

STUDENT ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Classes will officially begin at 7:30 A.M. Students transported by parents should enter via Keeton Road and be dropped off using the Student Drop-Off area at the south end of the school. Students may be dropped off as early as 7:00 A.M., **but not before** as supervision does not begin until then. In the event that students are brought to school before 7:00 A.M., we ask that parents supervise students in their vehicle until 7:00 A.M. Students who walk or ride their bicycles to school should arrive no earlier than 7:00 A.M. Upon arriving, students who eat breakfast must go directly to the cafeteria. All other students should go to their designated hall assignment. No student will be permitted to go into a classroom before 7:30 A.M., therefore, students must keep all possessions (lunch box, backpack, etc.) with them.

FOR SAFETY REASONS, HIGHWAY 17 ENTRANCE WILL NOT BE USED AS A PICK UP OR DROP OFF FOR STUDENTS RIDING IN CARS. Should a student happen to be tardy, however, Highway 17 entrance should be used so that the student may check in through the front office, as it will be necessary for the student to receive a tardy slip.

AFTER SCHOOL

Parents providing transportation will pick students up after the 1:58 P.M. bell using the Student Drop-Off area. When using the Drop-Off area, please pull as far forward as possible in order to keep the student pick-up line moving. **For student safety, students will NOT be allowed to walk to cars in the parking lot. If you are picking your child up, please remain in your car and travel through the car line.**

1. Students will not be permitted back in the building after dismissal.
2. Students waiting for rides are to do so at the designated loading area on the south end of the school.

NOTE: *Supervision is not provided after 2:15 P.M.

3. Walkers and bike riders are to leave immediately upon dismissal.
4. Bus students should go directly to the bus when dismissed.

EARLY STUDENT CHECK-OUT

Parents are encouraged to schedule doctor and dental appointments around school hours. If this is not possible, parents must come to the front office receptionist first to sign their child out of school. At that time, the front office secretary will inform your child's teacher, and your child will meet you in the front office area. For the safety of all students and the preservation of instruction, **at no time** should a parent go directly to the classroom or be on campus without first signing in through the front office and having received a Visitor's badge.

WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENTS

If you are moving out-of-county or to another school within the district, and are withdrawing your child from school, please notify the school a few days prior to the withdrawal date. This will provide ample time to complete necessary paperwork. **All textbooks and library books** must be returned to school **before** withdrawal. **Any money owed** for lost books, cafeteria, etc. should be paid at this time. Your cooperation is always greatly appreciated.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Walkers

Students walking to school may enter school grounds as early as 7:00 A.M., **but not before** as supervision at the school site does not begin until then. Students crossing Keeton Road should cross at the point where the school guard is posted. All students should obey the police and crossing guard at all times!

Students who ride bicycles to school must place them in the bike rack at the south side of the school and should insure their safety by placing locks on the bicycles while they are parked.

Bicycle registration forms are available in the front office. This form will be used if vandalism or theft should occur. **Students should walk their bicycles while on campus.** No skateboards will be allowed on school grounds.

Bus Students

All bus riders will be dismissed at the 1st bell (1:50 pm), all walkers and bike riders will dismiss at the 2nd bell (1:54 pm), and all car riders at the 3rd bell (1:58 pm).

Students who ride the bus must obey the rules posted in the bus. Failure to obey the bus rules or the driver could result in an accident. The principal or his designee may suspend any student transported to or from school at public expense from the privilege of riding the bus, giving notice in writing to the student, parent or guardian and to the superintendent within twenty-four (24) hours. If a pupil has been suspended from riding a school bus, it is still the parent's or guardian's responsibility to see that the student attends school regularly, unless he is suspended from both the bus and school in the same action. The principal's authority to suspend a student from bus transportation is Florida Statute 1006.09.

For questions concerning bussing, please contact the transportation office at 773-4754.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

The Hardee County School Board provides bus transportation as a service to the parents and students of Hardee County. The following rules help to maintain a safe transport. If a student fails to comply with the rules he/she may lose the opportunity to ride.

1. Stand off of the roadway in an orderly line while waiting for the bus.
2. You must remain in your seat at all times when the bus is moving.
3. Keep your arms and head inside of the window. (Do not throw objects in or out of the bus).
4. If you cross in front of the bus, walk 10 feet in front of the bus. Stop and wait for the signal before crossing the road.
5. Outside of ordinary conversation, classroom conduct is to be observed.
6. Absolute silence is required at all railroad crossings.
7. The driver is in full charge of the bus and pupils. The driver has the right to assign seats if necessary. Pupils **must** obey driver.
8. No eating, drinking, or use of any tobacco products will be allowed on the bus.
9. Pupils must be on time; the bus cannot wait for those who are tardy.
10. Respect the bus; do not write on or cut the seats.

