

# Welcome to Hillcrest Elementary School!

**“Today is a great day to learn.”**

We are pleased to have your family join our community. Our primary goal at Hillcrest is to provide your child with a first-class education in a safe, caring, and friendly environment. We take great pride in the programs and procedures we have established that enable us to reach this goal. Our mission statement outlines the beliefs that we hold about our school:

***Our students will be contributing members of society and lifelong learners, pursuing their passions and interests in an ever-changing world.***

At Hillcrest we expect students and staff to be a **STAR**, that is to...

**Show respect,  
Think it through,  
Act responsibly and  
Reach for your best!**

We hope that this handbook answers many of the questions you may have about our school. You can also find more information at <http://www.lkstevens.wednet.edu/hillcrest>. Our website has a wealth of information!

If you have further questions you need answered or suggestions you would like to make, please feel free to call our office at 425-335-1545. You can also contact me by email at:

susan\_songstad@lkstevens.wednet.edu

We look forward to working with you and your child.

Sincerely,

Susan Songstad  
Principal

# GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT HILLCREST

## **Daily Schedule:**

Students attend school from 9:35 am – 3:50 pm on Monday through Thursday.  
Every Friday is an early release with students attending from 9:35 – 2:25 pm.  
Early Release Days: 9:35-1:20

**Delayed Start Time for Snow or Inclement Weather:** 11:35 – 3:50 pm

**It is very important to note our start and dismissal times. We are unable to provide supervision for your child beyond our normal school hours. We ask that students are dropped off no earlier than 9:25 am. If you plan to pick up your child, it is vital that you are here at dismissal or have an alternate person available to pick them up in the event that you have traffic delays coming from work. It is the parent's responsibility to make these arrangements.**

## **Hillcrest has 2 Offices**

### **Hillcrest Main Campus houses K/1st/4th/5th grade students:**

If your student is in the main office, please call **425-335-1545** for attendance, early release, or questions related to your teacher. You may also drop off lunch and/or items for your student at this office.

### **Hillcrest West Campus houses 2nd/3rd grade students:**

If your student is in the West Campus, please call **425-335-1563** for attendance, early release, or questions related to your teacher. You may also drop off lunch and/or items for your student at this office.

## **Attendance**

Every day is a great day to learn at Hillcrest and your child's attendance is extremely important to us. In order to assure the best progress for your child, it is important that your student arrives at school on time each and every day. Regular attendance and arriving at school on time are the first steps in ensuring that your child has a successful learning experience. All students should be in their classroom at 9:35 when school starts. **Students arriving after 9:35 are marked absent**, unless they have checked in at the front office and received a tardy pass. It is disruptive to the learning environment of the class when students arrive late to class. Please help ensure that your child arrives on time and ready to learn. You will receive an email or text on each day that your child is tardy or absent.

**The school day is divided into 2 sections for attendance purposes – one AM and one PM.** The AM section is from 9:35 – 12:30. The PM section is from 12:30 – 3:50. If your child is absent more than 1 ½ hours of either section, they will be marked absent for that section.

Attendance letters will be sent home for students who accumulate excessive tardies, absences, or early releases. Please remember that 3 tardies equal 1 absence.

In the event that your child is experiencing any signs of illness (fever greater than 100.4, cough, chills, loss of taste or smell, congestion, runny nose, diarrhea, headache, sore throat, body aches) please keep them home and call our **attendance line at 425-335-1569** before 9am. You may be directed to the nurse for further evaluation and to discuss when your student may return to school. If your student has an injury and needs to have accommodations provided please either email a healthcare provider letter to [erica\\_hall@lkstevens.wednet.edu](mailto:erica_hall@lkstevens.wednet.edu) or bring one to the front office.

### **Early Dismissal for Students**

If you need to have your child dismissed early, **please send a note** (the day of) indicating what time you will be picking them up. All students must be signed out and picked up through the office. Your child will be called from class when you arrive to pick them up. **We ask that you make every effort not to pick students up early from school.** Our teachers work hard to use every minute of class time as an opportunity for students to learn and we want your child to be included in all learning.

All early dismissals must occur before 3:30.

## **School Communication**

### **Parent-Teacher Communication**

Good communication between school and home is essential for the success of our students. We encourage you to contact your child's teacher whenever you have questions or concerns about school.

