

HARDWICK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
135 SO. MAIN STREET  
HARDWICK, VERMONT 05843  
472-5411  
WEB SITE: [www.hardwickelementary.org](http://www.hardwickelementary.org)

**Welcome to the 2009-2010 school year.** We have published this handbook to inform you about our school and its programs.

A careful review of the information will allow you and your child

to become familiar with our rules, procedures, opportunities, responsibilities and programs. Please take the time to review relevant procedures with your child so that he/she will be familiar with them. Feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns which are not addressed in this handbook. We look forward to an exciting year of learning with your children.

\*\*\*

**New or important procedures for this school year:** The staff has put numerous supports in place for students to be successful:

**The Planning Room** - The Planning Room is a place for children to reflect on their unacceptable decision and actions. S/he will make a plan to be more successful before rejoining the class.

**The HOPE Team** - When a student has frequently needed to visit the Planning Room, the Guidance Counselor will consult with the classroom teachers. They may choose to schedule a HOPE team. The student, the parents, and key staff members will be invited. The purpose of the meeting is to understand from the student's perspective what supports s/he needs in order to make better decisions.

**The HES Child Protection Team** - The school nurse, guidance counselors, planning room person, principal, and home/school clinician meet on a weekly basis. This meeting is to brainstorm ideas for students, who may be struggling at school academically or socially. The team also reviews referrals and makes plans for students to receive extra support from counselors.

**Positive Behavior Supports** - The entire school is working together to be more positive and proactive in supporting the students. We are joining with all district schools to focus on PBS, a research-based program.

**Dress Code** - You will find a revised dress code in this year's handbook. Last year's student council created some more detailed guidelines and submitted them to the principal for consideration. Please remember, individuality is encouraged. The new guidelines are to support the most productive learning environment for all. Thanks to the 2008-09 student council for their work.

**Volunteer Background Checks** - ALL volunteers will need to have a background check before being able to volunteer at HES. This includes volunteers, who have helped in our school previously (i.e. Four Winds) and attending field trips with your child. This is a new district policy to further insure the safety of all children.

You should receive a form to complete with all the beginning of the year forms. If you think you will be able to volunteer in any way, you must have this form completed and the District Office will submit your request for approval. This takes a while, so submit the form to the HES main office now.

For volunteers who help out on a consistent basis, HES will reimburse you for the cost (\$19.25).

**Drop Off/Pick Up** -Please remember we are guests of our wonderful neighbors when we use the Catholic Church parking lot. They ask that we safely and respectfully use the space. It is for quick drop off and pick up. If you want to go into the building, you should plan on parking on the street. This arrangement has made a huge difference in safety for our children. We want to continue to have the opportunity to use it. Thanks for your cooperation.

**Web site** - Have you checked out our web site yet? ([www.hardwickelementary.org](http://www.hardwickelementary.org)) We continue to post all important documents on our web site, including this handbook. We would love to hear from you about your ideas to improve the site.

**Trimesters** - We now have trimester marking periods. The first trimester ends December 4; the second ends March 19.

**Call us when your child is absent** - We need to hear from you when your child is absent. You can also leave a voice mail on the office line so that you don't have to wait for the office to be open.

**Absenteeism** - We are mandated to report truancy. If a student is absent more than 10%, you will receive a letter of notification. Tardiness is also a consideration for truancy. It is so important for your child to be present at the start of the school day, when class meeting and the daily schedule take place. We will work with you to assist you with any challenges, which you are experiencing that result in your child's tardiness or absences.

Excused absences are for sickness, doctor and dentist appointments and attending funerals. All other reasons, including trips, are not excused absences.

**Electronic Devices** - Electronic devices can be unsafe for children when used inappropriately. We recognize the convenience of them at times, but at school, we can not allow their presence. If a child brings a device to school, it will be taken to the office and an adult will be required to pick it up.

\*\*\*

Hardwick Elementary School intends not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religion or handicap in the educational programs and services we offer. Please contact the principal if you believe we have inadvertently done so.

\*\*\*

The Hardwick School Board of Directors meets the third Tuesday of each month in the conference room. Members of the community are cordially invited to attend Board meetings. Individuals who wish to be heard by the Board should advise the principal or superintendent seven (7) days in advance of the Board meeting. Advance communication helps with agenda planning.

