



JOHN G. LEACH SCHOOL

Parent-Student Handbook

DR. GINNY SCHREPPLER
PRINCIPAL



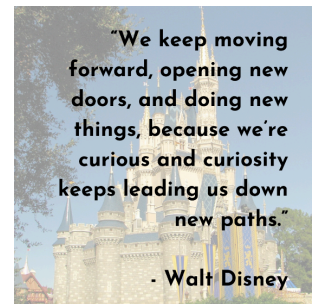
Welcome to John G. Leach

Dear Families,

Welcome to John G. Leach! We are excited to provide your child with a high quality program, designed to meet his or her individual needs. Our staff is committed to providing an excellent education while creating a safe and supporting learning and exploring environment.

Our school wide theme this year: "If you can dream it, you can do it!"

This handbook will provide you with information related to the school day and to your child's overall educational programming. Please read this handbook as it will be a great resource throughout the year. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.



Vision

Through collaboration with various stakeholders we are committed to providing high quality services that are meaningful and respectful to diverse learners; fostering independence, communication and relationships.

Mission

The Leach Staff will embrace the responsibility of providing individualized instruction and programming with an emphasis on purposeful communication, opportunities for social interactions, independence, and appropriate adaptations that are student centered. This can be achieved through professional development, family involvement, and community relationships.

TAG Line

#leachislimitless

Be sure to follow our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/leachcsd>

Leach Lines our school newsletter will be sent to the email we have on file, please reach out to the main office if you are not receiving this correspondence. **Leach Lines** will also be posted on our **Facebook page**.

Sincerely,
Ginny Schreppler, Ed.D.
Principal

John G. Leach School

Program Contacts

Name	Title	Contact Information
Dr. Ginny Schreppler	Principal	(302) 429-4055 virginia.schreppler@colonial.k12.de.us
Lorie Simmons	Secretary	(302) 429-4055 lorie.simmons@colonial.k12.de.us
Kim Tomlinson	Medical Records Secretary	(302) 429-4060 (housed in Colwyck) kimberly.tomlinson@colonial.k12.de.us
Catherine Rounsley-Maxwell	Special Education Coordinator	(302) 429-4055 catherine.rousley-maxwell@colonial.k12.de.us
Dr. Krista Drewry	School Psychologist	(302) 429-4055
Claudia Peters Joseph Salerno	School Nurses	(302) 429-4058 Claudia.Peters@colonial.k12.de.us Joseph.Salerno@colonial.k12.de.us
Amy Micklos Kelsey Newkirk Samantha Margerum	Speech Language Pathologists	(302) 429-4055 Amy.Micklos@colonial.k12.de.us kelsey.newkirk@colonial.k12.de.us samantha.margerum.@colonial.k12.de.us
Kathleen Benson Dr. Kristin Capone Dr. Christine Palmer-Casey	Physical Therapists	(302) 429-4055 Kathleen.Benson@colonial.k12.de.us Kristin.Capone@colonial.k12.de.us Christine.Palmer@colonial.k12.de.us
Dr. Kristin Chickadel Dr. Tara Kulak Annette Mestern Tom Winkler	Occupational Therapists	(302) 429-4055 Kristin.Chickadel@colonial.k12.de.us Tara.Kulak@colonial.k12.de.us Annette.Mestern@colonial.k12.de.us Thomas.Winkler@colonial.k12.de.us
	Transportation	(302) 323-2851

Colonial School District Office Contacts
(302) 323-2700

Title	Name
Superintendent	Dr. Jeff Menzer
Deputy Superintendent	Dr. Nneka Jones
Chief Operating and Financial Officer	Emily Falcon
Executive Director	Holly Sage
Director of Operations	Drew Moffett
Supervisor of Facilities	Ted Lambert
Supervisor of Nutrition Services	Amanda Nask
Transportation Supervisor	Marc Emerick
Director of Student Services	Nicole Markey
Director of Health and Wellness	Dr. Jon Cooper
Director of Secondary Schools	Dr. Janissa Nuneville
Director of Elementary Schools	Jeff Gibeault
Director of Curriculum and Instruction	Sherrie Clark

Colonial School District Board of Education

Christopher Pieuch Sr. II, President
Christine Smith, Vice President
Ronald D. Handy Sr.
Robin A. Crossan
Dr. Keenan Dorsey
Ja’Lisa White
Joseph Laws

DISTRICT INFORMATION

Colonial School District Office Address	318 E. Basin Road
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	New Castle, Delaware 19720
District Office Phone Number	(302) 323-2700
Transportation Office Phone Number	(302) 323-2851

The John G. Leach School **Program Overview**

The Leach School is named for John. G. Leach, a prominent educator, humanitarian, and advocate for the disabled. Leach Schools serves students residing in New Castle County, ages 3-22, who have physical and/or cognitive disabilities and other health impairments.

