

Hearst Elementary School  
Family and Student Handbook  
2016-2017



*The best little school in the district!*

3950 37<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20008  
(202) 282-0106 Main Office  
(202) 282-2303 Fax  
[www.hearstes.org](http://www.hearstes.org)  
[@hearstes](https://www.facebook.com/HearstElementary)

Jen Thomas  
Principal

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Who We Are	
Hearst Elementary School Vision and Mission	4
Purpose and Goals of DC Public Schools	4
Hearst Pledge	5
Educational Program	6
Common Core State Standards	6
Responsive Classroom	6
English Language Arts	7
Reading Levels and Just Right Books	8
Mathematics	8
Science and Social Studies	8
Technology	8
Library	8
Arts Program	9
Wellness Program	9
Inclusion	9
Communication and Education Support Program	10
English Language Acquisition	10
Assessment	10
Intervention Program	11
Schoolwide Enrichment Model	11
Homework	11
Report Cards	11
Student Support	12
Counseling	12
Response to Intervention Team	12
School Social Worker	12
Special Education Referrals	12
Policies and Procedures	14
Admissions and Enrollment	14
Attendance Policy	14
Before and After School Programming	15
Birthdays and Special Events	15
Dress Code	15
Drop-off and Pick-up	16
Emergencies	17
Field Trips	17
Health	17
Lost and Found	17
Money, Toys, Electronic Devices, and Cell Phones	18
Non-Discrimination Policy	18
Nut-Free Policy	18
Promotion and Retention	18
Safety and Security	19

School Culture and Student Behavioral Supports	19
School Delays and Closings	20
Textbooks and Library Books	20
Parent Involvement	21
Communication	21
Local School Advisory Team	21
Meeting with the Principal	21
Parent Conferences	22
Parent Teacher Association	22
Parent Visits	22
Volunteers	22
Family and Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form (please sign and return)	23

# Who We Are

---

## *Hearst Elementary School Vision and Mission*

---

Our vision for Hearst Elementary School is to be the best little school in the district. In order to realize our vision, we are committed to providing all students with a rigorous curriculum integrated with exposure to the Arts. Our school is dedicated to encouraging healthy living and an appreciation for the world around us. Our staff works as a team to promote a positive atmosphere from PK through 5th grade.

## *Purpose and Goals of DC Public Schools*

---

### *Purpose*

Our purpose is to ensure that every DCPS school provides a world-class education that prepares ALL of our students, regardless of background or circumstance, for success in college, career, and life.

### *A Capital Commitment - Better Schools for All Students by 2017*

DCPS' five-year strategic plan, A Capital Commitment, provides a roadmap for building DCPS into a high-quality, vibrant school district that earns the confidence of our community. With this strategic plan, we recommit DCPS to providing every student with a safe, academically challenging, and inspiring learning experience.

- Goal One: Improve Achievement Rates – At least 70% of our students will be proficient in reading and math, and we will double the number of advanced students in the district.
- Goal Two: Invest in Struggling Schools – Our 40 lowest-performing schools will increase proficiency rates by 40 percentage points.
- Goal Three: Increase Graduation Rate – At least 75% of entering 9th graders will graduate from high school in four years.
- Goal Four: Improve Satisfaction – 90% of students will say they like their school.
- Goal Five: Increase Enrollment – DCPS will increase its enrollment over five years.

Hearst Pledge



**The Hearst Owl Pledge**

I am a Hearst Owl  
and today I pledge to demonstrate:

**O**wnership  
fello **W**ship  
**L**eadership  
**S**cholarship

**Hoot! Hoot!**

# Educational Program

---

## *Common Core State Standards*

---

Our instructional program is grounded in the Common Core State Standards in ELA (English Language Arts) and Mathematics. We use the DCPS Standards for Social Studies and the Next Generation Science Standards for Science.

From [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org):

The Common Core State Standards Initiative is a state-led effort coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). The standards were developed in collaboration with teachers, school administrators, and experts, to provide a clear and consistent framework to prepare our children for college and the workforce.

The NGA Center and CCSSO received initial feedback on the draft standards from national organizations representing, but not limited to, teachers, postsecondary educators (including community colleges), civil rights groups, English language learners, and students with disabilities. Following the initial round of feedback, the draft standards were opened for public comment, receiving nearly 10,000 responses.

The standards are informed by the highest, most effective models from states across the country and countries around the world, and provide teachers and parents with a common understanding of what students are expected to learn. Consistent standards will provide appropriate benchmarks for all students, regardless of where they live.

These standards define the knowledge and skills students should have within their K-12 education careers so that they will graduate high school able to succeed in entry-level, credit bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs.

The standards:

- Are aligned with college and work expectations;
- Are clear, understandable and consistent;
- Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills;
- Build upon strengths and lessons of current state standards;
- Are informed by other top performing countries, so that all students are prepared to succeed in our global economy and society; and
- Are evidence-based.

