

Hoosic Valley Elementary School

22 Pleasant Avenue

Schaghticoke, NY 12154

518-753-4458

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2021-2022

Student & Parent Handbook

Pre-K ~ 6th grade



Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 School Year! Last year was like no other, and this year promises to be very interesting as well. We are excited though to welcome back all of our students to live instruction. There are many changes to our classroom layout, our transportation and our schedule this year, so please read carefully as we have tried to outline new procedures here. We've written into certain sections, or procedures for COVID-related precautions, and have included some documents listed as appendices, but for the most up to date information, you should always consult our school's website, listed below.

If we left something out that would be useful for parents and students to know please tell us so we can include it in future handbooks.

You may visit our website at www.hoosicvalley.k12.ny.us or reach us by phone at (518) 753-4458 ext. 3506 OR 3507.

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Board of Education

Mrs. Karen Carlson - President
Mrs. Denise Reilly - Vice President
Mrs. Carolyn Stannard-Carlo
Mrs. Margaret Rice
Mr. Joseph Barton
Mrs. Maureen Mayer
Mr. Joshua Gela

Board meetings are held once a month (with exception) at 7:00pm in the HS Large Group Instruction Area. A public access time is provided at the beginning of each meeting. Additional meetings are scheduled as needed.

Administration

Mr. G. Michael Apostol, Superintendent
Mr. Eric Papandrea, HS Principal
Mr. Mark Foti, ES Principal
Ms. Brionna Whitman , CSE Director
Mr. Marc Iorio, Business Administrator
Mr. Wayne Akin, Transportation Supervisor
Mr. Matthew Waryas, Building and Grounds Supervisor
Mrs. Kathy Yavaniski, District Data Coordinator
Sara Straub, Coordinator of Educational Technology

Elementary Staff

Mrs. Debra Ellett, School Nurse
Ms. Lisa Foster, CSE Secretary
Ms. Michelle Gillespie, Cafeteria Manager
Mrs. Cori Kinnicutt, Secretary
Mrs. Mackenzie Houle, Secretary
Mrs. Beth McQueeney, Guidance
Mrs. Lisa Waldron, School Psychologist

See website for complete listing of Faculty & Staff

Directory

Elementary School (K-6)	753-4458, ext. 3506
Jr./Sr. High School (7-12)	753-4458, ext. 2506
Special Education	753-4458, ext. 2509
Business Office	753-4458, ext. 1506
Transportation	753-4458, ext. 1503

Who to Ask

When you have a problem, all organizations have a procedure that allows you to take a problem to a person in authority. Our school system is no exception.

You should start with the person who is closest to the problem. You should contact:

First	Your child's Teacher
Second	If you are not satisfied, your child's Principal
Third	If not satisfied, see the Superintendent

Fourth If still not satisfied, see the Board of Education

SCHOOL HOURS

Grades K-6: **8:15pm – 2:20pm** **8:15am or after – students are tardy**

Students should not arrive before 8:00am, as there is no supervision until 8:05am. Students arriving after 8:15am need to be signed into school by a parent or guardian. Students walk to their classroom unaccompanied. Parents/Guardian may not walk students to class.

Pre-K: **8:30 am – 1:30 pm**

A small number of students designated for Head Start programming will have an extended school day, from 8:00 am – 2:00 pm.

Extra Help Period: **There will be an extra help period after school Tuesday through Thursday from 2:20 until 3:00 pm. Late buses will run at 3:20 pm**

COVID-19 Guidance

Mandates regarding social distancing and mask wearing will still be required of school districts in NYS during the 2020-2021 school year. Guidance from the New York State Education Department and New York State Department of Health is necessarily changeable based on COVID infection rates in our area.

As of September 1, masks are mandated to be worn inside school buildings and on school transportation. Hoosic Valley Central School District will be updating our COVID preparedness plans as mandates change. It is important to note that precautions to prevent exposure or spread of COVID-19 require that our plans remain flexible and able to change as environmental conditions require. Our school's website will always have the most up to date information on the district's COVID Plan, www.hoosicvalley.k12.ny.us.

