

HILLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Family Handbook

With Student Policies



Est. 1964

**Additional Information to accompany the Iowa City Community
School District's Elementary Student Handbook**

301 W. Main Street

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Hills, Iowa 52235

(319) 688-1105

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Welcome to Hills Elementary School

You are the most important person in your child's life. No one will have a bigger impact on a child's life than his/her parents. When families are involved, children do better in school.

Parent Involvement

One of the most important elements of your child's education is your involvement in her/his learning. We strongly encourage you to become involved in your child's education and request that all families volunteer in some capacity at least one time each school year. Listening to students read, making copies, organizing book shelves – these are just a few of the many things you can do to support our teachers and school. The PTO also sponsors several events throughout the year that need parent help. Contact the Student Family Advocate at 688-1105 or your child's teacher if you would like to volunteer on a more frequent basis.

All volunteers must complete an application, a District Volunteer Disclosure Statement, a Criminal Background Consent Form, and Consent to contact the Central Abuse Registry, prior to being permitted to volunteer at Hills. Please go to the District website:

<https://www.iowacityschools.org/domain/57>

Mission and Vision

Mission:

The Hills community is committed to serving the whole child. We acknowledge that each student's physical, emotional, creative, and social well-being are integral to learning and academic experience. The individual gifts and needs of all learners are accepted, fostered, and challenged. We strive to promote life-long learning in a safe, nurturing environment.

Vision:

High Expectations – Inspire – Lifelong – Learning for – Successful Students

Struck with Pride: We display pride in ourselves, our skills, our goals, and our school.

Respect: We demonstrate self-respect, respect for others, and respect for property.

Responsibility: We take responsibility for our learning and behavior.

Ready to Learn: We make choices to be prepared to learn and accept challenges.

#Bolt Brave: Brilliant – Respectful – Accepting – Valiant - Electric

School Hours

STUDENT HOURS

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday – 7:50 a.m. to 2:55* p.m.

Thursday – 7:50 a.m. to 1:55* p.m.

TEACHER HOURS

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday – 7:40 a.m. to 3:40 p.m.

SECRETARY HOURS

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday – 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

PRINCIPAL HOURS

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday – 7:40 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Hills Pride Promise

I am Struck with Pride,
In what I think, in what I say, and in what I do.

I am Respectful, I am Responsible, I am Ready to learn.
Be Bolt Brave. Go Hills Lightning Bolts!

Arrival and Dismissal

ARRIVAL

7:30 - Students may enter school to eat breakfast. **Under no circumstances will any student be allowed to enter the building prior to 7:30; unless they are enrolled in HCFK or NCJC.**

7:50- Entry bell rings: Students line up at the entry doors outside and enter school. Playing on playground or equipment must come to end for line-up. If the wind chill is below zero, students will wait in the gym.

7:55- Tardy bell rings: Students must use front office door. All other doors will be locked. **Students not in their classrooms at this time will be marked tardy.**

Students eating breakfast will go outside to line up as usual at the playground doors if finished before 7:50; after 7:50 they may go to classrooms.

Vehicle Loading and Unloading

Parking Lot Safety:

In order to help insure student safety during arrival and dismissal, we have worked with District staff to improve our parking lot and procedures. This will be successful with the help of all students, families, and staff. Please note the following:

1. HCFK and NCJC (Hills Cares for Kids and Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County– Before and After School Program) opens at 7 AM. When bringing your child, please park in the west lot (closest to the veterinary clinic.) Your child(ren) must be enrolled in HCFK/NCJC to attend. Contact the main office at 319-688-1105 (319-325-4279 for NCJC) for information.
2. Free Breakfast for all students begins at 7:30 AM – Students may enter the building ONLY to come to breakfast. There is no playground supervision until 7:40. Students should not be dropped off at 7:30 unless going to breakfast; however, if siblings are coming together and one would like to eat breakfast and the other does not

want to, both siblings should go to the cafeteria. When bringing your child, please park in the west lot (closest to the veterinary clinic).

3. Playground supervision begins at 7:40. If students are not eating breakfast they may go directly to the playground by using the west sidewalk that wraps around the building and leads directly to the playground.
4. **Please drive ALL the WAY through the parking lot to the east curb when dropping off students. Stopping between the rows of parked cars and dropping off students between cars is a SAFETY issue. This also causes traffic congestion; people cannot get into the parking lot or get to parking spaces.**
5. You may enter the bus lane AFTER 7:50 and drop off your child(ren). This means drive down to the end of the lane, stop, let your child(ren) out and then drive through the parking lot to exit. There will be **NO PARKING** in the bus lane. If there is a BUS sign placed in the lot, please do not enter the bus lane.
6. 7:50 – first bell that signals it is time to go to class.
7. 7:55 – second bell that signals class is to begin. If students are not in class by the 7:55 bell, they will be marked tardy.
8. The west parking spaces are to be used by parents who are going to park and walk with their child(ren) to the door. The east parking spaces will be used for staff. The lane directly in front of the school is for buses only. Please do not park in this lane at any time.
9. The spaces that are on the east curve of the parking lot are reserved for PRESCHOOL FAMILIES. Preschool families will park in this area at scheduled times and use the preschool exterior door to sign out for student pick up.
10. Dismissal will occur on a staggered basis:
 - 2:55 – BUS students will be dismissed
 - 2:57 – HCFK students will be dismissed
 - 3:00 – Walkers and Pick-up's will be dismissed

IF you are picking up your child(ren), please plan on a 3:00 time. This will assist with parking lot congestion. At the end of the day, a student's ride should be present by 3:00 p.m. Students not picked up by 3:05pm will be directed to the main office, where parents/emergency contacts will be called. Students are only allowed to leave with a person who is identified in Power School as guardians and/or emergency contacts. Please be prepared to provide photo identification when picking up a child.

