

Hopatcong Middle School

Main Office 973-398-8804
Attendance Office 973-770-8877
Nurse's Office 973-770-8874

Student/Parent Handbook 2022 - 2023

Lewis Benfatti
Principal

Melissa Kennedy
Coordinator of Student Support

HOPATCONG MIDDLE SCHOOL CALENDAR - 2022-2023		
August	29	Open House Grade 5 (9:30-10:30 letters A-M / 11:00-12:00 letters N-Z)
	29	Open House Grade 4 (9:30-10:30 letters A-M / 11:00-12:00 letters N-Z)
	30	Open House Grade 6/7 (9:30-11:30 letters A-Z)
September	1 & 2	Teacher In Service
	5	District Closed- Labor Day
	6	First Day of School for Students
	21	Back To School Night- Grades 4 and 5
	22	Grades 4/5 School Pictures
	22	Back To School Night- Grades 6 and 7
	25- 30	Start Strong Testing
	30	Grades 6/7 School Pictures
October	6	First Marking Period Progress Reports
	10	School Closed/Teacher In Service/Columbus Day
	11-13	Grades 4 – 7 Student Early Dismissal /Afternoon Parent Conferences
	13	Grades 4 – 7 Student Early Dismissal/Afternoon & Evening Parent Conferences
		Violence Awareness Week
	23-31	Red Ribbon Week
November	9	First Marking Period Ends
	10 & 11	School Closed - NJEA Convention
	17	Picture Retakes Grades 4-7
	23	Student Early Dismissal
	24 & 25	School Closed – Thanksgiving Recess
December	12	Second Marking Period Progress Reports
	19	Winter Holiday Concert High School
	23	Student Early Dismissal
	26-30	Holiday Recess – Schools Closed
January	2	New Year's Day Observed
	3	Schools Reopen
	16	School Closed – Teacher In Service
	25	Marking Period 2 Ends
February	20	School Closed – President's Day
	27	Third Marking Period Progress Reports
March	9	Spring Photos Grades 4-7
	7 - 9	Student Early Dismissal - Spring Conferences (As Needed)
	31	Marking Period 3 Ends
April	6	Student Early Dismissal
	7	Spring Recess - District Closed
	10-14	Spring Recess – School Closed
May	TBD	NJSLA ELA & Math Grade 4-7
	TBD	NJSLA Science Grade 5 Window Begins
	3	Fourth Marking Period Progress Reports
	18	Spring Concert at High School
	TBD	NJSLA ELA and Math Testing Window Ends
	29	School Closed – Memorial Day
	30	Grades 4 Field Day / HHS field
	31	Rain Date - Grade 4 Field Day
June	2	Grades 5 and 6 Field Day / HHS field
	5	Rain Date – Grades 5 and 6 Field Day
	*	NJSLA Science Grade 5 Testing Window Ends
	8	Grade 7 Advancement/HS Auditorium 6 pm
	9	Grade 7 Field Day / HHS field
	16	Student Early Dismissal / Last Day For Students/ Fourth Marking Period Ends Grades Posted PS

ATTENDANCE & ABSENCES

Regular attendance is expected of all our students. Excessive absences from school may result in academic subject failure. Every effort should be made to maintain the best possible attendance.

Whenever a student is absent from school, parents should phone the **ATTENDANCE OFFICE** at **(973)770-8877** before 7:45 a.m. on the day of the absence. Students must bring a written note from their parents the day they return. This note should include the student's full name, date(s) of the absence, reason, and parent's signature. When a doctor requires that your child remain home from school, please obtain a doctor's note. The above note must be submitted to the attendance office.

This attendance procedure is in accordance with State Law (NJAC6:20-1.3, NJJA-18A:38-25 et. Seq), State Department of Education recommendations, and Board of Education Policy/Regulation (#5200). It is designed to guarantee the maximum educational opportunity for all students.

1. Attendance will be taken/recorded on a daily basis and all parent/school contacts regarding attendance will be recorded accordingly.
2. Parents of absent students will be called if a phone call has not been received by 8:30 a.m.
3. Parents will receive written notification of a possible attendance problem.
4. When applicable, a meeting will be scheduled between the school (Administration, Guidance, etc.) and the parent.
5. Continued failure to improve negative attendance patterns will result in the formal filing of charges in Municipal Court by the attendance officer.