## *Responsive Classroom*

---

Our faculty and staff implement Responsive Classroom practices at Hearst. This approach to classroom life and learning emphasizes an environment that builds social and academic skills while encouraging our students to think and be responsible. Language is positive and solution-driven and mistakes are celebrated as an opportunity for learning. The physical space in classrooms, morning meetings, closing circles, and class and school rules are organized to facilitate opportunities for positive interaction that meets students' basic needs of achievement, respect, fun, and freedom.

### *Guiding Principles of the Responsive Classroom:*

- The social curriculum is just as important as the academic curriculum.
- How children learn is just as important as what they learn.
- The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
- There is a set of social skills that kids need to be successful (cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, self-control).
- Work in the classroom should be rooted in the science of child development.
- Parents are partners in the education of their children.
- How adults interact and model is extremely important for lasting change.

### *How the Responsive Classroom approach lives at Hearst:*

- Classroom organization that provides for active interest areas for students, space for student-created work, and an appropriate mix of whole class, group, and individual instruction.
- A morning meeting and closing circle format that provides children the daily opportunity to practice greeting, conversation, and sharing.
- Rules and logical consequences that are generated, modeled, and role-played with the children and that become a cornerstone of classroom life.
- Academic choice for all children each day that provides them with the necessity of taking control of their own learning in some meaningful way.
- Guided discovery of learning materials, areas of the room, curriculum content, and ways of behaving moves children through the deliberate and careful introduction of each new experience. There is no assumption that children know how to do something before they begin.
- Assessment and reporting to parents that is an evolving process of mutual communication and understanding.

### *The First Six Weeks of School*

The first six weeks of school are an essential time to build classroom and school communities. Routines and expectations are set and emphasis is put on how the class will work together as a community. During this period, parents and visitors are discouraged from visiting classrooms as their presence can hinder this group development. After this initial period, visitors are welcome to come into classrooms. In fact, parents are encouraged to participate in a Morning Meeting at least once during the school year. Principal Thomas will hold mini-workshops for parents during the first six weeks of school to highlight some of the activities that are occurring in our classrooms each week. Please check the Hearst website and listserv for additional details about these workshops.

For more information about Responsive Classroom, log onto: [www.responsiveclassroom.org](http://www.responsiveclassroom.org).

### *English Language Arts/Literacy*

---

The key components of English Language Arts instruction at Hearst include:

- Phonics/Morphology
- Reading, Research, and Writing
- Small Group Instruction, including independent reading in just right books, guided reading, and independent and small group work stations

## *Reading Levels and Just Right Books*

---

Students learn to read most effectively when they read books at their reading level. Our teachers use a variety of assessments to understand each child's individual reading level to maximize learning. Students are provided a variety of books and reading materials at their just right level. For more information about reading levels and just right books, please see your child's teacher.

## *Mathematics*

---

This year, DCPS has adopted a new math curriculum for students in grades K-11 called Eureka math. In addition, we will supplement teacher-led instruction with an online program, called iReady. For more information about these programs, please see your child's teacher.

## *Science and Social Studies*

---

Social studies instruction is based on the DC Standards, while science instruction is based on the Next Generation Science Standards. Teachers are encouraged to design and deliver authentic, project-based social studies and science instruction and will have two new tools to support them, Project Lead the Way and Discovery Education Techbook. Integrating technology and research is strongly encouraged, as are hands-on learning opportunities for students across the grades. Additionally teachers are encouraged to use field trips and other extended learning opportunities to enrich and extend science and social studies learning.

## *Technology*

---

Technology is a terrific tool for enhancing delivery of instruction and gathering, sharing, and presenting information. All of the computers in the building are part of the Hearst network. Five mobile laptop labs are part of the network. Digital cameras, LCD projectors, video cameras, document cameras, and iPads are available for teacher and student use. As well, lessons can be enhanced using SMART Boards. Ali Ibrahim, ELL Teacher and Technology Coordinator is the main point of contact for technology related questions at Hearst.

## *Library*

---

Hearst's library program is a driving force behind fostering a love of reading in students. Students have a minimum of 45 minutes per week to visit the library in order to conduct research and borrow books. Our library was upgraded last year to include an expanded collection and, when our new building is complete, the library will also have improved technology resources. Elizabeth Vandivier, our Library Media Specialist, staffs our library full-time.

## *Arts Education Program*

---

Our arts education program at Hearst is a multi-faceted one. In addition to receiving 90 minutes of visual and performing arts each week, students also benefit from our partnership with The Kennedy Center. The Kennedy Center has been a partner with Hearst Elementary for the past 20 years and is our longest standing partner. The guiding principle of the Kennedy Center Partnership School program is that an education supports the development of the whole child. Critical to this is access to and engagement in a high-quality, equitable arts education for all children. The Kennedy Center's approach to arts education includes learning in, through, and about the arts, and experiencing the arts. Kennedy Center resources for Partnership Schools include professional development for teachers and administrators, in-school workshops and demonstrations led by performing artists and in-depth arts integrated curriculum residencies led by teaching artists, and performances at the Kennedy Center.

