

*Mill Hill
Elementary
School Family
Handbook*

2014-2015



MILL HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HANDBOOK

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| PRINCIPAL | Kevin Chase |
| LOCATION | 635 Mill Hill Terrace Southport, CT 06890 |
| TELEPHONE | (203) 255-8320 |
| FAX | (203) 255-8205 |
| WEBSITE | http://fairfieldschools.org/schools/mh/ |
| STUDENT POPULATION | 423 |
| HOURS OF OPERATION | 8:55 AM TO 3:30 PM |
| ABSENTEE NUMBER | 203-255-8415 |
| GUIDANCE & NURSE | 203-255-8320 |
| EARLY CLOSING HOTLINE | 203-255-TALK (8255) |
| TRANSPORTATION | 203-255-8385 |

SCHOOL HOURS

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Grades K-5 | 8:55 AM to 3:30 PM |
| Early Dismissal | 1:40 PM |
| Weather Delayed Opening | 10:55 AM |

SCHOOL OFFICE

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| Secretary | Debbie Garavel |
| Clerical Assistants | Julie Davis |
| Hours Monday-Friday | 8:30 AM to 4 PM |

MILL HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STAFF

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Principal | Kevin Chase |
| Kindergarten | Kimberly Grapski Nancy Mis Dan Smith |
| Grade 1 | Ann Oliver Cindy Kaestner Stephanie Ehret |
| Grade 2 | Jeanne Gaughan Ana Pinheiro (student teacher) Suzanne Grigg Sue Maloney |
| Grade 3 | Laurie Christensen Debbie Crossley Joan Hellthaler Kathleen Regula |
| Grade 4 | Cara McDermott Jennifer Pagan KeriAnn Ventresca |
| Grade 5 | Laura Fulton Larry Shire Joan Huff Larry Zankel |
| Building Substitute | Danielle Katz |
| Building Intern | Haley Turner |
| Instructional Improvement/ Gifted | Dr. Teresa Samuelson |
| Library Media Specialist | Gina Gorton |
| Language Arts Specialist | Dr. Jane Logie |
| Language Arts Specialist | Mary Ellen McKee |
| Psychologist | Melissa Griffeth |
| Social Worker | Kirsten Sabrowski |
| Art Teacher | Eric Erff |
| Physical Education Teacher | Matthew Cino |
| Physical Education Teacher | Bob Bove |
| Music Teacher | Amie Arcari |
| Math/Science Teacher | Nancy Meehan |

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Spanish Teacher | Laura Williams |
| Special Education Teacher | Alison Ditolla |
| Special Education Teacher | Melissa Ettinger |
| Special Education Teacher | Christina Capuano |
| Special Education Teacher | Amy O'Feeney |
| Special Education Teacher | Suzanne Stephens |
| Speech and Language | Nickie Gosselin |
| Occupational Therapist | Gina Papa |
| Physical Therapist | Catherine Rotondi |
| Strings Teacher | Veronica Kiss |
| Band Teacher | Julia Brion |
| ELL Teacher | Joyce Bultman |
| Media Technology Assistant | Tara Carlson |
| Library Media Center Assistant | Francesca Gori-Montanelli |
| Paraprofessional | Gayle Kraus |
| Paraprofessional | Sondra Kennedy |
| Paraprofessional | Wendy Musarella |
| Paraprofessional | Cindy Cipolla |
| Paraprofessional | Anne Marie Groccia |
| Paraprofessional | Gina Bucciferro |
| Paraprofessional | Mary Reidy |
| Paraprofessional | Jackie Skultety |
| Secretary | Debbie Garavel |
| Clerical Assistant | |
| Clerical Assistant | Julie Davis |
| Nurse | Mary McCarthy |
| Head Custodian | Tony Piccolo |
| Custodian | Jason Avila |
| Custodian | David Weiss |
| Cafeteria Manager | Joan Fogle |
| Kitchen Staff | Eva Salamon |
| Kitchen Staff | Cathy Sullivan |

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development is a program of planned activities that provides for the professional improvement of all staff members. All professional staff members in the system participate in this program.

For the 2014-15 school year, there are two full days for professional development and two early-release days for teachers (**please mark your calendars!**):

| | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Tuesday, October 7 | Early dismissal day (1:40 PM) |
| Tuesday, November 4 | Full Day (school not in session) |
| Tuesday, February 12 | Early dismissal day (1:40 PM) |
| Friday, February 13 | Full Day (school not in session) |

OPEN HOUSE

Open House is on Thursday, September 11, 2014, this year. It is one way to be informed about the school and your child's classroom.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES & PROGRESS REPORT PERIODS

(Please mark your calendars!)

