



Frequently Asked Questions 2019-2020

What is Skinner North's mission?

The mission of Skinner North Classical School is to provide rigorous, differentiated instruction to all students. With a focus on teaching the whole child in an academically advanced environment, we work to establish norms of highly successful and socially motivated individuals in a community that promotes collaboration, leadership, and celebrates the diversity of the students, families and staff.

Why does Skinner North have a no-food policy at events?

In recent years, CPS has placed a greater emphasis on health and wellness, including reducing sugar consumption at schools within the district. Many students in our school have food-related allergies--many are life threatening. Drawing from CPS guidelines and policies, we have various *safety* protocols followed at Skinner North Classical School: no nut, food only in designated locations and food free celebration policy.

Is Skinner North a no nut School?

Yes. Skinner North is a no nut school.

What are the lunch procedures?

Students may bring their own lunch or eat a school lunch. School lunch is free for all students. Students may not share food with other students. If a student forgets his/her/their lunch, they will get a school lunch. Students/Parents may not get food delivered from fast food restaurants/restaurants to the school as it can create disruption to the school day.

Why doesn't Skinner North allow holiday celebrations?

We have a rich diversity within our school community. In creating an inclusive environment, we choose not to celebrate holidays as not all members of the community may recognize that holiday. Instead classrooms are urged to study and learn about various holidays throughout the year. No formal celebrations will be conducted in the classroom. Our school wide no-food-out-of-the-cafeteria policy also applies to this situation. We encourage parents and family

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members to contact teachers and volunteer to come into the classrooms and share their experiences from the holidays as well.

Are student birthdays observed?

Yes! In keeping with CPS policies and guidelines, student birthdays will be observed in a non-traditional way at Skinner North: without food treats. Your child will be honored in class in **other** ways on his/her birthday. If you would like to bring something in for your child's special day, here are a few non-food options that the children may enjoy: individual pencils, stickers, books, or art supplies, an art project we can make, music we can dance to, or a game we can play. Please coordinate the idea with your child's teacher.

My child is having a party, can I pass out invitations?

In order to be considerate of everyone and not to be exclusionary, students and/or parents may not pass out invitations for outside activities unless they are including everyone in the class. The directory is a great way to connect with other families.

How does the school handle discipline?

A safe and civil school environment is necessary for student learning and achievement. We follow the CPS Student Code of Conduct, which emphasizes a restorative approach to discipline, meaning we seek to resolve behavioral incidents by teaching students social and emotional skills, shaping positive behavior, and repairing harm done. This also aligns with our use of the Responsive Classroom approach to teaching.

Each family receives a copy of the SCC and it is also available at <http://cps.edu/Pages/StudentCodeofConduct.aspx>. The SCC sets forth the expected behaviors for students and a transparent process for administrators to redirect inappropriate behavior. Parents are expected to review the SCC with their children, and encourage their children to conduct themselves appropriately at all times. Students are also expected to sign the SCC receipt and exhibit appropriate behavior by following all school rules and Board policies.

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How does the school address bullying?

CPS is committed to ensuring all students have access to a safe, supportive learning environment free from bullying and harassment. Updates provide guidance and protections against bias-based harassment, and clarify steps for schools to follow when responding to bullying allegations. (See section for of the Student Code of Conduct for more information and below for a few updates to the policy.

We have an issue with my child's teacher/grade/classmate, what should I do?

We always recommend starting by talking to the teacher. They are best able to talk through student specific concerns around grades or classmate interactions. If you need further assistance, reach out to administration and/or our school counselor.

Can students take Algebra and Geometry for high school credit at SN? Why or why not?

We have a strong belief in creating critical math thinkers who have a deep conceptual understanding and can fully explain their mathematically reasoning. Middle grade math is important in setting up students for success in high school mathematics courses. 8th graders at Skinner North take Algebra. At the end of the year, they are able to take an Algebra Exit exam. If they pass, they receive high school competency, not credit, for high school Algebra. This is a CPS policy. Currently, CPS does not have a geometry policy, so even if we offered geometry, students would not be able to receive high school competency or credit for the course.