## *Wellness Program*

---

Hearst's wellness program is comprised of health and physical education, environmental education, and our socio-emotional learning program. Every Hearst Elementary School student has the ability to increase their self-confidence, and therefore improve their physical and cognitive performance through organized physical education focusing on individual, paired, and small group activities emphasizing personal best and team building. The emphasis on teaching our students to be physically active increases their ability to remain focused in the classroom and absorb the rigorous instruction and phenomenal teaching. Hearst also offers a weekly afterschool running program that runs year round, as well as basketball, rugby, and golf.

Our school has many sustainable features that allow our students and staff to explore the relationship between human ecology and natural ecology and the building. Integrated across our curricula at each grade level are opportunities for students to engage in hands-on learning experiences on the Hearst campus that raise their awareness of energy conservation, resource consumption, waste generation, and the influence of the microclimate on building systems and human comfort.

In addition to Responsive Classroom practices, this year we'll be implementing a curriculum called Second Step, to support students' socio-emotional needs. For more information about this program, please contact Brenda Nishimura, our school psychologist.

## *Inclusion*

---

Inclusion describes the efforts to keep students with diverse learning and behavior needs in the classrooms and they would normally attend with their age-level peers. Hearst embraces the practice of inclusion for all students with special needs. Inclusive education means that all students in a school, regardless of their strengths or weaknesses in any area, become part of the school community. Students who receive ELL or special education services spend the majority of the school day with their peers in the general education classroom setting. It is our philosophy that each child belongs to all of us and, collectively, we are responsible for every child's education. Hearst's ELL and special education teachers work in classrooms to support the needs of our English language learners and students with special needs. ELL, special education, and classroom teachers regularly plan together to create lessons that are comprehensive and appropriate for all students. ELL and special education teachers rotate through the classrooms on a regular schedule. Students with special education needs receive specialized individual or small group instruction outside of the general education only if it is required in their Individualized Education Plans.

## *Communication and Education Support Program*

---

The Communication and Education Support (CES) Program at Hearst was founded in 2004 to provide individualized instruction and related services for students in grades K-2. In 2009, we added an Early Learning Support (ELS) program for pre-school and pre-K students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). In addition to our ELS program, we have a Primary CES program for students in Kindergarten through second grade and an Intermediate CES program for students in second through fourth grade. As determined by a student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), our program provides three educational settings designed to meet the needs of each student, self-contained, hybrid (students join the general education setting for social development during lunch, recess, and specials, and morning meeting), and full inclusion. Common Core State Standards drive the instruction in our self-contained classrooms and the vehicle for this instruction is Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). Hearst Elementary is the first school in DCPS to provide a Peer Volunteer Program, a buddy system specifically designed to pair an exceptional student with a typically developing peer. We achieved success with this model of inclusion in the 2014-2015 school year during a pilot program when pairing students together to participate in the school play and during afterschool enrichment and hope to expand this program this year. Claudia DeSilva works with Rhoda Forbes and Kendra Schenck in our ELS program, Elana Marber works with Shannon Montgomery and Ellen Hicks in our Primary CES program, and Erica Molino works with Jason Gary and Janice Hargrove in our Intermediate CES program. Speech and language therapy is provided by Elpida Athansiadis. Shona Forbes provides occupational therapy and Jonas Simon is our physical therapist.

## *English Language Acquisition*

---

This program provides additional supports to students with limited proficiency in the English language. This instruction helps students have a successful school year and develop English language skills through in-class support and small group pullout work. ELL instruction focuses on social and instructional language, subject area content language, and four language domains: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Our ELL instructors are Brian Garfield and Ali Ibrahim.

## *Assessment*

---

Assessment is used on an on-going basis to measure student progress towards meeting standards, determine the mastery of content, and determine the effectiveness of teaching. Three times a year, all K-3 students are assessed using the DIBELS and TRC assessments, as well as the iReady math assessment. Students in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades are assessed using the Reading Inventory (RI) assessments, as well as the iReady math assessment. These assessments monitor each child's individual progress in reading fluency, reading comprehension, and math, respectively.

Students in third, fourth, and fifth grades also participate in the interim assessments. These assessments, given three times over the course of the year, align to the reading and math standards and skills presented on the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) test. The PARCC assessment will be administered in the spring in third through fifth grades in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Fifth graders will take the Health and Science DC CAS tests. For more information about PARCC, log onto: <http://www.parcconline.org>.

## *Intervention Programs*

---

We are fortunate to have two staff members who provide personalized, targeted, small group literacy and math instruction for our most high-need students. Students requiring reading intervention will participate in targeted small group instruction with Janna Walker. Andre Short will support students in K-5 who require targeted small group instruction in math. Ongoing assessments in the intervention groups, as well as classroom observations, will determine which students are released and/or added to groups working with the specialists.

