

# Hillsborough Elementary Schools

## Hillsborough Township



Amsterdam Elementary



Hillsborough Elementary



Sunnymead Elementary



Triangle Elementary



Woodfern Elementary



Woods Road Elementary

# Student Handbook\*

Dear Parents and Students:

On behalf of the entire elementary staff, we would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to this School Year!

We encourage you to become involved in your child's education. Please feel welcome to join in the many grade-level activities that take place during the year, and please join us at our Home and School meetings. Our Home and School Associations work closely with the school members. They sponsor many of our school-wide events, and provide support for many wonderful activities that help make each elementary school special! There's a place for everyone in our Home and School Association!

This handbook has been developed to assist in your orientation to your school and to assist students in understanding and adjusting to the expectations and requirements. The goal of establishing a common set of rules and guidelines is to create and maintain a school environment that is safe, pleasant, and conducive to learning.

Please review this handbook together with your child. Any questions about the contents may be directed to the classroom teacher.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation in this regard and for your willingness to work with the school to make this school year an outstanding experience for our students. Success comes more frequently when we all pull together!

Sincerely,

Michele Fisher  
Amsterdam Elementary

Susan Eckstein  
Hillsborough Elementary

Tammy Jenkins  
Sunnymead Elementary

Anthony Aliperti  
Triangle Elementary

Steven Kerrigan  
Woodfern Elementary

Thomas Rathjen  
Woods Road Elementary

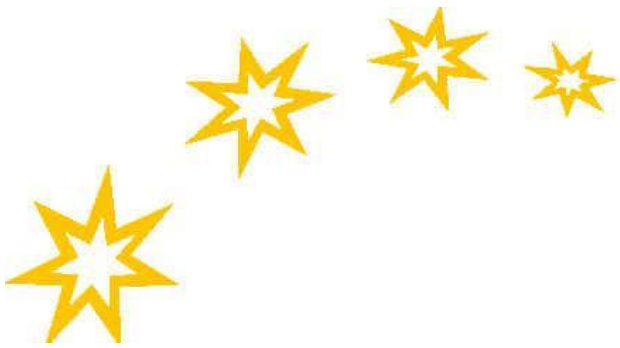
# Woodfern School

*Home of the Roadrunners!*

## STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK

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## Mission Statement



Hillsborough elementary schools are committed to creating strong learning communities where teachers, parents, and community members work collaboratively to provide students with a solid academic foundation rooted in the New Jersey Student Learning Standards while encouraging independent thinking, learning, and problem-solving. We seek to develop the whole child - academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. We encourage and nurture behaviors that build trust, acceptance, and respect for all. The school community will embody open communication, personal accountability, and positive character development in order to mold active citizens capable of contributing to their communities. Students will be encouraged to leave our elementary schools inspired and prepared to be life-long learners.



## EXPECTATION OF STUDENTS

### School-Wide Rules

#### **I have the right to be happy and be treated with kindness in this school.**

*This means that no one will laugh at me or hurt my feelings.*

*I have the responsibility to treat others with kindness. This means I will try to be a good friend to others by not. . .*

*laughing at others*

*teasing others*

*trying to hurt the feelings of others*

*calling others unkind names*

#### **I have the right to be and feel safe in school.**

*This means that no one will behave in a way that will harm or frighten me.*

*I have the responsibility to make this school safe by not. . .*

*threatening anyone*

*kicking anyone*

*hurting anyone*

*pushing anyone*

*running inside the building*

*punching anyone*

*hitting anyone*

#### **I have the right to be accepted and respected in this school.**

*This means that no one will treat me unfairly.*

*I have the responsibility to accept and respect others as individuals. I will respect their belongings as well. This means I will be polite to adults and children by not. . .*

*using disrespectful gestures or body language*

*using offensive language*

*touching things belonging to others without their permission*

*being rude*

#### **I have the right to have my ideas heard and appreciated by others, and the responsibility to listen to and deal peacefully in the event of a conflict.**

*This means. . .*

*I listen to others*

*I speak up nicely for what I believe*

*I tell the truth*

#### **I have the right to learn and the responsibility to do my best.**

*This means. . .*

*I do what I am expected to do*

*I am accountable for my choices*

#### **I have the right to be educated in a clean and safe environment.**

*This means that no one will do anything to litter or damage any part of the building.*

*I have the responsibility to do my part to make sure our school is clean and safe by not. . .*

*misusing bathroom facilities*

*writing on the walls and furniture*

*chewing gum*

*touching the walls or the hallway displays*

*littering with paper or food*

**Threatening Words or Actions**

Recent events in schools across America have made it necessary for school officials to pay close attention to threats which students may or do harm to themselves, another student, or an adult in the school.

Students and parents should understand that words or actions which threaten or harm will not be taken lightly. Writing or expressing a threat verbally, drawing threatening pictures, or making threatening gestures will result in immediate and serious intervention by school officials.

## DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES

Each individual teacher within their respective classroom has his/her own rules for behavior along with rewards and consequences.

On the occasions that a student displays behaviors not in line with our student code of conduct, he or she may incur a disciplinary consequence. Individual teachers will handle most issues concerning minor disciplinary infractions within the classroom; however, some circumstances require further action, including when a teacher has exhausted other options, and the student is sent to the principal's office.

The purpose of imposing a consequence to any student is not only to maintain a civil and orderly school environment, but to help the student understand what is expected, what was wrong, and hopefully to consider better choices going forward. A continuum of disciplinary consequences are intended to help students learn and grow in order to become positive citizens.

When it comes to the application of consequences for violations of our student code of conduct, it is the administration's goal to be firm, fair and consistent in the application of its rules. In this way, we can ensure that we are looking out for the safety and best interest of our entire student body.

