

Hill City Elementary

2016-2017 Student/Parent Handbook



Pickens County School District Information

Dr. Lula Mae Perry, Superintendent
Mike Cowart, School Board Chairperson
Delane Lewis, Vice School Board Chairperson
Peggy Andrews, School Board Member
Bryon Long, School Board Member
Daniel Bell, School Board Member

District Phone Number:

706-253-1700

Transportation Number:

706-253-1727

www.pickenscountyschools.org

Hill City Elementary

600 Hill Circle

Jasper, Georgia 30143

School Hours: 7:45-2:45

Student Drop off begins at 7:10

Jennifer Halko

Principal

Chris Wallace

Assistant Principal

HAWKS Mission Statement

High

Achievement

Within a

Kind

Safe Environment

HCES PTO Board

| | |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Dixie Simmons | President |
| Andi Jordan | Vice-President |
| Krystal Klein | Secretary |
| Tina Burton | Treasurer |
| Kelly Newton | Parent Representative |
| Deanna Edwards | Teacher Representative |
| Courtney Davis | Teacher Representative |

HCES School Improvement Team

| | |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| Jennifer Halko | Principal |
| Chris Wallace | Assistant Principal |
| Rhonda Lane | Academic Coach |
| Kim Lunn | Gifted Coordinator |
| Sonia Chapman | Kindergarten |
| Ashley Cagle | First Grade |
| Amy Childers | Second Grade |
| Becky Kuykendall | Third Grade |
| Vanessa Sultan | Fourth Grade |
| Brandi McEntire | Fifth Grade |
| Jacque Smith | Counselor |
| Ronnette Bradley | Lead SPED teacher |
| Greg Hamilton | School Advisory Council |

Welcome to Hill City Elementary—Home of the Hawks!



Welcome Letter from principal:

Dear HCES Family,

I have had the pleasure of working with students, families, and teachers at Hill City Elementary since 2003. I truly value each student and teacher and am amazed daily at all the great things that happen in our school. Being a part of a child's educational process is a great privilege with tremendous reward and responsibility. As Principal, I will make every effort to support our students and teachers on their educational journey.

Hill City Elementary enjoys a widely known reputation as a strong community school that stresses academic excellence. I love seeing our parents become involved in both the learning process and the variety of student-centered activities offered every year. Foremost, Hill City offers a dynamic education to every student and believes the expectations for developing and maintaining a safe and productive learning environment are key to the success of our students and staff.

On behalf of the Hill City family, I look forward to continuing our valued partnership with you in the coming school year! If I can be of assistance to you my door is always open. You are welcome to drop by the school or call me at 706-253-1880 if you have a problem or concern.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Halko

Principal, HCES

Hill City Elementary PTO

PTO is a group of parents, teachers, and other concerned adults who join together to support the school. The PTO plays an integral role in the success of the school. They sponsor programs for students such as Dances, Movie Night, Fall Festival, PTO School wide cook out, Reading program and much more. In addition, the PTO supports teachers and staff by providing volunteer assistance and offering financial support for various projects. Major projects which otherwise might not have been possible have been funded.

We hope that every parent will become a PTO parent, not only by joining as a member but also by becoming involved through volunteerism. PTO meetings are held in the evening. Many of our PTO programs will include special performances by our students. Meetings and special activities are announced through the school newsletter, website as well as on the PTO website.

AFTER-SCHOOL CARE

There is an on-site after-school program for childcare (district wide policy). The program is open each day that school is in session. **The cost per day is \$7.00.** The program begins at 2:45 each day and ends promptly at 6:00 p.m. **ASP Fee Schedule**

- **ASP \$7 per day** (includes snack) if prepaid by 10:00 AM
- \$9 per day for “drop-ins” this includes **ANY** student that has not paid by 10:00 a.m.

