



# Hillside Elementary School The Year of Determination



**1370 Hainesport-Mt. Laurel Road  
Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054  
856-235-1341**

## Student & Parent Handbook 2023-2024

# **Student & Parent Handbook**

District Website: [www.mtlaurelschools.org](http://www.mtlaurelschools.org)

School Website: <http://hs.mtlaurelschools.org>

**Main Office Phone Number: 856-235-1341**

**FAX Number: 856-222-9757**

School Directory... Press 1

Extended Daycare... Press 5

Reporting an Absence... Press 2

Nurse's Office... Press 3

Guidance Office... Press 4

Main Office Secretary... Press 6

**Board of Education: 856-235-3387**

**Community Education: 856-231-5891**

**Extended Kindergarten Option: 856-231-5891 Ext. 1000**

**Extended Daycare Office: 856-231-5890 Ext. 1004**

**Transportation: 856-778-6905**

**School Principal.....Dr. Briean Madden**

**School Counselor.....Mrs. Jenna Marcantonio**

**Part-Time School Counselor.....Mrs. Erica Mortimer**

**School Nurse.....Mrs. Meg Black**

**Secretary.....Mrs. Anne Cacchioli**

**Office Aides.....Mrs. Colleen Burns & Mrs. Stephanie  
Siddell**

**PTO President.....Mrs. Heather Korenkiewicz & Mrs. Melissa Venditti**

**Dear Hillside Families,**

**Welcome to Hillside Elementary School! Over my extensive years in education, I continue to take great pride in knowing that I get the opportunity to impact the lives of so many children. As your Hillside principal, I promise to uphold Hillside's standard of excellence in education. Hillside Elementary School serves a diverse community. We encourage the support and involvement of families, and community members as we work to meet the unique needs of every student in an inclusive setting.**

**Hillside serves kindergarten through fourth graders. The entire Hillside community has high expectations for academic achievement. Our students are expected to take the initiative to understand, analyze, communicate, and transfer knowledge and skills to school and real-life situations. We encourage our students to practice and demonstrate the ability, attitude, and expertise to lead responsible, fulfilling, and respectful lives. We work to create an atmosphere that meets the needs of each child with a strong emphasis on reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. Our staff is committed to helping each child find his or her special talents and interests. Technology is an integral part of our daily instruction where students are learning the skills and strategies to be 21st century learners.**

**Our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is an asset to our school community. The PTO takes an active role in fundraising for our school by offering a series of events for our parents and students. They also generate ideas for school improvement. Our PTO coordinates parent volunteer efforts throughout the school year. These volunteers assist in the classroom, library, and are invaluable in helping us provide special events and projects for our students. I encourage each of you to join the PTO and help us work collaboratively for our Hillside students.**

**This student/parent handbook contains extremely helpful information for your use throughout the school year. It includes the activities and procedures at our school and is based on Mt. Laurel School District's policies. Please be sure to review this information and use it as a reference throughout the school year.**

**It is exciting to begin another school year together. It is our sincere hope that every day your child will experience the joy of learning. Feel free to contact me at any time. I am looking forward to creating a strong partnership with you as we create long-lasting achievements.**

**Your partner in education,  
Dr. Briean Madden  
Principal**

# Hillside Connects with You

**Follow Dr. Madden on Twitter**

@MTL\_HSPrincipal

**Follow Dr. Madden on Facebook**

@hillsidees

**Monthly Newsletter Posted on Webpage**

[hs.mtlaurelschools.org](http://hs.mtlaurelschools.org)

**Additional Communication will be done using Swift K-12. Messages will be sent via Text and Email.**



## **Mt. Laurel Board of Education**

330 Mt. Laurel-Moorestown Road  
Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054  
(856) 235-3387

Superintendent of Schools.....Dr. George Rafferty

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum,  
Instruction & Assessment.....Ms. Mridula Bajaj

Assistant Superintendent of Business.....Mr. Robert Wachter, Jr.

