

HAMILTON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HANDBOOK

BENTHEIM 269-751-5335

BLUE STAR 269-751-5630

HAMILTON ELEMENTARY 269-751-5413

WEBSITE

www.hamiltonschools.us

INDEX

1.0 PERSONNEL

- 1.1 Board of Education/Administration Office

2.0 SCHOOL CALENDAR

3.0 BELL SCHEDULE

4.0 STUDENT ATTENDANCE

- 4.1 Notification of Absence
- 4.2 Prolonged Absences - Illness
- 4.3 Prolonged Absences - Non-Illness
- 4.4 Excessive Absences
- 4.5 Arrival/Leave Early Tardies

5.0 SCHOOL HEALTH

- 5.1 School Nurse
- 5.2 First Aid
- 5.3 Communicable Diseases
- 5.4 Head Lice
- 5.5 Medication Policy

6.0 STUDENT SERVICES

- 6.1 Student Record
 - A. Transfer from sending school
 - B. Release of information to other institutions
 - C. Parental Access
- 6.2 Standardized Testing
- 6.3 Student Insurance
- 6.4 Textbooks and Supplies
- 6.5 Lost and Found
- 6.6 Hot Lunch
- 6.7 Field Trips
- 6.8 Library
- 6.9 Transportation
 - A. Bus Transportation
 - B. Parental Transportation of Students
 - C. Bus Policy

7.0 SPECIAL SERVICES

- 7.1 Speech and Language Services
- 7.2 School Psychologist
- 7.3 School Social Worker
- 7.4 RtI (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support) Reading Program
- 7.5 Special Education Programming
- 7.6 Elementary Counseling

8.0 SPECIAL CURRICULUM

- 8.1 Physical Education
- 8.2 Art
- 8.3 Music
- 8.4 STEM

9.0 SAFETY

- 9.1 Fire Drills
- 9.2 Tornado Drills
- 9.3 Lock Down Drills
- 9.4 Arrival at School - Time
- 9.5 Removing Children from School
- 9.6 Weather Conditions
- 9.7 Accidents - Illnesses
- 9.8 Leaving School Grounds

INDEX CONTINUED

10.0 STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 10.1 Discipline
- 10.2 Discipline Guidelines
- 10.3 Rights, Responsibilities & Limitations
- 10.4 Care of School Property
- 10.5 Dress and Grooming
- 10.6 Use of Technology
- 10.7 Use of Personal Electronic Devices While on School Property or While Attending School-Sponsored or School Related Activities

11.0 STUDENT POLICIES

- 11.1 Pets in School
- 11.2 Recess Excuses Limited
- 11.3 Class Parties
- 11.4 Locker Policy

12.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

- 12.1 Student Visitors
- 12.2 Student Teachers
- 12.3 Parent-Teacher Conferences and Parent-Teacher Communication
- 12.4 Parent Volunteers
- 12.5 PTO Organizations
- 12.6 Report Cards
- 12.7 Weapon-Free School Zone Policy
- 12.8 Schools of Choice Policy
- 12.9 School & Classroom Newsletter
- 12.10 School Board Meetings

1.1 BOARD OF EDUCATION

HAMILTON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

Deb Brower– drower@hamiltonschools.us

Loren Joostberns – ljoostbe@hamiltonschools.us

Carl Marshall - cmarshal@hamiltonschools.us

Morgan Maul - mmaul@hamiltonschools.us

Ross Miedema - rmiedema@hamiltonschools.us

Lisa Theodore - ltheodor@hamiltonschools.us

Craig VanBeek– cvanbeek@hamiltonschools.us

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE 269-751-5148

**SUPERINTENDENT
DIRECTOR OF TEACHING & LEARNING**

Dr. Bradford Lusk
Laura Zeinstra

2.0 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Published on our Hamilton Community Schools website at www.hamiltonschools.us

3.0 BELL SCHEDULE

8:40 Warning Bell – Students Arrive

3:50 Bell – End of School Day

4.0 STUDENT ATTENDANCE

4.1 NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE

Parents should call the school office by 9:00A.M. if your child is ill. If your child will be missing multiple days, and you are aware of which days those will be, one call will suffice. The secretary will call if your child is not present and you have not notified us.

4.2 PROLONGED ABSENCE - ILLNESS

If your child is going to have an extended absence due to illness, teachers may provide work in advance if given 3 or more days' notice.

4.3 PROLONGED ABSENCE - NON ILLNESS

Please attempt to schedule family vacations in accordance with the school calendar, as we want all students to get the maximum benefit of instruction. If you will be taking an extended absence by choice, please notify the school in advance. Parents should connect with the teacher to develop a plan for learning, at a minimum recommending that the student read and journal daily while away to keep these skills sharp. Upon return, the teacher will provide the work missed, and families will be asked to complete the work at home and return to the teacher. Parents are reminded that it is very difficult to replicate the learning that takes place in the classroom.

