

Thames Elementary

**Every Decision, Every Day--
What is best for students!**



Parent Handbook

2019-2020

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Thames Administration

Teresa Vince Merwin, Principal
Christie Moss, Ed.D., Assistant Principal
Laurin Mizell, Administrator in Residence, Year 3
Kathleen Adams, Administrator in Residence, Year 2

Student Support Staffuly

Jonathan Kimbriel, Counselor
Jamie Baas, Behavior Interventionist
Allison Hinz, Case Manager
Stacie Brewer, Child Find Coordinator

Instructional Support Staffuly

Heidi Hackbarth, Leauge Strategist
Kaprice Thomas, League Advocate

Administrative Support

Tiffany Flowers, MSIS/Purchasing Secretary
Angela Lucky, Registrar/Attendance Secretary
, Technologist

Grade Level Leaders

Ariel Boleware, Kindergarten
Crystal Weathers, 1st Grade
Kyla Welch, 2nd Grade
Evette Brown, 3rd Grade
Cathy Anderson, 4th Grade
Earon Cobbert, 5th Grade
Madison Bourne, SPED-lower
Andrea Wade, SPED-middle
Hillary Duggan SPED-upper
Elvira Deyamport, Auxillary
Brenda Hollingsworth, Classified

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Thank you for allowing the Staffuly (staff plus faculty) at Thames Elementary to love, teach, and nurture your child this school year. We promise to give our best each day so that every student is successful.

For your convenience, this handbook will provide all the information you should need to navigate through the year. If you discover anything that we have left out, please let us know as our goal is to be completely transparent and supportive.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta once said, "I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things." This year I look forward to doing great things with your help.

Sincerely,

Teresa V. Merwin

School Motto- Thames Tigers, Thrive for Five!

School Mascot-Tigers

School Colors-Purple and gold

Arrival to Dismissal

<p>What time does school start?</p>	<p>School starts at 8:00 a.m.</p>
<p>What can my child wear to school? (for full dress details, please refer to the student handbook)</p>	<p><u>Shirts</u> must be gold, navy, purple, or white with a collar like a polo or button down style shirt. <u>Pants</u> must be khaki, navy or black. Students may wear shorts or long pants. Both must be chino style. No athletic wear, denim or jeggings. Girls may wear skirts. On Friday, students present Monday thru Thursday can wear a HPSD/Thames spirit shirt with uniform bottoms. Occasionally students may earn free dress rewards. Free dress rewards must follow the handbook guidelines.</p>
<p>How does my child get to school?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Your child may ride the bus. Bus cards will be issued to your child at the time of registration and should remain with your child at all times. 2) You may drop-off your child in the car rider area starting at 7:30. 3) Your child may walk or ride a bike to school. Children walking or biking must approach the school from beyond the crossing guards at each corner. <p>NO CHILD CAN BE DROPPED OFF IN THE ROAD OR IN THE PARKING BAYS IN THE FRONT OF THE SCHOOL! Parents please understand this is for SAFETY and not to inconvenience you.</p>
<p>I need to bring something in to the office when I drop off my child. What do I do?</p>	<p>For parents needing to make deliveries, you may park in the parking bays in the front of the school and come in to the school. Staffuly will be available to direct you. We prefer you drop your child off in car rider first. However, if that is not possible, we will assist you.</p>
<p>Can my child eat breakfast?</p>	<p>Breakfast starts at 7:30 a.m. All HPSD students eat free breakfast and lunch. If you drop off your child in car rider or they walk to school, they must arrive by 7:50 in order to eat breakfast and get to class on time.</p>
<p>What if we are late? (also see Awards)</p>	<p>If you are late arriving to school, your child is tardy. Parents MUST bring students into the office and sign them in as arrived. Students unaccompanied by a parent may not be allowed to class until a parent contact has been made.</p>
<p>How do I communicate with my child's teacher?</p>	<p>Once your child is assigned to a teacher, the teacher will send you a link to the Classroom Dojo. This is an app that links you directly with your child's teacher and class. You will be able to see how your child's day progresses. Also, teachers will communicate assignments, tests, and class needs using this tool. Additionally all teachers have an email address that can be located on the Staffuly page of our school website.</p>

