



Highland Elementary School Family Handbook 2019/2020

**490 Highland Avenue
Cheshire, CT 06410**

OUR MISSION

Highland School is committed to providing a positive, safe, nurturing environment that inspires all children to achieve their individual potential as life-long learners. We strive to create a community based on mutual respect in which all students become responsible citizens. This commitment relies on a cooperative effort that is centered on students, supported by home and community, and facilitated by teachers and staff.

Highland School's Vision

We are committed to fostering Students who....

- are self-directed learners – consistently demonstrate behaviors that lead to success – are open-minded
- display a positive attitude
- are life-long learners – self-motivated, enthusiastic about learning
- are critical thinkers and problem solvers - adept at using print and technological resources to support their learning
- appreciate all others who may look, speak, or act differently than they do – show respect and courtesy

We are committed to developing Teachers who...

- hold high expectations for all students
- believe that all students can learn and vary their teaching strategies to promote learning for all students
 - are continuous learners who seek out information on best practices and apply their learning in the classroom to maximize student success
 - are proficient in the use of technology to enhance instruction, communicate effectively, and organize data for analysis
 - embrace collaboration and appreciate the talents of other members of the learning community
 - are open-minded, patient, courteous, respectful and display a positive attitude
 - always consider the needs of their students in an ever-changing society and design a learning environment that is responsive to those needs

We are committed to partnering with Parents, Guardians, and Community Members to ...

- ensure that their child completes homework and is well rested and ready to learn
- collaborate with staff to ensure that their child applies/displays the success behaviors in all settings
- utilize the information sent home from school to reinforce their child's academic, social and behavioral development
- volunteer in the school to support the learning of all students

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Important Information

School Day Schedule

Regular Day:

- 8:45 AM Buses Unload
- 8:50 AM School Starts
- 3:20 PM School Dismissal

2-Hour Delay Opening (Students have lunch and recess):

- 10:55 AM School Start
- 3:20 PM School Dismissal

Early Dismissal (Students have lunch but do not have recess):

- 8:45 AM Buses Unload
- 8:50 AM School Starts
- 1:25 PM School Dismissal

No School, Late Start, and Early Dismissal Announcements

If it becomes necessary to dismiss early, **DUE TO WEATHER CONDITIONS**, announcements will be made on local television and radio stations (WFSB Channel 3, WVIT Channel 30, WTNH Channel 8, Local Access Channel 16 – WTIC 1080, WPLR, WMRQ 1410AM, WHCN 104 FM, WKSS 95.7 FM, WELI 960 AM, WDRC 1360 AM – 102.9FM, WRCH 100.5FM, WZMX 93.7FM, WKCI 101 FM, WAVZ 1300 AM. Announcements are even made at the Cheshire Stop and Shop!

We will not call you to inform you of an early dismissal due to weather. An emergency email or phone call will only be used in the event of a **NON-WEATHER RELATED** unscheduled early closing. The contact information used in this case will be taken from School Dismissal Manager.

In addition, **all students need to be aware of their early dismissal plans** that you wrote on the *Highland School Weather and Non-weather Related Closing* form at the beginning of the year. **We will always follow the directions on this form unless you call the front office and tell us otherwise.** Emails will not be accepted.

Many parents/guardians have signed up for instant notification on **WVIT Channel 30, WTNH Channel 8, and WFSB Channel 3** – just go to their websites and sign-up! They will send you an email or text message as soon as the decision has been made.

All families should have an early dismissal plan.

Telephone Directory

- Office 272-0335 (Office Hours are 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)
- Fax 272-9003
- Absentee Line 272-0977
- Transportation 272-2472
- School Cancellation 250-2410

You may also email any staff member by simply typing his/her first initial and last name followed by @cheshire.k12.ct.us (i.e. msmith@cheshire.k12.ct.us). No dismissal plans will be accepted if they are e-mailed to a teacher. However, all staff will respond to phone calls and emails within 24 hours. **For important issues call the office.**

Note: The full text of many of the policies, procedures, and regulations are contained in the “Cheshire Public Schools Parent/Student Handbook.” When applicable, a policy number has been included in this handbook for your convenience.

Website Information

District information can be found on the CPS website <http://www.cheshire.k12.ct.us/>

Information regarding the Highland staff, curriculum, parent news, and school events can be found on the Highland school website <http://www.cheshire.k12.ct.us/highland/>.

You can also stay up to date on school happenings by following us on Twitter: **@HighlandCT**.

One of the goals of the Highland School staff has been to share strategies used in school to promote positive behaviors with parents/guardians. Using the Responsive Classroom approach, teachers regularly implement routines such as morning meeting, team-building activities, positive language, academic choices, and logical consequences. Our Safe School Climate Committee has created a monthly blog in order to share information with you throughout the year. It is our hope that you will also be able to use some of these strategies and techniques at home. <http://highlandrcblog.weebly.com/>

Academic Information

Academic Grade-level and Specialist Subject Curriculum

Details on each area of the Cheshire curriculum may be found on the Cheshire website at www.cheshire.k12.ct.us/asi/overviews.html or www.cheshire.k12.ct.us/highland. At this site, specific documents may be found for each grade level and subject area.

Academically Gifted Program (AGP)

A district-wide Academically Gifted Program is offered to students in grades four through six who qualify through the district process. Please check the Cheshire Public School website, curriculum and instruction link for the description of AGP.

Band

In grade five, interested students have the opportunity to receive beginning instruction with band and string instruments. Small group instruction is available during the school day. In grade six, interested students have the opportunity to continue instruction with band and string instruments. Initial instruction of the band instruments is also available. Details about enrollment are supplied by each Highland's instrumental music teacher.

Chorus

Highland School offers two chorus programs for interested students. The upper chorus is for students in grades four through six and the primary chorus is for kindergarten through three.

Community Meetings - School Families

In an effort to create a sense of community, familiarity, and unity among all Highland students, staff, and faculty, we have created a program called "School Families". .

One way we help students connect with their grade level peers is through Student Community Meetings. Community Meetings help students get to know each other, recognize each others accomplishments, learn about important grade level topics, and enjoy each other's company.

Computers and SMARTBoards

Highland offers one-to-one technology for students in grades 3-6. In addition, Highland has two computer labs providing all students with access to technology utilizing the Google Suite. Teachers integrate technology, including Chromebooks and interactive SMARTboard technology. In addition, kindergarten students have access to iPads for educational purposes. Student activity on the computer is monitored through GoGuardian.

Concerts

At Highland, our students have the opportunity to perform for an audience. Most concerts are held in the evenings. For some of our concerts, tickets are distributed to ensure the safety of students, families, and guests. The Fire Marshal's regulations for capacity of the cafeteria are followed. In early spring, Music Visitation Days are scheduled, during the day, for Grades 3 and 4 music classes so parents can see an overview of what students have accomplished.

Connections Program

The Connections Program provides parents with the opportunity to volunteer in grades kindergarten through four, and in our library media center. Each classroom teacher determines how to best use the volunteers. Parent volunteers might be asked to work with individual students, small groups of students, students, and work in the computer lab.