4.4 EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

State law requires that all students attend school on a regular basis. Parents of students with excessive absences will be contacted via letter to notify them of the number of absences and/or tardies. Attendance checks are done every 30 school days, and letters are generated for those students whose absences are at or above 10% of the number of school days at that time. Parents may be asked to meet to help resolve the barriers to the student's attendance. If the pattern of absences continues, the truancy officer will be contacted.

4.5 TARDIES, LATE ARRIVALS, LEFT EARLY, PM TARDIES

Students arriving after the tardy bell must report to the office prior to going to class. Parents should sign their children in when they are late. *Tardies are issued for students arriving 10 minutes or less late or leaving 10 minutes or less early. Students arriving more than 10 minutes late are considered late arrivals, and students leaving more than 10 minutes early are marked Left Early.* As with absences, parents may be asked to meet to help resolve barriers to student's full-day attendance when excessive tardies or early departures are an issue.

5.0 SCHOOL HEALTH

5.1 SCHOOL NURSE

Hamilton Community Schools does employ a school nurse through Holland Hospital. She handles parent contacts regarding medical plans for students.

5.2 FIRST AID

Office personnel will administer first aid in the case of accidental injury. In the event of serious injuries, parents will be notified as soon as possible.

5.3 COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

We make every effort to keep communicable diseases out of school. If your child does become ill, we request that you keep your child home until the symptoms disappear. **Students must be fever-free for 24 hours, have had no vomiting, and no flu-like symptoms before returning to school.**

- [Too Sick for School Infographic](#) (possible resource)

5.4 HEAD LICE

These so-called "nuisance diseases" often become school problems. **Children with live head lice or nits (eggs) must be excluded from school and may not return until the child has been adequately treated. Children who have head lice must be brought to school and checked upon arrival for 5 school days to ensure they are lice/nit-free.** If your child does contract head lice, please call the school.

5.5 MEDICATION POLICY

Administration of Medications to Pupils in School

The following definition of "medication" is adopted for use in the Hamilton Community Schools: medication (includes prescription, non-prescription and herbal medications) taken by mouth, inhaler, those that are injectable, and those applied as drops to eyes, nose, or medications applied to the skin.

- The child's parent/guardian will need to get a permission form from the school office. The form will need to be filled out by the child's physician and also signed by a parent/guardian. The form will be kept on record by the school.
- The permission form will need to be renewed each school year.
- No changes to medication dosage or time of administration will be made except by instruction from a physician.
- Medications must be brought to school by the pupil's parent/guardian.
- The building administrator will designate an individual(s) responsible for administering medications to pupils at school.
- Each building will have a plan for handling medical emergencies.
- Any adverse reaction to medication, as described on the physician's written form, will be reported to the pupil's parent/guardian immediately.
- Any errors made in the administration of medications shall be reported to the building administrator immediately and written into the pupil's school record. The building administrator is responsible for reporting the medication error to the pupil's parent/guardian immediately.
- When it is necessary for a pupil to have medication administered while on a school-sponsored field trip or off-site activity, the individual designated to administer medication must carry the medication in the original container, and record the necessary information on the medication log upon return from the trip/activity.
- Students with disabilities who have an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan shall be included under the policy and procedures that govern the administration of medications. Note: The policy and procedures should not violate either the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

6.0 STUDENT SERVICES

6.1 STUDENT RECORDS

- A. Transfer from Sending School - If you are moving from another district to Hamilton you must sign a "Request for Records" form to have your child's records transferred to the receiving school.
- B. Release of Information to Other Institutions - Your child's records will only be sent to other institutions after we receive the request from the new school which includes your written permission.
- C. Parental Access - You may examine your child's personal educational records at any time by calling the school office and setting up an appointment with the Principal.

6.2 STANDARDIZED TESTING

Standardized testing as required by law is conducted in grades 3 and 4 (MSTEP - Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress). We also administer regular classroom assessments. These results are used to measure progress and plan instruction.

All local test data is available to parents. If you are interested in reviewing any test data, please contact the teacher or principal.

6.3 STUDENT INSURANCE

When students are injured during the school day, Hamilton Community Schools offers supplemental insurance, which covers costs not covered by the parents' insurance, such as co-pays and other fees. An accident report will be completed by office personnel and supplied to parents along with instructions for how to file claims.

6.4 TEXTBOOKS AND SUPPLIES

All textbooks and workbooks are supplied without cost to the parents. If a child damages a book he/she will be required to pay for a replacement.

Pencils and paper supplies are given to students in reasonable amounts. Many children enjoy bringing some of their own supplies to school, but they are not required to do so.

6.5 LOST AND FOUND

Please mark all personal belongings of your children as many children have the same type of coats, hats, boots, etc. Each building has a lost and found area if your child has lost something.

6.6 HOT LUNCH PROGRAM

The price for hot lunches will be shared when school begins. Forms for free and reduced lunch are available on the district website (www.hamiltonschools.us) and in the school office if you would like such assistance.

