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# JOHN HILL SCHOOL

## *Elementary Student & Family Handbook*



**2022-2023**

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## Introduction

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*Dear Preschool and Grades 3-5 Students & Families,*

Welcome to the 2022-2023 School Year!

At John Hill School, we maintain our steady focus on ensuring that each day enriches the lives of all those within our community and provides learning experiences that will empower students to be positive difference-makers in the years to come. Students in elementary school are making remarkable transitions in their lives as they become increasingly industrious members of our community and come to identify their individual and collective capacities to be impactful within it. Working together - as family members, students, and educators - will best allow us to harness the potential of these years and to propel noteworthy levels of success.

This year, we look forward to obtaining a greater level of normalcy as we return to our regular school operations. Over the past three years we have had to make many adjustments in order to reach academic successes. We look to build on these adjustments and get back to our strong academic mainstays to help students reach their academic goals.

This handbook provides a starting point for our collaborative work this year as it provides important information about school operations and expectations. Should you have any questions, thoughts, concerns, or ideas related to the content of this handbook or any matters pertaining to the work of our school community, please contact me any time.

I look forward to working together to make the coming school year a joy-filled and especially successful experience for all!

*Sincerely,*

*Peter Nosal*

*Acting Elementary Principal*

*John Hill School*

*[peter.nosal@boontonschools.org](mailto:peter.nosal@boontonschools.org)*

*973-335-9700*

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## Directory

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### **Town of Boonton Public Schools**

Thomas Valle	Acting Superintendent
Steven Gardberg	Business Administrator & Board Secretary
Judy Sorochnykyj	Director of Curriculum & Instruction

### **Board of Education**

Irene LeFebvre	President
Christopher Cartelli	Vice President
Jennifer Darling	
Crystal Davis	
Elaine Doherty	
Robert Ezzi	
Natavia Hayes	
Patrick Joyce	
Loren Katsakos	
Sandra Vucenovic	Lincoln Park Representative

### **Parent Teacher Association Board Members**

Nicole Cechony	President
Allison Mania	Vice President
Lauren Wainer	Treasurer
Caitlyn Magennis	Recording Secretary

### **John Hill School Administration**

Sara Brogan	Middle School Principal (Grades 6-8)
Peter Nosal	Elementary Principal (Preschool & Grades 3-5)

### **John Hill School Main Office Secretarial Staff**

Kathy Beiermeister	Main Office Head Secretary
Janine LaPointe	Main Office Secretary

### **John Hill School Counseling Staff**

Heidi Brady	Grades 6-8
Christine Maier	Elementary Grades

### **Child Study Team**

Maribel Martinez	Child Study Team Director
Meghan Arahill	Preschool Social Worker
Jennifer Coleman	School Social Worker
Toni DeCotiis	School Psychologist
Elise Petrella	Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant

***Link to Full JHS Staff Directory: <https://www.boontonschools.org/domain/1295>***

## **Boonton District Mission Statement**

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The Boonton School District will deliver an educational experience that inspires all students to reach their full academic and personal potential; through a program, delivered in a safe and secure environment, which empowers, and equips them to succeed. To achieve this, our curriculum and programs will be rigorous, relevant, comprehensive, and will embrace diversity.

## **Boonton District Vision Statement**

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The Boonton School District will graduate all students equipped with the 21st century skills, knowledge, and adaptability to succeed in an ever-changing global environment. Our students will be the pride of the community and leaders for our future.

## **Boonton District Core Values & Beliefs**

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- We believe that all students deserve to grow in a rigorous, relevant, and inclusive academic, co- and extra-curricular environments that assist each and every student to not only meet but also exceed his or her potential.
- We believe that all students will benefit not only from safe and secure facilities, but also from an environment focused on social, emotional and academic development targeted to increase motivation, self-esteem, tolerance, and respect.
- We believe that all students deserve to be educated in a community that understands, supports, and contributes to the District's initiatives, actions, and priorities.
- We believe that all students and staff will benefit from a rich technology-based teaching and learning environment, state-of-the-art equipment and systems, and the vast expertise of both Boonton personnel and community members.
- We believe that all students will have more opportunities and an enriched learning environment as a result of effective, creative, and proactive fiscal management and alternative funding sources.

## **Boonton District Commitments**

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- We are committed to the continuous achievements of all students.
- We are committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for all students.
- We are committed to meaningful involvement and communication between and among all stakeholders in the school community.
- We are committed to creating a technologically advanced system of education and district-wide operations.
- We are committed to finding and securing alternative funding opportunities and sources.