BICYCLES

Students in Grades 4 and 5 are not permitted to ride bicycles to school for safety reasons. Bicycle helmets must be worn at all times. If your child is in need of a helmet, please contact your child's School Counselor. Thank you for your cooperation.

BUS REGULATIONS

Students who are assigned a bus to and from school must ride that bus. If you wish your child to walk home, we ask that you put this request in writing. Bus students are to go immediately to the buses as soon as they are dismissed from school and walkers are to report to the gym.

Listed below are the bus procedures and regulations for the Hopatcong Middle School:

1. Only scheduled bus students are permitted to ride the bus.
2. Be at your bus stop five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive.
3. The administration/bus driver will assign seats. The administration or the bus driver can only authorize any changes.
4. No standing or moving about the bus while the bus is in motion.
5. Students may not have their hands, arms, heads, etc., out of the window and they must remain seated at all times.
6. No throwing of any objects either in or out of the bus.
7. Foul or abusive language is not permitted.
8. **Eating or drinking on the bus is not permitted..**
9. Any garbage (papers, etc.) must be placed in the trash receptacle.
10. Vandalism or tampering with any bus equipment is strictly prohibited. Liability rests with your parent(s) if you are found to be responsible for any damage.
11. Snowball throwing is grounds for bus suspension, in addition to any other school consequences.
12. Loud and boisterous behavior is not permitted.
13. Fighting is strictly prohibited.
14. Always obey the requests of the bus driver. ***(RIDING THE SCHOOL BUS IS A PRIVILEGE. IMPROPER CONDUCT ON THE BUS MAY RESULT IN THAT PRIVILEGE BEING DENIED.)***

CAFETERIA BEHAVIOR

While in the cafeteria students are expected to:

1. Follow the directions of the teachers and cafeteria staff.
2. Remain seated except to buy food or throw away garbage.
3. Use good table manners and clean up the table and floor area before leaving.
4. Obtain a pass from a teacher and sign out before going to the lavatory, office or nurse.

DELAYED OPENINGS

Middle School will begin classes at 9:55 a.m., with drop off supervision at 9:45 a.m. on a delayed opening day. We dismiss at the regular time (2:25 p.m.) Lunch will be served, but no recess for Grades 4/5 will take place on a delayed opening day.

DETENTION POLICY

***Refer to Code of Conduct**

The classroom teacher may find it necessary to issue a teacher detention to students who exhibit inappropriate behavior or who fail to meet class requirements. The following procedures will generally be initiated when a detention is assigned.

1. Students and their parents will be given at least one day's notice.
2. Students should return the signed detention slip to the teacher to indicate that his/her parent is aware of the detention.
3. Students are reminded that detentions are at the convenience of the teacher and not the student. It is, therefore, your responsibility to be sure you report to your teacher on the day of your detention. Students who do not report to teacher assigned detentions will be referred to the administration.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

Sometimes it is necessary for school to be closed because of snow or some other emergency condition. You will be alerted through our automated telephone system of school closings.

You may also check our website: www.hopatcongschools.org/ms/

In the event it becomes necessary to close school once the students have arrived, we will attempt to make contact with each parent via telephone using the Blackboard Connect using telephone numbers you supply. You can help us further protect your child in two ways:

1. Keep us informed of any change in home, work or cell phone numbers.
2. Be sure your child knows of a neighbor or a friend's house that he/she can go to should he/she not find you at home.

FIRE DRILLS AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Emergency evacuation drills are designed to provide an orderly and safe mass exit of people from the building. In order to facilitate a rapid exit during fire drills and other emergencies, it is imperative that students adhere to the following regulations:

1. Listen to the directions given. **TALKING IS NOT PERMITTED.**
2. Move into the corridor in single file. Walk rapidly but do not run.
3. Leave the building through the nearest exit.
4. Once your class is outside the building you must stay together at a distance of approximately fifty feet from the building.
5. Keep in mind that there may be emergencies, which may cause blocking of some of our normal exits. In this case, the rule of following instructions from your teacher and evacuating to the nearest exit should be applied.
6. In all fire drills, activities in progress outside the building should be immediately terminated and students should assemble in class groups.
7. Do not re-enter the building until directed to do so.
8. Re-entry into the building must be quiet and orderly.

GRADING POLICY

Alpha/Numeric Grades will be used for all courses in Grades 4-7.