Leach is recognized for its focused, innovative educational curriculum and breadth of individualized, challenging programs taught by our dedicated faculty. Our high standards are complemented by exemplary therapies and related services: Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy, Assistive Technology, Statewide Deaf/Blind Services, and Adaptive Exploratory Classes: Music, Physical Education, and Aquatics. These services and programs are provided by faculty who are certified, licensed professionals supported by skilled paraprofessionals.

Students receive individual services based directly from their Individualized Educational Plans, communication goals, general academics, functional skills, and vocational training. Instruction is guided by the Delaware Essential Elements for Elementary and Secondary students.

It is through our collaboration with families and agencies that we are able to best support our students as they achieve their individual goals and milestones. We thank you for your continued support and partnership.

Instruction and Assessment

Several tools are utilized for instruction and assessment. Below are a few examples of resources used to deliver instruction:

- ★ **Essential Elements-** Recognizing the need to make the content standards accessible to all students, the Delaware Department of Education selected this resource made available by Dynamic Learning Maps: Essential Elements. These resources were developed to assist educators in providing access to the general education curriculum in order to improve educational and achievement outcomes for students with significant intellectual disabilities.

- ★ **Unique Learning Systems (ULS)** - Unique Learning System is an online, interactive, standards-based curriculum specifically designed for students with special needs. Teachers utilize monthly thematic units of study for instruction. Each unit contains special education lesson plans and interactive materials teachers can implement into classroom learning activities. All materials are created using SymbolStix symbols and the student's communication goals. The unit lesson plans define three levels of differentiated tasks which accommodate the diversity of learners with significant disabilities.
- ★ **Equals Math-** Equals is real math instruction for students with disabilities. Students using Equals math have shown significant gains in math skills. Support for teachers using Equals math is embedded in the lessons and provided by training and follow-up by the AbleNet Curriculum Team.
- ★ **The Communication Matrix** - The Communication Matrix is an assessment tool to help families and professionals easily understand the communication status, progress, and unique needs of students functioning at the early stages of communication or using forms of communication other than speaking or writing.

Program Information

Attendance

Research shows that children greatly benefit from a consistent routine. Therefore, we ask that all students attend daily (barring illness, doctor's appointments, etc.) and arrive and depart on time. If your child is absent from school, please provide the school with a doctor's or excusal note. Use the Colonial School District Website to review the Colonial Calendar. Visit the district site at:

<http://www.colonialschooldistrict.org>

School Hours:

7:55 AM- 2:40 PM

(Doors open at 7:55 AM and our dismissal begins at 2:40 PM)

Late Arrivals & Early Dismissals

- After 8:05 AM a student is considered **late** and must be signed in by an adult at the Leach main office. Classroom staff will retrieve late children from the office. One family is allowed in the main office at a time. If there is someone there when you arrive, please wait in the vestibule until it is your turn.
- For late arrivals, parents are permitted to park in front of Leach School AFTER 8:05 AM when our school buses have finished their arrival process.

- If a parent wants to meet with a therapist, teacher, or nurse an appointment **MUST** be made in advance. All meetings will be held in the main office conference room. If the matter is urgent a phone or virtual conference will be made at the earliest available time.
- All parents/guardians picking up a student for an early dismissal must sign their child out in the Leach main office. Staff will escort students to the main office. ALL students needing an Early Dismissal must be picked up from the Leach main office **before 2:00 PM** or they will be a part of the normal dismissal process. **Families, please do not utilize bus parking (perpendicular to the school) any time after 2:00 PM, our buses must have a space to park and it can easily become a safety hazard as it is difficult for buses to see cars parked in bus slots.**
- For early dismissals, buses arrive in the Leach parking lot at 2:05 PM; vehicles must not be in the bus slots at that time.

