



Thrasher Elementary School Handbook

Thrasher's mission, through high expectations, is to develop children with active and creative minds, compassion for others, and the courage to act on their beliefs.

School Philosophy

Education is the teaching and learning of academic and living skills which will enable individuals to function in a happy, self-enhancing manner as a positive member of society.

Education is best accomplished in an atmosphere of success, happiness, cleanliness, warmth, regular time schedules, and known adult figures. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in the total education process.

School of Excellence
Blue Ribbon School
Tennessee Reward School

Vision of Thrasher Elementary School

AT THRASHER, WE ARE DEDICATED TO THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF TEACHING AND LEARNING WHERE...

Students:

- Are independently and collaboratively engaged in learning, creating, and problem-solving
- Think critically and analytically
- Effectively use technology as a tool for learning and communicating
- Lead their learning through personal and collaborative goal setting

Teachers:

- Build on their own teaching strengths to create rigorous and meaningful learning experiences
- Effectively use technology as a tool for learning and communicating
- Communicate effectively in speaking and writing
- Share in Thrasher's leadership and decision-making
- Embody pedagogical skill, strong content knowledge, and a compelling nature

School Leaders:

- Communicate clearly, regularly, and with transparency
- Create or support professional learning through ongoing, job-embedded, collaborative, and innovative practices
- Create and sustain a culture of professional dialogue and collaboration
- Use resources intentionally and equitably to further Thrasher's vision through academics, curriculum, technology, personnel, professional development, and infrastructure

The Culture:

- Is centered on what is best for students
- Maintains high expectations for students, parents, faculty, staff, and administrators to contribute their very best
- Shapes mistakes into opportunities for new learning
- Welcomes open communication across the school and community
- Fosters joyful, confident, competent, creative, and compassionate people (students, faculty, parents, and administrators)

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of the Hamilton County Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, national origin, creed, age, or religion in any of the programs or practices in the school system. A complaint may be filed by anyone who has a grievance regarding discrimination as set forth in one of the following statutes: (1) The Rehabilitation Act of 1972, Section 504; (2) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; or (3) Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972. Dr. Marvin Lott is the Title VI and Title IX coordinator for Hamilton County Schools. He may be reached by calling (423) 209-8538.

School Hours

6:00 am	Child Care Opens
8:30 am	Doors Open
8:50 am	Tardy Bell
3:50 pm	School Ends/Dismissal
6:00 pm	Child Care Closes

Contact Info

Office:	Cindy Abello Amy Dunavin (P) 423.886.0882 (F) 423.886.0888
SACC:	(P) 423.886.0871
Bus:	(P) 423.498.7320
Principal:	Jeff Paulson
Assistant Principal:	Raquel Newton
Board Member:	Marco Perez

DISMISSAL

Changes in a student's dismissal are managed through the School Dismissal Manager. For safety reasons, changes in dismissal cannot be granted over the phone. Changes can be made until 2:30pm.

- www.schooldismissalmanager.com or
- find ***School Dismissal Manager*** on your App Store

Walkers: Students who are walking home will be dismissed as walkers. Please do not drop off or pick up students in the Faculty Parking lot or on side streets.

Bicycle Riders: Students in grades 3-5 may ride a bicycle to school. A Thrasher bicycle permit is required before students can ride bicycles to school. To get a permit, the student should take the safety test found on the Thrasher Website. Helmets are required by TN Law. Bicycles must be walked within the school area.

AM Car Riders: Bring children to the back of the school. Doors open at 8:30am. Safety Patrol students will help open and close doors. Please do not drop children off at the front doors. Making phone calls, texting, and general screen usage is not permitted in the car line or school zone.

PM Car Riders: Come to the back of the school. For the safety of all children, keep the crosswalk open; follow direction of the teacher on duty; do not drive away from the car rider area until the teacher on duty gives the all clear. Know your 6-digit code (School Dismissal Manager) or use the app to scan the QR code (stop car, scan code, put phone away, continue). Making phone calls, texting, and general screen usage is not permitted in the car line or school zone.

Early Dismissal: Any early dismissal should occur before 3:00 pm.

Parking: Parking is available in the side lot (connected to the back of the school) and in the front gravel lot. Please do not park, drop off students, or pick up students in the Faculty Parking Lot.