<u>NUMERICAL EQUIVALENT GRADES 4-7</u>	<u>GRADE</u>
98-100	A+
94-97	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
68-69	D+
65-67	D
0-64	F

In Grades 4-7, the final mark for the year is obtained by averaging the letter grades of all the marking periods: MP1, MP2, MP3, MP4 are 25% of the final grade.

(Grades 4-7 will continue the alpha grade (F) being worth a minimum of 50 to a maximum of 64 for marking period 1.)

HONOR ROLL

Middle School recognizes student performance with both a High Honor Roll and an Honor Roll.

High Honor Roll = All A's in every subject area.

Honor Roll = Combination of A's and B's in all subject areas.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

The Board of Education's Policy # 5410 and # 5411 regarding promotion and retention are available for your review on the district's website at www.hopatcongschools.org.

SUMMER SCHOOL

(Please refer to Board of Education Policy / Regulations 5410)

Students in Grades 4 - 7 who fail core academic courses (English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies) for the school year will be required to attend Hopatcong Middle School Summer School and pass the course(s) that were not passed in order to be promoted to the next grade. Students who fail multiple core courses will be reviewed for retention.

- ***Parents are responsible for transportation to and from summer school, as well as tuition/materials costs.***

GUIDANCE

The purpose of the guidance program is to help each individual student achieve his/her highest potential academically, emotionally and socially. We try to do this in several ways:

1. The counselors will help a new student adjust to the school.
2. Individual conferences will be scheduled whenever a student, a teacher, or the counselor deems it necessary.
3. Schedule and academic problems/questions are to be referred to the counselor if the teacher is not available or unable to help.
4. The counselors welcome the opportunity to talk with any student, parent or teacher.

HALLWAY BEHAVIOR

While in the hallways students are expected to:

1. Keep to the right and refrain from running.
2. Keep moving and not congregate during passing time.
3. Respect the space and property of others and adhere to social distancing requirements as put forth by the classroom teacher.
4. Display courteous, orderly behavior (public displays of affection are not permitted).
5. Have a signed pass/agenda when in the hallways during class time.

INAPPROPRIATE ITEMS

In order to provide a strong and safe academic environment, the following items are **not permitted** in the Hopatcong Middle School:

1. Any type of weapons or electronic devices
2. Cell phones are permitted in school; however, cell phones must be turned off and put away upon entering the school building for the entire school day. They cannot be used at all while students are in the school building. If a student needs to call home he/she must go to the main office or to guidance.

Students who are using these items will have them subject to be taken away and returned at the end of the day. If actions continue, disciplinary consequences may be issued and in some cases a parent / guardian will be required to come and pick the item up.

IDENTIFICATION BADGES

IDs are used as debit cards for student lunch purchase. Parents may establish lunch debit accounts for their children by simply writing a check payable to Hopatcong Board of Education. Your child should submit this check to the cafeteria. Parents can also add funds through the PowerSchool parent portal under the balance tab. Of course, your child may always use cash to purchase an a la carte item if he or she forgets their student ID.

Identification badges are a central part of Hopatcong Middle School efforts to provide all students with a safe, caring and orderly environment for learning.

INTERNET AND NETWORK COMPUTER ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Acceptable Use – The purpose of the internet is to support research and education in and among academic institutions by providing access to unique resources and the opportunity for collaborative work. Transmission of any material in violation of any national or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret.

Privileges – The use of the internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use may result in a cancellation of those privileges.

Network Etiquette – You are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include (but are not limited to) the following:

1. Be polite. Do not be abusive in your messages to others.
2. Use appropriate language. No vulgarities, threats or any other inappropriate language allowed. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
3. Do not reveal your personal information (i.e. address, phone number) or that of other students. Note that electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. People that operate the system do have access to all mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
4. All district issued chromebooks can only be used for academic purposes only.
5. Do not use the network in such a way that would disrupt the use of the network by other users.
6. All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property.

LOCKERS

Students in grade 6 and 7 will be assigned a locker with a combination on it. It is imperative that you remember the best insurance against lost articles is to keep them locked in your locker. You should keep your locker neat and clean at all times. Periodic inspections may be made, since all lockers are, and shall remain, the property of the Board of Education. Students in Grades 4 and 5 will have either lockers or coat hooks in classrooms. The lockers will remain unlocked and not require a combination.