ASP Fees for Late Pick-Up

- \$10 per 15-minute increment per child
- 6:01 p.m. – 6:15 p.m. = \$10
- 6:16 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. = \$20
- 6:31 p.m. – 6:45 p.m. = \$30
- 6:46 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. = \$40

Notes

- All fees are to be **prepaid** by the day, week, or month.
- “Drop-ins” are defined as students who had fees received at the school later than 10:00 a.m.
- These additional fees are assessed so that the program coordinator may address unique staffing needs

Students that receive three (3) write ups during a grading period will be suspended from afterschool for the remainder of the nine weeks. One (1) additional write up will result in suspension from ASP for the remainder of the school year. Parents that want children to attend the program should complete an afterschool registration page (available in the front office). Students not picked up by 2:55 will be placed in after school care and there will be a \$9.00 charge.

ASSEMBLIES/AWARDS CEREMONIES

HCES will have in-house assemblies four times during the school year. These assemblies will feature entertaining educational speakers/events that will enhance and expand the school curriculum. **Students will receive quarterly awards in their classroom, these include: quarterly perfect attendance, honor roll, principal’s list.** Teachers will contact parents to make them aware of the awards. HCES will have an end of the year assembly that will recognize: year-long perfect attendance, year-long honor roll, year-long principal’s list

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

See Pickens Code of Conduct for student attendance rules

Make-up Work:

It is the student's responsibility to turn in make-up work, when he/she is absent from school. Parents/guardians and students are encouraged to come to the office to retrieve make-up work after they contact the teacher. The student has five (5) school days to make-up work.

Late Check-in or Early Check-out:

An unexcused late check-in or early check-out is defined as any time a student arrives late to school or leaves school early for a reason other than those defined by the State Board of Education as an excused absence. The school day begins at 7:45. Any student arriving after 7:45 is considered to be tardy. A student must stay at school at least 1/2 of the day (11:15) to be counted present. When possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outside of school hours. If a student is being checked in or checked out for a doctor's appointment, a physician's note is required within 1 school day to be considered excused. Students that are tardy or checkout early have one (1) day to submit either a doctor's excuse or a written parental excuse in order for the tardy or early check out to be considered excused. See the Pickens County Code of Conduct for further explanation of absences, tardy, or checkouts.

Check-in:

Students that are brought to school by parents may not enter the building before 7:10. Parents that accompany their children to their classrooms must sign in at the table in the front hallway and sign out before leaving the building. An alert message will be given at 7:43. At that time all parents and visitors are required to make their way out of the building or come to the office for a visitor's pass. Classes begin promptly at 7:45. Students must be in their classroom at 7:45, in order to not be considered tardy.

Any child that arrives after 7:45 must come to the main office to receive a tardy slip. PreK students will be considered tardy if they arrive after 8:00 a.m.

Check-out:

Any child that is checked out early must be checked out by a parent, guardian, or an adult that the parent/guardian has placed on the pickup list. A reason for pickup must be given. All individuals picking up children are required to show a state issued photo ID. Any individual that does not have an ID will not be allowed to pick up at child. **PLEASE BE AWARE THAT ALL TARDIES AND EARLY CHECK OUTS MUST HAVE A WRITTEN NOTE THE NEXT SCHOOL DAY TO BE CONSIDERED EXCUSED.** (See your Student Code of Conduct for more information). **Safety is a priority at HCES.**

BUSES

See Pickens Code of Conduct for specific rules regarding buses

CAR RIDERS

Morning Drop-off:

Students should not be dropped off before 7:10 a.m. for any reason. Staff members will be on-duty to receive students at the sidewalk after 7:10. No one is assigned to monitor students before this time. Students should be ready to exit the car on the right side quickly. Book bags and other materials should be on hand for the child to pick up as they exit the car, not in the trunk. For safety reasons, the car rider drop-off line is one lane. Please do not go around cars in the car line. Parents may not park behind cars in the parking lot and walk students across the lot. In the event that parents need to accompany students to class, they must park in a designated parking space at the end of the building, and sign in the front hallway. Please enter the parking in the correct direction.