Be aware that when coming into a new school year, students do not necessarily get to start with a "clean slate." When a pattern of behavior emerges or an extreme violation occurs, a student's behavioral records from previous years may be analyzed in order to determine consequences. Additionally, there are rare occasions that may necessitate involving local law enforcement in addition to applying school consequences.

**While the following guidelines listed below are the general rules that will be followed, the principal has the right and discretion to impose consequences as she/he sees fit in light of all circumstances involved, particularly, but not exclusively, for those behaviors that involve multiple offenses or are extreme in nature. This may include consequences that go beyond those listed below.**

Through **progressive discipline**, the principal determines the appropriate consequences and/ or supports to help students improve their behavior, while taking into account their individual circumstances including the students' stage of growth and development.

Guidelines for disciplinary consequences:

- **1st referral to the main office-** students may be given a verbal warning and the possibility of a reflective assignment to be completed.
- **2nd referral to the main office-** students may be assigned to silent lunch and/or recess (maximum 2 per week) with a reflective response activity.
- **3rd referral to the main office-** students may be assigned to additional days of silent lunch and/or recess (maximum 2 per week) with a reflective response activity.
- **4th referral to the main office-** students may start to lose school-wide privileges including, but not limited to, participating in special events, class trips, parties, assemblies, etc.
- **5th, 6th, 7th referral to the main office-** students may be assigned to after school detentions and will continue to lose school-wide privileges. Parents are responsible for coming to school to pick up their children in these cases. Transportation is NOT provided.
- **Subsequent referrals could result in in-school or out of school suspension.**

\*\* When students violate transportation procedures and/or school rules on the bus, a suspension from bus privileges may be included with the consequences listed above.

\*\* Please note that **out of school suspension** is a possibility as an initial consequence or at any time for any students who engage in behaviors that may be considered dangerous to themselves or others, as determined by the building's student code of conduct and principal's discretion.



## DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means 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, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students and that:

- A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his person or damage to his property;
- Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; or
- Creates a hostile educational environment for the student;
- By interfering with a student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

The HIB policy requires that a suspected violation of the policy be reported to determine if the action was or was not a violation. If you suspect your child is being bullied and/or harassed, **please contact your school counselor** or the building principal. It is strongly recommended that you verbally report the bullying incident on the day it occurs and follow up with the written reporting form. **We ask that parent, teacher, and student reporters describe the behavior / incident of concern and not label the action as "bullying," as our old definition is often misleading.**

**An act which does not fit the characteristics of a Code of Conduct violation might still fall under a violation of the HIB law, and an act which does not meet the criteria required by the HIB Law might still be considered a violation of our school Code of Conduct and subject to disciplinary action.**

**Whether a violation of Code of Conduct or of the HIB Law, all such behaviors can incur the same disciplinary actions ranging from admonishment to suspension. In other words, both violations are handled with equal weight and seriousness.**

Consequences:

- a) Are inevitable, immediate, escalating, and predictable.
- b) Will match the child's action rather than his or her intentions.
- c) Will consider the age, developmental and emotional functioning of the student and will be appropriate based on those factors.
- d) Include counseling for both the offender and victim if deemed appropriate through the investigation. Learning and well-being continues to be our focus.

The HIB Law requires that any suspected violation of the policy be reported immediately to the school administration and/or the anti-bullying specialist for investigation.



Additional Resources regarding the HIB law and reporting forms can be found on the District Website: [www.htps.us](http://www.htps.us)

It is important to understand that the legal definition of bullying is slightly different than the one to which we are accustomed. **Both definitions include behavior that is hurtful whether carried out by means of any gesture, written or verbal communication, physical or social action, or electronic transmission. The legal HIB Law is a Civil Rights Law, designed to protect the civil rights of people who could be targeted due to specific characteristics as outlined in the law.**

Here is a quick chart for your reference:

Characteristics of Normal Conflict	Indicators (Not Criteria) for Code of Conduct Violations	BULLYING HIB Violation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equal power – friends or acquaintances</li> <li>• Happens occasionally</li> <li>• Accidental</li> <li>• Equal emotional reaction between offender and victim</li> <li>• Offender not trying to get something</li> <li>• Offender shows remorse takes responsibility and an effort to solve the problem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imbalance of power – no friendship</li> <li>• Repeated negative actions</li> <li>• Purposeful- Intent to harm. Usually unprovoked.</li> <li>• Strong emotional reaction on the part of the victim</li> <li>• Seeking power or control</li> <li>• Trying to gain material item(s).</li> <li>• Offender shows no remorse and often blames the victim and shows no effort to solve the problem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May share some or all of the evidence listed in Violation of Code of Conduct.</li> <li>• <b>Additionally, MUST meet the definition</b> which includes: be motivated by an actual or perceived protected class, be recognized by a reasonable person as inflicting harm, and causes substantial disruption to school or to the student’s learning (see full definition above).</li> </ul>

In Hillsborough Township Schools, we always take seriously the issue of student misconduct specifically, harassment, intimidation, and bullying. As a school community, we will continue to address these issues in both a proactive and responsive manner so that we can provide a safe and civil learning environment for all students.

Each elementary strives to put proactive measures in place to stop harassment, intimidation, and bullying before it starts. These measures include: Implementing a comprehensive character education program. This includes:

1. Assemblies, Guidance Specials, and emphasizing character pillars throughout the year, highlighting one per month, and infusing positive character throughout the curriculum and the school day.
2. Instruction to all students through the Second-Step Curriculum, Social Studies content, embedded character education throughout all aspects of the school day including conflict resolution.
3. Letting students know that they have a voice whether as a victim or a bystander when it comes to bullying. A variety of measures are available for students to communicate with adults and advocate for themselves or others in addition to speaking to someone face-to-face.
4. Teaching awareness as to what the differences are between normal conflict, a Code of Conduct violation, and HIB Violation. Normal conflict is something that all students will face in school and in life.



