

# HILLSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HANDBOOK

## **ADMINISTRATORS' MESSAGE**

It is with great pleasure that we take this opportunity to welcome you to a new year at Hillside Elementary School. Your teachers, school counselors, administrators, and other professional staff members are interested in you, as a person, as we help you develop into a successful student.

This handbook has been developed to help you and your parents/guardians learn as much as possible about school policies and procedures and the services we offer students. The student agenda serves as an assignment pad, where you will be able to manage daily and long-term assignments. We ask that you bring your agenda to school every day and that you bring it home every day to share with your family.

We look forward to this school year with great excitement and hope all of our students will have a rewarding and successful academic year.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The community of faculty, parents, and administration of Hillside School will provide a learning environment that prepares children to be responsible world citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We will strive to develop the whole child academically, socially, emotionally, physically, and aesthetically in a nurturing and supportive atmosphere.

Our mission is to promote the love of school and life-long learning for all children by developing their self-esteem, integrity, self-discipline, ability to work cooperatively, decision-making and problem-solving skills, appreciation of individual differences, and respect for the environment.

We are committed to a partnership of parents, children, teachers, administrators, and community members that encourages full and active participation in the learning process. We will provide authentic, hands-on learning experiences to challenge and encourage risk-taking, integrate technology to enhance learning, and adapt to different learning styles of our students.

## **TELEPHONE DIRECTORY**

Main Office.....201-768-3860 Ext. 41118  
Health Office.....201-768-3860 Ext. 41121  
Child Study Team.....201-768-3860 Ext. 41119  
Guidance Office...Ms. Lang 201-768-3860 Ext. 41151  
Ms. Weiss Ext. 41124  
Absence Line.....201-768-3860 Ext. 41133

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

Students are encouraged to visit with the school counselor for personal and/or academic guidance. Our school counselors are available to discuss any home, school, or social concerns.

## **GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION**

### **Regular Schedule**

Students line up.....8:20 am  
Students enter.....8:20-8:35 am  
Students dismissed.....3:15 pm

### **Delayed Opening Schedule**

Staff reports.....9:40 am  
Students arrive.....10:10 am  
Instruction begins.....10:25 am

### **Early Dismissal Schedule (No lunch)**

Students arrive.....8:20 am  
Students enter.....8:20-8:35 am  
Students dismissed.....12:40 pm

## **ATTENDANCE**

School attendance is important for school success. Take time to review board policy 5520 which supports regular attendance. Please consider the school calendar when making family vacation plans. When conflicts are unavoidable, please contact the teacher as soon as possible.

### **Absences**

1. Parents/Guardians are to call the school at 201-768-3860 Ext. 41133 before 8:30 am in cases of a morning or full-day absence.
2. Students who arrive after 8:45 am are to report to the main office to have their attendance marked and to receive a late pass.
3. Parents/Guardians are to call the school office by 12:30 pm in case of an afternoon absence.
4. Students who must leave school early must be picked up by a parent or authorized person at the main office. Avoid scheduling appointments during the school day as it is disruptive to instruction.
5. Parents/Guardians will be contacted in cases of excessive tardiness and/or absences.

## **HEALTH OFFICE VISITS**

Students who become ill during the school day must report to the health office. If the nurse decides that the student is too ill to remain in school, she will telephone the student's parent/guardian to have the child brought home.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Our school's Lost and Found is located inside the main entrance. Students should report missing items

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as soon as possible and the staff will assist them in trying to find their belongings. Lost and Found items will be placed outside the main entrance before school breaks. Remaining items will be donated. Families will receive an email with additional information.

## HOMEWORK

### **Definition**

Homework is an assignment given by the teacher to a pupil to be completed outside of regular classroom time as an extension of the school program. It can be used to extend classroom learning, increase the amount of learned content, or provide reinforcement.

### **Purposes**

1. Homework helps students to synthesize and integrate what they have learned in the classroom. In some cases, it helps a student to work at his/her own pace.
2. Homework permits more productive use of class time. It provides a link between school and home and gives parents an opportunity to be informed about their child's learning.
3. Homework promotes students' self-discipline, responsibility, and time management skills.
4. It helps students develop study habits and concentration skills that are used throughout life.

### **Types of Homework Assignments**

Homework may involve written work; it may be purely study; or it may be some form of individual or group activity. At times, it may be necessary for teachers to give assignments over extended periods of time.

### **Homework Standards**

Assignments are planned so that work can be completed in a reasonable amount of time. Parents are encouraged to notify the teachers if the homework cannot be completed on time.

The standards established by the teacher may vary with the type of assignments and with the individual differences of students. Homework, when submitted, should be complete, legible, handed in on time, and representative of the student's best efforts.

### **Student Absences**

In the case of multiple day absences, a parent may call the school office to arrange for missed work. In such cases, an appropriate amount of time will be given to complete the missed assignments.