Afternoon Pick-up:

Children will not be released to parents at the classroom door. Afternoon dismissal can become difficult when last minute interruptions occur. If you must pick up your child early for an appointment, **checkouts must occur before 2:00 p.m.** otherwise, pickups must occur through the car line. Please plan after school activities accordingly. Please do not attempt to pick up students in the lobby or in the bus line. Anyone checking a child out of school must show a valid photo identification card, and must be listed on the child's pickup list. Afternoon car rider line will be a one-lane pick up for grades 1-5 students in the front of the building. PreK -K students will be picked up in the area by the gym. **(Older siblings in grades 1-5 will be sent to the gym with younger siblings)**

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

All transportation changes must be made in **writing** to the school office before 1:00 each day. Changes can be brought to school by students, emailed to mandygable@pickenscountyschools.org, or faxed to the school at 706-253-1885. **ALL CHANGES MUST BE MADE BEFORE 1:00 P.M.** In accordance with PCS transportation policy bus riders will be allowed one (1) pick up spot in the morning and one (1) drop off spot in the afternoon. Students may not ride the bus home with other students nor may students ride a bus other than their regularly assigned bus. Students that will be car riders or in after school care must follow the same procedures listed above. Any student that is riding home with another child must have a note from their parent and a note from the parent that they are riding home with. If your child is not in HCES district they are not allowed to ride a Pickens County bus.

CAMP

HCES will continue to have our CAMP by grade level. We will have the services of Ms. Leslie Miller as music teacher the 1st semester. Ms. Jacqueline Tipton will be back as our art teacher the 2nd semester.

CHANGES IN STUDENT INFORMATION

In order to keep our records current, please notify the office immediately in writing of a change in any of the following: address, home telephone number, cell phone number, pager number, employer and phone number of each working parent, and person to call when parents cannot be reached. With changes of address, proof of residency is required. When we have an emergency, it is imperative that we be able to reach an adult caretaker immediately.

CHARACTER EDUCATION

Words of the Month:

August-Respect
October-Trustworthiness
December-Giving
February-Kindness
April-Fairness

September-Responsibility
November-Caring
January-Friendship (Tolerance and Acceptance)
March-Citizenship
May-Celebrate Success

CLASSROOM PARTIES

Hill City Elementary School will celebrate the following holidays with classroom parties –Christmas and End of the School Year. Parents will be contacted by individual teachers for party assistance or treats. Parents will not be allowed in the classroom until time for the party. **Student birthday invitations may not be distributed on campus.** Special snacks may be brought to the office and the teacher will be notified. The classrooms will not celebrate student birthdays. The snacks will be given to the children during recess. Parents may not attend these special snack times. **Students will be allowed to exchange Valentine’s cards at recess. Kindergarten students will make a Valentine box. Children in grades 1-5 will be given a bag to carry their Valentines home.

CLINIC AND STUDENT HEALTH

HCES clinic is staffed during school hours by Ms. Melissa Faucett. In case of illness or injury, a student will be cared for temporarily by the nurse or a designated member of the school staff. School personnel will render first aid treatment only. If emergency medical treatment is necessary, the parents will be contacted. If parents are not available, an ambulance may be summoned at the parents’ expense. All medication must be delivered **BY THE PARENT** to the clinic and administered in the clinic by the school nurse or a designated member of the staff. All medication must be in its original packaging. No medication will be given without written instructions from the parent and/or doctor. Please refer to the Medication Procedures available in the nurse’s office if you have questions.

Communicable Disease:

A child is not to return to school until fever, diarrhea and/or vomiting have stopped for a full 24 hours, without the aid of medication. Prescribed antibiotic medications for communicable diseases are to be given for 24 hours prior to return.

Medications:

All medications (prescription and nonprescription) must be brought to school by the parent/ guardian. No student will be allowed to bring medications to school. Students may not have medication in their possession, except with a physician’s order for emergency situations only. Medications brought in bags or other unmarked containers will not be given. Prescription medication must be in the pharmacy container labeled with the child’s name, date, name of medication, name of prescribing physician, time(s) the medication is to be given and name of pharmacy filling the prescription. Please ask the pharmacist to provide two labeled prescription bottles so that parents/guardians have one bottle at home and one at school. Do not send medication to the school that needs to be given only once daily or two/three times a day unless the physician specifically states a time during the school day for the medication to be given. If medication can be given at home, please do so.

