

# Student Policies and Procedures

Dear Parents/Guardians:

This handbook is intended to serve as a reference to the day-to-day policies/procedures of Scotchtown Hills Elementary School.

The staff is confident you will find the school instructional program exciting and challenging, assuring quality and equity for all. Many hours have been spent creating a curriculum that continues to enhance instruction through the incorporation of critical thinking skills collaborative decision making, cooperative learning infusion of multicultural education, thematic units with performance assessments. The success of our students will heighten as we continue our partnership in this educational endeavor. The staff encourages your active participation.

Sincerely,

Tracie Prevost, Principal



## **SCHOOL HOURS**

7:45 a.m. - 1:55 p.m.

For all Pre-Kindergarten thru Sixth grade classes

# **ATTENDANCE**

We encourage all students to be in attendance and on time each and every day, unless they are ill. We are required to monitor attendance very closely. The following is a synopsis of the law in our state:

## **STATE OF MARYLAND COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAW**

### **DUTY OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN**

Each person who has under his control a child who is six (6) years old or older and under 16 shall see that the child attends school regularly.

### **UNLAWFUL ABSENCE**

Unlawful absence and/or truancy is defined as the act of a pupil being absent from school for a day or any portion of a day or from any individual class or portion of a class for any reason other than those defined as a lawful excuse for absence from school.

### **LAWFUL ABSENCE**

- Death in immediate family.
- Illness of the child – A physician's certificate will be required for continuous absence for illness.
- Quarantine - A physician's certificate certifying the time of absence necessary as a result of the quarantine.
- Court summons.
- Violent storms - Only those conditions of weather that would endanger the health or safety of the child when in transit to and from school.
- Observance of a religious holiday.
- State of emergency.

## PENALTY

Any parent or guardian violating the Compulsory Attendance Law is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to a fine not exceeding \$50.00 for each day their child is unlawfully absent from school.

If your child will be absent, please call the office at **(301) 497-3994** between 8:00 AM and 9:00 AM.

In addition to the call, please send a note when your child returns to school, so we can credit him/her with a legal absence. The Principal (or their designee) and Pupil Personnel Worker (PPW) will be following up on students who are absent excessively.

Make-up work may be requested after an extended lawful illness of three (3) or more days. Your child's teacher will make contact with the student's parent or guardian if there is an absence of three (3) days in a row.

Many incentives and awards are provided for attendance, since it is so vital to your children's learning process.

## ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

Students may arrive to school by **7:20 AM** and line up at the front of the building. We will let students into the building at **7:25 AM**. If you transport your child to school by car, please turn into our main parking area (located on the side of the building) and follow the directions of those staff members responsible for morning duty. Your child can unload from the **passenger side** of the vehicle and proceed to the entrance. Please do not park here (drop-off lane). If you need to escort your child into the building, please park in the parking lot and walk with your child to the main office and sign in as a visitor.

As a reminder: Students will be admitted at 7:25 AM. Each student will receive a breakfast item per our new breakfast program which will begin at 7:30 AM each morning. In the event of inclement weather (precipitation or temperatures below 32 degrees F), all students will be admitted to the building prior to **7:30 AM**.

## DISMISSAL

Walkers and car riders are dismissed after 1:50 PM. Bus students are dismissed beginning at 1:55 p.m. so they can board buses and leave the grounds as soon as they are loaded. For student's safety, the circular driveway will be closed to cars during bus dismissal. Parents of Car riders - Instruct your child to quickly (but safely) exit the building and walk to your vehicle. You may also park in the lot and walk to meet your child. A staff member or designee will be present to help supervise your child as he/she enters your vehicle. Some parents prefer to park and meet their children. In the interest of safety, no child will be permitted to cross into the lot unless accompanied by an adult, unless he/she crosses at the corner where a crossing guard is in attendance. Please be patient during the first several weeks of school, because students (and parents) are learning new routines and dismissal takes much longer. By the second week of school, routines are generally established and departure occurs in a much more timely fashion.