A student's regular dismissal procedure will be followed unless written or verbal notice of a change is communicated to the school's main office by a PARENT or GUARDIAN. Calls notifying the office of a change should be made prior to 11:30am.

Bus Loading and Unloading:

The bus unloading area is the fire lane directly in front of the building. Buses unload students daily, from 7:30 to 7:50 a.m. and load students M, T, W, and F from 2:55-3:05p.m. and TH from 1:55-2:00 p.m.

Cars should not load or unload students in this area during the arrival and dismissal times. Cars should NEVER PARK in this area.

Additionally, the NCJC may or may not have buses that will load at various times outside of the school arrival/dismissal times.

Walkers or Bike Riders:

Walkers and bike riders should walk their bikes on the sidewalk to the bike racks. Bike riders should secure their bike racks and join morning recess; bikes are not to be ridden through the parking lot and/or playground.

Breakfast:

FREE breakfast is available to ALL Hills students every morning. Breakfast begins at 7:30 and ends at 7:50. Children should proceed directly to breakfast, as

THERE IS NO LATE BREAKFAST. After finishing breakfast, the children will join their classmates for morning recess and enter school at 7:50 a.m. with their respective grade level lines. Students riding buses are the only exception to eat breakfast past 7:50. Students will not be permitted to take breakfast items into the classrooms.

Morning Line-Up and Entry

The entry bell rings at 7:50, which signals students to move into their respective grade level lines. Teachers will pick students up at 7:50 in order to start the instructional day at 7:55 a.m.

Late Arrivals

All students are expected to arrive at school on time. If your child arrives after 7:55, you must sign the tardy book at the front office and receive a tardy pass. It is extremely important that students arrive on time for school. The first bell rings at 7:50 a.m. Then, when the second bell rings at 7:55, many things occur, for example, attendance, lunch count, opening announcements and the beginning of morning meetings.

DISMISSAL

2:55 Dismissal Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday

1:55 Dismissal Thursday

TRAFFIC PATTERNS

- Please park in a parking space if you plan to leave your car unattended. Parking is limited so you may have to park across the street.
- Exit the parking lot safely, when all of your children are secured in their safety belts.
- Please note that leaving young children in your vehicle unattended is dangerous and considered child endangerment.
- Please avoid parking in the traveling spots; these are reserved for staff go between buildings.

Parking and walking your child(ren) in or out of the school

DO: Park in a designated parking stall at ALL TIMES

DON'T: Use the handicap, striped zones, fire lane or curbs to park.

DO: Be sure to walk your child across the crosswalk.

DON'T: Drop children off in the parking lot or in the moving traffic lane.

DO: Use our drop off process to promote student independence and to alleviate congestion

To drop off or pick up:

DO: Unload or pick up your child/children curbside

DON'T: Unload your child in the line of moving traffic or in the middle of the parking lot spots

Leaving School Grounds

Students may not leave school without a parental note or telephone message requesting dismissal. If students leave without permission, parents will be notified immediately; the Johnson County Sheriff may be notified for assistance. There is a student sign in/out sheet in the office for all students who are "coming and going" between the hours of 7:55 A.M. and 2:55 P.M. (1:55 P.M.)

Students are only allowed to leave with a person who is identified in Power School as guardians and/or emergency contacts. Please be prepared to provide photo identification when picking up a child.

A student's regular dismissal procedure will be followed unless written or verbal notice of a change is communicated to the school's main office by a PARENT or GUARDIAN. Calls notifying the office of a change should be made prior to 11:30am.

If a student needs to leave early, they must come to the office. They may not be picked up at the classroom door. This allows the office to check for appropriate identification.

Attendance

Assuring the academic, social and emotional growth of your child is the mission of our school community. It takes the cooperation of our staff and families as partners in a child's education to achieve our mission. We know the more days children attend school the better they achieve. Being late just 10 minutes a day adds up to 30 hours of missed school time each year. For your child to have a successful year, regular attendance is critical.

Please call the office before 8:30 A.M. (688-1105) if your child will be absent. There is a 24 hour answering machine available and you may leave a message. Please give your name, the student's name, grade and teacher, and the reason for the absence. If the child is ill, please give a brief description of the illness.

If your child has any of these symptoms the evening before school or the morning of school, do NOT send him/her to school:

- ✓ A temperature over 100 degrees
- ✓ Skin that is hot and dry; profuse sweating; a rash that is spreading
- ✓ A sore throat, severe cough, or croup
- ✓ Pain in the chest, stomach, ears, or joints
- ✓ A stiff back or neck
- ✓ Vomiting and nausea; frequent, loose stools

A child should be symptom free (fever, vomiting and loose stools) for 24 hours before returning to school.

Please let school know when/if your family has been exposed to any contagious health issues such as chicken pox, whooping cough, head lice, etc. By doing this, we can be sure our school nurse is aware of the situation and can take necessary precautions when needed.

In the case of a planned absence, please inform the office and make arrangements for make-up work with the teacher at least one week prior to the absence. Under most circumstances, work missed while ill will be completed when the student returns to school.