## *Schoolwide Enrichment Program (SEM)*

---

This year, we will again be implementing the Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM) in PK-5. 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders will participate in the first SEM groups in the fall and in the winter we'll include K-5 students, adding PK in the spring. As stated on the SEM website (<http://www.gifted.uconn.edu/sem/>), "The SEM provides enriched learning experiences and higher learning standards for all children through three goals; developing talents in all children, providing a broad range of advanced-level enrichment experiences for all students, and providing advanced follow-up opportunities for young people based on their strengths and interests. The SEM focuses on enrichment for all students through high levels of engagement and the use of enjoyable and challenging learning experiences that are constructed around students' interests, learning styles, and preferred modes of expression." For additional information on the SEM, please contact Elizabeth Vandivier, Josh Levin, or Hunter Coleman.

## *Homework*

---

Homework is designed to reinforce the day's lessons either by practicing skills or using new skills in different contexts. Beginning in Kindergarten, students will receive homework regularly. Homework assignments are designed to be developmentally appropriate for each grade level. Additionally, all Hearst students are expected to read for at least 20 minutes nightly and record their reading in a reading log provided by their teachers. Regular reading is essential and parent support of this activity is key to helping students develop solid reading habits. Here are some homework tips:

- Families should encourage and monitor their child's completion of homework.
- With your child, determine where s/he works best. Once you've found a spot that works, ensure that your child has the necessary supplies there and create a nightly routine for when to do homework.
- Families should check that homework is completed and offer assistance when needed, but should not complete their child's homework. If a child gets stuck on a particular problem, it is ok for him/her to move on, sharing with the teacher the next day the problem and what made it challenging.
- Families also can help students pack their backpack for school to make sure the homework gets to class each morning.

## *Report Cards and Grading Policy*

---

Report Cards are issued quarterly for students in Kindergarten through Fifth Grade and three times a year for Pre-Kindergartners. Report Cards for K-5 will be distributed on November 10, 2016, February 3, 2017, April 14, 2017, and June 14, 2017. Additional information about Hearst's grading policy will be shared this fall.

# Student Support

---

Students sometimes experience challenges and need additional support beyond what the classroom teacher can provide. These difficulties may be academic, social, and/or emotional. When noted by school personnel, the process for addressing the difficulty may begin with a referral to the Response to Intervention (RTI) Team, the school social worker, or the school psychologist. The parent is informed and brought into the process at this time. Often the issue is resolved by the RTI Team or at the school counselor or social worker level, but sometimes further assistance is necessary. When further information or resources are necessary, the child may be referred for special education services. If a child is found eligible to receive services, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is written and services are provided at school.

## *School Social Worker*

---

We are pleased to welcome Bernadette Carroll, social worker, to the Hearst staff this year. Ms. Carroll will be involved in the following six key areas: (1) preventive work with students, staff, and families that promotes positive school climate and social/emotional well-being; (2) program development to meet the unique needs of our school; (3) program planning that contributes to the development of school-wide policies; (4) advocacy that supports students and families; (5) direct services to students and families such as individual and group counseling; and (6) and special education. Ms. Carroll is located in the main office suite and can be reached by phone (202) 282-3131 or e-mail [bernadette.carroll@dc.gov](mailto:bernadette.carroll@dc.gov). Appointments are recommended; however, she is usually in her office at 8:45 after line-up.

## *Response to Intervention (RTI) Team*

---

The Response to Intervention (RTI) Team is our school-based committee charged with helping us provide all students with opportunities to learn and progress in the general curriculum. The RTI process recognizes that many variables affect learning. The primary purpose is to help general education teachers meet diverse student needs within general education settings.

Teachers and parents can request RTI Team assistance. RTI Team members – school social worker, school psychologist, general education teachers, administrators, nurse, other support staff, and parents – use a collaborative process to assess the needs of students who are struggling academically and/or behaviorally. The process is data-driven, that is team members consider evidence that the teacher collects to document the concern. After identifying a positive goal or goals for the student, RTI Team members recommend academic and/or behavioral instructional strategies that the teacher and family agrees to implement during a six-week period. The RTI Team also designs an implementation plan that includes monitoring and evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the intervention. Please contact Sara Tick, school psychologist for additional information about the RTI process and team.

## *Special Education Referrals*

---

The goal of special education is to enable students to work successfully in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) as defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). All students must first go through the RTI Team process before a referral for assessment by the special education team. When the RTI Team makes a referral, the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) convenes and formally evaluates the student to determine eligibility for special education services. The Multi-Disciplinary Team includes the special educator, general educator, administrator, and service providers such as speech

language pathologists, and school psychologists.