You may call the office (425-335-1545) to talk with your child's teacher or to leave a message for them. You may be transferred to their voicemail at any time during the day. We also encourage you to email your teacher with questions or concerns (email addresses are located on our website). Every staff member has an email address as follows: first [name\\_lastname@lkstevens.wednet.edu](mailto:firstname_lastname@lkstevens.wednet.edu). Our school will send out frequent messages to parents through email and/or text messages to the email/phone numbers you provided at registration.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for all students after the first semester. Information about conference dates, schedules, and dismissal times will be sent home as conference time approaches. Students will be released early (1:20 p.m.) during conference week.

### **Report Cards**

Report cards are another method of communicating your child's progress at school. Our teachers use a variety of assessments on a semester schedule. Our semesters end in January and June. Report cards will be sent home approximately one-two week after the end of the first semester and again on the last day of school. Parents may also access these through their child's Skyward account.

# Curriculum & Special Programs

## Curriculum

Our district has developed a special guide for parents that outlines the elementary curriculum for each grade level. Parents can review our curriculum guide by going to our school district website at [www.lkstevens.wednet.edu](http://www.lkstevens.wednet.edu).

## Special Programs

It is our belief that all students can be successful at Hillcrest. Our goal is to meet the learning style of each student within the regular instructional program. We also provide special programs such as **Highly Capable, LAP, Special Education, and English Language Learners**. It is sometimes necessary to change a student's schedule to enable them to be more successful in their learning. We will notify you if your child is eligible for these programs or if we anticipate a program change. If you have concerns about your child's progress, please start by contacting his/her classroom teacher.

## Counseling Program

Our full-time counselor provides a variety of special programs to help meet the needs of our students. These include class presentations, small support groups, Hawk Heroes, and individual conferences. Please feel free to contact our counselor Kara Forston @ 425-33-1674 or email her [Kara\\_forston@lkstevens.wednet.edu](mailto:Kara_forston@lkstevens.wednet.edu).

# Student Health & Safety

## Health Concerns

**Students with life threatening conditions *must* have a Care Plan, healthcare provider orders, and medication if necessary before attending school each year.** Care Plans will be needed for students with anaphylactic allergic reactions, asthma, cardiac disorders, diabetes, seizure disorders. These are separate from the Medication Authorization form, but are also good for the current school year only and must be updated yearly by your child's MD. Plan on seeing your doctor in the summer prior to each school year. Parents can obtain these forms from our nurse or directly from our website [health care forms](#). Please plan on making an appointment with the nurse **prior** to the start of school to ensure that we are safely taking care of your child's life threatening condition. If you have any concerns about your child's health that relate to school, please feel free to call our school nurse at 425-335-1673 or email her at: [Erica\\_Hall@lkstevens.wednet.edu](mailto:Erica_Hall@lkstevens.wednet.edu).

## Medication

If your child needs medication during school hours, the medication is to be accompanied by a [Medication Administration Form](#) signed by the parent and doctor indicating the name and dosage of the medication and times it is to be administered. *This authorization must accompany prescription medication and over the counter medication such as Tylenol or cough drops. Medication sent to school with students without healthcare provider orders will be confiscated and returned to guardians.*

**All medication will be kept in the health room.** Prescription medications must have the prescription label and original box on the bottle/inhaler/EpiPens. All other over-the-counter medications must be labeled with students first and last name and child's current teacher. **The parent and doctor must complete a Medication Authorization form before any medication may be administered or taken at school.** Parents must transport

all medicine to school and check in medications with a health room staff member. Students may not carry any medication to or from school. Medical Authorization forms are good for the current school year only. Students with ongoing medications will need an updated Medical Authorization form each year. Please plan on updating this yearly with your MD before the new school year.

### **When should I keep my child home due to illness?**

If your student is experiencing any of the following symptoms please keep your student home for the day and call our attendance line at **425-335-1569**. You may be directed to the nurse for further evaluation.

- Fever greater than 100.4
- Chills
- Cough
- Loss of taste or smell
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Body aches
- Sore throat
- Congestion
- Runny nose
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

### **What if they feel worse at school?**

It's not unusual for students to feel better in the morning and then worse as the day goes along. The school is not equipped for prolonged care of your sick child, please make sure you have up to date emergency contacts on file.

