



# Thrasher Elementary School Handbook

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Thrasher's mission, through high expectations, is to develop children with active and creative minds, compassion for others, and the courage to act on their beliefs.

## School Philosophy

Education is the teaching and learning of academic and living skills which will enable individuals to function in a happy, self-enhancing manner as a positive member of society.

Education is best accomplished in an atmosphere of success, happiness, cleanliness, warmth, regular time schedules, and known adult figures. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in the total education process.

School of Excellence  
Blue Ribbon School  
Tennessee Reward School

## VISION OF THRASHER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

*At Thrasher, we are dedicated to the highest level of teaching and learning where...*

### Students:

- Are independently and collaboratively engaged in learning, creating, and problem-solving
- Think critically and analytically
- Effectively use technology as a tool for learning and communicating
- Lead their learning through personal and collaborative goal setting

### Teachers:

- Build on their own teaching strengths to create rigorous and meaningful learning experiences
- Effectively use technology as a tool for learning and communicating
- Communicate effectively in speaking and writing
- Share in Thrasher's leadership and decision-making
- Embody pedagogical skill, strong content knowledge, and a compelling nature

### School Leaders:

- Communicate clearly, regularly, and with transparency
- Create or support professional learning through ongoing, job-embedded, collaborative, and innovative practices
- Create and sustain a culture of professional dialogue and collaboration
- Use resources intentionally and equitably to further Thrasher's vision through academics, curriculum, technology, personnel, professional development, and infrastructure

### The Culture:

- Is centered on what is best for students
- Maintains high expectations for students, parents, faculty, staff, and administrators to contribute their very best
- Shapes mistakes into opportunities for new learning
- Welcomes open communication across the school and community
- Fosters joyful, confident, competent, creative, and compassionate people (students, faculty, parents, and administrators)



## NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of the Hamilton County Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, national origin, creed, age, or religion in any of the programs or practices in the school system. A complaint may be filed by anyone who has a grievance regarding discrimination as set forth in one of the following statutes: (1) The Rehabilitation Act of 1972, Section 504; (2) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; or (3) Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972. Dr. Marvin Lott is the Title VI and Title IX coordinator for Hamilton County Schools. He may be reached by calling (423) 209-8538.

### SCHOOL HOURS

6:00 am	Child Care Opens
7:45 am	Doors Open
8:00 am	Students report to rooms
3:00 pm	School Ends/Dismissal
6:00 pm	Child Care Closes

Car Riders must be picked up by 3:25 pm.

### CONTACT INFO

Office:	Teresa Bishop Amy Dunavin (P) 423.886.0882 (F) 423.886.0888
SACC:	(P) 423.443.0430
Bus:	(P) 423.498.7320
Principal:	Jeff Paulson
Assistant Principal:	Fannie Moore
Board Member:	Kathy Lennon

## DISMISSAL

Changes in a student's dismissal must be detailed in writing. For safety reasons, changes in dismissal cannot be granted over the phone.



**Walkers:** Students who are walking home will be dismissed as walkers. Please do not drop off or pick up students in the Faculty Parking lot or on side streets.

**Bicycle Riders:** Students in grades 3-5 may ride a bicycle to school. Helmets are required by TN Law. Bicycles must be walked within the school area. The school is not responsible for stolen or damaged bicycles.

**AM Car Riders:** Bring children to the back of the school. Doors open at 7:45 am. Safety Patrol students will help open and close doors. Please do not drop children off at the front doors.

**PM Car Riders:** Come to the back of the school. Dismissal begins at 3:10 pm. For the safety of all children, keep the crosswalk open; follow direction of the teacher on duty; do not drive away from the car rider area until the teacher on duty gives the all clear.

**Early Dismissal:** Any early dismissal should occur before 2:30 pm.

**Parking:** Parking is available in the side lot (connected to the back of the school) and in the front gravel lot. Signal Mountain Police will ticket cars parked on side streets. Please do not park, drop off students, or pick up students in the Faculty Parking Lot.



## BUS RULES

This is an abbreviated list from HCDE. The complete bus rules can be found at <http://www.hcde.org/>

Students should arrive 10 minutes prior to the scheduled arrival time of their bus.

Students shall stand a safe distance from the flow of traffic and wait until the bus door is open before moving toward the bus.

The use of abusive or obscene language is strictly forbidden at all times.

Students are not permitted to bring knives or sharp objects of any kind, firearms, or living animals on the bus.

Students shall not tamper with any of the safety devices.

Students shall not shout or make gestures toward anyone outside the bus.

Students shall not extend their hands, arms, head, or any other part of their body through the window.