Drama Club

Highland School has an after-school drama club for our fifth and sixth graders. In the past, we have performed *Twinderella*, *Mother Goose, Inc.*, *Romeo and Harriet*, *Jack and the Giant*, *Singing in the Rain*, *Annie*, *Pinocchio Del Arte*, and *The Wizard of Oz*. Opportunities exist for on-stage and the backstage crew.

Field Trips

Field trips support and enhance the curriculum. Children must understand that field trips are "school" trips and that all school and bus rules apply.

Chaperones are sometimes needed in order to provide adequate adult supervision. The classroom teacher is **responsible** for determining the number of chaperones, and will select those chaperones. Please refrain from attending a field trip unless assigned as a chaperone.

Remember that we cannot take your child on a field trip without a signed permission slip. If we do not have your written permission on file, and we cannot contact you for verbal permission, your child will be assigned to another class for the day and will miss the field trip experience (BOE 6153).

If the field trip requires that you pick your child up after school hours, you must sign your child out with the child's teacher. If you are planning to have another adult pick-up your child, a note must be given to your child's teacher the morning of the trip.

No student will be denied the opportunity to participate in any field trip due to financial hardship. If you require assistance, call the principal. Your request is considered highly confidential.

Homework

Homework is a necessary and integral part of the instructional program and learning process that allows students to follow through on their personal commitment to academic work. Through meaningful assignments, students develop constructive attitudes and sharpen useful skills.

The regular practice of homework requires self-discipline and enables students to function as individuals. Assignments offer opportunities for problem solving and increased learning. Students who benefit most from formal education are those who approach it with curiosity, varied interests, and a willingness to work hard.

Homework is an essential part of the individual's learning and development. Yet it is recognized that time must be allotted for physical and social interaction. Feedback to the child on the quality of completed homework shall be provided by the teacher on a regular basis. Homework activities, differentiated as needed, are designed to accommodate students with learning and organizational difficulties or those with other special needs.

In the homework “triad” each party has specific roles and responsibilities to accept. We suggest the following:

The **TEACHER** will:

1. Assure that learners have a clear understanding of assignments.
2. Provide feedback to the learners.
3. Adjust homework for learners as needed.

The **STUDENT** will:

1. Ask questions in order to clearly understand assignments.
2. Take home appropriate materials needed to complete assignments.
3. Complete the homework assignment.
4. Bring homework to school and hand it in according to the classroom procedures.

The **PARENTS/GUARDIANS** will:

1. Provide a work environment that is conducive to the completion of work.
2. Keep siblings away from the student doing homework.
3. Decide with your child a specific time to complete homework. There is no “best time” to do one’s homework!
4. Let their child work independently and provide support and encouragement.

5. Help with occasional special projects, when requested by the teacher.
6. Write a note to the teacher when your child is experiencing difficulty with the assignment or project.

The full text of this policy with guidelines is contained in the “Cheshire Public Schools Parent/Student Handbook” (BOE 6154).

Instructional Textbooks

Any instructional textbook that is used in any class and/or course currently being used as an e-text is also available in hard copy for use at home. Students are asked to speak to his/her teacher directly to obtain a hard copy of an instructional textbook if needed for use at home.

Instrumental Music

In addition to the general music program provided to all students, instrumental or string instruction is available to interested students in grades five and six.

Instructional Assistants

At Highland we have instructional assistants to help students, with identified needs, in all subject areas.

Interns/Student Teachers

Each year we have college students join our staff. These students are studying to become teachers. We treat them with the same **respect** we give to teachers and other adults at Highland. Interns come to our school every day and work in different parts of the school, often as substitute teachers or instructional assistants.

Additionally, there are student teachers working with cooperating teachers at Highland. This provides them with the necessary experience to become quality teachers.

Open House

These nights are planned so your child's teacher can speak to you about the grade-level curriculum. You will also learn about your child's schedule and some of the special events planned for the year. Please remember that, during this evening, the teachers are meeting all of their students' parents/guardians and do not have a sufficient amount of time to talk to you about how your child is doing in class. We will have conferences in the fall and spring, to discuss individual student progress. If you have questions or concerns at any time, please feel free to give the teacher a call and/or request a conference.

Report Cards and Parent/Guardian Conferences

Communication of student progress is an important vehicle in maintaining a home and school connection. The conference times have been set aside so your child's teacher can meet with you to discuss academic and social progress made during a marking period. It is very important that you attend these informative conferences so you and the teacher can begin to establish a partnership that will serve all the needs of your child. Conferences are usually

scheduled close together so please **respect** set times so all parents have a chance to meet with the teachers. Written report cards and parent conferences are determined and posted on the annual school calendar. Please note changes in dismissal times on conference days (*BOE 5124*).

Student Council

The mission of the Highland Student Council is to provide leadership development that emphasizes respect, cooperation, and school improvement. The primary focus is to promote a school with a respectful atmosphere that prepares students for becoming leaders.

Student Council representatives are determined in grades two through six at the beginning of each school year. They are role models to students at Highland and must exhibit appropriate behaviors. Each sixth grade representative is paired with a kindergarten and first grade class to keep them informed of Student Council activities and information.

Teaching Assistants

At Highland we have several teacher assistants who help us supervise the students during lunch and recess. Their primary focus is to maintain a safe lunch and recess environment for our students. They also communicate directly with classroom teachers and administration regarding student concerns.

Student Expectations

Behavior

Our behavior plan for Highland School is designed to ensure that children are free from physical and emotional disturbances anywhere in the school. Whenever necessary we will take the appropriate action that will make all areas of our school a place where your child is respected and safe. If your child's behavior is inappropriate to the point where it warrants a visit to the principal, we will work to have the child understand the reason for the visit, and only call you if necessary. In some situations, a Discipline Notice is sent home to parents/guardians. Our wish is to have all children assume greater **responsibility** for their own actions, which means accepting the meaningful and logical consequences for any inappropriate behaviors. We are confident you will work together, in partnership with us, to support this position.

At Highland School, students are expected to be kind, honest, responsible, and caring. Students are expected to:

1. Be honest.
2. Be courteous and respectful to everyone.
3. Respect and take care of our school and personal property.
4. Use good manners (e.g., Say please and thank you.).
5. Use appropriate, respectful speaking voices and tones.

6. Walk at all times when inside the building.
7. Walk quietly in the hallways, respecting that others are still working in their rooms.
8. Keep hands, feet and belongings to yourself.
9. Pick up papers or other items that have dropped on the floor.
10. Remove hats when in the building.
11. Refrain from chewing gum and eating candy.

Behavior - Bus

The safety of all children on the school bus is our highest priority. Bus transportation is a privilege extended to students conditional upon satisfactory behavior. Video cameras may be used on school buses to monitor student behavior (*BOE 5131.11*). School buses provide a safe means of transportation for many students. All students are expected to follow the bus safety rules as outlined in the "Cheshire Public Schools Parent/Student Handbook." In addition to the bus safety rules as outlined in the "Cheshire Public Schools Parent/Student Handbook," students are expected to:

1. Walk to their bus safely.
2. Board the bus in an orderly fashion, and take their seat quickly.
3. Share seats with others and remain seated until their designated stop.
4. Use appropriate language and respectful speaking voices while riding the bus.
5. Keep hands, feet, and belongings inside the bus and to yourself.
6. Follow the directions and be respectful of the bus driver whose responsibility is the safety of all passengers.
7. Show respect to others at all times.