## **WOODFERN SCHOOL SCHEDULE**

### **Regular Daily Schedule:**

<i>Grades 1-4</i>	<i>8:30 a.m. – 3:05 p.m.</i>
<i>Kindergarten a.m.</i>	<i>8:30 a.m. – 11:17 a.m.</i>
<i>Kindergarten p.m.</i>	<i>12:17 p.m. – 3:05 p.m.</i>

### **Half-Day Schedule:**

<i>Grades 1-4</i>	<i>8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.</i>
<i>Kindergarten a.m.</i>	<i>8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.</i>
<i>Kindergarten p.m.</i>	<i>10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.</i>

### **Delayed Opening Schedule:**

<i>Grades 1-4</i>	<i>10:30 a.m. – 3:05 p.m.</i>
<i>Kindergarten a.m.</i>	<i>10:30 a.m. – 12:17 p.m.</i>
<i>Kindergarten p.m.</i>	<i>1:17 p.m. – 3:05 p.m.</i>

### **Early Dismissal Schedule:**

<i>Grades 1-4</i>	<i>8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.</i>
<i>Kindergarten a.m.</i>	<i>8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.</i>
<i>Kindergarten p.m.</i>	<i>Canceled</i>

## SIX-DAY CYCLE

Along with our regular academic schedule, your child will study five “Special” areas of our curriculum on a “Cycle” basis. These areas include Physical Education (twice during the cycle), World Language (Mandarin Chinese and Spanish), Art, Vocal Music, and Library. Our 180 days of school are divided into 30 cycles of 6 days each. Each day your child is in school, he/she will have a “Special”. An example of this would be:

Day 1	Physical Education (wear your sneakers)
Day 2	World Language
Day 3	Vocal Music
Day 4	Physical Education (wear your sneakers)
Day 5	REACH or Library
Day 6	Art

Each classroom in our school has its own specific “Special” schedule. You will receive that schedule from your classroom teacher. It is important to note that we never miss a day! If the school is closed for a holiday or for inclement weather, the next day we are in session will be the next consecutive day of the cycle – we don’t skip cycle days when we skip school.

## ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL



### EARLY MORNING DROP-OFF

Woodfern School does NOT have a before school program or certified staff on hand to supervise early drop offs.

**Students may be dropped off at the school no earlier than 8:20 a.m. When dropping off students, please do not enter the main driveway. Private vehicles are prohibited from entering the main driveway in front of the school when buses are present or expected to arrive.**

### ARRIVAL

For the safety of the students and to preserve efficient arrival and dismissal procedures strict drop-off and pick-up procedures are in place. Placing your child on the bus is the safest and most efficient way to get your child to Woodfern School in the morning.

**Car traffic is not allowed in the parking lots when buses are present.** If you choose to drive your child to school, please use the gravel parking lot of Mark E. Singley Park (right next to Woodfern School).

Students are encouraged to arrive on time each and every day. This helps to formulate good life skills and a stress-free start to the school day.

**Students arriving at school after 8:20am are considered late.** Parents must personally sign their children into school if they arrive late, and children must receive a pass from the office to be admitted to class.

### DISMISSAL (INCLUDING EMERGENCY DISMISSAL)

Each day to facilitate dismissal the office and school building will close from 2:40 until after the school buses have left. **Student pick up may not be scheduled during that time.**

All students will ride their regularly scheduled school bus at dismissal. Woodfern School has staff members assigned to each school bus who carefully check each student onto their respective school bus to insure a safe and secure dismissal for all.

**Early Pick-Up (Prior to 2:40)**

If you would like to pick your child up prior to the end of the school day, you must send a note to school to advise. Upon arrival at school, please come to the main office to have your child called out of class. Please do not proceed to the classroom.

**3:00 Pick-Up/"Walkers"**

If you would like to pick your child up at the end of the school day instead of having them ride the bus, please send a note to school indicating that your child will be a 3:00 Walker. Parents are asked to arrive at the school at 3:00 sharp and wait outside the front door to receive their child. You will be asked to sign your child out by a staff member at the front door. You do not need to enter the building.

**Non-Parent/Guardian Pick-Up**

If you will be sending someone other than the legal parent/guardian of a child to pick up your child, you **MUST** send a note to school to advise, and provide the name of the person who will be picking up your child. **No student may be signed out to any person other than a parent or an adult who is expressly authorized to do so by the parent in writing and by prior arrangement.** Please note this person will be asked to provide a photo ID verifying identity.

**YOU MUST SEND A NOTE:** In all of the instances listed above, you **MUST send a written note to school.** Your note will be read by the teacher and then sent to the main office to be logged in. The information will be added to our daily dismissal sheet which is finalized by 12:50 p.m. daily. **Telephone calls to make these arrangements are highly discouraged as we strive to maintain minimal disruption to the teacher's day by limiting phone calls to the classroom. Please understand that each time we have to call into a classroom, it disrupts the learning process and we respectfully request that you help us keep all interruptions to a minimum.** PLEASE MAKE YOUR ARRANGEMENTS PRIOR TO YOUR CHILD ARRIVING AT SCHOOL FOR THE DAY and please remember to review these arrangements with your child prior to their arrival at school in the morning.