Bus Rules

This is an abbreviated list from HCDE. The complete bus rules can be found at <http://www.hcde.org/>

- Students should arrive 10 minutes prior to the scheduled arrival time of their bus.
- Students shall stand a safe distance from the flow of traffic and wait until the bus door is open before moving toward the bus.
- The use of abusive or obscene language is strictly forbidden at all times.
- Students are not permitted to bring knives or sharp objects of any kind, firearms, or living animals on the bus.
- Students shall not tamper with any of the safety devices.
- Students shall not shout or make gestures toward anyone outside the bus.
- Students shall not extend their hands, arms, head, or any other part of their body through the window.
- Students shall not deface or litter the bus.
- Food or drinks may not be consumed on the bus, and smoking is not permitted.
- Students shall not ask the driver to let them off the bus at any other place except their regular stop.
- Students who must cross the road or highway to enter the bus must wait until the bus comes to a complete stop and the driver has signaled them to cross in front of bus.
- Students who must cross the road after leaving the bus shall go after the driver has signaled them to cross.
- The driver has the authority to assign seats.

Other BUS INFO: 423.498.7320

ACADEMICS

Academic Standards

Thrasher follows the Hamilton County frameworks for Math and Literacy to help students learn grade level expectations as set by Tennessee State Standards.

Tennessee State Standards for all content areas can be found at: tn.gov/education

Homework

Homework is *an extension of a learning experience which began at school or preparation for an upcoming learning experience*. We have found homework to be beneficial to student success. Parents are encouraged to provide satisfactory homework conditions, including workspace, good lighting, and a regularly-scheduled study time. At times, students may need help with homework, and the one-on-one instructional coaching a parent can provide is extremely beneficial to students. As in the classroom, the instruction for intermediate students at home should be designed to help students become *more strategic* and *more independent* in the content.

We find a great deal of value in reading. All students should read or be read to daily.

- Homework in the intermediate grades should not exceed 60 minutes per day.
- Homework in grades 1, 2, and 3 should not exceed 30 minutes per day.
- Homework in Kindergarten should not exceed 20 minutes per day.

Make-Up Work

Homework is not assigned in advance of absences. The teacher will provide the necessary make-up work when the child returns. If you call for work, please call before 12:00pm and it will be placed on the lobby counter after 4:00pm. Students have five days to make up work for excused absences.

Field Trips

All learning expeditions are designed and implemented to further the students' understanding of Tennessee State Standards. Teachers will inform parents/guardians of date, time, place, cost, and purpose for each learning expedition. Parents/guardians must sign permission slips prior to each trip; children will not be allowed to leave the school grounds without a signed permission slip. Students that do not attend a learning expedition will have the opportunity to deepen their learning of the same standards at school.

Parents are sometimes needed to help supervise students on learning expeditions. When parents volunteer to chaperone a class, they are asked to not bring other children (student siblings, etc.) so that they can fully support the students in the learning.

In order for parents to be listed as chaperones, they must have submitted and paid for a background check. (See thrasher.hcde.org for more information.)

Payment for learning expeditions can be completed online at <http://osp.osmsinc.com/hamiltontn/>.

CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring. If you would like a conference with your child's teacher at any time throughout the year, please contact the teacher in advance and schedule a time for a conversation. Kindergarten through 2nd grade parents are encouraged to attend both fall and spring conferences. 3rd through 5th grade parents are encouraged to attend at least one conference during each year.

DINING AREA/CAFETERIA

Students can add money (cash or check) to their lunch accounts before school starts each day. If a check is sent, please make it payable to Hamilton County School Food Service for the exact amount. The cafeteria staff is not allowed to give change. Have a student's name and teacher's name on each check. Families can add money to student accounts online here: <https://family.titank12.com>.

Do not combine lunch money with any other money. Money should be placed in an envelope labeled with student's name and intended purpose.

Students can use the money in their lunch account for purchasing a meal, an *a la cart* item, and/or ice cream. If you want the money in the account for lunch only, you will need to send the cafeteria a note stating that money can only be used for lunch. Include your child's name, grade, teacher and account number. **Students may NOT purchase lunch items, snacks, or ice cream for friends!**

Students are encouraged to use lunch time for quiet conversation with their friends as they:

- Eat from their own tray or lunchbox
- Remain seated throughout the meal

All students must leave the cafeteria at the appointed time with their class. No food should be taken from the cafeteria.