REMEMBER: STOPPING AT LOCKERS IS NOT AN EXCUSE FOR BEING LATE TO CLASS!

Money and other valuables should not be left in the lockers or unguarded. If you find it necessary to bring money or valuables to school, bring them to the main office at the beginning of the day for safekeeping. **Valuable jewelry, cameras and electronic items should not be brought to school.** Hopatcong Middle School students must assume full responsibility for all their personal possessions. In physical education class, students should leave valuables in assigned hallway or classroom lockers. Backpacks may be used to transport books, notebooks, etc. to and from school. During the day students must store backpacks in the lockers provided. Ample locker time will be provided to allow students to gather materials needed throughout the day.

SCHOOL NURSE

The nurse's office is always available for those students who are sick or injured.

We may require a doctor's note for students who are constantly in need of the nurse's services in order to ensure that all students are receiving the proper attention. If a student is required to take medicine during the school day, the parents must provide a doctor's note to the nurse, and the parent must deliver the medicine to the school in person. The school nurse will also dispense the medicine, which must be stored in the nurse's office. You may contact the school nurse at (973)770-8874.

Please visit HMS Nurse's website (<https://www.hopatcongschools.org/ms/p/nurse>)

SCHOOL FUNCTIONS/ASSEMBLY BEHAVIOR

While at a school assembly or function students are expected to:

1. Follow the directions of staff members at all times.
2. Sit in designated or assigned areas.
3. Give full attention to the speaker/performer.
4. Demonstrate respect by remaining quiet during the performance.

SIGN OUT PROCEDURES

If you need to pick up your child before dismissal, please go to the front lobby entrance area and use the Intercom System to communicate with the main office. Your child will be brought to you and you will have to sign him/her out for the school day.

TARDINESS TO SCHOOL

Whenever a student arrives at school after homeroom, he/she is to report directly to the attendance clerk for a late slip in order to be admitted to class. All work missed because of tardiness must be completed.

1. Unexcused lateness (tardy) will result in disciplinary action(s) being assigned by the administration.
2. Continued excessive tardiness will be subject to review by the administration for possible suspension and/or the filing of attendance charges in Municipal Court

TARDINESS TO CLASS

The office will not issue passes for unexcused tardiness to class. Any student detained by a teacher between classes should ask that teacher for a pass to the next class. The classroom teacher handles tardiness to class, but excessive tardiness will be handled by the administration.

TEXTBOOKS

Students are responsible for the care of all books and materials loaned to them. Hardcover books must be covered and the student's name should be written on the inside cover of each textbook that they are assigned. Fines will be assessed for all lost or damaged books. PLEASE TAKE CARE OF OUR SCHOOL MATERIALS SO THAT WE CAN PASS THEM ALONG IN GOOD CONDITION.

VANDALISM AND PROPERTY DAMAGE

Students who destroy or vandalize school property will be responsible for the cost damages, in addition the student may be suspended, and/or have formal charges filed against them. Damage should be reported to a teacher or administration immediately.

VISITORS*

According to Board Policy #9150.1, all visitors who enter the building must use the main entrance. Visitors must be “buzzed” into the building using the intercom. Visitors must report directly to the Main Office to sign in and obtain a Visitor’s Badge which must be worn at all times while in the building. Parents or any other visitor coming to school to meet with a teacher, bringing items to a student must report to the Main Office, not directly to the classroom. This procedure will assist in providing the most secure environment for all students and staff. When leaving the building, please sign out in the Main Office and return your visitor badge.

- **Please do not open the door for any other visitors. All visitors should be buzzed in by the Main Office.**

HOPATCONG SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICIES

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION & BULLYING POLICY

The Board of Education’s Policies #5500, #5512, and #5600 prohibit acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for pupils to learn and achieve high standards. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a pupil’s ability to learn and a school’s ability to educate its pupils in a safe environment. Effective August, 2022, a complete copy of the District’s policy on Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying is available to parents on the District’s website: www.hopatcong.schools.org.

SMOKING POLICY

The Board of Education’s Policies #5533 and #7434 prohibits any student from smoking, vaping, chewing tobacco, or using snuff (or any variation of the above) in the school or on the school grounds, at events sponsored by the Board of Education away from school and on any transportation vehicle supplied by the Board of Education.

