

Helen Street School

Family Handbook **2023-2024 School Year**



Mrs. Karen Franklin, Principal

285 Helen Street • Hamden, Connecticut 06514
phone: 203-407-2030 • fax: 203-407-2052

www.hamden.org/helenstreet

Preface

The material covered within this Family Handbook is intended to provide students and parents with important general district information, rules and procedures and is not intended to either enlarge or diminish any Board policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement. Material contained herein may therefore be superseded by such Board policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement. Any information contained in this handbook is subject to unilateral revision or elimination from time-to-time without notice.

This handbook is written for our students and their parents. It contains required and useful information. Because it cannot be as personal a communication as we would like, we address students not directly as “you” but rather as “the student,” “students,” or “children.” Likewise, the term “the student’s parent” may refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume responsibility for the student. Both students and parents need to be familiar with the District’s Student Code of Conduct which is intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere conducive for learning.

This Family Handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board policy. Please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy that affect portions of this Handbook will be made available to students and parents through newsletters, web pages, and other communications.

Message from the Principal



Mrs. Karen Franklin, Principal

Dear Families,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2023-24 school year at Helen Street School! This Family Handbook is a summary of important information that will assist you in getting the most out of your child's experience at Helen Street School.

All staff members at Helen Street School are committed to making your children's learning and well-being our top priorities. Our students are provided with a learning environment that has high expectations academically, socially, and behaviorally. We provide instruction that is both engaging and relevant to our students and the world today. Our mission is to ensure that all students learn to the best of their ability each and every day they are entrusted to our care.

At Helen Street School, each student will be a part of our "S.T.A.R." Program, our Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Program. They will be encouraged to always:

S Be Safe	T Be Trustworthy	A Be Accountable	R Be Respectful
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We encourage parent involvement as we appreciate that you are important partners in the education of your child. Communication is the key. Please keep in close contact with your child's teachers and with me so that we may best support your child. You are always welcome to contact me at 203-407-2030 or kfranklin@hamden.org. We are here for you and your family.

Helen Street School is a wonderful learning community and I feel privileged to be a part of it. Best wishes for a wonderful and successful school year.

Sincerely,

Karen Franklin

Mrs. Karen Franklin, Principal

Hamden Board of Education

Melissa Kaplan, Board Chair	Crystal Dailey	Walter Morton, IV
Réuel Parks, Secretary	Peter Downhour	Kevin Shea
Dr. David Asbery	Mariam Khan	Gary Walsh

Hamden Public Schools

Gary Highsmith	Superintendent
Erin Bailey	Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Schools
Linda Morbidelli	Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools

Hamden Public Schools Mission Statement

The mission of the Hamden Public Schools is to ensure all our students learn to the best of their potential each and every day they are entrusted to our care. We aim to provide challenging, high-quality learning experiences and supports so that all students develop skills, attitudes and practices for academic and life-long success.

Hamden Public Schools Vision Statement

We envision a professional learning culture wherein all members of the school community consistently put the needs of students first and foremost. In such a community, the exclusive focus of all our efforts will be to increase the achievement levels of all students, while simultaneously expanding the knowledge bases of all adult members of the school community.

Hamden District Goals

1. All students will demonstrate accelerated growth in reading with the goal of meeting proficiency by the end of grade three
2. All students will demonstrate accelerated growth in math, with the goal of achieving Algebra I readiness by the end of grade eight
3. Increase student achievement in grades 9-12
4. Reduce student chronic absenteeism districtwide
5. Increase equity districtwide

Important Phone Numbers

Hamden Public Schools	203-407-2000
Helen Street Main Office	203-407-2030
Helen Street Fax	203-407-2052

When school is not in session (before or after school, weekends, holidays or vacations) messages can be left by calling the main number and following the instructions to access the appropriate voicemail box. The appropriate school personnel will get back to you as soon as possible.

Important Links

Hamden Public Schools	https://www.hamden.org
Helen Street School	https://www.hamden.org/helenstreet
Helen Street School PTA	https://www.hamden.org/helenstreet/parentspta
HPS Calendar	https://www.hamden.org/district-information/district-calendar
HPS Lunch Menus	https://www.hamden.org/families/lunchmenu
Community Resources	https://www.hamden.org/families/community
Virtual Bulletin Board	https://www.hamden.org/families/vbb

School Hours

	Arrival	Instruction Begins	Dismissal
Full Day	8:20	8:35	3:24
Scheduled Early Dismissal	8:20	8:35	12:55
Two-Hour Delay	10:20	10:35	3:24

School-Wide Behavior Expectations

S.T.A.R. Program

All students will participate in our STAR Program. STAR is our Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Program. This program includes a set of common guidelines, positive reinforcements, and consequences for all students in each area throughout the building.

At the beginning of the school year each class will have opportunities to learn and practice expectations and procedures in each of these areas so that all students know what is expected at Helen Street School.

Students and families will receive full-sized versions of the matrix below at the start of the school year. Please help us by reinforcing these expectations at home.