### **When do I need to pick up my child who is ill at school?**

We require that you or an emergency contact person pick up your sick child *within the hour* that you are called. It is important for the school to have a list of local emergency contacts that are available for your child in the event that we are not able to reach you. Please notify the school if there are any changes to your contact or if your information changes.

## **Emergency Information**

**It is very important that the school is kept updated with your students' current guardian contact information - cell/telephone numbers, address and emergency contact information.** This information is accessible in our Skyward system (by both parent and school) and will remain the same until we are contacted by you. We ask that you keep us informed whenever there are changes to this information. You can either send a note and/or phone call Hillcrest with the correct new information. If your address has changed, please bring a proof of address (utility bill, lease agreement, etc.) to the front office so that we can change your address.

**People listed for Emergency Release in Skyward:** The only time that we will release a student without your knowledge to someone that you have listed on your Emergency Contact form is in the event that we are unable to contact you when your child is ill, has had an accident, or there is no one to pick them up at the end of the

day. If a civil emergency were to occur while school is in session, we may also release your child to someone you have noted on the emergency release. **If you are scheduling someone to pick up your child when they are not ill or injured, please be sure to send a note or call the office (on the day of) before the time that they will be picked up.** Identification may be required for anyone picking up your student in the event that our office personnel are not familiar with you or the person designated to pick up your student.

If a student is injured at school, the school nurse or trained staff member will give him/her basic first aid. A parent/guardian will be notified immediately when a student has a serious injury or illness. If a parent cannot be reached, we will begin to call your emergency contacts. In serious situations, we will call 911 and then notify the family. Whenever a child has a head bump, we make every effort to contact you with the numbers we have available, as well as send home a Head Bump Form with your child. If we are unable to reach you via phone, we will leave a message regarding the head bump incident.

### **Emergency Drills**

Our district has developed an **Emergency Response Plan** for use when the school is confronted with a natural disaster or emergency. We conduct regular drills for the procedures we would take in the case of fire, earthquake, intruder/lockdown, or bus incident.

### **Drug-Free Campus**

Hillcrest Elementary and the Lake Stevens School District strive to make school a safe place for all our students. The unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs or alcohol on school grounds is strictly prohibited. The unlawful use of alcohol and illegal drugs is seriously harmful to the health and education of children. All students must comply with this rule or face corrective actions including, but not limited to, short or long-term suspension or expulsion.

The school can assist in arranging access to drug and alcohol counseling, treatment, rehabilitation and re-entry programs. If you have any questions or would like assistance please contact the school counselor or Steve Burleigh, principal.

### **Weapons on Campus**

It is against the law to bring any object to school that is considered a weapon. Weapons can include knives, firearms (including BB or pellet guns), throwing stars, clubs, fist packs, metal knuckles, sling shots, etc. If a student brings a weapon to school or uses any object as a weapon to create harm or threat towards another person, they may be suspended or expelled from Hillcrest. *Law enforcement agencies must be notified and involved in every instance of weapons on school property.*

## **Transportation**

**How to define your child's "normal daily routine" for transportation:** Your child's normal daily routine will be how they are transported to and from school on 3 or more days a week. Any day that your child will not be following their normal daily routine, we ask that you call the office before 2:30 pm or send a note to school on the day of change. If we do not receive a phone call or a note from you by 2:30 pm, your child will be directed to follow their normal routine.

**Guidelines for picking up or dropping off your child:** All students must have an adult sign them in or out after the school day has begun. If your child does not normally get picked up from school, we require parents to send a note in the morning with their student or call the office by **2:30 pm**. Parent pickup notices will then be delivered to classrooms by 3:00 pm daily.

**Students who get picked up during the school day:** If your student is being picked up during the school day, the office will call for the student when you arrive. Please have your identification available, in the event that our office staff may be unfamiliar with you. If someone other than the parent will be picking up your student, parents must send a note or call the office *prior* to them being picked up. In the interest of safety, please do not drive into the bus lane.

### **Transportation procedures during start and dismissal times:**

If you will be picking up your child at start and dismissal times, please follow school procedures and always remain patient. When everyone works together and does their part, the whole process is safely completed in about only 15 minutes. If you need instruction for our procedure, please ask our front office how the traffic should flow.

