

August 2022



HAMILTON CENTRAL SCHOOL *NEWSLETTER*

Hamilton Central School • A Professional Learning Community

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Michelle Jacobsen
President

Jennifer Jones
Vice President

Ellen Larson

G. Cory Duclos

Travis Ames

www.hamiltoncentral.org

Special Points of Interest:

Principal's Messages

Director of PPS Message

Student Safety

Annual Notifications

Free & Reduced Meal Info. & Application

Tax Levy

Direct Phone Numbers

Dear Emerald Knight Parents, Students and Community Members:

Welcome back! We hope that you have enjoyed a safe and relaxing summer. We are excited to welcome students back to school and to work with you to provide an excellent educational experience for our students. The district has been a busy place this summer with our summer school programs, several school maintenance projects, and preparing for the upcoming school year. Whether you are new to Hamilton Central School or a returning student/family, we look forward to you being a part of the Emerald Knight family and hope you become involved in our school community.

Our school, recognized by Newsweek and Niche as "One of America's Best Schools," profits from a committed staff, involved parents, and enthusiastic students. It is our mission to educate every child, every day.

There are many opportunities for students at HCS to demonstrate excellence. It is our goal to challenge each student with a rigorous educational environment that allows them to grow in their academic abilities, extra-curricular pursuits and social-emotional skills. It is critical that HCS students graduate with the skills to pursue and achieve their lifelong dreams and to be lifelong learners.

We ask that you, the parents, join us in encouraging your children to view school as an opportunity to enhance their personal growth and create choices for their future.

Our faculty and staff consider it a tremendous responsibility and an honor to be part of your child's present and future and will work diligently to provide a year of learning, growth and accomplishments. We look forward to working with you to meet the needs of our multi-talented student body. Best wishes to all for a productive and successful school year.

Together, we are #HCSstrong!

William Dowsland

William Dowsland • Superintendent of School





MATTER OF PRINCIPAL

Dear HCS Families,

It is that time of year again, and I want to take a moment to welcome everyone back! It has been a busy summer of construction and preparing for the 22-23 school year.

One of the things I remember best about my time as a student is the start of a new school year. I always felt optimism and excitement as September approached. I know not everyone shares the same level of enthusiasm, but I would encourage our students to think about the opportunities that lie ahead of them. Everyone has a chance to start anew, try something different, and make a positive impact on our school community.

I hope you agree that HCS is a special place. What makes it special is the attitudes and effort of the people involved. Here are a few suggestions for your children to make the most of this year:

- Set personal goals and build habits that will lead to your academic success
- Go out of your way to help someone who might be having a bad day
- Recognize a problem and work to make it better
- See something positive in every day

All of us have the opportunity to have a great year and to make a positive impact on others. I hope we can all think about this as the year approaches and do something (no matter how small) to make HCS a better place for everyone!

Two very important aspects of a successful school experience are home/school communication and student engagement. With that in mind, please read the information below:

Google Classroom and Daily/Weekly Guardian Summaries

I have found that one of the best ways of keeping up to date with Google Classroom for my own children is downloading the app on my phone and having them sign in with their usernames and passwords. The passwords are saved, so you only need to enter them once. After that you can open the app any time and toggle between your children's accounts. Each child's account will display a number of different classes. By clicking on each class, you can check upcoming assignments, missing work, grades, etc.

Google Classroom also offers an email update called the daily or weekly summary. This allows you to receive an email every afternoon - or once per week -

containing upcoming assignments and missing work. If you have any concerns about your child falling behind, I recommend the daily summary. (To change the frequency, scroll to the bottom of any summary email and click Settings.) Please note that summary emails do not contain grades. To check grades, you can use the app as described above.

If you have not received summaries in the past and would like to begin receiving them, please contact one of your child's teachers and they can invite you to join Google Classroom as a guardian. You will then receive an automated email asking if you accept the invitation.

School-Wide Announcements

HCS will continue using ParentSquare, which we began using in June. If you have an account, you will receive the morning announcements (Daily Bulletin) and other information.

