

PARENTS' HANDBOOK
2023-2024 School Year
Lopatcong Township School District

Grades PreK through 4

Grades 5 through 8



Lopatcong Township Elementary School
Township Middle School
263 Route 57
Phillipsburg, New Jersey 08865

Telephone: 908-859-0800
FAX: 908-213-1339
Special Services: 908-213-2995 ext. 2800
Cafeteria: 908-859-3960

Lopatcong

Phillipsburg, New Jersey 08865

Cafeteria: 908-213-2995, ext. 2520

Lopatcong Township Board of Education Offices
321 Stonehenge Drive
Telephone: 908-213-2995, ext. 2500 FAX: 908-213-3675
www.lopatsd.org

Administration	
Israel Marmolejos	Superintendent
Rick Bonney	Middle School Principal
Krista Wayne	Elementary School Principal
Tina Palecek	Business Administrator
Nicole Clymer	Child Study Team Supervisor
Child Study Team Personnel	
Cate Proulx	Psychologist
Kelsey Sessions	Social Worker
Lisa Zittis	Social Worker
Jocelyn Hayes	Speech Therapist - Elementary/Middle School
Jessica Verrelli	Speech Therapist - Elementary
Chelsey Waliko	Speech Therapist - Elementary
Michelle De Santo	Physical Therapist
Karen Pereira	Occupational Therapist
Gwen Olah	Special Services Secretary
Office Personnel	
Laura Ruggiero	Administrative Assistant – Middle School
Carmen Camunas	Administrative Assistant – Elementary School
Gwen Olah	Administrative Assistant – Elementary School
Chris Ferri	Assistant to the Business Administrator
Tiffany Menegus	Payroll & Benefits Specialist/Human Resource Assistant
	504 Compliance Officer
Rick Bonney	Transportation Coordinator
Director of Technology – Adam Boyer	
Custodial Staff	
Matthew Alter	Custodian (M)
John Feleppo	Custodian (E)
Barbara Hurte	Custodian (E)
Henry Hooper	Custodian (M)
Robert Marinelli	Custodian (M)
Matt Maslonka	Custodian (E)
Maynard Reeves	Custodian (M)
Benjamin Whitehead	Custodian (E)
Lunchroom Staff	
Linda McQuade	Lunchroom Supervisor (E)
Donna Booth	Lunchroom Supervisor (M)
Kim Koslowski	Lunchroom Aide (M)
School Nurses	
Ann Bertsch (Elementary) Betsy Fania (Middle School)	
School Counselors	
Angela Sodalbers (Elementary) Stacy Conner (Middle School)	

Lopatcong Township Board of Education 2023-2024 School Year

David Schaible, President

Megan Flynn	Ernie Gallant
Julia Jasper Jones	Nicholas Smith
Breanne Sweeney	Pam Thomas, Vice President

Treasurer of School Monies - Cindy Hanics
Business Administrator/Board Secretary – Tina Palecek

Superintendent – Israel Marmolejos
Principal (MS) – Rick Bonney
Principal (ES) – Krista Wayne

Supervisor of Special Services – Nicole Clymer

Regular Board of Education meetings are conducted on the second Thursday of each month and on the fourth Thursday of each month (as needed) at the Lopatcong Township Middle School, 321 Stonehenge Drive in the Country Hills section of Lopatcong Township at 7:00 p.m. in the instrumental music room unless otherwise indicated.

District Mission Statement

The Lopatcong School District is committed to provide a safe, secure and supportive learning environment that challenges all students to meet or exceed developmentally appropriate expectations based on New Jersey Core Curriculum Content and Common Core State Standards through interaction with highly qualified and dedicated staff.

With community collaboration, the district will promote a positive atmosphere that acknowledges diversity and encourages students to be self-reflective and civically responsible.

By providing a comprehensive educational program using varied instructional strategies, recognizing individual differences, incorporating technology and digital literacy and encouraging critical thinking, the district will prepare students for college and careers in the 21st century.

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I am delighted to extend my warmest greetings and welcome you to another exciting school year. As the Superintendent of our school district, I am honored to have the opportunity to partner with you in guiding the growth and development of our students.

At Lopatcong Township School District, we believe that education is a collaborative effort between parents, teachers, and the community. Your active involvement and support play a vital role in creating a positive and enriching learning environment for our children. Working as a unified team, we can empower our students to achieve their highest goals.

In this parent handbook, you will find valuable information about our district policies, academic programs, and various resources available to you and your child. We have designed it as a comprehensive guide to help answer your questions and provide you with insights into the educational journey your child will embark upon.