## John Hill School Mission Statement

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At John Hill School, our mission is to enrich the lives of the students within our care and to empower them to be impactful citizens. This is accomplished by tailoring learning activities to meet the unique learning needs and styles of students while also appealing to student interests and passions. This is also accomplished by cultivating a school environment that provides optimal conditions for student growth - one in which respect, responsibility, and compassion serve as hallmarks of our work together.



*We are proud to be the  
John Hill School Junior Bombers!*

## A Regular School Day @ JHS (Grades 3-8)

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### Regular Day Schedule

7:35 - Doors Open  
7:50 - Homeroom Begins  
8:00 - Attendance Taken  
8:01 - Period 1  
8:58 - Period 2  
9:55 - Period 3  
10:52 - Period 4 (Lunch/Recess Grades 3 & 4)  
11:49 - Period 5 (Lunch/Recess Grades 5 & 6)  
12:46 - Period 6 (Lunch/Recess Grades 7 & 8)  
1:43 - Period 7  
2:40 - Dismissal

### Student Arrival

Students will enter the front entrance or rear entrance which is accessible from the sidewalk at the back of the school.

### Student Dismissal

We ask families of 3rd-8th grade students to assist us in adhering to the quality of being a walking district and ask that students dismiss in one of three ways...

- Parking on a side street and designating a meeting spot for students to meet family members at dismissal. This can be in the lawn surrounding the front flag pole, on the back field, or on a side street location. Staff will be positioned on the perimeter of school grounds to ensure a safe and orderly dismissal process.
- If a student's residence is within comfortable walking distance, we recommend that students walk home along a route that is agreed upon with the student's family.
- There will be a car line available each day for families that choose to pick up their child. Those students will wait at the main entrance each day.

School District Policy 8601: Pupil Supervision After School Dismissal ([linked here](#)) stipulates that *families have the right to request the school not release a pupil to walk home after dismissal unless the pupil is released to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or escort(s) designated by the parent(s) or legal guardian(s). The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) designated escort(s) must be at least 18 years old for a student in Grades K-3 or 16 years old for a student in Grades 4-8. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) may designate up to 4 escorts. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) requesting their child(ren) only be released to a parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or parent(s) or legal guardian(s)-designated escort after dismissal must submit a completed*

*Request for Supervision at Dismissal from School Form to the Principal or designee, or program administrator.* If you would like to exercise this option, please contact us and we will provide an electronic form to make this request.

## **Alternate Schedules (Grades 3-8)**

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### **Delayed Openings**

Occasionally, due to inclement weather, our district will have a delayed opening. On these days, the school schedule is as follows...

9:35 - Doors Open  
9:50 - Homeroom Begins  
10:00 - Attendance Taken  
10:01 - Period 1  
10:34 - Period 2  
11:06 - Period 3  
11:38 - Period 4 (Lunch Period - Grades 3 & 4)  
12:28 - Period 5 (Lunch Period - Grades 5 & 6)  
1:18 - Period 6 (Lunch Period - Grades 7 & 8)  
2:08 - Period 7  
2:40 - Dismissal

### **Early Dismissals**

During scheduled early dismissal days, we will follow the schedule as outlined below...

7:35 - Doors Open  
7:50 - Homeroom Begins  
8:00 - Attendance Taken  
8:01 - Period 7  
8:28 - Period 1  
8:55 - Period 2  
9:22 - Period 3  
9:49 - Period 4 (Lunch Grades 3 & 4)  
10:35 - Period 5 (Lunch Grades 5 & 6)  
11:21 - Period 6 (Lunch Grades 7 & 8)  
12:07 - Dismissal



## Preschool Information

### Schedules & Procedures for the “Junior Junior Bombers”

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#### Morning Arrival: 8:00-8:10

- Dropoff will occur in front of the main entrance to school for preschool students housed in the JHS Main Building.
- Dropoff will occur in the annex parking lot for preschool students housed in the JHS Annex.
- Staff members will be present to assist preschool students as they arrive.
- If your child requires supervision prior to 8:00, please contact Rosemarie Lynch (rosemarie.lynch@boontonschools.org) to learn about our before care program.

#### Dismissal: 2:10

- Students will be picked up at the front entrance of the JHS Main Building and in the parking lot of the JHS Annex between 2:10 and 2:20.
- Please display JHS PK cards in the front windshield. This will help to ensure that only preschool parents are in the pick-up line at that time and will also help us to provide a timely dismissal process.

