Hamilton County

Elementary School

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2023 - 2024



**School Times**

8:10 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.

*“Together we will Rise to Excellence”*

**The Principal’s Message**

Welcome back to the 2022-2023 school year! The administration, faculty, and staff of Hamilton County Elementary School are looking forward to a positive, learning focused and exciting school year. We have elevated expectations that **ALL** children can learn and exhibit social skills appropriately. We are confident that the education we provide at Hamilton County Elementary School is educationally sound and focused to ensure life-long learning for all our students. We are committed to improving every aspect of school to make every child’s school experience a success. We encourage all parents and family involvement in the education of their child or children. Please visit or contact us for any suggestions or concerns. With your support, we can continue “***Ensuring a Successful Future for Every Student***.”

*Kathy Griffin*, Principal of Hamilton County Elementary School

*Charles Claridy*, Assistant Principal, Hamilton County Elementary School

*Erica McCoy*, Assistant Principal, Hamilton County Elementary School

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**Mission Statement**

“***Ensuring a Successful Future for Every Student***.”

**Vision Statement**

Investing in children today to shape their future tomorrow.

**Goals**

The goals that we have for ALL students who attend Hamilton County Elementary School are:

1. Receive a quality education in a safe learning environment.
2. Demonstrate learning gains in Reading and in Math.
3. Engage in Science, Social Studies, and Civics.

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**District School Board**

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**Registration and New Students**

All students entering HCES for the first time must present the following:

1. Original Birth Certificate
2. Physical Examination from Florida (Form DH3040) completed at least 12 months before the child's school entry date.
3. Certificate of Immunization from the State of Florida (Form DH680)
4. **Two** Proofs of Address documentation for the school zone (which may include a water, gas, or light bill, lease, or notarized deed)
5. Previous school records must be received before a new student will be enrolled with the exception of students who have a military, migrant, or homeless status.

**Arrival at School and Tardiness - Start time is 8:10 a.m.; Dismissal time is 2:50 p.m.**

Students must be in the classroom by 8:20 a.m. or they will be considered tardy. After 8:20 a.m., students who are tardy must report to the receptionist’s desk to obtain a tardy pass before going to class. Continued tardiness will be referred to truancy for intervention and support. Regular attendance is a parent’s responsibility as defined by Florida State Law. **Excessive tardiness may affect academic performance.**

**Car Riders**

Car riders should be dropped off in front of the school. Drop-Off begins at 7:45 a.m. When we have clear weather, the students should be dropped off in front of the cafeteria. Drivers should pull up beside the sidewalk, allowing students to exit the vehicle on the right side to avoid staff or students having to walk through traffic. When it is raining, drivers should pull up in front of the administration building, allowing students to exit the vehicles on the right side and walk to the middle entry doors. Students will remain in the cafeteria until 8:08 a.m. when they will be released by grade level to report to their classrooms.

In the afternoon, car riders will be released to the cafeteria at the end of the day. Students will wait in the cafeteria, separated by grade level until they are called to exit the building. Students are expected to walk from the cafeteria, exiting the school, and then walk to the vehicle that is picking them up. Students are monitored as they walk from the cafeteria to the pick-up area. Parents and/or Guardians should always remain in their vehicles during the pick-up process. Parents/Guardians should then exit the school parking lot in an orderly manner, observing a safe speed.

We ask that drivers remain respectful and adhere to district and school policies anytime they are on school property.

**Early Check-out**

For security reasons, children may not be picked up from the classroom. All parents must report to the receptionist to sign their child out of school. Students will be released only to the parent or guardian listed on the check-out form unless the school has been notified **in writing** with a change of someone else picking up or signing a student out of school. Students must be in school for four hours to be counted present. Students with excessive early check-outs will be referred to truancy. **Students WILL NOT be released for early check-out after 2:20 p.m. due to dismissal safety and procedures; parents will be directed to wait for official dismissal if they attempt to check a student out after the designated time. If a student is checked out, they should exit campus as soon as possible.**

**Attendance**

Florida Statute 1003.21 requires that all students who have attained the age of six (6) years old by February 1 of any school year or who are older than six (6) years of age but who have not attained the age of sixteen (16) years of age attend school regularly during the school year unless otherwise eligible for exemption. Florida Statute 1003.26 also requires that

parents/guardians justify to the school each absence, excused or unexcused, to prevent a pattern of non-attendance from developing. Students who have continuous absences or early check-outs, excused or unexcused, will be referred to truancy. **Three or more days tardy,** **excused, or unexcused, will impact Perfect Attendance status.**

**Excused Absences**

Absences will be excused due to an illness, medical/dental, death of an immediate family member, religious reasons, or with principal’s approval. Parent must provide documentation for the absence, or the absence will be unexcused. Students will be given one (1) day to make up work for each day they are absent. Excessive absences (3 days or more) must have a doctor’s statement.