Human Resources.....Ms. Aja Thomas

## **Board of Education Members**

Danielle Stuffo, *President*

Melissa DeClementi, *Vice President*

Susan Fortuna

Roger Gibson

Curtis Green

John Laskin

Susan Lovato

Michael Magee

Johnathan Paradise

\*For dates and times of Board meetings, please refer to the district website at:

<http://www.mtlaurelschools.org/District/Board-of-Education/Board-Meetings/index.html>

### **Hillside Elementary School**

#### **Parent Teacher Organization**

Co-Presidents, Heather Korenkiewicz & Melissa Venditti

Co-VP's Fundraising, Melissa Styer & Ashley Bartolomeo

Treasurer, Heather Yearly

Assistant Treasurer, Anne Myers

Recording Secretary, Jennifer Moore

Corresponding Secretary, Melissa Jordan

Co Assemblies & Activities, Amber Elliot

Parliamentarian, Erica Bennett

Social Media Secretary, Shannon Gallo

*Hillside Elementary School-A place where we Include, Nurture, Inspire, and Empower the Future!*

**We would love to achieve 100% support for our Parent/Teacher Organization.  
Make sure to sign up to support our kids!**

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

### **Kindergarten-Grade 4**

Regular Session Day: 9:00-3:30pm

Early Dismissal: 9:00-1:00pm (**No Lunch is served**)

2 Hour Snow Delay: 11:00-3:30pm (**Lunch is served**)

Helpful Hints for Kindergarten

- Please label jackets, coats, hats, book bags (no wheels) with your child's name
- Please help your child:
  - Know his/her first/last name
  - Learn how to tie his/her shoes
  - Zip, button, and/or snap clothing

## **LUNCH HOUR**

Kindergarten            11:45-12:15 Recess  
                                     12:15-12:45 Lunch in classrooms

Grades 1 & 3            12:15-12:45 Lunch  
                                     12:45-1:15- Recess

Grades 2 & 4            12:15-12:45 Recess  
                                     12:45-1:15 Lunch

## **ADDITIONAL LUNCH INFORMATION**

There is a charge for lunch this year unless you have qualified for free or reduced lunch. Mount Laurel's will cost \$2.75 for students. Parents must Log into the Lunch Portal to pre-order lunch for their child on a weekly basis. You can find the link for this under the Parents Tab on the Hillside webpage. If you do not have a lunch account, you will need to create one in order to place your weekly order.

## **ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL**

Student arrival begins at 8:45 am. No students are permitted to arrive prior to 8:45 as supervision is not available. All students report to the gym upon arrival and are required to be in the gym by 9:00. Students arriving after 9:00 am are considered late and must report to the office for a late slip. When arriving late to school all children **MUST** be signed in at the main office by a parent/guardian. Please do not drop children off at the door.

Dismissal begins at **3:25 pm**. Due to security reasons, you will be asked to follow our Parent Pick-up Procedures which are located on a Virtual Help Desk (this link will be shared with parents). Parents DO NOT leave their vehicles. **EVERY PARENT MUST HAVE AN ID** to pick up their child. Please notify your child's teacher or the main office if your child is not going home on the bus before **2:00 pm**. Anyone picking up a student must be designated on the emergency form provided by the parent or guardian. You will be asked to produce identification when picking up the student.

### **PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF**

Unless you have an emergency situation, we ask that you do not pick-up your child from school early. Early pick-ups cause children to lose necessary instruction and may disrupt the entire class. We ask that you allow your child to go home on the bus. **The Hillside Parent Pickup form link is found on the Hillside Webpage.** Please do not email the note to the teacher or leave a message on the teacher's phone. If the teacher is not in the building the substitute cannot access the teacher's email or voice mail. Your child will be called to the office upon your arrival and you must sign your child out. **Also, children will only be allowed to leave with a parent or individual noted on the emergency information form.** Therefore, make sure your emergency information form is accurate and up to date.

Students may not be dropped off before 8:45 am. This is when staff members are on duty to supervise the children. The front of the building is a designated **NO PARKING ZONE**. If you are coming into the building, please park in the side parking lot. Do not block the buses. Please do not pass buses when they are unloading. Children brought to school in cars should be let out on the school side only. Please follow the arrows in the parking lot that designate the morning drop-off location. The morning drop-off is from 8:45 am to 9:00 am. Be sure to see the school aide at the door before dropping off your child.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Please note that new legislation has compounded the importance of attendance. In the past, if your child was absent due to a family trip, those missed days would be reported in our internal system as unexcused absences. Under the new process, the NJ Department of Education is now collecting its data directly from our reporting system. **Any days reported as unexcused in our system are considered "truant" by the state.** As you know, truancy can result in serious legal consequences for parents. **Therefore, please do not schedule family vacations during the school year.** When such absences are unavoidable, a letter or email the teacher and copy Dr. Madden explaining the reason for the trip must be submitted to the school principal prior to your departure for approval.

