

# Hickory Elementary School

Home of the Hawks  
2015 - 2016

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Principal

Ms. Sharae N. Brown  
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Mrs. Robin Phillips  
Lead Secretary

Mrs. Peggy Burney  
Attendance Secretary

Mrs. Sandy Phillips  
School Health Advisor

Mrs. Roxanna Zook  
Guidance Counselor

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## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students:

It is my pleasure to welcome you to Hickory Elementary – home of the Hawks. The staff at Hickory Elementary is dedicated to providing the best educational program possible for our students. We are responsible for making learning a pleasant and rewarding experience for students. In addition, students must assume certain responsibilities for their education. Parents are also asked to collaborate with our school to assure the best education possible for their child.

The pages of the handbook are filled with important information regarding school policy and procedures. Parents and students should review the contents together. We feel that open and clear communication between school and home is important to the success of our educational program. If you have any questions, please call the school office.

The HES Student Planner was designed to assist your child in organizing his/her daily, weekly, and long-term assignments. This planner will improve your child's organizational skills and serve as a helpful reference for parents who seek to provide academic support at home. Hickory Elementary parents are our partners in the important job of educating the children of this community.

We welcome your participation and support this school year and solicit your membership in the PTA. Working together, we will be able to reach our collective and individual goals and celebrate the achievements of our students.

## Mission Statement

Hickory Elementary School, in partnership with parents and community resources, strives to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all children where differentiated learning experiences enable the students to achieve high goals, develop critical thinking skills, contribute to society, and become life-long learners in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

The faculty and staff at HES believe that all children can learn and that learning is a lifelong endeavor. Our fundamental purpose is to ensure that all our children acquire a firm foundation in the basic academic skills of English, math, science, and history. We also want to develop in children a love for reading books, increase their knowledge in technology, emphasize the need for daily physical exercise, and instill an appreciation for music and art. By doing this, we hope to help students continue learning throughout their lives. We believe children learn best in a school where achievement is emphasized, high expectations are held for students and staff, an orderly atmosphere is maintained, and appropriate instructional strategies are clearly defined.

Our teachers view each child as an individual who has unique needs and who learns according to his/her own interests, abilities, and experiences. Academic progress is monitored and outstanding performance is acknowledged. The desire to learn is fostered in every child, and students are encouraged to recognize that they have a responsibility for successful learning.



# HICKORY ELEMENTARY STUDENT HANDBOOK

## SCHOOL HOURS

School hours are from 7:50 a.m. until 2:19 p.m. each day. Students should not arrive earlier than 7:35 a.m. or remain on school grounds later than 2:30 p.m. unless they are participating in a supervised school activity. Supervision will not be provided for students who arrive before 7:35 a.m. or remain later than 2:30 p.m. These procedures are designed for the safety and well-being of your children.

## ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Children typically ride the bus to and from school. Buses utilize the bus ramp located at the rear of the building. Parents who bring their children to school should drop them off at the north end of the school building directly behind the school marquee between 7:35 a.m. and 7:50 a.m. Children who arrive after 7:50 a.m. must be escorted by a parent to the office to receive a tardy slip.

For dismissal, parents who wish to pick their children up should send a note in with the child or arrive prior to 2:00 p.m. The Alternate Bus and Bus Stop Permission Slip must be filled out completely for all bus changes. This form can be found on the back of the "Note to the Teacher" pad or on the CPS website under Pupil Transportation. In the event of an emergency, administrative approval is required for all changes made over the phone. If parents wish to pick-up a child every day, one note should be sent in for the duration of the school year. Unfortunately, we are unable to get children off of the bus if we have not been notified by 2:00 p.m. due to the tight schedules our buses must follow to get to their next school. If we have not received a note, we will follow our normal dismissal plan for your child.

## ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Hickory Elementary is required by the Code of Virginia and the local school board to enforce laws that are related to truancy and excessive absences. The law states that every elementary school aged child is required to attend school every day and is to remain in school for the whole day.

Recently, those laws have increased the school's responsibility to make sure children are in school. The law requires the school to take an active role in the enforcement of school attendance. This law requires schools to develop a plan of action with the parent for students who are not in school and whose attendance is excessive and/or unexcused.

Absences from school are categorized as either excused or unexcused. The Chesapeake School Board has defined an excused absence to include any of the following:

Sickness of a student, medical appointments, severe illness or death in the family, exposure to contagious disease, religious holidays, or extenuating circumstances such as fire, accident, or extremely inclement weather. Absences other than those listed above will be recorded as unexcused absences.

Being on time and regular attendance are important to your child's success. This lays the foundation for good work habits that your child will carry into adulthood. When a student is absent, there are many missed educational opportunities. Written work can be made up, but missed instructional time cannot. Instruction, including explanations, demonstrations, discussion, experiments, and group practice continues whether your child is present or absent. Therefore, try to schedule doctor and dental appointments for after school hours and take family vacations when school is not in session.

## REPORTING ABSENCE

Parents are required to notify the school in writing of the reason for any absences. Notes for absences should include the dates as well as the reason and should be submitted within 2 days of the child's return.