We encourage you to familiarize yourself with the handbook and use it as a reference throughout the school year. It contains essential details about school policies, procedures, expectations, weather-related closings, and important dates and times. The handbook will help to ensure a smooth and productive experience for both you and your child. Additionally, it highlights the various ways you can get involved in the school community, such as through parent-teacher associations, volunteering opportunities, and attending school events.

Communication is a cornerstone of our partnership, and we are committed to keeping you informed about your child's progress, school activities, and essential updates. We encourage you to maintain regular contact with your child's teachers and participate in parent-teacher conferences. We also provide various digital platforms and channels to ensure effective and timely communication between home and school.

As we embark on this educational journey together, let us remember that education is not just about academics but also about fostering social-emotional growth, character development, and critical thinking skills. Our dedicated team of educators is passionate about creating a safe, inclusive, and stimulating learning environment that nurtures each child's unique talents and strengths.

I am grateful for your trust and confidence in our district. We are committed to providing a high-quality education that prepares our students for success in an ever-changing world. Together, we can make a lasting impact on the lives of our children and empower them to become responsible, compassionate, and lifelong learners.

Thank you for being our partner in your child's success and future. I look forward to a remarkable year of growth, discovery, and achievement.

Warmest regards,
Israel Marmolejos
Superintendent

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2023-24

The Board of Education reserves the right to revise the 2023-202424 - 28	
(Thurs. – Mon.)	Teacher In-Service – Schools Closed
Aug. 29 (Tues.)	First Day for Students – Schools Open
Sept. 1 – 4 (Fri. – Mon.)	Labor Day Weekend – Schools Closed
Sept. 29 (Friday)	½ day Students and Staff
Oct. 9 (Monday)	Teacher In-Service –Schools Closed
Nov. 9 & 10 (Thurs. - Fri.)	NJEA Convention - Schools Closed
Nov, 16 - 21 (Thurs. - Tues)	Parent - Teacher Conferences ½ Students
Nov. 22 (Wed.)	½ day Students and Staff
Nov. 23 & 24 (Thurs. - Fri.)	Thanksgiving Recess - Schools Closed
Dec. 22 (Fri..)	½ day Students and Staff
Dec. 24 – Dec. 31 (Mon. - Mon.)	Winter Recess – Schools Closed
Jan. 3 (Wed.)	Schools Reopen
Jan. 15 (Mon.)	Schools Closed
Jan. 26 (Fri.)	Teacher In-Service – ½ day Students
Feb. 16 (Fri.)	Teacher In-Service – Schools Closed
Feb. 19 (Mon.)	Presidents’ Day - Schools Closed
March 15 (Fri.)	½ day Students and Staff
March 28 - April 2 (Thur. - Tues.)	Spring Recess – Schools Closed
April 3 (Wed..)	Schools Reopen
May 24 (Fri.)	Schools Closed
May 27 (Mon.)	Memorial Day - Schools Closed
June 12 (Wed.)	Last Day of School

Four emergency school days are included in this calendar.

If any of these 4 days are not utilized for an emergency, they shall be subtracted from the days remaining on the calendar. In the event of an excess of emergency days exceeding the 4 allowed, either non-state mandated school holidays will be utilized, or days may be added to the end of the school year in order to fulfill the student minimum required days. Snow days beyond the three allotted will be deducted in the following order **June 17, June 16, June 15 at the end of the school** year.

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL:

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OUR ALERT SYSTEM is used to notify all parents with regard to emergency closings and important announcements (make sure you are registered). Additionally, all school closings, delayed openings, and early dismissals will be announced over radio stations: **WODE-FM (99.9); WEEX (1230 AM); WAEB-FM (B104); WCTO CAT COUNTRY 96 (96.1); and TV Station WFMZ (Channel 69).**

2 HOUR DELAYED OPENING of school due to an emergency:

Elementary School – Doors Open 9:40 AM / School Begins 10:00 AM

Kindergarten and Preschool AM session 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Preschool PM session 12:35 AM to 2:35 PM

Middle School – Doors Open 10:15 AM/School Day Begins 10:25 AM

Lunch will be served on the days of delayed openings.