#### Early Release Days

- Students will dismiss at 12:27.
- Pick up will occur at the same locations as a normal day.

#### Delayed Openings

- Morning arrival will occur from 10:00-10:10 in the same locations as a normal day.

#### Daytime Pick-Ups, Drop-Offs, or Other Visits

- If parents are visiting the school during the school day (i.e. to pick up a child early, to drop off a student, to deliver a lunch, etc), parents must report to the main office in John Hill School regardless of whether the preschool student’s classroom is in the main building or in the annex. **No visitors should report to the JHS Annex without first being approved in the main building.**

## Attendance

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The Board of Education requires the pupils enrolled in the schools of this district to attend school regularly in accordance with New Jersey State Law. The educational program offered by this district is predicated on the presence of students and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. Therefore, we ask that every attempt be made to ensure that students are present for full days of instruction with the exception of illness, emergencies, or other excused absences such as religious holidays. Please note that if you are requesting that an absence be deemed excused for a religious holiday, written notification must be provided.

**When absences must occur, please notify school before 7:45 on each morning the pupil is absent.** Requests for picking up homework should also be left at this time. If homework is requested, it will be available for pick-up in the main office after 2:40 pm.

Please be aware that any pattern of absence is of concern. As absences accrue, you may receive written notification from our school and a request for a meeting with administration. Excessive absences may be cause for retention in accordance with Board policy.

### TARDIES

Not only is it important for students to be present in school, but it is also imperative that students arrive at school on time. Students who are excessively tardy will work with counselors and administration to design an attendance plan. The plan may include administrative consequences as well as loss of privilege. Ultimately, a student's grade may suffer due to repeated tardiness.

## Grade Reporting

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### Preschool Skill-Based Notations of Progress

- A: Applying
- P: Practicing
- E: Emerging
- C: Area of Concern

### 3rd, 4th & 5th Grade Performance Keys

Progress Indicators of Academic Performance

- ES - Exceeds Standard
- MS - Meets Standard
- AS - Approaching Standard
- LP - Limited Progression to Standard
- NE - Not Evaluated

## Progress Indicators of Essential Habits

C - Consistently

S - Sometimes

R - Rarely

## Code of Conduct

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In all things at John Hill School, our foremost concern is to cultivate positive development for the students within our care. As such, we work to protect the rights of students at all times, strive to ensure that students embrace the responsibilities entrusted to them, and adhere to universal values. Some of these rights, responsibilities, and values are stated below and serve as an important starting point in consideration of how we expect students to conduct themselves and how we proceed when behaviors fall short of expectations.

### Student Rights

- Students have the right to learn and play in a safe school environment.
- Students have the right to be respected and to have their property respected at all times.
- Students have the right to embrace academic challenges in an environment that is free from excessive disruption and allows for proper focus.
- Students have the right to express themselves in an appropriate manner and to take pride in their individuality while remaining free from judgment of others.

### Student Responsibilities

To ensure that the rights of students are afforded to all, students at John Hill School hold substantial responsibilities to...

- Follow directions by those in authority.
- Arrive to school on time with a commitment toward giving one's best in all things.
- Respect the rights and feelings of others at all times.
- Work continuously to make our learning community the very best it can be.

### Shared Values

As we all learn and grow within our community, we aspire to continuously develop and act in a manner that reflects the following universal values (*Adapted from the Character Counts 6 Pillars of Character Education*)...

- **Caring:** We show that we are caring by helping those in need, treating others how we would like to be treated, expressing gratitude for what we have, and being understanding of others.
- **Citizenship:** We are strong citizens when we continuously strive to make our community and our world a better place. We become involved, cooperate with others, and show respect for rules and the people who make them.

- **Fairness:** We are fair when we play by the rules, share with others, are open-minded, value the perspectives of others, and take other’s perspectives into account when we make decisions.
- **Respect:** We show respect when we celebrate the diversity of all people, take care of our environment, use good manners, and act positively even when dealing with difficult emotions or circumstances.
- **Responsibility:** We are responsible when we consider consequences before actions, plan ahead, and follow through on our commitments. We avoid making excuses and strive to overcome challenges.
- **Trustworthiness:** We earn trust by being honest, being reliable, being loyal, and having courage to do the right thing even when it is the hard thing.

**Inappropriate Behavior**

At times, interventions are required to ensure that behaviors align to protect the rights, responsibilities, and values upheld within our school. When our students make poor behavioral decisions, we view them as learning opportunities with the desired outcome of continuously improving behavior and cultivating positive character development. This learning process requires...