## SAFETY OF STUDENTS

If your child rides the bus, please remember that the school system does not have the facilities for monitoring bus stop behavior. This responsibility must be shared with the community. Bus drivers will monitor behavior of riders as best they can while paying attention to traffic and driving. Volunteer student bus patrols serve on each bus. If a problem occurs on the bus, the bus driver will write a bus referral and the Principal or Assistant Principal will confer with the student to resolve the problem. You can also contact the bus driver's supervisor in order to express a concern (Laurel Bus Lot 301-497-3665). Riding the bus is a privilege and bus suspensions can occur if a student exhibits continued behavior problems on the bus.

For walkers, a crossing guard is posted at Dorset Road. Volunteer student patrols assist in crossing children as well.

Students riding bicycles to school must have written permission on file in the office. Scotchtown Hills Elementary School takes no responsibility for stolen bikes. There are bicycle racks in the front of the school. **STUDENTS SHOULD LOCK THEIR BICYCLES.**

## EARLY DEPARTURES

Please send a note and call to speak with an office staff member, if you will be picking up your child before 1:40 PM or if someone other than the parent or guardian will be picking up your child. We encourage you to pick your child up **before 1:40 PM**, so that we will be able to focus on bus dismissal and end-of-the-day routines. If you come **after 1:40 PM**, you will have to wait in the vestibule until after bus dismissal in order to receive your child. For safety reasons, we will not be able to release students to persons other than the parent or legal guardian without notification or clearance from you.

## CHANGE IN STUDENT'S DESTINATION/MODE OF TRANSPORTATION

Whenever your child will be leaving school, for another destination other than his home or regular sitter, a note is mandatory. **If he/she will be riding a bus to go home with another child, you will first need to contact and confirm with the Transportation Department. No student will be allowed to alter his/her normal departure without first contacting and obtaining authorization from the Transportation Department. We will not be able to accept permission by the telephone for safety reasons. Temporary and permanent bus changes must be approved by our Transportation Department.**

## VISITORS AT SCHOOL

We encourage you to visit the school and observe or volunteer. Please remember that observing does not mean that a teacher will be able to hold a conference in reference to your child. If you would like to visit your child's classroom in order to hold a conference or discuss an issue, please phone his/her teacher in advance to arrange a convenient time. We reserve classroom privileges for parents and guardians. Grandparents, relatives and friends are most welcome to attend Honors Assemblies, PTA, programs and other visitations. **ALL VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL MUST PROVIDE PHOTO ID, SIGN IN AT THE OFFICE AND OBTAIN A VISITORS' PASS.**

New procedures have been established for volunteers. Background checks and fingerprinting are now mandatory. Check with our school office for details.

# **ACADEMIC PROCEDURES**

## **HOMework**

Homework is a part of our school program and also a part of the grade for the subject. Each grade-level has procedures and policies pertaining to Homework. These procedures and policies are presented to parents at Back-to-School Night. The procedures and policies were also sent home with students at the start of the school year. We use homework to reinforce learning and develop responsibility. Students should be able to do the homework assignments with ease. If there is a problem, please let the teacher know.

Guidelines for approximate amount of time spent on nightly homework are as follows (when applicable):

Pre K - 1 grade	10 - 30 minutes
2 - 3 grade	30 - 45 minutes
4 - 6 grade	45 - 60 minutes

However, please remember that students vary greatly in their working pace. Some children will be able to finish an assignment very quickly, while others work more slowly. It helps to provide a quiet spot for your child to work. If you find your child is continually struggling with homework, contact their teacher to discuss the concerns.

Sometimes long term projects will be assigned. Students will need to plan their time carefully, rather than leaving everything until the last moment. If you have questions about homework, please discuss them with the teacher.

## **REPORTING PROCEDURES**

Report cards are issued quarterly for grades K-6. Parents are invited to at least one conference yearly and additional conferences may be scheduled by contacting your child's teacher. Please remember to register and create an account in order to access our Family Portal System. You will need to have a current email account, students' ID number, birth date and current address. You can access the registration site via the Homepage of the school system's website. There is also a mobile application available for download.

## **INTERIM PROGRESS REPORTS**

By carefully monitoring your child's papers (which are sent home) and communicating with the teachers, you will be able to stay informed about his/her progress. Interim progress reports are issued for students who might receive a C, D or E to indicate that a problem exists and work needs to be done right away to affect improvement. These reports are not part of the child's permanent record. They are simply a vehicle to keep parents informed.