Helen Street S.T.A.R. Expectations				
Voice Levels				
0	1	2	3	
No voice	Whisper voice	Speaking voice	Calling voice	
	S Be Safe	T Be Trustworthy	A Be Accountable	R Be Respectful
Hallway & Stairs Voice Level: 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands and feet to yourself Walk on the right side Use walking feet Walk in single file 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk directly to your destination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remember your purpose Use stopping points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to and follow adult directions Keep personal space Treat school property with care
Cafeteria Voice Level: 0-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands and feet to yourself Walking feet Sit on your seat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eat your own food Stick with your lunch choice Stay in your seat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pick up trash in and around your area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to and follow adult directions Use manners Wait patiently and quietly in line Keep personal space
Outdoor Recess Voice Level: 2-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands and feet to yourself Be aware of your surroundings Stay in approved areas Have a safe and fun play time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use equipment properly Follow game rules and be a good sport Clean up and walk to line when the whistle blows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dress for the weather Use self-control Return equipment to proper locations Be a problem solver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to and follow adult directions Include others Take turns Keep personal space
Indoor Recess Voice Level: 1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands and feet to yourself Stay in approved areas Have a safe and fun time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use activity materials properly Follow game rules and be a good sport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use self-control Return activity materials, at first call, to proper locations Be a problem solver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to and follow adult directions Include others Take turns Keep personal space
Arrival Voice Level: 1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands and feet to yourself Use walking feet Walk in a single file line when entering building Use stairs, ramp, and sidewalks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay on school property Use appropriate language Tell adults about unsafe or disrespectful behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dress for the weather Wait for the bell to ring in your grade level's assigned area Arrive on time Throw away trash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to and follow adult directions Keep personal space
Dismissal Voice Level: 1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands and feet to yourself Use walking feet Use stairs, ramp, and sidewalks Cross streets at crosswalks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check out with your teacher Stay with your teacher in your assigned area until you are picked up Leave through correct exit door 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know your dismissal plan Walkers go straight home after checking out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to and follow adult directions Keep personal space

Helen Street S.T.A.R. Expectations

	S Be Safe	T Be Trustworthy	A Be Accountable	R Be Respectful
Assemblies Voice Level: 0-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands and feet to yourself Be aware of your surroundings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay with your group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve yourself fully in each activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to and follow adult directions Give full attention to the presenter Include everyone in each activity Treat equipment with care Keep personal space
School Belongings Voice Level: 0-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands and feet to yourself Walk outside the classroom Keep belongings in their place off the floor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only use your storage area and belongings Use time wisely Ask permission before using common supplies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remember your purpose Keep your area clean Return common supplies to proper locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to and follow adult directions Keep personal space
Bathroom Voice Level: 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wait patiently Walk to the bathroom area and back Ask permission before using the bathroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return to class quickly Tell adults about bathroom concerns Leave the bathroom as clean as you found it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return to class if someone else is already waiting Flush toilet Keep floors and walls dry and clean Wash hands and throw trash away 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be private and allow others to have privacy Use paper towels and toilet paper appropriately Leave door open when done
Technology Voice Level: 0-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands and feet to yourself Carry devices with two hands Keep liquids away from devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use approved websites and apps only Only log in as yourself Tell adults about abuse or misuse of technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use hand sanitizer before use Return equipment to assigned spots Make sure your device is charged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to and follow adult directions Treat equipment with care Keep personal space
Small Groups (outside the classroom) Voice Level: 1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands and feet to yourself If your teacher is not available, return quickly to class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk directly to your group's location Leave the area clean Put your chair back when you leave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask questions and for help if you need it Try your best each and every day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to and follow adult directions Follow directions the first time Keep personal space
Emergency (Fire & Lock Down Drills) Voice Level: 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands and feet to yourself Listen for adult directions Stay silent and calm Walk through classroom, hallways, and in the stairwell 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay with the adult you are closest to when the drill begins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow directions the first time they are given Be patient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to and follow adult directions Keep hands and feet to yourself Keep personal space
Office/ Nurse Voice Level: 0-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands and feet to yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enter and exit quickly Return to class quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay in designated area Be patient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to and follow adult directions Use your manners Wait your turn Keep personal space

Always remember to be KIND!

Arrival and Dismissal Information

ARRIVAL

School opens at 8:20 AM. Helen Street School staff members supervise students during morning arrival, beginning at 8:20 AM. Students should not arrive before 8:20 AM as there is no adult supervision.

Students being dropped off at school should exit the vehicle on the passenger (curb) side. Please do not let children exit vehicles unless the car is adjacent to the curb (not double parked). Parents should remain in the vehicle as staff directs exiting students to the entrance. If a parent needs to exit the vehicle they should park the car outside of the dropoff area on Helen Street so that area can remain clear for student drop-offs. Parking is never permitted in the bus inlet on Pine Rock Avenue.

The playground is not open to students before school. Children and families can walk through the playground area, but are not permitted to stop and play.

