

Hamlin Elementary

We learn. We grow. We soar.



Handbook of Policies and Procedures
2016-17

Dear Hamlin Elementary Parents,

Welcome to the new school year. This is your official Hamlin Elementary School Handbook. We hope that you will find this handbook useful through the new school year. On the following pages, in alphabetical order by topic, you will find information on attendance, arrival/dismissal procedures, lunch, dress, medication, etc.

Much of the information in this handbook is for you, the parent, but we would appreciate it if you would review the appropriate student information with your child in an effort to help your child demonstrate responsibility at school.

We know that by working together as a team, all of the students at Hamlin Elementary School will learn, grow, and soar.

Sincerely,



Gary A. van Staveren, Ph.D.
Principal

Attendance

It is very important that every student be in attendance at school unless the child is ill. Although there are some assignments that can be completed later, there are many important activities that cannot be repeated. The responsibility of attending school and arriving on time is an important attitude for children to develop. If you arrive late for school, please bring your child to the office and sign her/him in. Late arrival at school is a disruption to the classroom, the other students and to the late child. Please make every effort to arrive at school on time. Hamlin utilizes an electronic attendance to report absences to the State of Michigan. We want to assist you if you are having difficulty with regular attendance or excessive tardiness. Though regular attendance is important, when a child is ill, he/she should stay home in order to recover. Children may not return to school until they have been free of fever for at least twenty-four hours.

Safety Check

Our school safety check program is designed to ensure the safe arrival of your children at Hamlin School. In order to provide a more efficient program, parents should call the Hamlin twenty-four (24) hour school attendance line (248) 726-3610 by 8:30 AM to report all absences. The following information is needed:

- Name of your child
- Teacher's name
- Nature and length of the illness or absence
- If you don't know length of absence, please call again on subsequent days
- Notify us of communicable diseases

This plan of safety will alert us that your child is missing, only if you call.

Prearranged Absences

If you know in advance that your child will be absent (doctor's appointment), you may call the 24-hour school attendance line (248) 726-3610 or send a note to school with your child. Teachers are asked not to release students unless directed to do so by the office. When you need to take your child out of school early, come to the office and sign him/her out. Upon returning to school the same day, you should also sign your child back in. This procedure ensures the safety of your children. Teachers appreciate a note from parents when a child returns to school following an absence.

Assignments for Absent Students

If you would like assignments for your child who is absent for an extended period, teachers will be happy to provide missed assignments. Please leave a message requesting the assignments on the teacher's voice mail. We will send work home with a sibling/neighbor or have it in the office for you to pick up. It does take time for the teacher to prepare assignments, so it is expected that the parents will see the work is completed and returned to school. Extended vacations that do not coincide with the school calendar are discouraged. Teachers will not provide assignments for these absences.

Work Not Completed During Absences

It is the responsibility of the student to do any necessary work that was assigned during an absence. There may not be time during the school day, so the work may have to be completed at home. Typically, two days for each day absent is given to turn in the work. Parents' supervision and support is needed.

Attendance - Tardiness

Students should make every effort to arrive at school on time each day. Late arrivals may miss some instruction; they also create disruption in the classroom. Arriving on time is a responsibility that needs to be developed by all students. If a student does arrive late, he/she must report to the school office so their name can be removed from the absence list. All absences and tardiness are reported electronically to the State of Michigan.

Rochester Community Schools

Truancy Tracker

2016-17 School Year

Excessive absences and frequent tardiness have a negative impact on a child's learning. This document is designed to provide guidelines for supporting children and families having difficulty with regular school attendance.

STEP I When a child has been absent for five (5) days the teacher should make a call to the parent and inquire about the child's attendance.

STEP II When a child has been absent eight (8) days the principal should make a call to the parent and inquire about the child's attendance.

Step III When the child reaches ten (10) absences, the principal should review the child's absences and tardiness and mail the "First" attendance letter to the parent. This letter is designed to document the schools desire to support the family in achieving regular attendance in school. A copy of the child's attendance report should be attached to letter.

Step IV If the previous measures have not been effective in achieving regular attendance in school for the child, the principal will mail a second letter to the parent and require the parent and child to attend a meeting with the principal and teacher. This step is recommended between 14 and 16 absences at the discretion of the administrator. During this meeting an "ATTENDANCE CONTRACT" should be completed.