EDUCATIONAL EQUITY POLICY

The Hopatcong Board of Education’s Educational Equity Policies, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:7-14, are available on the District website at www.hopatcong.schools.org for your review.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The school's main concern is the education and safety of the students. For any school to be successful, it is imperative that all students have a stake in that success. In order to ensure that this takes place, all students must obey the rules and regulations that have been established by the teacher and the school. Each teacher will provide specific discipline guidelines, which include behavioral expectations, consequences, and rewards. In addition, the school also has a set of rules that are to be followed.

Level 1

The first three incidents of Level One behaviors are handled at the teacher level. Documentation utilizing the Discipline Report Form will be filed by the teacher and then forwarded to the office on the fourth offense. Interventions for the first three incidents will include some combination of the following: warning, student-teacher conference, parent contact, and/or a teacher consequence. The teacher consequence might be a lunch/recess detention, loss of a class privilege or an after school detention. If necessary, teachers may initiate cooperative efforts to assist students with behavioral contracts and refer students to Peer Mediation. The fourth and subsequent incidents of Level One behaviors are referred to the administration.

Types of Level One Behaviors	1st – 3rd Offense Action	4th Offense Action	5th Offense Action	6th and Subsequent Action
General misconduct (classroom)	Refer to the Level 1 paragraph above for actions. These include teacher interventions and student consequences	Detention (lunch or recess) after school detention	After school detention or in-school suspension and Development of Behavior Contract	Mandatory Parent Conference, after school detention, in-school suspension
General misconduct (school) inappropriate behavior hallway, café, assembly, etc.	Refer to the Level 1 paragraph above for actions. These include teacher interventions and student consequences	Detention (lunch or recess) after school detention	After school detention or in-school suspension and Development of Behavior Contract	Mandatory Parent Conference, after school detention, in-school suspension

Level 2

Behaviors categorized as Level Two are immediately referred to the office. They will be investigated and handled by the building administration.

Types of Level Two Behaviors	1st Offense Action	2nd Offense Action	3rd and Subsequent Action
Leaving Class Without Permission	Detention (lunch or recess), or after school detention	Detention (lunch or recess) or 1 hour after school detention (contact parent)	1 day in-school suspension
Obscene or vulgar language directed toward an adult	Detention (lunch or recess), or 1 hour after school detention	After school detention, or 1 day in-school suspension, parent notification	1 hour after school detention, or 1 day in-school suspension; parent meeting
Destroying or defacing the property of an individual in the school	Detention (lunch or recess), or 1 hour after school detention	After school detention, or 1 day in-school suspension, parent notification	1 hour after school detention, or 1 day in-school suspension, parent meeting
Harassment Verbal abuse, threatening comments, repeated putdowns, etc.	30 minute detention (lunch or recess), or 1 hour after school detention, refer to Resource Officer	After school detention, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension. Possible referral to local authorities	After school detention, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension. Possible referral to local authorities
Endangering the safety of others; scuffling, pushing; shoving (intent to do harm)	Detention, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension	After school detention, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension	After school detention, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension
Possession of inappropriate materials (lighters, matches, stink bombs, caps, cigarettes or tobacco products, etc.)	Detention, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension. Possible referral to local authorities	After school detention, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension. Possible referral to local authorities	After school detention, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension. Possible referral to local authorities
Stealing – taking possession of school property and or of another person without permission	Detention, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension. Possible referral to local authorities	After school detention, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension. Possible referral to local authorities	After school detention, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension. Possible referral to local authorities
Vandalism – Destroying or defacing school property or the building	Detention, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension. Possible referral to local authorities	After school detention, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension. Possible referral to local authorities	After school detention, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension. Possible referral to local authorities

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES PARTICIPATION POLICY

Consequence	Point Value (per day)
Out of School Suspension	4 pts.
In-School Suspension	3 pts.
After-School Detention	1 pt.
Lunch Detention	.5 pt.
Recess Detention (4th-5th grade only)	.5 pt
Late to School 10 minutes or more	.5 pt
<p>A student who accumulates more than 20 total points during the course of the school year will be ineligible to participate in selected school activities. The activities may include, but are not limited to, field trips, field days, dances, class trips, etc. Students who lose eligibility based upon behavioral issues will not be entitled to refunds if payment has already been submitted towards the cost of an activity or event.</p>	