Please refer to the "Cheshire Public Schools Parent/Student Handbook" for a detailed explanation of bus behavior consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Behavior - Cafeteria

Lunch is a time for eating with friends. Students are expected to:

1. Use good table manners.
2. Listen to all adults.
3. Stay in their seats at all times while eating.
4. Use appropriate quiet speaking voices at their table.
5. Keep hands, feet, and belongings to yourself.
6. Listen quietly to directions.
7. Eat food appropriately.
8. Clean up after yourself when finished eating.
9. Enter and exit the cafeteria walking, safely and quietly.

Behavior - Classroom

Classroom behavior ensures a safe, positive learning environment for all students. Teachers have the authority and responsibility to maintain discipline in the classroom. Your child's teacher will inform his/her students of the class expectations. Students are expected to:

1. Respect teachers and other adults.
2. Respect themselves and classmates.
3. Use good manners.
4. Come to school ready to learn.
5. Respect the property of Highland School and of others.
6. Use appropriate speaking level for the activity of the classroom.
7. Take care of classroom materials, for example, books, calculators, and computers.

Behavior –Dismissal

The dismissal of children is safe, efficient, and orderly. Students are expected to:

1. Walk to the assigned dismissal area and stand quietly in line.
2. Remain in line until dismissal is called.
3. Use quiet voices.
4. Listen carefully to teachers on duty.

Behavior – Hallway

While in the hallways, students are expected to:

1. Listen to the directions of the teacher.
2. Walk at all times.
3. Stay in line behind the person in front of them.
4. Keep their hands, feet and belongings down by their sides.
5. Remain quiet, no talking.

Behavior - Recess

Recess is a time to socialize with friends and classmates. Students are expected to:

Outside:

1. Listen to all supervising adults.
2. Respect other students on the playground.
3. Walk to the playground in a safe and orderly manner.
4. Follow the playground safety rules.
5. Ask supervising adults for help when needed.
6. Stay on school grounds.
7. Actively participate in appropriate activities.
8. Re-enter the building safely and quietly.

Inside:

1. Listen to all supervising adults.

2. Show respect to teachers and students at all times.
3. Walk at all times.
4. Speak quietly with friends.
5. Ask a supervising adult for permission to leave the classroom.
6. Actively participate in appropriate activities.

Behavior – Logical Consequences

Logical consequences are reasonable and respectful and are not considered punishment. Through logical consequences, students learn to be accountable for their behavior.

A structured learning opportunity is put into place when a student forgets one of Highland's "rules." Attempts are made to match the inappropriate behavior with the consequence. For example, destruction of school property or the property of any student may result in the need to replace the damaged article. The teacher may conference with the student and/or parent/guardian. The situation may be referred to the school counselor and/or principal.

Based upon the number and nature of the rule violations, any combination of the following consequences may be issued by the teacher, counselor, or principal:

- warning;
- reparation
- time out;
- loss of privilege – student forfeits participation;
- Highland Service;
- parent contact/conference;
- after school detention;
- in or out of school suspension.

Completion of a Behavior Reflection Form

This process helps your child present his/her view of the situation and hopefully to understand the situation from another point of view. The student also has an opportunity to suggest what s/he would do differently the next time. A copy of the reflection is mailed home to parents. Please discuss this form and behavior with your child.

Time Out ("Take a Break")

Students who have disrupted the learning process in the classroom and/or school may lose time during any activity on the day closest to that of the occurrence.

After School Detention

This time is set aside for students to make-up learning time missed for a variety of reasons. Students will be supervised by a teacher or a principal. Parents/guardians will be contacted prior to this consequence being imposed.

Highland Service

This time is set-aside for students to give back to the school. Students may “work,” for example, in the library or in a classroom.

Suspension

Students may be placed on in-school suspension, out of school suspension, or referred to the Board of Education for expulsion by the school principal for serious misbehavior (*BOE 5114*).

Safe School Climate

“Bullying” means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district that:

- A. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student’s property,
- B. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
- C. creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
- D. infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
- E. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, oral or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics. The student (or students) against whom the activity is directed and the student (or students) directing the activity must be attending school in the Cheshire Public Schools. (see BOE Policy 5131.911 and the “Safe School Plan” on the Highland School website for more information)

Dress Code

Our guiding principle in determining the appropriateness of dress and grooming is based upon standards that are acceptable for a public school environment. Keeping in mind that school is

more formal than informal, clothing that may be distracting to the learning process or disruptive to a classroom will not be permitted. Specifically, T-shirts that advertise inappropriate topics (such as alcohol, tobacco, illegal substances, and phrases with sexual connotations or double meanings) should not be worn. Jeans and shorts must be worn at the waist and “tops” must cover the midriff. Furthermore, we ask that shorts be long enough to cover fully that which should be covered and that tank tops not only do the same, but that they be worn with appropriate undergarments. Lastly, please do not have your children wear “flip flops” “heelys” (the skating shoes with wheels in the sole), or high heels because students can easily trip while outside during recess or while transitioning to other classrooms within the school building. The building administrators are the sole judge of a student’s dress and/or grooming (*BOE 5132*). Note: Sneakers for P.E. should be athletic shoes which completely enclose the foot and stay on securely.

Electronic Devices, Games, Meaningful Jewelry, and Valued Toys

Expensive electronic games, valued personal collections (sports cards, stuffed animals, etc.) and meaningful jewelry should be left at home. The school cannot be **responsible** if these are broken or lost. Oftentimes, these items take away from the learning that is going on or create behavior conflicts in the classrooms. If we feel these games, cards, or toys interfere with learning, we may take them from your child and return them at the end of the day so your child may take them home. **Students are not permitted to use cell phones, beepers, pagers, walkie-talkies, i-Pods, MP3 Players, electronic toys and games, or other electronic devices while at school or on the buses unless they are to be used for educational purposes as deemed appropriate by the teacher.** Electronic devices not used for educational purposes will be taken away and parents or guardians will be notified (*BOE 5131.81*).

Flags

Every classroom displays the United States flag. Each day begins with the Pledge of Allegiance and a Moment of Silent Reflection (*BOE 6115*).

Student Responsibility

Students are encouraged to develop the habit of coming to school on time and to be prepared for each day, ready to learn. In the interest of teaching our children responsibility, the school requests that forgotten items **not** be brought to school by parents. Unless there is precipitation, all students participate in outdoor recess throughout the year and should dress appropriately for the weather.

Room Maintenance

Students are taught to take responsibility for the safety, appearance, and care of their classroom and school. They participate as much as possible in the maintenance of a safe, clean, and orderly building. During the day, students ensure that:

1. Books and classroom materials are stored in an organized way.

2. Desks are cleaned and organized.
3. Paper and materials are picked up off the floor.
4. Chairs are pushed in to prevent accidents.
5. Coat closet area is neat and orderly.

Physical Education

For safety and ease of movement all students are required to wear sneakers for physical education classes. Sneakers need to enclose the entire foot and should be fastened securely to stay on the foot. Students who do not wear sneakers will be asked to watch the class for the day as sandals, heeled shoes, boots (Uggs) work boots and leather sole shoes become slippery and are unsafe for most physical education lessons and activities.