Emergency Cards

An emergency card will be sent home with your child at the start of the school year and must be completed and returned to school within one week of your child starting school. If information on the emergency card changes during the school year, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the main office and school nurse of changes.

Nursing/Health Services

The John G. Leach Program employs full time registered nurses. As the health services experts, the school nurses serve as health professionals for the school community and provide services to support learning and access to education.

- **Immunization/Medical Requirements** -According to the State Board of Education regulations, all children entering Delaware public schools are **REQUIRED** to have written documentation of the following:
 - Five doses of DPT' or DT' vaccine (or combination) unless 4th dose was given after 4th birthday
 - Four doses of polio vaccine unless 3rd dose was given after 4th birthday
 - Two doses of measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine
 - 3 doses of Hepatitis B vaccine
 - Proof of lead screening (pre-k and kindergarten only)
 - Physical exam within the past 24 months
 - Tuberculosis screening within the past 12 months or written documentation from a physician or public health clinic stating that the child is low risk factor
 - 2 doses of Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine (or proof of disease)

The Board of Education or its designee may grant exemption from the immunization requirement for medical or religious reasons upon presentation by parents of acceptable documentation. The nurse will contact parents of those children whose health records do not show the required immunizations.

- **Injuries & Illness**—Please notify the school nurse if your child has an injury outside of school, as your child may need to be restricted from recess or physical activity depending on the injury.
 - Prior to sending your child to school each day please view the Colonial School District's health screener questionnaire. If a “yes” answer is yielded to any question please keep your child home and follow up with your primary care physician.
 - Your child must stay home if he/she has any condition that is contagious, and you must notify the school nurse. If given an antibiotic for an illness, your child must be on the antibiotic for 24 hours before returning to school
 - Your child must stay home free from vomiting, diarrhea, and fever (100.6 degrees Fahrenheit) without the use of Tylenol or Motrin for 24 hours.
 - For any child who has been hospitalized, a copy of discharge orders is required before they can return to school. Additional return-to-school documents may also be needed. Please consult your child's assigned nurse for details. Parents/guardians must also contact the school nurse to share any additional medical information. This policy applies to all students, including those with a private duty nurse. Please review our policies in this letter, sent home annually: [Policy Letter](#)

- **Medication Policy** Upon arrival at school, the nurse will verify the quantity of the medication. If a discrepancy is encountered, the parent will be notified. For students on a medication regimen, a new physician's order is mandatory at the beginning of each school year.
 - Whenever possible, medication should be administered at home.
 - Students are not permitted to carry medication or take any medication during school hours without the nurse's supervision, including cough drops. The only exception is fast acting medication such as inhalers or Epipens. Families must share these needs with the school nurse in writing AND on the emergency card.
 - Nurses may administer prescription and non-prescription medication during school hours, utilizing the instructions outlined in this policy:
 - The medication must be in the original container, with the attached prescription label.
No medication is to be sent to school in plastic bags or foil wraps.
 - A note from home must include following information:
 - Name of medication
 - Amount of medication in bottle
 - Dosage of medication
 - Time of administration
 - Reason for administration

Overview of Private Duty Nurses (PDN) Guidelines

Many students at John G. Leach School require the services of a Private Duty Nurse (PDN). If your child is supported by a PDN, please note the following:

- The role of a PDN in the school is to provide medical services and interventions only. PDNs, are not authorized to communicate on behalf of parents, guardians, or school staff. To avoid confusion or miscommunication, parents and guardians are encouraged to directly communicate with teachers or therapists regarding educational programming.
- Should any issues arise concerning the PDN's role in your child's care or impact on your child's educational programming, you will be contacted by Dr. Schreppler, or her designee, to discuss the issue and to develop a plan to address the issue. If the issue persists, the Colonial School District reserves the right to request a conference with you and the agency to discuss the issue and develop a plan to address the issue, which may include requesting that a new PDN be assigned during school hours.

NOTE: For additional information regarding the role of PDNs, please see the Colonial School District PDN guidelines. They will be posted prior to the start of school.

Toileting and Changing

It is the expectation that all staff assist in the toileting/changing of all students regardless of gender.