**Unexcused Absences / Truancy**

An unexcused absence is an absence from school or class without appropriate documentation, excessive tardies, and /or out-of-school suspension. Three or more days tardy will impact Perfect Attendance status. School attendance is important; please ensure that students are at school each day.

**Code of Conduct and Dress Code for Students**

Refer to the Hamilton County School District Code of Conduct for Guidelines at www.hamiltonfl.com

**General Dress Code Requirements**

This general dress code applies to students from the time the student arrives on school property, which includes the buses and the physical campus, until the end of the school day and at all school activities during the school day. Exceptions to the dress code may be made by the principal for field trips or other special activities.

**Girls:** The dress code for girls is a long or short-sleeved shirt of any color. Shirts/blouses/dresses must cover midriff, back, and sides always; and must be fastened with no visible cleavage or undergarments. Shorts/skirts/jumpers/skorts/dresses shall be worn no shorter than three inches above the kneecap. Leggings, tights, or hosiery can be worn underneath dresses, skirts, or shorts, or be covered by a shirt that is at least thigh length.

**Boys**: The dress code for boys is a long or short-sleeved shirt of any color. Clothing must be the appropriate size for this student, not be oversized or undersized. The garment's waist shall be worn so that it is worn at the waist and not below it. A student may not wear baggy/saggy pants exposing any under garments, or bedroom pants.

**Shoes**

Shoes must be safe and appropriate. Students must wear athletic shoes during physical education activities. A student may not wear bedroom slippers, bubble slides, or shoes with wheels. A manufacturer’s logo/image is acceptable on all footwear. The students may not wear platform shoes, heels higher than one inch at HCES or cleats. No slides or open-toe shoes are acceptable at HCES.

**Dress Code for Visitors / Parents**

Visitors and parents are requested to dress appropriately (ensure all body parts are covered/ no tops that are see though) when making school visits.

**Progress Reports and Report Cards**

Academic and Behavior Reports will be issued to all students according to the District Calendar. To view the District Calendar visit www.hamiltonfl.com. Progress reports will be issued to students to be taken home at the mid-point of the nine-week grading period. Report cards will be sent home via the students at the end of the nine-week grading period.

**Academic Evaluation Procedures**

Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, First Grade, Second Grade, Third Grade, Fourth Grade, and Fifth Grade students’ academic evaluation will be based on the B.E.S.T Standards with skill progression documentation.

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| Numerical Grading Scale | \*Student Conduct Scale |
| A 100-90  B 89-80  C 79-70  D 69-60  F 59-0 | S – Satisfactory  N- Needs Improvement  U- Unsatisfactory  \*Conduct does not impact academic grades |

**Homework**

Homework provides additional practice, thus increasing the amount of time students are actively engaged in learning and extending time on skills. Homework is the time students spend outside the classroom in assigned activities to practice, reinforce, or apply newly acquired skills and knowledge and learn necessary skills of independent study. Research shows it is an effective way to increase student personal responsibility, individual accountability, and leads to increased communication between parents and the school. Furthermore, we believe homework encourages parent awareness of student learning.

**Class Assignments**

According to ss.1003.3101 and 1012.42, F.S., schools are required to notify parents of transfer requests that are denied, along with the reasons for the denial. An explanation of the transfer process must be included in the student handbook or similar publication, and this **does not** give parents the right to choose a specific teacher.

**Field Trips / Off Campus Activities / Chaperones**

To participate in field trips/off campus activities, students must have **met** academic and behavioral requirements. Parents will receive notices when a field trip/activity has been planned. This notice will include information on the planned trip, the cost, and if needed, the request of chaperones. All payments must be submitted by the due date. ***NO REFUNDS WILL BE PROVIDED ON ANY MONEY COLLECTED!*** In addition, any non-school adult participating in an off-campus activity must assume responsibilities for all personal costs and personal transportation. The school will not collect monies for non-school adult charges.

**To serve as a chaperone, a parent or community member MUST be a School Board Approved Volunteer.** When chaperones are requested, we ask that parents adhere to the following guidelines: please do not invite or bring other siblings or other school-aged children to participate, plan to be responsible for a group of children for the entire trip and support the stated behavior expectations of the Code of Conduct.