Step V If a child reaches twenty-five (25) absences, a third letter is mailed and the truancy officer (police liaison) for Rochester Community Schools is contacted.

Step VI If a child reaches 30 absences, a referral is sent to the Truancy Office at Oakland Schools. A copy of the referral with letter #4 is mailed to the parents.

Note: Tardies are also tracked and the principal sends letters at various points. When they are to the point of excess, a plan is drawn up.

Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

Arrival

Front Loop Arrival: Parents pull in and drop off children and exit immediately. Do not leave your car unattended in the front loop for any reason. Loop open from 7:55 – 8:10 AM.

Back Parking Lot: Parents park in the rear parking lot and walk with their child to the west entrance (Door#6); you may wait outside with your child.

Walker and Bussers: Bus student are dropped on the east side of the school and greeted by an adult. Walkers may line up in the front or west side and await the 8:05 AM bell.

****After 8:10 AM children will ONLY be allowed into the building through the rear entrance, door #8. Parents MUST come into the building to sign their child in.*

Dismissal

Bussers: Bus students are escorted out the front of the building onto the buses.

Front Loop Dismissal: The front loop dismissal is used first for bus students to be loaded on the buses. Upon departure of the buses, cars awaiting loop pick up will enter the loop to begin this procedure. Those waiting for the loop will “stack” along the east side of the building. Please have a large 8”X10” sign with your child(ren) names in your dashboard for the valet service.

Walkers: Student exits at the west side of the school. A Crossing Guard and the Hamlin Safety Patrol help the students cross Hamlin and Cumberland Roads. Siblings may meet each other at the bike rack. Those students walking through the nature center will have safety patrol assistance in the nature center and at Sandalwood. Parents may wait for their children on the west side of the building near door #3 or door #6.

School-Aged Care: Students are escorted to the cafeteria for SAC.

Dismissal Procedures

This year, Hamlin has almost 400 children enrolled on the first day of school. Approximately one hundred (100) of those students ride a bus home. All other children either walk or are picked up by their parents. Parents are encouraged to allow their children to walk home from school. If you choose to pick up your child from school, patience and cooperation are the keys. Students who are being picked up are taken to the front of the building, where parents form a one lane and remain in their cars. An adult walks children to their parent’s car. Parents may also park their car in the rear parking lot and meet their child before he/she enters the parking lot. With almost four hundred children leaving the school within a five-minute window, we must all be alert, patient, and cooperative in order to provide the safest possible situation for all of our children.

Bikes

In Rochester Elementary Schools, children in grades three through five who live within a mile of the school are permitted to ride their bicycles to school. We are also allowing this age group to ride their scooters to school. Children in those grades who live beyond a mile and do not need to cross a major highway, may ride to school with a note on file in the office. Skateboards and roller blades are not permitted.

Birthday Treats

Hamlin Elementary will follow the district guidelines of **non-edible birthday celebrations**. There will be more information provided by your child's teacher regarding non-edible birthday celebrations. We also plan to have an adult check snacks daily to ensure all children with food allergies are safe.

First-time allergic reactions can occur anywhere including the school environment. The proteins from tree nuts and peanuts seem to be most often associated with anaphylaxis after ingestion or other exposures. All tree nuts and peanuts are part of the FDA required foods to be listed on manufacturer's ingredient labels. The other six most common foods that people are allergic to and that must be listed on ingredient labels are fish, shellfish, soy, wheat, egg and milk.

The Rochester Community School District wants to reduce the possibility of our students with severe allergies being exposed to their allergens. To do this, we are taking a multi-pronged approach to prevention and have developed a Handbook with guidelines on allergy avoidance, education, and emergency readiness for all of our students. This guide can be found on our Web site. We realize that the biggest part of avoidance is education, and that involves not just families directly involved, but to be safe, the entire school community.