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <u>First Progress Report</u> | <u>December 12</u> |
| Parent/Teacher Conferences | October 23, 29, 30 (early dismissal) |
| <u>Second Progress Report</u> | <u>March 20</u> |
| Parent/Teacher Conferences | March 25, 26, April 1 (early dismissal) |
| Final Progress Report | June 11 (or last day of school) |

All conference days are early-dismissal.

Early Dismissal for ALL students is at 1:40 PM

STANDARDIZED TESTING SCHEDULE

Students in the Fairfield Public Schools participate in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) assessment. The SBAC is a state-mandated examination administered to children in grades 3 – 8 that will take place after the New Year.

This year, the Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities Test, as well as the Cognitive Abilities Test, will be administered to children in grade 3.

As the testing time approaches, further information will be provided in order to prepare your child for these tests. You will receive information on your child's performance on all of these assessments.

REGISTRATION OF NEW STUDENTS

The school office should be notified of all student entrances and withdrawals so that records may be obtained or sent out. To register a new student, parents must go to Fairfield Public Schools Central Office located at 501 Kings Hwy and submit a birth certificate, proof of Fairfield residency, and a statement of immunizations, as required by Connecticut state law.

IMMUNIZATIONS AND PHYSICALS

Children must have all of the necessary physical examinations and immunizations. All families with children who require physical examinations have been (or will be) notified. If you have any questions about this, please contact the school nurse. Proof of immunizations and physical examinations (at specified intervals) are required by law.

FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN SCHEDULE

This year the full day schedule for incoming kindergarten students will begin on the first day of school, August 28, 2014. All kindergarten students will go to school at the same start and end times as all other grades.

ABSENCES/EXCUSES

If a child is to be absent or tardy, **parents must report the absence or tardiness using the Absentee Call-in line at 255-8415**. Students entering school after 8:55 AM should proceed to their classrooms and will be marked tardy by their homeroom teachers. Students arriving after 9:10 AM should sign in (that is, **be signed in by an adult**), at the main office. Students may not be dropped off at the curb, sent, or taken directly to the classroom. Upon the child's return to school following an absence of any kind, parents are required to send a note to the classroom teacher regarding the nature of the child's absence.

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL

The district determines the necessity for the emergency closing or delayed opening of school due to weather conditions or other occurrences. You can read all about this topic on the Fairfield Public Schools website http://fairfieldschools.org/parent_resources_family_guide.htm

There will be a notice on the FPS website www.fairfieldschools.org if school is delayed or closed early, but it is strongly advised that you take advantage of the text and e-mail notification system described below.

You can sign up for text message, e-mail notification, by selected the desired option in your Infinite Campus account.

Additionally, announcements are made over the following local radio stations:

WICC 600 AM

WEZN 100 FM

WNAB 1450 AM

WEBE 108 FM

You can also go to <http://ctweather.com/> go to *Cancellations & Notifications, Schools*

Announcements for delayed opening are usually made by 7 AM. Early-dismissal announcements are usually broadcast by 11 AM.

A recorded announcement regarding school closings, delayed openings or emergency early dismissals is available by calling 255-TALK (8255). **Please use this number instead of calling the school.**

EMERGENCY EARLY DISMISSAL

In the event of an emergency early school closing due to inclement weather or other emergency, parents are encouraged to develop an **emergency plan and discuss it with their children** in advance. To be prepared for such an emergency, parents will want to implement a family emergency plan such as

- Be sure to update emergency contact information online.
- Give your children three to five homes to go to in the neighborhood, in a certain order.
- Remind them to go to the designated neighbor.
- Have them call you or another adult when they arrive to inform you of their whereabouts.

We suggest that you walk through a simulation with your children to give them the experience in a non-threatening situation. This planning not only prevents numerous phone calls but also alleviates the children's anxiety.

DISMISSAL

All students not taking the bus must have a note from home stating their personal plan for dismissal, regardless if they are walkers, riding their bicycles, or being picked up.

EARLY DISMISSAL:

Please avoid picking up your child early for non-medical/emergency reasons. Students who **must** be dismissed early for medical appointments must present a written note in advance. Parents are encouraged to make these appointments **outside of school hours**. Parents must meet their child in the school office.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURE:

Dismissal arrangements must be provided to the teacher first thing in the morning. **Your child will take the bus home if they do not arrive with a note stating otherwise.** We respect that changes do occur, however you must call the Main Office by 2:30 for non-emergency requests for change in dismissal plans. Pick-ups will only be out of the Gymnasium. It is requested that parents park in the back parking lot. For students' safety, please do not attempt to pick-up your child at the classroom or out of the bus line.