Please check your notification settings and make sure they are set to your preference. Log into parentsquare.com and choose "My Account" followed by "Notification Settings". You may see up to three groups: ES (Elementary School), JSHS (Jr-Sr High School) and District. For each of these groups, you can choose to receive messages instantly or in an evening digest. You can also choose to be notified via email, text, or app.

SchoolTool Parent Portal & Student Portal

SchoolTool is the place to find schedules, progress reports, report cards, etc. Parents/guardians should all have an account, and students have their own accounts. If you have trouble logging in, please reach out to our technology director, Mr. Rogers, at crogers@hamiltoncentral.org. Here is a link to SchoolTool: <https://schooltool.hamiltoncentral.org/>

Contact Information

Please make sure that your contact information on file at the school is correct. We may send information to families through email, text, automated phone call, or paper mail.

Extracurricular Activities

I encourage all of our students to join one or more clubs or sports. HCS has a long-standing tradition of an active student body. Our students make HCS a great place to learn, and their involvement in activities is one of the contributing factors. By engaging in extracurriculars, students build bet-

continued on page 3



ter connections with their peers, adults, and the school as a whole. Parents and guardians, please encourage your children to get involved. A list of our after-school activities can be found here: <https://www.hamiltoncentral.org/Page/197>

Finally, I would like to welcome three familiar faces! Ms. Tori Kowalski will be moving into the secondary art position this year. Ms. Haley Furner, who worked alongside Ms. Marcellus last year, will be our new school nurse. Ms. Renee Merkt will be a teacher on special assignment as the Coordinator of Social-Emotional Learning and Family Engagement.

I would also like to welcome Ms. Denise Whalen, who is new to HCS. She will be teaching our elementary and middle school art students.

As always, please reach out if you have any questions or concerns as the year progresses. I look forward to a great year for everyone in our HCS community!

Mark Arquiatt

Mark Arquiatt • Secondary Principal
marquiatt@hamiltoncentral.org • (315) 824-6320

FFA Update

This summer Hamilton FFA has been very busy! Whether it was helping plant 2,200 poinsettias at Morrisville State College, or setting up our FFA booth at the New York State Fair, or even having students attend the NY FFA ACCESS conference to see which SUNY colleges they may be interested in. Students always made sure that they were participating in as many FFA activities as they could throughout the summer. Here's what our chapter has been up to this summer:

Starting in June we harvested garlic from our school's garden with the help of some HCS students! This summer we've also planted and harvested cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, strawberries, zucchini, and broccoli.

July was a very busy month for HCS students and members! The first week in July, 25 HCS students headed up to Camp Oswegatchie to enjoy some camp activities and fun! Students were able to experience the fun of mountain biking, kayaking, high ropes challenges, archery, low ropes activities, friendship bracelet making, and more! Even more exciting news, our very own Morgan Craven was at camp for week two! She was there as a New York State FFA Officer and attending Camp Oswegatchie was her very first duty! Additionally, HCS was proud to say that we had the Camp Oswegatchie "Camper Of The Week." Congratulations Thomas Roy on a much deserved honor!

Also in July we had a stand at the Hamilton Farmers Market! Students volunteering helped sell eggs, plants and flowers, student made cutting boards, and more!

Four of our HCS students also attended WLC (Washington Leadership Conference). At WLC students created a "**Living to Serve Plan**" to implement into their communities; stay tuned on lots of updates and implementation of these throughout the upcoming year! Students were also able to experience lots of the sites in Washington DC! Additionally, Morgan attended State Officer Summit training in Washington, DC where she worked to better develop her leadership and advocacy skills for agriculture and FFA!

In August some of our HCS students attended ACCESS (Agricultural College & Career Experience for Student Success) to learn about different SUNY schools with agriculture programs! Students attended: Paul Smith's College, Cornell University, SUNY Morrisville, SUNY Delhi, SUNY Cobleskill, and SUNY Alfred!