If your child has an appointment and needs to be picked up early, please call the office at 688-1105. Please check-in at the office when you arrive, and before leaving the building with your child.

Timely communication between parents and the school regarding attendance will assure that our children are safe and will promote student responsibility and punctuality. When students are marked absent and no phone call has been received, the secretary will call parents to account for all absent students. If contact and communication does not occur, the absence will be marked as unexcused.

TRUANCY PROCEDURES FOR ICCSD ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

The Iowa City Community School District has standards for attendance and tardiness in all elementary schools. The following information explains the guidelines and what steps will be taken as the number of tardies and/or absences accumulate for your child.

Definitions

- **Truant:** A student who is absent from school without an acceptable excuse
- **Habitual Truant:** A student with five (5) or more unexcused absences in a school year
- **Unexcused Tardy:** A student who arrives at school within 60 minutes of the start of school without an acceptable excuse. Arrival beyond 60 minutes will be considered a half day unexcused absence.
- **Unexcused Absent:** **A student who is absent from school without an acceptable excuse. Unexcused absences are accrued in half-day increments. The attendance office should receive the acceptable excuse before the absence occurs. It must be received no more than 48 hours from the beginning of the absence.**

Procedures for unexcused tardy/or unexcused absence for a portion of the school day

- A letter is sent when the child has their 5th unexcused tardy indicating that 5 tardies is the equivalent to a full day unexcused absence, regardless of time of arrival. (RE: 3 tardies/truant letter)

- A student is also considered truant if they are absent for any portion of the day without an acceptable excuse. Therefore, if a child is absent for a portion of a day, five of these absences (or a combination of these with unexcused tardies) would also equal a full day unexcused absence. (RE: 5 tardies/truant letter)
- If a student accumulates 10 unexcused tardies, a parent meeting will be set.

Procedures for unexcused absence

- An attempt is made to reach the parent/guardian by telephone. (A log is kept of the calls and results.)
- If parents cannot be reached by phone a notification by letter will be made.
- After 48 hours from the beginning of the absence, if there has not been further communication from the parent/guardian to explain the absence and have it considered excused (according to the ICCSD Guidelines), the absence stands as unexcused.
- A letter is sent to notify the parents/guardians that the child has three unexcused absences. (RE: Three unexcused absences.)
- A letter is sent to notify the parents/guardians that the child has five unexcused absences. A parent meeting is required. (RE: Five Unexcused Absences)
- The parents/guardians have a conference with the school regarding attendance. This conference should discuss options, including possible program changes, to assist the child in regular attendance. An attendance plan is created. It is understood that it is the responsibility of the attendance officer to contact families, and talk with them throughout the entire process to achieve compliance with statutes. This is always done prior to designating the student a habitual truant. (RE: Attendance Plan)
- **If the student is on an in-district transfer, the attendance plan should indicate that the transfer will be revoked if attendance is not improved.** The transfer needs to be revoked before a child can be referred to the County Attorney to determine if attendance will improve by having the child attend their home school. If attendance does not improve at the home school, the home school proceeds to step four.
- If, after meeting with the family, or attempting to meet, the child reaches his/her 8th unexcused absence and there is no apparent effort from the family to improve attendance, a letter is sent to the family (RE: Habitual Truancy) and a referral is made to the County Attorney.

Unexcused Excuse

For an absence to be deemed excused the parent or guardian of the student must call in the excuse to the Attendance Office prior to the absence. If there are unusual circumstances, (no phone, emergency situation) an excuse may be accepted within 48 hours of the beginning of the absence. Ultimately, the decision of whether or not the absence will be excused lies with the principal or his/her designee. It is the opinion of the school district that school attendance is one of the student's and his/her family's highest priorities during the school year. Other than health-related absences and appointments, school related activities, and family emergencies, few reasons should be considered as acceptable reasons to be excused from class or school. (See ICCSD's acceptable excuses for absences and tardies)

Medical Excuse

If at any time, the parent appears to be abusing the excuse of illness, medical documentation may be required by the school for the absence to be counted as medically excused. Medical evaluation would be done at the expense of the family and/or cooperation with ICCSD Health Department and staff.

Two letters have been created. The first one can be used as a warning. The attendance officer may use discretion and send them in sequence or skip right to the second letter depending on the circumstances. (RE: Medical 1 and 2) Recommendations (if no past history of truancy) 8 Excused Absences: Medical 1 letter sent; 12 Excused Absences: Medical 2 letter sent.

Additional Clarification

Unexcused tardies, unexcused truanancies for a portion of the day, unexcused absences and excused absences are cumulative throughout the school year.

Copies of all letters/postcards/attendance plans shall be placed in the student's cumulative file. Documentation of all efforts made regarding a student's attendance will be kept as well.