- There will be 3 staff members in the gym.
- There will be a staff member by the outside door with a binder listing reported dismissal notes for the day.
- Parents will be instructed to sign out the students they are picking up. THEN they will be able to take them.

- If your child will be a pick-up or walker **every day**, you may send in a “standing” note that states that. They will be dismissed from the hallway between the grade 5 portables and the Gymnasium. If you choose to change that plan on any given day, or for more long term, you must send in an additional note stating the change.

BEFORE-SCHOOL POLICY

Children may not arrive at school earlier than 8:45 AM. There is no supervision on school grounds prior to that time. To ensure the safety of your child, students that are dropped off prior to 8:45 AM will be required to call home to arrange transportation home. Students may arrive early only if they are attending specific school-scheduled and supervised activities such as band, choir, or orchestra rehearsal.

AFTER-SCHOOL POLICY

Playgrounds are not supervised after school. To ensure the safety of your child, students should not remain in the building or on the playground after 3:30 PM unless specific arrangements for supervision have been made. Students participating in an extended-day program or activity should have a note indicating their alternate dismissal arrangement.

PARKING

School buses and emergency vehicles **must** be able to enter and leave the school **at all times**. Buses have been delayed because of people parking illegally.

In an attempt to reserve parking for staff, particularly those who travel from school to school, we ask that you use the parking lot to the rear of the school. The parking lot in the front of the school is reserved for staff. Parking is limited during school functions, such as Open House. Please use caution and abide by parking restrictions when parking. There have been several incidents that prompted safety concerns. Of particular concern are earlier arrivals for Band and Strings rehearsals. **Please use the circle to turn around and exit the parking lot, rather than performing an illegal u-turn in the parking area.**

DROP-OFFS, PICK-UPS, CONT.

1. Dropping off children before 8:45 AM is prohibited under the Fairfield Public Schools' district-wide policy.
2. When dropping off your children, please use the drop-off loop (Stop, Kiss, and Drop) and pull your car up as far as possible. **Do not leave your car.** If your child needs assistance, ask the attending teacher(s) to help. **Have your children exit from the passenger side of the car only.**
3. Park only in the areas designated with white lines.
4. Parents who are picking children up after school **must park and meet them at the designated pick-up area.** When picking your child up after school, please arrive before 3:15 PM so you will allow enough time to park your car and walk to the school. **Do not park in the bus loop in the front of the building.** This area must be left clear so that the buses can pass as needed.
5. **Under no circumstances should you instruct your child to meet you at your car!** This is against school policy and is a serious safety concern. The children have been advised that if they have a note that they are being picked up, they may not meet their parents anywhere other than the designated pick-up area.
6. It is imperative that caution be used at all times when driving near school grounds and in driveways. **Please drive slowly.** Also, avoid parking in the handicapped spaces unless you have a permit. Please be a positive role model for driving, parking, and walking safely. Please know that our students' safety is our primary concern. Your caution and cooperation are most appreciated.

BICYCLES

Riding bicycles to and from school should be done with extreme caution, and only by those students in the upper grades. Please review all rules of the road with your children, practice the route to be taken, and preferably accompany them each day, if you choose to allow them to ride their bicycle to school.

FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BUS TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES

1. Seating on the bus is at the discretion of the driver. There are no reserved seats other than those assigned by the school or the driver for safety or disciplinary reasons.
2. Appropriate behavior on the bus is expected from all students. Discipline reports issued by the drivers will be sent home for the signature of the students' parents or guardians. The third report, or a very serious offense, received by a student may result in the temporary suspension of his or her bus privileges. Our goal is to have a safe bus ride to and from school for every student.
3. Please share the following procedures and safety rules with your children before they board the bus:
 - Leave home early enough to arrive at your bus stop on time.
 - Do not wait for the bus in the street. Wait well away from the edge of the road.
 - Wait until the bus comes to a **full stop** before approaching the door. It saves time if you line up with younger children boarding first.
 - When boarding or leaving the bus, go up or down the steps **one at a time**.
 - Take your seat immediately, and do not stand up until the bus arrives at your destination.
 - Keep your legs, feet, and any articles you are carrying out of the aisle.
 - Speak in soft voices and avoid singing, shouting, or throwing objects.
 - Avoid talking to the driver, except in cases of emergency.
 - Do not open bus windows without the driver's permission.
 - Keep your head, arms, and hands inside the bus at all times.
 - When leaving the bus, if you must cross the street, walk in **front** of the bus (at least six feet away from the bus) in full view of the driver. Stop and look both ways, and wait for the bus driver's signal to cross. This is a very important safety procedure.