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

Please notify the office no later than 1:00 PM if there is going to be a change in the transporting of your child. This notification must be in written form or by telephoning the school office. Please do not wait until the end of the school day to make changes in your child's transportation. This will help avoid confusion or mix-ups during this especially busy and important time of the school day. **If no appropriate notification is received before 1:00 PM your child will be expected to follow his/her regular method of getting home.**

RAINY DAY SCHEDULE

Parents should complete a Rainy Day Dismissal Form that will be included in their Beginning-of-the-year Packet. This form will provide direction to the classroom teacher for safe dismissal during inclement weather. Please make sure your child is aware of this plan.

DISTRICT ELEMENTARY ATTENDANCE POLICY

Florida Statute 1003.21 requires that all students between the ages of 6 and 16 attend school 180 days a year, unless properly excused. Parents are encouraged to set the goal of regular attendance as a top priority. Students must be present in order to learn.

Any student who has been absent from school must bring a note from a parent or guardian stating the cause of his absence. This note must be brought to the secretary at Hilltop Elementary within five days after an absence or it will be recorded as unexcused. . **Please be certain that your note includes the date, full name of your child and that it explains exactly why he/she was absent or tardy.** Excessive absences or tardiness without notification will be investigated. If a student is unable to participate in P.E., he/she must have a written excuse from a parent or guardian.

A doctor's note will be required for all absences over a total of 15.

Students with a minimum of 5 unexcused absences within a 90 calendar day period will be contacted by the Truancy Intervention Program to establish a parent conference to discuss the absenteeism. In the event of an extended absence of 15 days or more due to illness, the student should contact the office to make arrangements for instruction from a teacher in the child's home.

TYPES OF ABSENCE

Excused absences are days missed for personal illness, death of a member of the immediate family, special appointments or emergencies approved by the school and the parent or guardian. Absence for head lice will be excused the day the student is sent home and the following day only. Students will be responsible for making arrangements with teachers to make up work missed for excused absences.

Unexcused absences are days missed for activities that can be arranged on days other than school days. These include avoidable absences such as shopping or pleasure trips, vacations, and truancy. Absence for head lice will be unexcused after the second day of notification of lice.

Planned/non-emergency absences are days planned in advance and missed for personal reasons. The parent or guardian must submit a written request to the principal or assistant principal at least two days in advance of the absence. These will be excused if approved. The student will need to make arrangements with the teacher to complete the assignments that would be missed. These assignments will be given full credit if returned in the allotted time.

STUDENT INFORMATION FORM

During the first days of school or at the time of student registration an **Emergency Care Card** will need to be completed and notarized. Having this information returned promptly and correctly is of utmost importance. A record of this information is kept in the front office and the clinic in case you need to be contacted. Please make sure all telephone numbers and addresses are accurate and clearly written. Remember to put the name and telephone number of the contact person(s) in case you cannot be reached. **PLEASE NOTE THAT YOUR CHILD WILL NOT BE RELEASED TO ANY PERSON NOT ON THE EMERGENCY CARE CARD OR WHO YOU DO NOT VERBALLY GIVE PERMISSION.**

ILLNESS OR INJURY

If a student becomes ill or is injured at school, notification should be given to the teacher or the duty personnel who will make arrangements for the necessary care.

During such a time, our school nurse will administer first aid only and will make your child as comfortable as possible. In case of illness, our clinic personnel will attempt to contact the parent immediately, and the student will be cared for until the parent arrives or until he/she is returned to class. In case of major injuries, first aid will be administered and the parent will be immediately notified.

Please remember we cannot keep seriously ill children at school. Children referred to the clinic for noticeable health problems will be briefly checked and the parents notified of the condition prompting the referral. Responsibility for obtaining adequate treatment rests with the parent or legal guardian.

NOTE IF THE INFORMATION ON THE EMERGENCY CARD CHANGES AT ANY POINT DURING THE YEAR, PLEASE INFORM THE FRONT OFFICE IMMEDIATELY.

