

HILLCREST HEIGHTS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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**The place where teachers believe and students
succeed!**



PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK
2011-2012

HILLCREST HEIGHTS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S **PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK**

Dear Parents and Guardians:

As a method of communicating the policies that govern Hillcrest Heights Elementary School as a part of the Prince George's County Public Schools System, this handbook has been devised to help you become aware of important information which will assist us in working together to ensure we have a safe and supportive school which mirrors the goals of our school system. This handbook provides basic information about the policies, procedures, and regulations which govern the operation of Hillcrest Heights Elementary School. It is important that both parents and students understand the contents of this booklet and work with the staff of Hillcrest Heights ES to meet and/or exceed the expectations for success in our building.

At any time during the school year, more specific information pertaining to school policy might be distributed. Hillcrest Heights Elementary school retains the right to amend this handbook, if necessary. Parents/Guardians will be given notification of such changes in writing.

Excited about having a collaborative year,

Traci Brown
Principal

MISSION STATEMENT

Hillcrest Heights Elementary School is committed to developing the skills, attitudes and abilities of all students. We focus on high expectations and academic achievement for all boys and girls by hiring staff that have a clear commitment to teaching and by offering teachers excellence through staff development. Teachers engage in performance-based instruction to ensure that children learn basic and higher-level thinking skills. There are many opportunities for students to use real life hands-on activities. Our school will strive to attain academic and cultural excellence for all as we prepare students to become productive citizens of the 21st century.

GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Registration:

If your child is new to Prince George's County Public Schools, you will need the following:

1. Birth certificate and social security card.
2. Transfer/withdrawal card from last school attended
3. Shot record (2 measles shots)
4. Proof of residency (current within 1 year)
 - Lease or rental agreement
 - Deed or mortgage payment statement
5. Last report card if in grades 1-5
6. Two (2) current telephone numbers
7. A recent (within 9 months) physical examination
8. Parent identification

You cannot use a Driver's License from Motor Vehicle Administration as proof of Residency.

Prince George's County School Policy states that parents providing a notarized statement as proof of residency must submit official documentation of address within 30 days. If proof of residency has not been received within 30 days, the student will be withdrawn from this school. For further inquiries, please call the Prince George's Board of Education at (301) 952-6000.

If your child is transferring from another Prince George's County Public School you will need the following:

1. Transfer/withdrawal form and report card from the last school attended

2. Shot records from the last school attended
3. Proof of residency (current within 1 year)
 - Lease for rental agreement
 - Deed or mortgage payment statement
4. Parent identification
5. Birth certificate with parents' name

If you need to withdraw your child(ren) from Hillcrest Heights Elementary School, please give the Registrar at least 24 hours notice, in order to accurately prepare your necessary documentation.

No person, on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, color, or national origin, is excluded from participation in, may be denied the benefit of, may be treated differently from another person, or may be otherwise discriminated against with regard to transfers.

B. School Hours:

School hours are from 7:45 am to 1:55 pm. For safety of our students we are asking parents **NOT TO HAVE THEIR CHILDREN ARRIVE BEFORE 7:30 am., UNLESS THEY ARE EATING BREAKFAST.** Breakfast begins at 7:20 am until 7:30 am. Please make every effort to have students in the building and ready to start their day by 7:45 am. Students, who are late repeatedly, miss very crucial instructional time. Students arriving to school late must receive a late slip from the main office.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH:

Students are given a 4-digit pin number in which they must memorize and input daily on the keypad located in the cafeteria during breakfast and lunch. Monies may be added to the student's account on a daily or weekly basis. New lunch menus are sent home the first week of every month.

Breakfast – Elementary	\$1.50
Reduced Price	\$.30
Lunch – Elementary	\$ 2.60
Reduced Price	\$.50

C. Suspension

1. Short – Term Suspension

A short-term suspension is a denial to a student of the right to attend school and to take part in any school function for any period of time up to and including five days.

a. Investigation

The Principal or his/her designee may invoke a short-term suspension only after investigating the misconduct and by following these procedures:

- (i) Notify the student of the charges(s)
- (ii) Accept information from persons having knowledge of the incident. The student involved shall have the opportunity to his/her side of the problem and if deemed appropriate by the Principal, to have persons give information on his/her behalf.
- (iii) Determine accuracy of the charge(s) based on this information. A short-term suspension shall be levied solely at the discretion of the building Principal based on the findings of the investigation.

