



## Apollo Beach K-8 School Handbook



**Information can be found alphabetically.**

**ACADEMICS-** Apollo Beach K-8 offers a broad and balanced curriculum for all students in kindergarten through grade five, following Florida BEST Standards, Hillsborough County guidelines, policies, and procedures. Apollo Beach 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 the Principal and Assistant Principal.

### **ARRIVAL DROP-OFF PROCEDURES**

Students who plan to eat breakfast in the cafeteria should arrive at 7:10 AM.

**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 AM 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 at ext. 247. Students eating breakfast should be dropped off at the cafeteria building. Students who are not eating breakfast in the cafeteria can arrive between 7:10 -7:40 AM and walk directly to class. Students arriving after 7:40 AM will not be permitted to get breakfast.

### **ATTENDANCE-**

Every day matters when it comes to attendance! There is a strong link between regular attendance and academic success. Research indicates that missing 10% of the school year, which is 2 days a month, negatively affects a student's academic performance. Compared to students who are chronically absent, students who attend school regularly have greater success in all grade levels.

However, we know that students will have illnesses and other family matters that may result in time out of school. In the case that your child is out of school, please report the absence. Unreported absences will be unexcused.

Reporting your Student's Absence:

It is the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian to explain a student's absence to the designated office in person, in writing or by telephone.

Parents/guardians are expected to notify the school the day of the absence. The school may require additional documentation upon a student's return.

Report your absence via phone by 8:30 AM by calling the attendance line at 671-5172 ext. 1. Calling the attendance line ensures that your child's absence is excused. 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 is generated for all excused and unexcused absences.*

Refer to [HCPS Student Code of Conduct](#)

### **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS-**

- Birthday parties are not allowed at school. Due to food allergies, parents should not send in birthday treats.
- **For the safety of students, birthday invitations to private parties, telephone numbers and addresses may NOT 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, HARASSMENT, and THREATS**

Bullying is defined as any written or verbal expression, or physical or electronic act or gesture, or a pattern thereof, that is intended to coerce, intimidate, or cause any physical, mental, or emotional harm to any student, or would be reasonably assumed to cause harm. Bullying is prohibited against any student for any reason, including but not limited to, any such behavior that is directed toward a student on the basis of academic performance, or against whom federal and state laws prohibit discrimination.

To guide the investigation of alleged bullying, three key elements must be present in order to fall into the Substantiated Bullying category. This includes behaviors that are repeated, or could be reasonably repeated, intentional, and reflect a power imbalance between the individual engaged in bullying behavior and the one being bullied.

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

Cyberbullying is a specific form of bullying using technology to hurt, harm or humiliate another individual or group.

HCPS Bullying Hotline Link can be found at:

<https://www.hillsboroughschools.org/bullyprevention>

Online Bullying Reporting Form

[https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=-f2oEP\\_CDU6cGR\\_iwYgWSlfHKK0R9cNEu-CHNB5dB91UM0NVMFUzN1JKRktLM0xBT11JTTRLN1AxMiQIQCN0PWcu](https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=-f2oEP_CDU6cGR_iwYgWSlfHKK0R9cNEu-CHNB5dB91UM0NVMFUzN1JKRktLM0xBT11JTTRLN1AxMiQIQCN0PWcu)

FortifyFL is a suspicious activity reporting tool that allows you to instantly relay information to appropriate law enforcement agencies and school officials. It can be used to report threats against students, staff, or the school.

[FortifyFL](#)

### **BUS & DAY CARE DISMISSAL**

Bus riders will be dismissed at 1:55 PM (Mondays @ 12:55 PM). Buses will park at the bus ramp in front of the school. Students will be escorted by adults for boarding. Cars should **NOT** enter this area for pick up. 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**

All car riders will be picked up on the east side of the school. ALL car riders will receive TWO Apollo Beach car rider tags. Your child's name and grade level should be written on the tag in large, dark letters to assist with identification and the pick-up process. **IMPORTANT SAFETY PROCEDURE: A car without the special Apollo Beach 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.** If you are walking your child to the door in the morning, please park and walk. For safety, every effort should be made to ensure that your child can get in and out of the car on the passenger side of the vehicle.