- Recognition when a mistake is made
- An understanding that actions have consequences (both positive and negative)
- Realizing that remediation can occur when mistakes are made
- Striving to improve

While not all behaviors and circumstances can be predicted, the following chart outlines certain misbehaviors that may occur during a school day and interventions to be applied in accordance.

<b>BEHAVIOR</b>	<b>MINOR</b>	<b>MODERATE</b>	<b>SEVERE</b>
Defiance toward school authority	- Teacher conference with the student. - Parent contact at teacher’s discretion	- Teacher conference with student - Parent contact. - Completion of reflection activity at teacher’s discretion - Lunch detention at teacher’s discretion.	- Administrative conference. - Parent contact - Completion of reflection activity - Consequence assigned at administrator’s discretion which may include detention(s), loss of privilege, suspension
Intentional or persistent disruption of class	- Teacher conference with the student. - Parent contact at teacher’s discretion	- Teacher conference with student - Parent contact. - Completion of reflection activity at teacher’s discretion - Lunch detention at teacher’s discretion.	- Administrative conference. - Parent contact - Completion of reflection activity - Consequence assigned at administrator’s discretion which may include detention(s), loss

			of privilege, suspension
Showing disrespect to other students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teacher conference with the student.</li> <li>- Parent contact at teacher's discretion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teacher conference with student</li> <li>- Parent contact.</li> <li>- Completion of reflection activity at teacher's discretion</li> <li>- Lunch detention at teacher's discretion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Administrative conference</li> <li>- Parent contact</li> <li>- Completion of reflection activity</li> <li>- Consequence assigned at administrator's discretion which may include detention(s), loss of privilege, suspension</li> </ul>
Unwanted physical contact or unsafe physical behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teacher conference with the student.</li> <li>- Parent contact at teacher's discretion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teacher conference with student</li> <li>- Parent contact.</li> <li>- Completion of reflection activity at teacher's discretion</li> <li>- Lunch detention at teacher's discretion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Administrative conference.</li> <li>- Parent contact</li> <li>- Completion of reflection activity</li> <li>- Consequence assigned at administrator's discretion which may include detention(s), loss of privilege, suspension</li> </ul>
Intent to substantially physically harm or threat to impose substantial physical harm to another person	➔	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Administrative conference.</li> <li>- Parent contact</li> <li>- Completion of reflection activity</li> <li>- Consequence assigned at administrator's discretion which may include detention(s), loss of privilege, suspension</li> <li>- Potential notification to law enforcement</li> </ul>
Possession of a weapon or object intended to be used as a weapon	➔	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Administrative conference.</li> <li>- Parent contact</li> <li>- Completion of reflection activity</li> <li>- Consequence assigned at administrator's discretion which may include detention(s), loss of privilege, suspension</li> <li>- Notification to law enforcement</li> </ul>
Possession of illegal substance	➔	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Administrative conference.</li> <li>- Parent contact</li> <li>- Completion of reflection activity</li> <li>- Consequence assigned at administrator's discretion which may include detention(s), loss of privilege, suspension</li> </ul>

			- Notification to law enforcement
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### **Persistent Problematic Behaviors**

If behavioral concerns persist, students may be referred to our Intervention and Referral Services Team. The purpose of this referral would be to identify areas of concern and strengths to build upon while devising a Behavior Improvement Plan. Should this type of referral take place, parents/guardians will be notified. If the student has an IEP, the student’s case manager will be involved in this process as well.

### **Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying**

While the majority of behavioral concerns are treated as Code of Conduct violations, some may potentially meet the definition of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying as defined in New Jersey State Law...

*“Harassment, intimidation or bullying” is defined as any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, **that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic**, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored function or on a school bus, or off school grounds, in accordance with law, that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students, and that:*

- *A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student’s property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or*
- *Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; or*
- *Creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with the student’s education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.*

When incidents are reported that may potentially meet this definition, an HIB investigation will ensue in accordance with our Board of Education Policy # 5512.

## Use of School Technology & Personal Devices

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Technology will be an integral part to all that is accomplished this school year and, as such, it is important for everyone to have a clear and shared understanding that school technology including student issued Google accounts are to be used solely for school activities and in an appropriate manner at all times.

