



Lopez Elementary School Handbook



Information can be found alphabetically.

ACADEMICS- Lopez Elementary offers a broad and balanced curriculum for all students in kindergarten through grade five, following Hillsborough County guidelines, policies, and procedures. Lopez utilizes the most current state and county adopted textbooks, materials, and programs for elementary students. Technology is integrated into the curriculum. Student learning is carefully monitored by teachers with the support of Instructional Coaches and Administration.

ARRIVAL DROP-OFF PROCEDURES

Students who plan to pick-up breakfast in the cafeteria should arrive at 7:10 a.m. **Students are not permitted to arrive earlier than 7:10 AM because our staff is not required to be on campus until 7:10 AM.** Students who arrive earlier than 7:10 a.m. are using our fee-based HOST program as childcare. If you would like to pay for your child to have childcare at the school before 7:10 AM please contact HOST (information is listed below under HOST).

ATTENDANCE- Florida State Law requires that a student attend school every day except for personal illness or other extenuating circumstances. It is required by law that parents explain the cause of a student's absence.

If your child is absent, you are required to notify the school via phone by 8:30 AM by calling the attendance line at 744-8000 ext. 1. If we do not receive notification that your child is sick or that a family emergency has occurred, the absence will be unexcused. An automated attendance phone call is generated for all excused and unexcused absences. Please refer to the Hillsborough County Student Handbook for additional attendance policies.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS- Birthday parties are not allowed at school. Due to food allergies and continued safety measures, **parents can ONLY send in sealed and store-bought birthday treats.** For the safety of students, birthday invitations to private parties, nor telephone numbers and addresses may be distributed at school. **Balloons and flowers should NOT be scheduled for delivery to school.** If we receive a delivery for a student, it will be kept in the main office until dismissal. Teachers will recognize your child on their special day.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Hillsborough County Public Schools, in compliance with 2008 Florida Statute -- 1006.147~adopted its own anti-bullying and harassment policy in December, 2008.

It is the policy of Hillsborough County Public Schools that all of its students and school employees have an educational setting that is safe, secure, and free from harassment and bullying of any kind. The district will not tolerate bullying or harassment of any type. Conduct that constitutes bullying or harassment, as defined in the policy, is prohibited. All Hillsborough County students and employees will receive updated information at the beginning of the school year. Information is also in the Student and Teacher Handbooks. The Hillsborough County Public Schools district expects students and school employees to conduct themselves appropriately for their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities, with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment.

Any reported bullying is handled by teachers, school counselor, and administration when necessary.

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- **An Imbalance of Power:** Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- **Repetition:** Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

If you suspect bullying, please call your child's teacher.

BUS & DAY CARE DISMISSAL

Bus riders will be dismissed at 1:55 PM (Mondays @ 12:55 PM). Buses will park at the bus ramp facing Kingsway Rd. Day Care vans will park along the PK car line facing Kingsway Rd. Students will be escorted by adults for boarding. We have a check-in system in place for students getting on the bus. In the unlikely event that a student happens to get on the wrong bus, the driver will notify the school and bring the child back to the school. We will then notify the parent/guardian to come pick up the child. (Please note that for the first week or two drop-off times may be later than originally scheduled on the route; as bus drivers are carefully checking and rechecking student names and stops prior to delivering students to their destinations. This is for your child's safety, so please be patient while this process is underway.)

CAR RIDERS

Students in PK and self-contained ESE classes along with siblings will be picked in the car loop on Kingsway Rd. All other car riders will be picked up on the side of the school facing Old Hillsborough Ave. ALL car riders will receive two Lopez car rider tags. Your child's name and grade level should be written on the tag in large, dark letters with a permanent marker to assist with identification and the pick-up process. **IMPORTANT SAFETY PROCEDURE: A car without the special Lopez car rider tag will be sent to the main office to show identification for pick-up.** This is for the safety of all students.

Parents should remain in their car. Pull as far forward as possible, quickly pick up your child and exit the campus. Caution and patience will make this area safe and the process quick.

The car line is typically over by 2:10 PM. Students should not be picked up in a car at the bike gate. (Please note that for the first week or two, the car line will be longer than 2:10. Please be patient while we get it working smoothly.) Students who are not picked up by 2:10 will be brought back to the main office. Parents will be required to come to the office to sign their child out after that time.