DISMISSAL NOTES

Whenever you must make changes in your child's schedule at school (e.g., picking your child up early or after school, staying for an after-school activity, or making arrangements for an after-school play date with another child), **please inform your child's teacher in writing.** To avoid anxiety in your children, please be sure they know where the note has been placed in their backpacks. This will avoid anxious phone calls home. **Failure to send in a note will result in your children being put on the bus.** Large numbers of phone calls coming in around dismissal time create problems and make phone lines unavailable for an emergency. **If a last-minute phone call is absolutely necessary,** it must come from a parent, guardian, or a designated baby sitter or nanny. The names of such designated sitters or nannies must be on file in the office, with the classroom teacher, and listed on all emergency cards. **E-mail is not a preferred method of making such arrangements.** Teachers are busy working with students and are unable to check e-mail.

Please be reminded that the policy of the Fairfield Public Schools **prohibits students from riding on any bus other than the one to which they have been assigned.** However, if your child is going home with another child on the **same** bus (the one taken every day), he or she may get off at a different stop, provided there is a note from his/her parent or guardian.

FIRE AND LOCK-DOWN DRILLS

Connecticut law requires that each school hold monthly fire drills. Lock-down drills are held up to two times per school year. There are procedures at school to evacuate children quickly and safely in the event of fire or other emergency. Each classroom teacher has an evacuation plan that is reviewed and practiced accordingly.

ITEMS NOT PERMITTED IN SCHOOL

In order to ensure the student safety and the protection of personal property, parents are encouraged to closely monitor those items that are brought or worn to school by students. **The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or broken prohibited items.** Handheld tablet style devices are allowed if used for ebook purposes. The following items are specifically prohibited on school grounds and will be confiscated by school staff:

- Weapons (real or toy) such as guns, pocket knives, razor blades, sharp objects, or shockers
- Matches, caps, and fireworks
- Skateboards, roller blades, roller skates, heeleys
- Cell phones, iPods, MP3 players, radios, CD players, and hand-held video games
- Sports equipment (equipment for recess will be provided by the school)
- Toys, stuffed animals, dolls, and trading or playing cards
- Make-up, glitter, scented lip gloss, perfume or cologne
- Animals or Pets

WEAPONS POLICY

The safety of all students is our highest concern. Therefore, students who bring to school, use, sell, or attempt to sell a firearm, deadly weapon, dangerous instrument or **facsimiles of weapons**, will be suspended from school and reported to the Fairfield Police Department. State law specifically prohibits such behavior. Such behavior may result in expulsion from school for a period of up to, but not exceeding, 182 school days.

DRESS CODE POLICY

At Mill Hill Elementary School we know that our students' dress reflects pride in the school and in them. At no time should clothing be a **distraction** to the students, nor should their attire be a danger to their **personal safety** in the classroom or on the playground. Below are some guidelines for appropriate dress:

- Appropriate *closed* footwear must be worn (no flip-flops, clogs, or open-toed sandals). Sneakers **must** be worn on Physical Education days.
- Hats may not be worn inside the school (these items may be worn at recess and placed in cubbies during school hours).
- **Appropriate outerwear must be worn to outside recess in the winter months.** Please dress your child accordingly.
- Short shorts, bare-midriff style shirts, and halter tops are inappropriate school attire.
- Tank tops are allowed as long as the strap is greater than one inch wide.
- T-shirts that display alcohol- or drug-related logos, or inappropriate messages are prohibited.
- Jewelry that is inappropriate or considered a danger will not be allowed (dangling earrings, chains, or bracelets).

BULLYING POLICY

Mill Hill Elementary School promotes a secure and happy school climate, conducive to teaching and learning, that is free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behavior. Therefore, it is a policy of the Board of Education that bullying of a student by another student is prohibited, and such instances will be documented and acted upon accordingly. This includes any threatening behavior over the Internet.

BOARD OF EDUCATION DEFINITION OF BULLYING

The State's definition of bullying under Sec. 10-222d, as amended by PA 08-160 and the Fairfield Board of Education policy is: "any overt acts by a student or a group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, harass, humiliate, or intimidate the other student while on school grounds, at a school-sponsored activity, or on a school bus, which acts are committed more than once against any student during the school year. Bullying which occurs outside of the school setting may be addressed by school officials if it has a direct and negative impact on a student's academic performance or safety in school."