Students shall not deface or litter the bus.

Food or drinks may not be consumed on the bus, and smoking is not permitted.

Students shall not ask the driver to let them off the bus at any other place except their regular stop.

Students who must cross the road or highway to enter the bus must wait until the bus comes to a complete stop and the driver has signaled them to cross in front of bus.

Students who must cross the road after leaving the bus shall go after the driver has signaled them to cross.

The driver has the authority to assign seats.

**Other BUS INFO: 423.498.7320**



## ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Thrasher follows the Hamilton County frameworks for Math and Literacy to help students learn grade level expectations as set by Tennessee State Standards.

Tennessee State Standards for all content areas can be found at: [tn.gov/education](http://tn.gov/education)

## HOMEWORK

Homework is *an extension of a learning experience which began at school or preparation for an upcoming learning experience.* We have found homework to be beneficial to student success. Parents are encouraged to provide satisfactory homework conditions, including work space, good lighting, and a regularly-scheduled study time. At times, students may need help with homework, and the one-on-one instructional coaching a parent can provide is extremely beneficial to students. As in the classroom, the instruction for intermediate students at home should be designed to help students become *more strategic* and *more independent* in the content.

We find a great deal of value in reading. All students should read or be read to daily.

- Homework in the intermediate grades should not exceed 60 minutes per day.
- Homework in grades 1 and 2 should not exceed 30 minutes per day.
- Homework in Kindergarten should not exceed 20 minutes per day.

Homework Hotline is available if a student has difficulty understanding how to correctly work or complete an assignment. The phone number is 209-7755. However, homework assignments are written on classroom boards and children are responsible for copying assignments before leaving each day.

## MAKE-UP WORK

No homework will be given ahead of time for unexcused absences. The teacher will provide the necessary make-up work when the child returns. If you call for work, please call before 2:00 and it will be placed on the lobby counter after 3:10. Students have five days to make up work for excused absences.

## LEARNING EXPEDITIONS

All learning expeditions are designed and implemented to further the students' understanding of Tennessee State Standards. Teachers will inform parents/guardians of date, time, place, cost, and purpose for each learning expedition. Parents/guardians must sign permission slips prior to each trip; children will not be allowed to leave the school grounds without a signed permission slip. Students that do not attend a learning expedition will have the opportunity to deepen their learning of the same standards at school.

Parents are sometimes needed to help supervise students on learning expeditions. When parents volunteer to chaperone a class, they are asked to not bring other children (student siblings, etc.) so that they can fully support the students in the learning.

NEW HCDE Policy: Parents cannot be listed as chaperones unless they have submitted and paid for a background check.

Payment for learning expeditions can be completed online at <http://osp.osmsinc.com/hamiltontn/>.

## CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring. If you would like a conference with your child's teacher at any time throughout the year, please contact the teacher in advance and schedule a time for a conversation.

## LIBRARY

The library program strives to reflect the philosophy of our school and enrich all parts of the educational programs. The program works toward offering each student experiences and instruction resulting in growth in library skills, reading, listening and viewing abilities and tastes. The library also works to be an inviting place where individuals may learn research and study skills with the guidance of a librarian or teacher. Each class has an assigned library time and every child is encouraged to select books that may be checked out for one week.

## THE DINING AREA / CAFETERIA

Students can add money (cash or check) to their lunch accounts before school starts each day. If a check is sent, please make it payable to Hamilton County School Food Service for the exact amount. The cafeteria staff is not allowed to give change. Have a student's name and teacher's name on each check.

Families can add money to student accounts online by using the student's ID#, which can be acquired by calling the front office. <https://www.mypaymentsplus.com/default.aspx>.



Students can use the money in their lunch account for purchasing a meal, an *a la cart* item, and/or ice cream. If you want the money in the account for lunch only, you will need to send the cafeteria a note stating that money can only be used for lunch. Include your child's name, grade, teacher and if you know it, their account number. If you use "My Payments Plus", you can set your child's account to allow certain purchases only. You can also monitor what they are purchasing.

Students may NOT purchase lunch items, snacks, or ice cream for friends!

Meal Prices:      Student Lunch -- \$3.00      Adult Lunch -- \$5.00

Do not combine lunch money with any other money. Money should be placed in an envelope labeled with student's name and intended purpose.

Extra milk can also be purchased with each carton costing \$.50. Parents may have lunch with their child, but please limit lunch visitors to no more than two.