Participation in Physical Education is a state mandated and the Highland procedure for attendance is as follows: Students attending class must participate in the daily lessons unless for a health reason. A note from the parent/guardian excusing them for one class. If multiple classes are to be missed the note must be from the child's physician with a date for their safe return to class.

In addition, students in grades K, 1, 2, 3 are required to wear clothing that is safe, comfortable, and easy to move in.

For students in grades 4, 5, and 6 must have a change of their shirt so that they return to class after physical education in their clean, dry school clothes. They may change before and after class in the locker rooms. They may also change into shorts if they so desire for comfort and ease of movement, for example many prefer to change into shorts in the winter for basketball and gymnastics units. Students who forget their to bring their change of shirt will be permitted to participate if they so choose knowing that they may return to class sweaty depending on the level of activity. Repeated forgetfulness (3 or more consecutive unprepared) will result in sitting out one class. Beginning this healthy and sanitary habit in fourth grade has made the transition for changing in middle-school much easier for Highland students.

Support Services

Nurse

Our school has the services of one registered nurse and a part-time registered nurse. If it is necessary for your child to take medication during the school day, the prescription must be brought to the nurse in the morning with a form from the doctor. The school nurse must administer all medications.

If a child does not feel well, the school nurse will assess the child's condition and determine if the child should be dismissed from school. Students that are dismissed for medical reasons

should be picked up as soon as possible. Parents are asked to keep students home for 24 hours after a fever or vomiting subsides.

Our school nurse makes every attempt to contact you in the case of an “emergency.” If you cannot be reached, the emergency contact person or your family physician (if warranted) will be called. It is very important that your child’s emergency information is current and accurate. During the year, if your family’s emergency information changes, please notify the nurse’s office, where all emergency information is kept on file.

PARENTS ARE REQUIRED TO NOTIFY THE SCHOOL HEALTH OFFICE IF THEIR CHILD HAS A CONTAGIOUS DISEASE.

Literacy Support

In order to improve the reading achievement of some students, there is a Literacy Support Team for children in grades kindergarten through six who are performing below grade level with regard to their reading and/or math achievement. This program is designed to provide assistance and instruction to students who struggle with reading or math process so that they can perform at grade level as quickly as possible.

School Counselors

Our school counselors provide a planned sequential program of guidance services geared to students’ developmental and personal needs in the classroom. In addition, the school counselors provide individual or group counseling for children who demonstrate a need through our PPT process or for children who encounter changes and challenges within their families and lives. They also consult with teachers and parents.

School Psychologist

The services of the school psychologist include assessment, counseling, and consultation. The assessment process involves observing the child, administering psychological tests (if recommended by the Parent and Placement Team (PPT) – see next page), and consulting with the child’s teacher and parents. Upon identification of specific needs, the school psychologist works with the PPT in determining an appropriate program for the child. In addition, the school psychologist provides individual or group counseling for children who demonstrate a need through our PPT process or for children who encounter changes and challenges within their families and lives.

Special Education

Many special education services are available to all children qualifying for such services under federal and state guidelines. However, parental permission is required and must be received before we can assess and/or plan a special education program for any child. Upon completion

of a student's assessment, a planning meeting (PPT) is held, in which parents are invited to give input into their child's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Speech/Language

Students are identified through the school referral process. When a student qualifies, the school speech/language pathologist works with the identified child individually, and/or in small groups, in developmental language, auditory and speech articulation programs, and remediation of voice and fluency problems.

Scientific Research-Based Instruction (SRBI)

The SRBI team may discuss students who demonstrate academic and/or social difficulty in the classroom. The team consists of classroom teachers, special educators, specialists, school counselors, school psychologist, and principal or assistant principal. The teacher can request an SRBI meeting at any time during the school year. These meetings serve as informal brainstorming sessions in search of accommodations to a child's classroom instruction. It should be clearly understood that this process is part of "regular education," and not a part of "special education." Upon review of the student's progress, after accommodations have been implemented, and if the student is still struggling, the SRBI Team may refer the student to the Planning and Placement Team (PPT).

Planning and Placement Team (PPT)

To plan the most effective program for some children exhibiting special needs, an accurate assessment of these needs may be recommended by the Planning and Placement Team. The PPT members are: parents, administrator, classroom teacher, and a special educator. The school psychologist, guidance counselor, speech pathologist, occupational therapist, and/or nurse may also be invited to attend this meeting. The role of the PPT is to determine how best to meet the special needs of the child.

English Learner Program (EL)

The primary goal of the Cheshire Public Schools' EL program is to increase the English language proficiency of limited English proficient (LEP) students so that they can fully and successfully participate in all mainstreamed classes at an age-appropriate grade level. A related goal is to help these students succeed in school and meet state and district academic standards. To meet these goals, the objectives of EL instruction are to develop students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English, and to provide an educational environment which helps the EL student understand and cope with a new culture. An ELL program is provided in each Cheshire school when at least one student is in need of ELL

instruction. EL services are offered in a general education classroom that provides structured English Immersion (SEI) during individual or small group sessions, as well as some pull-out services when appropriate to individual needs.

The district wide ELL program has one full-time teacher who services all eligible students in grades kindergarten through six. Each ELL student is initially screened for eligibility and is evaluated at the end of the year. Initial evaluation of a student is conducted when the student is referred for ELL services.

DCF Mandated Reporter

Suspected CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT AND SEXUAL ASSAULT - All school employees, including teachers, superintendents, administrators, coaches of intramural or interscholastic athletics, paraprofessionals and other professional school staff including guidance counselors, school counselors, paraprofessionals, social workers, psychologists, licensed nurses, physicians, licensed behavior analysts, and substitute teachers are obligated by law (C.G.S. 17a-101) to report suspected child abuse, neglect, or if a child is placed in imminent danger of serious harm or sexual assault by a school employee to the Connecticut State Department of Children and Families Services. Specific procedures governing the reporting of abuse and neglect are in effect, and staff receives training in their use, as required by state law. Reporting of child abuse, neglect and sexual assault by a school employee is a responsibility which is taken seriously. If there is any doubt about reporting suspected abuse, neglect or a sexual assault a report will be made. The school will work with the parents and appropriate social agencies in all cases. Child abuse is defined as any physical injury inflicted by other than accidental means or injuries which are not in keeping with the explanation given for their cause. Improper treatment such as malnutrition, sexual molestation, deprivation of necessities, emotional abuse, cruel punishment or neglect are also considered child abuse. The Board of Education will post in each school the telephone number of the Department of Children and Families' child abuse hotline, Careline, and the Internet web address that provides information about the Careline in a conspicuous location frequented by students. Such posting shall be in various languages appropriate for the students enrolled in the school.

Parent Information

Arrival

Student arrival begins at 8:45 AM. Students should not arrive prior to 8:45 AM as we do not have adult supervision. Students should go directly to their classrooms. If the teacher is not in the classroom, students should line up quietly in the hallway next to their classroom door unless otherwise noted.