**EMERGENCY/EARLY DISMISSALS**

In the event of an emergency situation, such as severely inclement weather, a serious electrical problem, severe flooding, etc., the Superintendent and the Hillsborough Police Department may call for an emergency dismissal of school. *It is imperative that each parent/guardian discuss with their child what procedures they are to follow when they are delivered home by their bus in these events – especially in the event there is no one home.* In the event of an emergency dismissal, the Catholic Charities after care program will not be in session. All of these students will ride their assigned bus home.

Timely information will be communicated vis SchoolMessenger, as well as any of the following news sources: Cable Television Channel 27, NEWS 12NJ; Radio WOR (710K), WCTC (1450K), WHWH (1350K); and the Hillsborough Township School District website ([www.htps.us](http://www.htps.us)).

***As a reminder, in order for the school district to keep you informed, maintaining the accuracy of your contact information is essential. Please remember to log into your Genesis Parent Portal regularly to ensure your information is accurate and up to date.***

**AFTER SCHOOL CARE**

We are often asked about after school care for students. Please be advised that Catholic Charities runs an after school program on the premises of our elementary schools. It is important to be aware that this program is solely administered by Catholic Charities and not by the school or the District (this private organization merely uses school facilities). Should you wish to obtain information regarding this program, please contact Catholic Charities directly at (908) 722-1881. (Note: In the event of an emergency early closing of school, the Catholic Charities after-school Program will not be in session and all program participants will be sent home on their regularly assigned buses.)

***All parents MUST provide their child's teacher with a note telling them about their child's involvement in the after-school program. If your child attends any daycare other than Catholic Charities, please inform your child's teacher and the main office.***



## VISITING OUR SCHOOLS

1. For the safety and well-being of students and in the interest of minimizing interruptions to the instructional process, it is requested that visitors enter the building by the main entrance and wait to be buzzed in. Every visitor must be properly identified before entering the building. Visitors must report immediately to the main office and conduct all business through the school office. All visitors must sign in, present identification, and wear a “Visitor” badge (provided by the main office). Parents are asked not to go directly to a classroom at any time.
2. To minimize classroom interruptions, it is requested that parents who need to see a teacher schedule an appointment at a time when the teacher is not responsible for the supervision of students or the teaching of classes. Drop-in conferences are strongly discouraged. Parents’ cooperation in this regard will result in a better learning atmosphere for all children.
3. There are times your child may forget an important school item and you choose to bring it to school. If this happens, please ring the school bell and inform the office of what you are dropping off. Please make sure that your child’s and teacher’s name is on it and the office staff will see that they get it.



## OFFICE

**Please note: The Main Office will be closed from 2:40 p.m. until the buses leave the driveway. Please do not enter the office at this time.**

*Unless there is an emergency, parents picking up students for early dismissal must arrive to sign them out prior to the time that the main office is closed each day. All requests for early dismissal must be in writing and submitted to the classroom teacher no later than the morning of that school day.*

## FEES

Notices of money owed for cafeteria debts, library fines, or fines for lost or damaged books will be distributed to students and/or mailed home. Parents’ cooperation in clearing up these accounts promptly will be appreciated. Students with outstanding debts will not have access to their report cards.

## SCHOOL ATTENDANCE



Much of the learning which happens in the classroom is experiential in which students learn by discussing, listening, and doing. Something exciting happens each and every day! These experiences and opportunities simply cannot be replicated outside of the classroom. That is why student attendance is important. Please make every effort to see that your child is in attendance and arrives on time for school each day. We strongly suggest that whenever possible, you schedule family vacations during scheduled periods when school is not in session.

### **Student ABSENCE Call-In Program**

Our “**Call-In Program**” is in effect for all students who are **absent** or who will be coming in **late**. The number to call is **908-431-6600 and follow the prompts - BEFORE 8:30 a.m.** For those parents who wish to call in earlier, you may leave your message at any time. When leaving a message, please state your child’s name, the name of your child’s classroom teacher, the reason for the absence, and the anticipated duration of the absence. In the event that your child will be absent for an extended period of time, it may be wise to include a request that the teacher contact you directly.

If your child is coming in late and is planning to obtain lunch, please call and speak directly to one of the secretaries in the office. All lunches are pre-ordered by **8:30 a.m.**

**You now have the option of reporting your child’s absence or tardy to the attendance office online on the Genesis Parent Portal.**

**It is important to notify the school when your child is absent.** Schools are required by the state to report the number of student absences. In the case of illness, an absence is usually considered as excused with notification. Bringing in a doctor’s note is especially important in the case of extended absence (three days or more). The ultimate determination of absences as excused or unexcused is, according to policy, left to the principal’s discretion.

### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

An absence may be excused for the following reasons:

- Illness (a doctor’s note will be required after 3 consecutive days of absence)
- Funeral/Death in the family
- Religious observances pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14 through 16.
- Court obligations
- Take Your Child to Work Day
- Approved Home Instruction
- Exemptions as per Individualized Education Plans or other school-approved accommodation plans for individual disabilities.