Students arriving after 8:35 AM must enter through the main entrance on Helen Street and report to the main office.

DISMISSAL

All students are required to have a Dismissal Plan on file. If you need a form please contact your child's teacher.

Students may only be dismissed to authorized adults, who may be asked to confirm their identity with a government issued photo identification.

Dismissal begins at 3:24.

Grade levels are dismissed from different exits around the school. Please wait patiently in the designated area until a staff member opens the door to begin dismissal.

Early pick-up and dismissal changes:

When it is necessary for a parent to pick up a child prior to 3:00 PM, please note the following procedures. There are no dismissals from the main office after 3:00 PM for safety reasons as our main office can become very busy during school-wide dismissal.

- Please provide a note to your child's teacher stating the date and time for the dismissal as well as the name of the adult authorized to pick up your child.
- The adult picking up the child must report to the main office; students will be called to the main office for early dismissal once the identity of the authorized adult is verified.

If you need to change the dismissal plan for your child, please call the main office at 203-407-2030 (followed by written notice; email is acceptable) before 1:30 PM. The main office will confirm receipt of the email. After 1:30 PM we may not be able to get a message to your child prior to dismissal. This will help alleviate any confusion for students and teachers.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL EXPECTATIONS

Students will have opportunities to practice arrival and dismissal procedures and expectations the first few days of the school year. Students are expected to follow S.T.A.R. Expectations during these times.

Helen Street **S.T.A.R.** Expectations during **Arrival**

Voice Level: I-2

S Be Safe	T Be Trustworthy	A Be Accountable	R Be Respectful
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hands and feet to yourself • Use walking feet • Walk in a single file line when entering building • Use stairs, ramp, and sidewalks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay on school property • Use appropriate language • Tell adults about unsafe or disrespectful behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dress for the weather • Wait for the bell to ring in your grade level's assigned area • Arrive on time • Throw away trash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to and follow adult directions • Keep personal space

Always remember to be KIND!

Helen Street **S.T.A.R.** Expectations during **Dismissal**

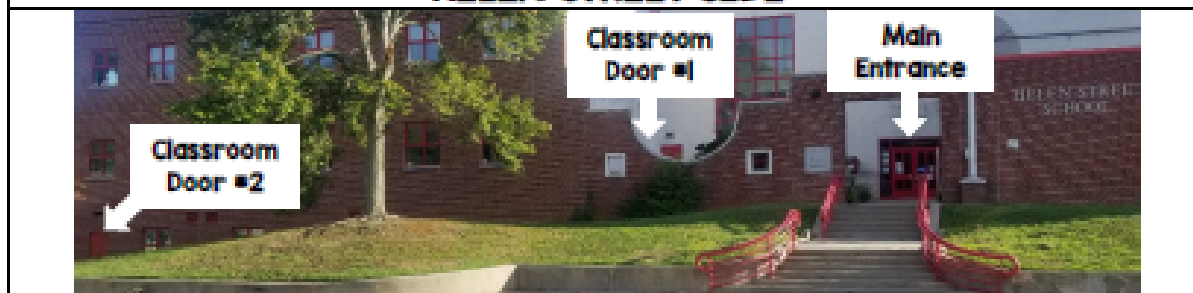
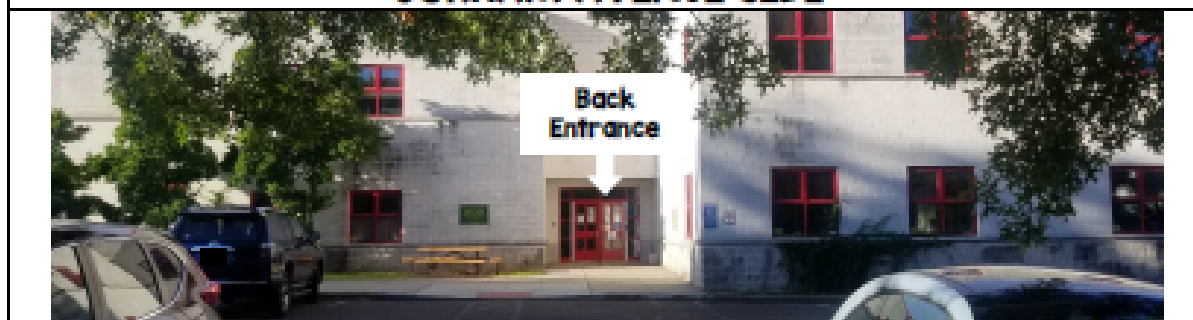
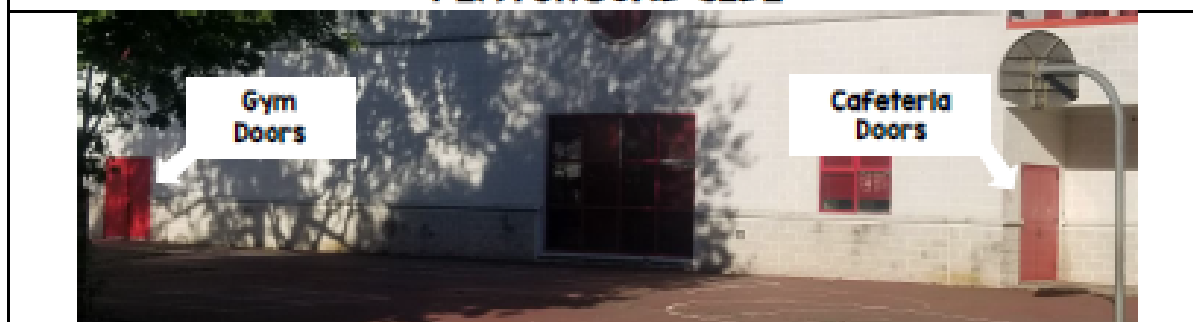
Voice Level: I-2