6.7 FIELD TRIPS

As part of our educational program, students may take part in various field trips. Parents are always notified of such trips. Many times parents are asked to volunteer to go along with the teacher to provide additional supervision. Any parents wishing to chaperone field trips must be approved volunteers through our WISH program, which includes a background check. This WISH profile must be completed at least 2 weeks in advance to allow time for approval.

6.8 LIBRARY

Students regularly check books out of the library. Students and/or parents will be asked to pay for lost or damaged books. If a book is found after it has been paid for, the money will be reimbursed to the student and parent.

6.9 TRANSPORTATION

- A. Bus transportation is provided to all students who live within the enrollment area of the school of attendance subject to the exceptions below. Any questions regarding bus problems should be directed to the Transportation office at (269) 751-5191.
- B. Parental Transportation of Students:
 - a. Parents who transport their students should stay in designated areas for student drop-off and pick-up. Please check your child's school regulations and send a note to school informing the teacher that you will be picking your child up.
- C. Bus Policy
 - a. General Guidelines: A resident student is eligible for transportation services if the distance from the home to the school (elementary school in their attendance area) equals or exceeds the distance of 0.5 miles (Y5-4th grade). Distances will be determined in accordance with the policies of the Michigan Department of Education.
 - b. Exception Guidelines: Within the walking distances described above, exceptions will be granted to students required to walk along certain designated routes. Factors such as traffic volume and speed, road and shoulder width, presence or absence of ditches and/or sidewalks are to be considered.
 - i. The following roads are exceptions to the walking distance eligibility described above.
 - 1. Bentheim:
 - a. 38th Street north of the school
 - b. 38th Street south of 140th Avenue
 - c. 140th Avenue
 - 2. Blue Star:
 - a. Blue Star Highway
 - b. 58th Street
 - 3. Hamilton:
 - a. 135th Street east of M-40
 - b. 134th Street
 - c. M-40, east side of road if crossing guards unavailable north of the school or south of main entrance
 - c. Other Guidelines: Exceptions may be granted if there are no older students (grades 1-4) to walk with Y5/Kindergarten students during the morning or afternoon times.
 - D. Walking Distances to Stops: Bus routes will be determined so that an authorized bus stop is available within a reasonable walking distance of the home of each student eligible for transportation services. The following shall be the limits for walking distances from the student's home to the assigned bus stop.
 - a. Y5/Kindergarten 0.1 mile
 - b. Grades 1-4 0.2 mileThe walking distance to stop policy will not apply in cases where the Transportation Supervisor has determined that a road is not accepted for school vehicle to travel. (See next section).
 - E. Establishment of Routes
 - a. Buses will not be required to travel unimproved roads or roads determined to be unsafe or impassable. Unless the Transportation Supervisor determines that a safer stop must be

established, buses will generally not travel on seasonal, dead-end, narrow (not 2 full lanes), or private roads.

- b. Bus routes will be established under the direction of the Transportation Supervisor in accordance with the laws of the State of Michigan and the policies of the district.
- F. Bus Passes: Students may ride another bus or change their stop only if they have a Bus Pass approved by the school office. Bus passes are approved only for emergency or daycare purposes. The student will be dropped off only at a regularly scheduled stop.
- G. Childcare Stops: Childcare stops are permitted only if permanent. That is, the student's stop is determined to be at the babysitter's stop morning and/or evening on a consistent basis. Both the Transportation Department and the principal's office of the school must be notified of childcare arrangements. If there are changes for your normal transportation arrangements, a bus pass must be filled out and approved by the school office for each occurrence.
- H. Other: Students must obey the driver and the rules of the bus. The bus ride is considered part of the school day and students may have school and/or transportation consequences for inappropriate behavior.
- I. Emergency Situations: The Transportation Supervisor and the School Principal will work together to resolve emergency situations.

7.0 SPECIAL SERVICES

7.1 SPEECH AND LANGUAGE SERVICES

Speech and language services are available for those students who qualify for these services through the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process. If you feel your child needs this help and is not receiving it, please contact your child's teacher.

7.2 SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

A school psychologist is on staff with Hamilton Community Schools. This individual tests students who are having academic or emotional problems in school. This testing only occurs with your written permission. If you feel your child needs this type of support, please contact his/her teacher and principal.

7.3 SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER

School Social Workers are on staff at each school. This individual primarily works with students who are, or may be, eligible for special education services and programming. These services are typically part of the special education testing process or are written in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), both of which require parent permission. The school social worker may also link HCS families to community resources related to mental health and other social emotional needs, as well as support teachers and other school staff in meeting the social, emotional and behavioral needs of students. Please contact your child's teacher or principal for more information.

7.4 MTSS READING PROGRAM

Students may receive extra help in reading through our Reading Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). This program is designed to provide extra assistance in reading to our students in need. Pupils are selected for support based on various assessment results.