When dropping your child(ren) off in the morning at the first grade circle, be sure to pull up to the sidewalk and have your child(ren) exit your vehicle on the passenger side only. This will ensure that students do not cross in front of vehicles that are exiting this area during a very busy time of our school day. Do not park along the curb when you need to enter the building, so that the area in front of the sidewalk is kept clear and cars can pull up to the curb for student

drop off. Drop off should be quick so that all parents/guardians are able to pull forward and do not have to back up. If you need to have a conversation with your child, please utilize one of our parking spaces. Please make sure that you drive in only one lane of traffic. Although this procedure may mean a few minutes of wait time for you, we ask that you have patience and follow this procedure so that we can keep everyone safe.

Attendance - Absences

Schools are responsible for teaching your child. A child who misses a day of school also misses a day of learning that might never be replaced.

In case of illness or excused absence, please call the school's absentee line (203-272-0977) to notify the office of the excused absence no later than 9:30 AM. **Please provide your child with a written excuse when he/she returns to school.** School staff will call the home of any absent student not reported to the office. Excused absences are listed in the "Cheshire Public Schools Parent/Student Handbook." Religious holidays requiring absences are considered excused absences (*BOE 5113*). When a student reaches nine absences, a notice will be sent home to remind parents/guardians of the BOE Absence Policy (*BOE 5113*). Once a student reaches 12 or more absences, a letter will be sent home outlining the impact these absences have on the child's education. A child missing 10% or more of the school year is considered a "Chronically Absent Child" and will be subject to a meeting with the Attendance Review Team.

Channel of Communication

If there is a question about a student's classes or work in school, it is best to first contact the person who is closest to the situation. In most cases this is the teacher. The proper channeling of concerns regarding instruction, discipline or learning materials is:

(1) teacher, (2) principal, (3)superintendent, (4) board of education .

Tardy

It is the responsibility of every child to get to school on time every day. School begins at 8:50 AM. Tardiness may cause students to "feel like they are late and they have to hurry to catch up." They may miss assignments, directions, and special announcements, etc. that are made at the beginning of the day. A child is considered tardy after 8:55 AM. Any student arriving after 8:55 AM must report to the office with his/her parent/guardian to sign in before going to his/her classroom (*BOE 5113(b)*).

Family Trips and Vacations

An unreported absence is an unexcused absence. Absences are excused only for illness or certain family emergencies at the discretion of the principal. Vacations and family trips are considered unexcused absences and need to have permission of the principal. **We strongly**

urge you to plan your trips around the school vacations whenever possible. No matter what make-up work is done, you cannot fully duplicate the classroom time that is lost by going on a trip that results in your child missing time from school. It is impossible to replace the instruction, discussion, and activities, which take place in the classroom. If you find that you have no option but to take your child out of school for an extended period you must notify the principal, in writing, before you make arrangements for the trip (*BOE 5113(a)*). Upon returning to school, it is the responsibility of the students and parents to make suitable arrangements for making up work, which has been missed. In general, a day for submitting completed classroom assignments will be allowed for each day of absence (*BOE 6154.1 (b)*).

Truancy

A “Truant” is any student who has four unexcused absences in a month or ten unexcused absences in a school year. A “Habitual Truant” is any student who has twenty unexcused absences in a school year (*BOE 5113(b)*).

Requests for Early Dismissals

Students are expected to be in school all day. Early dismissals should be requested only in emergency or unusual situations. Requests for early dismissal must be in writing and signed by a parent or legal guardian. Such requests shall be subject to the approval of the building principal. In an emergency, telephone requests for early dismissal will be approved (*BOE 5113(d & e)*).

Parents/guardians are required to go to the office and to sign their child out. Parents must wait in the office for their child. The student will be called to the office when the parent arrives. Please do not go directly to your child’s classroom or make the request while your child is waiting in the bus line.

Although we do realize that emergencies occur, we ask that whenever possible, you schedule doctor and/or dentist appointments and other commitments for your children after school and not during school hours. Each early dismissal request we receive results in a classroom disruption for all students. Leaving early may cause students to miss assignments, special announcements, etc. that are made at the end of the day. Please avoid requesting early dismissals within the last ten to fifteen minutes of the day, unless absolutely necessary. These requests are disruptive to students and classroom teachers who are completing the end-of-the-day activities, but also to office staff that is preparing for school dismissal.

Bicycles

Students in grades four through six may ride bicycles to school. **Students using bicycles must walk them on school property – bicycle riding on school grounds is not permitted.** Bicycles must be parked in the racks provided immediately upon arrival. Students should provide locks to secure the bicycle to the rack. The school will not be responsible for bicycles

brought to school. Written parental permission is required for riding bicycles to and from school. Remember, all students who ride bicycles to school must wear a helmet.

Birthday and Holiday Parties

Everyone enjoys celebrating birthdays. We'd like to invite your child to share her/his birthday with classmates, but remember that *some classmates may be allergic to some foods. So, before you decide how to celebrate your child's birthday please check with your child's teacher.* Please refer to our Guidelines for Food and Beverages Offered to Students at School in the appendix. When planning birthday parties that take place outside of school, invitations cannot be handed out in school even if you are planning on inviting every child in the classroom. In addition, delivery of balloons, flowers, and other birthday gifts are not to be distributed at school and should be reserved for celebrations outside of school.

Book Fair

The Book Fair is a great place to buy new books for your home library. Many parents work very hard and long so you will have a lot of books from which to choose. Be sure to watch for a notice telling you all about this exciting event.

Class Placement

Placement is done with the collaboration of the principal, grade level teachers, and professional support staff. It is our primary goal to place each child in an environment where s/he will learn best. An additional goal of the staff is to create classrooms that are heterogeneous in composition, reflecting the variety of students in the school at a given grade level. We accomplish this by carefully balancing classes as to girl/boy ratio; academic performance; special learning needs; independent work habits; and social-emotional development. We believe that parents know their child very well and may wish to share any additional information about which we may not be aware. You have the opportunity to do so in the spring prior to the next year's placement.

Dismissal

The dismissal of children is safe, efficient, and orderly. Dismissal is at 3:20 PM. Children assigned to a bus must ride to and from school on their assigned bus. Children changing a bus stop must receive written permission and a bus pass from the office. As a rule, students may not ride any bus other than the one to which they are assigned. However, a child may be transported to an established alternate location for the purpose of day care or a community program; or to another location if the parent suffers hardship or unique circumstances. Transportation to and from the established alternate location must be at least two days per school week. Requests for transportation to an established alternate location must be made directly to the Transportation Department.

Children living within walking distance will be dismissed from their classrooms. All children must walk on the sidewalks and cross at a crosswalk. No one should cross between parked buses or cars. Children attending YMCA After-Care will report to the designated areas at the end of the day.

Any change in transportation must be made using School Dismissal Manager. School Dismissal Manager is a web-based technology that allows you to communicate your child's change in dismissal plans safely, easily and quickly.

To make a change in your child's transportation plans for the day, log onto the following website: <http://www.schooldismissalmanager.com>

To Sign-In:

Enter your *username* (which is your email address).

Enter your *password* (which was emailed to you).

Click *Log In*.

Select A Date

Find the *date* you wish to change on the two-week calendar.

Select Your Child

Click on your *child's name*.

Select A Driver And Activity

A *yellow box* will be displayed on the left indicating rider and driver.