**Please see the county's calendar for the dates of interim progress reports.**

## **HEALTH ROOM (301) 483-7480**

The medical care of students is, of course, the primary responsibility of the parents. Therefore, specific regulations limit the school's treatment of students who are ill or injured at school.

Medication not retrieved by parents by the last day of school will be destroyed.

Notify the school of any allergies your child may have (foods, bee stings, etc.).

**IN CASE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS, THE SCHOOL MUST BE ABLE TO REACH PARENTS OR GUARDIANS, THEREFORE, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE HAVE CORRECT PHONE NUMBERS AND EMAILS. Please remember to update these numbers immediately whenever there is a change.**

A physical, with form SR-6 completed, is required for all students entering Prince George's County Public Schools for the first time.

Students in Kindergarten and Fourth grade receive vision and hearing screenings, as well as any student new to Prince George's County or who received borderline results last year. A written referral form to be completed by the doctor will be sent to parents whose children do not pass screenings.

Scoliosis screening will be done for all Sixth grade students. If any sign of scoliosis is noted, a referral form will be sent to the parents for further evaluation by a doctor.

## **READING ASSISTANCE**

Since reading is such a vital skill, our Reading Specialist supports students and teachers to help with our reading program. The Reading Specialist works with teachers and other staff members in supporting students demonstrating additional help with reading fundamentals.

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENTS**

### **PARENT VOLUNTEERS**

Parent volunteers serve in many capacities at Scotchtown Hills Elementary School. We encourage volunteers to utilize their special talent and abilities either in reinforcing basic skills or in helping with the enrichment or remedial programs. The direct assistance given to students by parent volunteers acting as teacher assistants is invaluable. We welcome volunteers at any time. Some work, such as typing and telephoning, can be done at home. The first step in becoming a volunteer is to get fingerprinted **and** complete a background check. Information is available in the office pertaining to fingerprinting and background checks. Interested volunteers should contact the school office or the **PTO** President ([scotchtownhills@gmail.com](mailto:scotchtownhills@gmail.com)).

### **FUNDRAISING**

Fundraising activities are conducted to help the school. The monies raised from these activities provide instructional materials for science experiments, supplemental reading and math materials (tentative), educational software, plays, concerts for all the students, field trips and incentives for students. We ask the parents to help with this work.

## **SPECIAL SERVICES**

### **LUNCH AND BREAKFAST**

Meals, both breakfast and lunch, are served daily at school. Students can participate in these programs. Free and reduced price meals are available for children who qualify. Information on qualifications is sent home with every child. Forms should be completed as



quickly as possible in September. Meal prices are:

Daily Prices (Always check each year for any changes)

All students are served Breakfast at no charge

Reduced Price Lunch - No Cost to Students

Full Price Lunch - \$2.75

Our cafeteria is computerized and each student has a private **PIN** number. We encourage you to send in money for several days or weeks at a time. This money goes into the student's account.

Menus are can be found online via the PGCPs website. If lunch money is lost or forgotten, your child must notify the teacher immediately. The school will provide a sandwich and milk. The school will not loan money for lunches. If you wish to have other arrangements, please let us know in writing. **BREAKFAST WILL BE SERVED ON DELAYED OPENINGS AND SCHEDULED EARLY CLOSINGS.**

Parents are able to join their children for lunch. Adult lunches may be purchased through the cafeteria. If parents choose to bring in a fast food lunch for their child, it is suggested the parent and child eat the lunch at the table outside of the front office.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

We have programs available for students who have special learning problems. Upon staff or parent referral, a team of specialists will review any student having difficulty with the regular instructional program. Further testing may be recommended before an appropriate program can be determined. Parents are kept informed about recommendations and must give permission before placement is made.

## **BEHAVIOR**

We believe our primary responsibility is to help children learn. This can only be accomplished in an orderly setting. We expect students to follow the established rules. There is a **Code of Student Conduct** that is reviewed with the students and parents each

year. In addition there are behavior standards for the school and the classroom. The classroom teacher will share this information with the student and with you.

If behavior problems arise in the classroom, the teacher will contact you. In the event of recurring problems (once the teacher has exhausted all avenues), or a severe problem, you will be contacted by the Principal or Assistant Principal, to enlist your cooperation in seeking a solution.