7.5 SPECIAL EDUCATION RESOURCE ROOM

Special education assistance is provided through the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process for those who qualify. Students must be tested by a Multidisciplinary Education Team (MET) and must be certified as being eligible for special education programming and/or services. Parent permission must be obtained before programming and/or services are administered. Teachers or parents may request testing for students. Parents seeking special education testing for their children should request this in writing to the Principal.

7.6 ELEMENTARY COUNSELING

Counseling services are available for all elementary students. Our school social workers also function in the role of counselor for students who are having issues which are directly impacting their education at school. If you suspect your child may benefit from these services, please contact his/her teacher. Occasional counseling services may occur on an as needed basis. Longer term or ongoing counseling will not take place without parent permission. If you would like to consider counseling services for your child, please contact his/her teacher or the school counselor.

8.0 SPECIALS CURRICULUM

8.1 PHYSICAL EDUCATION

All students in grades Y5-4 participate in P.E. classes with a certified instructor. All students must have a pair of clean gym shoes to wear during these classes. These shoes should not be worn on the playground. It works best if the student can leave these shoes at school.

8.2 ART

All students in grades Y5-4 receive instruction from a certified art instructor.

8.3 MUSIC

All students in grades Y5-4 receive music instruction from a certified music instructor.

8.4 STEM

All students in grades Y5-4 receive instruction in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) from a certified instructor.

9.0 SAFETY

9.1 FIRE DRILLS

During the school year we are required to conduct 5 fire drills.

9.2 TORNADO DRILLS

During the school year we are required to conduct 2 tornado drills.

9.3 LOCK DOWN DRILLS

During the school year we are required to conduct 3 lockdown drills.

9.4 SEVERE WEATHER POLICY: The following are the policies of the Hamilton Community Schools for tornado and severe weather conditions.

A. Definitions

- a. **Severe Thunderstorm Watch** - A possibility of severe thunderstorms with high winds and hail in a defined area.
 - i. School remains in session.
 - ii. Parents may pick up their children, if they wish.
- b. **Severe Thunderstorm Warning** - Severe thunderstorm in process in the area.
 - i. School remains in session.
 - ii. Parents may pick up their children, if they wish.
- c. **Tornado Watch** - A possibility of tornadoes in the area.
 - i. School remains in session until normal time of dismissal.
 - ii. Parents may pick up their children, if they wish.
 - iii. All extra curricular events scheduled for the rest of the day will be canceled with this exception: If a tornado watch will expire or is canceled at least two hours before a school event is to begin, the administrators would retain the flexibility to decide whether or not to cancel the event.
 - iv. School will be canceled if a tornado watch is in effect beyond 7:00 a.m.
- d. **Tornado Warning** - Tornadoes reported in a defined area by local weather spotters.
 - i. School remains in session and students will be guided to prearranged protected areas.
 - ii. Teachers will remain with their students until released by the Principal.
 - iii. If the warning period should begin while students are being loaded on the bus, they will be called back into the building to protected areas.
 - iv. If the warning period should begin after the loaded buses have left the school building, the drivers should use their own judgment as to whether to seek shelter or whether the bus route can be continued.

If school is canceled all day due to inclement weather conditions no athletic practices or other school activities would be allowed to be held before 12:00 noon. The building principal will make a decision as to whether weather conditions would allow practices or activities to take place in the afternoon or evening.

If a student and his/her parent consider the weather or driving conditions to be unsafe, no consequences will be incurred for missing a practice or activity.

- B. **School Closing or Delay**: When it becomes necessary to close or delay school due to weather conditions, the following area radio and television stations will be notified:

- a. WKZO 590 AM
- b. WHTC 1450 AM
- c. WCUZ 1230 AM / 101.3 FM
- d. WJQ 1260 AM / 99.3 AM
- e. WOOD 1300 AM / 105.7 FM
- f. WZZM TV-CHANNEL 13
- g. WWMT TV-CHANNEL 3
- h. WOOD TV-CHANNEL 8
- i. FOX TV-CHANNEL (depends on provider)

These stations will also be contacted if the students must be dismissed early.

9.5 ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL - TIME

School is in session from 8:45 - 3:45. For reasons of safety, please do not allow your child to come to school before 8:15. Students are not supervised until 8:30 and many problems needlessly arise if children arrive at school early.

9.6 REMOVING CHILDREN FROM SCHOOL

No child is permitted to leave or be taken from school during the time school is in session by anyone other than an authorized adult. If you must have someone else pick up your child, please send a note to school. Please report to the office prior to picking up your child.

9.7 WEATHER CONDITIONS

Parents should see that their children are dressed appropriately for changing "Michigan weather." Children will play outside each day, unless it is raining or winter temperatures and conditions are severe (generally ZERO degrees or wind chill of -10).