MEDICATION

In order to ensure student safety and health, the Hardee County School Board has established a policy for the administration of medications during school hours. If your child must be given medication of any kind during school hours, **including over-the-counter medications**, you have the following choices:

You, or someone chosen by you, may come to school and give the medication to your child. The medication must be in its original container with a pharmacy label noting the following:

- the name of the student for which the medicine was prescribed
- the dosage instructions including how much is to be taken
- the name of the doctor who prescribed the medication

Medication must be delivered personally by the parent/guardian to the School Health Team. *Students may not bring the medicine to school themselves.*

NOTE: If daily medication are to be dispensed at school, please contact the clinic personnel for directions and appropriate forms.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Any child suspected of having a communicable disease shall immediately be excluded from school and may not return to school until the disease has completely subsided and/or the child presents a written statement by a physician or the health department that he is free of communicable diseases and may return to school. If the child is to be out of school for an extended length of time, notify the guidance counselor so the child can receive services by our homebound teacher.

HEAD LICE

If a student is found to have head lice, he/she will be sent home or removed from the classroom. The child will not be permitted to return until his/her hair is free of lice and nits. If a student has nits only, he/she will be permitted to complete the school day. Before being readmitted to the classroom however, the student must be free of nits and/or lice. Nits are the white eggs lice lay which adhere to strands of hair.

HEALTH SCREENINGS

Florida Law 81-18 requires that parents or guardians be informed at the beginning of each school year that children in schools will receive non-invasive screenings during the year. Such screenings and examinations will be for vision, hearing, height, weight, head lice, etc. These screenings are visual checks for any health problems the child may have. Should we find any problems; parents will be notified at once. Invasive screenings, such as immunizations, tuberculin tests, etc. will always require prior written permission from parents or guardians before they are accomplished.

BREAKFAST and LUNCH

Breakfast at no charge to parents is served from 7:00-7:25 A.M., and children planning to eat breakfast should go directly to the cafeteria as soon as they arrive. Students arriving after 7:20 will not be permitted to eat breakfast.

Lunches are served between the hours of 10:45 A.M. and 12:30 P.M., depending upon the grade of your child. Lunches must be paid for in advance or on the day served. We strongly encourage parents to pay for lunches as far in advance as possible. Any credit remaining at the end of the year will be refunded to the parents. Students who have paid in advance will not be charged for lunches on days they are absent.

Children should be responsible for bringing and caring for lunch money. Lunch money should be placed in an envelope with the student's name, teacher's name and grade, and then deposited in either of the "Bank-O-Meal" boxes located by the cafeteria.

BREAKFAST and LUNCH – cont.

Parents should send no checks or large bills to school with their children to be split among several family members, for we keep no money on hand for change or for check cashing purposes. If checks are sent with children, please make out one check for each child for which you are paying.

Parents and guardians may apply for free or reduced lunches for their children. Only one form needs to be submitted per family. Forms are available in the school office.

CAFETERIA EXPECTATIONS

1. Raise your hand for help.
2. Keep hands and feet to yourself.
3. Use good table manners.
4. Talk quietly to the people at your table.
5. The quiet table is a silent place.
6. After tray has been emptied, return to your table and remain seated until dismissed.
7. Students should finish eating while at the dining table.
8. All food and waste products are to remain in the cafeteria.

NOTE:

- **Glass containers or carbonated drinks are not allowed in the cafeteria.**
- **Students who bring lunches from home may go directly to their assigned tables.**
- **Fast food lunches brought from outside the school should be put in a plain brown bag or lunch box.**

PARENT ORIENTATION

There will be an Open House within the first weeks of school. After a general meeting, you will be invited to your child's classroom. At this time the teacher will discuss classroom policies and procedures.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

A child's success in school is directly influenced by a parent's involvement in his/her education. Because of this belief, each teacher will contact the parents or guardians of the students in their class during the first weeks for a "get to know you" conference. We also encourage parents to meet regularly with their child's teacher to monitor progress and maintain an open line of communication. Conferences should be scheduled in advance so a convenient time for all involved can be established. Please protect instructional time. Uninterrupted instructional time is very important to your child's learning process. To schedule a conference, please call the school office (773-2750) and inform the secretary of your availability and a meeting time will be set or call the teacher's extension directly to leave a voice mail and the teacher will return your call at the earliest convenience.

STUDENT REPORTS

A Report Card will be sent to parents after the end of each nine-week grading period. Report cards will contain both academic and conduct grades, as well as their attendance record. The card should be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to the classroom teacher not later than three (3) days after it is issued. An explanation of the grading system is printed on the report card.

