

Hillsborough Elementary Schools

Hillsborough Township



Amsterdam Elementary



Hillsborough Elementary



Sunnymead Elementary



Triangle Elementary



Woodfern Elementary



Woods Road Elementary

Student Handbook

Amsterdam Elementary School



Student Handbook

2023-2024

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Welcome Letter



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. It sponsors many of our school-wide events, and provides 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

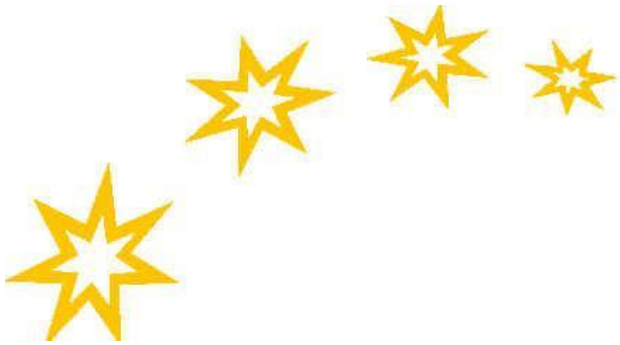
Susan Eckstein
Hillsborough Elementary

Tammy Jenkins
Sunnymead Elementary

Anthony Aliperti
Triangle Elementary

Steven Kerrigan
Woodfern Elementary

Thomas Rathjen
Woods Road Elementary



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.



Contact Information



Mailing Address:

Amsterdam School
301 Amsterdam Drive
Hillsborough, NJ 08844

Main Phone Number

(908) 431-6600

To reach Amsterdam Elementary School, select option 4, then option 1

Fax Number

(908) 281-7201

Amsterdam Main Office Staff

Principal: Michele Fisher x2136

Secretary: Jeannie Demetrio x2396

Clerical Assistant: Christine Battagliese x2388

School Nurse: Kathy Hujber x2239

Amsterdam Main Office Hours

The main office is open daily from 7:30am to 3:00pm. Please note that the office closes during dismissal starting at 2:00pm, until the buses depart the parking lot.

Other Important Numbers

Hillsborough Township Board of Education: (908) 431-6600, option 5

Transportation: (908) 431-6600, option 6

Catholic Charities (On-site Aftercare): (908) 722-1881

Communication Between the Home and School



In an effort to keep parents/guardians 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/guardian contact information (address, phone number, etc.) should be reported immediately to the office and child's teacher. The Genesis [Parent Portal](#) should also be updated.

Websites

Please refer to the following useful websites for the latest district and Amsterdam School information:

Hillsborough School District Website: <https://https.us>

Amsterdam School Website: <https://ams.https.us>

Genesis Parent Portal

All Hillsborough schools use the Genesis student information system. With the use of individualized log-ins and passwords, parents/guardians can review their child's demographic data, attendance records, current teachers, bus transportation, and other information regarding their child's progress. Importantly, parents/guardians must fill out emergency forms on the [Parent Portal](#) and should update contact information as needed. Additionally, reporting your child's absence can be completed efficiently by using the [Parent Portal](#). In order for the school to keep you informed, maintaining the accuracy of your contact information is essential. Please log into the [Parent Portal](#) and review/update this information as soon as possible. For assistance in accessing your child's Genesis account information online, please contact the main office.

School Messenger

All Hillsborough schools use the School Messenger system to provide direct communications to parents/guardians home phone, work phone, cell phone, and email addresses. School Messenger links phone numbers and emails which you provide through the [Parent Portal](#). The system is used for distribution of special announcements, reminders, sharing of general information relevant to the school community, as well as to provide vital updates in the event of emergency school closings or other emergencies. The School Messenger system is integrated with our Genesis Student Information System, which means that your child's information is entered at registration, rolled over from any previous school year, and updated based on your child's current enrollment. **It is important for families to maintain accurate and current contact information by directly accessing the [Parent Portal](#) to review and update this information whenever there is a change in phone numbers, home addresses, or email accounts.** Parents/Guardians are able to add secondary numbers and email addresses to provide our school with multiple ways to reach you.

Communication Between the Home and School (cont.)



Parent Notes to School

Please place all correspondence in an envelope and remember to include your child's full name, grade level, homeroom teacher, and the purpose of the communication. While your child's teacher may anticipate this information, notes regarding dismissal changes, lunch money, ASHA orders, etc. are forwarded straight to the main office and arrive in bulk from across the building.