# HICKORY ELEMENTARY STUDENT HANDBOOK

## EXCESSIVE ABSENCES/TRUANCY PROCEEDURES

- ❑ After five unexcused absences, the school counselor will contact the parent and student, obtain an explanation for the absences, and make the parent aware of the consequences of continued unexcused non-attendance.
- ❑ After six unexcused absences, the principal or assistant principal will schedule a conference with the parent within 10 days of the last unexcused absence in order to resolve the causes for the unexcused absences.
- ❑ After seven unexcused absences, the student and parent will be referred to Truancy Court through the offices of Student Services. The documentation will be reviewed and forwarded to the court for legal action.
- ❑ Children who miss 30 or more school days, either excused or unexcused, are candidates for retention due to large amount of instructional time lost unless extenuating circumstances have been discussed with the principal.

## TARDY TO SCHOOL

Students are to be in school and in the classroom before the start of school. School starts at 7:50 a.m. Students tardy to school must go to the office and obtain an admittance slip to class. Excessive tardies are also subject to truancy procedures.

## MAKE-UP WORK

Unfortunately, illnesses do occur and children who are sick should not be in school. Because sick students usually cannot complete their school work until they have recovered and effective instruction requires continuous adjustments, it is the general policy that missed work is given when students return to school. Students will be permitted to make up work regardless of the reason for the absences.

- ❑ It is the student's and parent's responsibility to ask for all work missed when absent.
- ❑ Students returning from each unexpected absence have three (3) school days to complete the missed work to receive full credit. Exceptions may be made for extended absences.
- ❑ When a student is absent on the day of a test, but was in school the day before the test, the test will be taken when the student returns to school.

## HOMEWORK

The Chesapeake School Board considers homework to be an important component in the learning process. It is a natural link between the home and the school. Appropriately planned homework assignments extend the time in which formal learning can take place. Correctly monitored, homework helps children learn how to work independently and how to be accountable. Parents should provide an established routine for completing homework and then check that it is done correctly. Homework must take precedence over extracurricular activities.

Hickory Elementary teachers adhere to the following homework guidelines:

- ❑ Students will have homework.
- ❑ Homework assignments will be evaluated and returned as soon as possible to students. Non-written homework assignments may be assessed by students' participation in class discussions.
- ❑ Evaluation of homework by the teacher does not necessarily require the "grading" of each assignment. The teacher may use check marks, stickers, or written comments as examples of how to evaluate homework.
- ❑ Homework should be reasonable in length. On some nights there will be more homework than at other times. School Board guidelines are as follows:
  - Primary grades (K-2) --approximately 20 to 45 minutes per night
  - Intermediate grades (3-5) -- approximately 30 to 60 minutes per night
- ❑ In each intermediate classroom, homework assignments will be clearly displayed in a specific location. Students will know where to look in the classroom in order to copy down the day's homework assignments. At the primary levels, teachers may place homework in an assigned location or may send home a homework bulletin.
- ❑ Homework will not be used as a disciplinary action.

# HICKORY ELEMENTARY STUDENT HANDBOOK

## SYNERGY

Synergy is a new student information system that Chesapeake Public Schools is implementing this school year which will replace EdLine among other things. More information will be distributed to parents once the program is up and running.

## GRADING POLICY

In assigning grades to student work and in evaluating student performance the following guidelines will be followed:

- Teachers evaluate student progress frequently and use a variety of methods including tests, projects, homework, classwork, and class participation.
- A minimum of one graded activity per week for each subject taught that week is the goal.
- Grades on tests, homework, and class work may be in a numerical or letter format. Teachers may also reward student performance on papers with the use of check marks, stickers, smiley faces, etc.
- Not all work completed by a student carries the same weight. Teachers develop a plan for grading classwork, projects, tests, and homework. Some student work, such as major tests, carries more weight in the averaging of grades for the end of the marking period.
- Teachers use the evaluation process (grading) as a diagnostic tool for identifying skills mastered and skills requiring re-teaching as well as for assigning grades for subjects taught. On classwork, homework and tests, children are required to write all answers in complete sentences unless directed otherwise by the teacher. This is an important goal and students begin to work on this important skill even in kindergarten.
- Grades reflect student achievement (how much of the material has been mastered by the student) not ability, conduct, or work habits. Areas such as handwriting, neatness, and conduct are evaluated separately and are not used in deriving a grade for subject content. Classwork or homework assignments, if not legible, may be returned to the student to be redone.
- Teachers inform parents of students' progress at least once every four and a half weeks, either by an interim progress report or the report card.
- Teachers will not assign a grade of zero to student work. The grade of zero will be used to reflect non-performance of an academic responsibility only. It will not be used for work where the student's name is missing.
- Grades reflect individual and honest effort. Therefore, students who cheat will receive a grade of zero and possible disciplinary action.

### Grading Marks for K - 2

O – Outstanding  
S - Satisfactory  
P - Progressing  
N - Needs improvement  
U – Unsatisfactory  
/ - Not evaluated at this time

### Grading Scale for 3 - 5

93 – 100	A
90 – 92	A-
87 – 89	B+
83 – 86	B
80 – 82	B-
77 – 79	C+
73 – 76	C
70 – 72	C-
67 – 69	D+
64 – 66	D
Below 64	E

# HICKORY ELEMENTARY STUDENT HANDBOOK

## STUDENT RECOGNITION

Our faculty and staff are committed to recognizing our children for their many varied accomplishments through our Hawk Achievers program. Children are recognized in these categories: academic achievement, academic improvement/effort, attendance, behavior, and citizenship.