Click on *Select A Driver* and a drop down menu will appear.

Click on *Add A New Driver* and a screen will appear with two boxes.

In the *first box*, indicate either:

the name of the driver who will be picking up your child;

the bus # that your child will ride home;

or "walker/bike."

In the *second box*, titled Describe Activity, indicate:

a brief reason for the transportation change.

Example: Walking home with Jane Doe.

Click *Add Record* and, if this is the first time you are selecting a particular transportation method, this step will create a new option in the drop down menu.

Use the *drop down menu* to select the new option.

Arrange For A Pickup Change

Enter the name of the person picking up your child in the field labeled *Driver Name or Bus*.

Enter a brief reason for pickup in the field labeled *Describe Activity*.

Example:

Driver Name or Bus: Sally Sample

Describe Activity: Johnny Sample car pickup

This entry would indicate that your child (Johnny Sample) will be picked up by Sally Sample.

Arrange For Your Child To Walk Or Ride A Bike

Enter "Walker" or "Biker" in the field labeled *Driver Name or Bus*.

Remember to click *Logout* when you are finished.

If this notification is not received, the student will follow his/her usual dismissal procedure. Please do not call the school or drop in at the end of the day with a request to pick up your child, as it is often very hectic in the office. **Do not e-mail your child's teacher or leave a message on the office message machine stating your child's dismissal plans. We may not get the message before dismissal.**

Any child being picked up by a parent/guardian at the regular dismissal time (3:20 PM) will report directly to the cafeteria. **You must enter the cafeteria to sign out your child.**

Teachers will not release students to parents in the classrooms.

Security Drills

Highland School conducts monthly security drills including Evacuation Drills, Lockdown Drills, Secure Building Drills, and Shelter In Place Drills. Drill routes and procedures are reviewed and practiced with the teachers, students, and Cheshire Police and Fire. Any parents/guardians or visitors in the building must exit the building immediately upon hearing a fire alarm. They must also follow the school safety procedures in case of a lockdown or shelter-in-one-place drill.

Lost and Found

Items that are found and turned in are placed in the Lost and Found, which is located in the cafeteria. Please encourage your child to check the Lost and Found if s/he has lost something. All items not claimed at the end of the school year will be donated to a local shelter. **Please be sure that all personal items are labeled.**

Lunch Program

Although students may bring their own lunch and purchase milk, hot lunch is offered daily at Highland School. A debit account is set up for each student. Money sent in to purchase hot lunch will be credited to your child's account. All transactions must be made when children arrive at school in the morning. Checks should be made payable to *Highland Lunch Program*.

Maintenance

We have building maintainers and maintenance staff members who help to keep our facility operational.

Notices Home

School notices will only be sent home on Tuesdays and Fridays. On these days, parents are strongly urged to check children's backpacks.

Office Staff

We have a diligent office staff that is able to assist you with any school related questions. Feel free to give them a call anytime during office hours (8:00 AM to 4:00 PM) (203-272-0335). For routine questions we ask that you avoid calling during the first and last fifteen minutes of the school day because these are very busy times.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Formal conferences are scheduled in October and March for all students. This is a time to learn more about your child's progress as well as other matters. With the teacher, you will have an opportunity to set up a time and date for a conference. However, open communication is encouraged throughout the school year. You may contact your child's teacher via e-mail, a telephone message, or a written note.

Pets

We love pets, but taking them to school is not a good idea. Many of our students have allergies. So, if your child wants to take his/her favorite pet to school for sharing, you must first ask the teacher. S/he will make sure no one in the class is allergic to your pet. Parents will have to

bring the pet to school and stay with it while their child shares it, and then take it home (BOE 6163.2).

Photography and Videotaping

From time to time, photographs or videos are taken of classrooms “in action” to demonstrate a particular aspect of a curriculum or the implementation of a specific program. These photographs or videos are sometimes used in a presentation to the Board of Education, teachers, parent groups, and community groups or on television via the Cheshire channel. On occasion, photographs of students are placed in newspapers concerning events at school.

Any parent or guardian who objects to a photograph or video of his or her child used in the manner described should contact the principal in writing.

Students are prohibited from taking pictures and/or videos at school or school functions without the subject’s knowledge. It is prohibited to post pictures, or videos taken at school or at a school event, on the internet without the permission of the building principal.

PTO

The Parent Teacher Organization of Highland School is a very strong advocate for our school. Through the efforts of the PTO, Highland students enjoy educational cultural arts programs, family fun, enhanced computer technology, etc. The list is almost endless. The PTO meets in the library reference room. Your support through membership and participation will help the PTO continue to enrich your child’s education, and you will receive a student directory!

PTO - Connections

Connections is our Volunteer Program in which parents may come to school and help in a variety of ways. Connections volunteers assist teachers and students in grades kindergarten through four. Volunteers may help as often or as little as their schedule will allow. Some volunteers work at home to prepare materials. Through the work of the Connections program, the quality of our students’ education is greatly enhanced. You are encouraged to participate in your child’s school community. Please complete the Connections Volunteer Form at the beginning of the school year.

Room Parents

Room parents are needed to help classroom teachers plan and chaperone special activities that occur throughout the year. Please communicate with your child’s teacher if you would like to volunteer as a room parent.

School Store

The PTO sponsored school store is located in the Community Lobby. A variety of school-related items are sold at the school during posted times. See posted times in the [Daily Parent/Guardian Bulletin](#).

Skateboards and Rollerblades

Skateboards and rollerblades are not permitted on school grounds or in the building (*BOE 5142.3*).

Snacks

Students at Highland are provided the opportunity to have a light snack in their classrooms. We ask that students bring in a snack that is **nutritious** and of reasonable size. Students may also bring water bottles to school, but need to follow specific guidelines in each classroom for their use.

Strategic Planning Committee

A strategic plan begins with mission and vision statements. All of our school's goals support these statements. Each year the committee produces a Strategic Plan with goals and action plans aligned with the CPS major initiatives. This document briefly summarizes the school's purpose and operations, what it wants to accomplish, and what it will do for that given year.

Substitutes (Referred to as Guest Teachers)

A guest teacher or intern will occasionally teach students at Highland School. The most common reason for using guest teachers or interns occurs when the regular teacher is ill. However, guest teachers are also used when regular teachers are on leave for personal business, professional training and meetings, or a family emergency. Because a guest teacher is a guest in our building, students should treat the substitute with the same respect given to a regular teacher.

Visitors and Volunteers in the School

Please review the Guidelines for Volunteers in the Appendix of this handbook.

Visitors are welcome at Highland School. Visitors are to abide by the established administrative regulations governing their arrival, presence, and departure so that the learning, welfare, and safety of the students in the school are not compromised. All visitors, including parents/guardians, are required to report to the school's Main Office before walking through the halls or visiting classrooms, the cafeteria, etc. Visitors are required to sign in and out using the LobbyGuard Visitor Management system. **Visitors are required to provide a valid picture identification upon entrance and will use their identification to register through LobbyGuard.** A "Visitor's Identification Tag" will be provided and must be worn while visiting the school.