\*\*\*

Parents have the right to inspect and review all records directly related to your children. You may request access to such records by making an appointment with the principal.

BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS:

Karen Richardson, Chairman	472-5473
Perley Allen	472-9574
Anne McPherson	472-3621
Patrick Moulton	472-5151
Jodi Lew-Smith	472-5084

\*\*\*\*\*

ORLEANS SOUTHWEST SUPERVISORY UNION:

Superintendents of Schools:	
Mark Andrews	472-6531 x22
Director of Student Services:	
Joanne LeBlanc	472-6063 x12
Curriculum/Federal Grants Coord:	
Bill Kimball	472-6531 x20
Special Ed/Reading Specialist:	
Karen Weeks	472-6531 x21
Technology Coordinator:	
Carol Viens	472-6531 x14

STAFF DIRECTORY

Preschool Kindergarten	Steve Stahl Merrill Hurst Peggy Sprague Karen Tibbits
Grade 1	Alicia Benoit-Clark Linda Kinney Joanne Spear-Duffy
Grade 2	Suzanne Bader Jessica Baitz Julie Boudreau
Grade 3	Deborah Fenby Elaine Gendron Barbara Mercier
Grade 4	Kevin Broderick Maureen Demers
Grade 5	Carolyn Aiossa Beth Miller
Grade 6	Mike Noyes Mike Ryan Beth LeCours
Art	Jodi Ethier
Music	Nancy Ford
Health Education	Mike Baker
Physical Education	Tammi Smith
Athletic Director	Jennifer Faith
Library/Media	Woody Belt Sheila Halpin
Guidance Counselors	Betsy Allen Sara Behrsing Cynthia Burnham Barbara Jacobs Pam Parro
Math Teacher	Kate Densle
Reading Teachers	Patty Hannigan Heather Wright
Teacher of the Deaf	Sandra Gebbie
Special Education	Amy Kimball Patricia LeCours
Nurses	
Administrative Assistant	
Office Assistant	
Library Assistant/EST Clerk	

**Instructional Assistants**

**Christie Allen  
Brittany Chilson  
June Cleveland  
Bonnie DeGoosh  
Nichole Devenger  
Alice Fler  
Bea Gelineau  
Diane Holbrook  
Melissa Martin  
Annette Meservey  
Kristen Millard  
Selina Mochizuki  
Merrilee Perrine  
Judy Picard  
Claire Pike  
Claire Slayton  
Tammi Smith  
Glo Webel**

**School Psychologist  
REACH! Site Coordinator  
Four Winds Coordinators**

**Con Keppel  
Kelly Evans  
Johanna Laggis  
Beth LeCours  
Maria Everett**

**Technology/Computer  
Student Mentor Coordinator  
Building & Grounds**

**Richard Coolbeth  
Joseph Martineau  
Eugene Mooney  
Fred Powers  
Val Simmons  
Amanda Gabaree  
Ruth Larsen  
Frances Perry-Miller**

**Food Services**

## ***School Procedures***

### Address Change

Any change in address, telephone number or other important information should be given to the school as soon as a change is anticipated.

### Attendance Information

School hours are 7:55 - 2:27. Students who arrive at school for breakfast may report to the cafeteria at 7:20. The playground is supervised for early arrivals between 7:30 - 7:45.

### Early Dismissal

We ask parents to report to the main office when picking up their child for an early dismissal. We require parents to complete a sign out form before children are released.

### Bicycles & Skateboards

Bicycles must be kept in the bicycle rack near the red building. Students are responsible for their own locks. The school does not assume any responsibility if a bicycle or skateboard is damaged or stolen. Skateboards are allowed only to come to school and are not to be used on school property during school hours.

### Changes in After School Destination

Occasionally a child will need to change his or her normal after school destination. Parents are required to send a note to the school indicating the specifics of the change that day.

### Directory Information

Directory information as follows may be divulged without parent permission: student names, addresses, dates of birth and dates of enrollment; parent or legal custodian's name and address; grade levels of students enrolled in our school; school activities in which students participate; and awards and honors students receive. Parents may refuse disclosure of any of the above information by providing a written notice to the principal by October 1st of each school year.