We have not declared our schools "Nut Free", as some districts have done, for several reasons. First, this is a claim that cannot be guaranteed and we felt that it would lead to a false sense of security. "Allergy Aware" and "No Peanut/Tree Nut Classrooms" or "Nut Safe" are the phrases and controls that best describe our efforts to keep allergic students safe. In this way we best plan for each allergic child as best suits their needs. Celebrations will also focus on foods that are nut free and safe for everyone. Students may have nut products during lunch. There will be a "No Peanut/Tree Nut Table", just as in the past, to make sure all students are safe from life-threatening allergens.

Books and Supplies

Supply Lists are located at the bottom of the Hamlin webpage. Rochester Community Schools provides all necessary materials for students and you are not obligated to provide supplies, however, your donations are appreciated.

All books and supplies needed for the basic instructional program are provided by the school district. It is expected that the students develop the responsibility to take care of all materials. The parents must replace books that are damaged or lost. Students may also bring their own supplies if they prefer (pencils, notebooks, etc.). Teachers may also request that the students bring other materials to enhance their education. Textbooks, which are taken home, must be brought back each day, as extra copies are not available. Library books must be returned on time so other students may use them.

Communication Between School and Home

The school staff believes in the importance of good communication between the school and home. Several means of communication are provided:

- Hamlin Happenings
 - Sent out via email each Monday. If you are not receiving Hamlin Happenings, send an email to Dr. van Staveren at gvanstaveren@rochester.k12.mi.us.
- Curriculum Night
 - An evening in September when teachers review plans for the year.
- PTA Meetings
 - Informational meetings with parents, principal, and teacher representatives.
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
 - The most important means of communication we offer. You will be invited by your child's teacher for a conference, or you may request a conference by sending a note or calling the school office.
- Report Cards
 - Completed twice a year: end of January and end of school year.
- Family Nights
 - During the year, the Hamlin PTA plans several activities, which will provide opportunities for parents to visit the school: Open House, Pizza Dinner, Science Olympiad and Family Night are all examples of these evening family activities.
- Classroom Newsletters
 - Many classrooms produce weekly or monthly letters. Teachers also send home notes, reminders and make phone calls to parents.
- Hamlin Web Site
 - Updated regularly is an electronic means to stay informed.
<http://www.rochester.k12.mi.us/pages/321/hamlin>

Daily Schedules

6:30 AM	School Aged Care opens (<i>enter through door #9</i>)
8:05 AM	Students admitted to the school
8:10 AM	Classes begin
8:10 AM - 3:13 PM	Full Day of School
8:10 AM - 11:25 AM	Half-Day

Please plan your child's arrival to coincide with the time he/she may enter the building.

Critical Incident Team

At all Rochester schools, there is a Critical Incident Team in place. At Hamlin, this team consists of the principal, learning consultant, social worker, psychologist, special education teacher, and the school secretary. This team meets periodically throughout the school year to review, rehearse, and plan for potential situations. The team takes action during a significant student injury, during a state or national situation (the 9/11 attack), and in the case of a local tragedy. The Critical Incident Team is first concerned with safety and then focused on helping children and their families deal with these difficult situations.

Dress for School

Although the school has no specific dress code, students are expected to come with appropriate clothing. During warm weather, shorts may be worn but should be appropriate for school; bare midriffs are not appropriate. Remember, the building is air-conditioned. During wet or cold weather, students need jackets, coats, and leg coverings. All students should also have boots or weatherproof shoes for the winter months. Students do go outside at recess and at the lunch hour, weather permitting. If the wind chill factor drops below zero degrees Fahrenheit, children stay inside. Items of clothing, particularly coats, jackets, and boots should be labeled with the student's name. Students who wear shoe boots to school must have a pair of shoes to wear in the classroom.

Emergency Cards

Every child must have an emergency card on file in the office. Emergency Cards hold valuable information, which allows the school to notify the parents of an illness, injury or to determine a serious health situation. Information on these cards must be accurate and

current at all times. **Students can only be released to adults who are listed on the emergency card.**

Emergency Early Dismissal

On very rare occasions, it may be necessary to send children home early. This may be due to mechanical failures such as heating, electrical, or plumbing. This may also be necessary due to severe weather conditions. Each year, the PTA puts together an Emergency Fan Out System. Operated by volunteers, this system is activated in the event school closes early. Volunteers come to the school with cell phones and contact each child's parent. Children remain in school until a parent arrives to take them home. This system is not used when school is closed for the full day, only when children are being sent home early.