The special education assessment may include the following evaluations:

- Psycho-Educational
- Speech and Language
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Family History

As well, student work samples are evaluated as part of the assessment process. The appropriate professionals make assessment recommendations and their reports are written and presented at the Multi-Disciplinary Team Meeting. These professionals, the special education teacher, the parent, Principal, and classroom teacher meet together to determine if the child meets eligibility criteria for special education services. If it is the consensus of the team that the child is eligible then an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is written specifying the nature of the needs, goals to be achieved, and the services that will be delivered to support the child. It is the responsibility of the Multi-Disciplinary Team to ensure that these services are provided to the child. Annual evaluations are held to review the status and progress of each child with an Individualized Education Plan. The parent, principal, special education teacher, classroom teacher, and service providers meet to discuss the progress of the student and plan for the next academic year. The special education teacher assesses the student's progress using classroom work, informal assessments, and formal assessments. The date of the annual evaluation is determined by the anniversary of the initial psycho-educational assessment. Triennial evaluations are held every third year after the initial psycho-educational assessment. This is in accordance with IDEA. The Multi-Disciplinary Team meets and determines what formal assessments need to be re-administered to determine if the child is still eligible for special education services. For more information about special education, please see MaryEllen Macek, our LEA Representative and one of our special education resource teachers. Shareen Beech and Jessica Lunde can also be contacted with questions.

# Policies and Procedures

---

## *Admissions and Enrollment*

---

Hearst Elementary School observes the enrollment guidelines of the District of Columbia Public Schools. Children entering the school in Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, or First Grade must be four, five, or six years old by September 30th respectively. Before enrollment in school, the child's family or legal guardian must present a birth certificate, current record of immunization, health certificate, and proof of residency in the District of Columbia.

Our Pre-Kindergarten has limited space and placement is not guaranteed. Registration for the Pre-K Lottery typically opens in December each year. Neighborhood students are given preference in the Pre-K Lottery, as are students with siblings already enrolled at Hearst. Enrollment in Kindergarten through Fifth Grades is guaranteed for each child residing within Hearst's boundaries.

## *Attendance Policy*

---

Regular school attendance is vital to academic success. Our goal is to ensure that every student attends school regularly and on time. When your child is absent, please inform the school by sending an email to our [attendance@hearstes.org](mailto:attendance@hearstes.org). If your child arrives after 8:45am, he or she should report to the main office to receive a tardy slip prior to reporting to class.

## *Excused Absences and Tardies*

The following reasons for an absence or a tardy arrival are considered excused:

- Student illness (a doctor's note is required if a student is absent for more than five days);
- Medical reasons such as a doctor's appointment (a doctor's note is required for both a tardy arrival and an absence);
- Death in the student's immediate family (please provide a note);
- Necessity for a student to attend a judicial proceeding as a plaintiff, defendant, witness or juror (please provide a note);
- Observance of a religious holiday (please provide a note);
- Temporary school closings due to weather, unsafe conditions or other emergencies;
- Failure of DC to provide transportation where legally responsible; and
- Emergency circumstances approved by the Chancellor's Office.

## *Unexcused Absences or Tardies*

Examples include extended travel (domestic or international), oversleeping, traffic, the illness of a sibling, visiting another school as a prospective student, and doing errands.

## *DCPS Out of Boundary Attendance and Tardy Policy*

DCPS has instituted an attendance/tardy policy that requires students to return to their home schools if they acquire more than 10 unexcused absences or more than 20 unexcused tardies. This policy is strictly enforced at Hearst as we believe on time, regular attendance is essential to student success. Please note that excuse notes must be submitted within 5 school days in order to be processed. Additionally,

students who miss 20% of the school day or come in after 10:03am will receive an absence for the full day.

### *Before and After School Programming*

---

Please note that in the event that your child is absent from school and/or earns an in or out of school suspension, your child is not allowed to participate in before and after school programming or any extracurricular activities that same day.

#### *Hearst Recreation Center*

Hearst Recreation Center runs a variety of programs throughout the school year. Please contact Kim Campbell at [kim.campbell@dc.gov](mailto:kim.campbell@dc.gov) or 202-282-2207 for more information. Detailed information regarding specific programs can also be found at the Department of Recreation Website at <http://dpr.dc.gov>.

#### *Innis Before and After Care*

Innis Before Care runs from 7:00-8:15 and After Care runs from 3:15-6:00. Please call Michelle Marbury at 240-882-5550 or Fred Barnes, Hearst Program Coordinator, at 301-873-0646.

#### *Enrichment*

The Hearst PTA runs enrichment programming in the afternoons. Please visit the Hearst website ([www.hearstes.org](http://www.hearstes.org)) for additional information.

### *Birthday and Special Events*

---

One day per month teachers will celebrate all birthdays for that month. On this day, parents are welcome to bring treats for students and come to class to celebrate. See your child's teacher to learn more about when this celebration will be specifically for your child's class and ensure that there will be no conflicts with planned classroom or school-wide activities. Invitations for special celebrations outside of the school day may not be distributed in the classroom or in the hallway to avoid concerns about the exclusion of students. The main office at Hearst will not distribute invitations.