b. Implementation

Once a Principal or his/her has determined that a short-term suspension is warranted, he/she shall proceed as follows:

- (i) The Principal or designee informs the student of the suspension and of the reason(s).
- (ii) The principal or designee notifies the parent(s)/guardian(s) by telephone or in person of the student's suspension.
- (iii) If the parent(s)/guardian(s) cannot be reached by telephone or in person, the effective time of the suspension shall be at the end of the day. In the meantime the student may be excluded from class but must remain at school under the supervision of the Principal or his/her designee.
- (iv) The principal prepares a "Notification of Pupil's Suspension" (PS-31). One copy is given to the student, one copy is mailed to the parent(s)/guardian(s), one copy is filed in the student's cumulative folder in the school, and one copy is forwarded to the Pupil Personnel Worker. (Note: The mailing of this form does not relieve school personnel from making every reasonable effort to establish direct contact with the parent(s)/guardian(s) to contact the school for a conference immediately. If there is no response from the parent(s)/guardian(s) within three days, second notification is sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s) by certified mail.
- (v) The student and the parents/guardians must be provided promptly with an opportunity for a conference with the Principal and appropriate personnel following the initiation of the suspension. Under conditions mutually agreed upon during the conference, the student may be readmitted to school by the Principal or his/her designee effective at such time as specified by the Principal but no later than five days from the effective date of the suspension.

2. Long-Term Suspension

A long-term suspension is a denial to a student of the right to attend school and to take part in any school function for any period of time in excess of five days but not to exceed the length of two semesters.

a. Investigation

The Principal or his/her designee may invoke a long-term suspension only after there has been compliance with the following procedures:

- (i) The Principal, upon determining initially that a long-term suspension may be appropriate, shall follow the same investigatory steps outlined for short-term suspension,

Section C.1. a; i.e., notifying the student of the charge(s); reviewing information from persons with knowledge of the incident, including the student; determining the accuracy of the charge(s).

b. Implementation

Once a Principal has determined that a request for a long-term suspension is warranted, he/she shall proceed as follows:

- (i) The Principal shall inform the student of the suspension and the reason(s) for it.
- (ii) The principal notifies the parent(s)/guardian(s) by telephone or in person of the student's suspension. If the parent(s)/guardian(s) cannot be reached by telephone or in person, the effective time of the suspension shall be the end of the day. In the meantime, the student may be excluded from class but must remain at school under the supervision of the Principal or his/her designee. If, however, the behavior of the student is in the judgment of the Principal, harmful to himself/herself or others, the Principal may reasonably order the student to leave the premises provided that in the judgment of the Principal the student is sufficiently mature. After such order to leave the premises is given, the student willfully disobeying same shall be considered a trespasser, and the Principal may request the appropriate person or agency to effect the student's removal from the school premises. The Principal prepares a request for long-term suspension (PS-32). One copy is given to the student, one copy is mailed to the parent(s)/guardian(s), and one copy is forwarded to the Pupil Personnel Worker.

Notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) should include a statement of his/her right to appeal after a suspension conference has been held and to whom he/she may appeal. (See Procedures for Short-Term Suspension.) Principals may choose to use a letter rather than a PS-32. (Note: The mailing of this letter of Form PS-23 does not relieve school personnel from making every reasonable effort to establish direct contact with the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the suspension is going into effect.)

- (iii) The principal must communicate his/her request for a long-term suspension to the appropriate Pupil Personnel Worker or appropriate Assistant Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Worker no later than the day following the first day of suspension. (The failure of the Principal to communicate his/her request within the aforementioned time span shall not serve to invalidate the request for a long-term suspension.) Prior to the expiration of the first five days of suspension, a preliminary review of the request of the Principal and the circumstances of the suspension shall be conducted and a tentative decision reached by the Pupil Personnel Worker. The student and his/her parent(s) shall be immediately informed of the tentative decision. If said preliminary review is not conducted within such five day period and/or a tentative decision is not reached, the student must be returned to school immediately, pending a final decision in the matter by the Pupil Personnel Worker.