Field Trips

Field trips add much to an educational program. Rochester elementary students will attend two to four trips per year. These trips have been designed to follow the district curriculum, be local and to be transported by district busses. Contributions to the Rochester Schools Foundation help to offset the cost of these trips. No child is denied a trip because of inability to pay any costs.

Hearing and Vision Screening

Each year, the Oakland County Health Department conducts a screening for hearing on all students in kindergarten, second, and fourth grade. Parents are notified if a student fails the screening.

Each year, the Oakland County Health Department conducts a screening for vision on all students in grades first, third, and fifth. Parents are notified if a student fails the screening.

Homework

Your child may bring assignments home to be completed. When this happens, you can help by providing a quiet place for your child to work, preferably away from the television. Every child can benefit by having a quiet time at home each evening. That time should be used for homework assignments, reading, or listening to someone read to them. Homework assignments may consist of work missed during an absence, work not completed during class hours, work that needs to be studied such as spelling words or math facts, or assignments which require resources found at home. Each teacher's expectations may vary, but the teacher will communicate these expectations to the parents.

Immunizations

Children must have all childhood immunizations in order to attend school. Periodic checks of the files as well as upon new entrance to school may result in notification and possible exclusion from school until such time that records are brought up-to-date.

Kindergarten

Kindergarten classes are provided for all children of kindergarten age in Rochester Community Schools. The Michigan Revised School Code (MCL 380.1147 and 388.1606) stipulate that before a child may enroll in kindergarten, he/she must be age five on or before September 1, 2016. You may enroll your child under waiver if their birthday is after September 1 but by December 1.

Lost and Found

A lost and found box is located near the gym. If your child loses an item, please encourage him/her to check the box to see if the item has been found. Small items that are found are kept with the school secretary. Labeling items is very helpful in their recovery. Items not picked up in June are donated to charity.

Lunch Hour

Students will remain at school during the lunch hour. The students may bring their lunch or purchase a hot lunch. The procedure for ordering a hot lunch is:

- A menu is posted on the District web site each month.
- A lunch count is taken every morning.
- Each student has a lunch card, and parents are expected to maintain funds in the account so lunches can be debited from the account. You will receive notice if your account reaches +\$5.00. You can make online payments to My School Bucks: <http://www.rochester.k12.mi.us/pages/65366/online-payments>
- Students may qualify for free or reduced prices after the parents complete the financial information form.
- Milk and juice are available for purchase by the students
- Students without a lunch, will be given a lunch, and a credit is placed on their lunch card.
- Students are supervised by para-educators hired by the school district. Students are expected to observe all lunchroom rules, and good table manners are expected.

Medication at School

Administration of medication at school is governed by strict adherence to the Board of Education Policy. No exceptions to this policy will be allowed. Medications are administered by one adult, witnessed by a second adult, recorded in a logbook, and signed by both individuals.

- Students may not transport medication.
- Medications are stored in the office.
- Only medicines prescribed by a doctor can be administered at school.
- Medications must be in the original prescription container.
- Medications administered three times per day should be done at home, in the morning, after school, and at bedtime.
- Medications needed for less than 10 days (antibiotics, prescription cough medicine, etc.) may be administered by school personnel once we have the “Authorization to Administer Medication” form signed by the parent.
- Medications remaining in the office for more than 10 days (Inhalers, EpiPens, etc.) requires Physician’s signature on the “Authorization to Administer Medication” form.

All of these forms are available on the school’s website. This procedure is in compliance with District policy and is designed to protect all children. Please observe the correct procedures. Forms can be found at: <http://www.rochester.k12.mi.us/hamlin-elementary/pages/6275/medical-forms>

Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

The PTA is very active at Hamlin, sponsoring events, providing enrichments and coordinating fundraising activities. The working relationship and cooperation among parents, teachers and administration goes a long way in promoting the welfare of our children and youth. Please play an active and supportive role in this organization and be **Part of The Action**.

Personal Belongings

The school cannot assume responsibility for personal items brought to school. Students should be discouraged from bringing toys and games that may be a distraction in the classroom. Radios, electronic games, headphones should not be brought to school. Toy knives and guns are forbidden and will be confiscated. Cell phones brought to school must be turned off during school hours.

