



Welcome to Hillside

Learn about some of the common questions that new families pose when their student enters Hillside. Welcome to this warm and welcoming community!

- ***How can I stay up to date with what's happening at school?***

In addition to emails and handouts from Mrs. Staves and the classroom teachers, the PTO sends out a weekly newsletter called the Hillside Highlights. The PTO also has social media accounts on Facebook and Instagram, as well as grade-level Facebook pages. Subscribe to the PTO's Google calendar using the QR code to the right. Check out the PTO website (www.hillsidepto.org) for more information and links to all of these tools.



- ***Can my child bring a snack and water bottle to school?***

Yes, all grade levels are permitted to eat a nut-free snack during recess. Snacks can be purchased in the cafeteria or packed from home. Children are not permitted to share snacks. Reusable water bottles are encouraged and should be sent to school every day. Water bottle filling stations are available around the school.

- ***How do I pay for lunch in the cafeteria?***

Each individual student has an account in the cafeteria. Upon checkout they input a PIN number, which the district provides each August. Parents are able to fund this account using the School Café website or by paying with check or cash. A School Café account can be created using the QR code to the right. Payments by check should be given to the student's homeroom teacher, made payable to the "TESD Caf Fund," and include the student's name and grade in the memo line. Snacks and ala carte items can also be purchased using this account.



- ***What if there's a change in our dismissal plan?***

If you need to communicate a change with your child's dismissal plan (e.g. car line, bus, or going home with a friend), please send an email to all of the following people before 3pm that day: Mrs. Beata Szekeres (szekeresb@tesd.net), attendance (HESattendance@tesd.net), and your child's classroom teacher. If going home with a friend, both families must confirm the dismissal plan.

- ***How does the car line work?***

At the beginning of the year, each family is given a sign that can be placed inside the windshield to streamline the dismissal process. Some families lay the sign on the dashboard, others attach it to a sun visor or rearview mirror, and others attach it directly to the windshield. Enter the car

line from the Cassatt Road side of Howellville Road. Do NOT turn left to enter the car line from Howellville Road, as this causes considerable traffic congestion. The staff will assist students in opening doors. It is safest for the students to enter from the passenger side of the car. Stay in your car. If your child needs help buckling, please park in a parking space to assist them. Do not pass cars ahead of you in line if they are still loading. Patience and safety are key!

- ***Is there a centralized gift collection for teachers and staff?***

Both in December and at the end of the school year, the PTO organizes voluntary gift collections to show our wonderful faculty and staff how much we appreciate them. The funds collected are divided among all of the teachers and staff. Some families prefer to give their teacher an individual gift instead of participating in the group collection. There's no right or wrong way to show appreciation.

- ***Are there class parties during the year?***

Each class has three parties throughout the school year. The Halloween party follows the Halloween parade on the playground. Parents are invited to watch all of the students in costume parade outside, but only a few parents per class are permitted inside to help with the parties. Likewise, the winter party in December and Valentine's Day party in February offer opportunities for a few parents per class to volunteer to help. Valentines are exchanged during the party for all grades. Party plans and parent volunteers are coordinated by each class's homeroom parent. Food is NOT permitted at any school party due to allergy concerns and school district policy.

- ***What are after school clubs?***

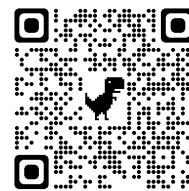
After school clubs are PTO-sponsored clubs run by Hillside faculty, staff, or parents. Past offerings have included STEAM Club, Board Games Club, Art Club, Music Clubs, Yoga Club, Chess Club, Gardening Club, and many others. Club sessions are offered in the fall, winter, and spring, and meet weekly for a six-week period of time. The clubs run from school dismissal at 3:45pm until 4:45pm. There is no transportation after clubs are dismissed, so arrangements must be made to pick up students at school. Financial assistance is available for those in need by contacting Mrs. Karen Kilby, the guidance counselor (kilbyk@tesd.net).

- ***How can I get involved?***

There are plenty of volunteer opportunities for parents to get involved. Volunteering is a great way to get to know some of your child's classmates, teachers, and the parents of your child's friends. Sign-up sheets are posted on the PTO website when specific events arise, such as the Spring Fair, Book Fair, Teacher Appreciation Lunches, and many others. Notifications about these events can be found on social media and the Hillside Highlights newsletter. Other positions are frequently available on the PTO Board. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend PTO meetings. The meeting schedule and other school events can be found using the Google calendar QR code above.

- ***Why do I need to access or log into PowerSchool?***

PowerSchool is the central location for many important documents and forms. Progress reports are loaded onto PowerSchool three times per year, as well as standardized benchmark test reports. This is important to note since paper copies of progress reports are not distributed. All school forms, including student health forms, emergency contact information, sunscreen permission, media consent, and many others are listed here. Transportation information, including bus numbers and times, are listed on each student's profile. Contact the Family Help Desk (familyhelpdesk@tesd.net) with any problems or questions.



- ***Are there any special events during and after school?***

The PTO sponsors numerous events throughout the school year. Some of these include social events, such as a Trunk or Treat, a Winter Social Family Night, and the Spring Fair. The PTO also sponsors various Cultural Arts programs for all grades throughout the school year. Examples of some of these programs have previously included a cultural heritage celebration, Chinese paper cutting artist and puppeteer, African storytellers and drummers, a Mother Goose program, author visits, and many others. In the fall, a fundraiser is held in a donation-only format to raise funds to use throughout the school year, which culminates in a fun event for students and parents.

- ***Are there any student-led programs during the school year?***

In the spring, kindergarten holds a teddy bear picnic and first, second, and third grades prepare musical programs, all of which families are invited to attend. Third and fourth grade students are able to join the chorus and orchestra, and fourth grade students are also able to join the band.

- ***What else should I know?***

Hillside spirit wear is available to purchase at various times throughout the school year through the PTO. A yearbook is available to purchase towards the end of each school year and includes a photo of each student from the picture day in the fall and candid photos taken throughout the year. The PTO generally offers group ticket sales to sporting events, such as the Sixers, the Phillies, and the Union, as well as discounted tickets to Hersheypark. Information is provided via email, social media, and flyers when these sales are open.

- ***What if I still have questions?***

Hillside is a welcoming community. Never feel shy about reaching out to a fellow parent, teacher, or administrator.

Mrs. Michele Staves, Principal – stavesm@tesd.net, (610) 240-1501

Dr. Lauren Jones, PTO President – president@hillsidepto.org

TESD Transportation – (610) 240-1680

HES Main Office – (610) 240-1502