Parents/guardians must provide specific instructions (including drugs and related equipment) to the nurse. It will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the school of any changes in pertinent data. A "Request for Administration of Medication" form must be completed by the parent/guardian. New medications will not be given unless a new form is completed. Due to the risk of Reye's syndrome in children under the age of 18, the school will require a physician's signature in order to give any aspirin-containing medications including Aspirin, Pepto-Bismol, and Excedrin. Due to the risk of choking, students may not bring cough drops. All medications, herbals, and supplements must be approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and appear in the U.S. Pharmacopeia.

Illness:

All students must go through the school nurse if they are not feeling well and think they should go home. The nurse will contact the parents, and a decision will be reached based on the medical situation. Parents should notify the school nurse of any chronic health conditions. Students with chronic health issues need to have necessary medication, etc., available at school and need to take responsibility in managing the problem by working with the nurse.

Medication forms are available at the school. A conference with the school nurse about the medical problem is encouraged. We want to keep our students well and in school.

In an effort to decrease our communicable diseases, students should be free from vomiting, diarrhea, and fever reducing medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

Head Lice

The Pickens County Board of Education maintains a **no nit policy**. Head lice and nits (eggs) are not uncommon in any Georgia elementary school. Staff members check for possible infestation on an as-needed basis. Parents (guardians) will be contacted to pick up the child if nits or lice are found. Students may not ride the bus or return to school until all nits and lice are removed. Our school nurse will provide cleaning and removal information for parents. The child is to be checked by the school nurse before returning to class.

COMMUNICATION

Teachers at HCES will communicate with parents through e-mail, web sites, class newsletters and weekly reports. Each child should have graded papers coming home each week. Graded papers will be placed in the student's communication folder on Friday. You may check your child's recorded grades anytime online using Infinite Campus. Please get your login information from your child's teacher or Jacob Hicks, our Data Clerk at HCES. Upcoming events, assignments, special materials needed, as well as progress and behavioral reports are information you can expect from your child's teacher.

COMPUTERS & USE

ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTERS AND NETWORK RESOURCES (GUIDELINES) are available in the Pickens Code of Conduct regarding use policy for students.

COUNSELING SERVICE

HCES has a full time counselor available to provide individual or small group counseling to students and to conduct classroom guidance lessons on a regular schedule. The counselor works with school

personnel to foster a positive learning environment. The counselor may also assist parents in obtaining special school and/or community services.

CUSTODIAL/LEGAL INFORMATION

Parents/legal guardians are responsible for providing office personnel with a copy of any legal documents involving the custodial care of his/her child. The lack of legal documentation and any resulting conflicts may require local law enforcement involvement. Parents are asked to refrain from engaging in non-constructive custodial discussions or conflicts on school grounds.

DISCIPLINE

HCES believes that self-discipline is an important part of a child's development. Self-discipline underlies the whole educational structure and is the training that develops character, orderliness, efficiency, and self-control. Developing self-discipline occurs when students learn to follow common rules and make wise decisions. Proper behavior by each student allows all students the maximum opportunity to play, learn and grow in a school environment. At HCES we use the discipline strategy of PBIS (positive behavior interventions and supports). While students are still disciplined for misbehaviors, positive behavior is encouraged, modeled and supported throughout the school.

DISMISSAL

At dismissal time, bus riders are loaded onto their assigned buses by teachers, after buses have exited the parking area, car riders are released to wait to be picked up at the designated car dismissal area. Dismissal begins at 2:45; therefore, students signed out before 2:45 will be recorded as having an early checkout. **Students may not be checked out after 2:15.**

Students who board a bus other than their assigned bus or request to get off the bus other than their assigned stop will be returned to school where the parent may pick them up.

Car-riders see afternoon pickup for specific instructions.