TELEPHONE

Plans for the afternoon should be made at home prior to coming to school. In an **emergency**, the office phone may be used with a teacher's permission. Only emergency phone messages for children and/or teachers will be delivered during the school day. Each classroom teacher will review the telephone policy with your children in school.

STUDENT GUESTS

Student guests are limited to those who have a Mill Hill Elementary School teacher as a sponsor. The sponsor must request permission through the office in advance. The sponsor accepts responsibility for the conduct and safety of the guest while at school. Guest privileges will be limited to one day.

FAMILY VACATIONS

Parents are urged to refrain from withdrawing students from school during non-vacation times. However, if circumstances do cause an unavoidable extended absence incurring a loss of instructional time, it is your responsibility to notify the classroom teacher so that s/he may keep work aside for the student to "make up" upon return to school. Your child may receive missed assignments to be completed at home if requested. **Please do not ask that work be sent with the student on a vacation.**

FIELD TRIPS

Each grade level has several field trips throughout the year that provide for increased learning in specific curriculum areas. Permission slips are sent home in advance along with requests for fees, if necessary. Note: Field trip costs are subsidized by the Mill Hill Elementary School PTA, and scholarships are available. Travel is generally by school bus, although coach/luxury buses are hired for longer trips. Parents are often needed as chaperones and can volunteer by contacting their child's teacher or PTA Room Parent (depending on the arrangement).

LUNCH PROCEDURES

Lunch may either be brought from home or purchased through the electronic payment system, which is outlined below:

You put money into your child's account. Your child's name/picture appears on the computer screen located at the lunch line. When your child comes through the line, the Cafeteria Manager simply presses your child's picture, presses the meal your child is selecting (hot lunch, bagel plate, milk, or water), and off s/he goes! The price of the lunch/milk is automatically deducted from your child's account.

How do I pay for meals or milk?

There are three ways to put money into your child's account:

1. **You may send in a check or cash to the Cafeteria Manager.** Please place your payment in an envelope marked with your child's name and grade. The Cafeteria Manager will enter your check/cash amount

into your child's account on the computer. Checks should be made payable to **Fairfield School Lunch** (there is no fee for this method of payment).

2. **You may pre-pay via the Internet using www.MealpayPlus.com** and enter the dollar amount you choose using a debit or credit card. You must have your child's student identification number to use this feature. You may obtain that number by calling the Main Office. Please note that convenience fees apply to use this method, which cover the cost of bank fees. The school district does not receive any income from these fees.
3. **You may call Mealpay's toll-free number** at 1-866-875-6833 to pre-pay by checking account, credit, or debit card over the telephone. As above, convenience fees apply using this method.

Please note: If you choose to pre-pay through Mealpay, you will be given the option of putting money into either a Meal Account or a General Account. The Meal Account will allow a student to purchase only a hot lunch meal. If your child purchases milk or water, even occasionally, we suggest you put your money into the **General Account**.

How do I know the balance in my child's account?

We will send home a "low-balance" letter weekly if your child's account falls below three meals. This letter is a reminder for you to add money to your child's account. You can also check your child's balance by registering on www.MealpayPlus.com. Registering on Mealpay is free and allows you to receive e-mail notifications when your child's balance goes below a certain amount. This registration does NOT require that you pay via Mealpay, but allows you online access to account balance and automatic e-mail notifications.

Do I need to use all the money in my child's account this school year?

No. Any money left in your child's account at the end of this school year will carry over to the next school year.

PUPIL SERVICES PROGRAMS

The Special Education Department is comprised of a team of professionals dedicated to ensuring that all children learn. The members, comprised of four Special Education Teachers, a Speech and Language Pathologist, Social Worker, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, and School Psychologist are specially educated and trained to address the specific learning needs of the children at Mill Hill. Together, the department addresses the learning, behavioral, emotional, and social needs of the students. The Special Education Team, under the leadership of School Psychologist Melissa Ringer, meets regularly throughout the year with Mr. Chase, classroom teachers, specialists, and parents to address academic and social issues of concern. Some meetings may result in a Planning and Placement Team meeting, where the team designs individual student programs, brainstorms behavioral and academic strategies, and determines the best way to enhance student learning.