	<p>The school website is thames.hattiesburgpsd.com. The school will share information using Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. See the social media section for these tags. Teachers will send newsletter weekly.</p>
<p>How do I meet with my child's teacher?</p>	<p>All teachers have planning time throughout the day. Teachers can meet with parents during planning time and before or after school. Contact your child's teacher via email or dojo to schedule a time.</p>
<p>How do I observe my child in class?</p>	<p>Our first priority is safety and protecting instructional time. We allow classroom observations by appointment. A member from the school's leadership team will escort and stay with parents observing during instructional time. Please contact your child's teacher to schedule an appointment.</p>
<p>My child is acting out in class and I want to come deal with the issue. What do I do?</p>	<p>We appreciate parent support and agree that sometimes a visit goes a long way. Message the teacher that you are coming and they will alert an administrator. An administrator will escort the parent to the room. Thank you for your support.</p>
<p>Can I have lunch with my child?</p>	<p>Absolutely! Our cafeteria schedule is very busy, but we will do our best to accommodate your request. You may be asked to eat with your child in the conference room if the dining area is packed. However, you can only eat with your child during their scheduled lunch time. We cannot pull students outside their normal schedule. Please contact the teacher to find out what time to arrive. You may purchase a meal in the cafeteria or bring something. However, commercial items must be in generic packaging. For example, a McDonald's happy meal should be transferred to a plain paper bag or lunch box.</p>
<p>Does my child get recess?</p>	<p>Yes. All students are scheduled for 20 minutes of free play daily. Recess is a privilege. Therefore, students will be required to make good decisions to keep their recess.</p>
<p>Do I need to send a snack to school?</p>	<p>Pre-K, kindergarten and first grade levels have a snack time. Parents may send snacks with their child. During this time, students may earn social time. Students will ALWAYS be allowed to eat their snack, but, based on behavior, they may or may not have free social time with the snack. Grade levels second thru fifth may bring a snack for recess time. These grade levels do not get a separate time for snack.</p> <p>All students may keep a water bottle in their book bag or designated area of the classroom. Water bottles must have a sealed cap to avoid spills. If students abuse this privilege, they will be denied this opportunity.</p>

<p>Can I bring a classroom snack for my child's birthday?</p>	<p>Pre-K, kindergarten, first grade, and community-based classes may have birthday parties. These events can only take place at the end of the day. Pre-K, kindergarten and first grades may start at 2:30 and community-based classes may start at 2:15. Grades 2nd-5th may have birthday snacks during their recess time. Parents may leave these items in the office for their child to pick up for recess.</p>
<p>I need to check my child out from school. What do I need to know?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) All checkouts must be complete by 2:30 p.m. After 2:30 we start ending the day and getting ready for dismissal. <u>NO ONE MAY CHECK OUT AFTER 2:30 UNLESS THERE IS AN EMERGENCY.</u> 2) Anyone checking out your child MUST be on his or her checkout list. No one can check out your child unless you have given written permission. This is for <u>SAFETY</u> and not for inconvenience. 3) <u>ID is required for checkout.</u> EVERYONE will need ID regardless if you are recognized or not by our staff. <u>Please bring your ID every time you come to the school.</u>
<p>What time does school end each day?</p>	<p>School dismisses at 3:00 each day.</p>
<p>How will my child get home?</p>	<p>You may choose one of four options.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Ride the bus 2) Walk home* 3) Pick up by daycare 4) Pick up by parent in car rider** <p>*Children walking home are considered “walkers” if they walk beyond the crossing guards on both corners of the school.</p> <p>**Parents wishing to avoid the car rider line CANNOT pull to the front and come in to check out. Checkouts are before 2:30. You must wait until 3:30 when remaining car rider children walk to the front. Abuse of this option will be addressed.</p>
<p>My child's dismissal has changed. What do I do?</p>	<p>This request gets complicated. We do our best to ensure children and their teachers are aware of how to dismiss. If you absolutely must request a dismissal change, you MUST SEND THE REQUEST IN WRITING before 2:00 and alert the office that email or fax has been sent. You may email one of the secretaries (angela.lucky@hattiesburgpsd.com or tiffany.flowers@hattiesburgpsd.com) or fax the request to 601-582-6084. We will not be able to accommodate phone request for liability purposes. Please make sure to include your ID.</p>