- (iv) Concurrent with the preliminary review, the Pupil Personnel Worker commences a thorough investigation of the problem. School personnel will make available all data request during the course of this investigation. As soon as possible the Pupil Personnel worker discusses the case with the Assistant Supervisor of Pupil Personnel and arranges a conference to be held at the appropriate Staff Development Center. At the discretion of

the Assistant Supervisor of Pupil Personnel, the conference may be chaired by him/her instead of the Pupil Personnel Worker. Included in the conference must be the student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s), the Principal and the Pupil Personnel Worker. The Principal must bring the suspended student's cumulative record to this conference. Every effort will be made to resolve the matter at this conference. If a decision is made by the person chairing the conference that the suspension will exceed ten days, the duration of the suspension of the student, as well as the recommended steps to be taken by the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school personnel, consistent with budget availability to resolve the problem, and a notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the right to appeal shall be clearly presented to the parent(s)/guardian(s) at that time. Such information shall be further communicated to the parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing.

(v) The long-term suspension of any student in excess of ten days shall be subject to the review of the Division of Pupil Services at least once every increment of twenty days beyond the first ten. The purpose of the review shall be to ascertain if conditions have developed to permit the return of the student to full educational participation. At any time during the course of a long-term suspension parent(s)/guardian(s) and student shall be encouraged to submit relevant facts to the Division of Pupil Services.

D. Possession or Use of Weapons, Alcohol, or Controlled Substances

1. Possession or Use of Weapons

The Board of Education expresses the strongest belief that any student properly found with the possession or use of weapons in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct as defined in Section V.G.1.f. be expelled by the Superintendent of Schools.

2. Alcohol, Controlled Dangerous Substances, Controlled or Drug Paraphernalia

The Board of Education views the possession, use or distribution of alcohol, controlled dangerous substances, controlled or drug paraphernalia, as defined as such in Section V.G.1.h. of the Code of Student Conduct Handbook, heretofore, to warrant the following disciplinary actions:

a. Student Users

1st Offense: If a student has been found to have committed a first offense of using alcohol, controlled dangerous substances, and/or controlled or drug paraphernalia, the student shall be expelled, notwithstanding any mitigation circumstances excepting, however, that the superintendent of Schools or his designee may stay the Request for Expulsion, or Order of Expulsion if already issued, and readmit the student and at least one of his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) furnish satisfactory evidence of having enrolled in an appropriate school or community alcohol/drug counseling program in which they are scheduled to attend a minimum of two (2) sessions to be completed no later than four (4) weeks from the date of the student's readmission from the Superintendent and the completion of such minimum alcohol/drug counseling program, the

Request for Expulsion, or Order of Expulsion if already issued, shall be rescinded.

2nd Offense: If a student has been found to have committed a second offense under the provisions of this article, the student shall be expelled, notwithstanding any mitigating circumstances excepting, however, that the Superintendent of School or his/her designee may rescind the expulsion if after the student's absence from school for length of one full semester, the student exhibits documentation of satisfactory participation in an appropriate accredited alcohol/drug treatment program.

b. Student Possessors

Students having in their possession alcohol, controlled dangerous substances in a small quantity (i.e., quantities typically for individual use) or controlled or drug paraphernalia in any quantity shall be subject to the disciplinary guidelines outline for student users.

c. Student Distributors:

1st Offense: Expulsion procedures shall be instituted in accordance with Section V.F. of the Code of Student Conduct. If the student had been found to have committed a first distribution offense under the provisions of this document, the student shall be expelled, notwithstanding any mitigating circumstances.

d. Student Suspended

All students suspended for alcohol/controlled dangerous substance offenses are to be requested to reveal their source of the alcohol/controlled dangerous Substance to the Principal.

3. Acts of Gross Misconduct at Other Schools

The Principal of the school to which a student is regularly assigned shall request the Superintendent to cause the expulsion of a student who engages in any act of GROSS MISCONDUCT (as defined in) upon the grounds or within the building of another school at a time that such student is not regularly assigned to or authorized to be engage in an activity at such other school.

4. Group Fight

The Principal of the school to which a student is regularly assigned shall request the superintendent to cause the expulsion of a student who engages in a group fight as hereafter described.

A group fight shall mean any physical attack, threat thereof, or actual fighting by two or more students against one or more other students who are not at the time of such physical attack, threat thereof, or actual fighting members of the same group.

E. Academic Policies and Procedures

1. Curriculum

- a. All curricula in the Prince George's County Public Schools are guided by the Maryland State Department of Education. Curriculum guidelines are available online.
- b. Education at Hillcrest Heights Elementary School attends to and develops the whole person and teaches students how to be productive members of a contemporary society.
- c. The core academic areas are Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies with Music, Physical Education, Health, Media, Computer Education and Communication Arts as communication Arts as complements to the core.
- d. The Reading/Language Arts deals with the development of literacy. The program integrates the processes of reading, writing and speaking students compose language to express, create, and synthesize knowledge. Through reading and listening, students interpret language to derive meaning, to stimulate thoughts and feelings, and to learn. These four processes, listening, speaking, reading and writing are the vehicles for communication that provide the foundation for school success. Presently, the county is using Houghton Mifflin's, Invitations to Literacy Reading Series.