If it becomes necessary to remove a child from the classroom and/or school for a period of time, we will contact parents and arrange for a re-entry conference. By working together, we can ensure a safe and orderly learning environment.

## **INTERNET USE**

Each classroom has computers for Internet access. Permission slips will be sent home in the fall. All students are expected to access only those sites sanctioned by the teacher.

## Uniform Policy (effective 7/1/17)

The Scotchtown Hills community has adopted a mandatory Uniform Dress Code for the school.

All students are required to be in uniform every day.

<b>GIRLS</b>	<b>BOYS</b>
RED collared blouse RED oxford shirt (long or short sleeves) RED polo or turtleneck Navy blue skirt V-neck jumper (pleated) Navy blue Bermuda length shorts or skirt Navy blue slacks with belt Navy blue tie optional Navy blue or white socks or tights Navy blue crew neck cardigan sweater or V-neck vest Black or Navy blue soft-sole closed shoes Sneakers must be solid black	RED oxford shirt (long or short sleeves) RED polo or turtleneck Navy blue slacks with belt Navy blue Bermuda length shorts Navy blue tie optional Navy blue or white socks Navy blue crew neck cardigan sweater Navy blue V-neck vest Black or Navy blue soft-sole closed shoes Sneakers must be solid black

During inclement weather, low-heeled black boots may be worn to school. Students will be encouraged to bring an additional pair of black shoes to change into during the school day.

The following items are not acceptable:

- T-shirts, sweatshirts, sweatpants, jeans, cut-offs or shirts with no collar.
- Sandals, flip flops, white sneakers and ornamental/high-heeled boots.

## **School Uniform Violation**

If your child is in violation of the mandatory school uniform policy set by the Prince George's County Board of Education, the following actions will be taken:

- **First violation:** the student's teacher contacts the parent/guardian and notifies the Principal that a violation has occurred.
- **Second violation:** the teacher refers the student to the principal who contacts the parent /guardian by telephone and/or in writing that a second violation has occurred.
- **Third violation:** the principal sends a letter and telephones the parent / guardian of a third violation.
- **Fourth violation:** the school's administration arranges a parent conference and restates the guidelines of the policy and consequences of future violations
- **Fifth violation:** the student is removed from the classroom for a full day and completes classroom assignments provided by the classroom teacher in another part of the school.
- **Sixth violation:** a parent/student conference is called which includes representatives from the school's administration, the child's teacher, and a representative from the school uniform committee. A final warning is given to the student and his parent / guardian advising them that another violation will result in further administrative actions. This same information will be forwarded to the parent / guardian in writing as well.
- The County will no longer provide an option of transferring to a non-uniformed school.

**ALL SHIRTS MUST BE TUCKED IN.**

## **THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**

We use the instructional program mandated by the Board of Education of Prince George's County. The textbooks and guides used are authorized by the system. All materials are available for your review.

Students are assigned to a homeroom teacher and are regrouped throughout the day for differentiated instruction in reading and other instructional areas depending upon their level of development. The student may have more than one teacher if the grade-level

teams have departmentalized (teachers deliver instruction for only one or two content areas).

Groups are determined by overall academic progress, as well as performance on various assessments. If you have any questions about your child's grouping, please contact their teacher.

## **INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAM**

Lessons are provided for students in Grades 3, 4, 5 and 6 two times per week. Students have the opportunity to perform at concerts twice annually. Our Instrumental teacher will provide additional information about any upcoming events.

## **CHORUS**

Chorus is offered to students in grades 5 and 6. All students are welcome to try out. Programs are presented at least twice a year.

## **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL EXTENDED LEARNING PROGRAM**

The Before and After School Extended Learning Program provides daycare for children of working parents. The program operates in our school building. Please call **(301) 498-6589** for further information.

## **GUIDANCE SERVICES (301) 497-3994**

There are guidance services available for students and parents. The counselor provides counseling for children to encourage understanding one's self, making decisions, solving problems and communication. Parents may use this service to help with parenting problems.

It is important to call the school for an appointment. If the counselor is not available at that time, a return call will be made as soon as possible.