### **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES ARE UNEXPLAINED ABSENCES**

“Truancy” means ten or more cumulative unexcused absences that count toward truancy of a student between the ages of six and sixteen as determined by the Board’s Attendance Policy and Regulation pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6(a)4.iii. and the definition of school day pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3. Any absence not counted toward truancy listed in C.2. above shall be an unexcused absence counted toward truancy

The following are the steps that may be taken to respond to **any student absences-**

1. If the teacher is concerned about the number of absences and lack of work being completed, the teacher will reach out to the parent and notify the counselor of concern.
2. School Counselor will reach out to parents with support.
3. Principal will reach out to parents with next steps if attendance doesn't improve.
4. Student will be brought up to I&RS committee to discuss strategies that haven't been tried yet.
5. Attendance meeting may be scheduled with parent, teacher, counselor, and principal.
6. **If the above strategies have not improved student attendance, the principal will discuss the possibility of retention if the student is not making adequate progress and consider a wellness call to DCP&P if the number increases.**

At the end of each marking period, attendance records will be reviewed. If the total number of absences reaches **10 days**, a letter will be emailed home notifying parents of number of absences

### **VACATIONS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR**

Family vacations during the school year are discouraged. However, it is understood that sometimes family circumstances dictating a short time away from school are unavoidable. It is important to know that even when advanced notice is given, teachers are not required to provide work in advance. Therefore, please understand that although the teacher may be able to provide some work in advance, you will need to touch base with the classroom teacher upon return for any additional missed work.

**Students must be present in school in order to participate in any after school or evening activity. Any student who wishes to participate in a curricular activity (i.e., dances, clubs, athletics, intramurals, music shows, etc.) must be in attendance for a minimum of four hours on the day of the activity. Students who are suspended from school may not participate in any festivity or activity.**

## **HOMEWORK**



The Hillsborough Board of Education believes that homework relevant to the material presented in class provides an opportunity to broaden, deepen, and reinforce a pupil's knowledge. Homework is generally given to reinforce the lesson taught that day - completing it at a later date would not serve the same purpose. The next lesson is usually dependent on the practice from the previous night. The work handed in also helps the teacher to know if the student understands the lesson or needs more help. The student is expected to complete homework neatly and accurately, and to submit it on the due date.

If students have difficulty understanding their homework assignment, rather than having them struggle for an inordinate amount of time, they should complete what they can and ask their teacher about the assignment during the next day at school.

In addition to the many subjects we teach, we also teach students to build character, focusing on topics such as responsibility. With regards to homework, students are not allowed to return to the school after hours should they forget a book or homework assignment. In the event of an emergency situation when a child must return for something left at school, such as eye glasses, **the child must be accompanied by his or her parent**, and a custodian must be present to allow access into the classroom.

After two days of absences, a request may be made for makeup work to be sent home or picked up.



## REPORTING PUPIL PROGRESS



The purpose of reporting the educational progress of pupils is to

1. inform parents of the progress children have made in school
2. apprise pupils of their progress in school
3. prompt teachers to make periodic, formal assessments of each pupil's progress
4. provide a cumulative record of a pupil's progress through the educational system
5. enable each pupil to gain a positive sense of his or her intellectual, social, emotional, and physical abilities and growth toward effective citizenship.

### REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued at the end of each of the four marking periods in the school year. Report cards will be visible through the parent portal on the date designated on the district calendar. No report cards will be distributed before the last day of school.

**Kindergarten** students do not receive report cards. They receive progress reports which address the child's developmental and academic growth. These are shared with the parents during conferences and are made available the day on or the day before the date that corresponds to the conference dates.

### PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES GRADES 1-4

Parents will be invited to participate in a parent-teacher conference at the end of the first marking period. In addition, conferences may be scheduled throughout the school year as a need arises on the part of either the parent or the teacher.



## COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE HOME AND SCHOOL

In an effort to keep parents well informed regarding school activities and to promote a positive link between the home and school, your principal and Home and School Association will communicate with you throughout the year.

**Important Note: Any changes in parent contact information (address, phone number, etc.) should be reported immediately to the office and child's teacher. The parent's account on the Parent Portal should also be updated.**





# Genesis Parent/Student Access Portal

*Keeping parents informed and involved helps to assure student safety and improve student success. As technology advances, we have attempted to offer better delivery methods for pertinent information in a timely manner.*

*The SchoolMessenger system will continue to deliver a single, clear message to parents' or guardians' home phones, work phones, cell phones, and email addresses. SchoolMessenger is connected to the Genesis Parent Access Portal, which means that students' contact information will be available to parents/guardians, teachers and district staff in one secure, password-protected place.*

*Through the Genesis Parent Access Portal, Elementary School Parents and Guardians are able to:*

- *Monitor daily attendance records in "real time"*
- *Report their child's absence or late arrival to the school*
- *View Report Cards*
- *Update emergency information including telephone and email contacts for you and your child(ren)*
- *Electronically sign important documents (Technology and Media permissions)*

*In order for the school to keep you informed, maintaining the accuracy of your contact information is essential. Please log into the Genesis Parent Access Portal and review/update this information as soon as possible. You can access the Genesis Parent Access Portal by going to <http://parents.htps.us/>.*

*In the Parent Portal, you are able to add secondary numbers and email addresses to provide the schools with multiple ways to reach you, but please note that SchoolMessenger Alerts will be sent ONLY to:*

- *The first home phone number listed for each guardian*
- *The first work phone number listed for each guardian*
- *The first cell phone number listed for each guardian*
- *The first email listed for each guardian*

*The following pages have detailed information on how to access the Parent Portal. If you are having difficulty logging in, or if you have not yet provided the school with an email address to access the Portal, please contact the school office.*

*Together we will work to keep you updated throughout the year. Thank you for your attention to the above.*

# ***GENESIS PARENT ACCESS PORTAL -- QUICK START GUIDE***

## **Logging In**

*Logging into the Genesis Parent Access Portal is very simple:*

- *Go to the Parent Access Portal login page: <http://parents.htps.us>*
- *Enter your Email Address, the one you provided to the school during registration, in the 'User Name' field (this will always be your user name)*
- *Enter your Password in the 'Password' field. (When your Genesis Parent Portal is activated by the school district, you will be emailed a temporary password for your first time log in)*
- *Click the 'Login' button.*