Acceptable excuses for absences and tardies as indicated by ICCSD

The school attendance officer is empowered to approve an excuse to any student for the following reasons:

1. Evidence that the student is not in proper physical or mental condition to attend school or an educational program. The district may request the parent or guardian to obtain a written statement from a physician or licensed practitioner as proof of the physical or mental condition of the student. Such excuse shall be made in writing, shall state the period of time for which it is valid, and shall not exceed 30 days.
2. Medical, dental, chiropractic, optometric or other valid professional appointments. Parents or guardians are requested to make their appointments during non-school hours
 - Excused early dismissals are recorded when a student is picked up early and there is 1 hour or less left in that day. If a child is picked-up early, and is gone more than one hour from the end of the school day, it is considered a half day excused absence.
 - When a child arrives one hour or less late at the beginning of the school day, it is considered an excused tardy. If the appointment is more than an hour and the child arrives after 10:00 am it is considered a half day excused absences.
3. A death in the immediate family or funerals for close relatives
4. Religious holidays
5. Family trips that can be taken only during the normal school term. A parent/guardian shall be required to notify the school attendance officer prior to leaving on vacation. If attendance is satisfactory, **the attendance officer may excuse up to 5 days a year for family trips.** Student vacations or trips without parent/guardian accompaniment are not excused absences.
6. A court appearance or other legal procedure which requires the attendance of the student
7. A quarantine as imposed by a public health officer
8. Attendance at special events of educational value as approved by the school attendance officer
9. Approved school activities during class time

10. Special circumstances that show good cause which the school attendance officer approves in advance
11. Out of school suspension
12. **Please note that after 8 excused absences documentation is required for future absences**

Before and After School Programs

The Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County (NCJC) Before and After School Program (BASP) is a child care program located at Hills Elementary School and is operated by the Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County. The program is open to children in kindergarten through sixth grade and provides a variety of supervised activities in a safe and friendly environment. Creativity and development of social interaction skills are emphasized through leisure activities and play.

The program follows the school calendar and is supported in principle by the school, but receives no financial support or administration from the school. The NCJC program is licensed by the Department of Human Services and abides by its regulations and guidelines. Hours of operation are: Before School - 7:00 AM – 7:50 AM, After School – 2:55 PM (1:55 PM Thursday) – 6:00 PM.

Space is filled on a first-come basis. For more information on space availability and monthly fees please contact the Neighborhood Centers at (319) 325-4279.

The Hills Care for Kids (HCFK) Before and After School Program (BASP) is a child care program located at Hills Elementary School and is operated by Iowa City Community School District staff. This program is open ONLY to preschool children who participate in the Hills Elementary preschool program. It also provides supervised activities in a safe and friendly environment. Creativity and development of social interaction skills are emphasized through leisure activities and play by extending the preschool day through its goals for children.

The HCFK program is licensed by the Department of Human Services and abides by its regulations and guidelines. Hours of operation are: Before School - 7:00 AM – 7:50 AM, After School – 2:55 PM (1:55 PM Thursday) – 5:30 PM.

Behavior Expectations

Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS)

Our goal at Hills Elementary is to build a partnership between home and school in order to foster a positive learning environment that results in success for all students.

One of the ways we can do that is by establishing high standards and clear expectations, and then supporting all students in reaching those goals. We have a dedicated, caring staff that is anxious to work with both the students and families to make Hills Elementary a unique and positive learning environment from the day it opens. In order to help make this happen, we will be implementing a program known as PBIS, which stands for Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports.

What PBIS **IS**:

- A research-based framework to help us establish a positive school-wide climate
- A structure for minimizing negative behaviors so all students can do their best learning
- Focused on teaching and reinforcing appropriate behaviors
- Focused on prevention of problem behaviors, paired with meaningful, predictable consequences when problem behaviors do occur
- Most successful with families support and reinforce the expectations, language, and process at home as well as school

What PBIS is **NOT**:

- A "token economy" in which students are rewarded for everything they do
- A lack of correction or consequences for negative behaviors
- Focused on reactionary punishment
- An attempt to control students, but rather to motivate, teach, and acknowledge them

What you need to know now:

- Our *Lightning Bolt FOCUS* consists of expectations related to four important areas: *RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, READY to LEARN, AND PRIDE*...expect to hear those words often!
- Throughout the year you may hear your child(ren) talking about "pride tickets," which we will use to acknowledge specific positive behaviors we see students demonstrating.
- Throughout the year, students will be rewarded in a variety of ways both with individual privileges and school-wide celebrations for reaching goals.
- We will continue to provide you with additional specific information about PBIS throughout the year.

How you can help:

- Learn about PBIS...familiarize yourself with what it is and how it works.
- Talk about PBIS...use the language of the *Lightning Bolt FOCUS* areas with your child(ren), and try implementing some of it within home and community settings.
- Communicate with us...be sure to let us know if you have questions or suggestions!

#BE BOLT BRAVE!

Common Areas	<u>Respect</u> <i>I respect myself by making choices that help me to be my best. I treat others the way I want to be treated.</i>	<u>Responsibility</u> <i>I will take responsibility for my words and actions and will work to become a better person each day</i>	<u>Ready to Learn</u> <i>I will be prepared to do my personal best through being present, timely, having materials organized and having a growth mindset.</i>	<u>PRIDE</u> <i>I will show my LIGHTNING BOLT PRIDE wherever I go... Pride in our school, pride in my learning, and pride in myself as a person.</i>
Bus	I use a 0-1 (red-orange) voice level I keep my hands and feet to myself I stay in my own personal space	I follow directions of all adults I walk to and from the bus and stay on the sidewalk I sit and stay in my seat	I am on time for the bus. I have my backpack and needed materials. I look forward to the new learning of the day.	I use my manners I take care of all of my personal belongings
Arrival Dismissal	I keep my voice level 0 (red), when the bell rings I stay in my own personal space	I arrive between 7:30-7:50 I stand with my class I follow directions of all adults	I am on time for school. I put my personal belongings in the appropriate spot.	I hold doors for others Be prepared I represent myself and our school positively in and out of the building
Breakfast Lunchroom	I keep my voice at level 0-2 (red-yellow) I eat and touch my own food I use kind language and looks I talk to friends around me	I follow adult directions I find a seat right away I stay seated with my feet under table I clean up my space when done	I arrive on time. I give my body the nourishment it needs to be prepared for a day of learning.	I keep our cafeteria clean I say "please" and "thank you" I welcome others to sit next to me
Hallway	I use a 0 - red voice level I greet others with a smile and wave	I walk with my Hands at side All Eyes facing forward Lips zipped, Walking Feet	I go directly to the location	I keep our halls clean I look at displays with my eyes only
Restroom	I keep my voice level at 0 - red I wait patiently and respect others' privacy	I am quiet as I use, flush, wash and leave the restroom	I limit socializing I go directly to the location	I keep the walls, stalls, floors and sinks clean
Assembly	I keep my voice level at 0-1 (red-orange) I will wait quietly for the presentation to begin I stay in my own personal space	I will wait patiently and enter and exit calmly I follow directions I will clap and respond appropriately	I will focus my eyes, ears and brain on the presentation	I represent me and myself and my school positively
Playground	I keep my voice level 0 (red) in line I solve problems respectfully I share, cooperate and include others	I will take care of equipment Follow safety rules Report serious issues Follow directions immediately	I exercise and play to help my body and mind to be ready to learn.	I use good sportsmanship