Communication

Building a strong home and school connection is important to our staff. We strive to provide frequent communication to families through daily student logs, weekly classroom newsletters, automated phone messages, flyers, progress reports, conferences, and the school website; <http://www.colonialschooldistrict.org/schools/leach>. Teachers will communicate with parents through a daily communication log or individual Class Dojo. Please be sure to check this everyday. In addition, Dr. Schreppler will send out weekly newsletters, *Leach Lines* directly to the email we have on file for you as well as post it on our school's FB page. If you are not receiving this communication please contact the main office to update your information.

School Notification Systems

We use Class Dojo here at Leach, why should you use Class Dojo? Class Dojo provides a platform for consistent communication between families and ALL the staff that support their child. All the speciality teachers, PT, OT, SLP, and the nurse assigned to your class are all connected to your child's classroom. You can quickly send a message to anyone on your child's team and that team member can message you back. This is great for quick questions and/or updates. I also share school-wide announcements through Class Dojo. You will receive instructions from your child's teacher on how to connect to the class.

The Colonial School District uses Remind to communicate major or important information to families. You will receive a text message or email with the relevant details. All personal information is taken from the school's records, so please ensure that our main office has your current phone numbers and email addresses.

Family Involvement

- **Parent/Teacher Association** - The PTA plays an integral role in your child's education! We value family support, feedback and collaboration. The PTA has many events planned for the students, staff and families. Meeting information will be sent home with your child at the start of the school year. Meetings last for approximately one hour, and childcare is often offered by the PTA. We provide opportunities to meet during the day and afterschool, alternating months.
- **Family participation** - Families are strongly encouraged to participate in family-centered events such as, Open House in September, Parent Conferences in November and March and evening and daytime events planned throughout the school year. Family events are diverse, with some focusing on academics/student learning, and some focusing on social activities/connecting families, children, and staff.

Inclement Weather

Be sure to follow instructions from the School Messenger Phone call and the Remind text messages that are sent related to inclement weather. The following are additional resources:

- Please use the following as a resource for days when school is delayed:
 - One hour delay (school begins at 8:55 a.m.)
 - Two hour delay (school begins at 9:55 a.m.)
- Please expect buses to be delayed by the appropriate time delay and to safely navigate while driving to and from our school and your home.
- During inclement weather or emergency situations, early dismissal/school closing information for the Colonial School District will be available from the following:
 - Delaware School Closing Website and Email Notification- Families can register for email notification and/or view the status of school closings across the state. Go to: <http://schoolclosings.delaware.gov> to register for this service.
 - School Messenger- Phone calls are made to parent/guardians from the Colonial School District. The District utilizes the phone numbers that were provided during registration. **If there is a change in your phone number please contact the Leach main office to make appropriate changes.**
 - School and District Websites -A notice will be posted on the homepage if schools are opening late, dismissing early, or closing.

- Local Radio Stations

92.9 FM WDSD

1450 AM WILM

93.7 FM WSTW

1410 AM WDOV

99.5 FM WJBR

1150 AM WDEL

School Safety

The safety and welfare of students is of utmost importance. The Leach School staff is committed to ensuring that the highest level of safety is maintained within our building on a daily basis. Therefore:

- All school doors will remain locked at all times. When visiting, family members must ring the buzzer and tell the office staff the reason for their visit. Visitors must report directly to the main office.
- Visitors MUST bring a State issued ID that will be processed through a security check. Please give your ID to the Main Office Secretary upon arrival.
- Once admitted, visitors MUST sign in and receive a "Visitor Badge." Visitor Badges must be clearly displayed at all times.
- After receiving a Visitor's Badge, all visitors will be escorted to and from their destinations: classroom, therapy room, conference, cafeteria, etc.
- Parents who wish to visit their child's classroom are to write and submit a note to the teacher 24 hours prior to the requested visit. This will provide uninterrupted instruction to all students and at the same time allow parents the opportunity to view programming. Please also know that parents who are requesting to observe the classroom cannot stay beyond a 1 hour limit to minimize distractions and any interruptions. Additionally, observations are not meant to be on-going or evaluative in nature. Please note that classroom observations are at the principal's discretion. If observations impede learning or instruction, they may be reduced or alternative arrangements will be made. **John G. Leach School values its partnership with families and warmly welcomes their collaboration. It is also the school's responsibility to provide individualized, consistent programming with minimal disruptions.**

Leach Transitions

It is important to us at Leach to provide a variety of transition opportunities for our students and their families, and we ask that families take advantage of all of the opportunities that we offer. We understand the need to support children and their families as children enter into our program, transition from one classroom into another classroom, and transition out of the program and into kindergarten, elementary or high school.