Our Hamilton FFA Chapter Sentinel, Coy Gilchrist competed in the New York FFA Association Welding Competition and placed fifth in the state; congratulations Coy!

Also in August, our Hamilton FFA chapter officers started training for this year! They developed a contract for themselves for the year, completed the program of activities for this year, and decided on the timeline for completion this year. Our chapter officers also had professional photos taken, then headed up to an escape room for some team building in Syracuse!





continued from page 3

Students competing in upcoming New York State FFA Association contests being held at the NY State Fair have been busy practicing also. Wildlife ID, Tree ID, and Environmental Science Contest participants practiced with SUNY Morrisville Professor Snyder to prepare them for their contest! FFA members also headed to Morrisville Equine Center for horse judging too with Professor Michelle Nyberg!

Some of our HCS students also helped plant poinsettias at SUNY Morrisville in August! This year students planted 2,200 poinsettias! We can't wait to bring home our poinsettia and see all the awesome new varieties and colors we will have in our HCS greenhouse this year!

Hamilton FFA members also went to the New York State Fair to help set up our booth in the FFA building! The theme we chose this year was "Animal Science Barnyard." Make sure to stop by and check it out!

Upcoming, the Hamilton FFA has many students competing in contests at the New York State fair, students volunteering at the Dairy Cow Birthing Center and at the dairy products building which are also located at the New York State fair!



FROM THE DIRECTOR OF PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES

Welcome back!

As director of Pupil Personnel Services (PPS), I oversee a department that consists of all personnel that help students and families who need more than what general education offers. Another way of saying this is, we assist students who need to have their education adapted or modified to meet their needs. These services include, but are not limited to:

- Special Education (CSE and CPSE)
- Homeless Students (McKinney-Vento)
- Response to Intervention (RtI)
- English Language Learners
- 504 Plans
- Homebound Instruction

All Related Support Services:

- Psychological Services
- Counseling
- Speech/Hearing Services
- Occupational Therapy
- Behavior Consultation
- Vision Services
- Physical Therapy
- Adaptive Physical Education
- Skilled Nursing Care

If you have questions or concerns about any of the services listed, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or any person in this department. Personnel in the PPS department includes teachers and providers of all special education services, counselors, school psychologist, ELL teachers, and all aides and teacher assistants that work with students with an IEP.

This school year, our department is expanding our services for students that have social and emotional (SEL) needs. Ms. Renee Merkt will be joining our SEL team and will be working with the entire HCS community to strengthen the support we offer our students. Additionally, we are working to hire a behavior support specialist and a new school psychologist.

As I enter my 16th year as an administrator for the Hamilton Central School District, I must express my appreciation for working in this wonderful community. Parent participation has always been a strength here and we are grateful to have this support.

Thank you,

Kevin Ellis

Kevin Ellis • Director of PPS



2022-2023 Income Eligibility Income Guidelines

REDUCED PRICE ELIGIBILITY INCOME CHART

Total Family Size	Annual	Monthly	Twice per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly
1	\$ 25,142	\$ 2,096	\$ 1,048	\$ 967	\$ 484
2	\$ 33,874	\$ 2,823	\$ 1,412	\$ 1,303	\$ 652
3	\$ 42,606	\$ 3,551	\$ 1,776	\$ 1,639	\$ 820
4	\$ 51,338	\$ 4,279	\$ 2,140	\$ 1,975	\$ 988
5	\$ 60,070	\$ 5,006	\$ 2,503	\$ 2,311	\$ 1,156
6	\$ 68,802	\$ 5,734	\$ 2,867	\$ 2,647	\$ 1,324
7	\$ 77,534	\$ 6,462	\$ 3,231	\$ 2,983	\$ 1,492
8	\$ 86,266	\$ 7,189	\$ 3,595	\$ 3,318	\$ 1,659
*Each add'l person add	\$ 8,732	\$ 728	\$ 364	\$ 336	\$ 168