9.8 ACCIDENTS - ILLNESSES

Should your child become ill or sustain an injury you will be contacted to pick him/her up at school. If we are unable to reach a parent, we will contact the person listed on the emergency card. If no one is available, we will keep the student at school unless immediate medical assistance is required.

9.9 LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS

Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds during the school day unless a parent or guardian or approved adult signs the student out from school.

10.0 STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

10.1 DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

Part of the educational process is assisting students to grow into safe and responsible citizens. We believe there should be mutual respect between parents, children, and staff members. Respect must be earned, but we realize that people respect others to the degree they respect themselves. We believe in kids - their worth, rights, and responsibilities. We believe we must listen carefully to students and that discipline must be handled on an individual basis. We believe that discipline is teaching and that it is our responsibility with yours to teach our children to be responsible.

10.2 DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

It is important for students to be safe, respectful, and responsible in all areas of the school and on the bus. Expected behaviors for the bus, arrival/dismissal areas, hallways, restrooms, cafeteria, classrooms, and playground will be taught and modeled for students. Students, parents, and staff must work cooperatively for all students to achieve success. Therefore, parents can expect to be contacted by phone or in writing when students are disciplined for their actions.

A. Some common expectations include:

Be safe

- Walk
- Keep hands, feet, and belongings to yourself
- Use equipment properly

Be respectful

- Use appropriate and respectful language toward others
- Use appropriate voice volume for the area you are in
- Be kind to others/Use manners
- Respect others' personal space

Be responsible

- Monitor your own behavior
- Play fairly
- Bring playground equipment inside
- Be prepared for the day

B. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

Effective classroom management and preventive school discipline are essential for supporting teaching and learning. PBIS goes further by emphasizing that classroom management and preventive school discipline must be integrated and working together with effective academic instruction in a positive and safe school climate to maximize success for all students.

PBIS is a framework or approach for assisting school personnel in adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students. PBIS IS NOT a packaged curriculum, scripted intervention, or manualized strategy. PBIS IS a prevention-oriented way for school personnel to (a) organize evidence-based practices, (b) improve their implementation of those practices, and (c) maximize academic and social behavior outcomes for students. PBIS supports the success of ALL students.

C. Corporal Punishment

In accordance with state law, the use of corporal punishment shall not be permitted in the Hamilton Community Schools. No employee, volunteer or contractor employed or engaged by the district shall threaten to inflict physical pain upon a student as a penalty or punishment for a student's offense. Staff members may, within the scope of their employment, use and apply reasonable force and restraint in self-defense, to quell a disturbance threatening physical injury to others, to obtain possession of weapons, or for the protection of persons or property. If any employee inflicts unreasonable, inappropriate or unlawful force upon a student, he or she may be subject to discipline by the district.

10.3 RIGHTS RESPONSIBILITIES & LIMITATIONS

A. Sexual Harassment

- a. Sexual Harassment Defined: Sexual harassment of students by other students or by employees of this district is unlawful under both Michigan and Federal law, and is contrary to the commitment of this district to provide a stable learning environment. All contact between students, teachers, and other adult employees of this district must demonstrate respect for the individual student, be of a nature, which does not make the student feel uncomfortable, and be conducive to creating a stable learning environment. All students and employees are expected to conduct themselves with respect and dignity for others.
- b. Sexual harassment includes making unwelcomed sexual advances, engaging in improper physical contact, making improper sexual comments, or otherwise creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational learning environment.
- c. If a student has concerns about the nature of any conduct or physical contact by an employee of this district or by a fellow student, the student should immediately report this concern to one of the following: the building principal, the assistant principal, a counselor, a social worker, the district monitor for sexual discrimination (Superintendent, Dave Tebo, Human Rights Officer, 751-5413). Students should also discuss the concern with a parent or legal guardian.
- d. The district will investigate all reports of harassment. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including student expulsion from school or employee termination from employment. Reports of sexual harassment will be handled discreetly to maintain confidentiality in order to avoid embarrassment and to protect the student making the report. The principles of due process will be followed.

B. BULLYING POLICY – BULLYING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED

- a. This policy applies to all activities in the district, including activities on school property, the bus, and those occurring off school property. The latter case consists of any situation when a student or employee is at a school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function- such as field trips, or athletic events- where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business. "Bullying" consists of (but is not limited to) all of the following acts:
 - i. threats or actual physical harm;
 - ii. unwelcome physical contact;
 - iii. threats or taunting via verbal, written, or electronic means;
 - iv. theft or extortion of money or property;
 - v. damage or destruction of student property;
 - vi. blockage or impediment of student movement.
- b. Aggressive behavior is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical or emotional well being. This type of behavior is a form of harassment, although it need not be based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, national origin, marital status, and/or disability. It would include (but not be limited to) such behaviors as bullying, hazing, stalking, intimidating, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, and/or making threats.

C. **Criminal Acts Defined.** The following activities are among defined as criminal under Michigan state law. The commission of, or participation in, any of the following activities in school buildings, on school property, or a school-sponsored event is prohibited. Violations of this article will be subject to disciplinary action by school officials regardless of whether criminal charges result.