**Conferences**

We encourage positive communication between our parents and our staff. Please contact the school and/or teacher to set up a conference date and time that is convenient for you and your child’s teacher. The administration supports an Open-Door policy - please visit or call as needed. The phone number for our receptionist is (386)792-8000.

**Classroom Observations /Volunteering**

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to arrange an observation in their child’s classroom or become a school volunteer. As a courtesy to our efforts to ensure that education is our top priority, we ask that parents do not interrupt the educational flow within our classroom. A classroom visit can be arranged with an acknowledgment and understanding of the purpose

for observations—prior notice is required. The schedule and placement of the volunteer will be arranged by the principal or designee.

**School Visitors**

For the protection of the students and security in the school, any person visiting during the school day will be screened using the **RAPTOR SYSTEM**. Please bring a state issued form of identification for the screening procedure. No student will be permitted to leave the building with a visitor without following the established check-in protocol. Please obtain approval for classroom visits and observations before entering the educational environment.

**Emergency Information**

To ensure that school staff can contact parents/guardians during an emergency, please keep all contact information, which includes phone numbers and addresses current and up to date.

1. Parent or Guardian Names
2. Current Home Address
3. Home Phone and parent(s) work phone (which should be connected and working)
4. Emergency phone number of a friend and/or relative (which should be connected and working)
5. Physician’s name and phone number
6. Medical Alert Information
7. Authorized person(s) allowed to check a student out

**Medical Information**

Parents should make the school aware of any medical issues their child might have and provide any supporting documentation from a physician. In case of an emergency while at school, parents will be notified promptly.

**Illnesses**

If a student becomes too ill to remain in class, school personnel will contact the parents/guardians by phone to come and pick up the child. If a child is ill, please do not send them to school. A student who contracts a contagious disease or condition such as pink eye, chickenpox, ringworm, impetigo, pediculosis (head lice), or COVID-19 will be sent home from school with the expectation that the condition or infection is treated or corrected in a timely manner to minimize their absenteeism. If a child needs medication to be administered at school, an Authorized for Medication Form (HCS 8023) must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian and the assigning physician. The form is available in the nurse’s office. School personnel are not allowed by law to administer any type of medication without proper documentation.

**Phone Calls and Messages**

Students will only be allowed to make outgoing phone calls in an emergency. Additionally, messages are **NOT** given to students to call home.

**Transportation**

**Bus Rider:** Bus transportation is provided to all students who live within Hamilton County. For any further information concerning transportation not provided here, please contact a member of the transportation department 792-7900. Changes in student transportation will only be made with a **written notice signed by the parent or legal guardian.** **NO** **phone requests will be accepted.** The student must provide parent notes about transportation change to the receptionist at the start of the school day. Parents need to ensure they sign the written notice with the date(s) of the change and provide a working contact number for verification purposes.

**Car Riders:** Parent pick up and drop off will be at the designated area.

**School Breakfast and Lunch**

All students are served free breakfast and lunch. Breakfast is served in the student’s classroom at 8:10 am. Lunch is served in the cafeteria at the assigned grade-level time. **No food from outside vendors is allowed.**

**Personal Electronic Devices and Cellular Telephones**

Display or use of personal electronic devices or cell phones for non-academic activities will be subject to disciplinary actions according to the Hamilton County Code of Conduct. While visiting the school, parents are asked to ensure cell phones do not cause a disruption to the educational environment. This includes refraining from taking pictures of your child or any other child/children.

**PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) / SAC (School Advisory Committee)**

The PTO and the SAC are integral parts of the total school program. We request parents and community members to become involved in our PTO and SAC.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Under the 1943 Federal Law 319 U.S. 624 (West Virginia State BD of Education v. Barnette), students have the right not to participate-by saying or standing-in the pledge. Hamilton County Elementary Schools abides by the ruling and staff have been instructed that under no circumstances should they attempt to persuade students to refrain from exercising their right of nonparticipation, question students for their nonparticipation, or characterize option out as misconduct or unpatriotic. In accordance with the law, no disciplinary or other retaliatory measures will be taken toward any student for nonparticipation in reciting the pledge. Students must remain quiet and still during the pledge if they choose not to participate.

**All policies in this handbook are subject to change due to the actions of the Florida Legislature, the Florida Board of Education, the state and federal courts, the School Board of Hamilton County, and the district or school administration.**

**Parents/students will be notified when such changes occur. The changes will be posted on the district home page www.hamiltonfl.com**