To start the school year:

All staff and students must wear masks at all times when in school or on school transportation. Mask breaks will be provided in classrooms, and students will be able to remove masks while eating during lunch. Temperature screenings and questionnaires about symptoms will not be required at the start of school. Parents should continue to carefully monitor your child's health and do not send them to school if you feel that they are not well. As always, consultation with our school nurse is advised. Please see our school's Coronavirus Updates webpage for further instructions on what to do if your child is not feeling well and/or experiencing COVID like symptoms.

<https://sites.google.com/hoosicvalley.org/hvcsdcovidupdates/home>

PARENT-DROP OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Grades K-6 Drop-Off: Parents dropping their children off at school should proceed down Pleasant Avenue and follow the road alongside the fence of the tennis courts. Follow the roadway left around parked cars and proceed to the end of the sidewalk, where students should exit vehicles. Staff members will be stationed at the end of the sidewalk and just before the tennis courts to assist in traffic control along with our school Resource Officer.

School staff will not be screening student temperatures at least to start the year.

Other Faculty and a Staff will be stationed along the sidewalks and hallways at the start of each day to assure that students exiting vehicles safely make their way along the sidewalk to the school entrance, and as they travel through the hallways.

Students arriving before 8:05 am will wait outside the main entrance until the doors open.

Grades K-6 Pick-Up

Dismissal is at 2:20 pm. Buses will be lined up at the bus loop at that time, and all students will be dismissed together. Parents picking up students will need to park vehicles in the parking lot and walk to the main entrance where parents will meet students and sign them out of school. Parents should expect to bring, and produce an ID if asked. Parents who have previously signed children out of school and have previously presented ID, will not need to have their IDs scanned again.

Pick up for students staying after school can begin at 3:00 pm. The same procedures listed above for 2:20 dismissal will be used for parent pick up at 3:00 pm. Buses are available to transport students staying for the after school period, and will depart the campus at approximately 3:20 pm.

Pre-K Drop-Off: All parents must arrange for transportation to and from the program daily. Those bringing students to school will be asked to proceed to the Elementary bus loop, park at the curb, and walk your child to the UPK entrance at the end of the sidewalk past the cafeteria. Student sign-ins will run from 8:15 am - 8:30 am daily.

Pre-K Pick-Up

Parents picking up UPK students at 1:30 pm may drive directly into the Elementary School bus loop, and park. They should proceed to the Drop-Off spot where staff will be there to release students to parents. Parents are expected to be at school or have a designated person to pick up their child at 1:30 pm.

Pick – up at Dismissal or Early:

If you need to pick up your child early from school, a written note to the teacher should be sent that morning with your child. This alerts the teacher, who in turn gives the notice to the office so we are aware when you arrive to pick up your child.

Bus Changes:

If a child is going somewhere other than home at the end of the day and needs to ride a different bus, you must send a note. It should include the child's full name, the Route # the child will be riding and the full name and address of the person that will be expecting him/her. For the safety of the students, telephone calls are not recommended.

VISITOR PROCEDURES – Elementary Building

To start the school year, we will not be allowing visitors into the school. We hope to allow visitors beginning October 15th. Parents that need to pick up students can come to the school and do so. At dismissal, parents will be asked to come into the main entryway to sign their child out. We hope to hold an Open House, information regarding Open House will be distributed after school starts.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

To start the school year, we will not be having parents volunteer in classrooms. Volunteer and visitor procedures will be revisited when COVID-19 related mandates are changed.

CUSTODY

The Main Office must have the most recent custody order on file if you have one. This will ensure we are following those orders accurately and ensuring the safety of your children. In the absence of a court

order limiting the rights of a biological parent to see, or pick up their child, the district is required to allow such parent to sign the child out of school upon request.

ACADEMIC INTERVENTION SERVICES

State Education Department regulations outline requirements for Academic Intervention Services for students not meeting state standards as measured through New York State tests, however, in addition, Hoosic Valley has identified a number of other ways to measure student progress, and the potential need for interventions, such as classroom based assessments, benchmark reading assessments and teacher recommendation. Interventions range from additional after-school help with the classroom teacher, to small group, or one-to-one support. Also, if warranted, referral to the Committee on Special Education may also occur to determine if learning or other disability is present. Processes used to determine how and when support services are recommended are outlined in the district's Academic Intervention Services, (AIS), Plan. Parents can and should always contact their child's teacher with any concerns about their child's academic progress. The teacher can clarify their understanding of the child's progress and begin the process if necessary, of accessing support services.

ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

If your child is unable to attend school because of illness etc., please call us so we can alert your child's teacher. If we do not receive notification by phone, the nurse's office will call home to determine the reason for the child's absence. Even if you have notified us by phone of the student's absence, we ask you to send a written notification as well. Board policy outlines procedures for school interventions in cases of excessive absences. After 10, 15 and 20 days absent, the principal will send a letter to the parents identifying the number of days absent and requesting that the parent call the school so that we can help to address whatever issues may be causing the absences.

Absences/Tardiness:

When a student is absent or tardy, the parent/guardian must provide a written notice (excuse) upon the student's return to school. This is a legal document and will be used to determine whether an absence is **excused** or **unexcused**. All absent excuses must be received within 5 days of the student's return to school, absent excuses received after 5 days will be recorded as illegal regardless of the reason written. Examples below:

<u>Excused:</u>	<u>Unexcused:</u>
• Personal illness	• Truancy
• Illness or death in family	• Vacation/Shopping/Family Visit
• Religious observation	• Family Obligation/Confidential reasons
• Quarantine	• Car trouble/No ride/Missed bus
• Court appearance	• Overslept
• Cooperative work program	• No written excuse received
• Attendance at an emergency as a member of a rescue organization	

REPORT CARDS and MARKING PERIOD DATES

Report cards for all students offer extensive information on your child's progress. Dates when these report cards will be sent home are linked to the school district's website under calendar. Kindergarten

report cards are distributed in January and June. Report cards for Grades 1-6 will be distributed four times per school year as follows:

MP 1	Sep 8 - Nov 10	Report Card Issued	Nov 19
MP 2	Nov 15 - Jan 24	Report Card Issued	Feb 4
MP 3	Jan 31-Apr 1	Report Card Issued	Apr 8
MP 4	Apr 4 - Jun 14	Report Card Issued	Jun 23

TRANSPORTATION

Students will be required to wear masks on student transportation at all times. Please help us to protect your children by teaching them about bus safety and expected behavior. It's important for children to understand that many of the same classroom rules apply on the bus - stay in your seat, keep your hands and feet to yourself, treat others as you wish to be treated and don't disrupt the class or in this case distract the driver.

Bus Rules

- 1) Observe the same conduct as in the classroom.
- 2) Be courteous, use no profane language.
- 3) Do not eat or drink on the bus.
- 4) Keep the bus clean.
- 5) Cooperate with the driver.
- 6) Do not smoke.
- 7) Do not be destructive.
- 8) Stay in your seat.
- 9) Keep head, hands and feet inside the bus.
- 10) Bus drivers are authorized to assign seats.

Babysitting or Change of Bus Stop:

If your child requires a permanent/temporary change of pickup or drop-off locations please contact the Transportation Department at 753-4458, extension 1503. ** See Bus Changes, above for day to day changes

Use of Video Cameras on District Buses:

After due consideration of balancing discipline and to ensure safety on our school buses, the Board of Education has authorized the use of video cameras.

Private / Parochial School Transportation Request:

According to State Law, all requests for private/parochial transportation must be submitted by April 1st. Even if your child's placement or acceptance at a particular school has not been finalized, make the request in anticipation of attendance. You may jeopardize your child's right to transportation if requests are late. Call the Transportation Supervisor for more information.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (P.T.O)

The Parent-Teacher Organization has a mission to support academic and enrichment activities throughout the Hoosic Valley School District. Their aim is to support the educational world of our children and they provide many services. Please look on the school website for time and location.. Come join the interested parents and teachers to show your support for your child's education. New ideas are always welcomed and encouraged.

FOOD SERVICE

Breakfast and lunch are available daily through the school cafeteria. Students will eat in the cafeteria this year, though seating will be spaced 3-4 feet apart. Students will be expected to remain seated during the lunch period. When seated and eating, students may remove masks. If a student needs to stand to move

around the cafeteria, they should be masked. Breakfast and lunch menus are sent home with students monthly. The Hoosic Valley Central School District will once again be offering free meals to all students in the school district throughout the 2021-22 school year by accepting a waiver through the USDA. This waiver allows Hoosic Valley to offer free breakfast and lunch to all families. There is no cost to families for accepting the free meals and all meals are reimbursed by the USDA.