**Bus Expectations:** Your child's safety is the top priority for our bus drivers. It is expected that students will act in a safe and appropriate manner when riding the bus. The bus drivers will review the bus rules at the beginning of the school year and periodically during the year. Bus privileges will be suspended if students are unsafe to themselves or others. Parents are encouraged to supervise their children at the bus stop both before and after school. This will ensure your child's safety in arriving at school in the morning and home in the afternoon.

It is our policy that students who normally ride the bus will not be allowed to walk home unless we have written permission from you. If the student does not have a signed note from home, they will be directed to ride their regular bus.

#### **Bicycles**

The roads surrounding our school are very busy, especially at the start and end of the school day. Students must have prior permission by providing the main office with a signed note from their parent. There is a bike rack available for students to bring a lock and secure their bicycle. Lake Stevens School District is not liable for any theft or damage to your personal equipment. Please remind students that they will need to walk their bikes across the crosswalk upon entering school property and continue walking them to the back of the school where they are stored during the day.

#### **School Closures Due to Weather**

In the case of severe or hazardous weather conditions, visit our school district website at [www.lkstevens.wednet.edu](http://www.lkstevens.wednet.edu) for regular updates or stay tuned to our local news/radio stations for information regarding school closure or late-start times. Oftentimes, our district will also send out emails notifying guardians of the delay or change to the normal school day.

#### **Snow Routes**

It is sometimes necessary to change the bus routes due to inclement weather. Please check our website at [www.lkstevens.wednet.edu](http://www.lkstevens.wednet.edu) to find out if there are transportation changes or listen to your local radio/tv station for information regarding alternate bus routes, limited transportation or late start/early release times. Also,

please pay attention to our snow routes, located on our website. Snow routes are implemented any time that the district calls a late start due to snow/weather conditions. Please remember that the snow routes are implemented for the day, regardless of whether the weather improves during the day or not. This may mean that you need to transport your child or take them to a bus stop that is much farther away than their regular stop, both to and from school on any day that we have a delayed start. If you are unable to transport due to snow/weather, your child will be excused from school for the day. Be sure to call the front office to notify them that you will be keeping your student home.

## **Homework**

Homework is a part of your child's learning experience because it allows them to practice important skills and to develop good study habits. The length of time your child spends on homework varies with each grade level. Generally speaking, first graders can be expected to spend about 10 minutes per night, second graders from 10-20 minutes, third graders 20-30 minutes, and fourth and fifth graders, 30 minutes to an hour. Each teacher sets the guidelines for homework in their classroom. One of the most important things that we ask you to do with your child is to spend time reading with them each day. It is also helpful to practice math facts and enjoy fun games that encourage your child to develop their math skills. Your support and encouragement with your child's homework is appreciated.

## **Student Conduct and Discipline**

Hillcrest Elementary prides itself on being a nurturing and safe environment for children. School-wide limits for appropriate student behavior are taught during the first week of school and throughout the school year. These expectations are clearly stated, fairly implemented, and reflect the rights and responsibilities of all students. Simply stated, our expectations are that each student will strive to be a **STAR**, that is they will **Show** respect for themselves and others, **Think** through the choices they are making, **Act** responsibly, and **Reach** for their best at all times.

**Show respect,  
Think it through,  
Act responsibly and  
Reach for your best!**

We believe that classrooms work best when students manage their own behavior with responsibility and respect for one another. Each classroom teacher will provide parents and students with information about classroom expectations throughout the year.

A record is kept of all major discipline infractions and the actions taken to resolve them. Whenever possible, we attempt to apply a natural consequence to infractions of the rules. We respond to each discipline incident as an opportunity for learning. Our discipline procedures are in compliance with Lake Stevens School District's Discipline Policy. A copy of this policy is available upon request. Parents are notified whenever a major discipline incident occurs or if there is a pattern of repeated minor incidents. You may view all recorded discipline infractions on your child's Skyward account under "Discipline."

## Miscellaneous

### Birthdays and Party Invitations

Birthdays are special days for students and we make every effort to announce each student's birthday during our morning announcements. We announce all summer birthdays during the month of June. We do not allow birthday treats to be shared in the classrooms due to health concerns.