In the event that your child will not be attending school, please follow these instructions:

- If you know in advance that your child will miss school, send a note to his/her teacher showing the child's name, dates of absence and reason for absence. You may email the classroom teacher.
- **If the absence is unanticipated, please call (856) 235-1341 and press #2 no later than 8:45 am to report your child's absence. Please state your child's name, your child's teacher, and reason for the absence.** The answering machine is on 24/7, so you may call the night

before to leave a message.

- When your child returns to school, he/she must have a note explaining the absence. The note should include your child's name, the date the note was written, the dates of the absence, the reason for the absence and a signature by the parent/guardian.
- **\*Please abide by the 24 HOUR RULE** - If your child has a temperature, diarrhea, vomiting, throat infection or strep throat, he/she should not return to school until 24 hours after the symptoms have subsided, or after antibiotics have been noted.

**As a safety measure, the school will call you if your child is not in school and we have not received notification by phone or note.**

- When a child's absence is not verified with a note or a telephone call, it will be necessary for the school staff to call home. If the school is unsuccessful in reaching the home, the emergency telephone numbers will be used to call the parent/guardian at his/her place of employment to verify the child's absence. This is for the safety of the children.
- If your child will be absent more than 10 consecutive school days, you will need to notify the principal in writing. Your child will be marked absent during this time. Truancy will be pursued unless you unenroll your child. Please contact the main office if your child has these absences for further information.

**TARDY:** Students reporting late to school must report to the main office upon arrival. Excessive absences/tardiness will be reported to the school attendance officer, who will investigate the causes and take appropriate action.

### **HOMEWORK REQUESTS**

Absentee work can be requested on the day of the absence. Please state if you will be picking it up or with whom it is to be sent home. When calling in a child's absence, please also email the teacher requesting homework at the same time. We ask that this be done **before 10:00 am** to give the teacher enough time to gather the work. The homework may be picked up after 3:00 pm. Many teachers have created a homework buddy system within their classrooms for homework to be sent home. Please check with your child's teacher for this policy.

### **BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT**

Back to School Night will be held in the evening on September 21<sup>st</sup> from 6:00-8:00pm. This event is for parents and guardians and will be held at Hillside. The evening includes a meeting with the PTO, a visit to your child's classroom and an opportunity to meet their teacher. The teacher will give a short outline on what he or she plans for the school year and what will be expected of your child. General questions will be answered. Specific concerns about your child should be addressed privately at another time. A second session is provided on the same evening for those of you who have more than one child in the school. If you have more than two children, you will have to attend classes separately.

### **BUS TRANSPORTATION – Telephone Number: (856) 778-6905**

During the summer, your child will receive a bus number in the mail. Usually, that number is the same for morning and afternoon for all students. To help all students with arriving and departing, Hillside has fourth grade safeties and staff to assist the children.



Children may only take their assigned bus to and from school at their assigned bus stop. **Please do not request a pass to ride a different bus.** Pupils transported to school must return home via the same route. **Parents wishing children to visit friends, relatives, etc., should make plans to do so after the child returns home.**

Should you have any questions about your child's bus number please call transportation. If an emergency arises, call Transportation at (856) 778-6905 and notify Hillside's main office. At times, it may become necessary for Transportation to make a bus change. Please be patient and understanding. Also, for a variety of reasons, buses are sometimes late. If you are ever concerned, you should call the Transportation Department at (856) 778-6905.

#### **A Special Kindergarten Message:**

One of the biggest worries for parents of Kindergartners is the concern that they will be lost or confused when they get off the bus. We assure you that we will take the utmost care of your little one. The Kindergartners will get off the bus and be directed into a special area. When school begins, the teacher/aides will direct them into the classroom.