The Things in Between

<p>I need to meet with the principal or assistant principal.</p>	<p>The quickest way to schedule an appointment or request a meeting is to email the administrator. An administrator may or may not be able to meet with you in the moment of a request, though they will try very hard. The busiest times of day are arrival and dismissal. Please be prepared to leave your name and number with the secretary during these times or send an email.</p>
<p>My child was absent. What do I need to do?</p>	<p>Upon returning to school, please send the excuse or written note to indicate why your child was absent. This is required within three days of returning in order to be eligible as “excused.” After the three-day mark, the school is not able to make an absence excused even with an excuse. However, we will keep it on file in case of a truancy issue. Students have the same amount of days absent to make up work. For example if your child missed three days, he or she has three days to make-up the work before getting a zero. Please see the student handbook for more details regarding truancy and absences.</p>
<p>My child needs medicine during the school day. Can someone give this to them?</p>	<p>Yes. Some children may need daily doses of medicine and some may only need medicine for a temporary illness. The secretaries are trained to administer prescribed medicine and all medicine is kept in a locked location. Students needing medicine must have a completed Medicine Release form signed by their doctor. Parents must then bring the medicine to the school with the completed form. You may pick up this form in the office or download from our website. thames/hattiesburgpsd.com, Parent menu, Resources Medicine distribution is only available through the office.</p>
<p>Will my child get an award? Can I attend the ceremony?</p>	<p>We have end-of-year awards for the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perfect Attendance-at school EVERY day ALL day, no tardies or check outs • Math Award-highest math average in class • Reading Award-highest reading average in class • Science Award-highest science average in class (4th and 5th grades only) • Tiger Award-most growth in math or reading in class (2 per class)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal’s Award-best citizen in each class • Principal’s Honor Roll-All A’s and B’s for the entire year • Superintendent’s Honor Roll-All A’s for the entire year • Term Honor Roll-A’s and/or B’s for each term and is awarded at the end of each term • Activity Awards-each activity teacher will recognize one boy and one girl from each grade level based on effort, attitude, and responsibility <p>All parents can attend awards ceremony. Times will be announced. Parents of students receiving an award will be notified.</p>
<p>What type of behavior system does the school use?</p>	<p>Our school uses the Classroom Dojo. This free app can be downloaded to any smartphone, computer, or device. Teachers will provide a link to their class. You will be able to monitor behavior, assignments, and announcements through this app. Students receive positive points for good choices and negative points for poor choices. This way you know exactly what is going on in the room. You can also directly contact the teacher during school hours if needed.</p>
<p>How does the school communicate?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Social Media- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. FB-W I Thames Elementary b. Instagram- thameselementary c. Twitter- thameshpsd 2) Web page-thames.hattiesburgpsd.com 3) Newsletter (twice a month) 4) Call out/Text-make sure you update your phone number if it changes. 5) Teachers- teachers send out daily information through Dojo and weekly newsletters
<p>What is a rally?</p>	<p>We believe recognition of children should be an ongoing process and not just at the end of the year. Each nine-week term, we will recognize students who have met their academic goals or made a unique accomplishment. A <u>Rally</u> is how we conduct these recognitions. There are two rallies each term; upper (grades 3-5) and lower (grades PreK-2.) Parents are always welcome to attend; however, notification of award recipients is not available. We recognize a large number of students and review data until the day of the</p>

	<p>rally. There is always entertainment to make this a fun occasion.</p>
<p>What does it mean that my child is part of a house?</p>	<p>We have four community houses. These houses are part of our positive culture initiative. Students and teachers grades 3-5 draw from the Hero's Hat to randomly select their house. The houses provide opportunity for students to build positive relationships with peers as well as cooperative learning. The houses are Aqua Dome, Bat Cave, Spider's Web, and Panther's Lair. These houses tie into our school theme of heroes. We believe that every child should be the hero of his/her own story!</p> <p>Houses compete at the Rally each term to showcase their skill and talent and promote their house's character traits and science focus.</p>
<p>What is PBIS?</p>	<p>PBIS stands for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support. PBIS is a nationwide campaign that proactively encourages positive decisions and behaviors for children. At Thames Elementary, we celebrate PBIS every month. Students earn points through Dojo. (See Behavior System) Students meeting their positive percentage goal each month are eligible to attend the PBIS event. There are two levels. Students meeting or exceeding their goal attend the entire PBIS event; Students approaching their percentage goal attends half of the PBIS event.</p>
<p>I want to join the PTA?</p>	<p>Wonderful! PTA meetings are each month, August thru May. The PTA meets on the 4th Monday of each month at the school. Messages will be sent to remind members of the meetings. You may sign up by messaging them on their Facebook page, Thames Elementary PTA. Membership is \$5.00 per person and \$8.00 per family. Membership allows parents to vote on important issues and run for an office.</p>
<p>I want to volunteer at the school. What do I need to do?</p>	<p>Thank you. We need volunteers. All volunteers must complete a background check in conjunction with completing the volunteer packet. The background check is \$20.00.</p>
<p>We invite volunteers to assist with the following tasks:</p>	

SCHOOL

- Putting up bulletin boards in the foyer and cafeteria
- Straightening the uniform closet and managing coats and jackets
- Assisting children in the cafeteria at breakfast
- Change the marquee
- Shelving books in the library
- Pick up trash around track
- Weeding the outdoor sidewalks
- Directing and monitoring morning and afternoon traffic
- Greeting students getting off the bus
- Playing musical instruments for students while arriving and dismissing
- Assist PTA with events

CLASSROOM

- Cutting materials for centers, bulletin boards, or other needs
- Reading to a class
- Help sanitize desks at the end of the day
- Sharpen pencils
- Organize supplies, class library, and center materials
- Staple packets
- Make copies

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