Parents will be sent a Progress Report at the mid-point of each grading period. If your child is not demonstrating satisfactory progress, please call and set up an appointment with his/her teacher as soon as possible. We, like you, want your child to be successful in school.

STUDENT CONDUCT GUIDE

Hilltop Elementary will adhere to the School Board adopted document entitled the HARDEE COUNTY SCHOOL'S STATEMENT OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT. Parents may have access to read, understand, and review this document so there is an understanding of what the child's rights and responsibilities are. This document is available upon request in the front office of Hilltop Elementary School.

DRESS CODE

We feel that students should take pride in their grooming and general appearance by selecting appropriate dress for school in order that they may develop the proper habits in becoming young ladies and gentlemen.

- The wearing of headbands, bandanas, halter, tank, or spaghetti-strap tops, and/or other distracting articles of clothing are not permitted by girls or boys.
- Garments which are sexually suggestive, vulgar or display drug related wording graphics, which provoke or may tend to provoke violence or disruption in the school shall not be worn.
- The tops of pants may not sag below the waistline and where belt loops are provided, a belt must be worn.
- The length of shorts should be in good taste for an educational setting.
- For the safety of students, all shoes **must** be secured to the foot by a strap or a heel, and students **may not** wear tennis shoes with rolling wheels (Heelys).
- No head coverings or sunglasses will be allowed inside the building. Hats will be allowed outside only.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

All parents and other interested persons are encouraged to join Hilltop Elementary first P.T.O. Membership materials will be sent home early in the school year. The PTO participates in and sponsors programs and activities to benefit students and faculty. Meetings are held at various times during the year.

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are a welcome part of our school community. There are many opportunities to contribute to the education of HES children both at home and at the school site. If you have an interest in tutoring, mentoring, or sharing your talent or career, please call the school office (773-2750). All Volunteers are required by school board policy to undergo a security check. We welcome your interest in contributing to the success of our students. You can make a difference in a child's life.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are planned by individual classroom teachers as enrichment to the educational program. Field trips must include instructionally based activities and be pre-approved by the principal. Permission slips **MUST BE SIGNED AND RETURNED** to school prior to each trip. Children who do not meet the deadlines for permission slips and/or money will not be eligible to go. In addition, students must demonstrate proper behavior and the ability to follow directions to be eligible to attend field trips.

NOTE: STUDENTS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ATTEND FIELD TRIPS WITHOUT A NOTARIZED EMERGENCY CARD ON FILE IN THE OFFICE.

VISITORS

Parents are encouraged to visit the school. We are, however, very concerned for the safety of our students and the preservation of instruction; therefore, we ask **all** visitors to sign in at the office and receive a visitor's badge **before** visiting any classroom. Visitors on campus without a pass will be escorted to the office to obtain a pass. **Classroom visitations should be pre-arranged with the teacher, and the office personnel will take messages for any incoming calls during instructional time.**

SAFETY DRILLS

Safety of students is a priority at Hilltop Elementary School. We will have a fire drill each month of the school year in order to prepare students and teachers for such emergencies.

Long buzzing sounds will indicate a fire drill. At the teacher's direction, students will move out of the building quickly and quietly. Students will line up in assigned areas and quietly return to their classrooms when the all-clear signal is given.

In addition to fire emergencies, students will be properly prepared and practiced in case of tornadoes or intruders. A crisis plan has been written and practiced in order to prepare faculty and students for emergencies.

LOST AND FOUND

Any article found by a student should be turned in to the office. These articles will be kept in the designated lost and found area and may be reclaimed by the owner at any time. Any article not reclaimed in a reasonable length of time will be discarded or donated. **All sweaters, coats, gloves, caps, etc. should be labeled with the child's name.** Remind your children not to bring valuables from home, since there is a possibility that it may be lost.

TELEPHONE USE

The telephone may be used by students with teacher permission, and only in the case of an emergency! No student will be able to make a long distance call from Hilltop Elementary School. Calls charged to a credit card or to a third party phone **must** be cleared through the Hilltop office or administrative personnel.

Students are permitted to have cell phones on school property but they will **not** be permitted to be turned on until after they have left the school grounds.

DOGS/PETS

Please do not allow your dog to follow you to school. Dogs found on the school grounds may be removed by animal control at the owner's expense. Efforts will be made to contact the dog's owner before officials are called (unless the dog has become a chronic problem or endangers the children).