#### **EMERGENCY BUS CHANGES**

It is important that each student ride his/her assigned bus to and from school. From time to time an emergency may arise, and you may need your child to be transported on a different bus. (Shared school projects and social get-togethers are not considered valid reasons for a bus change). **In all cases, permission will be given for the switch ONLY if it is an EMERGENCY provision and if space is available on the bus.** In such situations, the student must take the following steps:

- *Secure a note from his/her parent making a request to switch buses for a specific date and stating the reason*
- *Secure a note from the adult whose home is the child's destination*
- *Submit the notes to the principal for approval*
- *After the principal's signature is obtained, give the approved notes to the bus driver when boarding*

#### **BUS BEHAVIOR**

Transportation provided by the Mount Laurel Township Board of Education is a privilege. The children are expected to remain seated on the bus with seat belts buckled at all times and keeping their hands inside the bus. Children must know they are to adhere to the bus driver's rules for safety. The bus drivers will explain bus safety rules to the children. Please remind your children that they are to sit quietly on the bus, be courteous to others and set a good example, especially to the younger children on the bus. No eating is permitted on the bus.

#### **CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS**

The Mount Laurel School District cannot honor requests from parents for placement with a particular teacher or in a particular class. If a parent is dissatisfied with the placement that has been made, the principal must be contacted, in writing, and informed of the reasons. The principal

will evaluate the situation on its individual merits and inform the parent of his/her decision. If a parent is not satisfied at this level, the parent may appeal to the Superintendent in writing. The Superintendent will then review the case and render a decision.

### **EMERGENCY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mt. Laurel school district notifies parents of school delays or closings through Swift K-12 by email, phone and/or text message. Local radio station KYW 1060 (school closing number is 659) or Cable Channel 19 will also have announcements regarding cancellations, early dismissal or delayed openings. You may also check the website at [www.mtlaurelschools.org](http://www.mtlaurelschools.org). If school is closed, PTO functions will not be held and all after school activities will be canceled.

It is imperative that your child is aware of your family's contingency plan if schools must close early. Please place a written plan in your child's folder or homework book. If in the opinion of a parent, weather conditions are adverse and there has been no emergency closing announcement, parents should use their own judgment as to the advisability of sending their child to school. Mt Laurel's School Closing Number is "659".

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION**

#### **Yearly Screening**

Your child will be screened yearly for height, weight, hearing and vision. Deviations from the norm will be screened a second time and parents will be contacted if it is noted again.

#### **Emergency Information**

Parents should be aware that if any contact information changes they must notify the main school office. It is extremely important that at least two people are designated as alternates who are available during school hours in case of an unforeseen emergency. Include adults who may take your child home when you are unavailable.

#### **Illness-The 24 Hour Rule**

If your child has a temperature, diarrhea, vomiting, or infection such as strep throat or pink eye he/she should not return to school until 24 hours after the symptoms have subsided. If a student starts a course of antibiotics for an infection please make sure they have had 24 hours of antibiotic therapy before returning to school. When in doubt, a good rule of thumb is to ask yourself whether you want a child sitting next to your child with the same symptoms, if the answer is no, it is probably a good idea to keep your child home.

Please notify the school nurse if your child is positive for strep, pink eye or any contagious infection. It helps us to care for all our students and staff.

#### **Transporting of Medications**

Any medications (prescription or over the counter), that need to be taken during school hours must be in the original containers along with written authorization from your physician. The medications must be dispensed by the school nurse. For the health and safety of all students, all medications must be transported to and from school by an adult.

### **Special Medication Needs**

If your child should require medication during the school year for severe allergy, asthma or any other reason please contact the nurse's office to obtain the appropriate forms. Both you and your physician must sign the forms before any medication can be dispensed.

### **Special Physical Education Needs**

If your child has a medical condition or injury and cannot participate in Physical Education, a written note is required from the physician stating limitations. Also, a note is required stating the date the child may resume participation in Physical Education.

### **Physical Examinations**

Physical examinations are required for all kindergarten students and new enrollees. Any other questions, please call the school nurse.