S Be Safe	T Be Trustworthy	A Be Accountable	R Be Respectful
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hands and feet to yourself • Use walking feet • Use stairs, ramp, and sidewalks • Cross streets at crosswalks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check out with your teacher • Stay with your teacher in your assigned area until you are picked up • Leave through correct exit door 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know your dismissal plan • Walkers go straight home after checking out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to and follow adult directions • Keep personal space

Always remember to be KIND!

ENTRANCE AND EXIT LOCATIONS

School staff will communicate entrance and exit locations for each grade level at the start of the school year. The pictures below show the door locations on each side of the school.

Helen Street School Door Pictures**HELEN STREET SIDE****PINE ROCK AVENUE SIDE****GORHAM AVENUE SIDE****PLAYGROUND SIDE**

Medical Information

School Nurse: Staci Walden 203-407-2030 swalden@hamden.org

ILLNESS

Please follow these guidelines should your child become ill.

1. Any child with an elevated temperature 100 or over should remain home until temperature has been normal without medication for 24 hours.
2. If your child vomits or has diarrhea in the morning before school, he/she should stay home. Generally, children should stay home at least 24 hours after the last episode of fever, vomiting or diarrhea.
3. If your child has a rash, which you would like, checked by the school nurse, please accompany him/her to school in the event exclusion from school, due to suspicion of communicable disease, is necessary.
4. All communicable disease (e.g., strep throat, mononucleosis, head lice, scabies, ringworm, etc.) must be reported to the school nurse even if diagnosed on the weekend or over vacation. It is important to alert parents of other students who may have been exposed in the event another child has similar symptoms. Names of affected children are kept confidential. Without adequate information, however, we cannot prevent unnecessary transmission of communicable diseases in school.
5. Children being treated for a communicable disease (conjunctivitis, impetigo, scabies, and streptococcal infections) may return after a full 24 hours of antibiotic therapy.

MEDICATION

If your child must take medication while at school, including any over the counter drugs, it can be administered under the following conditions only.

1. An authorization form provided by school personnel is completed and signed by both the primary health care provider and parent/guardian (even for over the counter drugs).
2. Medication, not to exceed a 45-day supply, comes to school in the original bottle or container, properly labeled with the child's name; the name, strength and dosage of the medication; time for administration; date and number of prescriptions.
3. An adult delivers the medication to the school nurse or the principal.
4. Children are not allowed to transport medication to and from school.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS

Parents of 6th grade students are reminded that the state-mandated physical is due by June 1st of the 6th grade. If you have any questions or need forms, please call the school nurse.

HEALTH UPDATE

Many times, children will become ill, develop allergies, sustain an injury, have an operation or surgical procedure, obtain a prescription for new glasses or lenses, or receive an immunization

booster during school vacations. Please inform the nurse so that your child's health record can be updated.

Informational Items

ABSENCE

Every attempt should be made to confine necessary appointments to after school, weekends and vacation periods. When a parent determines that an absence is necessary, parents must contact the school before 9:00 AM on the day of the absence by telephoning the school. Voicemail is available for your convenience when school is not in session.

If it is not possible to telephone the school on the day of absence, the parent is requested to send a written excuse to the school on the date of the student's return. The student should submit the excuse directly to the office. Parents should contact the office in order to take advantage of special services such as the collection of homework assignments for the student who must be out several days.

Excused Absence

A student's absence from school shall be considered "excused" if a written documentation of the reason for such absence has been submitted within ten (10) school days of the student's return to school and meet the following criteria:

- A. For absences one through nine, a student's absences from school are considered "excused when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence (with a phone call) and submits appropriate written documentation to school officials
- B. Receive an excused absence for the tenth absences and all absences thereafter, when they are absent from school for the following reasons:
 - Student illness (all student illness must be verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional, including the school's health office, to be deemed excused, regardless of the length of absence);
 - Student's observance of a religious holiday;
 - Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family;
 - Mandated court appearances (additional documentation required);
 - The lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends (no parental documentation is required for this reason);
 - Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators and in accordance with Connecticut Department of Education guidance.
 - Additional 10 days for children of service members.

Unexcused Absence

Unexcused absences are those, which do not fall under any of the excused absences. Such absences may also be reflected in the student's final grade.