PSYCHOLOGICAL/COUNSELING SERVICES

Our school has a full-time School Psychologist available to every child, parent, and staff member. Our School Psychologist, **Melissa Ringer**, has specialized training in both education and in psychology, and uses his skills as a professional to assist students in their educational, personal, and social development. Miss Ringer works with the entire school community toward the goal of helping all students reach their full potential. As students face different challenges, these services can provide solutions for tomorrow's problems through thoughtful and positive actions today. Among those services are:

- Peer mediation groups
- Interest groups
- Peer leadership groups
- Groups to help children enrich their social and friendship skills
- Classroom lessons to help children learn how to get along with others

SOCIAL WORKER SERVICES

The Mill Hill Elementary School Social Worker, **Mrs. Kirsten Sabrowski**, provides support for students through a variety of modalities. These include:

- Individual counseling
- Dyad or group work focusing on enhancing social skill development or to provide children experiencing difficulties (such as divorce, bereavement, etc.) with a peer support network
- Classroom lessons on character development (including topics such as bullying, gossip, good sportsmanship, diversity, tolerance, kindness) focused on creating a supportive learning environment
- A school-wide program on diversity and tolerance
- Support to Mill Hill faculty in the form of resources and consultation
- Family support in the form of resource referral, counseling, consultation and limited home visits.

Mrs. Sabrowski is currently at Mill Hill 14 hours per week, which she spreads over two days.

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE SERVICES

Speech and language services are available for students whose difficulties in articulation, fluency, voice and/or language have an adverse effect on educational performance. The Speech and Language Pathologist, in collaboration with the classroom teacher, special educator, and School Psychologist, designs instruction to address educationally related communication needs. Students are selected for the program on the basis of staff or parent referrals and diagnostic evaluation. **Mrs. Nickie Gosselin** is our Speech and Language Pathologist.

MILL HILL LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

Mill Hill Elementary School's library media program is delivered collaboratively by the classroom teacher and the Library Media Specialist, **Ms. Bobbi Stak**. Flexible scheduling allows us to incorporate information literacy and technology skills in the curriculum-based K-5 research projects so all students have the opportunity to become independent, responsible users of information. An important aspect of our program is the presentation of these projects to our learning community. We are committed to providing access to all of our resources. Circulation is guided, and children are encouraged to visit the library on a daily basis.

MILL HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WEBSITE

<http://fairfieldschools.org/schools/mh/>

PUBLISHING STUDENT IMAGES

Mill Hill Elementary School routinely makes use of videotaping, digital, and traditional photography for educational purposes. Examples may include the videotaping of concerts, assemblies, or class productions. Student images without names may be displayed in a variety of ways, including bulletin boards, publications, and school or class websites. **Parents who do not want their child videotaped or photographed (and those images displayed as described above) are asked to indicate this in Infinite Campus.**

SCHOOL VISITATION

Parents and other visitors are both welcome and encouraged to visit the school, attend assemblies, participate in special events, and volunteer. All visitors must report to the office immediately upon entering the building. **Classroom instruction should not be interrupted.** Below are some important reminders to help maximize the learning environment for your children and decrease classroom disruptions:

- **Walk-in visits are not permitted. When visiting the school, please make sure you sign your name in the book in the Main Office and wear a visitor badge.**
- **Please refrain from unannounced visits to your child's classroom.**
- **Please make an appointment with your child's teacher to address any concerns.**
- **If it is necessary to drop off your child's lunch or a forgotten item from home, *please leave it at the Main Office.***

Thank you in advance for your partnership and cooperation with these guidelines. They will greatly help us to maintain consistency in your child's daily school routine. This also will allow your child to have a positive school experience that will foster his/her independence.

GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR PARENT VOLUNTEERS IN SCHOOL

Thank you for offering to lend a hand as a parent volunteer at Mill Hill Elementary School. All parent volunteers must complete the Volunteer Information Form and Waiver of Liability form at the back of this handbook.

Our teachers are outstanding, yet it's a real challenge to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of each child within the classroom setting. As a staff, we firmly believe that there is a direct correlation between the quality of education that can be achieved in a school and the visible presence of caring parent volunteers. In order to keep all minds and bodies appropriately focused and "on task" during instructional sessions, additional adult eyes and hands can dramatically improve the efficiency and productivity of the children's participation in a lesson or activity. Below is a list **of ethical standards** for parents who serve as volunteers at Mill Hill. The school reserves the right to "dis-invite" a parent volunteer who is not able to adhere to these standards.