### **DRESS CODE**

Research shows that the way students dress for school affects their attitude and behavior. All students are expected to wear clean, sensible attire at all times. Sneakers must be worn on Gym days or your child will not be permitted to participate in gym activities for that day.

The Board of Education recognizes that each pupil's mode of dress and grooming is a manifestation of the pupil's personal style and individual preferences. The board will impose its judgment on pupils and parents only when a pupil's dress and grooming affect the educational program of the schools. Per Board Policy #5132, pupils may not wear clothing or engage in grooming practices that present a health or safety hazard to the individual pupil or to others, materially interfere with school work, create disorder, or disrupt the educational program, cause excessive wear or damage to school property, or prevent the pupil from achieving his or her own educational objectives because of blocked vision or restricted movement. The principal/school supervisor shall determine whether the dress or grooming of pupils comes within these prohibitions.

### **INTERVENTION AND REFERRAL SERVICES (I&RS)**

Hillside School operates a multi-disciplinary team called I & RS in order to assist students who appear to be experiencing academic, behavioral, social, or emotional difficulty. It offers teachers a way of drawing on the many resources of the individual school staff, as well as, the resources of the total district in order to determine the service(s) which will most benefit the student. Any staff member may request that a child's needs be considered by the team. These meetings take place once a month. Further information may be obtained from the principal, school counselor or classroom teacher.

## **OFFICE PROCEDURES**

### **What to Do If...**

- **Discuss something with the principal:**

If you have something pressing that you would like to speak to Dr. Madden about, please call and arrange an appointment prior to coming to the school.

- **A lunch is left at home:**

Deliver it to the school. You will be asked to label it and place it on the front table in the foyer. The student will be notified to pick up their lunch or snack in the office.

- **Something is lost on a school bus:**

Call the school office and report the loss. The article will be traced from this point and you will be notified if it is found.

- **You change your address or telephone number:**

Please advise the school office immediately.

## **PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES**

The best educational environment includes the complete understanding and cooperation between home and school. Parents are encouraged to maintain ongoing communication with their child's teachers throughout the year. There are formal parent/teacher conferences held in the fall and spring of each year. Fall conferences are held for every student. Spring conferences are held at the teacher's request on a needs basis; however, parents may request a spring conference. When parents have a specific concern, they should first contact the appropriate staff member (teacher, school counselor, nurse, etc.) to remedy the situation. If the concern continues, they should contact the principal.

## **PARTY PROCEDURES**

During the school year, several classroom parties are scheduled for special events. Additional celebrations must be arranged with the principal and classroom teacher. Healthy snacks are encouraged in accordance with the New Jersey bill that became official as of September 2007. The bill states that foods considered to have limited nutritional value as defined by the federal government, foods listing sugar as the first ingredient and all forms of candy, would be banned from public schools in New Jersey during school hours. Additionally, elementary schools would have to limit beverages to milk, water and 100 percent fruit and vegetable juices.

The food service provider at Hillside offers options for parents to arrange to purchase birthday party treats that meet the described criteria. Please visit the Nutri Serve link on the district webpage for more information. Drink options are 100% fruit juice or milk. You simply fill out the form, pay at least one week in advance, and the students receive their treats during their lunch or to their classroom. **We no longer accept birthday treats for the class from home.**

## **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

On many occasions, it is necessary for you to send money to school with your child. Generally, checks should be made out to Hillside PTO for PTO fundraisers. Book orders should be made out to the book company. Be sure all money is put in an envelope with its purpose and child's name clearly printed. The school district can assume no responsibility in the event of loss,

theft, or damage to personal property. Therefore, students are not to bring to school large sums of money, valuable jewelry, or any other items of value such as any type of electronic devices.

### **STUDENT PROPERTY**

Found items will be placed in the Lost and Found container in the gym. Small and/or valuable items (watches, rings, electronics, money, etc.) will be secured in a separate location in the Main Office. Students are encouraged to check the Lost and Found as soon as they realize an item is missing. Parents and students should label important personal items such as coats, jackets, and book bags, etc. Items not claimed will be on display in the lobby during Fall and Spring conferences, as well as the close of the school year. All items unclaimed at the close of the school year will be donated. If your child leaves something on the bus, call the transportation department and they will attempt to locate it and return it to the school.