The responsibility for makeup of work lies with the student, not the teacher. Unless a student has an extended illness, all makeup privileges must be completed within 5 days after the student returns to school.

Absences, which are the result of school or district disciplinary action, are excluded from the definitions.

Although the school will maintain records and keep parents informed within the limit of its capability, parents and students are expected to keep accurate attendance records and compare them to report cards issued quarterly. Parents are also encouraged to contact the teachers, social workers and administrators to get help in verifying attendance and attendance records at any time during the year.

Chronic Absenteeism

A student whose total number of absences at any time during a school year is equal to or greater than then percent of the total number of days that such student has been enrolled at such school during the school year is considered to be a "chronically absent child," Such a student will be subject to review by the attendance review team and the chronic absenteeism prevention and intervention plan developed by the State Department of Education.

Reminder:

If children are ill with a fever or contagious condition, please keep them home so that they may fully recover and not infect others. If we do not hear from you, we will call you at home or work to verify the absence. If we cannot reach you by phone, we will contact you by mail.

School is in session for 180 days of instruction. Please help your child succeed by making sure that your child is in school to benefit from the instruction. Make-up work can never replace direct instruction from the teacher. Please schedule vacation to coincide with days when school is not in session.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

We are pleased to offer our students access to a computer network, including electronic mail and the Internet. Students who wish to use the computer network must have an Acceptable Use Policy signed by themselves and a parent or guardian. This document will remain a part of a permanent record for your child. The media specialist will review the guidelines of this policy each year with students during one of their initial media classes.

ADDRESS CHANGE

Report change of address, all phone numbers, and emergency contacts promptly. In the event of a new address, parents must provide two proofs of residency. It is critically important to update the emergency contact forms.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

For questions, concerns, or complaints concerning the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991 call Gary Highsmith at 203-407-2000.

Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights
33 Arch Street, Suite 900

Boston, MA 02110-1491

Upon request, this material is available in alternate formats. For matters concerning accommodations, call the Board of Education at 203-407-2000.

ANIMALS

Due to health department regulations, animals are NOT permitted in the classrooms or on school property at any time.

BICYCLES

Fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students may ride bicycles to and from school as long as they follow the safety rules and have permission from a parent/guardian. Students must obtain a bicycle permission form from the main office and return the completed form signed by a parent/guardian. Students must follow all bicycle safety rules and regulations, wear a helmet and properly secure their bicycle outside. The school is not responsible for theft or damage to bicycles while on the school property.

BIRTHDAYS

The staff is committed to recognizing students for a variety of reasons, including birthdays. We must adhere to the district's health and wellness policy and medical guidance to avoid potential medical issues related to allergies. We ask parents that wish to celebrate to respect the following:

- If you send in something to share, **please make sure that it is a non-food item.** Please do not send in any type of food/candy, balloons, flowers, gifts or other items that will interrupt learning. **They will not be allowed to be brought to the classroom.**
- If you have questions, please speak with your child's teacher in advance to determine what will be appropriate for his/her classroom.
- Birthday party invitations will not be distributed at school unless every child in the class is included.

BREAKFAST

School breakfast is FREE for all students at Helen Street School this school year. It is available for students to take to their classroom from 8:20 to 8:35 AM. **There is no breakfast served on delayed openings.**

Applications for Free/Reduced Breakfast and Lunch are available for each student at the beginning of the year. Families are encouraged to complete this application to be eligible for support with other programs, such as musical instrument rentals.

BULLYING

The bullying of any student in the Hamden Public school system is strictly prohibited and such conduct may result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, suspension and or/expulsion from school.

Bullying is defined as an act that is direct or indirect and severe, persistent or pervasive which:

- A. causes physical or emotional harm to an individual, OR**
- B. places an individual in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm, OR**
- C. infringes on the rights and opportunities of an individual at school.**

Bullying can include, but is not limited to written, verbal, electronic communication or a physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, such as RACE, COLOR, RELIGION, ANCESTRY, NATIONAL ORIGIN, GENDER, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY, SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS, ACADEMIC STATUS, PHYSICAL, DEVELOPMENTAL, OR SENSORY DISABILITY, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more characteristics.

Reports of bullying behavior are taken seriously and will be addressed immediately, in accordance with the CT law on Anti-Bullying. Students and parents may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior, and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying to teachers and school administrators. Any report of suspected bullying behavior will be promptly reviewed and parent notification of the outcome given within 48 hours after completion of the investigation. If acts of bullying are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process under Board of Education policy. A communicated threat or a hate crime will be reported to the police.

CELL PHONES/PHONE USE

It is recommended that cell phones remain at home. If brought to school cell phones must be turned off during the instructional day and remain unseen. If a cell phone is seen or heard during the school day, the following will occur in this order:

- First Occurrence: Teacher will confiscate the cell phone and return it to the student at the end of the day.
- Second Occurrence: Teacher will confiscate the phone and turn it into the principal. The student can pick up the phone from the principal at the end of the day.
- Third Occurrence: Teacher will confiscate the phone and turn it into the principal. A parent or guardian must come to claim the phone.