### Illness

Parents are asked not to send children to school if there has been vomiting, diarrhea or fever during the previous twenty-four hours. A sick child does not learn easily and may spread the illness to classmates. If a child becomes ill in school, the nurse is available to assist. We will contact parents or individuals designated on the emergency form if a child needs to be excused for illness.

### Dress Code

In order to foster a healthy educational setting, all staff, volunteers and students are to adhere to the following:

- Only appropriate pictures and words on clothing (at discretion of Principal)
- Shoulder straps are to be at least an inch wide
- Only outerwear straps are to be visible
- Shirts and all tops should be long enough to tuck in, even with arms raised to shoulder length and necklines extend to the middle of the chest (only small areas of skin showing in front or back)
- Skirts and shorts are to be at an appropriate length (at discretion of Principal. i.e. fingertip length)
- Children's faces are to be free of make-up

Heads are free of hats, scarves, and hoods  
All clothing should be loose fitting  
Jackets and all outerwear are to be worn only outside  
For safety, shoes need to be free of wheels and no flip flops

Anyone wearing clothing that appears to create an improper or disruptive influence on the educational environment will be asked to borrow an article of clothing from the school's extra clothing supply for the rest of the school day.

#### Emergency Closings

*Delayed Opening* - The opening of school may be delayed for two hours during inclement weather. In the event of a delayed opening, the buses will run two hours late and school will open at 9:45. Delayed openings will be announced over the radio on stations WDEV, WFRB, and WLVB. WCAX channel 3 will also announce delayed openings on the television.

*Closings* - If school is closed because of inclement weather, announcements will be made on the aforementioned radio and television stations.

#### Field Trips

Students must have written parental permission to take field trips or leave school grounds for any purpose. Information about each field trip will be given to parents by teachers. Parents are asked to provide the school with either a blanket permission slip for all field trips or grant permission on a trip-by-trip basis. Students will not be excluded from a trip for financial reasons.

#### Fire/Crisis Drills

Fire/crisis drills are held once a month, as required by state law. An escape map is posted in each classroom.

#### Locked Doors

For the building to provide a safer environment, the only entrance to the building, which will be unlocked throughout the school day, will be through the main door in the back of the building. The side entrance by the catholic church will be unlocked between 7:20 and 7:50. We continue to promote an "Open Door" policy along with the need to keep our students safe. Please sign in at the office when entering the building.

#### Lost and Found

The 'Lost and Found' box is located outside the gym. Items found are taken to this box or, in the case of small or valuable items, turned into the office. Labeling clothing and school belongings with the child's name is extremely helpful, and has led to many happy 'finds.' Items are kept for only a short time before being donated to the Salvation Army.

#### Outside Recess Participation

Outside recess is an important part of a student's school day. Parents are advised to dress their child for outside recess each day, and/or to send clothing which might be needed with weather changes. In the event of inclement weather, or if the temperature is below zero, students are not taken outside. We expect that a child will go out for recess except in cases when a physician indicates that a child may not participate in outside recess.

#### Personal Property

Students must assume responsibility for loss or damage to personal property brought to school. The school will try to protect such property but is not responsible for replacing lost or damaged personal items.

#### Pets

Pets are not allowed in the school building or on school grounds.

### Snacks

We believe standards for snacks should primarily be the responsibility of the parents. We encourage parents to provide healthy, sugar-free snacks and drinks for their child. You may be asked to NOT send snacks with nuts because of life-threatening allergies for some children.

### Student Responsibility for School Materials

If a student loses or damages school materials, we ask parents to reimburse the school for the loss or damage.

### Use of School Telephones

Telephone communications between a child and a parent should be limited to emergency situations. Planning at home for after school activities or permission to stay late can help reduce the need for calls. **Students will not be given permission to call home for forgotten items.** The natural consequence of not having an item helps improve organizational skills and responsibility.

***Involved parents do make a difference and increase a child's success in school.***

### ***Getting To and From School Safely***

Hardwick Elementary School contracts for bus services from Wildcat Busing. If you have any questions about routes or stops, please contact Dona or Cary Bessette at Wildcat Busing Co., 472-5501. If you wish to share a concern or report an incident, please call the principal.

