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# ***John Hill School***

## ***Elementary Student & Family Handbook***



***2019-2020 School Year***

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## ***Introduction***

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

Welcome to the 2019-2020 School Year!

After enjoying a wonderful first full year at John Hill School, I could not be more excited to officially kick off another new school year with you this September. Anticipation for the coming school year includes some substantial items for us to look forward to! We are thrilled to welcome three additional preschool sections this year, excited to have our incoming 3rd graders return to JHS, and eager to implement a new specialized instructional model in grades 4 and 5 in which students reap the benefits of working with multiple classroom teachers throughout the progression of each day.

Along with these anticipated changes, 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 all of our members to make positive impacts 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.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a starting point for our collaborative work this year. The information included provides some basic “nuts and bolts” of how our school will operate as well as some general expectations and procedures of which a common understanding will be of benefit. 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,***

***Tom Valle***  
***Elementary Principal***

*John Hill School*  
*thomas.valle@boontonschools.org*  
*973-335-9700*

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## ***Directory***

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

Robert Presuto	Superintendent
Steven Gardberg	Business Administrator & Board Secretary
Judy Sorochynskij	Supervisor of Curriculum & Instruction

### ***Board of Education***

Joseph Geslao	President
Christopher Cartelli	Vice President
Jennifer Darling	
Elaine Doherty	
Robert Ezzi	
Patrick Joyce	
Loren Katsakos	
Irene LeFebvre	
Jennifer Shollenberger	
Robert Stager	Lincoln Park Representative

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

Justine Cirinelli	President
Nicole Cechony	Vice President
Tammy Shaw	Treasurer
Sue Chara	Recording Secretary

### ***John Hill School Administration***

Sara Brogan	Principal, Grades 6-8
Thomas Valle	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	Preschool & Grades 3-5

### ***Child Study Team***

Christine Muench	CST Director
Meghan Arahill	Preschool Social Worker
Jennifer Coleman	School Social Worker
Toni DeCotiis	School Psychologist
Elise Petrella	Learning Disabled 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 Jr. 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 Grades 3 & 4)  
11:49 - Period 5 (Lunch Grades 5 & 6)  
12:46 - Period 6 (Lunch Grades 7 & 8)  
1:43 - Period 7  
2:40 - Dismissal

### **Student Arrival**

Students may enter the building during arrival time via the front entrance or the rear gymnasium

entrance which has now been made accessible via the added sidewalks at the rear of the building. Students arriving between 7:35 and 7:39 are to report directly to the gymnasium. At 7:39, students will transition to supervised classroom spaces. Any students arriving between 7:39 and 8:00 should report straight to their homerooms. Any students arriving to their homerooms after 8:00 am will be deemed tardy and will be required to obtain a late pass from the office prior to joining their classmates.

If you require care for your child prior to 7:35, please contact Rosemarie Lynch (rosemarie.lynch@boontonschools.org).

### **Student Dismissal**

There are three options for students to dismiss from school...

- 1) Students may walk independently from school. "Independent walkers" will report to the gymnasium at dismissal and either exit the rear door or the side door of the gym. The gym will also serve as a meeting point for siblings or neighbors to meet one another prior to exiting the building.
- 2) Students may be picked up via our car line at the front entrance of the building.  
***IMPORTANT CHANGE FOR THIS YEAR: In order to allow for preschool dismissal to occur, cars arriving for grades 3-5 pick-up may not park in the front traffic circle until 2:20.***
- 3) Parents may elect to have students report to the Music Suite to be picked up by a designated adult who will access the Music Suite via the side building entrance next to the playground. For this option to be exercised, parents must complete the "Request to Have Child Remain in the School Building Upon Dismissal" Form.

## ***Alternative 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 children getting out of their cars.
- If your child requires supervision prior to 8:00, please contact Rosemarie Lynch (rosemarie.lynych@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.

## ***Grade Reporting***

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### **Preschool Skill-Based Notations of Progress**

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

### **3rd Grade Grading Key**

A: Consistent understanding and application of concepts and skills  
B: Good understanding and application of concepts and skills  
C: Satisfactory understanding and application of concepts and skills  
D: Minimal understanding and application of concepts and skills  
F: Fail P: Pass

### **4th & 5th Grade Grading Key**

A+ = 98-100 A = 92-97 A- = 90-91  
B+ = 88-89 B = 82-87 B- = 80-81  
C+ = 78-79 C = 72-77 C- = 70-71  
D+ = 68-69 D = 62-67 D- = 60-61  
F = Below 60 P = Pass  
High Honor Roll: 90 or above in all subjects  
Honor Roll: 80 or above in all subjects

## ***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 collectively aspire to cultivate and live according 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 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
- 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	<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>
Intentional or persistent disruption of class	<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>
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> <li>- Notification to law enforcement</li> </ul>

### **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 "Positive Behavior 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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As technology is increasingly a natural part of a students’ educational experiences, it is important to keep in mind that technology must be used during the school day in a manner that is appropriate for the school setting and which is designed for educational purposes only. A violation of this understanding may result in the temporary removal of school technology privileges.

In addition to an increasing presence of school technology, we recognize that personal devices are becoming 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. We simply

ask that students turn off these devices 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, 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. At this time, we will 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.

## ***5th Grade Lockers***

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Students in grade 5 are provided lockers for use during the school year and may be subject to inspection by school personnel. Each student is required to purchase a combination lock from the school office for use on the locker. Other types of locks will not be permitted. The current price of the lock is \$6.00. While students may re-use the locks from year to year, they are instructed to maintain the confidentiality of their lock combination. Lockers are the property of the Boonton Board of Education and will be opened and inspected if believed to house any material detrimental to the health, safety or welfare of a student or the student body. Posters or pictures of inappropriate nature are not permitted and will be removed with consequences given. Lockers should be kept locked at all times. Students must keep backpacks in their lockers. Students are permitted access to their lockers before homeroom, before and after recess/lunch, at dismissal, or when given permission from a teacher. Students should never keep valuables in their locker, and are highly discouraged from bringing expensive or sentimental items to school. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

## ***Counseling Services***

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Need help? John Hill School counselors are here to assist. 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 Child Study Team examination in reference to learning difficulties.

## ***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. We strongly recommend that such sharing occur in ways that are not food related. Stickers, pencils, craft materials, etc. are preferred. However, if a student does want to bring in a food-based treat, they are permitted to do so if it is noted on the **approved food list** which is posted on the school website and if it has been approved by the classroom teacher. If a student is to bring in a food item to share, notification must be provided so that they can verify that it is both on the approved food list and not a health concern for any students. Home baked goods may not be shared.

### ***Web Address for Approved Food List:***

<https://www.boontonschools.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=6584&dataid=7478&FileName=JHS%20Snack%20List.pdf>

Please also note that any invitations for celebrations to occur outside of school may not be distributed at school unless every child in a students' class is included.

## ***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.