### **POLICIES**

A complete set of Board of Education Policies and Regulations can be found online at: <http://www.mtlaurelschools.org/> .

### **CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT**

Any knowledge or suspicion of child abuse and/or child neglect by law must be reported immediately, to the New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency. Failure to make a report is a violation of the law. All information is kept confidential. The building principal, school nurse, and school counselor have further information relating to this process. You may also reference Board Policy #5141.4 on the district webpage at [www.mtlaurelschools.org](http://www.mtlaurelschools.org).

### **DISCIPLINE**

#### **SAFETY AND RESPECT**

Hillside School's entire staff works diligently to create an environment in which our children feel safe, comfortable and happy providing the greatest opportunities for learning. Behavior is everyone's responsibility. Your child's teacher and bus driver will provide some very important guidelines for the proper behavior on the school bus, in the classroom, hallways, lunch room, and playground. In order to grow educationally, socially and emotionally, children need to be in an environment in which there are concerned individuals who will set firm, consistent, positive limits while providing warmth and support for the appropriate behavior. Please help to reinforce these guidelines. We work together with the students in creating our Hillside Constitution.

The Constitution will be signed by each student, posted and sent home with the students in order to cultivate a positive and motivating school experience. We will ratify this school-wide Constitution on Constitution Day in September. In addition to these school-wide rules, we also have lunch and playground rules.

The Mount Laurel Board of Education has adopted a district wide discipline code. You can view the entire code by visiting [www.mtlaurelschools.org](http://www.mtlaurelschools.org).

## **HARRASSMENT, INTIMIDATION & BULLYING**

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a pupil's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its pupils in a safe and disciplined environment. Since pupils learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation, or bullying. For further information please review the Mt. Laurel BOE policy #5131.1 or visit [www.mtlaurelschools.org](http://www.mtlaurelschools.org).

## **PTO INFORMATION**

The Hillside PTO enhances and enriches our children's academic experience by inspiring parents/guardians and teachers/staff to work together to build a strong school community. Parental involvement is critical to your child's success in school and we encourage all parents/guardians to show their support for their children by getting involved in the Hillside PTO. There are many opportunities for parents to get involved during and after school hours. Activities and events that support the children, the school, and Mt. Laurel community can be managed based on your availability. Please join us as we work together for the benefit of our children. See our link on the Hillside website.

## **COUNSELING SERVICES**

Hillside School's Counseling Program is an integral part of the educational process for every child. Our counselor helps students to strengthen self-concepts, enhance their ability to solve life problems and explore positive attitudes. Counseling services include whole class instruction, as well as individual and group interaction. These services address the social, emotional, behavioral and academic aspects of a child's life. Counselors are available to consult with parents, teachers and others regarding issues related to a child. All School Counselors in the district of Mount Laurel are certified professionals. Parents are encouraged to call the counseling office with any questions concerning your child's social or emotional needs, in addition to questions regarding standardized testing.

## **RELATED SERVICES**

### **BASIC SKILLS MATH**

The Basic Skills Math teacher is a certified professional who provides services for any student needing additional academic assistance in the area of math. Students receive math services weekly. Teacher recommendation and test scores determine eligibility for basic skills math.

### **Literacy Support Services**

The Reading Specialist is a certified professional who uses strategies to help develop a strong basic reading foundation for students who are in need and provides corrective reading services. Students are eligible for corrective reading services based on teacher recommendation and a variety of assessments. Services are provided three to four times a week.

### **GIFTED ACADEMIC PROGRAM (GAP)**

GAP, the Gifted Academic Program, seeks to meet the needs of students whose depth of understanding, higher level thinking skills, speed of learning, and related affective needs fall into the range of gifted potential. The GAP students are pulled out of their class to attend classes with the GAP teacher. Parents may make referrals to the program but students must meet a range of criteria. Please visit the district's webpage for more information.

### **SPEECH AND LANGUAGE SERVICES**

Mt. Laurel's Speech and Language department's mission is to ensure that all students with speech, language, and hearing disorders which negatively impact academic progress have access to quality services to help them communicate effectively. Referral to the Speech / Language Specialist is made through the I&RS Committee. Speech / Language Services are provided by a certified professional.

