

WELCOME

It is with great pleasure that we take this opportunity to welcome you to a new year at Hillside Elementary School. Teachers, school counselors, administrators, and other professional staff members are excited to be part of your educational journey.

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 bring it home every day to share with your family.

We look forward to this school year with great excitement and hope 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 21st 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 our students' learning styles.

STUDENT SERVICES

Students are encouraged to visit with the school counselor for personal and/or academic guidance. Our school counselors can 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 enter.....	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 vital for school success. Please consider the school calendar when planning your family vacation. When conflicts are unavoidable, please contact the main office and the teacher as soon as possible.

Absences

1. Parents/Guardians are to call the school at 201-768-3860 x41133, before 8:30 am in cases of a morning or full-day absence.
2. Students who arrive after 8:40 a.m. are required to report to the main office to have their attendance marked and to obtain a late pass.
3. Parents/Guardians are to call the school office by 12:30 p.m. in the event 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.

Student Absences

A parent may call the school office to arrange for missed work in the case of multiple-day absences due to illness. In such cases, an appropriate amount of time will be given to complete the missed assignments. Kindly give 24 hours' notice for work preparation. Work will not be given for reasons such as family vacations while school is in session.

HEALTH OFFICE VISITS

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

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.
- Leave unnecessary electronic devices at home (i.e., iPod, digital camera, electronic games, cellular phone).
- Treat school property and the property of others with respect.
- Act in a way that does not interfere with others' rights or harm their health and safety.

Students are expected to:

- Arrive on time and prepare 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.
- Dress appropriately for the school day. (no flip-flops, slides, Crocs, wearing of hats unless there is a special circumstance or school-wide event)

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) and board policy (5512). Please refer to the district website for further details.

REPORTS OF STUDENT PROGRESS

Reports on student progress are made at intervals of approximately twelve weeks during the school year. In addition to these formal reports, individual conferences will be held during the year as needed. A positive partnership between teachers and parents/guardians is desired. Parents/guardians are encouraged to call the main office or email the teacher directly for an appointment to discuss concerns. At the end of the first trimester, all parents/guardians will be invited to meet in individual conferences with their children's teachers.

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 for longer durations require a doctor's note stating the 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.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES

While we understand that many parents would like their children to wear a smartwatch, we seek your cooperation in supporting [Closter Board of Education Policy 5516](#), which indicates the 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 anytime while school**

is in session. If you need to communicate with your child, 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 must pick it up from the office.

FIELD TRIPS

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

SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS/ HEALTHY FOODS

The faculty prioritizes the importance of teaching our children the principles of healthy and balanced nutrition. As a result, we have established the following guidelines for school celebrations and appreciate your cooperation in maintaining a healthy environment.

- Celebrating important events and holidays will be limited to the regular classroom, with snacks provided by parents/guardians **following the guidelines of 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 participate in planning healthy celebrations.

BICYCLE SAFETY

Students may choose to ride bikes to school as transportation and as a 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 outside the main entrance or near the playground.

LOST AND FOUND

Our school's Lost and Found is located inside the main entrance. Students should report missing items. If items are lost, students should notify staff as soon as possible, and the staff will assist them in trying to find their belongings. Lost and Found is located outside the main entrance foyer. Lost and Found items will be placed outside the main entrance before school breaks. The remaining items will be donated. Families will receive an email with additional information.

DIRECTORY

Main Office.....	201-768-3860 Ext. 41118
Health Office.....	201-768-3860 Ext. 41121
Child Study Team.....	201-768-3860 Ext. 41119
Absence Line.....	201-768-3860 Ext. 41133
Guidance Office.....	Grades K, 1, and 2- Ms. Weiss 201-768-3860 Ext. 41124 Grades PK, 3, and 4- Ms. Lang 201-768-3860 Ext. 41151

HOMEWORK

Definition

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

Purposes

1. Homework helps students synthesize and integrate what they have learned in the classroom. In some cases, it allows students to work at their own pace.
2. Homework allows for a more productive use of class time. It links school and home, informing parents about their child's learning.
3. Homework helps students develop their self-discipline, responsibility, and time management skills.
4. It helps students develop study habits and concentration skills used throughout life.

Types of Homework Assignments

Homework may involve written work, purely study, or some form of individual or group activity. At times, teachers may need to assign assignments over extended periods.

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.

Homework Standards

Assignments are planned to ensure that work can be completed within a reasonable amount of time. Parents are encouraged to notify their teachers if they are unable to complete homework on time.

The standards established by the teacher may vary depending on the type of assignment and the students' differences. When submitted, homework should be complete, legible, handed in on time, and representative of the student's best efforts.

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 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 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 should be emailed to the teacher.
- 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 is essential to recognize that quality takes precedence over 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