How to Apply: To get free or reduced price meals for your children carefully complete one application following the instructions for your household and return it to the designated office listed on the application. If you now receive SNAP, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) for any children or participate in the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), the application must include the children's names, the household SNAP, TANF or FDPIR case number and the signature of an adult household member. All children should be listed on the same application. If you do not list a SNAP, TANF or FDPIR case number for any household member, the application must include the names of everyone in the household, the amount of income each household member, and how often it is received and where it comes from. It must include the signature of an adult household member and the last four digits of that adult's social security number or check the box if the adult does not have a social security number. **An application for free and reduced price benefits cannot be approved unless complete eligibility information is submitted, as indicated on the application and in the instructions.** Contact your local Department of Social Services for your SNAP or TANF case number or complete the income portion of the application. No application is necessary if the household was notified by the SFA their children have been directly certified. If the household is not sure if their children have been directly certified, the household should contact the school.

Reporting Changes: The benefits that you are approved for at the time of application are effective for the entire school year and up to 30 operating days into the new school year (or until a new eligibility determination is made, whichever comes first). You no longer need to report changes for an increase in income or decrease in household size, or if you no longer receive SNAP.

Income Exclusions: The value of any child care provided or arranged, or any amount received as payment for such child care or reimbursement for costs incurred for such care under the Child Care Development (Block Grant) Fund should not be considered as income for this program.

Reduced Price Eligible Students: Beginning July 1, 2019, students in New York State that are approved for reduced price meals will receive breakfast and lunch meals at no charge.

In the operation of child feeding programs, no child will be discriminated against because of race, sex, color, national origin, age or disability

Meal Service to Children With Disabilities: Federal regulations require schools and institutions to serve meals at no extra charge to children with a disability which may restrict their diet. A student with a disability is defined in 7CFR Part 15b.3 of Federal regulations, as one who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual, a record of such an impairment or being regarded as having such an impairment. Major life activities include but are not limited to: functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working. You must request meal modifications from the school and provide the school with medical statement from a State licensed healthcare professional. If you believe your child needs substitutions because of a disability, please get in touch with us for further information, as there is specific information that the medical statement must contain.

Confidentiality: The United States Department of Agriculture has approved the release of students names and eligibility status, without parent/guardian consent, to persons directly connected with the administration or enforcement of federal education programs such as Title I and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which are United States Department of Education programs used to determine areas such as the allocation of funds to schools, to evaluate socioeconomic status of the school's attendance area, and to assess educational progress. Information may also be released to State health or State education programs administered by the State agency or local education agency, provided the State or local education agency administers the program, and federal State or local nutrition programs similar to the National School Lunch Program. Additionally, all information contained in the free and reduced price application may be released to persons directly connected with the administration or enforcement of programs authorized under the National School Lunch Act (NSLA) or Child Nutrition Act (CNA); including the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, the Special Milk Program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program and the Special

Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women Infants and Children (WIC); the Comptroller General of the United States for audit purposes, and federal, State or local law enforcement officials investigating alleged violation of the programs under the NSLA or CNA.

Reapplication: You may apply for benefits any time during the school year. Also, if you are not eligible now, but during the school year become unemployed, have a decrease in household income, or an increase in family size you may request and complete an application at that time.

The disclosure of eligibility information not specifically authorized by the NSLA requires a written consent statement from the parent/guardian. We will let you know when your application is approved or denied.

Sincerely,
Andrea Cass, Food Service Manager



Nondiscrimination Statement: This explains what to do if you believe you have been treated unfairly.

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **mail:**
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**
program.intake@usda.gov



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Date Withdrew _____

F ____ R ____ D ____

2022-2023 Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals

To apply for free and reduced price meals for your children, read the instructions on the back, complete **only one** form for your household, sign your name and **return it to the address listed below**. Call **(315-824-6382)**, if you need help. Additional names may be listed on a separate paper.

Return Completed Applications to: **Andrea Cass**
Hamilton Central School
47 W. Kendrick Ave, Hamilton, NY 13346

1. List all children in your household who attend school:

Student Name	School	Grade/Teacher	Foster Child	Homeless Migrant, Runaway
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. SNAP/TANF/FDPIR Benefits:

If anyone in your household receives either SNAP, TANF or FDPIR benefits, list their name and CASE # here. Skip to Part 4, and sign the application.