### **EXTENDED DAY CARE**

The district does provide a self-supported program for extended day care, at your own cost, for before and after school hours at each of the elementary schools. An online application is located on the district website under the parent tab. For information call: **(856) 231-5890**.

### **FIELD TRIPS POSTPONED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE FOR THE 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR**

Field trips will be considered as instruction and planned as such, with definite objectives determined in advance. Appropriate instruction will precede and follow each trip. Students are expected to dress appropriately and conduct themselves courteously at all times during field trips. All school rules are in effect during field trips. Denial of student participation for field trips shall not be used as a disciplinary measure. However, students may be barred from field trips when there is a serious concern for their own safety, or the safety of others.

#### ***AM I PERMITTED TO BRING A YOUNGER SIBLING TO A FIELD TRIP?***

Siblings are not permitted on field trips. However, siblings are invited to activities involving the entire school, such as: Field Day, the School Picnic, etc. When in doubt, check with your child's teacher.

### **INCLEMENT & COLD WEATHER DRESS ATTIRE**

Please make sure that you send your child to school dressed appropriately for inclement and cold weather. As the weather becomes colder, you should send your child to school in a warm jacket, gloves and a hat. The students will be going outside for recess and will be outside before school unless it is extremely cold. The students will also be walking to their buses after school. They may need a raincoat on rainy days. Please send your child dressed warmly before he/she leaves for school every morning. Thanks for your help!

### **FIRE DRILLS AND SECURITY DRILLS**

There will be fire drills and other safety drills conducted each month, as required by state law. During a fire drill, a visual & auditory alarm will signal the need to evacuate the building. Students

should follow the directions given by staff members. A map indicating the nearest exit, as well as an alternate route is posted in each classroom. Fire drills are concluded when the principal or his/her designee indicates the drill is completed. To facilitate the evacuation of the building during fire drills and other emergencies, the following rules should guide students' actions:

- Leave the building through the nearest exit. If it is blocked, use the next nearest exit.
- Walk rapidly, but do not run. No talking is permitted. Listen for directions.
- Move into the hallway in an orderly fashion.
- All doors and windows must be closed, and lights turned off.
- Once the class is outside the building; students are to stay together away from the building.
- Activities taking place outside the building should be immediately terminated.
- Unless otherwise directed, the ringing of the fire bell implies that all persons must evacuate the building.

Lockdown and Evacuation Drills will be conducted throughout the year. The purpose of these drills is to account for all the students and faculty and move them to a safe place in case of an emergency. Teachers review the process prior to the drills. Parents/Guardians will be notified via email when a security drill takes place.

### **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are issued quarterly and provide a means of communicating to the parent/ guardian their child's level of academic achievement and effort. Report cards will be issued electronically for each trimester. Behavior will also be indicated in the appropriate sections of the report card. Please consult with your child's teacher first regarding any questions you have concerning his/her progress.

### **HOMEWORK**

Parental support and cooperation is necessary for homework to have a positive impact upon a child's learning. Providing an appropriate and consistent time, quiet work place and regular consistent support serves to create a responsibility for learning. Communication between the teacher and parent is essential in order to effectively coordinate this important component of the educational program. At all grade levels, homework will be given on a regular basis Monday through Thursday. On occasion, it may be inappropriate to assign homework, so there will be exceptions to this general guideline. While homework should not be assigned prior to holidays and weekends on any consistent basis, it is an excellent time for students to work on long-term assignments, projects and make-up work. The specific amount of homework assigned will depend upon the age of the student, and the needs of the instructional program.

In each grade level, the time presented is considered as a maximum:

\* Grades 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> - 20 minutes/night

\* Grades 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> - 45 minutes/night

**To request homework for a student who is absent after 2 days, please call: (856) 235-1341, by 9:00 a.m. You may leave a message on the office machine indicating when you will be picking up the homework assignments. Homework will not be available for pick up until 3:00 p.m., as the**



**teachers need time to get the assignments organized. You may also request to have assignments sent home with a sibling in another class.**

### **RESPONSIVE CLASSROOM**

Responsive Classroom is an approach to teaching and learning by which children develop respect for themselves and others. It creates a caring classroom community of learners. The goal is to foster children's academic and social growth necessary for success in life.