Breakfast and Lunch

Breakfast

FREE breakfast is available to ALL Hills students every morning. Breakfast begins at 7:35 and ends at 7:50. Children should proceed directly to breakfast, as **THERE IS NO LATE BREAKFAST**. After finishing breakfast, the children will join their classmates for morning recess and enter school at 7:50 a.m. with their respective grade level lines. Students riding buses are the only exception to eat breakfast past 7:50. Students will not be permitted to take breakfast items into the classrooms.

Lunch

Hot school lunches are available at Hills Elementary every day. Menus are found on the ICCSD website:

http://www.iowacityschools.org/pages/ICCSD/Departments/Food_Service/Menus

Lunch prices are as follows: Full price=\$2.65, Reduced price=.40, Milk=.50 - Adult Guest: \$3.30

Lunch money or checks can be turned in at the main office. Money sent with students should be sealed in an envelope with the student's full name, teacher's name, and "lunch account" on the front of the envelope. Checks can be made payable to Hills Lunch Program. Online lunch accounts can be set up at: Myschoolbucks.com

Free and reduced price lunches are available at Hills. Application forms are located on the ICCSD website under Quick Links and must be completed every year. All information concerning free and reduced lunches is kept confidential.

Lunch Guidelines:

- Five lunch components are offered (meat, grain, fruit, veggie, milk). Students MUST take three components and one MUST be a fruit or veggie – milk is Not required.
- Students MUST have money in their lunch account to purchase milk only. FRL students that want milk need to 3 items (one being a fruit or veggie) so it is free.
- Salad bar – choice of fresh fruits/veggies. Students must make their own choices and need a half cup of fruit or veggie (total) to count as a meal. MAXIMUM serving is ½ cup of fruit AND 1 cup of veggies.
- Students need to learn their 5-digit lunch account #.
- If a student has an unexcused tardy and needs a school lunch, they will not have a choice between regular/alternate. They will receive a regular lunch.

Building Security

The Iowa City Community School District has many policies in place that help to assure the safety of students in our schools. In addition, each school site has numerous plans that are used to ensure safety at the individual schools. We regularly practice safety drills including fire, inclement weather and emergencies that may pose a threat to student safety. As parents, you can help protect our students and staff by following these procedures:

- All visitors are to stop in the office to sign-in and to pick up a visitor badge to wear. A student or staff member may remind you to wear one as you walk through the school.
- Please remind your child/children that they should not be in the building or on the playground after school hours, as there is no supervision.

Other avenues for keeping our school safe include asking all visitors and volunteers to sign in and wear a badge while at Hills, protocols for dropping off and picking up students, introducing and reviewing playground safety expectations with all students each school year, a building Security Plan, Safety Patrol, background checks on all staff members and disclosure statements from all volunteers in our school. While this information touches on only some of the ways we strive to ensure your child/children are safe at school, please know that your child's safety is of great concern for our staff and community.

Busing

The Iowa City Community School District provides busing to qualifying students. Currently the district contracts with Durham for transportation services. Applications for pupil transportation are available in the school office, including the Pay-to-Ride option. Only route riders are allowed to ride the bus. **Friends of those students are not permitted to ride.** All bus routes and bus assignments are made by the Iowa City Community School District Administrative Office. Route assignments and bus arrival times are posted in Power School information found on-line before school starts. Questions regarding bus transportation should be directed to Durham Transportation, 354-1304 or Esme Davis, Transportation Manager, Iowa City Community School District, 688-1000. Students are asked to follow all safety and courtesy rules and to cooperate with the bus driver so that all riders may have a safe and pleasant ride.

For list or expected bus behaviors, please see School Bus Transportation Handbook p. 4. The following information outlines the procedures to be followed for infractions of the responsibilities.