DRESS CODE

The school dress code is outlined in the Pickens County Code of Conduct. Appropriate dress enhances the learning environment and reduces distractions. Dress codes apply to students, teachers, and parents in the building. Please note that parents will be called to bring a change of clothes if a student is not appropriately dressed by definitions in the Pickens County Code of Conduct. We expect that all of our adult visitors will be models for our students in abiding by our dress code.

DROPPING OFF FORGOTTEN ITEMS FOR STUDENTS

Please make every effort to establish a routine for bringing necessary items to school each morning. In the event that your child forgets an item that must be brought to school, please bring that item to the front office with your child's name and the teacher's name attached. Teachers will be contacted to pick up items when there is an instructional break. We will not interrupt the learning environment to take items to

classrooms.

EIP

Early Intervention Program (EIP) is a state funded program which is available to eligible kindergarten through fifth grade students. This program focuses on supplementing instruction in skills necessary for academic success. The EIP program emphasizes an activity-centered, small group curriculum with extensive use of appropriate materials to assist in skill development. Students are placed in an EIP mixed model homeroom based on a variety of data including test scores, teacher checklist, and previous year's classroom performance. The curriculum in an EIP classroom is the same as the other grade level classes.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS

Parents/guardians are requested to make arrangements in advance for taking care of their children when schools are closed for emergency reasons. The plans should include arrangements for school closings, delayed openings and early dismissals. PCS closings will be announced on the local and metro broadcast media outlets, the school system website, www.pickenscountyschools.org, and on the automated voice service. Subscribers to HCES e-newsletters will also receive an email notifying them on closings or delays.

School Closing and Delayed Opening Information: School closings or delays will be announced as described above before 6:00 a.m. If school opening is delayed, please follow the same routine/schedule as normal, but push back the start time by two hours. On delayed days, breakfast is not served, lunch will be served and school will dismiss at the regular time. All school and school system operations will be delayed two hours. Busses will run two hours later. School schedules will be altered at the discretion of the principal. For information on closing/delaying school, see the school system website (www.pickenscountyschools.org)

Early Dismissal Information: Early dismissals will be announced as described above. In the event of inclement weather, notification will be as soon as the decision is made. In the event of a school crisis, parents/guardians will be notified after the safety and security of students is assured. School closings will be announced as described above at or before 6:00 a.m.

FIRE DRILLS

Fire Drills will be held each month. The student and staff will be instructed in the fire drill process prior the first drill.

1. At the sound of the fire alarm bell, all instruction will cease and students/staff will exit the building to assigned areas on campus. The assigned areas are posted on the emergency evacuation classroom or area.
2. Teachers and staff members will care for and monitor the students during the drill. At the sound of a re-entry signal, teachers and staff members will lead the students back into the building and instruction will begin.
3. Parents will be notified if an actual fire emergency exists.

FOOD SERVICES PROGRAM

Your support of the School Nutrition Program is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the cafeteria manager @ 706-253-1889.

The Hill City Elementary School Food Service Staff will serve two meals each day. Breakfast and lunch.

Breakfast: Breakfast will be served from 7:10 – 7:35 A.M. each morning. Menus for breakfast are published in advance and usually consist of a choice of items, such as cold cereal and milk to hot entrée, fruit, juice or milk.

Lunch: Hot lunches will be served on a daily schedule that will allow the students thirty minutes for lunch. A monthly menu will be published in advance. School lunches consist of a multiple choice buffet style menu with two entrées, a variety of fruit and salads and milk. Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches are offered each day. Students must pick up at least three food items, but may choose all of the following: one entrée, two fruits, and/or vegetable selections, bread, dessert and cold milk. The food trays remain the prices listed below no matter how many food items are selected.