### Procedures

It is recommended that students be at their bus stop at least five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive. Bus drivers are required to depart from their pickup stations on time. Drivers are not expected to wait for any student who delays the bus. Expect schedules to fluctuate if weather or road conditions are adverse. During hazardous road conditions, the driver of the bus will decide if a road is in safe, passable condition.

Each bus driver has expectations for the behavior of the students on his/her bus. Students should learn what the driver expects and follow these expectations. Students will be warned by the driver when the rules are not being followed. When an individual chooses to ignore the rules and the driver's warnings, the driver will file a formal report and the child will write a plan in the Planning Room. Subsequent offenses may result in a loss of bus privileges. Any time riding privileges are revoked, it is the responsibility of the parent to provide transportation.

### School Bus Rules

To provide maximum safety, each driver shall be responsible for enforcing, and each passenger shall be expected to observe, the following rules:

1. Be at the bus stop on time and wait on the shoulder of the road or sidewalk.
2. Board the bus in single file without pushing and crowding.
3. Be seated immediately and stay seated until the bus stops at your destination.
4. Follow driver's instructions regarding where to sit.
5. Talk in a low, calm voice. Loud talk and foul language are not permitted.
6. Be courteous. Throwing objects, changing seats, and rough play are not permitted.
7. Ask for the driver's permission before opening windows.
8. Look both ways before leaving the bus. Wait for the driver's signal to cross the road.
9. Obey the driver.
10. Be respectful at all times.

Any acts which are considered flagrant violations of safety may result in an immediate suspension of transportation privileges by the principal. Parents will be held responsible for mutilation and/or destruction of property and equipment on the bus.

### ***Student Expectations At School***

School rules are designed to provide a safe learning environment for everyone. As a faculty we strive to be consistent and fair in applying the rules and in dealing with students who violate the rules. To create a safe and caring school, every member of the school is asked to follow four rules:

***Respect People***

***Respect Property***

***Practice Safety***

***Show Care & Concern***

## ***Behavior and Discipline At School***

Our approach to classroom management is to systematically teach discipline - it is a basic curriculum which flows through every classroom activity. Our goals for this approach are to assist children in learning self-control and to create a caring and kind school. We believe effective, caring discipline requires both empathy and structure. Empathy helps us perceive the child's needs and hear what s/he is trying to communicate, and structure allows us to set guidelines and provide the necessary limits. Our interactions with students are aimed at helping them develop a strong sense of self-discipline and respect for the rights of others.

Our method for assisting students who choose to disregard school expectations is to hold the student accountable for his/her own behavior. Through this process, we support students in learning the importance of being responsible for one's behavior.

During the 2009 school year the staff created the HES Discipline Plan. Copies of the plan are available at the office. We continually review the plan to ensure its success for all.

### Student Grievance Procedure

At times, a student and/or parent may not be able to resolve their differences with a staff member, or may feel that a decision reached is unjust. Students and/or their parents, have a right to appeal decisions through the following process:

1. Try to resolve the difficulty at its source.
2. If unresolved, seek help from the principal.
3. If unresolved after consulting with the principal, contact the superintendent for an appointment to review the problem.
4. After consulting with the superintendent, if the problem has not been resolved a hearing before the Board may be requested through the superintendent or Board chair.

***It helps to take a "no fault" approach when your child experiences difficulties in school. Blaming teachers or classmates only strains relationships. Join forces with teachers to help your child overcome the difficulty and find success.***

## ***Breakfast and Lunch Food for Thought***

Breakfast is served in the cafeteria from 7:20 - 7:45. Breakfast is FREE for all students attending Hardwick Elementary School. Hot lunches are served daily at a cost of \$1.50 for full paying students and \$.40 for students eligible for reduced lunches. Students may also bring their lunches; milk may be purchased for \$.35. The hot lunch menu is published and sent home every month in the Parent Link.

Parents may apply to receive free or reduced lunches for their children. Families who have been eligible for free or reduced lunch in the past need to file an application at the beginning of each school year. If this is not done, families will be billed the full price for meals. Information and application forms are available throughout the year in the school's main office. Please contact us at any time if your financial circumstances change and you believe you may be eligible for free or reduced price meals.