Name: _____ CASE #: _____

3. Report all income for ALL Household Members (Skip this step if you answered 'yes' to step 2)

All Household Members (including yourself and all children that have income).

List all Household members not listed in Step 1 (including yourself) even if they do not receive income. For each Household Member listed, if they do receive income, report total income for each source in whole dollars only. If they do not receive income from any other source, write '0'. If you enter '0' or leave any fields blank, you are certifying (promising) that there is no income to report.

Name of household member	Earnings from work before deductions <i>Amount / How Often</i>	Child Support, Alimony <i>Amount / How Often</i>	Pensions, Retirement Payments <i>Amount / How Often</i>	Other Income, Social Security <i>Amount / How Often</i>	No Income
	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	\$ _____ / _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

Total Household Members (Children and Adults)

*Last Four Digits of Social Security Number: XXX-XX-__ __ __ __

I do not have a SS#

*When completing section 3, an adult household member must provide the last four digits of their Social Security Number (SS#) or mark the "I do not have a SS#" before the application can be approved.

4. Signature: An adult household member must sign this application before it can be approved.

I certify (promise) that all the information on this application is true and that all income is reported. I understand that the information is being given so the school will get federal funds; the school officials may verify the information and if I purposely give false information, I may be prosecuted under applicable State and federal laws, and my children may lose meal benefits.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Email Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Home Address: _____

5. Ethnicity and Race are optional; responding to this section does not affect your children's eligibility for free or reduced price meals.

Ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino Not Hispanic or Latino

Race (Check one or more): American Indian or Alaskan Native Asian Black or African American Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Island White

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE – FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY

Annual Income Conversion (Only convert when multiple income frequencies are reported on application)
 Weekly X 52; Every Two Weeks (bi-weekly) X 26; Twice Per Month X 24; Monthly X 12

SNAP/TANF/Foster

Income Household: Total Household Income/How Often: _____ / _____ Household Size: _____

Free Meals Reduced Price Meals Denied/Paid

Signature of Reviewing Official _____ Date Notice Sent: _____

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

To apply for free and reduced price meals, complete only one application for your household using the instructions below. Sign the application and return the application to Andrea Cass. If you have a foster child in your household, you may include them on your application. A separate application is not needed. Call the school if you need help: (315) 824-6382. Ensure that all information is provided. Failure to do so may result in denial of benefits for your child or unnecessary delay in approving your application.

PART 1 ALL HOUSEHOLDS MUST COMPLETE STUDENT INFORMATION. DO NOT FILL OUT MORE THAN ONE APPLICATION FOR YOUR HOUSEHOLD.

- (1) Print the names of the children, including foster children, for whom you are applying on one application.
- (2) List their grade and school.
- (3) Check the box to indicate a foster child living in your household, or if you believe any child meets the description for homeless, migrant, runaway (a school staff will confirm this eligibility).

PART 2 HOUSEHOLDS GETTING SNAP, TANF OR FDPIR SHOULD COMPLETE PART 2 AND SIGN PART 4.

- (1) List a current SNAP, TANF or FDPIR (Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations) case number of anyone living in your household. The case number is provided on your benefit letter.
- (2) An adult household member must sign the application in PART 4. SKIP PART 3. Do not list names of household members or income if you list a SNAP case number, TANF or FDPIR number.

PART 3 ALL OTHER HOUSEHOLDS MUST COMPLETE THESE PARTS AND ALL OF PART 4.