Contacting Staff via Email

The staff at AMS always welcomes your comments, questions and concerns. Teachers and staff can best be reached via email. The email address is the staff member's first initial and last name, followed by **@htps.us**. This information can be found on our school website (<https://ams.htps.us>). Please give teachers a reasonable amount of time to respond to your email as they often do not have time during the course of a school day. *If it is a time-sensitive matter, please call the main office at (908) 431-6600, option 4, then option 1.*

School Schedule



Regular Daily Schedule:

Grades 1-4, CAP	7:50 a.m. – 2:25 p.m.
Kindergarten a.m.	7:50 a.m. – 10:37 a.m.
Kindergarten p.m.	11:37 p.m. – 2:25 p.m.

Half-Day Schedule:

Grades 1-4, CAP	7:50 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.
Kindergarten a.m.	7:50 a.m. – 10:20 a.m.
Kindergarten p.m.	9:20 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.

Delayed Opening Schedule:

Grades 1-4, CAP	9:50 a.m. – 2:25 p.m.
Kindergarten a.m.	9:50 a.m. – 11:37 a.m.
Kindergarten p.m.	12:37 p.m. – 2:25 p.m.

Early Dismissal Schedule (Emergency Closures):

Grades 1-4, CAP	7:50 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.
Kindergarten a.m.	7:50 a.m. – 10:37 a.m.
Kindergarten p.m.	canceled

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 Procedures



Placing your child on the bus is the safest and most efficient way to get your child to Amsterdam School in the morning. Parents/Guardians are not allowed to park in the school parking lot to drop off students, as car traffic is NOT allowed in the parking lot when buses are present (except for those following the drop-off procedure described below). Students should always remain with a parent/guardian until the 7:40am bell rings, as there is no outdoor supervision until that time.

Tardy/Late Arrivals

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. When arriving at school after the 7:50 AM bell, students MUST be accompanied by a parent/guardian and should proceed directly to the main office for sign-in. We will also obtain lunch orders at this time.

Morning Arrival Parent Drop-Off Procedures

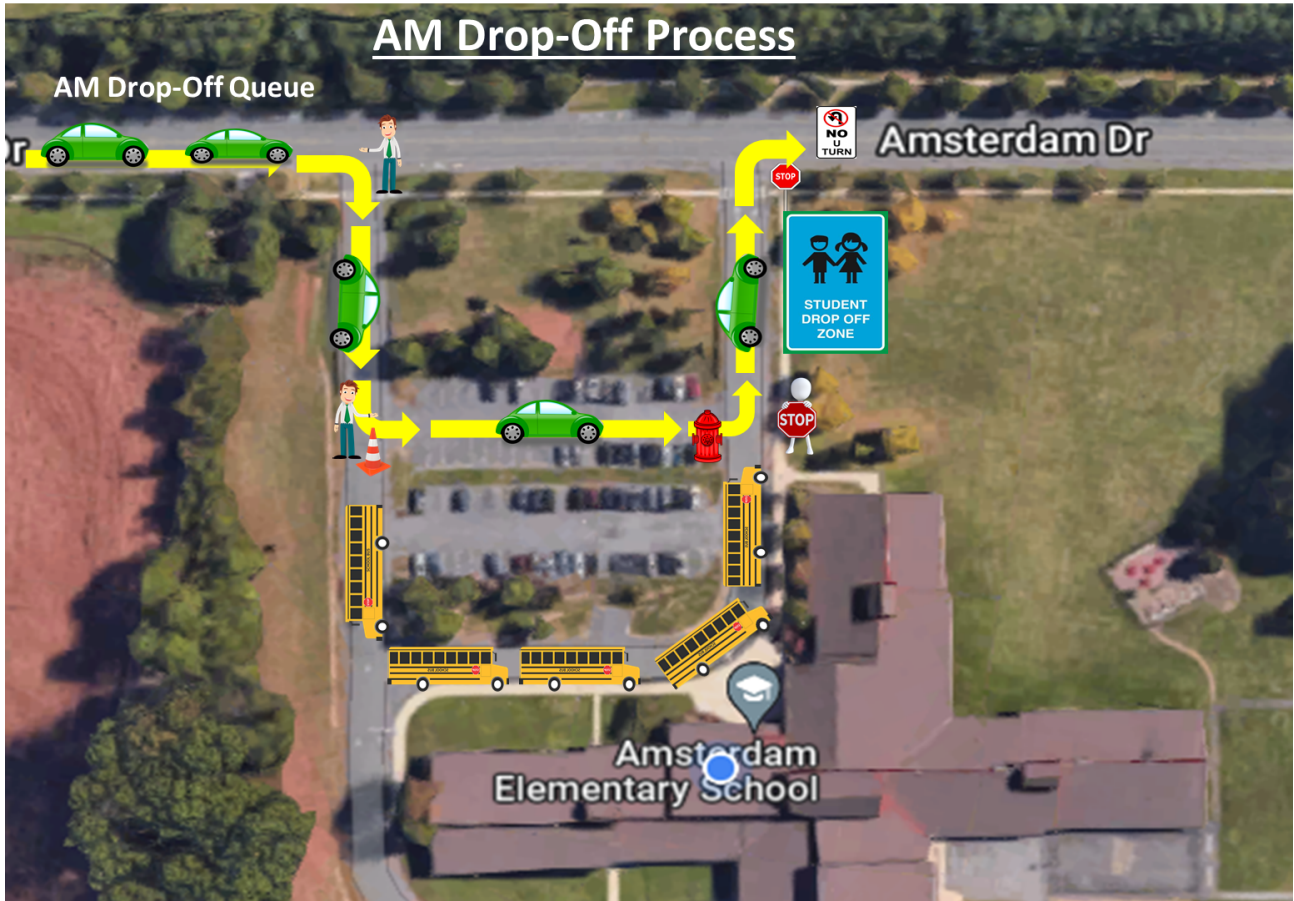
Note: the AMS main office is closed from 7:35 AM - 7:50 AM during morning arrival