The food service program is a self-supporting enterprise and we need your assistance and support to effectively manage the program. You can help us by prepaying for your child's meals. Checks for meals should be submitted to the school on Monday mornings for the week. Bills for money owed are sent home at the end of each week with the understanding that the bill must be paid the following school day. Credit will not be extended beyond \$10.00. Parents who exceed this limit will be asked to provide a bag lunch for their child until the account is paid in full.

## ***Student Health A Sound Body***

The school has the services of two certified, registered school nurses. The school nurses assist sick or injured children, consult with parents and staff members, and conducts various clinics and testing programs for vision and hearing.

Please be advised that the nurses cannot dispense any medication, including aspirin, without written permission. "Permission for Medication" forms are available in the school office. The medicine must be in the original container indicating prescription, child's name, time medication is to be given, etc.

We ask parents to give medications at home whenever possible. Medication prescribed three times a day should be given once in the morning before school, once after school, and once at bedtime.

Hardwick Town School Policy requires that every student attending our school must be immunized in accordance with state regulations. Forms seeking exemption for religious, moral or medical reasons are available through the nurse's office.

## ***Student Progress in School***

### Parent - Teacher Conferences

An important part of our reporting system is the parent-teacher conference, which is held twice each year. The conference offers both parent and teacher the opportunity to discuss academic and social progress, concerns, and share views in general. The conferences are scheduled by the teacher with notification of the conference sent home several days in advance of the conference. Each conference is scheduled for twenty (20)

minutes. The scheduled conference does not preclude calling a conference whenever the need arises. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher to arrange a conference at any time throughout the year. We believe educating a child is a partnership and we value time we can spend with parents.

Conferences are held in November and April. ***Bring a list of questions to the parent teacher conference. Prepared questions help the conference stay focused and assures that your concerns are covered.***

### Promotion and Retention

In retaining or promoting a student, the school considers not only the student's academic achievement and needs, but also the child's age, social and emotional maturity and needs, and the wishes of the child's parents. If retention is being considered, the issue will be raised and discussed with the parent no later than the spring parent-teacher conference. If the parent and/or the teacher believe retention should be considered, the next step is to gather as much information as possible before making the decision. Every factor which MAY affect the student's performance in school is considered and discussed with parents. We are committed to looking at the whole child and involving parents in the decision.

### Class Placement

In the spring we begin to work on class placement for the following year. Placing students in classroom groupings is a complicated task, and requires the collective input of teachers and parents.

Many different individual needs, often of varying urgency, must be carefully considered when making classroom assignments. The needs of individuals must be blended with the collective needs of all students to create groupings which will provide the best education

for all students.

We recognize that the student we know in the school setting may be a different child than the parent sees at home. We value parents' perspectives and views, and seek input from parents as we consider the needs of each child. We do not take specific teacher recommendations. It is our belief that class placement is a decision best left to the professional staff based on input gathered from many sources.

### ***School Communications***

#### School Newsletters

We publish a monthly school newsletter, *The Parent Link*, which is sent home with the oldest child in each family on the last Friday of each month. The newsletter features a principal's column, calendar of events, cafeteria menus, and children's creative writing and art work. We encourage parents to read the newsletter and use it to stay abreast of school happenings and events. The Parent Link is also on the school's web-site.

#### Staff E-Mails

Parents can communicate with any Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union employee through e-mail by using the first initial, last name of teacher @ ossu.org.

#### REACH! and Homework Cafe

These two after school programs will combine this year to offer even more academic opportunities for your children from 2:30-4:00. Homework cafe will employ more professional staff so that children will have supplemental/tutorial support in both math and literacy. The fabulous REACH! Enrichment activities will continue to happen from 4:00 to 5:00.

### ***Student Services***

#### Educational Support Team

It is our belief that a comprehensive system of instructional supports should be available for any student requiring assistance. We call this system the Educational Support Team or EST.

Students may be referred to the EST by teachers, specialists or parents at any time a child appears to be in need of additional instructional supports. The EST meets each week to review cases and develop plans to assist children. Instructional supports include, but are not limited to, guidance services, health services, peer tutoring, psychological evaluations, social services referral, or special education referral and supplemental small group instruction.

The EST functions as a collaborative team and includes members of the professional staff, principal and parents. A parent desiring to refer his/her child to the EST may obtain a referral form from the child's classroom teacher.