Picking up Students Early

Occasionally, it may be necessary for you to pick up your child early from school. We request that you send a note with your child or call the school office to tell us what time the child should be ready. The parent should come to the office to get the child and should not go to the classroom first. As you are signing your child out of school, we will contact the teacher and have the child sent to the office.

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Class Placement

As spring approaches, we begin plans for next year. One of the most important decisions we make as a staff is a class placement for your child. In the spring, the principal, classroom teachers, the learning consultant, and the student services staff meet to make preliminary placements for next school year. The staff receives numerous questions about this process. To help you understand the procedure, the following are the answers to the most frequently asked questions.

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Class Placement

To help you understand the procedure of class placement, I have prepared responses to some common questions.

- How are students placed in classes?

Students are grouped in classes to achieve as much balance as possible. We want to ensure that classes are equal according to gender and that a variety of academic levels are represented. These considerations allow us to foster a rich and stimulating environment for all students. Individual consideration is given to academic ability, learning style, and social growth and development. Classroom teachers provide much input, and placements are made with the support of the learning consultant, special education team, Title 1 interventionist, and principal.

- Should parents submit written information about their child's placement needs?

This is not generally necessary. While we certainly welcome parent input, classroom teachers are probably the most familiar with how individual children learn. If you have specific educational information that you feel we may not have, however, please feel free to share it in the form of an e-mail or letter addressed to Dr. van Staveren by the end of May. Please do not request to have your child placed with a specific teacher. All letters that have specific teacher requests listed will not be considered.

- When will students and parents be notified of class placements?

Events that take place over the summer may make it necessary to add a classroom, change teaching personnel, or revise the make-up of a particular class and these changes may continue through August. In accordance with district procedures, individual student assignments will be posted on MyRCS in late August.

If your child will not be attending Hamlin Elementary next year, please let us know so that we can ensure that records are ready to send to the receiving school.

Pride in Achievement

The purpose for your child being in school is to learn as much and as well as he/she can. The staff and parents working together can encourage all children to do their best and take pride in what they accomplish. Your knowledge as parents of your child's abilities can help you to set realistic expectations for your child. Showing approval of your child's progress will help him/her to take pride in their work and will result in continued steady progress.

Recess

Elementary students have a daily recess as part of their lunch time. Lunch is 40 minutes long, and students have 20 minutes for recess and 20 minutes for lunch. If weather permits, children go outside for recess. We use local weather information to make decisions about when children should stay inside for recess. Precipitation, age of the children, wind chill factor, and playground conditions are taken into consideration when the decision is made. Zero degree Fahrenheit or colder is the wind chill factor we use for remaining inside. Teachers may also take the students outside for a second recess.

Report Cards

Report cards are used as one means of communicating your child's progress. Read your child's card carefully. If you have any questions or concerns, please request a conference with the teacher. We also ask that you remember the card is only one means of sharing your child's progress. The conferences with the teacher and the weekly work brought home also give you important information.

Safety

The school staff shares the concern that parents have for the children's safety. During the school year, your child will receive instruction and reminders about safety in the following areas:

- Rules for the building and playground (PBIS)
- Walking to and from school
- What to do if approached by a stranger
- Anti-Bullying
- Fire Drills
- Disaster - Tornado Drills
- Bus Evacuation
- School Evacuation
- School Lockdown

- The new law requires schools to perform 10 emergency drills a year:

- Five fire drills (three before Dec. 1)
- Three lockdown drills
- Two severe weather drills (one in March before severe weather season).
- Schools cannot hold more than one drill a day.
- At least one drill must occur when students are not in a controlled classroom setting.

We urge parents to discuss safety with their children periodically. Adult examples are a good way for students to learn about safe behavior. Practice fire evacuations and meeting locations at home. Remind your child regularly about what to do if they are approached by a stranger. Be sure your child knows how they are getting home every day. Always have them come home first before playing with a friend. Use the schools Positive Behavior Support program as a model for home behavior.