- **Leach Handbook** - Our families receive a copy of this handbook at the beginning of the school year or upon registration following the first day of school, allowing families to learn about the program and to think of questions that they may need answered before their children start school.
- **Leach Tours** -

- All new children and families are encouraged to participate in a program tour before starting at Leach. This tour includes classroom observations with children present, the opportunity to visit important rooms around the school (main office, nurse's office, etc.), and the opportunity to ask questions about daily activities and routines.
- **Back-to-School Night** - In September, Back to School Night is held. On this night, children and their families are invited to visit their assigned classrooms.
- **Transitions within the Program** - Children and families are encouraged to visit the new classroom before children start in the new classroom. Most often, children transition with the program when they move one grade to the next; this transition usually happens during the summer.
- **Midyear Transitions to Other Programs/Schools** - If a family is moving to another district or a child is moving to a less restrictive setting, Leach staff will work closely with the family to transition the child from Leach to the new program. This may include holding a meeting at the new school, arranging a tour at the new school, and sending pertinent documents/information from Leach to the new school.
 - **Transitions to Special Programs Kindergarten through High School** - Discussions about the transition process from John G. Leach School begin the year prior to the transition year. During the annual IEP meeting, parents receive a brief overview of available programs and contact information for the receiving school to arrange a tour. A district transition meeting is scheduled and held in May at the receiving school. For families residing out of the district, please note that the process may differ, as your Local Educational Agency (school district) will guide and collaborate during IEP meetings.
 - **Transition Process from John G. Leach School to post 22 programs (This is for students NOT enrolled in the STAR Program)** Discussions regarding the transition process from John G. Leach School begin when students are age 14, and still in a Middle School classroom. This happens at the IEP meeting, where parents are provided information regarding the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS). Parents are encouraged to start the application process for DDDS at this time. Once students reach ages 17-18, the staff at Leach take students on Community trips to visit Post 22 Programs. When students are in the oldest of the Upper School classrooms, for students ages 18-22, parents are invited to visit Post 22 Programs. During these years, DDDS representatives are invited to students' IEP meetings to discuss matters, such as Power of Attorney, Guardianship, State IDs and paratransit. IEPs for students aged 18-22 have goals focusing on transition and preparing our young adults for transition. Students graduate from John G. Leach School when they are 22.

Transportation - Arrival and Dismissal Procedures:

- **Handicapped Parking-** Parents who wish to drive their child to school will be able to utilize the handicapped parking spots in the Leach parking lot. Parents may cautiously enter the Leach parking lot along with the buses during our arrival and dismissal times.

- **Bus Transportation** - Colonial School District provides transportation for children eligible for special education.
 - Please be sure to be ready 5 minutes before and after your assigned pick up and drop off times.
 - Children must ride their assigned bus.
 - Staff will review the school bus rules with all children, and families are asked to talk to their children about the importance of staying seated on the bus.
 - The Colonial School District requires that each child be met by a parent, guardian, or designee at the assigned bus stop. **If there is no one to receive a child at the bus stop, the child will be returned to the school. Parents or guardians must then pick up the child at school within a reasonable amount of time . Multiple occurrences will require a meeting with the School Principal.**
 - If you have a direct question for transportation please contact them at 302-323-2851.

- **Car Rider Transportation- Students that are transported by their family:**
 - All families need to complete the "Authorization for Pick Up" form, and return it to your child's teacher during the first week of school.
 - The staff member escorting your child may not be familiar with you, so please have your ID readily available.
 - If you need to come in the building during arrival/dismissal times to speak with someone, please park in the parking lot and go to the main office for assistance.
 - When entering the parking lot, parents should follow the directions of staff.
 - At approximately 7:55 AM the arrival process will begin, and at 2:40 PM the dismissal process will begin and buses will arrive/depart.
 - If you are going to have another person pick up your child, we require that you send in a note indicating the change. **Expect that person to follow these procedures.** Please be sure that the person brings a valid form of identification (driver's license/state ID). The name on this person's ID must be the same name that you provided in the note.