Students are encouraged to use lunch time for quiet conversation with their friends as they:

- Line up for lunch
- Get all of the food items on the first trip through the food line
- Eat from their own tray or lunchbox
- Remain seated throughout the meal

Any student may buy ice cream if no more than ONE food item is left on his/ her tray and if there is time to eat it. All students must leave the cafeteria at the appointed time with their class. No food is to be taken from the cafeteria. Any student may leave any amount of food on the tray; however, in such a case ice cream may not be purchased.

#### **PARENTS, WHEN YOU COME TO HAVE LUNCH WITH YOUR CHILD, PLEASE:**

1. Let the teacher know you will be coming and if you will be purchasing lunch.
2. Sign in at the front office and get a visitor sticker.
3. Meet your child in the cafeteria.
4. Go through the lunch line with your child.
5. Pay for all food items selected -- including tea.
6. Be seated next to your child at their assigned table. You will find extra chairs against the back wall.
7. Encourage good manners, congenial behavior, and quiet conversation at the table.
8. Have your child ready to leave the table with the group.
9. Do not bring in fast food (McDonald's, Subway, etc.).

## SCHOOL-AGED CHILD CARE (SACC) -- BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Contact: 423.443.0430

To register for the School Age Child Care/Before and After School Program, you must be enrolled in a Hamilton County Department of Education School. Your child must have attended the first day of Kindergarten in order to register with the SACC Program. You must turn your registration form in to the Site Director where your child(ren) will be attending.

There is a \$10.00 registration fee per child due when you turn in your registration form unless you attended one of our SACC Summer Programs. We are not licensed to care for Pre-K Children.

Please visit the SACC web site <http://www.hcschools.org/sacc/>.

## STUDENT CONDUCT

We expect each student to exhibit acceptable and cooperative behavior in all phases of school life -- class, bathrooms, hallways, cafeteria, assembly programs, playground, on the bus, at bus stops, and on learning expeditions. Teachers are in charge at all times. Discipline for inappropriate behavior will be at the discretion of the staff. In addition to the adopted school-wide behavior expectations, additional grade level guidelines and procedures will be implemented as well.

**DISCIPLINARY MEASURES:** Students that behave in a way that is inappropriate, unsafe, or unkind will earn teacher-directed consequences or Disciplinary Referrals. Disciplinary Referrals are sent to the office and will be addressed by school administration.

The following result in an *automatic* Disciplinary Referral and administrative intervention:

- Foul language
- Fighting, hitting
- Disrespecting others (students and adults)
- Bullying
- Leaving the teacher's supervision without permission





## BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

### CLASSROOM

1. Each classroom will determine a set of classroom rules.
2. Each classroom will have rules posted.
3. Each teacher will ensure procedures are understood by all students.

### HALLWAY

1. Walk quietly in the hallways and on the stairs, staying to the right.
2. Keep hallways clean.

### BATHROOM

1. Use for intended purpose only.
2. Keep bathroom clean.
3. Be considerate of others.

### AUDITORIUM

1. Enter quietly.
2. Sit in assigned areas.
3. Follow directions the first time they are given.

### PLAYGROUND

1. Play safely.
2. Stay in designated area.
3. Follow directions the first time they are given.

### GENERAL

1. Leave all toys, electronics, and other items of similar nature at home. Please get permission from teacher before bringing Kindles, Nooks, or tablets to school.
2. Students will not use or possess tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, illegal or look alike drugs, or chewing gum while on school premises. Zero Tolerance policies are posted throughout the school property.
3. Any profane or obscene language and gestures are prohibited.

## DRESS CODE

The matter of school dress and grooming will be left to the discretion of the parents. Children are not to wear clothing promoting alcohol, cigarettes or violence. No tank tops or short shorts are appropriate. We trust parents' judgment and taste in what is appropriate for their children. Students are to wear tennis shoes every day, and no hats are to be worn in the building.

## CELEBRATION ARRANGEMENTS

Thrasher is focused on the learning, and our goal is to keep outside distractions to a minimum.

Birthday Celebrations:

- Please send invitations to the home of the students – do not distribute invitations at school. Private party invitations should not be given out at school.
- Birthday snacks (fruit, cupcakes, etc.) are not necessary, but if they are given, please bring at lunch. No food with inedible decorations. No cookie bouquets or balloons should be sent to children at school.
- No balloons, flowers, or hard candy are allowed for any kind of school party.

## SAFETY PLAN

The staff and students will practice safety, fire, and tornado drills. Should we have to evacuate the building for any reason, students will be led to the soccer field behind the school and/or the field behind SunTrust Bank.