*Note that the very first time you log in you will be required to change your password. If you already have a password but have forgotten it, click on “Forgot my password”.*

## **The Parent Access Portal**

*There are 4 main sections on the top command line in the Parent Access Portal: Message Center, Student Data, Contacts, Settings.*

1. **Message Center:** *Generally not used at the elementary level.*
2. **Student Data:** *you will find the following six sub-sections:*
  - a. **Summary:**
    - *Student name, school, student ID, NJ State ID*
    - *Weekly attendance*
    - *Bus Route*
    - *Homeroom teacher, age, birthdate, Internet Permission and Media Permission indicators*
  - b. **Attendance:**
    - *Yearly calendar color-coded with absence and/or school day information*
    - *NOTE: If you “hover” over a date, you will see if any notes have been added to that particular date (i.e., if you pick your child up early, they will be marked “Early Out” and a notation will be added such as, “p/u by mom for dentist apt.”)*
  - c. **Grading:**
    - *Report cards (current and past) are available in this section*

- **NOTE: During the 3-week period prior to the release of the current marking period report cards, this section will be inaccessible in the Parent Portal while teachers post current marking period grades and comments.**

**d. Fees and Fines:**

- **If your child has an outstanding balance with the school cafeteria (or any other fine), the outstanding balance will be posted here.**
- **Please note: If your child has an outstanding fine, you will NOT be able to view report cards/grades in Genesis until the fine is paid.**

**e. Documents:**

- **Acceptable Use Policy K-4: This is where you may grant permission for your child to use technology in the schools (computers, tablets, Chrome books, etc.)**
- **Media Release Form: This is where you may grant the use of your child's photo (no names will be published) on our website or media releases (i.e., for special event photos such as assemblies, etc.)**

**f. Course pages – currently this page is inactive for elementary students.**

**3. Contacts: Click "Contacts" to view and update the contact information for a student. The Contacts screen has an area for each of your children and within a child's area, there is a separate section for each Contact. You may also add additional emergency contacts in this area (please remember that only the guardian will receive SchoolMessenger alerts.) Review the information and follow the instructions below if changes are required.**

**a. Updating a Contact's Email\* and Phone Number: You can do three things to the email addresses and phone numbers:**

- **Change the information:**
  - **Type the correct information in the appropriate field**
  - **Click the "Save all Changes" button.**
  - **Remove/Delete the information:**
    - **Click on the trash can icon**
    - **Click the "Save all Changes" button.**
- **Add new phone numbers and email addresses:**
  - **Locate the "Add Phone/Email" tool at the bottom of the Contact's information.**
  - **Click in the dropdown list to select the type of information you want to add.**



## 2. *Under Attendance > Notify Attendance Office*

The screenshot shows a web interface for 'Attendance'. At the top, there are navigation tabs: Summary, Attendance, Grading, Fees And Fines, Gradebook, Documents, Forms, and Course Pages. Below this is a header with 'Attendance' and a dropdown menu for 'SELECT STUDENT: Demo, Stu'. There are three sub-tabs: 'DAILY ATTENDANCE', 'CLASS ATTENDANCE', and 'NOTIFY ATTENDANCE OFFICE'. The 'NOTIFY ATTENDANCE OFFICE' tab is active. The form contains the following elements:

- Notify Attendance Office** (Section Header)
- You may only notify the attendance office about today and/or future dates.*
- Student will be: [Dropdown menu]
- On Date: [Date input field]
- Up through and including (may leave blank): [Date input field]
- Check off each student for whom this pertains:
  - Stu Demo
- Please leave a brief reason for the attendance request: [Text area]
- Submit to Office** (Green button)

*On the Notify Attendance Office page in the Portal, you will be able to choose whether the student will be absent or tardy. You can choose one date or a date range. It is important to include the reason for the absence in the comment box. Once you hit the “Submit to Office” button, the school can see your request. This screen will maintain a historical record of all notifications submitted.*

### Logging Out

*It is important to log out of the Parent Access Portal properly. To log out, click on the “Log Out” button in the upper right corner of any screen.*

### More Resources

*For more detailed instructions and more information on what you can view/change in the Parent Access Portal, please follow the links to the User Guide or the FAQs from <http://parents.htps.us>*

# *School Messenger*



Hillsborough Township Public Schools utilizes School Messenger, a parent notification system. School Messenger will be used to automatically notify parents of emergencies, activities, and information. School Messenger will allow the district to extend our parent outreach effort while also allowing the messages that are sent home via the system to be more directed to each family's needs and preferred communication methods.

School Messenger will be used for emergency broadcasts, bus delays, district, and school-wide events, etc.

School Messenger gives parents the option to include up to eight (8) parent/guardian emails and phone numbers to which messages may be sent. Parents can update their own emails and phone numbers via the Parent Portal. Please note that changes to contact information can take up to 48-hours to populate to School Messenger.

Please remember, if you update an email address that is directly linked to the Genesis Parent Portal as your username, the Portal connection will no longer be accessible. In this case, you will need to contact the school office to alert them of the new email and request that the Genesis Parent Portal link be created with this new email.

As a reminder, we ask that all parents routinely log into their Genesis Parent Portal to review their contact information to make sure everything is up to date.

Thank you for your assistance in helping us keep everyone informed!

## CONTACTING STAFF

The staff at each of our elementary schools welcome your comments, questions, and concerns; however, it is important that regular classroom instruction not be interrupted when information needs to be shared.

Teachers can also be reached via email. The email address is the teacher's first initial and last name, followed by @ htps.us. Please give teachers a reasonable amount of time to return your email as they often do not get time to return them during the school day. If there is an emergency, please call the main office.