2. Comprehension Toolkit

- a. Along with our already implemented reading program, Hillcrest Heights has invested in a reform model to enhance our student's success in reading. This reform model is the Comprehension Toolkit. The program emphasizes prevention and early intervention to anticipate and solve any learning problems. The Toolkit provides schools with research-based curriculum materials, extensive professional development in proven strategies for instruction, assessment, and classroom management; one-to-one tutoring for primary grade children who need it; and active family support approaches.
- b. In Mathematics, students learn to value mathematics; become confident in their ability to do mathematics; to communicate mathematically; and to reason mathematically. Students are taught abstract and concrete computation concepts and methods, practical application of operations, geometrical and quantitative relationships, measurements, critical thinking, logic and mathematical vocabulary.
- c. Science is a human activity through which problems and questions dealing with natural phenomena can be identified and defined, and solutions proposed and tested. Our science curriculum is fostered by the use of the 5 E's lesson plan (Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, and Evaluate). Using these components to effectively plan hands-on lessons will provide our students with the tools necessary to be successful in a global society which is technology savvy.

F. The Role of Parents and Guardians:

Parents/Guardians have a serious obligation first and foremost of providing for and supervising the education of their children. Parents/Guardians should create a family atmosphere filled with love and respect for people in which a well-rounded personal and social education is fostered. Therefore, the family is the first school for developing values, attitudes and love for humanity.

Parents and school staff must work together to develop and maintain positive, supportive relationships with one another as a means of setting the tone for success for students. Hillcrest Heights is the place where ‘teachers believe and students succeed’, but you, as the parent, are a key ingredient to making your child career and college ready. Teamwork makes the dream work!!

Promotion and Retention: The indicators below are offered as reference for educators when making decisions about promotion and retention of students. These indicators are provided for selected grade levels and are not meant to be totally inclusive

Kindergarten – A combination of the following factors may suggest another year in Kindergarten may be appropriate for the student:

1. Exhibits significant delays in language and communication skills as indicated by early identification screening procedures.
2. Demonstrates very short attention span, exhibited by much difficulty attending activities and tasks and following simple directions.
3. The student is unable to demonstrate mastery of the required skills for kindergarten promotion.

Grade One and Two – A combination of the following factors may suggest that another year in grade one may be appropriate for the student:

1. Remains at an emergent reading level in spite of interventions being administered.
2. Has not mastered learning names and sounds of letters, and simple sound blending skills after interventions were in place.
4. Experiences difficulty with demonstrating mastery of handwriting objectives.
5. Demonstrates poor skill development on mathematics objectives for grade one or two even when using manipulative aids and interventions.
6. Cannot work independently even for limited periods of time.
7. Exhibits much difficulty in following single and/or multi step directions.
8. The student is unable to demonstrate mastery of the required skills for 1st or 2nd grade promotion.

Grade Three and Four – A combination of the following factors may suggest that another year in grade three may be appropriate for the student

1. In spite of interventions provided, the student lacks fluency and/or demonstrates poor reading comprehension and is reading at a level lower than the level required at the beginning second grade.
2. Demonstrates poor skill development on mathematics objectives for grade three even when using manipulative aids and interventions.
3. Experience much difficulty with written communication with interventions.
4. Demonstrates much difficulty following two and three part directions with interventions in place.
5. The student is unable to demonstrate mastery of the required skills for 3rd or 4th grade promotion.

Grade Five – A combination of the following factors may suggest that another year in grade five may be appropriate for the student:

1. Is not yet reading fluently with comprehension at an intermediate level, in spite of interventions provided.
2. Demonstrates poor skills development on mathematics objectives for grade five even when using manipulative aids and other interventions.
3. Experiences extreme difficulty with completing tasks with interventions in place.
4. Experiences extreme difficulty working independently with interventions in place.
5. The student is unable to demonstrate mastery of the required skills for 5th grade promotion.



Thank you for taking the time to read the Parent/Student Handbook for Hillcrest Heights Elementary School. Please see Administration if you have any questions regarding the contents of this book.

HAND IN HAND...TOGETHER, WE CAN!