## **RECOGNITION OF STUDENTS (Subject to changes)**

Progress is celebrated for grades K - 6 at quarterly honors assemblies. Awards are as follows:

**Perfect Attendance:** No absences and less than 3 tardies.

**Principal's Award:** Students (2nd-6th) with at least a 4.0 GPA with no grade on the report card below an "A."

**Honor Roll:** Students (2nd-6th) with a 3.0 GPA or higher with no grade on the report card below a "C."

**Citizenship:** Students must have an A in both Social Skills and Work Habits

**Most Improved:** Teachers decide who earns this award

You will be invited to attend these celebrations. Please feel free to bring relatives and friends to honor and support your child.

## **MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION**

### **EXCUSES FROM RECESS**

Because recess is an important part of a child's day, it is stressed that a child participates in outdoor play. In the event of inclement weather, indoor play is provided. Notes from home requesting that a child remain indoors are discouraged because of supervision problems. A doctor's note is required for an extended (3 or more days) excuse from recess. Recess is held for 30 minutes daily (exception is 6th grade which may or may not support recess based on current Middle School model).

### **EXCUSES FROM PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

All requests for children to be excused from the physical education program must be in writing from the parent to the physical education teacher. Please remember that a note must also be provided in order to allow the student to re-enter active participation as well.

Any request for more than 3 days must be accompanied by a doctor's certificate (STANDARD COUNTY FORM). Please inquire at the office.

## **PERSONAL POSSESSIONS**

Students are not permitted to bring toys, games, radios or other personal possessions to school. The school nor staff will be responsible for any lost items when students bring cell phones, IPADs or other electronic device to school. These are distracting to the instructional environment. The school system provides play equipment for use while at school. If personal items become a hindrance in school, they may be held by the teacher or Principal until their return is requested and arranged by the parent or until the end of the school year.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

The lost and found department is located in the main hallway underneath visitors table. Parents are urged to check the lost items. Please label all articles that might be lost or left in school: especially coats, jackets, hats, gloves and lunch boxes.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

The school system supplies textbooks for the student's use. All school materials must be returned at the end of the school year or when a student withdraws. Textbooks are expensive. Please assist your child in covering the books and caring for them. Fines will be assessed for lost and damaged books.

## **SCHOOL RECORDS**

All school records concerning your child are available for inspection by parents. Please call the office and arrange an appointment with the Principal if you wish to review them.

## **TALENTED AND GIFTED PROGRAM (TAG)**

We have a program for students who meet the county's definition of talented and gifted. The **TAG** program will be grouped for TAG in the Regular Classroom (TRC) instruction.

There are definite admission criteria. Students who appear to meet the criteria are tested and results reviewed by a committee. Parents and teachers are encouraged to recommend students for testing. Parents will be notified before placement in the program is made. Please check county website for timelines and deadlines pertaining to TAG identification and admission to enrichment schools.

## **MONEY AT SCHOOL**

Please do not give your child excess money to carry to school. Money for field trips, lunch, pictures, etc. should be sent in an envelope labeled with your child's name, teacher and purpose. Cash or Money Orders only accepted. School and staff are not liable for misplaced, lost or stolen money.

## **SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

**INCLEMENT WEATHER** (Breakfast will be served when we have delayed openings).

School may close early or open late because of severe weather conditions. If it is excessively hot or snowstorms are predicted, keep your radio tuned to **WMAL** or **WTOP**. Many television stations also carry the news of changes in schedule. Breakfast will be served in the event of a delayed opening. If schools are closed for the day, afternoon and evening programs scheduled to be held at the school will be canceled. You can also add the county's app to your cell phone. You will receive email and text updates pertaining to school system closures or early departures. Just visit [PGCPS.org](http://PGCPS.org) for more information

## **EMERGENCIES**

Our school may not be able to continue classes if there is a problem with heating, power or water. If such emergency occurs, the students will be transported to Laurel High School. It is impossible to contact all parents if an emergency occurs. Please understand that the safety of the children is our first concern. If the children and staff are relocated, they will be dismissed and transported as soon as possible. **\*This procedure is different from "inclement" weather. For this reason, it is vital that parent and home information is updated and current in School Max/Family Portal.**