### *Dress Code*

---

Hearst does not have a specific uniform for students however the following guidelines around appropriate dress may be helpful:

- Excessively dirty and/or torn clothing may not be worn in school
- Bare or stocking feet are not permitted in schools
- Non-prescriptive sunglasses and hats are not permitted inside the school buildings
- Extremes in style and fit and articles of clothing emblazoned with vulgar or obscene words or pictures, or badges or slogans disruptive of school, as determined by the principal, will not be permitted

## *Drop-off and Pick-up*

---

The school day begins promptly at 8:45 a.m. and ends at 3:15 p.m. Students may report as early as 8:15 to the playground or the cafeteria for breakfast. **STUDENTS MAY NOT REPORT TO SCHOOL EARLIER THAN 8:15 UNLESS BEING SUPERVISED BY A PARENT/GUARDIAN.**

### *Arrival – Fair Weather*

Students are welcome to play on the playground or eat breakfast in the cafeteria beginning at 8:15, when Hearst staff report to those locations for duty. At 8:35 staff on duty will begin to usher students to the new morning line up location on the soccer field. Teachers will escort students from the soccer field to classes at 8:40.

### *Arrival – Inclement Weather*

Please note that teachers will be participating in professional development and meetings most mornings from 8:10-8:35. As such, on inclement weather days, PK students will report to the hallway outside of their classrooms where staff members will supervise them and K-5 students will report to the gym where they will be supervised by staff.

### *Dismissal-Fair Weather*

Students will be dismissed at 3:15. Students riding the bus will be dismissed to the front steps of the school, where staff will supervise them. Students participating in any of the after school programs (Innis, Rec, and/or Enrichment) will be escorted to the gym and dismissed to representatives of those after school programs. All other students will wait with their teacher to be picked up on the front plaza. Should parents elect to remain on the playground with their child(ren) after the child(ren) is/are dismissed to the parents, the parents, and not Hearst Elementary School, are solely responsible for the child(ren).

### *Dismissal-Inclement Weather*

At 3:15, families can begin to pick up students from designated dismissal locations on the first floor of the building. Please see signs posted in the main entrance to find the location where each grade will be.

Students not picked up by 3:30 p.m. will be taken to the main office and parent contact will be made. **Students not picked up by 3:45 p.m. will be taken to Innis After Care, and parents will be charged a drop-in fee for childcare.**

### *Early Dismissal*

In the event that students must leave early or follow a different routine, please notify the main office, who will in turn notify the child's teacher. Parents wishing to pick up their children early must do so before 3:00 as no students will be dismissed between 3:00 and 3:15. Parents should sign the "Early Dismissal Log" located at the security desk and report to the main office. Office staff will then call the teacher to release the student to the main office. For safety and security reasons, parents are not permitted to go directly to the classroom to pick up students.

## *Emergencies*

---

In the event that Hearst closes early and/or is evacuated because of an emergency, school personnel will notify parents. Throughout the year, we conduct several fire drills and emergency evacuation drills in order to prepare our students and staff in the event of a real emergency situation. When a fire drill occurs, the signal will sound and all people within the building must leave according to posted directions. These directions will be reviewed during the first week of school and subsequent times throughout the school year and your child may discuss the occurrence of these drills with you. In the event of an emergency necessitating evacuation of the school campus, our school will relocate to Sidwell Friends School, 3960 37<sup>th</sup> Street, NW.

## *Field Trips*

---

Field trips are scheduled throughout the year to provide Hearst students with learning opportunities outside the traditional classroom. Participating students are required to submit a completed field trip permission slip. These forms will be sent home by your child's teacher at least three days prior to the trip and provide specific information about the purpose of the trip, destination, date and time, mode of transportation (bus, car, Metro, walking), and the cost per student. Students will not be permitted to attend any field trip without a signed permission slip on file. Field Trip Chaperones are integral to the success of these extended learning experiences for our students. When parents volunteer to serve as chaperones, it is crucial they cooperate by following the guidance of the teacher(s) sponsoring the trip and provide support for the students in the class. Parents may not bring additional children on field trips when they are serving as chaperones.

## *Health*

---

Please notify the school immediately if your child has any symptoms of illness, especially highly contagious diseases such as chickenpox, measles, conjunctivitis (pink eye), or the H1N1 virus (swine flu). Students diagnosed with contagious diseases or appear to have ringworm will be excluded from school until the nurse receives a statement from their doctor certifying that they may return to school.

At this time, only the school nurse and three other staff members are authorized to administer medication **with the proper authorization from a physician**. Please note that students are not permitted to possess prescription medication as this medication is required to be stored in the nurse's office. In order to store and/or administer medication, authorization forms found here must be completed and signed by a physician: <http://dcps.dc.gov/page/health-and-wellness>.

## *Lost and Found*

---

Our Lost and Found is located inside the gym entrance. All lost items will be placed in the Lost and Found in the hopes that families can be reunited with their misplaced items. In order to help reunite items with children, please write their names on anything they bring to school, clothing, water bottles, lunch boxes, rain boot, etc. Items will be stored in the bin for a period of no longer than a month before they are donated to a local charity.