EARLY DISMISSALS due to an emergency, we advise you to make arrangements with a neighbor or relative for your child, so they will know where to go when dismissed. Please be sure your child knows what to do and where to go on these days.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:

School Hours: 8:00AM – 2:35PM. Students should arrive to the school from **7:40 AM until 8:00 AM.** Entrance is at the back of the school. All students should be in homeroom to prepare for the start of class at 8:00 AM. **Students arriving after 8:00 AM must be signed in by an adult in the front office and will be marked as tardy.**

KINDERGARTEN & PRESCHOOL

Preschool – Morning Session 8:00 AM – 10:45 AM

Preschool – Afternoon Session 11:50 AM – 2:35 PM

Kindergarten 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM

MIDDLE SCHOOL:

School Hours: 8:25AM – 3:00PM. Students should arrive to school **8:15 AM to 8:25 AM.** Entrances to the school will be located on Stonehenge Drive and Buckeley Hill Drive. Please refer to the “Car Rider” and “Walker” section of the handbook to determine the appropriate entrance. **Students who are not in homeroom at 8:25 will be marked tardy and MUST report to the office for a late slip.**

ATTENDANCE POLICY (Policy #5200): Regular and punctual attendance is mandatory for all students. During school hours, students are expected to be in the class or other assigned areas no later **than 8:00 AM at the Elementary School and 8:25 AM at the Middle School.** Students returning to school after an absence must bring a written statement signed by the parents explaining the reason for the absence. When a child is **absent for 3 or more days**, a physician's return-to-school note must be brought into school upon the child's return to school. Please be sure to keep the school nurse informed about any medical changes that occur during the school year.

ATTENDANCE - ABSENCES: **E.S.:**The Parent/Guardian of a student who is absent must make a "Plan Change" in the Pick Up Patrol by 8:00 A.M. **M.S.:** The Parent/Guardian of a student who is absent must call the office of by 8:00 AM to report the student's absence. Attendance is monitored by office personnel daily. Written notice will be forwarded to parents regarding excessive absences and the administration will carefully review cases to determine if further legal action must be pursued. Please refer to Policy #5200 for specific information regarding excused and unexcused absences and those counting toward truancy. If you have further questions, please contact the school. Students who are absent from school may not participate in evening school wide activities. **Students who are absent from school 18 or more days may be retained at their current grade level.**

ATTENDANCE – TARDINESS (Policy #5240): Parents of students arriving to school later than 8:00 AM at the Elementary School will need to submit tardy information in the Pick Up Patrol and students arriving after 8:25 AM at the Middle School will need to sign in at the main office. These students will be admitted to class with a late slip. **Disciplinary action** will be determined as per the "Student Code of Conduct". **In order for a dental or doctor appointment to NOT count toward truancy, students arriving later or leaving early MUST submit a note from the Doctor or Dentist.**

BUS TRANSPORTATION: In accordance with New Jersey School Law, the Lopatcong Board of Education provides transportation to and from school for students who live more than 2 miles from school.

Exceptions are:

- Children with physical disabilities who have been identified through the Lopatcong Child Study Team and are recommended for the related service by their IEP.
- Children who live on or would walk along Route 57 and/or Route 519.

The Board reserves the right to make the final determination in situations where there is an absence of a clearly defined point of demarcation relative to the established distances. **Questions concerning transportation should be directed to Mr. Bonney, Transportation Coordinator at the Middle School.**

Children must board assigned busses only and should be consistently picked up and dropped off at the same location to eliminate any confusion for the child, driver and school staff. **Students who are NOT bus riders will NOT BE ALLOWED to ride the bus home to another student's house.** Students that are bussed may ride the bus they are assigned to **only**. They are not allowed to switch busses for any reason. Bus drivers are responsible for the enforcement of all bus safety rules and regulations.

The following guidelines must be followed for all students riding the bus:

- Arrive at the bus stop 10 minutes prior to the scheduled pick up time
- Wait on the sidewalk or loading area, not the street
- Appropriate behavior is expected at the waiting area
- Wait for the bus to stop before advancing to board the bus
- No standing while the bus is moving
- Keep the aisle of the bus clear
- Keep heads, hands, and arms inside the bus at all times
- NO eating, drinking or gum chewing is allowed on the bus for safety reasons
- Conversations on the bus should not be loud or boisterous
- Obey and cooperate with the bus driver at all times

If a student's behavior creates a safety hazard on the bus, the student may be denied bus riding privileges. A warning and detention will be issued for infractions before a suspension is issued. In the case of a severe infraction, a bus suspension may be issued immediately.

CARE OF BOOKS & MATERIALS: Each child is charged with the proper and careful use of textbooks and educational materials. All textbooks must be covered. Book socks may only be used if they do not damage the book binding or cover. If textbooks or other school properties are defaced, damaged or lost students will be held accountable.