In addition to an increasing presence of school technology, we recognize that personal devices are increasingly accessible for elementary students. It is understood that families may want children to be in possession of a cell phone or personal electronic device when going to the school building. We simply ask that students turn off these devices and keep them in a backpack when school is in session (arrival in homeroom until 2:40 pm) and only turn them on for use during this time frame when provided permission of a school staff member. We believe this practice provides an appropriate balance for students: devices are available to students before and after school, present in case of an emergency, and available for communication and application use whenever permission is granted. At the same time, personal devices will not be so present as to create distractions from learning activities when permission for use is not granted nor will they detract from the important interpersonal interactions of students while in a school building.

Multi-function wearable devices (i.e. smart watches) also require us to seek an appropriate balance between technology availability and ensuring appropriate use that minimizes distraction. We allow students to wear smart watches but they shall not be used for any purpose other than telling time during school hours. Sending or receiving messages, using the device to make calls, or accessing online applications are not proper uses of this technology unless there is an emergency situation or approval is given by a staff member. If the use of a student smart watch violates this requirement, the watch may be required to be put away during school hours.

## Dress Code

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We respect the rights of students to dress in a manner that reflects their customs, comfort, and individuality. At the same time, we expect students' attire to be respectful of the school environment and the important work being conducted in our classrooms. Some general guidelines for student dress include the following...

- No attire may include offensive language or symbolism.
- Clothing that advertises alcohol or illegal substances is not permitted.
- Undergarments should not be visible.
- Pajamas should not be worn as school attire (unless "Pajama Day" is designated).
- Shorts and skirts should be of reasonable length.
- All tops should cover the midsection.

- Flip-flops should not be worn as these are not conducive to PE or recess participation.
- Hats, caps, and sweatshirt hoods should not be worn while in the school building.  
Garments that cover the head for religious or cultural reasons are entirely appropriate.

## Care of School Property

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John Hill School is very proud of its facilities and resources. It is important that the students share in keeping our facilities and resources something to be proud of. If students are responsible for lost or damaged items, they will be fined accordingly. Fines associated with the loss or damage of school equipment must be paid for by the family of the student responsible.

## Counseling Services

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John Hill School counselors are here to assist those in need. Our counselors will help with any issues students may be facing. Parents and teachers may also ask for the assistance of the counselor to help make a student's educational experience as beneficial as possible. In addition, the guidance counselor also serves as a liaison between the teacher and the Child Study Team in determining which students should be advanced for the Child Study Team examination as learning challenges are identified.

## Co-Curricular and Extracurricular Activities at JHS

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An important part of student life is being involved in extracurricular activities. Becoming involved in activities not only allows students to work with their peers outside the classroom, but provides outstanding opportunities in leadership and community involvement. John Hill School offers students a variety of activities to complement our school's curriculum. The following extracurricular activities are offered to students in grades 3-5.

Band  
Chorus  
Green Team  
Helping Hands

- The meeting dates and times may vary from year to year based on advisor availability.



- It is important to remember that some activities may meet more than usual when deadlines are near. Every effort will be made to notify parents of meeting dates and times in an appropriate time frame to allow for adequate planning.

## **Classroom Celebrations & Approved Foods**

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As students celebrate birthdays and other events during the year, we understand that they often enjoy sharing the celebration with classmates. If a classroom celebration is planned and food is going to be part of the celebration, please use the approved food items listed [here](#).

## **Medication**

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It is recognized that some children may require medication during the school day. The parent/guardian is asked to follow these guidelines when sending medications for a child during the school day:

- Written orders are to be provided to the school from the student's private physician, detailing the diagnosis or type of illness involved, the name of the drug, dosage, and time of administration. This applies to both prescription and over the counter medication.
- All medication must be in its original container and given directly to the nurse upon entering school.

Students who come to school with crutches must do so with an accompanying note from the family physician.

## **Visitors**

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To provide for the safety of our students and staff, visitors must use the call button from the main entrance. Visitors will be asked to identify themselves and their reason for visit. If items need to be dropped off for students (i.e. student coat, lunch, etc.), bins are available in the vestibule. Individuals entering beyond the vestibule must present identification and wear a temporary ID badge. ID badges are issued and access to the building granted upon completion of a background check. The background check is completed via the LobbyGuard Visitor Management System.

## **COVID-19 Implications**

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The impacts of COVID-19 had a substantial impact upon school operations the past three years. As we begin the 2022-2023 school year, we are excited to take significant steps toward more regular operations. With that being said, we expect aspects of this school year to be defined by COVID-19 related matters. As a result, administration reserves the right to initiate changes to school practices and requirements as needed to maintain safe and healthy learning conditions. We appreciate our community's understanding as we fluidly adapt to health related circumstances and look forward to working together to ensure that health and safety practices are clearly communicated and abided by.