## *Money, Toys, Electronic Devices, and Cell Phones*

---

Students should not bring money to school unless parents receive notification from the classroom teacher to do so. Because the school will provide equipment for recess and PE, we ask that students do not bring equipment from home. Additionally, students should not bring toys, electronic games, or cell phones to school. In the event that a child brings electronics to school, Hearst is not responsible if said items are lost or stolen and staff will confiscate items that we find. All items that are confiscated will be held in the main office and must be picked up by a parent.

## *Non-Discrimination Policy*

---

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) is committed to ensuring that all of its employees act in conformity with federal and District of Columbia non-discrimination laws, including Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the District of Columbia Human Rights Act of 1977, and the Genetic Information Non-Discrimination Act of 2008.

Accordingly, DCPS does not discriminate or tolerate discrimination against employees, applicants for employment, or students on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex (including pregnancy), age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an interfamily offense, or place of residence or business.

DCPS also prohibits harassment based on any of the aforementioned protected traits and retaliation against a person because he or she has complained about discrimination, filed a charge of discrimination, or participated in a discrimination investigation or lawsuit.

Employees found to have engaged in prohibited discrimination, harassment, or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action.

## *Nut-Free Policy*

---

Hearst is a nut-free school. Students can bring in foods that have been processed in a facility that processes tree nuts, so long as those foods are for personal consumption. In order to minimize the risk of cross-contact issues that can result with nut oils/residue left on surfaces, our staff is being extra vigilant about cleaning surfaces after eating and ensuring that students wash their hands after eating. For ideas for nut-free lunches and snacks, visit:

<http://school.familyeducation.com/slideshow/lunch/71131.html> or  
<http://www.100daysofrealfood.com/2013/10/07/nut-free-school-lunch-ideas/>

## *Promotion and Retention*

---

With regular attendance and close partnership between home and school, most students will receive the academic support they need to be successful from year to year. Decisions about promotion are based on a number of factors.

If a student in pre-kindergarten or kindergarten has met the proficiency requirements in the core subject areas but is not functioning at a skill level deemed ready for promotion to kindergarten or first grade by a teacher or a parent in the areas of physical, social or emotional development, an option of repeating a pre-kindergarten or kindergarten may be considered without being regarded as a retention. For Grades 1 - 5, promotion depends on whether your child has done the following:

- Received passing grades in the core subject tests (Reading, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies);
- Achieved the goals of the intervention learning plan (where applicable); and
- Met the DCPS attendance policy.

Students may be retained once in grades 3, 5 or 8 only when all other interventions have been unsuccessful and the student has not made sufficient academic progress during the course of the school year. Parents will be notified mid-year if there is a possibility that the teacher may recommend retention. Principal Thomas has the final authority for all first-time promotion/retention decisions.

### *Safety and Security*

---

All D.C. Public Schools operate under the closed campus policy. Under this policy, for safety reasons, students are not permitted to leave the school grounds between the hours of 8:45 a.m. and 3:15 p.m., unless an authorized adult signs them out at the security desk. This includes lunch and recess times.

### *School Culture and Student Behavioral Supports*

---

Hearst is a proponent of the Responsive Classroom approach and in the Responsive Classroom approach to discipline, the overarching goal is to keep the focus on learning, while maintaining a classroom that's physically and emotionally safe for all. To achieve this, adult responses to misbehavior:

- Stop the misbehavior and reestablish positive behavior as quickly as possible
- Maintain children's dignity
- Develop children's self-control and self-regulation skills
- Help children recognize and fix any harm caused by their mistakes
- Demonstrate that rules help make the classroom a safe place where all can learn

When this approach is used, adults respond quickly, firmly, and respectfully when children misbehave. Minor problems are addressed before behavior gets out of control. Children are held accountable for their behavior, with adults guiding their learning so they can make better choices next time. If students require additional support in order to meet behavior expectations, Ms. Wendt, our school counselor, Ms. Carroll, our school social worker, and Ms. Tick, our school psychologist, are available to provide this support in consultation with the student, teacher, and family.

If a behavior requires administrative intervention, Ms. Thomas will refer to the DCPS Student Code of Conduct, known as Chapter 25 of the DC Municipal Regulations. Chapter 25 can be found directly at the following link: <http://dcps.dc.gov/publication/dcmr-chapter-25-title-5-student-discipline>.

## School Delays and Closings

---

DCPS strives to keep schools open whenever possible and is reluctant to close school as it is the priority to ensure that students have access to all they need, including academic instruction, nutritious meals and healthy extracurricular programming. When there is inclement weather, DCPS works closely with the DC government and other agencies to obtain the best and most current information. The decision to delay and close schools is made with careful consideration of road safety, sidewalk safety, and meal availability. There are several ways to get informed about school delays and closings:

- Check the [DCPS homepage](#).
- Follow DCPS on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#).
- Call (202) 442-5885 or dial 311 for DC's Citywide Call Center.
- Listen to the radio and/or watch TV stations below:

AM Radio	FM Radio	Television
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• WMAL (630)</li><li>• WOL (1450)</li><li>• Radio America, Spanish (1540)</li><li>• WTOP (1500)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• WAMU (88.5)</li><li>• WTOP (103.5)</li><li>• WHUR (96.3)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Channels 4, 5, 7, and 9</li><li>• Cable Channels 8, 16 and 28</li></ul>

## Textbooks and Library Books

---

Textbooks and library books are available for students to borrow over the course of the school year. Any books that are not returned will result in a replacement fee being assessed. Final report cards will not be distributed until all fees are paid.