1. Upon first violation driver verbally acknowledges the infraction with the student.
2. Upon the second violation an "Unsatisfactory Bus Conduct Report" is written, the driver talks to the student privately and/or assigns a special seat. Written report is sent to the principal, the principal meets with the student, notes from the meeting are recorded on the "Unsatisfactory Bus Conduct Report", and the principal forwards a copy to the parents. A phone call to the parents is made by the principal as well.
3. Upon the third violation a second "Unsatisfactory Bus Conduct Report" is written and sent to the principal. The principal meets with the student. Notes from the meeting are recorded on the "Unsatisfactory Bus Conduct Report" and a copy is sent to the parents. A phone call to the parents is made by the principal as well.
4. Upon fourth violation, a third "Unsatisfactory Bus Conduct Report" is written and sent to the principal. The principal meets with the student. Notes from the meeting are

recorded on the "Unsatisfactory Bus Conduct Report" and a copy is sent to the parents. A phone call to the parents is made by the principal as well.

5. Upon fifth violation, a fourth "Unsatisfactory Bus Conduct Report" is written and sent to the principal. The principal meets with the student, calls the parents and the student is suspended from riding the bus for one day.
6. Further violations will result in the student being suspended from riding the bus for a period of time to be determined by the principal.

When the behavior by a student is such that it becomes an immediate threat to the safety of other riders the student may be suspended without going through steps 1-5 above. Continued unsatisfactory behavior may result in suspension from riding the bus for the remainder of the school year.

Celebrations and Snacks

The ICCSD is committed to providing a safe and healthy learning environment for our students. In line with that goal, changes are being made to the district's Wellness Policy regarding classroom snacks and classroom celebrations.

SNACK & HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS (Halloween, Winter Break, and Valentine's Day parties):

When food is served to students in the classroom as a snack or during a classroom celebration, the following rules apply (ICCSD Wellness Policy 507.9):

- allow only fresh fruits/vegetables or purchased foods with the ingredients listed (no homemade foods).
- allow only foods that meet the Healthy Food Guidelines/ Smart Snacks. (the only exception to this would be food-tasting related to district-approved curriculum lessons)
- not allow foods with peanuts or peanut butter, or foods that were made in a factory where cross-contamination may occur.
- food that does not meet the guidelines will be sent home.
- a list of acceptable foods (Healthy Food Guidelines/ Smart Snacks) will be made available to parents and teachers at the beginning of the school year.

Food and beverages, other than water, are not allowed in the hallways or classrooms (except in the event of a classroom healthy snack time or special event). If adults see students with food or beverages not in alignment with Smart Snack & Healthy Food Guidelines they will ask the child to dispose of or put the item(s) away; gently reminding the student not to have them at that time. For more details regarding the smart snack/healthy food guidelines, students and families are encouraged to visit the school or district websites for further information.

We realize that on special occasions you may wish to participate in your child's joy by sharing a form of recognition with them. We ask that you please refrain from sending flowers and balloons to school as they interrupt instructional time for your child and their peers. If deliveries of balloons, flowers, etc. for a child's special day arrive, they will remain in the office until the end of the day. Balloons cannot go on the buses.

Birthday party invitations can be passed out at school **IF** you invite all of the girls and/or all of the boys in your child's class. This makes sure there are no hurt feelings. If sending party invitations home from school, please contact the classroom teacher for an updated class list. You may not hold your child's birthday party at school. Special transportation, including but not limited to limousines, are prohibited. Additional vehicles interfere with our routine dismissal procedures and overall safety.

The ICCSD is committed to providing a safe and healthy learning environment for our students.

Birthdays

Student birthdays will be celebrated in the school and classrooms with a special acknowledgement. Each teacher will determine a simple though special recognition for students who wish to celebrate their birthday at school. **Please note that these celebrations may not involve food, due to the ICCSD Wellness Policy, therefore we cannot allow birthday snacks to be sent to school.** We ask that no food or non-food items be sent to school to share with the class to celebrate birthdays.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

Iowa law requires that a child abuse report must be made when a certified employee reasonably suspects that child abuse or neglect has occurred. That means that a report must be made if there is some reliable information indicating abuse in one of these eight categories: physical abuse; mental injury; sexual abuse; denial of critical care or neglect; child prostitution; presence of illegal drugs; manufacture or possession of dangerous substance in child's presence; or bestiality in child's presence. A report is a request to determine if abuse or neglect occurred and if so, to get help. Failure to report the suspected abuse or neglect may result in civil and/or criminal sanctions. A staff member cannot be penalized for reporting suspected child abuse that did not in fact occur if the reporter was acting in good faith.

A staff member must make the report directly to the Department of Human Resources. A written report must be made within 24 hours of receiving the information about the suspected abuse. School district staff members do not have an obligation to report the information to the parents of the students who are interviewed. If there is a reasonable belief that the student is in immediate danger, a request must be made for protection by law enforcement agencies.

Communication

Communication between school and home is very important to us. School newsletters, Hills Highlights, are sent home every week. The Hills website, <https://www.iowacityschools.org/Domain/1663> posts upcoming events and information about our school. Hills also has Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/hillselementary/>. Parents are encouraged to maintain regular communication with their student's teacher and can also contact the principal through email and/or phone. You may also request to visit with the principal in person.

The district also has a calling service to provide automated calls to staff and parents. These calls will typically be delivered by the principal or Superintendent Steve Murley. The calls will consist of cancellations/early dismissals, safety concerns, event updates, or other important information. The system uses the phone number(s) listed on PowerSchool so if you are not receiving these calls, please update PowerSchool information or call our office at 688-1105.

Student Attire/Dress Code

The major responsibility for appropriate dress and grooming rests with the students and their parents. An individual's appearance and attire can influence both others' behaviors and an individual's own self-image and behavior.