1. Volunteers must aspire to "**professional standards**" of ethical conduct while serving in the school and while communicating about school activities outside of the school. Please respect confidential matters and the

special “trust” that is formed between the school and the parent volunteer. There should be no judgmental or comparative anecdotal conversations in school or within the school community regarding the following:

- Perceived strengths, weaknesses, or “styles” of individual children or teachers
- Children who display developmental delays or a need for special education or social services (School Psychologist, Social Worker, Speech and Language Pathologist, etc.)
- Children’s social, economic, academic, or emotional challenges or advantages

2. Volunteers must try to adhere to the schedules they have worked out with their cooperating teachers. **If you are not able to keep to your scheduled arrangement, please notify the classroom teacher as soon as possible in advance.**

3. Volunteers with questions about the methods or practices of a teacher should make arrangements to seek clarification **from the teacher.**

4. Volunteers may be asked to work with children directly or handle management tasks (laminating, copying, etc.) as determined by the teacher.

Your role as a parent volunteer is important to our overall success and to the quality of learning we are able to provide the Mill Hill Elementary School children. **We want and need your involvement as a volunteer.**

CONCERT AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE ETIQUETTE

Concert etiquette can best be taught to children by example from their parents, teachers, and other adults. Here are some important reminders:

- Please arrive on time
- Turn off cell phones and pagers
- Supervise young children at all times
- Take photographs and/or videotape from the rear or side aisles
- Avoid bringing food or drink into the performance area
- Avoid conversations during the performance
- Hold applause until the end of a piece
- Avoid waving or calling out to performers
- Stay seated and quiet whenever possible

The performers work very hard in order to prepare for performances. Keeping distractions to a minimum will ensure a quality performance for all in attendance.

MILL HILL PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

The Mill Hill PTA is a dynamic, caring group of parents, teachers and staff whose mission is in line with the Connecticut PTA Mission:

- Support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community, and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children;
- Assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children; and
- Encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of the nation. Support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community, and before governmental bodies and other organizations.

HELP YOUR CHILD SUCCEED – PLEASE JOIN! Research has proven children perform better when their parents are actively involved both at home and at school. Grades and test scores climb. Self-esteem grows. Schools improve. The PTA helps parents, students, school staff, and the community work together to build programs and activities that benefit your children. Your time, participation, and financial contributions are so important to the success of our family here at Mill Hill. Sign up at Mill Hill's welcome-back coffee on the first day of school or online at www.millhillpta.com

BECOME INVOLVED: The key to Mill Hill's successful school spirit and community atmosphere is the PTA volunteer! Please consider volunteering for one or more of our committees. The Mill Hill PTA has over 50 working committees that are enriching our children's education, that are fundraising or administrative, and some that are just plain FUN! Our fundraisers provide financial support to Mill Hill that directly benefits each child, such as curriculum enrichment programs, books, classroom materials, field trip subsidies, teacher grants, scholarships *...just to name a few.

You can sign up any time by contacting our Volunteer Coordinators, by contacting a committee chair directly (listed in the Mill Hill PTA Web site,) or talking to us directly at our welcome-back coffee in the cafeteria on the first day of school!

SHARE YOUR VOICE: PTA meetings are held throughout the year to update you on happenings at Mill Hill. These meetings are key to staying in touch with your child's educational life – they provide a forum for you to share your thoughts and ideas about issues that affect Mill Hill and your student. They are also fun and a great way to get to know the staff and other Mill Hill families!

STAY IN TOUCH: Our Web site has just about everything you need to know – upcoming PTA events, volunteer opportunities, lunch menus, school calendar, forms and procedures, community links and MUCH MORE! Check it out: www.millhillpta.com

And, please, contact us – we would love to chat with you about Mill Hill! We look forward to working with you for a successful and fun year.

*Please note: Any student or parent participating in a PTA- or school-sponsored activity or program may be eligible for financial assistance. Inquiries are confidential and should be made directly to Mr. Chase.

PTA DIRECTORY

The Mill Hill Elementary School Directory is a listing of the names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of all the families at Mill Hill. It is published by the PTA and offers an excellent consolidated source of important information. Participation in the directory is encouraged, but it is optional. **Parents must fill out a directory form in order to be included in the directory.**

PARENT OBSERVATION REQUEST FORM FOR CLASSROOM OR PLAYGROUND OBSERVATIONS

Please complete the Classroom or Playground Parent Observation Request Form in support of your request to observe your child in the school environment in the classroom or on the playground at Mill Hill Elementary School (copy of the form is at the end of this handbook).

VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION FORM AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY

In continued efforts to provide for a safe and secure learning environment for all students, Fairfield Public Schools has implemented an administrative regulation (#1212AR) regarding Volunteers/Resource Persons. This regulation requires all Volunteers/Resource Persons in our schools to complete a registration form. Any Volunteer/Resource Person working before, during or after school in a school- or PTA- sponsored activity is required to complete this form. At the end of this handbook, you will find the Volunteer Registration Form and Waiver of Liability. Please complete this form and return it to the office prior to the start of any volunteer work.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

The policy of the Fairfield Board of Education calls for schools to provide educational supplies and equipment in an adequate amount for the education program for all students. As in previous years, our school will provide for your child's instructional needs by providing supplies and materials for the class. The supply list below includes items that each individual student *may* need to provide in order to be prepared for school and complete homework. Please check with your child's teacher. We understand that these are difficult economic times for many in our community. If your family needs financial assistance with the purchase of these school supplies, or if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Mr. Chase.

Composition notebooks
3-ring binders (grades 4 & 5 only)
Divider tabs (grades 4 & 5 only)
Homework folders
Pens
Pencils
Lined writing paper
Eraser
Pencil pouch
Backpack
\$5 for recorder (grade 3 only)
Art smock (or old t-shirt)

MILL HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Theory of Action & Principal's Vision Statement

Mill Hill Theory of Action

If we strategically and systematically design a school improvement plan that defines adult actions and measurements of successful implementation, then support will be given to students and staff toward our goals and student achievement will improve.

If we effectively monitor the progress of data within school and instructional data teams, then we should identify successful instructional strategies in improving student achievement.

If we define and create a level of support structures within staff to assist teachers in pedagogy and students in learning, then student achievement will increase in targeted areas.

If we create a school culture centered on collegiality to benefit students and student achievement, then staff will be better equipped to meet the differentiated needs of our students utilizing best practices and student achievement will improve.

If we engage in a reflective academic environment of planning, delivering, and adjusting for a high level of rigor with effective questioning prompted by Bloom's levels 4 (Analyze), 5 (Evaluate), 6 (Create), then student achievement levels will increase to higher levels.

If we reorganize our thinking and practice to focus on the growth of high achieving and gifted students, then we will see categorical growth within our higher performance levels and no regression of achievement.

If we create a school culture that invites family involvement, honors and celebrates community to nurture the whole child, then staff will be better equipped to meet the differentiated needs of our students to allow them to be better prepared to eventually contribute to our community.

If we constantly challenge ourselves to create opportunities for students to learn through tasks and in an environment that demands they think at higher levels, encourages divergence of thought and the incorporation of a digital learning environment, then we will empower them to become innovative contributors to our global society.

Principal's Vision Statement

We at Mill Hill strive to be champions of education, champions of children. We believe that we can reach higher levels of achievement through a constant cycle of reflection that lends itself to close examination and analysis of past and current practice to lead to continuous improvement. Each child is an individual in their own right and thus growth is commensurate to their individual needs and abilities.

More specifically, we collaborate in teams throughout our entire organization. We believe that inherent in the power of collaboration is that collectively we are smarter than any individual in the collective. Through this philosophy we will improve the capacity of administrators, teachers, and other key stakeholders to improve both the overall learning environment for our students and in turn their academic achievement and personal growth.

We are constantly examining student achievement outcomes. This close examination leads to focused reflection to identify instructional practice that produces positive student achievement outcomes for, as we know, there can exist instructional practice that is viewed as effective, but does not produce the desired results. In short, if we are responsive to student learner outcomes, we will improve student achievement.

This structure has clearly defined components that allow for a system of checks and balances that illuminate areas to both replicate and revise. This clear vision, communication of this vision, along with a transparent and well-articulated structure that is aligned in its documentation, tasks, and functioning throughout the organization is the backbone of our success. We strive to nurture the growth of the whole child. We will always work to follow our motto; "Mill Hill is a Home for the Mind and Heart." Keep your heart in mind.

Mill Hill School
Observation Request Form
(Parents)

Please complete the following in support of your request to observe your child in the school environment at Mill Hill School. We appreciate one week's notice to accommodate a request for an observation, however, we will do our best to schedule your observation as soon as possible. An administrator or other designee must accompany parents during observations. While we welcome your input as a parent and encourage active involvement in your child's education, please respect our need to limit observations to a 30 minute time period in order to minimize interruptions to the student learning environment. Please understand that teachers cannot meet with you at this time. Thank you for your cooperation.

Name of Student: _____ Date Submitted: _____

Classroom Teacher: _____

(If Applicable: Case Manager: _____

Individual Observing: _____

Class you wish to observe: _____

Options for dates & times requested: _____

Reason for observation:

.....
Staff complete:

Date & Time Approved: _____

Approved by: _____

Designee Attending
Observation _____

