

**Harpswell Community School**  
**M.S.A.D. 75**  
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September 10, 2018

Dear Harpswell Community School Families,

The first week of school flew by, and what a sweltering week it was! The classrooms in our building certainly hold the heat extremely well – I'm sure we'll appreciate that in the middle of winter!

If you have been at the school recently, you have probably noticed that visitor and student sign-in/sign-out procedures have been updated. As we look for ways to ensure the security and welfare of students and staff, we will continually re-examine our practices to support these efforts. Attached to this letter is the School Board policy regarding parent and visitor access to schools. Please know that any changes in past practice are in no way meant to question the integrity of any visitors to the school. Rather, we are working to ensure adherence to district policy as well as to current best practice around school security. To that end, the following procedures will be in place at HCS:

- When dropping off your child in the morning, if you arrive by 9:10 you may escort your child into the lobby. Please say your good-byes there, as Board policy states, "We ask that parents not escort their child to and from class. The beginning and end of the school day are particularly busy, and schools at those times are particularly vulnerable because teachers are most easily distracted."
- If you drop your child off after 9:10, please sign your child in at the office and have your child get a late pass from Mrs. Card.
- When picking up your child from school, please sign him or her out. If picking up early, Mrs. Card will call your child down to meet you in the lobby. If picking up at dismissal time, Mrs. Card will use the sign-out sheet to call children whose parents are here down to the lobby. Children who are being picked up but whose parents have not arrived by this time will walk with their teacher to bring students to buses and will then wait in the lobby for their parent or guardian.
- Please note: If children who generally take the bus are to be picked up, the parent or guardian must notify the school via note, phone, or email. Please make every effort to contact the school before 3:00 p.m., as things get pretty hectic at that time and we want to make sure that messages get relayed effectively. If a child is being picked up early by anyone other than the parent or legal guardian, we must have prior permission from the parent or legal guardian.
- If you are attending a meeting or have made prior arrangements to visit the school, please use the adult sign-in/-out sheet and obtain a visitor badge from Mrs. Card.

Volunteers are a special type of visitor to our school, and their efforts are much appreciated! MSAD 75 has a Volunteer Handbook which details the procedures for school volunteers. I have attached the page which describes Level 1 vs. Level 2 volunteers and includes an explanation of the need for a background check for Level 2 volunteers. **If you plan to volunteer at HCS, whether in classrooms, special programs, or on field trips, please obtain a volunteer application from Mrs. Card or let your child's teacher know that you would like to have one sent home.** Once you have completed the application, you may serve as a Level 1 volunteer. **In order to volunteer on a recurring basis or as a chaperone, the Human Resources Director must run a background check.** Background checks are valid for 5 years. If you are not sure whether you have been approved in prior years, please check with Mrs. Card or me and we can look into our school data system for your approval. **I need to caution you that it may take up to several weeks for background checks to be completed, so I would urge you to complete the application sooner rather than later if you plan to volunteer.**

I very much appreciate your understanding and cooperation in adhering to these district policies, as I feel the weight of responsibility for keeping our school as safe as possible. I realize that renewed enforcement of district expectations can seem like a minor inconvenience to us as adults, but I think that we can all agree that our children are worth the diligence it takes to make security measures a standard practice. As always, if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Let's make it a great year together!

Sincerely,

Anita Hopkins ☺