Breakfast:

Student Breakfast: \$1.25

Student Reduced Breakfast: \$0.30

Adult/Visitor Breakfast \$1.75

Lunch:

Student Lunch: \$1.95

Student Reduced Lunch: \$0.40

Teachers \$3.25

Visitors \$3.75

Extra Milk: \$0.50

Bottled Water will be available for sale in the cafeteria \$1.00

Payments – Please send your student’s meal payments in an envelope and with the following information on the outside of the envelope:

- Student Name Date
- Teacher/Grade Total Amount Enclosed

Parents may send lunch money at any time. The total amount sent will be applied to your child’s account to be used for breakfast and/or lunch and their meal costs deducted. Change will not be returned. The total amount will be applied to your child’s account. **Checks are to be made payable to Hill City Elementary School Cafeteria.** Parents are encouraged to pay by the week or month. When your child’s account reflects a zero balance, he/she will be allowed to charge up to a maximum of \$10.00. **Students that have a balance of more than \$10.00 will be given an alternate lunch.**

Applications for Free or Reduced priced meals are sent home during the first week of school. These forms are available in the school office at any time. If a student qualified for free or reduced lunch during a previous school year, the parent must reapply within the first 30 days of each school year to continue to qualify for services.

Sack lunches – Students may elect to bring a packed lunch from home. Milk may be purchased in the school cafeteria. It is encouraged that the lunches be nutritious and in containers easily opened by your child. Be sure that your child’s name is clearly printed on his/her lunchbox or sack. **Carbonated beverages are not allowed in sack lunches.** Students may purchase a milk or bottle of water in the

cafeteria.

Lunch Visitation – Parents are welcome to have lunch with their children. Parents and guardians must check in the front office before going to cafeteria. In order to maintain the privacy of other children in the cafeteria, HCES will provide a parent table in the cafeteria. This table will be reserved for parents and their children that are eating together. **PLEASE BE AWARE THAT NO CARBONATED BEVERGES ARE ALLOWED IN THE CAFETERIA OR IN THE CLASSROOM.** Also, please be aware that no microwave is available for student use. At the conclusion of your lunch visit please separate from your student as you leave the lunchroom in order for students to return to their classroom and resume their studies.

GRADING

All grades will be numeric, on progress reports and report cards, with the exception of Kindergarten, Art, Music and Physical Education.

- Students earn the grades that are issued. The grades are not given.
- Daily work must be completed and turned in on time.
- Work not turned in in within three (3) days of the assignment due date will be averaged as a zero

| Grades 1-5 | Music, Art, Physical Education |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| A (90-100) | P (Pass) |
| B (80-89) | F (Fail) |
| C (70-79) | |
| F (Below 70) | |

In grades 3-5 grades are weighted in the following manner: 60% Participation and Performance (Classwork, Projects, etc.) and 40% Assessments. When you look in Infinite Campus grades will not average correctly unless you use the 60/40 grading weights.

GUM

HCES has a no gum policy

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued each nine (9) weeks. Parent/teacher conferences are encouraged at any time but are especially important for parents of students earning failing grades.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress Reports are sent home at the mid-point of each grading period as a communication tool for students and parents.

Progress Reports:

August 31

November 9

Report Cards:

October 14

January 6

February 3

March 24

April 21

May 25

LOCAL SCHOOL COUNCIL

The LSC was established by Georgia law to “bring communities and schools closer together in the spirit of cooperation to solve difficult education problems, improve academic achievement, provide support for teachers and administrators, and bring parents into the school-based decision-making process...to provide advice, recommendations, and assistance and represent the community of parents and businesses.”

Elections will be held in the spring to select members of this council. The Local School Council replaces LSAC. Parents will still have a forum for their questions and for learning about school programs through parent representatives on LSC. Meetings will be announced and are open to the public. A parent will lead and moderate the group.

LOST & FOUND

Found items of clothing and lunch boxes will be collected in a designated lost and found location. Items such as jewelry, car keys, etc. are given to the office. Unclaimed items are donated to charity on a quarterly basis. Everything brought to school should be labeled so that lost articles can be returned to the owner.

