



Hillside Elementary School

120 Lefurgy Avenue
Hastings-on-Hudson, New York 10706
Tel: (914) 478-6270 Fax: (914) 478-6279
www.hohschools.org



2022 National Blue Ribbon School

Amy Cazes, Principal
cazesa@hohschools.org

Michael LaRocco, Assistant Principal
laroccom@hohschools.org

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Dear Hillside Families,

It is with deep sadness that we share the news of the passing of Lisa Amster, a dedicated first-grade teaching assistant in Ms. Reigner and Ms. Carrasquillo's classroom. Lisa was a cherished member of our school community, and her kindness, care, and hard work made a positive impact on both students and staff alike.

During this difficult time, our thoughts are with Lisa's family, friends, neighbors, and everyone who had the privilege of working with her.

We understand that children may have questions or feel upset about this loss. We want to reassure you that we will handle the news in an age-appropriate and compassionate way. Tomorrow, the first-grade students in Ms. Reigner and Ms. Carrasquillo's classroom will be informed of her passing by their teachers and mental health staff. We will be providing a supportive environment where students can express their feelings, ask questions, and receive comfort.

For our families who may wish to discuss this topic at home, we've compiled some helpful resources for talking to children about loss:

1. **PBS Kids: Talking to Kids About Death**

This [website](#) provides advice and resources to approach the topic with young children.

2. **The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)**

NASP offers specific [guidance](#) on helping children cope with death and loss in age-appropriate ways.

3. **Sesame Street: When Families Grieve**

Sesame Street has developed a helpful [resource](#) for children about grief, including a video.

If you notice that your child is having difficulty processing this news, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We are here to help. We also encourage you to reach out to our school counselor and psychologists, who are available to support you and your child during this time.

As we move forward, we will continue to honor Lisa's memory and the positive influence she had on our school. We appreciate the care and understanding of our community as we navigate this loss together.

Sincerely,

Amy Cazes
Principal

Michael LaRocco
Assistant Principal