## CLASSROOM CELEBRATIONS

In conjunction with our Home and School Association, classroom celebrations are limited to three per year per classroom. They will be Halloween, Winter, and End of the Year. For Halloween, children will enjoy the parade and go back to the classroom for an activity or a craft (20 minutes). **No food will be served.** During the other two parties, students will enjoy classroom games/crafts/activities. These two celebrations should be thirty minutes in duration. **Again, no food will be served.**

### **BIRTHDAYS**

Birthday parties are not permitted in school.

Below is a list of ideas for non-food items that could be sent in to celebrate your child's special day:

- Donate a picture book for the class library (to be read on your child's birthday).
- Donate a game for the class game center (to be used during indoor recess).
- Pencils
- Erasers
- Stickers

**Please be advised that invitations for private birthday parties are not permitted to be distributed through the school. Teachers cannot be asked to send home private invitations via backpack, whether there is one for every student or not. This policy must be strictly adhered to.**



## SCHOOL BUS GUIDELINES

Abiding by the following basic guidelines for riding the school bus should provide for a safe and pleasant experience for all students:

1. At the bus stop, students will remain well back from the road and refrain from any type of improper behavior.
2. Students will board the bus in an orderly manner and remain seated at all times.
3. Students will respect the authority of the bus driver at all times and abide by the rules, which have been established by the driver.
4. Students are prohibited from eating, drinking, or throwing objects on the bus.
5. Students must never lean out of the window of the bus or extend their head, arm, or any other body part out of the window. Nothing should ever be thrown from the bus window.

6. **Students must wear seatbelts when present.**
7. Students must ride on their assigned bus at all times. The changing of buses and/or bus stops is prohibited. Students must get off the bus at their assigned stop only.
8. Students must demonstrate respect for the school bus and refrain from any activity which will result in damaging or defacing the school vehicle.
9. Students must refrain from bringing animals or any large, bulky, unmanageable projects or packages on the school bus.
10. Students should talk in a reasonable tone and avoid loud noises.
11. Students should keep aisles clear at all times.
12. Students must refrain from littering the school bus.

All elementary students are currently eligible for district transportation (buses). Information regarding the location and times of your child's designated bus stop is provided to parents via School Messenger during the summer months. Should you need to contact the Transportation Office directly for any reason, please call 431-6600 ext. 3483 or 2076.

**Students who fail to abide by the bus rules outlined above will be reported to the principal, and parents will be notified of the nature of the problem. The principal will determine the discipline to be administered, in accordance with the severity of the infraction. When the misconduct is severe and/or ongoing, the pupil may be suspended from the school bus pending a conference with the parent. In the case of a bus suspension, transportation becomes the responsibility of the parent.**



## LUNCH

Students who wish to purchase lunch will have 3 daily lunch options: hot entree, cold entree, and bagel bag (including a milk) to begin the school year. Students' homeroom teachers will take a daily lunch count of which option the student chose each morning. Paper lunch menus will not be sent home; rather the monthly menus can be found on the district's website at [www.https.us](http://www.https.us).

If your child is purchasing lunch from the school cafeteria, please note that cash may always be used. However, Woodfern School strongly encourages using the District's electronic lunch payment system *Mealtime*<sup>®</sup>. Each student will have an account set up in his/her name and receive a swipe card (which will be kept at the school) that they will use to access funds in their personal account. Additionally, please note the following:

- The use of this system is voluntary; students may still pay for lunch with cash
- Parents are encouraged to visit the *My Mealtime* website (which may be easily accessed through the District website) and register for an account. Through this service you will be able to deposit funds online (NOTE: there is a fee to do this), see your child's account balance and monitor what meals/foods they are purchasing.
- Deposits into the Mealtime POS account may be made in two different ways:
  - Cash/checks may be sent directly to the school. The deposit **MUST** be placed in an envelope with your child's name, teacher's name and the words "POS LUNCH DEPOSIT" clearly written on the envelope, otherwise the school will not be able to distinguish what this money is for. Checks must have "POS LUNCH" written in the memo section. There is no service charge to deposit monies directly through the school. Checks should be made payable to "**Hillsborough Township Board of Education**"



- Deposits may also be made electronically through the *My Mealttime* website. Please note there is a service charge attached to electronic deposits.
- Only school lunches, beverages, and food ala carte items may be debited from this account. Snacks (ice cream, cookies, chips, etc.) cannot be debited from an elementary school account.

We strongly suggest that a minimum of \$5.00 be placed in every child's account for emergencies. If your child does not have lunch or the means to buy lunch, the child will have to call home.

For those who decide to utilize the POS system, it is very important that you monitor the balance in your child's account. When the account is low, you must make additional deposits. Finally, please be advised that *My Mealttime* is an outside service. The school office is not able to access individual accounts to advise of balances. If you have not created your own Mealttime parent account and have questions regarding balances, they will need to be sent directly to our school cafeteria.

The Mealttime POS lunch program has been utilized by the District for several years now, and has proven to be very successful for our students.

## **LUNCH AND RECESS GUIDELINES**

Students will be given a 40-minute lunch/recess period each day. Weather permitting, recess is held outdoors. It is expected that students will abide by the expectations outlined below during lunch and recess so that a safe and pleasant atmosphere can be maintained for all students.