Walkers/Bike Riders: Accompany your child to the bike rack area. If driving then walking, please park on Amsterdam Drive past the school entrance/exit. Note: parents are not allowed past the bike rack area. Children will walk into the main entrance by themselves when the first bell rings at 7:40am.

Car Line: Parents/Guardians who choose to remain in their cars for drop-off, please follow these steps:

- Parent/Guardian morning drop-off on campus is limited to children who can get out of the car independently on the passenger side. Parents/Guardians must remain in the vehicle at all times.
- Parents/Guardians may begin lining up for morning drop-off along Amsterdam Drive (See illustration below).
- No cars may enter the Amsterdam driveway unless directed by an AMS staff member starting at 7:35 AM.
- Once you are allowed into the driveway, all cars will proceed along the highlighted route (See illustration below) by making their first left and stopping at the fire hydrant.
- Cars cannot pull forward until the AMS staff member holding the Stop/Go sign directs them to do so. Once directed, cars will make a left and must pull all the way forward to the stop sign at the top of the driveway (See illustration below).
- Students MUST exit the vehicle on the passenger side and proceed along the sidewalk to the main entrance.
- Once your child exits the vehicle, cars will only be able to make a right hand turn onto Amsterdam Drive.
- Please do not make a K or U-turn on Amsterdam Drive, this creates a hazard for other cars and buses departing the campus.

Arrival Procedures (cont.)



Dismissal Procedures



Change in Afternoon Dismissal/Early Dismissal

Please use [this form](#) to notify the main office of a change in your child's daily dismissal plan. All changes to daily dismissal plans must be received through this google form by 1:00 PM. Some examples: 1) if your child rides a bus daily, but will be picked up at dismissal today, 2) if you need to pick up your child early for an appointment, 3) if your child normally attends aftercare but will be taking the bus home instead today.

In preparation for dismissal, submissions will not be accepted after **1:00 PM** and you must call the main office to ensure the appropriate staff are aware of your child's change in dismissal for the day. *Please do not email this information to your child's teacher at the end of the day, as teachers are instructing their students until dismissal and they may not see your email in time.*

If there is a **PERMANENT** change in your student's dismissal plan, please contact the Main Office and Teacher via email or written note.

Parent/Guardian Pick-Up prior to 2:00 PM

- Please park in an available spot in the front parking lot.
- Ring the doorbell and an office staff member will let you into the vestibule.
- You will be asked to show your photo ID to the office staff member.
- You will then be admitted into the main office to sign-out your child for the day.

Parent/Guardian Pick-Up at Dismissal

Note: the AMS main office is closed starting at 2:00 PM, until the buses depart the parking lot. If you need to pick up your child prior to dismissal, you must pick them up before 2:00 PM and follow the procedure outlined above.