If your child is designated as a WALKER, he/she should know how to get home. Parking on a side street and designating your child as a walker is NOT permitted.

CARE OF SCHOOL MATERIALS, LAPTOPS, AND LIBRARY BOOKS

These are the responsibility of the student to whom they are issued. Parents must pay for lost or damaged materials, such as laptops and library books.

All monies collected are recorded by the school bookkeeper and paid to the proper fund for replacement purposes. If a lost book is found within a reasonable amount of time and in good condition, money paid will be refunded. Money will not be refunded after the last day of school. Florida Statute states that the parent/guardian shall be held liable for any loss, destruction, or unnecessary damage to books and shall be required to pay for such.

CELL PHONES

A student may possess a wireless communication or other electronic device in school, on school property, at after school activities and at school-related functions, provided that during school hours and on school vehicles the wireless communication or other electronic device **remains powered off and stored out of sight unless authorized by staff**. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action and/or confiscation of the wireless communication or electronic device.

CHOICE

The approval of School Choice and Choice Hardship is a courtesy granted by the School Board of Hillsborough County with the understanding that students will maintain appropriate behavior, attendance, and timeliness and that all parties will honor the school district's Civility guidelines. Parents receiving approval for Choice and Choice Hardship are required to provide transportation to and from the requested school. All parents and students are advised that School Choice and Choice Hardship may be revoked by principals, at anytime, if established standards for conduct, attendance, tardiness, and civility are not maintained.

CHANGES MADE TO DISMISSAL

Changes to a student's normal dismissal procedure will need to be made to your child's teacher in **writing** by email, planner, Remind message, or any other form of communication the teacher has established. If you have an emergency, please call the main office and we will help you through the emergency at that time.

CIVILITY

In order to provide a safe, caring, and orderly environment, the School District of Hillsborough County expects **CIVILITY** from **ALL** who engage in school activities. Mutual respect, professionalism, and common courtesy are essential qualities that we **ALL** need to demonstrate in promoting an educational environment free from disruptions, harassment, bullying, and aggressive actions.

CLINIC

Administration of Medication

Authorized school personnel will assist students in the administration of prescription medication when the following guidelines have been followed:

All medication must be delivered to school by a parent/guardian (this includes all over the counter medicine, cough drops, sunscreen, and bug spray.) Over-the counter medication must be delivered to school in the container in which it was purchased and accompanied by written orders from a physician that includes student's name, name of medication and dosage.

Any medication that does not include written orders from a physician must be administered by a parent.

- For the safety of all students, parents MUST bring all medications to the school. Do not send medication with any child.
- When possible, medications should be administered at home.

A Parental Authorization Form, available in the school office, MUST be completed prior to administration of all medications.

Broken Bones, Casts, Crutches, Surgery, etc.

If your child has a broken bone, crutches, cast, or a sling, we MUST have a note from the doctor stating that your child may return to school. The note must also state any limitations your child may have. If your child has surgery, we MUST also have a note from the doctor stating that your child may return to school and the limitations your child may have.

COMMUNICATION

The school communicates with families in many ways. Every Sunday, the Principal or AP will send a weekly update by automated phone call and email. This call/email will have reminders and updates about what is happening at school.

We also post updates, information, and school events on the following online platforms:

Website: <https://www.hillsboroughschools.org/lopez>

Facebook: Lopez Elementary

X: @HCPSLopezElem

Instagram: Lopez_Elem

Teachers are expected to communicate with you regularly. They will establish the means for how to best communicate with them if you need something (i.e. phone, Canvas, email, Remind, Bloomz). Please note that a teacher is not required to use various apps such as Remind. These are applications that are used at the discretion of the teacher and is not a directive from HCPS.

CRISIS REUNIFICATION INFORMATION- In an event of an emergency that results in the evacuation of the school campus we will evacuate to Colson Elementary School. If Colson is not a safe destination, we will go to Burnette Middle School. Bay News 9 and WFLA 970 will be announcing procedures and details during the crisis. Automated calls/emails to all parents will also be utilized as a communication tool in the event of a crisis.

DISCIPLINE

Multiple strategies are used to promote a safe and orderly learning environment at our school. Social Emotional Learning is at the heart of the strategies we use to help students develop healthy social-emotional skills.