### **Lunch:**

1. Students should follow directions given by the lunch aide the first time they are given.
2. Students should remain seated during the lunch period and should keep hands, feet, and other objects to themselves. Running is not permitted in the cafeteria at any time.
3. Upon entering the cafeteria and during the first five minutes of lunch, all students are required to be quiet and prepare themselves for lunch (order their lunch, unpack their lunch, get straws, etc.).
4. For the rest of the lunchtime, conversation should be conducted in reasonable, quiet voices. Students should refrain from yelling, shouting, or making any other loud noises.
5. Students are responsible for discarding their trash and checking the area where they are sitting for any excessive mess and disarray.
6. Students are expected to demonstrate respect for the lunch aides at all times. This includes addressing the aide as "Mrs. ---", or "Miss ---".

### **Recess:**

1. Students should follow directions given by the recess aide the first time they are given.
2. Students should play in designated areas only.
3. Students should refrain from any type of rough play, which could result in jeopardizing the safety and well-being of another student. Fighting is strictly prohibited.
4. The use of foul or inappropriate language is not permitted.
5. At the conclusion of the recess period, students are expected to line up quickly and efficiently and re-enter the building in a quiet, orderly manner.
6. Students are expected to demonstrate respect for the recess aides at all times.

Parents will be informed of any serious, ongoing problems relevant to their child's conduct in the cafeteria or on the playground.



## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM

The Hillsborough Township Elementary School Counselor Program is a comprehensive, developmental program designed to assist ALL students in reaching their maximum potential. The objectives are to help students acquire the skills and knowledge, which are essential for responsible behavior, academic achievement, personal satisfaction, and successful integration into society. The Elementary School Counselor assists through classroom guidance activities, small group and individual counseling, coordination of school and community resources, and consultation with students, staff, and parents. The counselor can be contacted through the school's office at 431-6600.



## DRESSING FOR SCHOOL

With a focus on maintaining the best learning environment for all students, parents are asked to follow the guidelines below regarding appropriate school attire. Some guidelines pertain directly to student safety; others address appropriateness for the school setting.

We ask that students refrain from wearing the following:

- clothing that exposes the belly, midriff, or back.
- clothing with inappropriate language or negative comments about the school, work ethic, individuals or groups of people
- baggy or sagging pants falling below the waistline/low rise pants
- shoes that are inappropriate for play at recess or in physical education classes.

Where some of this clothing is popular outside the school setting, we appreciate parents' help in guiding their children in making good choices about what to wear to school.

The principal has the final discretion of the appropriateness of student clothing for school.

**During the colder days of fall, winter, and spring, we do try to take the children outside for recess. It is important that students come to school dressed appropriately with coats, hats, and gloves. Children wearing shorts on cold weather days often are uncomfortable during recess and the rest of the school day.**

**Sneakers are the safest footwear for the playground!**



## USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Please review the technology page on the district website for guidelines on technology use in the classrooms.

All parents are required to sign an authorization for internet use (K-4 AUP Form). The directions are outlined below:

Go to the **District Website** [www.htps.us](http://www.htps.us).

Look for **Technology Literacy** [https://www.htps.us/services/technology\\_literacy](https://www.htps.us/services/technology_literacy)

**Signing Online Forms in Genesis.**

## CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students **may** bring cell phones and smart watches to school **with parent permission**. Handheld electronic games and entertainment systems are not allowed in school.

Please note the following guidelines regarding cell phones and smart watches:

- Cell phones may not be turned on or in use during the school day or while riding the bus.
- Cell phones must be kept in the child's backpack and must be turned off and kept out of sight at all times while school is in session.
- A student who attempts to use a cell phone in school will immediately be referred to the Principal and the devices will be confiscated and must be picked up by the parent.
- If your child wears a smart watch, please make sure the communication options are turned **OFF**. Your child should not be able to send text messages or make/receive phone calls throughout the day.
- All communication to/from your child must be done via the teacher, main office, or school nurse. Children should not be texting or calling home via their personal cell phones or smart watches.

## STUDENTS' RIGHTS TO DUE PROCESS AND APPEALS PROCEDURES

Any student who is accused of violating a school regulation and is to be reprimanded or disciplined shall have the right to procedural due process in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1 et seq. Educationally handicapped pupils are generally subject to the same disciplinary procedures as non-handicapped pupils in accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:14:2.8. However, their classification will be taken into consideration when looking at an incident in its totality.

Although minor disciplinary consequences (admonishment, discussion, time-out) may be handled solely in-house, every effort will be made to contact a student's parents/guardians, whether it be by phone call, written notice, email, or any combination of those methods when a significant disciplinary action is taken. If a parent or guardian disagrees with the consequences given, he/she can appeal the decision to the principal through a written or electronic statement. The principal will then reply to such an appeal. Should parents or guardians feel that the principal's second judgment is not right, they can make a second appeal to the superintendent of schools.



**Affirmative Action:** Concerns relevant to affirmative action, sexual harassment, or discrimination should be directed to:

**School Principal  
Local Affirmative Action Officer  
(908) 431-6600**

or

**Director of School Counseling,  
District Affirmative Action Officer  
(908) 431-6600 ext. 2906**

*Specific policies recommended for your review include the following, which can be found on the website:*

[Attendance](#) - Board Policy 5200

[Management of Life – Threatening Allergens in Schools](#) - Board Policy 5331

[Equal Educational Opportunity](#) - Board Policy 5750

[HIB](#) - Board Policy 5512

[Sexual Harassment](#) - Board Policy 3362

[Substance Abuse and a Drug Free School Zone](#) - Board Policy 5530

*Also for your reference:*

[Hillsborough High School Graduation Requirements](#)



**District Policies**

All policies are available on-line in PDF format at <http://www.htps.us>.  
Click on the Board of Education menu and go to "District Policies".

5200 [ATTENDANCE](#)

8505 [SCHOOL NUTRITION](#)

5512 [HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING](#)

5751 [SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS](#)

5460 [HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION](#)