# Parent/Family Involvement

---

## *Communication*

---

Home-School Communication will come in many forms. Email is primarily used, so it is very important the main office has a current email address that families check regularly. During the instructional day it is challenging for staff to respond to email as our focus is on your child. Our goal is to respond to all emails within 48 business hours. Communication from Hearst will include:

- Weekly bulletin from teacher which includes current standards being covered
- Weekly update email from Ms. Thomas
- Ongoing Robo emails and phone calls regarding upcoming events
- Website updates
- First Friday Chats with Ms. Thomas
- PTA Meetings held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month
- Individual Parent-Teacher Conferences, Academic Parent Teacher Team (APTT) Meetings, and Student-led Conferences

## *Local School Advisory Team*

---

The Local School Advisory Team (LSAT) is a group of elected and appointed members that exists for every DCPS school. The team (formerly the Local School Restructuring Teams) consists of parents, teachers, non-instructional school staff, a community member, and in some cases students, to advise the principal on matters that promote high expectations and high achievement for all students. These teams were initially established to serve in an advisory capacity to the principal for the purpose of improving student outcomes.

Local School Advisory Teams are tasked with advising the principal on matters such as: allocation of school resources; organization of the school; curriculum options, including special or supplementary course offerings and specialized research-based instructional strategies; budget decisions; priorities and considerations for staffing patterns and the selection of personnel; monitoring overall student progress; school culture, and family engagement.

If you have concerns about any of the above matters, please feel free to raise them with any of the LSAT members so they can discuss them with the group and with Ms. Thomas at their next LSAT meeting. All LSAT meetings are open to observers.

## *Meeting with the Principal*

---

If you would like to meet with Ms. Thomas, please email her at [jen.thomas@dc.gov](mailto:jen.thomas@dc.gov) to arrange a mutually agreeable date and time.

## *Parent Conferences*

---

Conferences between parents and teachers and/or other personnel are welcomed and encouraged. It is extremely difficult for a teacher to give you the uninterrupted non-instructional time needed during the school hours or when students are entering and/or leaving school. Please email the teacher in order to schedule an individual conference. Teachers will not be able to conduct a parent-teacher conference during instructional times (8:45 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.), unless specific arrangements are made ahead of time with the teacher.

## *Parent Teacher Association*

---

The Parent-School Association works to enhance the educational experience of all Hearst students. The PTA strives to reinforce a strong sense of community within our small, but growing, school through events like the Spring Fair, Fall Festival, and service activities such as our neighborhood E-cycle. Additionally, the Hearst PTA works to raise much needed funds for our after school enrichment programs, teacher professional development, supplies, computer equipment, field trips, and to support our excellent school library. We hope you will join us as well as, take part in the many opportunities to [volunteer](#) throughout the year! Please see the Hearst website ([www.hearstes.org](http://www.hearstes.org)) for more details.

## *Parent Visits*

---

Parents are welcome to observe their children in a classroom setting at any time, but must give classroom teachers 24 hours notice. Classroom visitations are limited to two hours at a time and are for observation purposes only. If you need to discuss specific issues about your child(ren), please make an appointment with the teacher for a conference.

## *Volunteers*

---

A wide range of volunteer opportunities is available at Hearst, from tutoring students to helping with administrative tasks to beautifying our campus. We are always excited when talented and motivated individuals want to use their skills, resources, and knowledge to serve our school. In order to volunteer in our schools on a regular basis, individuals need to follow our volunteer application process:

1. Complete the volunteer application (<http://dcps.dc.gov/page/volunteer-our-schools>).
2. Complete a tuberculosis test.
3. Bring the completed application, TB test result, and photo ID to the district office to be fingerprinted.
  - The office is located at 1200 First Street, NE, 10<sup>th</sup> floor.
  - Fingerprinting is available Tuesdays 9 am-4 pm or Thursdays 9 am-12 pm, or by appointment.
4. In about two weeks, you will receive a letter verifying that you have completed the process.

Please note those volunteers for Beautification Day or other weekend or one-day service events do not need to complete the process.

Phone: (202) 442-5447

Email: [dcpsvolunteers@dc.gov](mailto:dcpsvolunteers@dc.gov)

**Dear Hearst Parents & Guardians:**

**In our effort to ensure that communication in the Family and Student Handbook is exchanged between you and Hearst Elementary School, please sign and return this document to your child’s classroom or the main office indicating that you have read the Family and Student Handbook.**

---

**Child’s Name and Grade**

---

**Parent Name (Please Print)**

---

**Parent Signature**

---

**Date**



*The best little school in the district!*