The car line is typically over by 2:10 PM. Students should not be picked up in a car at the bike gate. Walkers or bike riders should be met at the crosswalk. *(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. Students who are not picked up by 2:45 will be escorted to our afterschool HOST program where parents will be required to register and pay for after school care services.

**If your child is designated as a WALKER, he/she should know how to get home by walking. Parking on a side street and designating your child as a walker is not safe.**

**PK/VPK Arrival/Dismissal procedures will be communicated with those parents of PK/VPK children.**

### **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 AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Cell phones and electronic devices (e.g. ear buds, watches) are a distraction to students' learning. To ensure that students can focus on their learning, the following guidelines are in place regarding cell phones and electronic devices.

- During school hours and while on the bus, cell phones and other electronic devices are to be used under the supervision of district staff for educational purposes only.
- **Students must comply with the directives of school/district staff regarding when and where electronic devices can be used**
- Cell phone conversations and video recording during the school day are prohibited unless under the supervision of staff/school personnel.
- Watches should be used to tell time only.

At Apollo Beach, students may NOT use cell phones, ear buds, or watches (except for time) during school hours. Phones and ear buds should be kept in bookbags at all times. Only students with a documented medical exemption will be allowed usage of these devices during the school day.

If a student is using a phone or other non-authorized device, the following consequences will occur:

First Offense: The device will be confiscated by the staff member, labeled, and given to front office personnel. The student may pick up the device at the end of the school day in the front office.

Second Offense: The device will be confiscated by the staff member, labeled, and given to front office personnel. An administrator will notify the parent/guardian and the device will only be returned to a parent/ guardian.

Third Offense: The device will be confiscated by the staff member, labeled, and given to front office personnel. An administrator will notify the parent/guardian and the device will only be returned to a parent/ guardian. A plan will be developed with the parent/guardian to store the device in the front office during school hours for the duration of the school year.

### **CHANGES MADE TO DISMISSAL**

Changes to a student's normal dismissal procedure will need to be made to your child's teacher in writing. This communication should not be sent to the teacher during school hours because the teacher may not see it and it is a disruption to learning.

If you have an emergency, please call the main office and we will help you through the emergency at that time.

Please do not call the office to change dismissal unless it is an emergency.

### **CIVILITY**

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.

Updates, information, and school events will be communicated through the following online platforms:

- Automated calls
- Thursday folders
- Facebook: Apollo Beach K-8 School
- Website: <https://www.hillsboroughschools.org/apollobeach>
- Gr. 6—Canvas

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).

Thursday folders will be used to send home information from school.

*Please note that a teacher is not required to use Remind or other similar apps. These are applications that are used at the discretion of the teacher and are not a directive from HCPS. The district and school expectation is that teachers will communicate regularly.*

*Please understand that while teachers will often reply to texts/emails after hours, this should not be an expectation. In most cases, please allow 24 hours to return calls/reply. Do not expect that teachers will answer texts/calls/emails during the school day when they are instructing students.*

**CRISIS REUNIFICATION INFORMATION**- In an event of an emergency that results in the evacuation of the school campus we will relocate to Bell Shoals Baptist Church Apollo Beach Campus. If Bell Shoals is not a safe destination, we will go to East Bay High School. During a crisis, automated calls/emails to all parents will be utilized as a communication tool.

### **DISCIPLINE**

Multiple strategies are used to promote a safe and orderly learning environment at our school. Character Education and Social Emotional Learning are 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.

Click link for [HCPS Student Code of Conduct](#)

## **DRESS AND GROOMING POLICY- GRADES PK-6**

The dress and grooming of students shall be that which contributes to the health and safety of the individual and which is non-disruptive of the educational activities and processes of a school. The definition of appropriate dress shall vary with the age of the student, the program of instruction, and the heating/cooling system of the building.