The school is NOT responsible for the loss of or damage to cell phones.

Students **are not allowed** to use the school telephones unless they have permission from the principal. Students are only allowed to use telephones for emergencies. Forgetting materials at home is not an emergency. Students also **will not be called to the main office** to answer a phone call.

CHAPERONING A TRIP

Your child's teacher may reach out to you when there are opportunities to chaperone field trips. You will be asked to sign a chaperone agreement, to acknowledge the responsibilities of a chaperone. Chaperones must be 21 years of age or older. Chaperones may not bring any other children or family members on the trip.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Due to state statutes, school personnel are not allowed to give out the names, addresses or phone numbers of students.

DELAYED OPENINGS AND EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

A delayed opening, early dismissal, or an emergency closing for the day may occur at any time during the school year. These are done for emergency reasons that can be the result of, but are not exclusive to inclement weather. When school is closed for the day, all afternoon and evening activities are canceled except when special permission is granted by the superintendent. On the television and radio the delay or closing is announced as **Hamden Public Schools**. Parents may also check the Hamden Public Schools website for information. Decisions to cancel school, delay the opening or have an early dismissal are made by the Superintendent of Schools. Decisions are made based on weather predictions and road conditions throughout Hamden.

Delayed Opening

A delayed opening means that the school building will open later than usual (90 min. delay: 9:50 AM; 2 hour delay: 10:20 AM). Students should not be dropped off earlier as there is no guaranteed supervision.

Emergency Closing

There is no set time to dismiss school for an **emergency** school closing. An automatic call and/or text message will be made from the district in the event there is an emergency closing so it is imperative that we always have current contact information.

DISTRICT-WIDE TESTING

Hamden Public Schools is mandated to offer the SBAC (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium) assessment in the spring each year to all students in grades 3-6 who meet eligibility requirements. The SBAC is intended to assess student knowledge in the areas of mathematics and reading. In grade 5, students are also assessed utilizing the Next Generation Science Assessment.

Other district-wide assessments are given to students to determine academic progress and to inform teachers who will plan appropriate instruction for students. Concepts About Print (CAP), Fountas & Pinnell Reading Assessment (F&P), Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (Dibels), and Math Benchmark Assessments are some examples of assessment tools.

These assessments may also be used to determine whether a student is in need of SRBI (Scientific Research-Based Intervention). SRBI operates within the general education setting and provides a tiered support system that allows all students to experience continuous growth in any identified areas of weakness in a small group or 1 on 1 setting. You will be notified by letter if your child is included in SRBI supports.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The goal of Hamden Public Schools is to produce graduates who exhibit Dragon PRIDE. As your child moves from elementary, to middle, and then high school, we will focus on creating learning environments that promote the development of these traits.

HAMDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Diversity Statement

We intend to show our Hamden P.R.I.D.E. to showcase and honor the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of all students and staff.



 <p>Persistence</p> <p>We intend to be persistent: confident, adaptable and driven to present and receive materials and activities that are respectful of the diversity in our community inclusive of gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race and culture.</p>	 <p>Responsibility</p> <p>We intend to model responsible language, sharing and dialogue; to lead with a strong moral compass, and be accountable, contributing members of the community. We intend to be fearless, intentional and responsive to issues, within our community and the larger society.</p>	 <p>Inquiry</p> <p>We intend to inquire; to connect, wonder, investigate, construct and express; to appreciate and encourage suggestions.</p>	 <p>Diversity</p> <p>We are diverse and believe that our strength lies in our diversity. By acknowledging and appreciating ourselves and the world around us, we reaffirm that belief.</p>	 <p>Empathy</p> <p>We are empathetic. We intend to identify and understand the perspectives, experiences, and motivations of others. We intend to be kind and open minded.</p>
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DRESS CODE

Students are expected to dress appropriately and safely for school. Children should be comfortable in school, but a child's attire should not be distracting or take away from the learning process. Parents may be called to bring a change of clothing to the school, if a student is wearing inappropriate clothing. Additional information on Hamden's Board of Education dress code policy is available here:

https://www.hamden.org/uploaded/Policies/Series_5000/HAMDEN_5132.pdf

EMERGENCY FORMS

The school must have an emergency form for EVERY student. These are important, since they provide valuable information to the school, particularly in case of an emergency. Please keep them updated during the school year.

FIELD TRIPS

Students will go on field trips throughout the school year. These trips are planned by teachers and designed to enrich the curriculum. Specific objectives are determined in advance and activities are planned both prior to and after the field trip. It is expected that students follow the same standards of behavior on field trips as in school. A signed permission slip from a parent or guardian is required for every student in order to participate in any field trip. Students who demonstrate inappropriate or unsafe behavior in school may be excluded from a trip or may require supervision on the trip by a parent or guardian.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Students will not be denied the opportunity to participate in any class or school sponsored activity because of inability to pay for material fees, transportation costs, admission prices, or any other related expenses. Any parent who needs financial assistance for school activities should contact the principal or social worker to request confidential help.