Families who feel that they are eligible for free and reduced meals are still encouraged to complete an application - [the form is available on our website](#). **The completion of this application may have additional benefits for families.**

The Nutri-Kids program is able to offer on-line account management, called My School Bucks. You may create an account for your child by following the instructions on www.myschoolbucks.com. For every \$25 added to a student's account, a bonus meal will be given to the student to offset the service charge from the system. You can view transactions and add money to multiple student accounts at one time. More information about this system can be found at <http://learnmyschoolbucks.com/Parent/>. Questions can be directed to Marc Iorio, Business Administrator at 753-4458 ext. 1509.

SAFETY DRILLS

Hoosic Valley's District Safety Plan outlines the safety drills that are required each year in accordance with NYSED guidelines. These include, but may not be limited to Fire Drills, Lockdown drills, Duck and Cover drills, Evacuation drills and Shelter in Place drills. In order to make these drills as realistic as possible, and to assure the most focused and serious implementation of safety procedures, drills are not always announced in advance to parents, students or faculty and staff. We will always inform parents following a lockdown drill and we will always inform parents if a real emergency requires us to implement actions to keep children safe from a real or threatened emergency.

During all safety drills, students should listen carefully to the instructions given to them by the adult supervising them at the time. Disruptive student incidents during safety drills will be handled as disciplinary incidents and consequences may be administered per the District Code of Conduct. This year again, safety drills may be subject to adjustment to assure social distance guidelines are followed.

DISCIPLINE (please see also K-12 Code of Conduct)

The district is committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students receive, and district personnel deliver quality educational services without disruption or interference. Responsible behavior by everyone in the school community (student, parent, staff member, and visitor) is essential to achieving this goal. The district has a long-standing set of expectations for conduct on school property and at school functions. These expectations are based on the principles of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, tolerance, honesty and integrity. The district recognizes the need to clearly define expectations for acceptable conduct on school property, to identify the possible consequences of unacceptable conduct, and to ensure that discipline, when necessary, is administered promptly and fairly.

BUILDING RULES

Rules have been developed for the areas of the playground, hallways, buses, and cafeteria and are posted in the appropriate places.

Classroom teachers discuss classroom rules with all students to start the year, to ensure that all students are clear on our expectations. In addition, the counseling staff and principal meet with grade levels to review and discuss rules and expectations for student behavior in all areas of the building grounds and buses.

Hall Rules

1. Each class will stay to the right, teachers will prompt them for how .
2. Students will remain quiet in the halls so as not to disturb other students who are working.

3. Keep hands and feet to yourself and away from student work or other decorations that may be posted or displayed.

Playground Rules

1. Remain in the play area designated by the staff member in charge.
2. Keep hands and feet to yourself.
3. Use playground equipment appropriately and safely.

Cafeteria Rules

1. Remain seated unless given permission to do otherwise.
2. Keep hands and feet to yourself.
3. Use a quiet voice when speaking.
4. Keep your eating area neat and tidy by cleaning up after yourself.

Please Note items Below Prohibited from School Under any Circumstances:

Cigarettes, cigarette lighters, matches, tobacco, any kind of play or real knives, water pistols, any type of play or real guns, and any type of fireworks or explosives

The following Items may be brought to school but should be turned off and/or remain out of sight for the school day: Cell phones, cameras, other music players, other electronic devices used for communication that if used, would create a distraction from instruction. A violation will warrant severe disciplinary measures by the principal.

Board Of Education Policy 3 1530, 3121, 5310, 5312-5312.3

HEALTH ASSESSMENTS

A school nurse assists those students who need health care while at school. In the event a child becomes sick and is too ill to stay in school, the nurse will contact the parent, requesting that the parent come to pick up the child.