- (1) Write the names of everyone in your household, whether or not they get income. Include yourself, the children you are applying for, all other children, your spouse, grandparents, and other related and unrelated people in your household. Use another piece of paper if you need more space.
- (2) Write the amount of current income each household member receives, before taxes or anything else is taken out, and indicate where it came from, such as earnings, welfare, pensions and other income. If the current income was more or less than usual, write that person's usual income. **Specify how often this income amount is received: weekly, every other week (bi-weekly), 2 x per month, monthly. If no income, check the box.** The value of any child care provided or arranged, or any amount received as payment for such child care or reimbursement for costs incurred for such care under the Child Care and Development Block Grant, TANF and At Risk Child Care Programs should **not** be considered as income for this program.
- (3) Enter the total number of household members in the box provided. This number should include all adults and children in the household and should reflect the members listed in PART 1 and PART 3.
- (4) The application must include the last four digits only of the social security number of the adult who signs **PART 4** if Part 3 is completed. If the adult does not have a social security number, check the box. **If you listed a SNAP, TANF or FDPIR number, a social security number is not needed.**
- (5) An adult household member must sign the application in PART 4.

OTHER BENEFITS: Your child may be eligible for benefits such as Medicaid or Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). To determine if your child is eligible, program officials need information from your free and reduced price meal application. Your written consent is required before any information may be released. Please refer to the attached parent Disclosure Letter and Consent Statement for information about other benefits.

USE OF INFORMATION STATEMENT

Use of Information Statement: The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act requires the information on this application. You do not have to give the information, but if you do not submit all needed information, we cannot approve your child for free or reduced price meals. You must include the last four digits of the social security number of the primary wage earner or other adult household member who signs the application. The social security number is not required when you apply on behalf of a foster child or you list a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) case number or other FDPIR identifier for your child or when you indicate that the adult household member signing the application does not have a social security number. We will use your information to determine if your child is eligible for free or reduced price meals, and for administration and enforcement of the lunch and breakfast programs. We may share your eligibility information with education, health, and nutrition programs to help them evaluate, fund, or determine benefits for their programs, auditors for program reviews, and law enforcement officials to help them look into violations of program rules.

DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-26-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **mail:**
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**
program.intake@usda.gov





FROM THE ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL

Dear HCS Families and Community Members,

The signs that fall is right around the corner have started to pop up around us; pumpkins for sale by the roadside, a patch of orange hiding in the green leaves of the maple tree, and bins of yellow pencils for sale in our local stores. These indicators bring with them the excitement of welcoming students, families, teachers, and staff to the start of the 2022-23 school year on Wednesday, September 7, 2022. I hope that you have had the opportunity to enjoy our beautiful summer weather and are ready to jump back into our school community here at Hamilton Elementary School.

I would like to welcome all families and students who are new to the Hamilton community to attend our New Family Orientation on August 31, 2022 at 5:00. You are invited to learn about programs, policies, and services as well as take a tour of the elementary school. I'm looking forward to meeting each of you and answering any questions that you may have.

I would like to extend a huge thank you to the faculty and staff members that have worked tirelessly over the summer to make sure we are ready for the new school year. Many of our classrooms have been renovated, cleaned and organized to better support the needs of students. Teachers have attended virtual training in the Reading and Writing Workshop model with colleagues nationwide among other professional development programs. Faculty members have worked to develop curriculum, build enrichment programs, and engage in their own education that will benefit learners in the classroom.

We are excited to welcome some new teachers to our elementary team. Jessica Ames will be the new elementary reading teacher bringing a wealth of knowledge in

the field of literacy education, most recently teaching at Morrisville-Eaton Central School. Denise Whalen joins us as the elementary art teacher. She comes to us with many years of experience as an art teacher in the Canastota School District. Jeremy West will be our elementary physical education teacher as he returns to upstate New York from Oregon where he was a physical education teacher. Ashley Sirtoli joins the Special Education Department after serving as a long-term substitute in the same capacity during this previous school year. Sarah Wayland-Smith will be teaching third grade as Renee Merkt moves into the role of Coordinator of Social Emotional Learning and Family Engagement.

Please be sure to note that our Open House will be held on Thursday, September 29, 2022 from 6:30-7:30. Prior to Open House at 5:30 will be an AIS/RtI and Testing Parent Meeting and at 6:00 will be a Library Informational Meeting. We hope that you will be able to join us!