Please remember, that visitors may not visit a classroom unless they have an appointment with the teacher (*BOE 1250*). If you would like to spend a significant amount of time with your child at school, permission is needed from the building principal. Also, visitors may not visit or observe other programs during the school day, such as recess, without prior approval from the

school principal. Parental participation in recess activities is not allowed for apparent safety reasons. The principal reserves the right to accompany visitors on any visit, therefore, please call the principal's secretary to make an appointment.

On occasion, visitors may wish to visit your child during lunch. If you visit your child during lunch, keep in mind that you must sit on a chair at the end of the lunch table and that you cannot extend a lunch visit without prior approval.

We have many volunteers working in our school. These volunteers may be parents, grandparents, or people from our community. We are very lucky to have all of these people working with our students and teachers. Students should always remember to be kind and respectful to them because they are giving up their free time to help us. Volunteers are required to report to the school's Main Office before walking through the halls or visiting classrooms. Volunteers are required to sign in and out using the LobbyGuard visitor management system. Volunteers are also need to wear a "Visitor's Identification Tag" with their name, date, and intended location while they are in the school and return the tag to the office when they sign out (BOE 1212).

Appendix

Study Habits and Learning Strategies

Guidelines for Volunteers

Health Policies

Guidelines for Food and Beverages Offered to Students at School

Highland School Safe School Climate Plan

District Calendar (See CPS webpage <http://www.cheshire.k12.ct.us/>)

Study Habits and Learning Strategies:

To Succeed in School:

In order for you to become successful in achieving good study habits, here are some helpful techniques which may make learning more effective and enjoyable.

- Come to class prepared with writing instruments, paper, and other necessary materials.
- Listen well, actively participate, and ask questions in class.
- Schedule time after school for homework.
- Always do your best work. Set your own expectations high.
- Get plenty of sleep, especially on school nights, and keep a healthy diet.

- **Visual Learner** - Do you seem to learn best by reading and using other visual formats such as looking at pictures, diagrams, or graphs? You might find it helpful to take notes and make pictures in your mind to help remember information.

- **Tactile/Kinesthetic Learner** - Do you learn best when you can move about and handle things? You might find it best to have manipulatives or objects to help you remember information.

Listening Skills:

Be Prepared:

Being prepared helps you to be a better learner.

- Keep your supplies and materials in their place.
- Use a pocket folder for bringing work and notices to and from school.
- Every week clean out old work and notices from your folder or backpack.
- Use your agenda to help plan long-term projects and reports.
- Prepare for the next day. Put books, papers, and supplies in your backpack the night before. Have your musical instruments or projects with your backpack. Leave yourself a note for anything you will need to remember for the next day.

Learning Styles:

Your learning style is your strength. When you study it may be helpful to keep in mind the way you best learn.

- **Auditory Learner** – Do you seem to learn best by listening and participating in class discussions? You may find it helpful reading aloud or talking things out to help you gain a better understanding. You might like to use listening tapes.

Being a good listener helps you to do better in school. There are several strategies that help you to become better listeners.

- Look at the person who is speaking.
- Sit up straight.
- Think about the main ideas that the speaker is saying. What points do they want to get across?
- Form questions in your mind about what the speaker is saying.
- Good listeners listen with their face as well as their ears. Show the speaker you are listening by nodding with agreement, smiling, or frowning.
- Give feedback to the speaker. Ask questions if you are unsure of any part you heard.
- Wait until the speaker has finished before raising your hand or beginning to speak.

Preparing to Study:

There are things you can do to help you be prepared to study. Remember that doing homework is an important part of learning.

When you study, keep these things in mind:

- Decide on a regular schedule every day.
- Decide on a place without distractions to study.
- A quiet environment helps most students study best. If you are a learner that likes some noise, keep the volume on your television or radio low.

- Make sure that you have books or papers before you begin to study.
- Choose a comfortable place to sit. A chair that is not comfortable can interfere with your learning or even make you sleepy.
- Make sure that your learning space has enough light. You should be able to see your work clearly without eye strain or discomfort.
- Questions - Have questions in your mind as you read. Questions will help you to stay focused on what you are reading. Use the words *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how* to form your questions. Form a question for each heading.
- Read - Read the information after each heading to find the answer to your question. As you read.
- Write – Write each of your questions and your answers. Make sure that your answers contain important information about what you read.

Study Strategies:

There are several different study strategies that you should be familiar with when you are studying.

Reading Strategies --When you are reading there are some strategies that you can use:

Survey Method — When reading fiction or nonfiction:

- Look at the title. The title helps you to know the main idea or theme of what you will read.
- Look at the pictures. The pictures help you to visualize what you are reading about.
- Read the captions. The captions give you specific information about the pictures.
- Read the introduction. In an article or story it is the first few paragraphs. This section introduces you to what you will be reading.
- Read the heading. The headings tell the main points of what you will be reading.
- Read the words in special print. A word in bold or italic print usually introduces you to new

vocabulary.

SQRW — Strategies for reading and taking notes from a chapter.

- Survey — Think about what you already know about the topic. Look over what you

Memorizing — Many things in school just need to be memorized. Memorizing takes time and practice. There are several strategies to help you memorize information.

- Use a mnemonic. This is a strategy where you make up words to help you remember. An example is the names of the great lakes, HOMES — (Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, and Superior).
- Make up a short story or poem to help you memorize information. Include what you need to know in your poem or story.
- Practice what you are learning with a look, say, write, and check approach.

Flashcards — Using flashcards can help with learning math facts, states and capitals, spelling or vocabulary words, and learning specific information like measurement questions.

- When practicing with flashcards, begin with three piles: those you know quickly; those you know, but need a little more practice with; and those you don't know.
- When practicing, chunk your work into sections. For example: learn all the states and capitals by region, practice spelling words with similar spelling patterns, study math by a specific table (i.e., all facts with a 7 in them) or fact families.

are going to read, and pay attention to such things as pictures, tables, maps, and graphs. Survey helps you to quickly learn about what you will read.

Highland School Confidentiality Guidelines for Volunteers

A School Volunteer is...

Dependable

- The volunteer keeps appointments, is prompt, and notifies the proper person, well in advance if an appointment cannot be kept.
- The volunteer signs in and out in the *Visitor Register* located in the main office and wears a Visitor's Tag while in the school building.

Discreet

- A volunteer's work is confidential. Students should not be discussed with anyone except appropriate school personnel. Public discussions of students and their families can be hurtful and often misinterpreted. If a volunteer has questions about school policies or procedures, s/he should also discuss these issues with appropriate school personnel.
- Volunteers should feel free to discuss any questions with the school principal.

Reliable

- The volunteer follows the direction of the teacher and does not hesitate to ask questions.
- The volunteer gives feedback to the teacher.

Professional

- Volunteers should participate in all orientation and training offered.
- Volunteers should be familiar with our school regulations and safety procedures, as outlined in our Highland School Family Handbook.
- A school volunteer conducts her/himself as a professional and a member of the school team by understanding that completing her/his particular responsibilities for each session is the primary focus for each visit at Highland School. If the volunteer should need to see other school personnel about different matters, please set up a time when both of you will be free to give the meeting full attention.
- A school volunteer helping with a classroom celebration should check with the teacher for guidelines.
- Volunteers often help with class projects. To encourage our students to be self-sufficient and focused a school volunteer assists students but does not complete the work for them, monitors the student's work, helps students stay "on track" and helps the teacher maintain a quiet classroom atmosphere.
- Parent volunteers should make child care plans for younger siblings, unless previously arranged with the teacher or committee chairperson.