Immunizations:

New York State Public Health Law 2164 requires all students entering and attending school to be immunized. Children entering Hoosic Valley Elementary school are required to have the following immunizations: OPV, DTP, Hepatitis B, MMR and Varicella. Pre-K students will also need PVC and HIB immunizations. Students who are entering 6th grade and are 11 years old must have a Tdap immunization; those students will be tracked to ensure the immunization is done. In order to avoid interruption of your child's educational process, a period of two weeks will be allowed for you to arrange for the proper immunizations.

Medication:

It is understood that certain circumstances require a child to take internal medication during school hours. Parents of students who need to take medication during school hours should make all arrangements with the school nurse. **No student is to take medication without having made prior arrangements with the nurse. All medication will be kept in a locked cabinet.** In order to comply with Education Law governing medication, the procedure listed must be followed and all requirements met:

1. The medication and prescription must be delivered directly to the school nurse by a parent in its original container.
2. The parent must complete a medication card which indicates medication, dosage and time given.
3. The Physician must provide written requests for the school nurse to administer the medication, including frequency and dosage.

Physical Exams and Health Assessments:

New health regulations effective 7/1/2018: doctors' physicals will be required in grades PreK, K, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11, and all newly enrolled students. Students in these grade levels and new students without evidence of physical examination by a family physician will be examined by the school physician. The school physician also conducts physical examinations for interscholastic sports.

Vision, hearing and scoliosis screenings are conducted by the school nurse. Parents are notified when results of testing procedures require follow-through

Accidents/Injuries:

Any injuries or accidents which occur at school **must** be reported to the teacher in charge, regardless how minor they might be. The teacher will file a written report to the nurse within 24 hours of any accident. The nurse will call home to report the accident circumstances to parents/guardians. Emergency medical forms will be sent home in September; parents **must** fill this out and return. **It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school when the emergency information changes.** **An excess-type medical insurance is carried by the school. This means that family insurance must be used first and the remaining balance reported under school insurance.

LOST AND FOUND

Please label your child's name on all items; including sweatshirts, coats and lunchboxes. We will keep lost items for a short period of time. If your child has lost an item, please contact your child's teacher first and if they cannot locate the item, you can call the main office to see if it was returned there.

STUDENT COUNCIL

The Student Council consists of one student per class from grades 4-6. Each year, the Council is involved in many activities to serve the school. The students serve as pages for, Open House and the Graduation Ceremonies, and many other activities throughout the year. Student Council elections are held early in each school year to choose representatives from each class. A Faculty advisor serves as a facilitator for all Student Council activities.

NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY

Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 are eligible to be inducted into the Hoosic Valley chapter of the National Junior Honor Society. The NJHS was founded in 1929 and promotes recognition for students who reflect outstanding accomplishments in the areas of scholarship, character, leadership, citizenship, and community service. To be eligible for induction, students must have an overall average of at least 90% for the first semester of the school year. Students who meet the scholarship eligibility minimum are notified in late March. Students who wish to be considered for selection should submit an application and return it to the National Junior Honor Society advisor by the date specified.

A Faculty Council of five middle school teachers reviews the applications submitted for membership. Students who have submitted applications are evaluated based on community service, leadership, character, and citizenship. Applicants are rated on a point system. Points are earned based on the information from the student's application as well as a student evaluation form given to staff in each building. During the selection process, the points each student earned in the areas of character, leadership, citizenship, and community service are totaled and averaged together. A cut-off point is then selected for each grade, which determines how many students are inducted at each grade level. All students applying are notified of the Faculty Council's decision by mail. Family members of students selected are invited to attend the induction ceremony, which takes place late in the spring semester.

CHARACTER EDUCATION

The Character Education Program is designed to develop and sustain a school environment that allows all students to feel safe, confident and eager to learn. We have implemented the Responsive Classroom program, and established a set of "school-wide guidelines" which are key steps in building a positive school climate.

The expectations are: Always do your best to be safe, responsible and open to learning

Be Kind and Respectful to Others.
Help Keep Our School Safe, Clean and Green

We will have assemblies during the school year to reinforce these guidelines and to highlight school-wide virtues. Our monthly virtues include: Ready to Learn, Responsibility, Self-Control, Empathy, Cooperation, Friendship, Citizenship, Tolerance, Integrity and Assertiveness. Respect is our eleventh character trait and it's so important we promote the virtue of respect all year long.