I recently read the following quote that I'd like to share with you: "Sometimes we're all too quick to count down the days that we forget to make the days count." I'm looking forward to working together as we strive collaboratively to make each day one that offers the opportunity for individual and community growth. I encourage you to reach out to me at (315) 824-6330 or at hthomas@hamiltoncentral.org to share your questions, thoughts or concerns. Let's make each day count!

All the best,

Heather Thomas

Heather Thomas • Hamilton Elementary Principal

OUR SCHOOL IS USING PARENTSQUARE!

Dear Parents & Guardians,

We are excited to let you know that this year we'll be using ParentSquare to communicate with you at the school, and in your classrooms and groups.

ParentSquare provides a simple and safe way for everyone at school to connect.

With ParentSquare you'll be able to:

- Receive all district, school and classroom communication via email, text, or app
- View the school and classroom calendar and RSVP for events
- Easily sign up to volunteer and/or bring items
- Securely receive report cards, IEPs and other important student documents

Activate your Account

You will soon receive an invitation email or text to join ParentSquare. Please click the link to activate your account. It takes less than a minute.

You can use ParentSquare on any device. You can download the free mobile app for iOS or Android or use the desktop version at www.parentsquare.com.

Our goal is for every family to join ParentSquare and engage with our school community. Please feel free to ask me any questions.

Thank you so much!

Chris Rogers

Christopher Rogers • Director of Technology





Notification of Teacher Qualifications:

In accordance with the No Child Left Behind Act, parents are entitled to information regarding the professional qualification of their child’s classroom teacher. You may receive information by contacting the district office. The information will include:

- whether the teacher has met NYS certification requirements for the grade levels and subject areas in which he/she provides instruction;
- whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional conditions by which NYS certification requirements have been waived;
- the baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree; and
- whether the child is provided services by teacher assistants and, if so, their qualifications.

Dignity for All Students Act:

The Dignity for All Students act, or DASA, was enacted by the New York State Assembly and went into effect in 2012. It protects students in New York public schools from harassment, discrimination and bullying by other students or school employees. It provided that no student

shall be subjected to discrimination based on his or her actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, weight, sexual orientation, sexual identity, or sex. DASA was amended in July 2013 to include Cyberbullying, which is defined as harassment or bullying by any form of electronic communication, and includes incidents occurring off school property that create, or would foreseeably create, a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment. DASA explicitly states that bullying, taunting, and intimidation on these protected grounds are all forms of harassment.

Dignity Act Coordinators: Mr. Matthew Crumb as the District-wide, Mr. Mark Arquiett, Mr. Kevin Ellis and Ms. Heather Thomas as the Building-wide DASA Coordinators.

FERPA: Access to Student Records:

Release of Student Directory Information: This notice is to inform parents or eligible students of their right to refuse the release of student directory information and indicates a time period for their response. Following such public notice and a reasonable response period, the District may release such information to an outside group without individual consent. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) defines student directory information as the following: name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height (if members of athletic teams), degrees and awards received, and the name of

the educational agency or institution previously attended by the student. If any parent would like to request such directory information NOT be released for the child, such request shall be filed, in writing, with the principal of the school having the record with a copy sent to the superintendent.

Consent for Use of Photographs/Videos:



Throughout the school year, photographs or videos may be taken of students for use in district-produced publications, websites and Facebook or by the news media. If you do not wish to have your child photographed or videotaped, please indicate this, in writing, to the principal of the school having the record with a copy sent to the superintendent.

(Names of students in videos or photographs are not published within district publications.)

District Policies

All district policies can be found on the district website but these are required policies that are to be noted in a mailing. Please take a minute to view them on the website.

- #0030 Drug Free Workplace
- #1014 Code of Conduct
- #4330 Investments
- #4510 Purchasing
- #5400 Internet Safety
- #5430 Data Security Breach
- #5662 School Food Service Program & Meal Charge





Pesticide Notification:



New York State law requires that schools and BOCES maintain a list of staff and parents who wish to receive written notice 48 hours prior to a pesticide application at our facility. If you wish to be included on the School District Notification List, please contact the Business Office at 824-6372. You will then receive advance notification of an application of a pesticide product covered by notification requirements, except in the event of an emergency application in response to a threat to public health.