The components of Responsive Classroom include: Morning Meeting, Hopes and Dreams, Rules and Logical Consequences, Apology of Action, Guided Discovery, and Academic Choice. There are four parts of the Morning Meeting that the children participate in every day.

Greeting- Children greet each other by name including handshaking, clapping, singing and other activities.

Sharing- Students share some news of interest to the class and respond to each other, practicing communication skills and learning about each other.

Group Activity- The whole class does a short activity together while building class cohesion through active participation.

News and Announcements- Students develop language skills and learn about the events of the day ahead by reading and discussing a daily message posted on a chart by their teacher.

The Responsive Classroom approach to teaching is based on the principle that a child's social growth is as important as their academic growth. Teachers take the time to know each child and home environment in order to help that student grow academically, socially and emotionally.

### **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

Standardized tests are designed to give a common measure of a student's performance. Educators use these standardized tests to tell how well school programs are succeeding, to measure the skills of the students and to plan instruction. Students in Grades 3 & 4 are required to take the NJSLA test in the Spring. More information regarding these assessments will be provided as the test dates near.

### **TECHNOLOGY**

Technology is integrated with the curriculum through the use of Epson Projectors and Chromebooks at Hillside School. All of the classrooms are now outfitted with the projectors enabling teachers to create engaging lessons for their students and each student in Grades 1-4 has one to one access to a google chromebook. In addition, Hillside teachers also have the use of digital cameras, digital video cameras, a computer microscope, as well as distance learning capabilities.

## **TRANSFERRING OUT**

If you need to transfer your child to another school, we'll miss you and hope your experience at Hillside was second to none! When transferring out of Hillside to another school, please let the main office know at least a week in advance. A transfer card will be completed with the name of the child, the name and address of the new school and any other pertinent information pertaining to the child. You will also be given a copy of the child's immunization record to carry to the new school.

## **VACATIONS**

If it becomes necessary for a child to be away with his or her family while school is in session, parents are required to notify the building principal two (2) weeks in advance. Parents/guardians must provide this notification of a child's absence in writing. Please be aware that extended absences from school can negatively impact a child's academic progress. If a child's absences or lateness exceeds 10 occasions, a letter will be sent from the Principal.

## **STUDENT CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC WATCHES**

If your child has a cell phone, the staff will be sure it is turned off and kept in the child's bookbag. At no point will a child be able to use their cell phone during the school day. The school has ample ways of communicating with you during the school day via phone, email and text messages. Regarding electronic watches, a child will be asked to turn it off during the school day but may still wear it.

## **VISITING HILLSIDE SCHOOL**

When you approach the building during the school day, you will be directed to push a buzzer near the entrance. A member of the office staff will respond via speaker to ask your identity and/or purpose for your visit. It is important that you have in hand your photo ID. The staff member will allow you entry to the building if you have a scheduled appointment/visit or are there to pick your child up from school based on a note/call received. **All visitors to the school must report directly to the Main Office to sign in.** This includes visitors to the playground. On each visit, the visitor will obtain an official Visitor's Pass, which must be visibly worn. Upon leaving the building, the visitor should return to the office, return the pass and sign out.

### ***WHAT DO I DO IF I WANT TO PICK MY CHILD UP FROM SCHOOL EARLY?***

To pick up your child, you must enter his/her name in the logbook and include the time you are leaving with your child. The office staff will notify your child's teacher that you are here. Kindly try not to pick your child up early unless it is an emergency. It is very disruptive to the learning process when children are leaving at odd times. **Please make sure to use the Parent Pickup Google Form if you are picking up your child early from school. This form is checked by our main office frequently and is an extremely important tool that Hillside uses to account for students who are being picked up by a parent/guardian.**

All of our security measures are in place for the safety of our students and staff. Children will only be allowed to leave with a parent or individual noted on the emergency information form.

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We hope you have found this booklet helpful. It is our ongoing attempt to assist parents and children in any way possible to make their experience at Hillside the best it can be. Please feel free to offer suggestions to our Principal or PTO for additional material you feel needs to be included in future editions. Parents and Staff working together at Hillside School is the key to our children's success!