Students and staff are expected to dress appropriately for school and may not wear or display attire which is deemed disruptive of the school environment or unreasonably infringes on others' rights to health, safety, welfare or property. If clothing is deemed disruptive or unreasonably infringes on others' rights, the offending student or staff member will be required to correct the situation. Depending on the situation, the student or staff member is subject to disciplinary action. All final decisions will be made by an administrator.

The following list includes examples of clothing that is considered inappropriate for school:

- Backless, strapless, or halter style attire that exposes the back/shoulder blades;
- Bare midriffs, chests or torsos;
- Visible underwear;
- Pants, slacks, or shorts worn below the waist;
- Clothing or accessories that promote the use of alcohol or drugs, including profane or offensive language or pictures that are obscene (vulgar, crude, or lewd) or include sexually inappropriate or racially biased material or references.
- Hats, head coverings and bandanas are prohibited indoors.
- Shoes or sandals should be worn at all times.
- Backpacks and purses should remain in cubbies throughout the day.

If there is a medical or religious reason to make an exception to these rules, the parents must request an exception. Such an exception must be approved by the administrators before the student can wear attire, which is an exception to these rules.

Illness Policy

1. Your child should not come to school if she/he has had a fever within the past 24 hours. She/he should remain at home, **fever-free** for 24 hours, before returning to school.
2. Your child should not come to school if she/he has vomited or has had other gastrointestinal symptoms within the past 24 hours.
3. If your child vomits at school, has a temperature above 100 degrees, or if we feel that your child is too ill to remain in the classroom, you will be called to pick her/him up. We understand that having to leave work or other activities unexpectedly isn't ideal for any

parent, however, we ask that parents arrange for transportation home for their sick child as soon as possible.

4. Be sure the school has an updated telephone number to reach you at in the event your child becomes ill or injured at school. You can update your information at home on your PowerSchool account.

Lost and Found

Please mark your child's items with her/his name to help ensure misplaced items are returned to them. Unlabeled lost and found items will be deposited in the storage bins in the wedge (the hall outside the main office). Parents and students are encouraged to check the lost and found first, when items are missing. Items left in the lost and found at the end of the school year will be donated to a local charity.

Medication

If administering medication at school is necessary, each of the following conditions **must** be met before medication will be given during school hours:

1. A physician's order is required for **ALL** medication, including over-the-counter drugs
2. Parent's written permission to administer medication must accompany the container.
3. Medication **must** be in the original container, with all of the following on the label:
 - a. the student's name
 - b. the name of the medication
 - c. the dosage of the medication
 - d. the time it is to be administered
 - e. the method of administration (i.e., by mouth)
 - f. specific instruction needed to administer correctly.

To fully insure the health needs of our students, your cooperation in following steps A-F is appreciated. Due to legal circumstances, we cannot depart from the above outlined procedures.

Other Building Policies

Phone Calls: Students may use the phone in the office for emergencies only, and with teacher permission. The office will forward messages to students. In the event of an emergency, we will have the student return a call to their parent as soon as possible. Students are not allowed to use personal cell phones during the school day.

Electronic Items/Cell Phones: Cell phones will not be allowed during the school day. Phones will be turned in to classroom teacher or the office at the beginning of the day for safe keeping. Hills Elementary cannot be held responsible for electronic items. It is best to leave these items at home. **Toys:** Students should leave toys at home for safe keeping.

Hats/Hoods: Hats and hoods will not be worn during the school day at Hills. **Gum/Food:** Students are not allowed to bring food or drink from home to eat during the day, except for home lunch; soda is not allowed.

Progress Reporting

Parent conferences are held twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring. The purpose of these conferences is to report how the child is progressing in academic content and in his/her social development. A student's end-of-the-year report is distributed on the last day of classes. The report is a combination of descriptions for all curricular areas and social development with a narrative summary. Throughout the year, parents and teachers also informally exchange information regarding children's work and progress. Open communication between parents and teachers is encouraged.

PTO

One way to become actively involved in your child's education is to participate in the PTO. The primary purpose of the PTO is to promote and provide assistance to the quality educational programs and community relationships at Hills Elementary. The PTO works cooperatively with Hills staff, the District-wide Parents Organization (DPO), and the Iowa City Community School District (ICCSA). All parents are welcome and encouraged to attend the monthly meetings. [The PTO meets 2nd Tuesday of every month](#) at 6:00pm [in the Hills Library](#).

School Safety

Weapons Policy

The Iowa City Community School District has a zero tolerance policy for weapons on school property or at any school function. It is important to note that this includes things like pocket knives or other sharp objects. Make sure your child understands this important matter. The policy also includes non-weapon materials which might be used as a threat or weapon. This could even include a toy that might be used to threaten someone. It is very important that students not bring anything which is or might be perceived as a weapon since severe consequences could result.

Emergency Drills

Each building within the Iowa City Community School District has a developed Emergency Plan to plan for various emergency situations. Emergency procedures for fire and severe weather are posted in all areas of the building. The plans designate procedures to follow in emergency situations and relocation sites if necessary.

Within the building we review the following procedures:

Bus Evacuation: Practiced twice a year. Fire: Students practice formally and informally four times per year. Storm: Students have designated areas to take cover and practice formally and informally four times per year. Safety and Intruder drills are being evaluated as a District.

School-Based Support

Student Family Advocate

Hills has a Student Family Advocate to help improve student achievement by supporting all families, teachers and students. Services offered by the SFA include assistance with school supplies, clothing, eye glasses and other items students need in order to come to the classroom prepared and ready to learn. In addition, the SFA is available to help acquaint families new to the area with community resources and connect families to local programs for financial assistance, child care, housing, energy assistance, etc. The SFA also has resources and information available on a number of parenting and developmental issues and is accessible for support and intervention to families experiencing crisis situations. For more information, contact the school at 688-1105.