If a child's behavior warrants involvement from an administrator, he/she will investigate and communicate with parents as needed and necessary.

EMERGENCY CARD

All students will have an emergency card on file in the front office. **Only those individuals listed on the emergency card will be permitted entrance into the school during normal school hours.** The only person who can make changes or additions to the emergency card is the parent/guardian who signed the card. All individuals will be asked to show a photo ID, to identify themselves as the person listed on the card. In the event additional emergency contact names need to be added to the card, they can be hand-written on the back of the emergency card; these additional contacts would need to be updated annually.

DRESS AND GROOMING POLICY- GRADES K-5

- Shoes shall be worn and be securely fastened to the feet and have a low heel height. Footwear must be suitable for outdoor physical education classes, and unsafe shoes such as "skate tennis shoes" are not allowed.
- Clothing that exposes the entire shoulder, tube tops, spaghetti straps, or similar type clothing, may be worn only with a blouse or shirt. Clothing exposing the torso or the midriff, either front, back or sides, shall not be worn. Underwear shall not be visible. Clothing shall not expose the mid-chest area.
- Hair shall be clean and neatly groomed. The general appearance of students should reflect neatness and good personal hygiene.
- Head coverings shall not be worn in the building unless required for religious observance or health-related reasons.
- Mini skirts, mini dresses and short shorts are not permitted. Hemlines shall be no shorter than fingertip length.
- All pants and shorts shall be secured at the waist.
- Garments and/or jewelry which display or suggest sexual, vulgar, drug, gang, weapons, or alcohol-related wording or graphics, or which provoke violence or disruption in the school, shall not be worn. Wallet chains shall not be worn.

HOMEWORK may be assigned daily, Monday through Thursday or weekly. District guidelines state that at the primary level (K-3), students should have approximately 30 minutes of homework while intermediate (4-5) should have approximately 45 minutes. Reading should also occur nightly. Parents can help with homework by providing a quiet work area and a regular homework time. To develop student responsibility, homework must be completed and returned on time.

HOST

For your convenience, we offer an after-school care (HOST) program from 2:00-6:00 PM daily, as well as morning hours of 6:30-7:10 AM for an additional fee. Applications are online on the school district website. <https://www.hillsboroughschools.org/>

MEALS

Breakfast and lunch is served free to all students. Breakfast is served from 7:10 AM - 7:40 AM. Students should be **dropped off no earlier than 7:10 AM** because there is no supervision prior to that time.

PARENT & VISITOR SIGN-IN PROCEDURES:

We will take every precaution to be sure that all students are safe and well-cared for while they are at Lopez Elementary. To help us do that, we use an electronic sign-in procedure.

You will need to have your driver's license with you every time you come into the school.

All individuals entering the school campus must be listed on a student's emergency card. If

your name appears on the emergency card, we will scan your driver's license and issue a visitor pass with your photo and name. This pass must always be worn while on campus.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Teachers should regularly communicate your child's progress throughout a grading period. This communication may come in a written format, phone call, conference, or email.

REPORT CARDS- will be posted online approximately two weeks after each grading period ends. These reports serve as a record of your child's academic and social development. When you have access to your child's report card, please discuss it with your child.

SIGN-OUT PROCEDURES

A student will only be released to an adult listed on his/her emergency card. If a person arrives at school to pick up your child and he/she is not on the emergency card, the school will not release your child. In addition, no changes to a student's emergency card will be taken over the phone. **All changes must be done in person and must be done by the parent/guardian who signed the emergency card.** You will need to have photo identification to be able to sign your child out.

Early sign-out is discouraged. Anytime children are not in their designated space during school hours, they are missing an opportunity to learn. Please make appointments with this in mind. If signing out your child early is necessary, please do so **prior to 1:30 PM (12:30 on Mondays)**. **We will NOT sign students out after 1:30 (12:30 on Mondays)**. This procedure is in place to maximize instructional time, alleviate traffic problems, and allow students to be safely supervised during our dismissal procedures. Your cooperation is appreciated.

TARDY PROCEDURES

The student school day begins at 7:40 AM. **At 7:40 your child should be in the classroom ready to begin his/her day.** Please help your child be on time. Promptness is a responsible habit that students learn from adults around them. All doors and gates will be closed and locked for student safety at 7:40 AM. **Any child arriving after that time must be signed into the office by an adult and will be marked tardy.**