MAKE-UP WORK

It is the student’s responsibility to turn in make-up work when he/she is absent from school. The student has five (5) school calendar days to make up work for every day missed. The teacher has the discretion to grant a longer period to make up work, if there are extenuating circumstances. It is the student’s responsibility to make arrangements with the teacher within two days of returning to school to make up test(s). Students with unexcused absences will not be permitted to make up work unless extenuating circumstances exist as determined by the principal or the principal’s designee.

Parents should contact the school before 9:00 a.m. if they plan to pick up missed work. Work will be available to pick up after 3:00 p.m. Make-up assignments may be picked up in the front office after dismissal time. In an effort to minimize disruption, we ask that parents not pick up missed work or make-up assignments from the teacher during the school day.

If your child is going to miss school because of a trip or other unexcused absence, the teacher may not have work available prior to the time of the absence. In most instances, he/she will not have it ready ahead of time. If this is the case, your child may be allowed to make up the work upon their return to school. Most work cannot be made up with a book or paper-and-pencil assignment, and absences of any type do impact student learning and/or grades.

Students suspended out-of-school are responsible for securing assignments and completing assignments by the time they return to school. Failure to do so will result in loss of credit for the assignments missed during the out-of-school suspension.

MEDIA CENTER

The Media Center at HCES uses an open program that allows students to access materials for assignments, projects, research, and personal reading at any time. Features include online card catalog computer workstations, reference materials, and works of fiction and nonfiction. In the Media Center, students will learn about research methods, authors, themes, Primary Search, and use of Media Center

materials. Students come to the Media Center for materials check-out, to use the computers, and for storytelling.

NEWSLETTER

News from the Hill, the school newsletter, is sent home via email each Friday. The newsletter provides information about school functions and upcoming events. Each classroom and individual notices and reminders will be sent home weekly. Please read these notices carefully for important information. Please submit to your child's teacher your email address in order to receive these newsletters OR send an email to jenniferhalko@pickenscountyschools.org with Newsletter in the subject heading.

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parents will be notified of conference times in advance. Additionally, parents may request a conference at any time during the school year. Parents may request a telephone conference at any time by leaving a message on the teacher's voice mail.

PETS

No pets of any kind are allowed at school without permission. Teachers may give special permission for pets to be brought to school as part of a special display or activity with the principal's approval. Pets must be taken home immediately after the activity. However, under no circumstance is a potentially dangerous pet to be brought to school. Pets can never be transported on the school bus. We must be considerate of students who have allergies.

PICTURES

Individual student pictures will be taken two times each year (fall and spring). One of the fall pictures will appear in the yearbook. Group pictures will be made in the spring. In the spring prepayment is required for group pictures. All questions regarding pictures should be directed to Ms. Pat Holliman, school secretary.

PHONES

Students are discouraged from bringing cell phones to school; however, any student that brings a phone to school must adhere to the following guidelines. During school hours 7:45-2:45 the phone must be in the child's book bag and turned off. Phones that are taken up by the teacher must be picked up in the office by a parent.

PLACEMENT & PROMOTION

Grade placement is determined by the overall academic and social progress of the student, with emphasis placed on the mastery of reading and math skills. Placement decisions for third and fifth grade may also be determined by the Georgia mandated assessment results. Students entering Pickens County Schools from private or home study schools may be evaluated to determine appropriate placement. Initial placement is temporary until such assessment is completed. Placement of kindergarten students will be done according to state and county guidelines.

Conferences are held in late spring to discuss placement of students who are not meeting minimum promotion requirements. Local and state requirements for promotion are followed in deciding appropriate grade placement. Parent input is valuable, but the final responsibility for the decision rests with school officials.

STUDENT HOMEROOM/CLASS PLACEMENT

Each year, the administration works collaboratively with teachers, test/assessment data and other relevant information to develop a balanced class placement for all students. This is a multiple-criterion decision that is based on a variety of research-based best practices as well as differentiated instructional considerations.

While parents are welcome to share general information regarding their child and their learning, specific teacher requests by name will not be accepted under any circumstances.