- a. **Arson** - The intentional setting of fire.
- b. **Assault** - Physical threats or violence to persons.
- c. **Burglary** - Stealing of school or personal property.
- d. **Explosives** - Explosives are not permitted on school property or at school-sponsored events.

- e. **Extortion, Blackmail or Coercion** - Obtaining money or property by violence or threat of violence or forcing someone to do something against his will by force or threat of force.
- f. **Firearms and Weapons** - Students in possession of a dangerous weapon, including guns, knives, and any other item considered a weapon on school district ground, in district buildings, at district sponsored events, on school vehicles or at bus stops, may be permanently expelled from school. If expelled, the individual will be referred to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system in the appropriate county and department, and community health agency.
- g. **Larceny** - Theft.
- h. **Malicious Mischief** - Property damage to school property of students or school employees.
- i. **Robbery** - Stealing from an individual by force or threat of force.
- j. **Sale, Use, or Possession of Alcoholic Beverages, Mind-Altering, Look-Alike, Non-Alcoholic Malt Beverages, and Illegal Drugs** - (Note: Hamilton Community Schools will not tolerate the use or sale of alcohol or drugs. The use of drugs or alcohol is harmful. Those who use, sell or possess these will be prosecuted. The school official in charge will immediately remove from contact with other students, anyone reasonably suspected to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs and thereupon shall contact the parent or legal guardian.)
- k. **Trespassing** - Being present in an unauthorized place or refusing to leave when ordered to do so.
- l. **Unlawful Interference with School Authorities** - Interferences with administrators or teachers by force or violence.
- m. **Unlawful Intimidation of School Authorities** - Interference with administrators or teachers by intimidation with threat or force or violence.
- n. **The state of Michigan has defined Arson, Criminal Sexual Assault, and possession or use of a weapon as violations that will result in expulsion.**

10.4 CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are expected to take care of the school at all times. Defacing school property will be dealt with by contacting the parents. Clean up and restitution of property will be expected if a problem does occur.

10.5 DRESS CODE

While we have no official dress code, attire should be consistent with safe, respectful, and responsible behavior expectations.

10.6 USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Students and staff in Hamilton Community Schools will use many forms of available technology. The use of these resources is intended to facilitate learning and enhance educational information exchange, which are consistent with the purposes of the school. *The use of personal computers, smart phones, or other forms of technology on school property is expected to be appropriate and consistent with the usage of district-owned technology (see section 10.7).* The following are the responsibilities, which students and staff must assume in order to use these resources:

- Users are responsible for using school technology only for facilitating learning and enhancing educational information exchange consistent with the purposes of the school. Users must adhere to the rules established by the Technology Coordinator, district administrators, classroom teachers and/or the Board of Education.
- Users are responsible for preventing pornographic and sexually offensive material, inappropriate text files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the school's network, equipment or software from entering the school network.
- Users are responsible for preventing malicious use of the technology (i.e., causing disruption in the use of technology by others, harassing or discriminating against others, accessing unauthorized computer systems).
- Users are responsible for keeping hardware and software from being relocated, removed from school premises, or modified without permission from the principal.
- Users are responsible for not using district technology for private business, for product advertisement or political lobbying, or for making unauthorized financial commitments.
- Users are responsible for maintaining the privacy of passwords and are prohibited from publishing or discussing passwords or using another person's password.
- Users are responsible for obtaining permission from the principal before bringing in their own software and using it on school equipment.
- Users must continue to abide by normal academic policies as established by administrators, teachers and Board of Education.

10.7 USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES WHILE ON SCHOOL PROPERTY OR WHILE ATTENDING SCHOOL-SPONSORED OR SCHOOL RELATED ACTIVITIES

Students may possess and use personal electronic devices defined as personal computers, MP3 players, personal digital assistants, electronic readers, cellular phones, and other similar electronic devices; provided that such devices do not pose a threat to academic integrity, disrupt the learning environment or violate the privacy rights of others.

Students in possession of personal electronic devices shall observe the following conditions:

- A. Unless authorized by the school administrator and classroom teacher, devices shall only be turned on and operated before and after the regular school day. If an emergency situation exists that involves imminent physical danger, a school administrator may authorize students to use devices at other times.
- B. Devices shall not be used in a manner that disrupts the educational process, including but not limited to, posing a threat to academic integrity.
- C. Devices shall not be used to violate the confidentiality or privacy rights of another individual, including but not limited to, taking photographs or recordings of others; or sharing, posting, or publishing photographs or recordings of others. **STUDENTS ARE NOT TO TAKE PICTURES OR VIDEO OF OTHERS AT ALL WITHOUT PERMISSION FROM THE PRINCIPAL.**
- D. Students are responsible for devices they bring to school. The District shall not be responsible for loss, theft or destruction of devices brought onto school property or to school-sponsored or school-related events or activities.
- E. Students shall comply with any additional school and/or District rules developed concerning the appropriate use of devices.
- F. Students who violate these conditions of use will be subject to disciplinary action, including losing the privilege of bringing the device onto school property, suspension, or expulsion. In addition, a school district employee may confiscate the device, which shall be kept in the school office and returned only to the student's parent/guardian.