We ask that flowers and balloons are NOT delivered to the school for students. We realize that this is a nice way to recognize your child on their special day; however, these beautiful flowers and balloons cause disruption to our classrooms, may interfere with the learning process, and can cause allergic reactions to some students. For safety reasons, these items are also unable to be transported home on our school busses. It is our policy that party invitations need to be distributed by a parent before or after school.

### Hillcrest PTA

Hillcrest PTA is a very active organization that provides many exciting events and programs for our students and their families. We would love to have you join us! Details about membership are sent home at the beginning of each year or you may join at any time during the school year. You may contact our PTA @ [www.hillcresthawks.my-pta.org](http://www.hillcresthawks.my-pta.org).

We have a fantastic PTA!

### Items For Sale

We ask that students not bring items to sell to other Hillcrest students. The sale of items needs to be done off campus.

### Lost & Found

Please be sure to ***mark all of your child's clothing and other belongings*** (such as lunch boxes, backpacks, coats) with their first and last name. **Lost and Found** is located in the primary hallway. It is a good idea to check there when you are visiting the school - there are always many items waiting to be claimed. **Items that are not claimed are donated to local charities on the last attendance day of October, December, March, and June.**

### Personal Items

As a general rule, personal items such as toys, electronic games, card collections, radios/CD players, etc. may **NOT** be brought to school. Unauthorized items will be collected by staff members and will require a parent/guardian to pick them up from the Hillcrest office. If your child needs a cell phone for security reasons, they may carry one that is turned off during school hours in their backpack. If the student turns on or uses their cell phone during the day it will be confiscated by a staff member and brought to the office where a guardian will need to come to pick up the phone. *We suggest that students not bring valuable personal items to school as we are not responsible for lost or damaged personal items brought to school.*

### **School Breakfast, Lunch & Snacks**

Breakfast and lunch are free for all students this school year.

If your child brings lunch from home, please remember that glass containers are prohibited. You may pay for your child's lunches ahead of time by either sending a check to Hillcrest or paying online by going to [www.MyMealTime.com](http://www.MyMealTime.com) and creating a parent account. You will need to know your child's student number and may call our Lunch Registrar (Joy) at 425-335-1500 x2032 if you need that information.

### **School Supplies**

A list of school supplies that your child needs is sent home before the start of the school year and is also posted on our website [www.lkstevens.wednet.edu/hillcrest](http://www.lkstevens.wednet.edu/hillcrest).

### **Student Dress**

Student dress is the responsibility of the student and parent. At Hillcrest, it is expected that students wear clothing that is appropriate for our weather (indoor recess is called only in **extreme** weather conditions), and also in consideration of the wide range of activities we have in a day. Due to the unpredictable nature of our weather, students should bring a coat to school every day.

**Clothing with profanity**, suggestive comments/designs, and advertisements for alcohol, tobacco or drugs is **not** acceptable. **Shorts** may be worn only if the shorts are no higher than the fingertips when arms are held at the student's side. **Halters, "spaghetti" straps, tank tops, and clothing that expose the torso** are **not** considered appropriate, as they are a distraction to the educational process. T-shirts under spaghetti strap tank tops are okay. **Hats/Hoods** may be worn to and from school, and on the playground at recess time. Students are not permitted to wear hats or hoods in the common areas of the school. Teachers use their discretion in their classrooms. We also ask that students refrain from wearing makeup to school as it is a distraction learning process.

## **Visiting and Volunteering - Currently, we are not able to have volunteers in the building. We hope to have them very soon!**

We welcome and invite you to visit and/or volunteer at Hillcrest. However, to ensure the safety of our students and to avoid disrupting the learning environment, we ask that you make **prior** arrangements with the teacher before visiting a class. All Volunteers must have a Washington State Background check clearance before volunteering or supervising students. You may pick up a Volunteer Packet from your teacher or the front office. When turning in your Background Check, please be prepared to show your Washington Driver's License, Washington Identification card or Military Identification card. One of these will be required to process the background check. Background checks will need to be renewed every 2 years. Please keep in mind that it takes approximately 1 week for them to be cleared with our district.

**All visitors/volunteers to Hillcrest must sign in/out at the office and wear a Visitor's Badge at all times.**