## Special Education

Students who are eligible for special education services, as determined by state and federal guidelines, receive additional support from the special education staff to address their needs. Services offer assistance based on the specific needs of the child. Any parent who feels their child may have special education needs is encouraged to contact their child's teacher. Our goal is to provide services, when possible, in the students' classrooms.

## ***Parents As Partners***

Each fall children enter a new classroom filled with new friends and new learning experiences. This is an exhilarating time of the year when excitement runs high and the possibilities for new discoveries are at their peak.

This is an exciting and important time of year for parents as well. As school gets under way, you may be wondering how you can help your child have a successful school year. We might suggest several ideas which will contribute to your child's school and academic success this year:

1. Read to or with your child on a regular basis, every day if possible. Encourage your child to read for fun, too, and take time to talk about what he or she is reading.
2. Encourage your child to always try to do his or her personal best.
3. The average child spends 5 1/2 hours a day in front of the television set. Encourage your child to spend some of that time reading.
4. Encourage your child to talk about what's going on in school or outside the home.
5. Encourage your child to write something each day. Diaries, shopping lists, notes and letters all provide opportunities for practicing important skills.
6. Your child will have homework each night. Students will have approximately 10 minutes of homework for each year they have been in school. A first grader will have 10 minutes of

## ***Curriculum***

Hardwick Elementary School strives to provide a rich and varied curriculum for students. Following is an overview of the programs we offer:

**Art** - Students in grades K-6 receive art instruction once a week from a specialist. Students use a variety of arts media including clay, watercolor, tempera and paper mache, and study the elements and principles of design. Student work is displayed throughout the building and in the community.

**Health** - Our health program is taught by a certified health instructor and incorporates activities from a wide range of health concepts. Instruction is provided in drugs, alcohol, tobacco, body systems, nutrition, physical fitness, fire safety, disease prevention, first aid, and growth and development.

**Guidance** - Guidance services are provided by certified school guidance counselors. The guidance program is a prevention oriented model designed for all students in the school. Components in the guidance program include whole class instruction, friendship groups, teacher and parent consultation, and individual support for students.

**Library** - Library classes are held weekly for students in grades K-6 and focus on providing students with the skills and knowledge to be successful users of the library. In grade 6 information skills are taught within the context of the classroom curriculum, with the librarian serving as a partner with the

classroom teacher.

**Mathematics** - Our math program focuses on the development of math concepts, computation and problem solving. Instructional activities are developed utilizing the Bridges program, which is a comprehensive K-5 math program. Our sixth grade uses Math Thematics.

**Music** - Students in grades K-6 receive music instruction once a week. Our program focuses on exposure to many different kinds of music, rhythm and movement. Students sing, learn to play instruments and dance. Students in grade 4 - 6 may elect to participate in small group music lessons and join the school band.

**Physical Education** - Students participate in physical education class twice a week. Our developmental program focuses on teamwork, cooperation, personal enjoyment of physical activity, and fine and gross motor skills. Adventure based learning and challenge by choice activities are important components of the physical education program.

**Reading** - Our instructional programs in reading combine phonological awareness, phonics, comprehension, vocabulary development, and the appreciation of literature. Our program emphasizes the development of reading skills as well as maintaining a strong emphasis on the reading of quality literature. Our primary goal is to foster a love for reading in each of our students. Students challenged in reading receive support from a reading specialist in a small group setting.

**Science** - Our science program is an inquiry based approach which includes active learning experiences in earth, physical and life science. Students in grades K-6 have opportunities to learn science and gain knowledge about themselves and their environment by being scientists. Science skills focused on in our program include observing, investigating, and constructing and testing hypotheses.

**Social Studies** - In social studies students learn about themselves and others through units on their local community, state and other parts of the world. Current events and place based learning are incorporated into their studies, and project work is included as much as possible.

**Technology** - All classrooms have access to computers and program related software. In addition, we have a full Mac lab and five mobile carts. Instruction is provided by classroom teachers with technology specialists consulting, and is integrated into the curricula.

**Writing** - Students write daily in a variety of forms with a focus on both skills and mechanics, and the creative aspects of writing. Spelling instruction is also provided on a daily basis.