HOMEWORK

Homework will be assigned in accordance with Hamden Board of Education homework policy guidelines. Additionally:

1. Homework assignments should have an authentic and meaningful focus that is relevant to the learning experiences that take place in the classroom. Students should be committed to their homework. In the case of incomplete homework assignments, teachers will use discretion as to the appropriate and reasonable consequences that students may serve to complete their work.
2. With the exception of reading, long-term projects (i.e., book reports, research projects, make-up work) or other activities requiring a longer process to complete, students will usually not be assigned homework over a weekend.
3. Every attempt will be made to avoid administering any tests on a day following a weekend or holiday vacation.

LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

The library/media center is a place for information and research and books, magazines, technology, and research materials are available to all students. In order to operate efficiently, guidelines must be followed:

1. The library/media center opens and closes with the school day, unless other arrangements have been made.
2. A replacement fee will be charged for books lost, destroyed or not returned.
3. Students must have permission from a teacher to visit the library/ media center.
4. Failure to return borrowed items, or make restitution, may affect a child's ability to borrow books and/or a student's report card being held at the end of the school year until the obligation to the school is met.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found items are located in the main lobby (eyeglasses, house keys and other "valuable" items are kept in the school office). To avoid the loss of personal items, please be sure a student's belongings are clearly marked with his/her name. The lost and found will be cleaned out before the school break in December, April, and at the end of the school year.

LUNCH

School lunch is FREE for all students at Helen Street School this year. Lunch is served in waves by grade level from 11:15 AM to 1:50 PM. Menus are sent home electronically each month. Lunch times are changed on early dismissal days.

Applications for Free/Reduced Breakfast and Lunch are available for each student at the beginning of the year. Families are encouraged to complete this application to be eligible for support with other programs, such as musical instrument rentals.

Helen Street S.T.A.R. Expectations **in the Cafeteria** **Voice Level: 0-2**

S Be Safe	T Be Trustworthy	A Be Accountable	R Be Respectful
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hands and feet to yourself • Walking feet • Sit on your seat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat your own food • Stick with your lunch choice • Stay in your seat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pick up trash in and around your area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to and follow adult directions • Use manners • Wait patiently and quietly in line • Keep personal space

Always remember to be KIND!

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

The Helen Street PTA provides a variety of programs and services to Helen Street School. The PTA works on behalf of its members, providing state and national information, influence and recognition to help unite parents, teachers, and the community for the common good of all children. For more information about the PTA visit the website at <https://www.hamden.org/helenstreet/parentspta>

PARKING

Please do not park in handicapped spaces, reserved spaces, the bus inlet on Pine Rock Avenue, or in front of our neighbors' driveways when you come to the school. Additionally, please do not park in the dropoff zone on Helen Street at arrival and dismissal time. If a car is illegally parked, an announcement may be made within the building for you to move your car before it is towed at your expense.

REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

Report Cards

Report cards give parents a broad view of a student's progress in school based on grade-level learning standards. The report card is directly linked to the various learning experiences in which your child is participating and measures their progress in a variety of areas. Elementary Report Cards are issued three times a year: November, March and June.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences provide parents with detailed and specific information about their child. Below are a few guidelines that you might find helpful in preparing for a conference:

- Make a list of questions or concerns you would like to discuss.
- Talk with your child before you attend.
- Please be on time. Each conference is scheduled for 15 minutes.
- Stress the positives and discuss possible suggestions for improvement.
- Discuss key points with your child when you get home.

Although parent-teacher conferences are officially held in October and March, we encourage you to schedule additional meetings if concerns develop that need additional conversation. Teachers will try to accommodate parents, as best as they can, to find a mutually agreeable time to meet.

RECESS

Recess is an important time when students can socialize with their peers. During this time, students learn how to cooperate with others to organize or create games and activities and converse with friends. Weather permitting, children will have recess outside. Please make sure your child is wearing appropriate clothing and footwear and these articles are clearly labeled. In the event of inclement weather, students will have indoor recess. Students should not bring any toys, games, sports equipment, electronic games or other devices to school for recess.

This will eliminate any difficulty with personal property damage or theft. Although we believe that students need exercise and structured social time, there may be occasions when a student may need an alternative recess placement for safety reasons, at the discretion of the principal.

Helen Street **S.T.A.R.** Expectations during **Outdoor Recess**

Voice Level: 2-3

S Be Safe	T Be Trustworthy	A Be Accountable	R Be Respectful
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hands and feet to yourself • Be aware of your surroundings • Stay in approved areas • Have a safe and fun play time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use equipment properly • Follow game rules and be a good sport • Clean up and walk to line when the whistle blows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dress for the weather • Use self-control • Return equipment to proper locations • Be a problem solver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to and follow adult directions • Include others • Take turns • Keep personal space

Always remember to be KIND!

