graders from years past:
 - "The best part of 321 is how the teachers showed us how much talent each person has and how we are special in our own way."
 - "PS 321 means fun and learning and I will never forget how every year I would come into a new classroom and walk in and feel the love."
 - "I feel like an old man reminiscing on his life from long ago. But that's what PS 321 is to me. It's my entire life. Now we're leaving the world we know for the unknown. We'll have to adapt and change, but PS 321 will always be in our hearts."
 - "What being here has taught us is that we fight for what is right and that we can make a difference in the world. "
- We are a school that has an optimistic point of view about children, about learning. Several years ago as a staff we studied a book about children who have challenges in school called "Lost at School" by Ross Greene, a professor at Harvard Medical school. He has a very simple and profound message, "Children do well when they can." Our job as educators is to create the conditions where this is possible.

Application Timetables

Kindergarten Admissions

- Tuesday, December 9, 2025: Kindergarten Application Opens
- Friday, January 23, 2026: Kindergarten Application Closes
- Tuesday, March 31, 2026: Kindergarten Offer Release

3-K and Pre-K Admissions

- Wednesday, January 14, 2026: 3-K and Pre-K Applications Open
- Friday, February 27, 2026: 3-K and Pre-K Applications Close
- Tuesday, May 12, 2026: Pre-K Offer Release
- Tuesday, May 19, 2026: 3-K Offer Release