## MEDICATION

Medication will not be dispensed to students. This includes, but is not limited to, aspirin, Tylenol, cough medicine and antibiotics. An exception is made when children require long-term prescription medication. Only in this case will the medication be administered by the principal or his/her designee in compliance with the following regulations:

1. A written permission form, signed by both parent and child's physician, is provided to the school and includes:
  - a. Child's name
  - b. Name of medication
  - c. Time to be administered
  - d. Dosage
  - e. Possible side effects
2. The permission form must be updated when there is a change in dosage or time of medication. A new permission form must be provided to the school at the beginning of each new school year.
3. Medication in the original prescription bottle must be brought to the elementary school office by a parent or guardian and refilled in like manner. No medication is to be brought to or from school by the elementary student.



4. The school system retains the right to reject requests for administering medication that are not in compliance with the above guidelines.

Sick children need to be at home. An early return to school generally aggravates the problem.

Children who have a temperature will be required to go home. Students will go to the nurse's office if they feel sick. The staff will make the decision if the parents need to be called.

## STUDENT ACCIDENTS AND ILLNESS

In case of accidents or illness, the school will follow these procedures:

1. Contact the student's parents or guardians. If unable to reach them, then:
2. Contact the person listed on the student's emergency card.
3. Notify the family physician. If he or she cannot be reached, then:
4. Call any local physician.

## LICE POLICY

- Children must be "bug-free" to be at school. If lice are found on a child, the child will be sent home for treatment.
- At each occurrence of lice, coats and personal items will be stored in backpacks, and backpacks will be separated.
- If a classroom has more than one occurrence of lice in a month, the classroom will be treated and items will be bagged for cleaning.

## VOLUNTEERS & VISITORS

### VOLUNTEER SIGN-IN

According to Tennessee Code Annotated 49-2-203-(b)(4), all visitors to the school should be directed to the front office obtain a visitors sticker immediately upon entering the building. Guests and volunteers will provide a government-issue ID and sign in electronically in the main office. All volunteers shall adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Sign in each time you come to school and sign out when leaving.
2. Wear your volunteer sticker.
3. Be on time as you are very important to the children and the teachers.
4. Notify your teacher or the school office as early as possible when you know you will be absent.
5. Respect the confidentiality of anything you learn at the school or in the classroom.
6. The school staff will assume the responsibility of contacting the volunteers if there should be a reason for cancellation of volunteers at a particular time (due to special projects.) If we are unable to contact you, we hope you will understand.
7. Discipline - leave the tough work to the teachers!
8. Exit routes and procedures for fire and tornado drills are posted in each classroom and you should familiarize yourself with them.

9. Younger siblings should not accompany volunteers during school hours.
10. Volunteers are an important part of the team. Please work toward a team relationship and environment which encourages understanding and cooperative effort. Be flexible and willing to learn and share ideas.

## SCHOOL VISITORS

All visitors, including parents, are to check in at the front office. This will avoid class interruptions. Do not move around the building from 8:10 to 3:10.

## SIBLING VISITS

It is helpful to avoid visits during the regular school day. These are frequently disruptive to students and to classes. Siblings are welcome to visit during special programs, plays, Open House, etc. Siblings should not attend for regular class activities, such as classroom parties or field trips.

## TECHNOLOGY

Signal Mountain schools participate in “Bring Your Own Device” (BYOD) for the Hamilton County school district.

Each 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade family will receive information related to the district’s BYOD policy, **including an agreement that must be completed prior to students bringing their own device to school.** The agreement will include responsibilities of the students and families who choose to participate along with expectations regarding appropriate use of the devices and consequences related to misuse of the BYOD privilege.

Per the HCDE BYOD agreement, personal devices, tablets and other reading devices (such as Nooks and Kindles) may be brought from home for student use. **Such devices will be used in direct instruction, project-based activities, independent reading, research, and skills practice.** Since teachers currently use iPads and we have many iPads in the building already (thanks to MEF and our PTA), all students will have access to the technology—whether or not families choose to participate in the BYOD initiative.

Please note that cell phones and iPods are not allowed or considered acceptable BYOD devices at the elementary level. If students have phones for after-school safety reasons, they must stay in the backpack and turned off during the day. This applies to all phones – wrist-mounted, phone watches, etc.

**Students in grades K – 3 must receive their teacher’s permission before bringing any device (including Nooks/Kindles, etc.) to school.**

## PREPARED FOR LEARNING

Everyone at Thrasher – including teachers, support staff, and administrators – is here to help children succeed and have the most choices in life. We strive to provide the best learning experiences available, to create a safe and happy environment, and to equip students to meet high expectations. Students and parents can support a happy, safe learning environment through the ideas in this handbook and regular communication with the school. Thank you, and we look forward to a powerful school year!