Walkers/Bike Riders: Please bring photo ID and wait for your child at the bike rack area. If driving then walking to meet your student, please park on Amsterdam Drive past the school entrance/exit.

Car Line: Parents/Guardians who choose to remain in their cars for Pick-Up, please follow these steps:

- Parents/Guardians may begin lining up for afternoon pick-up along Amsterdam Drive starting at 2:10 PM (see illustration below).
- No cars will be allowed to pull into the campus while buses are present.
- Once all of the buses have departed, a staff member will allow cars to enter the driveway.
- Cars should proceed to the bottom of the driveway, turn left, follow the yellow curbing and stop at the Main Entrance where the student pick-up area will be (see illustration below).
- Parents are to remain in their vehicle at all times. Please have your photo ID ready to show a staff member when they approach your vehicle.
- A staff member will ask you to sign out your child once you provide your photo ID.
- After you sign out your child, your child will be escorted to your vehicle.
- Please proceed forward and exit the campus.

Dismissal Procedures (cont.)



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. Unless otherwise arranged with the Main Office, all students will be sent home via their assigned **BUS** (including Catholic Charities Aftercare students). 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. The bus driver will not allow students in grades K-1 to exit the bus without a parent/guardian/emergency contact at the bus stop to greet them.

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.

Please [click here](#) for more information regarding the Aftercare Program.

Visiting our School



Main Office Hours: The main office is open daily from 7:30am to 3:00pm. Please note that the office closes during dismissal starting at 2:00pm, until the buses depart the parking lot.

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 **WITH PHOTO ID** before entering the building. Visitors must report immediately to the main office to sign in - visitors may not go straight to the classroom. Visitors must sign out before leaving the school building.

To minimize classroom interruptions, it is requested that parents/guardians 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. Parent/Guardian cooperation in this regard will result in a better learning atmosphere for all children.

At times parents/guardians may need to deliver items to school such as forgotten homework, forgotten lunch bags, or school projects. Please ring the school bell and inform the office of what you are dropping off. Make sure that your child's and teacher's name is on the item. The office staff will see that they get it.

Reporting Absences & Tardies



Unless an absence is excused (ex: illness, bereavement, religious observation, etc.), it is expected that students attend school. Students need to be in school to learn! Much of the learning that happens in the classroom is experiential, where students learn by discussing, listening, and doing. These experiences and opportunities simply cannot be replicated outside of the classroom.

Students begin entering the school at 7:40 a.m. and are marked “tardy” if they are not in their classrooms by 7:50 a.m. Instruction begins at that time, and it is very important for children to get off to a good start each day, receive directions for work with other students, and participate fully in the educational program. Recurring instances of being late are disruptive to the rest of the class in general.

During a regular day of school, a child must receive instruction for at least 4 hours in order to be considered present for an entire day (grades 1-4). Genesis will record students as “tardy” whether they are late to school or leave school early as indication that they were not present for the full school day. If the student is not present for a total of 4 hours, they will be marked absent for that day.

Reporting an absence or tardy:

Should your child need to be absent, the Parent Portal is the preferred method to record that absence. Using the [Parent Portal](#) is simple, has a phone app, and will reduce erroneous truancy calls. You may also call the Absentee Line at (908) 431-6600. Follow the prompts to the attendance line and leave your child’s name, teacher’s name, and reason for absence. Be sure to do this for each and every day that your child is absent. When your child is absent, you can request make-up work/homework after a period of two consecutive days absent.

Absences for more than 10 consecutive days:

If your child is going to be absent from school for an extended period of time during which classes are in session (more than 10 consecutive days, for any reason other than a medical one), please contact the main office. It may be necessary for you to complete paperwork in order to ensure your child’s smooth reinstatement upon your return.

Vacations During the School Year

Vacations during the school year are discouraged. However, it is understood that sometimes family circumstances dictate otherwise. It is important to understand that even when advance notice is given, teachers cannot assemble each and every assignment in advance for your child to complete while he/she is on vacation. Although they might be able to provide a general overview of what they plan to cover, please understand that your child would have to make up a great deal of work upon your family’s return from vacation.

Attendance Policy



Excused Absences

An absence may be excused for the following reasons:

- Illness (a doctor's note may be required depending on the cumulative number of absences)
- Funeral/death in the family or other family emergency
- Religious observances pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14 through 16
- Court obligations
- Take Your Daughter or Son to Work Day
- Approved home instruction
- Exemptions as per Individualized Education Plans or other school-approved accommodation plans for individual disabilities
- Any field educational experiences that are pre-approved by the Principal

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/guardian and notify the counselor of concern.
2. School Counselor will reach out to parents with support.
3. Principal will reach out to the parent/guardian 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/guardian, 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 sent home notifying parents/guardians of the number of absences.