Students have the right: to dress as they choose if their dress meets the approved dress and grooming regulations, does not disrupt school activities, is not obscene or defamatory, and does not endanger the physical health or safety of themselves or others.

Students have the responsibility: to dress and groom in such a manner to reflect cleanliness, modesty, safety, and good taste; become familiar with and adhere to approved dress and grooming regulations of the School Board of Hillsborough County.

### Pre-Kindergarten – Sixth Grades

- 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, tank 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. 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.
- Head coverings shall not be worn in the building unless required for religious observance, health-related reasons, or a school activity.
- Garments and/or jewelry that display or suggest sexual, vulgar, drug, gang, weapons, or alcohol-related wording or graphics, or that provoke violence or disruption in the school, shall not be worn. Wallet chains shall not be worn.
- Hoodies/hoods may not be worn indoors. Students will be expected to remove hoods when inside the school building. Please be mindful of the heat when allowing your child to wear a hoodie/hooded jacket.
- Hats may only be worn at recess/PE.

## **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 to sign your child out of school.
- The only person who can make changes or additions to the emergency card is the parent/guardian who signed the card.
- **All individuals must be able 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.

**HOMEWORK** may be assigned daily, Monday through Thursday. 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. Visit the HCPS website for additional details about the HOST program.

<https://www.hillsboroughschools.org/host>

Click link for online application [Registration Portal](#)

<b>Student Fees</b>	<b>Elementary/K-8</b>
Registration Fee*	\$30.00
Before School - Weekly Rate	\$15.00
After School - Weekly Rate	\$70.00
Before & After School - Weekly Rate	\$85.00
Drop In Rate - <b>per session</b>	\$50.00

\*Registration fee is nonrefundable.

Limited seating may be available.

## **Meals**

Apollo Beach has been designated as a Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) school. Breakfast AND lunch are free to ALL students. Breakfast is served to students 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. Snacks are still available for purchase.

Click [HERE](#) for information about allergy and special needs resources.

## **Parent and Visitor Sign-In Procedures:**

The safety of students in our greatest priority. We will take every precaution to be sure that all students are safe and well-cared for while they are at Apollo Beach Elementary. To help us do that, we use an electronic sign-in procedure that all schools in the district adopted beginning in the 2021-22 school year.

- **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, **your ID will be scanned through our security system.** This process is like what you find at a hospital when you sign in as a visitor. It can take several minutes per person.
- A visitor pass sticker with your name and photo will be given to you. This pass must always be worn while on campus.

We want our campus to remain as secure as possible, while also allowing parents to be a part of happenings at school. The protocols for visitors on campus are in place because of student and staff safety, not due to COVID, but to control additional people on campus. We appreciate your cooperation and support.

During the school day, parents will be invited to:

- Walk your child to class in the morning between 7:10-7:40 AM (ONLY if necessary)
- Volunteer in the classroom (if needed by teacher)
- Attend special school events/activities
- Attend special classroom events/activities
- Parent/Teacher conferences
- PTA meetings
- PTA Volunteering

*Please note: To maintain a secure, safe campus, parents are not invited to eat lunch with students.*

You can register as a school volunteer by visiting [Volunteering in HCPS](#). This is required to attend field trips and regularly volunteer on campus. It also makes the sign in process go slightly faster.

**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, and/or email. Teachers should work collaboratively with you to ensure a successful learning experience for your child.

**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 access to your child's report card, you are encouraged to discuss it with your child.

### **Sign Out Procedure**

A student will 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, we will contact the parent/guardian. 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. The office will notify the teacher and the student will be escorted to the front office. We will not call a student to the office to wait to be signed out.

This policy is in place to maximize instructional time, alleviate traffic problems with buses that arrive in front of the school, and allows students to be safely supervised during our dismissal procedures.

### **Tardy Procedure**

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.**