Parent's & Visitor's Guidelines

In order to maintain an orderly, respectful, and secure educational environment for the students and staff of the John G. Leach it is essential that all parents, guardians, and visitors to our building be aware of their responsibilities and adhere to the expected code of conduct as set forth in this handbook.

Parents/Guardians are expected to:

- Recognize that the education of children is a joint responsibility of the parents/guardians and the school community.
- Help their children understand that in a democratic society appropriate rules are required to maintain a safe, orderly environment.

- Ensure that during arrival and dismissal appropriate behavior, language, and dress are demonstrated.
- Understand that arrival and dismissal are not times to meet with/conference with teachers or therapists, students must be dropped off or picked up quickly, without disruption.
- Ensure that children bring only items appropriate and related to the instructional program at school.
- Build relationships with teachers, other parents, and their children's friends.
- Inform school officials of changes in the home situation that may affect student conduct or performance.

Public Conduct on School Property

Schools are a place of work and learning. Certain limits must be set for parents/guardians and other district citizens who visit our schools and classrooms. All persons on school property or attending a school function shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. The building principal or his/her designee is responsible for all persons in the building and on the grounds. The following rules apply to all visitors to the school:

- Anyone who is not a regular staff member or student of the school will be considered a visitor.
- All visitors to the school must report to the main office upon arrival at the school. They will be required to sign the visitor's register and will be issued a visitor's badge, which must be worn at all times while in the school or on school grounds. The visitor must return the badge to the main office and sign out before leaving the building.
- Visitors attending school functions that are open to the public, such as parent-teacher organization meetings or public gatherings, are not required to register.
- Parents or guardians who wish to observe a classroom while school is in session must arrange visits with the classroom teacher(s) and principal to minimize class disruption. Observations allow parents/guardians to see their child in the school environment, but they are not meant to be ongoing or evaluative. Please note that classroom observations are at the principal's discretion. If observations impede learning or instruction, they may be reduced or alternative arrangements will be made. John G. Leach School values its partnership with families and warmly welcomes their collaboration. It is also the school's responsibility to provide individualized, consistent programming with minimal disruptions.
 - NOTE: Private duty nurses are not permitted to record video or take photographs of students or staff unless authorized by the classroom teacher, therapist, or school administration.
- Teachers will not take class time to discuss individual matters with visitors.
- Any unauthorized person on school property will be reported to the principal or his/her designee. Unauthorized persons will be asked to leave. The police may be called if the situation warrants.

- All visitors are expected to abide by the rules for public conduct on school property contained in the Code of Conduct.

Conduct Prohibited on School Property

No person shall:

- Intentionally injure any other person or threaten to do so.
- Intentionally damage or destroy school property or the property of a teacher, administrator, other district employee or any other person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
- Disrupt the orderly conduct of classes, school programs or other school activities.
- Distribute or wear materials on school grounds or at school functions that are obscene, advocate illegal action, appear libelous, obstruct the rights of others, or are disruptive to the school program.
- Intimidate, harass or discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
- Enter any portion of the school premises without authorization or remain in any building or facility after it is normally closed.
- Obstruct the free movement of any person in any place to which this code applies.
- Violate the traffic laws, parking regulations or other restrictions of vehicles.
- Possess, consume, sell, distribute or exchange alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, or be under the influence of either on school property or at a school function.
- Possess or use weapons in or on school property or at school function, except in the case of law enforcement officers. Loiter on or about school functions.
- Gamble on school property or at school functions.
- Refuse to comply with any reasonable order of identifiable school district officials performing their duties.
- Willfully incite others to commit any of the acts prohibited by this code.
- Violate any federal or state statute, local ordinance or board policy while on school property or while at a school function.

Persons in violation of the Code of Conduct

The authorization of a visitor to remain on school grounds or at any school function shall be withdrawn and they shall be directed to leave the premises. If they refuse to leave, they shall be subject to ejection.

The Colonial School District is an equal opportunity employer. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, disability, age, genetic information or veteran's status in employment or its programs and activities.