### **Teacher's Role**

- Assign homework to reinforce or extend learning
- Explain homework in a clear manner
- Adjust assignments when needed
- Be aware of holidays and use discretion when giving homework
- Check and/or evaluate assignments
- Communicate and coordinate with other teachers
- Communicate with parents/guardians as necessary

### **Parents' Role**

Parents are as much a part of the homework process as are the teachers. Parental interest makes an important statement to children. It says that parents care and are interested in their schoolwork, and that school is important. The following is a listing of parent responsibilities concerning homework.

- Help children to organize their time in order to complete daily and long-term assignments.
- Provide an environment conducive to study.
- Insist that homework be neat and complete.
- If homework is not completed, a student should have a note from a parent/guardian explaining the reason. The note may be written directly on the assignment.
- Communicate with the teacher if there is evidence of a problem with schoolwork or homework.

### **Suggested Time Allotments**

Homework time varies for each student and each grade level. When establishing an "average length" for assignments, it must be realized that quality comes before quantity. The amount of time necessary to do a lesson varies with each student.

Grade	Minutes Per day	Times Per Week
K	As appropriate	As appropriate
1	20	2-4
2	30	2-4
3	40	4
4	50	4

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1. Grades K-4: Reading of literature, books, and novels should be included in each student's daily activities as part of his/her homework assignment.
2. While weekend and holiday assignments are not routinely given, there may be instances throughout the year when homework may be necessary.
3. Leisure reading is always encouraged.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Board Policy 5600

#### **Students have the right to:**

- A free public education.
- Equal protection under school policies and regulations.
- A safe and orderly environment in which to learn.

#### **Students have the responsibility to:**

- Obey school policies and procedures and the school authorities that enforce them.
- Respect one another.
- Treat school property and the property of others with respect.
- Act in a way that does not interfere with the rights of others and is not harmful to the health and safety of others.

#### **Students are expected to:**

- Arrive on time prepared for the day's work and assignments.
- Exhibit self-respect and show consideration toward school faculty, staff, volunteers, and peers.
- Use school property with care.
- Use appropriate language and behavior at all times.
- Wear clothing that is presentable and does not interfere with the educational process. Flip-flops are not recommended.
- Leave unnecessary electronic devices at home (i.e., iPod, digital camera, electronic games, cellular phone).

### **HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, and BULLYING**

Any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability may be defined as harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Such acts are strictly prohibited by law (N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13) as well as board policy (5512). Please refer to the district website for further detail.

### **BICYCLE SAFETY**

Third- and fourth-graders may choose to ride bikes to school as transportation and as healthful exercise. Registering your bike with the Police Department and using a secure chain lock are encouraged. Helmets are required. Please use the bike racks located on school grounds.

### **REPORTS OF PUPIL PROGRESS**

Reports on pupil progress are made during the school year at intervals of approximately twelve weeks. In addition to these formal reports, individual conferences will be held during the year as the need arises. A close and friendly working relationship between teachers and parent/guardians is desired and parents/guardians are urged to call the school for an appointment with the teacher or Principal when any questions arise. At the end of the first trimester, all parents/guardians will be invited to meet in individual conferences with their children's teachers. At this time, the report card and other pertinent information will be shared.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

It is the policy to take children on field trips only with permission from the parents/guardians and if children can exercise the needed decorum and self-control so important on educational field trips. When a trip is being planned, permission slips will be sent home for the approval of parents/guardians.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

1. Physical education excuses are kept on file in the health office.
2. A one-day excuse is given upon presentation of a note from the parent/guardian.
3. Physical education excuses of longer duration require a doctor's note stating length of disability.
4. Yearly physical education excuses for the students who cannot participate in physical

education classes are to be presented to the health office at the beginning of the school year.

**communicate with your child, you must call the school office at (201) 768-3860, extension 41127.**

Please understand that if this policy is violated, your child(ren)'s smartwatch will be confiscated, and a parent will be required to pick it up from the office.

### **SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS/ HEALTHY FOODS**

The faculty is greatly concerned with teaching our children the principles of good nutrition. As a result, we have the following guidelines for school celebrations and seek your cooperation in providing a healthy environment.

- Celebrating important events and holidays will be limited to the regular classroom with snacks provided by parents/guardians following the guidelines from the school nurse.
- Teachers will strive to make celebrations as much a learning experience as possible by emphasizing the meaning and relevance of the occasion.
- Children will be helped to understand the principles of good nutrition and will participate in the planning of healthy celebrations.

### **ACCEPTABLE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

While we understand that many parents would like their children to wear a smartwatch, we are seeking your cooperation in supporting [Closter Board of Education Policy 5516](#), which indicates appropriate use of an electronic device during the school day.

The use of smartwatches and other electronic devices is very distracting to the learning environment, and it is the district's policy that all devices with the capability to audio or video record must be turned off during the school day. **If the smartwatch is capable of making and/or receiving phone calls and/or text messaging, these features should not be utilized at all during the school day. Parents must not call or text students at any time while school is in session. If you need to**