Helen Street **S.T.A.R.** Expectations during **Indoor Recess**

Voice Level: 1-2

S Be Safe	T Be Trustworthy	A Be Accountable	R Be Respectful
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hands and feet to yourself • Stay in approved areas • Have a safe and fun time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use activity materials properly • Follow game rules and be a good sport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use self-control • Return activity materials, at first call, to proper locations • Be a problem solver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to and follow adult directions • Include others • Take turns • Keep personal space

Always remember to be KIND!

SAFETY

Safety Drills

On occasion, Helen Street School will practice important safety drills including: evacuations, lockdown, shelter in place, and full or partial evacuations. Students will be taught these procedures during the first weeks of school.

Helen Street **S.T.A.R.** Expectations during an **Emergency** Voice Level: 0

S Be Safe	T Be Trustworthy	A Be Accountable	R Be Respectful
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hands and feet to yourself • Listen for adult directions • Stay silent and calm • Walk through classroom, hallways, and in the stairwell 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay with the adult you are closest to when the drill begins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow directions the first time they are given • Be patient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to and follow adult directions • Keep hands and feet to yourself • Keep personal space

Always remember to be KIND!

Weapons

Students are NEVER to bring weapons or any other item that may cause a distraction or harm another person to school. Such items include, but are not limited to: real guns, toy guns, water guns, cap guns, laser pointers, knives, nail clippers, Swiss army knives, fireworks, matches, lighters, drugs, alcohol or cigarettes. Possession of items that can potentially endanger others can lead to severe consequences.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Teachers are trained to recognize learning problems and to seek special help for students when needed. Pupil Personnel Staff (School Psychologist and Social Worker and/or Special Education instructional staff) act as consultants to classroom teachers and work closely with them to provide interventions or individualized educational services for students, as authorized by the Planning and Placement Team (PPT). Parents should keep the school informed of any changes or concerns that may impact their child's performance in school. An appointment can be arranged to speak with an administrator or staff member to discuss support for students, available resources or referrals to agencies that may provide assistance.

Please contact the Principal or Social Worker as soon as possible if your child is experiencing any issue at school that interferes with his or her learning.

VALUABLES

Students are to bring only items that are needed for learning to school. Students should not bring valuables to school such as toys, sentimental jewelry, cameras, hobby collections,

handheld computers, video games, cell phones or other electronic devices. The school is not responsible for loss or damage. Such items will be collected from students and returned only to a parent.

VISITORS

To ensure the safety of all children, all guests entering the school building must sign in at the main office and be prepared to show a government issued photo identification. A visitor's badge must be worn while in the building. Staff personnel will direct guests to the office if the guest is not wearing a badge. Parents are welcome at Helen Street School. As a courtesy, parents must make arrangements with a child's teacher prior to visiting a classroom.

WEBSITE

For up to date information about the school including: announcements, upcoming events, and links to useful sites visit the school website at www.hamden.org/helenstreet frequently.

Helen Street School

Family Handbook 2023-2024 School Year



Mrs. Karen Franklin, Principal

285 Helen Street • Hamden, Connecticut 06514
phone: 203-407-2030 • fax: 203-407-2052
www.hamden.org/helenstreet

The Helen Street School Family Handbook is available digitally on the school website www.hamden.org/helenstreet.

Please review the Handbook online and sign and return the form on the back of this page by Friday, September 8, 2023.

To request a paper copy of the handbook,
email bmacdowall@hamden.org or call the school at 203-407-2030.

Helen Street School Family Handbook **Student & Parent/Guardian Agreement**

Please sign and return this page to your child's teacher to indicate that you have read the Family Handbook by Friday, September 8, 2023.

Students

- ✓ Follow STAR Expectations in all areas of the school
- ✓ Attend school daily and try my best and participate in class every day
- ✓ Treat everyone with respect and take responsibility for my actions and words
- ✓ Get along with my classmates and bring any problems to an adults' attention
- ✓ Read every day in school, complete homework and read every night at home
- ✓ Talk to my family about what I am learning in class
- ✓ Bring home notices and other important information about school activities to your parents/guardians
- ✓ Talk to teachers, parents/guardians or other trusted adult if something is bothering you or you need help

I have read the Helen Street School Student-Family Handbook.

I understand my responsibilities as a student.

Student's Signature

Printed Student Name

Grade

Date

Parent/Guardians

- ✓ Make sure my child is on time for school, attends school daily and has the materials he/she needs
- ✓ Talk to my child about the importance of education and trying his/her best
- ✓ Encourage my child to follow the school's expectations for behavior
- ✓ Monitor homework and provide a quiet space for my child to read nightly
- ✓ Read and respond to notices, forms and notes from the school/teacher
- ✓ Monitor my child's progress and contact the teacher early if concerns arise
- ✓ Attend Report Card conferences
- ✓ Look for notices, messages on ClassDojo, and check the school web-site for information
- ✓ Attend school-related family events and be an active member of the school's PTA

I have read the Helen Street School Family Handbook.

I understand my responsibilities as a parent/guardian.

Parent/Guardian's Signature

Printed Parent/Guardian Name

Date