Any student who wishes to participate in an extracurricular activity (i.e., dances, clubs, athletics, intramurals, music shows, etc.) must be in attendance on the day of the activity for a minimum of **four hours**. Additionally, if the student is sent home sick by the school nurse, they cannot participate in any after school activities. Students who are suspended from school may not participate in any festivity or activity during their suspension time period.

Withdrawal / Student Transfer



If your family will be relocating, or if it is your intention to register your child to attend a private school, it is necessary for you to make an appointment to speak with the school secretary. The secretary will advise you of the procedures that need to be followed in order to ensure legal withdrawal and timely transfer of records.

Fees & Fines



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

Homework Policy



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/guardian**, 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 Student Progress



The purpose of reporting the educational progress of pupils is to:

1. Inform parent/guardians 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/guardians 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/Guardians 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.

Lunch and Recess



Lunch

Our food services are provided by Sodexo. Students who wish to purchase lunch will have daily lunch options: hot entree(s), cold entree (sandwich and/or salad), pizza, mozzarella sticks, and bagel bag. 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.htps.us.

Lunch POS Account

AMS uses the district's electronic lunch payment system. While cash is also acceptable, the choice of using the debit "Point of Service" ([Mealtime](#)) system is efficient, safe and precludes the need to send cash to school which is often misplaced. With the POS system, students who wish to buy lunch can do so with the use of a swipe card, which we safely keep at school, in order to pay for their lunches.

Additionally, please note the following;

- The use of this system is voluntary; students may still pay for lunch with cash.
- Deposits can be made online (note: includes a transaction fee) or via cash/check (made out to "Hillsborough Township Board of Education") sent into school. Cash/checks should be placed in an envelope and sent to your child's teacher who will turn it into the main office. Please *clearly* mark the envelope with your child's first and last name, student ID number, teacher's name, and "POS Program" - otherwise, the school will not be able to distinguish that this money is for the student's lunch account.
- Deposits by check must have "POS Program" written in the note section of the check along with your child's first and last name. Please make checks payable to the "**Hillsborough Township Board of Education**".
- Only school lunches, beverages and food a la carte items can be debited from the account. Snacks (ice cream, cookies, chips, etc.) cannot be debited from the account and require cash for payment.
- We ask that at least \$5.00 be placed in every child's account for emergencies.

Free/Reduced Lunch Application

Please visit the district website for more information regarding the [free and reduced lunch program](#) and application instructions.

Lunch and Recess (cont.)



AMS students receive a 20-minute lunch followed by, or preceded by, a 20-minute recess. Weather and conditions permitting, recess will be held outdoors so students need to dress accordingly.

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 Guidelines

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. During lunchtime, conversation should be conducted in reasonable, quiet voices. Students should refrain from yelling, shouting, or making any other loud noises.
4. Students are responsible for discarding their trash and checking the area where they are sitting for any excessive mess and disarray.
5. Students are expected to demonstrate respect for the lunch aides at all times. This includes addressing the aide as “Mrs. ---”, or “Miss ---”.

Recess Guidelines

1. Students should follow directions given by the recess aide the first time they are given.
2. Students should use the behavior expected in our hallways on their way to recess keeping in mind that there is learning continuing in the classrooms.
3. Students should play in designated areas only.
4. 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.
5. The use of foul or inappropriate language is not tolerated.
6. 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.
7. Students are expected to demonstrate respect for the recess aides at all times.

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

Classroom Celebration Policy



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)
- Provide goody bags with non-food items such as pencils, erasers, or stickers

Class Parties

In conjunction with your Home and School Association, classroom celebrations are limited to **three** per year, per classroom.

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.

Winter and End of Year: These two celebrations will be scheduled for 30 minutes. Food from a district-approved list can be served (avoid tree nuts, peanuts/peanut butter, foods high in sugar and fat). A list of food and product names being served at the event will be provided to the classroom teacher and school nurse (*three-day minimum notice*) for review and approval. Approved food donations should arrive in the original packaging with ingredients and nutritional information listed. Baked goods, soda or candy are NOT permitted. Drinks should be 100% fruit juice, milk or water.