Do I have to participate in fundraising for the school?

Absolutely not. We so appreciate fundraising efforts done by our school community, but this is never an expectation. Every family has their own unique needs and we want you to determine what ways you want to be involved in our school community.

Where do Skinner North students end up going to high school?

The vast majority of our students go to selective enrollment high schools. The largest numbers going to Payton, Jones, Whitney Young, Lane Tech and Northside.

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Do many students leave Skinner North for academic centers?

This number varies year to year, but typically 30-40% of students go to academic centers. Academic centers can be a great fit for some students and not others. We encourage families to learn more about academic centers and see what works best for their student. Skinner North offers a smaller, supportive environment with numerous leadership opportunities for students.

Where can I find more information about grading scales, policies, expectations?

As a part of the Chicago Teachers Union Contract, teachers have autonomy over grading policies and procedures. These are listed in our Parent Handbook available on the website. It includes a listing of the grading weights assigned to categories teachers teams determine would best meet the needs of our students. Teachers also send out information and do an open house at the beginning of the year to explain these policies further.

Are volunteers welcome at the school? What about in my child’s classroom?

Yes! All volunteers must go through the CPS volunteer approval process and be approved to volunteer. To volunteer in your student’s classroom, you coordinate with the teacher who will send out volunteer requests.

How do I volunteer at Skinner North?

Parents must first apply at cpsvolunteers.org and follow the prompts for completing the volunteer application. Once the application is completed, you will need to see Ms. Morales (school clerk) to verify your ID. There are 2 levels of volunteering. Level II is our most common level.

If I am volunteering, what should I do when I arrive?

Parents and other visitors to our school are required to sign in at the main entrance and receive a visitor's pass. This procedure is strictly enforced in order to maintain a safe environment within the school building.

Is there a sibling preference at Skinner North?

There is no sibling preference at Skinner North as acceptance is based on application and testing. All placements are handled by the Office of Access Enrollment as per their policies.

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What are the school's hours?

Our school day runs from 8:30-3:30. We have paid before care from 7:00-8:00AM. Free care from 8:00-8:30 and after care programs that extend the day to 6:00PM. There is a tuition based before and after school program. The earliest your child can be dropped off is 8:00 unless your child is enrolled in the before school program. School ends at 3:30. Your child should be picked up at this time unless they are enrolled in the after school program.

Are there student fees for Skinner North?

Yes. Students fees are \$100.00 and cover school provided materials. There is also a field trip fee of \$50.00 for your convenience if you prefer to pay for trips in advance. This fee covers all field trip costs for the school year. Fees can be paid in the main office or online. There are always waivers available if a family is unable to pay.

What should I do if my child is absent? Or needs an early dismissal?

School begins at 8:30 for grades K-8 and ends at 3:30. If you child is absent from school, an absence form should be completed and submitted to the main office. Contacting the main office via phone/email or emailing your child's teacher does not excuse your child's absence from school. Until documentation is received, the automated CPS robo call will contact the phone number listed on file. Parents and guardians are urged to schedule doctor, dentist, or other appointments outside of school hours or on school holidays. If a child needs to be dismissed early, he/she should bring a note to the teacher stating the departure time and reason. Parents or guardians must sign the child out in the school office. The office will not call down your child from the classroom until you arrive. Chicago Board of Education policy mandates that students who receive an early dismissal are subject to loss of attendance.

Does the school have transportation?

Yes. Skinner North offers transportation services provided by CPS transportation. To be eligible for transportation you must reside within the following coordinates, 5200 North (Foster) - 2200 South (Cermak). There are no East or West boundaries. Anything outside of these coordinates will be ineligible. For additional questions, please contact CPS transportation at 773-553-2860.

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Is there a lost and found?

Lost and found items are stored in the parent room located in room 105. Parents are encouraged to check periodically for any missing items. Unclaimed items such as coats, sweaters, hats etc. will be donated to local charities if not claimed by report card pick-up days or before winter/spring break. Unclaimed lunch bags and waters bottles will be discarded monthly.

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