11.0 STUDENT POLICIES

11.1 PETS IN SCHOOL

Pets are not allowed at school.

11.2 RECESS EXCUSES LIMITED

All children participate in short recess periods during the day. This gives the children a necessary change of pace. Normally, students who are too ill to go outside during recess are too ill to be in school. All students will participate in recess unless a doctor's note indicates otherwise.

11.3 CLASS PARTIES

Parties are generally held in the fall, Christmas and on Valentine's Day. Parents are sometimes requested to assist with the parties. Your child's teacher will contact parents or request volunteers, if they are seeking assistance from volunteers or visitors.

11.4 POLICY ON SEARCHES OF PUPILS' LOCKERS AND LOCKER CONTENTS

LOCKERS ARE SCHOOL PROPERTY:

All lockers assigned to pupils are the property of the school district. At no time does the school relinquish its exclusive control of its lockers. The public school principal or his/her designee shall have custody of all combinations to all lockers or locks. Pupils are prohibited from placing locks on any locker without the advance approval of the public school principal or his/her designee.

LEGITIMATE USE OF SCHOOL LOCKERS:

The school assigns lockers to its pupils for the pupils' convenience and temporary use. Pupils are to use lockers exclusively to store school-related materials and authorized personal items such as outer garments, footwear, grooming aids, or lunch. Pupils shall not use the lockers for any other purpose, unless specifically authorized by school board policy or the public school principal or his/her designee, in advance of pupils bringing the items to school. Pupils are solely responsible for the contents of their lockers and should not share their lockers with other pupils, nor divulge locker combinations to other pupils, unless authorized by the public school principal or his/her designee.

SEARCH OF LOCKER CONTENTS:

Random searches of school lockers and their contents have a positive impact on deterring violations of school rules and regulations, ensure proper maintenance of school property, and provide greater safety and security for pupils and personnel. Accordingly, the board authorizes the public school principal or his/her designee to search lockers and locker contents at any time, without notice, and without parental/guardianship or pupil consent. The public school principal or his/her designee shall not be obligated, but may request the assistance of a law enforcement officer in conducting a locker search. The public school principal or his/her designee shall supervise the search. In the course of a locker search, the public school principal or his/her designee shall respect the privacy rights of the pupil regarding any items discovered that are not illegal or against school policy and rules.

SEIZURE:

When conducting locker searches, the public school principal or his/her designee may seize any illegal or unauthorized items, items in violation of board policy or rules, or any other items reasonably determined by the public school principal or his/her designee to be a potential threat to the safety or security of others. Such items include, but are not limited to the following: firearms, explosives, dangerous weapons, flammable material, illegal controlled

substances or controlled substance analogous or other intoxicants, contraband, poisons, and stolen property. Law enforcement officials shall be notified immediately upon seizure of such dangerous items, or seizure of items that schools are required to report to law enforcement agencies under the Statewide School Safety Information Policy. Any items seized by the public school principal or his/her designee shall be removed from the locker and held by school officials for evidence in disciplinary proceedings and/or turned over to law enforcement officials. The parent/guardian of a minor pupil, or a pupil eighteen (18) years of age or older, shall be notified by the public school principal or his/her designee of items removed from the locker.

NOTICE OF POLICY:

A copy of the local school board policy regarding locker searches shall be provided annually to each pupil and parent/guardian of the pupil assigned a school locker.

REFERENCES:

The Revised School Code, MCL 380.1306, 2000 PA 87 (Locker Searches)

New Jersey v. T.L.O., 469 U.S. 325 (1985)

U.S. Constitution, Amendment IV

12.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

12.1 STUDENT VISITORS

Student visitors are not allowed at school. We have found from past experience that visitors do not have much to do at school during the day and can be a distraction to the teacher and class.

12.2 STUDENT TEACHERS

Occasionally we have student teachers from local colleges. These student teachers are under the direct supervision of the classroom teacher. Students are expected to respect them as regular teachers.

12.3 PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Regular parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring. Parents are expected to attend both of these conferences, so we can share with you how your child is performing at school and you can share any concerns you might have.

12.4 PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Requests for volunteers come through our W.I.S.H. (We're Investing in the Students of Hamilton) volunteer program. If you would like to be a parent volunteer, please complete the W.I.S.H volunteer profile online at www.hamiltonschools.us. All volunteers are background-checked for the safety of our students.

12.5 P.T.O. ORGANIZATION

The P.T.O. sponsors various activities and some fundraising projects during the school year. If you are interested in participating with the PTO, please check the Newsletter for upcoming meetings or contact the office for more information.