Helpful to students

- A volunteer is most effective if s/he is patient and understanding with students; motivates students by praising their accomplishments; builds a student's self-confidence by

acknowledging successes; and determines with the teacher how discipline should be handled before working with the students.

Health Policies

Health Office Protocols

Notify the school by telephone if your child will be absent, this will save a call by the absentee caller. A “hotline” answering machine (203-272-0977) is available for use between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. for calling in your child’s absence. Please leave your name, your child’s name, your child’s teacher’s name, and the reason for absence. Notify the school if your child will be home for a prolonged period of time.

If your child appears ill, has vomited during the evening or night, and/or has a temperature of 100.5° or above, vomits, has diarrhea, found to have head lice, or any other contagious ailment, the child will be sent home, according to Cheshire Board of Education Policies.

Notify the school nurse if your child has: **Scarlet Fever, Strep Throat, Chicken Pox, “Fifth’s Disease,” Head Lice, Ringworm, Scabies, Pinworm, Lyme Disease, Conjunctivitis, or Mononucleosis.** Several diseases are highly contagious and/or pose a serious health threat to others.

Please keep your child home if they have:

- **Chicken pox:** Keep him/her home for 7 days from the first lesion or longer until all pox are scabbed over.
- **“Pink eye” or Conjunctivitis:** Consult your doctor for treatment. A full 24 hours of antibiotic treatment must be done before the child returns to school.
- **Head lice:** If you discover head lice or eggs (nits), notify the school nurse. There are several over the counter products available for treatment. Some are more effective than others. The school nurse will be able to give you guidance about child and home treatment. Upon returning to school, the child may be examined by the school nurse before reentry into class at the parent’s request.
- **Strep throat:** Children need to stay home for a full 24 hours after the start of antibiotics.
- **General Illness and Flu:** Please be considerate; a child with a hacking cough, a constantly running nose is unhealthful to others and is miserable in school. Allow the child time to convalesce at home and return to school when his/her symptoms diminish.

Children need to stay home from school and after school activities for 24 hours after:

1. The start of an antibiotic medication (except in the case of ear infection, when how the child is feeling determines time at home).

2. Diarrhea and Vomiting
3. Fever free (a return to normal).

Advise the nurse of all allergies, especially food and bee sting. Also advise the nurse of the need for **Epipens** and **Inhalers**. Notices to teachers/parents will be sent home regarding severe food allergies (nuts, lactose, etc.) in student's classroom. Caution will be taken by teacher/nurse when allergies are a concern during special activities.

Have your child report directly to the nurse upon entry to school following: **fractures, casts, splints, crutches, sutures** or any other incapacitating injury. A **doctor's written note** is needed for exclusion from and return to gym and other physical (recess) activities.

Guidelines for Food and Beverages Offered to Students at School

The Cheshire Public Schools strongly encourage the use of nutrient dense foods at all school functions and activities. Nutrient dense foods are those foods providing substantial amounts of naturally occurring vitamins, minerals and other nutrients with relatively few calories. Examples include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, lean meats, legumes, nuts and seeds.

At any school function (parties, celebrations, feasts, etc.) healthy food choice options should be available. Some suggested foods that may be offered to students are listed below:

- Raw/fresh vegetable sticks (e.g. carrots)/slices with low-fat dressing or yogurt dip
- Fresh fruit and 100% fruit juices
- Frozen fruit juice pops
- Fruit juice and vegetable juice (at least 50% full strength) and bottled water
- Trail mix (dried fruits and nuts) (**Unless your child is in a "nut-free" classroom**)
- Dry roasted peanuts, tree nuts and soy nuts (not coconut or palm nuts) (**Unless your child is in a "nut-free" classroom**)
- Low-fat meats and cheese sandwiches (use low-fat mayonnaise in chicken/tuna salads)
- Low-sodium crackers
- Baked corn chips and baked potato chips with salsa and low-fat dips (Ranch, Fresh Onion, Bean, etc.)
- Low-fat muffins, granola bars, crackers and cookies such as fig bars and ginger snaps
- Angel food and sponge cakes
- Flavored yogurt and fruit parfaits (low-fat/non-fat yogurt)
- Gelatin and low-fat pudding cups
- Low-fat ice creams, frozen yogurts, sherbets
- Low-fat and skim milk products
- Pretzels
- Bread products such as bread sticks, rolls, bagels and pita bread
- Ready-to-eat low sugar cereals

- Low-fat (1%) and skim milk

As we strive to promote a “healthy environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices,” we ask that you send in healthy snacks with your children daily. In addition, for all celebrations including your child’s birthday, **only nutrient dense foods** as listed above are permitted. Cupcakes and donuts are not considered healthy food choices and therefore are not permitted in our school. Thank you for your support of a healthy environment for your children.

Safe School Climate Plan 2019-2020 Highland Elementary School

Each year, administration, along with teachers, staff, and the Safe School Climate Committee, revise the Highland Safe School Climate Plan with the fundamental belief that each and every school community member should be treated with dignity, should have the opportunity to learn, work, interact, and socialize in physically, emotionally and intellectually safe respectful and positive school environments. Cheshire Public Schools and Highland School, therefore, have the responsibility to promote conditions designed to create, maintain, and nurture positive school climate. We are committed to creating and maintaining a physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe educational environment free from bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Our commitment to addressing bullying behavior involves a multi-faceted approach, which includes education and the promotion of a positive school climate in which bullying will not be tolerated by students or school staff. In order to foster an atmosphere conducive to learning, the Highland School Safe School Climate Plan includes a list of activities and programs designed to support our school community in its efforts to provide a safe and nurturing environment.

School Wide Activities

- New Students Meeting
- Student Council
- Kindness Club
- Kindness Week
- Gratitude week
- Bus of the Month program called “Not On My Bus” with a focus on safe and appropriate bus behavior
- Buddy Classes
- School Families
- Spirit Days
- Summer Learning Challenge Celebration
- PTO Cultural Events
- Sixth grade helpers
- Monthly Community Service Projects
- Veterans Day Honor Walk
- Read Across America

- Career Day

Staff Development/Trainings

- Responsive Classroom PD
- RULER PD
- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Training
- PMT Training
- Mindfulness
- QPR Training
- Mandated Reporter Training
- Regular Safety Committee Meetings
- Regular Safe School Climate Committee Meetings

Instructional Practices

- Implementation of Responsive Classroom Practices including hopes and dreams, morning meeting, positive teacher language, and logical consequences
- Peer Health Educator Presentation
- Comprehensive School Counseling Program including student community meetings and classroom lessons
- Implementation of RULER practices including the class charter, mood meter, and meta moment
- Internet Safety presentation for grades 5-6
- Bus Safety presentation for all students
- Mindfulness during Morning Announcements

Targeted Supports

- New Family orientation
- Anonymous reporting methods
- Empower Team Building Program for grade 6
- Bully Free Communities Program for grade 5 Student Council Members
- SRBI interventions to support academic and behavioral needs
- Circle of Security Training for Families