Code of Conduct:

The Hamilton Central School District is committed to providing a safe and orderly learning environment in which students may receive quality educational services without disruption or interference. Responsible behavior by students, teachers, personnel, parents and other visitors is essential to achieving this goal.

The Board of Education has adopted a district Code of Conduct. The code applies to all students, school personnel, parents and other visitors when on Hamilton Central School District property or attending a school function. The Code of Conduct policy can be found on our website at:

www.hamiltoncentral.org.

Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters:

Pursuant to the federal No Child Left Behind Act, the school district must disclose to military recruiters and institutions of higher learning, upon request, the names, addresses and telephone numbers of our high school students. However, the district must also notify parents of their rights and the rights of their children to request, in writing, that the district NOT release such information if it is requested.

Parents, or students who are at least 18 years old, wishing to exercise their option to withhold their consent to the release of the above information to military recruiters and institutions of higher learning, must submit their request, in writing, to the secondary principal's office.

Use of School Facilities:

Organizations who hope to use the facilities of the school district may obtain a Building Use Form from the main office. Depending on the nature of activity, a certificate of insurance may be required. A custodian must be on duty when the facilities are used. Groups may be charged a fee for the use, depending on the date, time and nature of the event. Please make plans and complete an application well in advance of the date your group may wish to use the facilities.

The building is not available for use on holidays, snow days, Sundays or other special days.

Early School Closing:

If it should be necessary to close school before the usual time, it is important for your child to know what to do. This is especially important if both parents work and there is no one to look after your child if there is an early dismissal. Please discuss this possibility with your child. All after-school activities are canceled when school is dismissed early. Please be sure that your contact information is up-to-date.

Snow Days:

In the event of inclement weather or mechanical breakdown, school may be closed or delayed. Notice of such changes shall be carried over the radio,



television and our Global Connect phone call system. Be sure that your contact information is current with the District.

Other district information/policies can be found on our website:

www.hamiltoncentral.org

Hamilton Central School

47 West Kendrick Avenue
Hamilton, NY 13346

"A Professional Learning Community"

Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
Hamilton, NY
13346

Postal Customer Rural Route or Box Holder



SCHOOL OPENS FOR STUDENTS ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7TH

TAX LEVY

At an August Board of Education meeting, the tax levy in the amount of **\$8,049,112** was approved for 2022-23. This amount was the same as projected last spring in the proposed budget, and subsequently approved by the voters. It represents a **2.95%** increase over last year's levy. The tax rates for individual district residents will vary depending upon any changes in assessments or equalization rates, within a particular township.

School tax bills will be mailed at the end of August. If you do not receive your tax bill by the second week of September, **please call (315) 824-6310** or access the website noted below.

AGAIN THIS YEAR: You can now access your tax bill either at www.infotaxonline.com, click on Hamilton and input your last name or at www.hamiltoncentral.org, click on the District tab, click on Tax Info, click on Access Your Tax Info. You will be able to print, view and see when your payment has been posted.

DIRECT PHONE NUMBERS:

Provided below are direct phone numbers to assist you in contacting the person to whom you wish to speak.

Superintendent/District Office	824-6310	Athletic Director	824-6320
Secondary Principal/Main Office/Purchasing .	824-6320	Transportation Department	824-6392
Elementary Office	824-6330	Maintenance Department	824-6342
Business Manager	824-6372	Special Education Department	824-6350
District Treasurer	824-6370	Cafeteria	824-6382
Technology Department	824-6388	Receptionist/Attendance/Main Entrance.	824-6300
HS/MS Counseling Office	824-6327	Tax Collector	824-6310
School Nurse	824-6340		

PLEASE NOTE

As per New York State Law, parents who wish to request alternate transportation routes, for the purposes of child care, MUST do so before

April 1st of the preceding year.