Requirements for Parents & Guests at Lunch

1. Let the teacher know you will be coming and if you will be purchasing lunch. Please limit lunch guests to two visitors per family.
2. Sign in at the front office and get a visitor sticker.
3. Meet your child in the cafeteria and go through the lunch line with your child.
4. Pay for all food items selected -- including tea.
5. Your child may sit with you at the Guest Table.
6. Have your child ready to leave with the group.
7. For the privacy and safety of all children, cell phone and camera use is not allowed in the cafeteria.

SCHOOL-AGED CHILD CARE (SACC)

Contact: 423.886.0871

To register for the School Age Child Care/Before and After School Program, you must be enrolled in a Hamilton County Department of Education School. Your child must have attended the first day of Kindergarten in order to register with the SACC Program. You must turn your registration form into the Site Director where your child(ren) will be attending.

There is a \$10.00 registration fee per child due when you turn in your registration form unless you attended one of our SACC Summer Programs. We are not licensed to care for Pre-K Children.

Please visit the SACC web site <http://www.hcschools.org/sacc/>.

STUDENT CONDUCT

We have high expectations for behavior in all phases of school life -- class, bathrooms, hallways, cafeteria, assembly programs, playground, on the bus, at bus stops, and on field trips. Faculty and staff are in charge at all times. Discipline for inappropriate behavior will be at the discretion of the staff. Thrasher uses principles for discipline as framed by *Love & Logic*.

DISCIPLINARY MEASURES: Students that behave in a way that is inappropriate, unsafe, or unkind will earn teacher-directed consequences or Disciplinary Referrals. Disciplinary Referrals are sent to the office and will be addressed by school administration. The following result in *automatic* administrative intervention:

- Inappropriate language
- Unsafe Behaviors: Fighting, hitting, leaving teacher's supervision without permission
- Unkind Behaviors: Disrespecting others (students and adults), Bullying

Behavior Expectations

CLASSROOM

1. Each classroom will determine a set of classroom rules.
2. Each classroom will have rules posted.
3. Each teacher will ensure procedures are understood by all students.

HALLWAY – 4s Lines

1. Straight
2. Silent
3. Single-File
4. Smiling

BATHROOM

1. Use for intended purpose only. Students use restroom, flush, wash hands, and return to class quickly.
2. Keep bathroom clean.
3. Be considerate of others.

AUDITORIUM

1. Enter quietly and sit in assigned areas.
2. Exercise good audience skills.
3. Follow directions the first time they are given.

PLAYGROUND

1. Play safely.
2. Stay in designated area.
3. Follow directions the first time they are given.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

1. Leave all toys, electronics, and other items of similar nature at home. Permission from teacher must be obtained before bringing to school toys, devices, or anything not intended to be used in a lesson.
2. Students will not use or possess tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, illegal or look alike drugs, or chewing gum while on school premises. Zero Tolerance policies are posted throughout the school.
3. Any profane or obscene language and gestures are prohibited.

DRESS CODE

For the most part, the matter of school dress and grooming will be left to the discretion of the parents. Children are not to wear clothing promoting alcohol, cigarettes, disrespect, or violence. No tank tops or short shorts are appropriate. Students should wear tennis shoes every day (no exposed toes for safety), and no hats are to be worn in the building.

CELEBRATION ARRANGEMENTS

Thrasher is focused on the learning, and our goal is to keep outside distractions to a minimum.

Regarding Birthday Celebrations:

- Please send invitations to the home of the students – do not distribute invitations at school. Private party invitations should not be given out at school.
- Birthday snacks (fruit, cupcakes, etc.) are not necessary, but if they are given, please bring at lunch. No food with inedible decorations. No cookie bouquets or balloons should be sent to children at school.
- No balloons, flowers, or hard candy are allowed for any kind of school party for safety reasons.

SAFETY PLAN

The staff and students will practice safety, fire, code blue, evacuation, and tornado drills. Should we have to evacuate the building for any reason, students initially will be led to the soccer field behind the school and/or the field behind SunTrust Bank. If the evacuation will be prolonged, faculty and staff will lead students to the gym at the Town Hall. A reunification plan is established to carefully reunite students with parents.