TEXT AND LIBRARY BOOKS

Textbooks and library books are furnished free to students by the taxpayers of the State of Florida, and students are responsible for taking proper care of books issued or checked out to them. Books lost or damaged beyond use shall be paid for by the student's parents or guardian in accordance with Florida Statute 1006.42, according to the book's age and condition when issued.

Guidelines for the care of textbooks and library books are as follows:

1. The student's full name and school year shall be on the inside front cover of all textbooks written in ink.
2. Do not mark or underline in textbooks or library books.
3. Do not damage or allow damage to occur to textbooks or library books.

PICTURE RELEASE

There will be pictures taken throughout the year for our school's yearbook and web site. If you do **not** want your child's picture used, please let your wishes be known by contacting the front office.

LAW OFFICIALS

Release of Student to Law Enforcement Officials: Students may be released into the custody of law enforcement officials (police, sheriff, federal agent, Division of Youth Services, Social and Economic Services, etc.) only if (1) the officer has properly identified himself and (2) the officer has filled out the Release of Student to Law Enforcement Officials form.

STUDENT SEARCH

Locker and Personal Search: Lockers are the property of the School Board of Hardee County and are subject to search or inspection at any time by school personnel (Florida Statute 1006.09). The school personnel may also remove any of the contents which may be stolen, unauthorized, or illegal. Students may be searched if: (1) school officials have reason to believe that the health and safety of that student or any other student are in jeopardy, (2) the pupil is told of the reasons for the search, or (3) the student gives his consent to be searched. If the student refuses to be searched, he will be removed to an area away from the other students and law enforcement officials will be called to conduct the search.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are responsible for the proper care of school property. Students who purposefully destroy school property must pay restitution. Payment may be in cash or by serving community service on the school campus during or after school hours. After school transportation will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Accidental property damage will result in similar consequences as a purposeful act.

PARENTS' RIGHT TO KNOW

Local Educational Agencies (LEA's) are required to inform parents about the quality of a school's teacher. Parents can request information regarding their child's teacher, including, at a minimum: (1) whether the teacher has met the State requirements for licensure and certification for the grade levels and subject-matters in which the teacher provides instruction; (2) whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; (3) the college major and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree; and (4) whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

INTERNET ACCESS

General Guidelines for Computer Usage

The use of a network is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in disciplinary action by school officials. A student's activities while using the network in this school must be in support of their education and consistent with the educational objectives of the Hardee County District School Board. In addition, a student accessing the network from a school site is responsible for all online activities which take place while using the networked computer. When using another organization's network or computing resources on the Internet, the student must comply with the rules appropriate for that network.

Acceptable Uses of the Network

All activities which support learning and teaching in Hardee County Schools are encouraged to develop uses which meet their individual needs and which take advantage of the network's function: electronic conferences, bulletin boards, data bases and access to the Internet.

Examples of Unacceptable Uses of the Network

Using unauthorized chat rooms

Using electronic mail (e-mail) for anything other than educational purposes

Using impolite, abusive, or objectionable language

Using the network in ways that violate federal, state, or local laws

Activities which cause congestion of the network or otherwise interfere with the work of others

Using the network for commercial purposes or financial gain

Sending or receiving copyrighted materials without permission

Using the network for sending or retrieving obscene materials

Circumventing security and/or authentication measures

Unauthorized access to another's resources, programs, or data

Vandalizing network resources, including the uploading or creation of computer viruses

Installation of unauthorized software on the computer networks

Use of network resources to commit forgery, or to create a forged instrument

Any other infraction deemed inappropriate by school or county personnel

Public Information

Electronic communications should never be considered completely private. Hardee County School Board is subject to Florida Statutes regarding public information access. As such, all electronic messages are a matter of public record.

PROTECTION OF PUPIL'S RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), 20 U.S.C. 1232h, requires [School District] to notify you and obtain consent or allow you to opt your child out of participating in certain school activities. These activities include a student survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns one or more of the following eight areas ("protected information surveys"):

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or students' parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or students' family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

NOTE: The Hardee County School District works in partnership with the Department of Children and Families; therefore the Department of Children and Families has a right to speak to children without parental consent.