Health Services

The ICCSD Health Services staff consists of the Director of Health Services, seven full-time school nurses, and one half time nurse, as well a health associates in the health offices at the junior high and senior high schools. The school nurse covering Hills will work closely with the Hills staff to ensure that Hills is a healthy learning environment and that your child(ren's) health needs are met during the school day. She will help staff carry out the health care plans for students, provide staff with mandated trainings, educate staff about common childhood health concerns. If your child has any health concerns during this school year, or if you have questions for the school nurse, please contact the Hills main office at 688-1105.

School Counselor

The building counselor and coordinates a comprehensive guidance program as an integral part of the Hills community. Classroom, group, and individual guidance focuses on education and prevention. The purpose of the developmental program is to strengthen interpersonal skills and to develop self-acceptance and positive coping strategies. By providing classroom guidance lessons to all students we hope to help students develop as confident, caring, engaged and responsible learners.

English Language Teachers

Hills has two English Language teachers who serve students who come to us at different levels of proficiency of English. Some students will be served within the classroom while others may be pulled out of the classroom for specific instruction in reading, writing, listening, and speaking English.

Extended Learning Program (ELP)

An ELP teacher is assigned to each elementary building in the district. The teacher works directly with groups of identified students and serves as a resource to classroom teachers in planning all class activities.

GWAEA Speech and Language Clinician – Occupational therapist and Physical Therapist

Grant Wood Area Education Agency (GWAEA) provides hearing and speech services to the district. Students are referred to the speech and language clinician by teachers and parents for evaluation of sound usage, language skills, voice quality, and fluency of speaking. Students in need of speech and language services meet with the clinician for individual or small group classes after parental permission is given. On as a needed basis and consultation, an OT is available for fine motor skills and a PT for gross motor skills.

GWAEA School Psychologist and Social Worker

Grant Wood Area Education Agency provides psychological services to Hills students, teachers, and parents. Help is available in the consultation of educational, emotional, and behavioral problems. Parents are always contacted to give their written permission before any psychological testing takes place.

GWAEA Hearing Specialists

Grant Wood Area Education Agency provides annual hearing screening to all students in the school. Parents will receive notification of the screening dates. If you do not want your child/children to participate in hearing screening, please notify the school in writing.

Instructional Design Strategist (IDS)

The district has hired an Instructional Design Strategist for every building. The IDS supports teachers in delivering the best, most effective instruction possible to every student at Hills.

Math Specialist (MARS)

The math resource specialist assists teachers in planning, developing, and implementing appropriate math instruction and materials for the students.

Special Education Programs

Hills special education programs include a resource program which provides support for students with mild learning, behavior, or mental disabilities. The resource program teacher works with children primarily in areas of reading and math. Children participate in special education programs following staffing and parental approval.

Title I Program

An additional academic support teacher with a focus in literacy teacher is provided through federal Title I funds. This teacher supports the regular classroom teacher's program by helping children who are having difficulty in reading. Emphasis of programs and funds is placed on educational needs of the students as identified by universal reading screeners.

Strings and Instrumental Band

String and Band lessons begin during fifth grade. There is also an elementary orchestra and band in which students are encouraged to participate.

Visitors

For the safety of all of our children, we ask that all visitors report to the office and receive a "Visitor" badge. All entrance doors (except the front door) will be locked at 7:55am and will remain locked throughout the school day. If parents want to visit their child's classroom we ask they arrange a convenient time with the teacher and stay no longer than 2 hours at a time.

Volunteers

Volunteers at Hills Elementary are greatly appreciated, and we look forward to you volunteering in our school. All volunteers must complete an application, a District Volunteer Disclosure Statement, a Criminal Background Consent Form, and Consent to contact the Central Abuse Registry, prior to being permitted to volunteer at Hills. The Volunteer Disclosure statement, Criminal Background Consent Form and the Consent to contact the Central Abuse Registry will be sent to our District Volunteer Coordinator for approval. This process takes approximately two weeks. Because most parents volunteer in some capacity over the time their children are in school, all parents are encouraged to complete the form. The application only needs to be filled out once for the district. Please go to the District website:

<https://www.iowacityschools.org/domain/57>

If you have a younger child that you would like to accompany you as you volunteer, please check with the staff member you will be volunteering for, whether or not a young child may accompany. It may depend on the volunteer activity to be completed and the staff/students involved.

Weather Related Cancellations

Please listen to KCJJ (1630), KXIC (800am), KRNA (93.1), KCRG (TV-9) KGAN (TV-2), or check the district website at <https://www.iowacityschools.org/domain/35> for **NO SCHOOL** or **EARLY DISMISSAL** messages due to inclement weather or mechanical breakdown. The decision will be made by the Central Administration Office between 6:00 and 6:30 AM for school cancellation and 11:00 and 11:30 AM for early dismissal. All NO SCHOOL or DELAYED school announcements will be broadcasted prior to 7:00 AM. Be sure that your contact information is correct in PowerSchool to receive automated messages regarding late starts, early dismissals or school cancellations. Please do not call the Educational Services Center or Hills to find out about school cancellations. Also, please note that if school is delayed, cancelled or dismissed early, before and after school programs will **NOT** operate.