12.6 REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued at the end of each semester (18 weeks). If you have any questions regarding your child's report card, please contact his/her teacher.

12.7 WEAPON-FREE SCHOOL ZONE POLICY

WEAPON-FREE SCHOOL ZONE POLICY

The Board of Education of Hamilton Community Schools, as both an employer and a public School District, is concerned with and interested in protecting the health, safety, and welfare of students, employees, and visitors. The Board recognizes that school buildings, facilities, vehicles, grounds and other school property are best utilized in the educational process in the absence of threats to physical well-being and safety, by individuals possessing weapons and/or dangerous weapons.

Accordingly, the Board of Education of Hamilton Community Schools (or the Superintendent, a principal or other District official as may be designated by the Board) shall permanently expel a pupil from attending school in the School District, if the pupil possesses a weapon in a weapon-free school zone. Such expulsion is mandatory, unless the pupil establishes, in a clear and convincing manner, at least one of the following:

That the object or instrument possessed by the pupil was not possessed for use as a weapon, or for direct or indirect delivery to another person for use as a weapon;

- a. The weapon was not knowingly possessed by the pupil;
- b. The pupil did not know or have reason to know that the object possessed by the pupil constituted a weapon or dangerous weapon; or

- c. That the weapon was possessed by the pupil at the suggestion, request, or direction of, or with the express permission of, school or police authorities.

Definitions:

"Weapon" or "dangerous weapon" includes: a firearm; gun; revolver, pistol; dagger; dirk; stiletto; knife with a blade over 3-inches in length; pocket knife opened by a mechanical device; iron bar; or brass knuckles.

"Weapon Free School Zone" means school property and/or a vehicle used by the school to transport students to or from school property.

"School property" means a building, playing field, or property used for school purposes to impart instruction to children or used for functions and events sponsored by a school.

"Firearm" means (a) a weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by an explosive, or by gas or air; (b) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (c) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (d) any destructive device, including explosives, incendiaries, poison gas, or any weapon which will (or may readily be converted to) expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant. For purposes of application and enforcement of this policy, a B-B gun is considered to be a "firearm."

Legal References:

MCL 28.421, 380.1311, 380.1313, 750.82, 750.237a, and 18 U.S.C. 921.

Our Board of Education will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, and/or actions to a student that cause (or threaten to cause) bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety, and/or personal degradation.

12.8 SCHOOLS OF CHOICE POLICY

In accordance with Section 23a of the 1991-92 State School Act the Hamilton Community Schools will implement the following SCHOOLS OF CHOICE program for Bentheim, Blue Star, Hamilton & Sandyview Elementary schools.

Parents of students attending one of the above listed elementary schools may submit a request to have their child transfer to another elementary school within the Hamilton Community School system prior to the start of each school year.

The reason for the transfer request will be optional and will not be used as criteria for approving or denying the request.

All requests will be only for one year. All requests must be for the entire school year. No requests will be considered for part of a school year. Students approved for intra-district Schools of Choice must reapply for the following school year.

Requests for a specific grade in a specific school will be considered based on the current enrollment in that specific grade and specific school. A general guideline is below 95% of the specified contractual class size limits as outlined in the Professional Agreement.

Transportation will be provided by the district from the nearest bus stop that is not already full within the attendance area of the school of attendance.

The principal of the receiving school will approve or deny these requests. If more requests are made than can be accommodated because of class size, selection will be on a random basis. In no case will a student who lives within the attendance boundary of a specific school be denied attendance at that school due to intra-district Schools of Choice requests.

12.9 SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM COMMUNICATION

Each building sends home a newsletter or other form of communication weekly. In addition, teachers also communicate weekly. All communications are designed to inform you of what is happening at school.

12.10 SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

School Board meetings are scheduled the second Monday of every month, unless otherwise notified. Meetings of the Board of Education are open to the public and opportunity for public comment is provided.

Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student's education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student, or former student, who has reached the age of 18 or is attending any school beyond the high school level. Students and former students to whom the rights have transferred are called eligible students.

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review all of the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of materials in education records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to inspect the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

Parents and eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records believed to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record commenting on the contested information in the record.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student before releasing any information from a student's record. However, the law allows schools to disclose records, without consent, to the following parties:

- School employees who have a need to know;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Certain government officials in order to carry out lawful functions;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- Individuals who have obtained court orders or subpoenas;
- Persons who need to know in cases of health and safety emergencies; and state and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law.

For additional information or technical assistance, you may call (202) 260-3887 or TDD (202) 260-8956 or contact:

Family Policy Compliance Office
 U.S. Department of Education
 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
 Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

The Hamilton Community Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, height, weight, marital status, handicap, disability, or limited English proficiency in any of its programs or activities. The following office has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

**Dr. Bradford Lusk
 Hamilton Community Schools
 4815 136th Avenue
 Hamilton, MI 49419**