Other Events

The only other times food can be served during the school year are "Icees" on Field Day and lunch during the 4th Grade Trip.

Health Office / School Nurse



Medications

- Students are not allowed to carry medication to and from school.
- All medications including OTC meds require a doctor's prescription and a signed parental consent form (a faxed copy is acceptable).
- Changes in the type, dosage and / or time of the medication must be in writing from the physician.
- The school will not provide students with aspirin or any other medication.

Health Office Protocol

- A child with a fever (temperature over 100 ° F) must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- If a doctor has prescribed an antibiotic for your child, they must be on the antibiotic for 24 hours before returning to school.
- If your child has experienced vomiting or diarrhea, they may return to school after being symptom-free, without medication, for 24 hours.

Please contact Kathy Hujber, Amsterdam School Nurse, at (908) 431-6600 ext 2239 with any questions or concerns.

Transportation and School Bus Guidelines



All children who attend Amsterdam Elementary School are currently eligible for district transportation (buses or vans). Information regarding the location and times of your child's designated bus stop is provided to parents via Genesis during the summer months. Should you need to contact the Transportation Office directly for any reason, please call (908) 431-6600, option 6.

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.

Students who fail to abide by the bus rules outlined above will be reported to the Principal, and parents/guardians 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/guardian. In the case of a bus suspension, transportation becomes the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

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 (908) 431-6600, option 4 then option 1.

ASHA (Amsterdam School and Home Association)



ASHA is a nonprofit parent/teacher organization whose membership includes parents, legal guardians and staff at Amsterdam Elementary School. ASHA's mission is to promote open communication and understanding between parents and staff so that our efforts will serve to enhance and maximize the education of every child while aiding them in achieving their highest potential.

ASHA aims to assist teachers, hold fundraising sales and events to supplement educational materials and experiences, support school and family social interaction, and provide a forum for sharing information on issues that impact our children. The team effort of a parent teacher organization offers the best possible learning environment for our children!

ASHA meets monthly to review activities that have taken place, plan upcoming committee projects, and share special programs.

Should you wish to contact our officers or have any questions regarding ASHA, you can make the connection by email at ashapresidents@gmail.com.

For more information, please visit the [ASHA website](#).

Expectations of Students



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

Expectations of Students (cont.)



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

This means that . . .

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 that . . .

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

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 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/Guardians are responsible for coming to school to pick up their child(ren) in these cases. Transportation is NOT provided.
- **Subsequent referrals could result in in-school or out of school suspension.**

Disciplinary Consequences (cont.)

** 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.

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.

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.

Dressing for School



With a focus on maintaining the best learning environment for all students, parents/guardians 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. No tank/spaghetti strap tops.
- 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
- mini skirts or short shorts (use the finger-tip rule - the hem of the shorts/skirt should fall below the fingertips when standing upright with hands at one's side)
- shoes that are inappropriate for play at recess or in physical education classes. No flip flops, shoes/sneakers with wheels.
- hats/caps/visors/bandanas

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 / Chromebooks



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.

Look for **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.

Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying



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.

Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (cont.)

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

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"> • Equal power – friends or acquaintances • Happens occasionally • Accidental • Equal emotional reaction between offender and victim • Offender not trying to get something • Offender shows remorse takes responsibility and an effort to solve the problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imbalance of power – no friendship • Repeated negative actions • Purposeful- Intent to harm. Usually unprovoked. • Strong emotional reaction on the part of the victim • Seeking power or control • Trying to gain material item(s). • Offender shows no remorse and often blames the victim and shows no effort to solve the problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May share some or all of the evidence listed in Violation of Code of Conduct. • Additionally, MUST meet the definition 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).

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.

Affirmative Action, Sexual Harassment, and Discrimination

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

**Michele Fisher, Principal
Local Affirmative Action Officer
(908) 431-6600 ext. 2136**

or

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

District Policies



District Policies

All policies are available on-line in PDF format at <http://www.https.us>. Click on the Board of Education menu and go to “**Policies and Regulations**”

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

- 5200 [ATTENDANCE](#)
- 8505 [SCHOOL NUTRITION](#)
- 5512 [HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING](#)
- 5751 [SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS](#)
- 5460 [HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION](#)
- 5331 [MANAGEMENT OF LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGENS IN SCHOOLS](#)
- 5750 [EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY](#)
- 5530 [SUBSTANCE ABUSE](#)