### Academic

- Superintendent's Honor Roll – all A's
- Principal's Honor Roll – All A's and B's
- Honor Roll- B Average (with nothing below a C)
- Principal's Wall of Fame – One student per class each Tues.  
(Teacher will choose depending on student effort)
- BUG Club – (Bringing Up Grades) students who bring up at least 1 grade and maintain others

### Attendance

- Perfect Attendance – no absences, less than 5 tardies (each 9 week period)

### Citizenship

- Student of the Month – chosen by teacher for good behavior
- “Caught Being Good” – chosen by all staff members at any time
- Resource Class of the Month – chosen by the resource teacher dependent upon group behavior
- Homework Hawks – students who turn in homework daily
- Hawk Hero Award – students receive all S's on Work Habits on Report Cards

## DRESS CODE

The Chesapeake School Board expects *all students to dress in a manner appropriate for the promotion of learning*. Student appearance shall not be disrespectful, indecent, disruptive to the school environment, or dangerous to the health and welfare of students.

- Students may not wear apparel or accessories that pose a health or safety hazard, such as flip flops, baggy pants, or tops with spaghetti straps.
- Clothes must be worn as they were designed to be worn (i.e. buttoned, zipped or belted tight enough to prevent them from falling and/or exposing under garments).
- No apparel or personal belongings are permissible that advocate violence, tobacco, alcohol, drug use, gang activities/ membership; that use profanity or obscenities; that display a weapon; or that reflect adversely on persons due to race, gender, creed, or intellectual abilities.
- Beach attire, bare midriffs, or revealing clothing, such as short-shorts, tank-tops, pajamas or bicycle pants may not be worn to school.
- Hats may not be worn in the building.
- Appropriate footwear is required for PE and recess for safety reasons.

If there is a question about a particular item of apparel, the student or parent should contact a school administrator for a decision. When a student is in violation of the above guidelines, all efforts will be made to correct the situation at school. However, if an acceptable alternative cannot be found at school, parents will be notified to bring in appropriate clothing/shoes. Students who consistently violate dress code standards will not be permitted to participate in class with their peers.

## SCHOOL BUS RULES

Riding the bus is a privilege which carries with it certain responsibilities. Students are expected to display proper conduct on the bus as outlined in the Chesapeake Public Schools Regulations for Pupils Riding School Busses. Misbehavior on the bus may result in bus riding privileges being suspended.

## SCHOOL BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

Our school does serve breakfast and lunch. As of press time, breakfast is available for \$1.25 and includes an entrée, a fruit choice, and milk. Lunch is available for \$2.40 and includes one entrée, choice of 1 or 2 sides and/or choice of milk. Milk is \$.55 separately.

Parents are encouraged to take advantage of our online prepayment system, Mealpayplus.com. The children's lunch accounts can be monitored free of charge. Parents can see what each child purchases

everyday. Additionally, for a small fee, parents can also pay for your child's meals online as well.

## **HICKORY ELEMENTARY STUDENT HANDBOOK**

### **INVITATIONS TO PRIVATE EVENTS/FUNCTIONS**

Please note that only invitations and event flyers approved under the guidelines of Chesapeake Public Schools' Office of Student Services may be sent home with students. This includes birthday invitations. Invitations to private functions must be exchanged outside of school. Unfortunately, privacy laws prevent our staff from releasing this personal information including contact information to students and parents.

### **PTA MEMBERSHIP**

Research shows that children whose parents are actively involved in their children's education achieve more. We encourage each family to show your support of your child's education and our school by joining the PTA and becoming ACTIVE members.

### **PTA BOARD**

President – Mrs. Christina Bass

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President – Mrs. Vania O'Keefe

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – Mr. Heath Miller

Secretary – Mrs. Jennifer Zieg

Treasurer – Mrs. Debbie Parsons

### **SCHOOL CALENDAR**

Below is the official school calendar. Please see HES's website page for the most up-to-date information and school events.

September 8	First Day of School
October 15	Early Release-Elementary Only
November 9	End of 1 <sup>st</sup> Grading Period
November 10	Teacher Workday – No School for Students
November 11	Veteran's Day – No School
November 25	Early Release at 12:19 for Thanksgiving Holiday
November 26-27	Thanksgiving Holidays
December 18	Last Day of School before Winter Break
December 21-January 1	Winter Break
January 4	Schools Reopen
January 18	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – No School
January 29	Early Release at 12:19
February 1	Early Release at 12:19- Last Day of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grading Period
February 2	Teacher Workday/In-Service Day – No School for Students
February 15	Presidents' Day – No School
March 10	Early Release-Elementary Only
March 28-April 1	Spring Break
April 13	Early Release Day-End of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grading Period
May 25	Memorial Day
June 16	Early Release at 12:19 – Last Day of School