Should a parent have a concern regarding a student placement at any point in the year, the following procedure will be followed:

- A minimum of 2 teacher-parent conferences directly focused on the area of concern with administrative support and presence.
- At that initial and follow up conference, a written plan to address concerns from that point forward will be drafted and agreed upon by all parties to protect the child and children from unnecessary transition.
- Follow up by administration over the coming weeks, via contact with both parents and teacher, to ensure the sustained efforts and success of the plan are moving forward.
- Final assessment of progress during this period regarding the area of concern by the principal.

Adjustments to any students assigned to classrooms will be by extreme exception and only considered by the principal after it has been clearly determined that joint efforts were made by both parties to resolve any concern. Furthermore, that there is clear evidence that a move to another classroom will directly address the lingering concern after the above attempts have been made to resolve the issue.

TORNADO DRILLS

Tornado drills will be conducted in the spring of each year, as recommended by the Civil Defense procedures. Instructions for the tornado drill will be provided prior to the first drill.

SEVERE WEATHER PROCEDURES

During the school year, if it is necessary to either dismiss or cancel school due to severe weather, the following radio and television stations will inform parents and students

WYYZ 1490AM ETC Channel 3 WLJA 93.5 FM WSB Channel 2 WSB 98.5 FM

BOE Information Line 706-253-1710

Pickens County Schools will also use our Infinite Campus Automated Phone Network to notify parents of school cancellation or early dismissal. **It is imperative that the school maintain your most current contact phone numbers.** If you have any changes, please contact the office immediately.

STUDENT SERVICES

Field Trips – Field trips are considered an extension to the instructional day and no student will be denied the opportunity to participate in a field trip due to the inability to pay. **Children not enrolled in**

Hill City Elementary School may not attend field trips and students at HCES may not attend field trips for other grade levels. Parents attending field trips will not be allowed to ride the school bus. While no child will be denied the opportunity to attend a field trip due to inability to pay the school administration reserves the right to cancel the field trip if there is less than 95% paid attendance. **Please be aware that ANY adult that is not the custodial parent or legal guardian MUST have written permission from the custodial parent or legal guardian prior to the field trip. Family friends may not go on field trips at HCES.**

Guidance Services – The primary goal of the Hill City Elementary School Guidance Counselor is to assist students in becoming and remaining “able” learners and responsible citizens.

Media Center – The Media Center is open each day and accessed by students on a flexible schedule. Students are encouraged to visit the Media Center and check out books. Media Center personnel will provide assistance and guidance for students wishing to check out books or conduct research. .

Student Insurance – Student accident insurance is available for purchase at the beginning of each school year. Two plans are available:

School coverage only/24 hour coverage

RTI – Response to Intervention (RTI) is a building level committee consisting of, but not limited to, a child’s teacher(s), parents/guardians, and school administrators. The major function of RTI is to plan alternative instructional strategies for students who are experiencing difficulties in the regular classroom. RTI will be initiated by school personnel. Questions about your child’s RTI process should be addressed to Mr. Wallace .

Telephones – Students may not use campus phones except in an emergency and only when accompanied by an adult. Arrangements for after school activities, forgotten homework assignments, and textbooks are not considered emergencies.

It is extremely important to have up-do-date home, work, cell and emergency contact numbers available for office personnel.

VOLUNTEERS

Parents, relatives, and friends of Hill City Elementary students are encouraged to volunteer in the school and at school sponsored events. A form will be available at Open House for parents to indicate their interest in volunteering. **As required by county policy, each volunteer must have a current background check on file. The fee for the background check is the volunteer candidates’ responsibility.** Parents may also call the school for volunteer information. New volunteers must complete the volunteer training and have a background check (at no cost to the volunteer). Volunteers who participated in the training last year may simply have the background check. The class will be offered twice during the fall and again in January. Volunteers must sign in and out in the office using the same procedures as other visitors. Volunteers must set up their times with the classroom teacher at least 24 hours before coming to work in a classroom. Please do not bring preschool age children into the classrooms as this can be very disruptive to the instructional environment. HCES has numerous volunteer opportunities and encourages parents to contact the office.