STUDENT HEALTH

Medication

Medication will not be dispensed to students. This includes, but is not limited to, aspirin, Tylenol, cough medicine and antibiotics. An exception is made when children require long-term prescription medication. Only in this case will the medication be administered by the principal or his/her designee in compliance with the following regulations:

1. A written permission form (IHP), signed by both parent and child's physician, is provided to the school and includes:
 - a. Child's name
 - b. Name of medication
 - c. Time to be administered
 - d. Dosage
 - e. Possible side effects
2. The permission form must be updated when there is a change in dosage or time of medication. A new permission form must be provided to the school at the beginning of each new school year.
3. Medication in the original prescription bottle must be brought to the elementary school office by a parent or guardian and refilled in like manner. No medication is to be brought to or from school by the elementary student.
4. The school system retains the right to reject requests for administering medication that are not in compliance with the above guidelines.

Children who are sick need to be at home. An early return to school generally aggravates the problem.

Children who have a fever will be required to go home. Students will go to the nurse's office if they feel sick. The staff will make the decision if the parents need to be called.

Student Accidents and Illness

In case of accidents or illness, the school will follow these procedures:

1. Contact the student's parents or guardians. If unable to reach them, then: Contact the person listed on the student's emergency contact list.
2. Notify the family physician. If he or she cannot be reached, then: Call a local physician.

Lice Policy

- Children must be "bug-free" to be at school. If lice are found on a child, the child will be sent home for treatment.
- At each occurrence of lice, coats and personal items will be stored in backpacks, and backpacks will be separated.
- If a classroom has more than one occurrence of lice in a month, the classroom will be treated and items will be bagged for cleaning.

VOLUNTEERS & VISITORS

Volunteer Sign-In

According to Tennessee Code Annotated 49-2-203-(b)(4), all visitors to the school should be directed to the front office obtain a visitors sticker immediately upon entering the building. Guests and volunteers will provide a government-issue ID and sign in electronically in the main office. All volunteers shall adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Sign in each time you come to school and sign out when leaving.
2. Wear your volunteer sticker.
3. Be on time as you are very important to the children and the teachers.
4. Notify your teacher or the school office as early as possible when you know you will be absent.
8. Respect the confidentiality of children at the school or in the classroom. For the privacy and safety of all children, cell phone and camera use is not allowed by volunteers in the school. This includes: phone calls, taking photos/videos, showing photos/videos, browsing the web, etc.
5. Discipline - leave the tough work to the teachers!
6. Exit routes and procedures for fire and tornado drills are posted in each classroom and you should familiarize yourself with them.
7. Younger siblings should not accompany volunteers during school hours.

School Visitors

All visitors, including parents, are to check in at the front office. This will avoid class interruptions.

Visits during the school day should be avoided to minimize interruptions and distractions, to protect the privacy of all students, and to increase the safety of all students. If you need to meet with your child at school, do not go to the classroom. Ask the front office to call the child to the office for you.

For the privacy and safety of all children, cell phone and camera use is not allowed by visitors in the classroom. This includes: phone calls, taking photos/videos, showing photos/videos, browsing the web, etc.

Sibling Visits

Siblings are welcome to visit during special programs, plays, Open House, etc. Siblings should not attend for regular class activities, such as classroom parties or field trips.

TECHNOLOGY

Signal Mountain schools' 4th – 12th grade students may participate in “Bring Your Own Device” (BYOD) for the Hamilton County school district.

Each 4th and 5th grade family will receive information related to the district's BYOD policy, **including an agreement that must be completed prior to students bringing their own device to school.** The agreement will include responsibilities of the students and families who choose to participate along with expectations regarding appropriate use of the devices and consequences related to misuse of the BYOD privilege.

Per the HCDE BYOD agreement, personal devices and tablets may be brought from home for 4th and 5th grade student use. **Such devices will be used in direct instruction, project-based activities, independent reading, research, and skills practice.** Since teachers have many devices in the building already (thanks to MEF and our PTA), all students will have access to technology—whether or not families choose to participate in the BYOD initiative.

Please note that cell phones and iPods are not allowed or considered acceptable BYOD devices at the elementary level. If students have phones for after-school safety reasons, they **must stay in the backpack and be turned off during the day.** This applies to all phones – wrist-mounted, phone watches, etc.

Students in grades K – 3 must receive their teacher's permission before bringing any device to school.

PREPARED FOR LEARNING

Everyone at Thrasher – teachers, support staff, and administrators – is here to help children succeed and have the most choices in life. We strive to provide the best learning experiences available, to create a safe and happy environment, and to equip students to meet high expectations. Students and parents can support a happy, safe learning environment through the ideas in this handbook and regular communication with the school. Thank you, and we look forward to a powerful school year!