CHARACTER EDUCATION

A character education program will be on-going throughout the year. Its goal will be to assist your child in developing into a responsible, productive member of society. The following rules are important as well:

- **Leave toys, radios, CD players, I-Pods, stuffed animals, and carbonated drinks at home unless you have special permission from your teacher or the principal.**
- Games involving tackling will not be allowed.
- The use of profanity, name calling, or obscene gestures will not be tolerated.
- HES students are **NOT** allowed on the junior high campus before or after school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

During Physical Education, our students are expected to:

1. Practice good sportsmanship.
2. Practice safety
3. Remain in the designated area.
4. Follow the instructions of the coach.
5. Participate in all activities unless excused by physician or a note from home.
6. Wear shoes appropriate for physical activity.

MEDIA CENTER

The media center can be an exciting place, and we encourage children to use it. Students may also visit the library at times designated by their teacher. The following rules apply in the library:

1. Students must have their book processed through the media center circulation desk.
2. Books removed from the shelves should be replaced in the proper area.
3. Books checked out are due in one week.
4. Books destroyed or lost must be paid for by the child's parents or guardian in accordance with Florida Statute 1006.42.
5. All other appropriate school rules apply when using the library.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

No student shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any educational program or activity because of race, sex, national origin, handicap, marital status, or religion (Title IX).

POLICY AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT OR OTHER FORMS OF HARASSMENT PROHIBITED BY LAW

- A. The School Board desires to maintain an academic and work environment in which all employees, volunteers, and students are treated with respect and dignity. A vital element of this atmosphere is the Board's commitment to equal opportunities and the prohibition of discriminatory practices. The board's prohibition against discriminatory practices includes prohibitions against sexual harassment, or any other form of harassment based upon a person's membership in a protected class and specifically prohibited by applicable state or federal law. The School Board forbids sexual harassment, or any other form of illegal harassment, of any employee, student, volunteer or visitor. The Board will not tolerate sexual harassment, or any other form of illegal harassment by any of its employees, students, volunteers or agents.
- B. The prohibition against discrimination including sexual and other forms of illegal harassment shall also apply to non-employee volunteers who work subject to the control of school authorities, and to all vendors or service providers who have access to School Board facilities.

*For more information contact your school administration or Sherri Albritton, District Equity contact at 863-773-2600, ext. 204.

PROCEDURE FOR ADDRESSING STUDENT COMPLAINTS

Step 1: If a student, currently enrolled in the Hardee County District, has a complaint, based on an alleged discrimination of the basis of race, sex, national origin, marital status, or handicap, the student has the right to voice this complaint to the school principal.

Step 2: The student may appeal to the superintendent, or his/her designee, if not satisfied with the decision in Step 1. The superintendent, or his/her designee, will hear the complaint, investigate the facts, and render a decision as to the proper disposition of the complaint. This decision will be final unless the student wished to proceed to Step 3.

Step 3: The student may appeal to the School Board by requesting in writing that the superintendent place the appeal on the agenda for the next Board meeting. The Board, after hearing the facts, shall take whatever action is deemed appropriate. The decision of the Board is final.

STUDENTS' RECORDS MAINTAINED BY HARDEE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Student records are prepared in accordance with the requirements of the FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT OF 1974.

SPECIAL NOTE: RELEASE OF STUDENTS

Parents are urged not to request release of students during instructional time except for dental or medical appointments and emergencies. For the protection of children, early release of a child may be granted only at the school office where children are permitted to leave school only in the custody of a parent or an adult who submits verified authorization. Telephone calls to release students are discouraged. We cannot verify the validity of these requests

ASBESTOS HAZARD RESPONSE ACT (AHERA)

Hilltop Elementary has been inspected to determine the presence and location of all Asbestos-Containing-Building-Material (ACBM) and was found to be free of asbestos. If you have any questions concerning asbestos management in our school, please contact the district's Asbestos Management Planner, Barbara Spears at 773-9058.

COMPLAINTS CONCERNING SCHOOL PERSONNEL

The Hardee County Schools invite the constructive criticism of all parents and patrons of the district and the schools. Complaints and criticisms are most valuable when they represent the considered recommendations of public-spirited citizens and organizations who have studied all facts in the problem at hand. All significant complaints will be investigated.

Complaints regarding school personnel shall be referred to the Superintendent.

Complaints of a non-personnel nature should normally be directed to the principal of a school; however, in the event the complainant is not satisfied in a conference with school representatives (principal, teachers, or counselors), the problem should be referred to the office of the Superintendent. The Superintendent will be available if his presence is desired. If no solution is available which is satisfactory to the parents, they may seek a hearing before the School Board.