School Aged Care

School Aged Care (SAC) is a Community Education program that operates in all thirteen elementary schools. This childcare program opens at 6:30 A.M. and remains open until the beginning of the school day and then opens after school until 6:00 P.M. For more information about availability and pricing please contact Community Education at 726-3000

Student Behavior

All Hamlin staff and students practice the Positive Behavior Support (**PBIS**) system for our children. Each teacher has specific lessons that they are teaching children that focus on four ideas; Respect, Responsible, Ready and Safe. You will see these ideas posted throughout the school and in classrooms. Rules are taught for all areas of the building so that our students understand the expectation for using the hallways, playground, lunchroom, bathrooms, classroom and how to arrive and dismiss each day. These lessons/rules are posted on our website and can serve as a perfect model for home use for dinner time rules, bedtime procedures and morning getting ready for school. Parents are notified when a child has made a serious infraction of a rule.

Definition of PBIS: School wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports is a proactive, team-based framework for creating and sustaining safe and effective schools. Emphasis is placed on prevention of problem behavior, development of pro-social skills, and the use of data-based problem solving for addressing existing behavior concerns. It increases the capacity of schools to educate all students utilizing research-based school-wide, classroom, and individualized interventions.

School-wide PBIS provides a positive focus for encouraging desirable student behaviors. A set of universal expectations for behavior, positively stated, are established for all students in all locations of the school. Core values are the premise for all location expectations. Key components of PBIS at Hamlin Elementary are:

- Core values: Be **Respectful**, Be **Responsible**, Be **Ready**, Be **Safe**
 - Core value posters are visible in various locations throughout the building.
- Periodic direct instruction of specific desired behaviors in various locations of the school
 - Specific lessons are taught by our Social Worker, to all classes.
 - Direct instruction is supported by teachers modeling and periodic re-teaching of expected behaviors.
- Positive reinforcement for students demonstrating positive behaviors and core values
 - *Hawk Hoorays*: Given to students, by adults, when ‘caught’ following the core values.
 - *Classroom-Student of the Week*: Weekly drawings occur to acknowledge students receiving Hawk Hoorays. Teachers also enlist other special ways to recognize students.
 - *School-wide-Student of the Month*: Monthly recognition of students; students receive a laminated SOM certificate, their photo is posted on the Hamlin website, students take a ‘selfie’ with the principal, and receive gift certificates to local businesses.
- Predictable consequences for behavior infractions
 - Consequences are per the district code of conduct and are on a continuum that matches the severity of the misbehavior. They are not primarily punitive in nature; they are an opportunity for the student to learn from his or her mistakes and to accept responsibility for their actions.
- Systematic review of discipline data to guide implementation of additional behavior supports

*Source: Michigan Department of Education School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Implementation Guide 2010.

The entire staff of Hamlin Elementary is committed to our core values and we appreciate your continued support in reinforcing these values at home.

Telephone Use/Student Cell Phones

The school phone is available for student use on an emergency basis. We ask that you help your children develop the responsibility to bring their books, lunch, or money to school because such calls are not allowed. Students are not permitted to call home to ask permission to go to someone's home after school. Such arrangements must be made in advance, and the school should be notified of the change. All classroom teachers have a voicemail phone number, and you may leave a message for them at any time. The teacher will return your call as soon as possible. We expect calls to a teacher be made to the school during the day and not to a teacher's home during the evening. Voicemail numbers are published on the school's website. Although student cell phones may be brought to school, they must be turned off upon arrival, remain in the child's backpack and then turned back on after school is dismissed. Failure to follow this procedure will result in the phone being confiscated by administration. Parents must then pick up the phone in the office and that child's phone will no longer be allowed in school.

Visitors

All visitors to the school must report to the office upon their arrival. Visitors will be given a badge to wear that identifies them as a guest in the building. Visitors in the classroom can be disruptive, so parents who wish to visit a classroom should make arrangements with the teacher in advance. We ask that student not bring visitors to school. A teacher's full attention to the students is necessary as the students arrive at school. Parents should not expect to talk with teachers at arrival/departure times unless there is an emergency. Please make an appointment with the teacher for a conference.

Volunteers – Background Check

The Hamlin community truly appreciates its over 100 volunteers per year and all the work they do with our children. In an effort to maintain a safe environment any person that volunteers on a regular basis and any person that is unsupervised with children must go through a background check before being able to volunteer.