CAR RIDERS at ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: Students who arrive to school and depart by car are to be **dropped off and picked up in the back of the school only**. The bus drop off is at the front of the building. Parents who use the front of the building for this purpose will be reported to the Lopatcong Police Dept. Parents who transport their children are advised to exercise extreme caution as they enter and leave the school grounds. Traffic signs are posted to facilitate safe and orderly movement on and off school property. **Please be aware that you may not access the front of the school from the Strykers Road entrance.**

Arrival: Students should be dropped off at the rear entrance of the school **starting at 7:40 am**, which can be accessed from the Strykers Road driveway. Please use the spaces marked with blue for drop off. Usually 14-15 cars can line up in the drop off area. Children should not exit into the parking lot, but rather to the right near the sidewalk and school building. Please remember to pull up so all drop off spaces can be used. The doors at the back entrance to the school will close at 8:00 am. Any students arriving after 8:00 am **MUST** be driven to the front of the building. You must exit to Stryker's Road and reenter the school property using the Route 57 entrance to access the main office. When you park in front of the school, please pull into a parking space and walk into the main office with your child. Your child will be marked tardy.

Dismissal: Students will be dismissed from the double doors facing the back parking lot. When you arrive, please use the spaces marked with blue for pick up. Staff members will dismiss students to the parent-approved designee using a number system. The supervising staff and crossing guard will determine when all drivers can exit the lot. Please do not exit until the crossing guard signals with the whistle, as we do not want a child to be injured while crossing to a vehicle. Students will not be dismissed to the side parking lot (faculty).

Preschool Arrival and Dismissal:

The AM preschool session runs from 8:00am-10:45am. The PM preschool sessions runs from 11:50am-2:35pm. Preschool students will enter and exit through the main entrance at the front of the building. Upon arrival, please find a parking spot in the front of the building and walk your child to the front entrance. The preschool teachers will meet your child at the front entrance. Students will be dismissed from the main entrance at the front of the building. Please park your car in a parking spot and wait outside the main entrance. The preschool teachers will walk the students out the main entrance and help them find their parents.

Kindergarten Arrival and Dismissal:

The kindergarten session runs from 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM. Parents may drop students off at the back entrance of the building between 7:40am and 8:00am. Kindergarten students who are car riders will be dismissed from the back of the building at 12:00 PM. Parents should use the spaces marked with blue for pick up. The teachers will dismiss the students one at a time.

CAR RIDERS at MIDDLE SCHOOL: Students who arrive to school and depart by car are to be dropped off and picked up at the **BUCKELEY HILL entrance only**. Parents are to drive on Buckeley Hill northbound only, enter the lot and pull up to the closest available space nearest the school. Students are to exit the car on the **right side only**. Parents will then turn at the circle at the end of the driveway and exit by turning right onto Buckeley Hill. We ask that you **DO NOT** drop off or pickup students at the Stonehenge Entrance as it interferes with bussing and presents a serious safety concern which will be reported to the Lopatcong Police Department. Violations will be addressed by the Board of Education. Parking along Stonehenge Drive is a hazard as well and we ask that you **do not** pick up or drop off there also.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER: One of the greatest problems schools may have during the day is locating parents in the event of an emergency. Please be sure to contact the school when your address, telephone number or place of employment changes. **School reserves the right to ask for proof of residency.**

CONCERNS: The responsibility of providing a well organized educational program has been delegated to the administration and staff. Concerns should be addressed in the following manner:

- Classroom concerns should be directed to the teacher. A conference can be scheduled with the Building Administrator if a resolution cannot be reached.
- The Building Administrator or a parent can refer the issue to the Superintendent if a resolution cannot be reached.

DISCIPLINE: Please be sure that you and your child become familiar with the Lopatcong Township Student Codes of Conduct. There are two separate Codes of Conduct: one for Lopatcong Township Middle School and one for Lopatcong Township Elementary School. A copy of the Codes of Conduct will be online in the parent portal on our website. The codes detail student expectations, student rights, and explanation of consequences. In the Middle School, demerits will be assigned for minor infractions while detentions/suspensions will be issued for major infractions based on the code of conduct. An accumulation of demerits will also result in disciplinary action in accordance to the code of conduct.

The following is a **partial list** of minor versus major infractions:

<u>Minor Infractions</u>	<u>Major Infractions</u>
Hallway Misconduct	Defiance of Authority
Possession of Electronic Devices not registered for BYOD	General Misconduct
Unprepared for Class	Harassment, Intimidations, and Bullying
Violation of Class Rules	Inappropriate Language/Drawing
	Tardiness

EARLY/EMERGENCY DISMISSALS: Student dismissal is at 2:35 for the Elementary School and 3:00 for the Middle School. If for some reason you need to pick your child up earlier than the dismissal time, please send a note to the main office about the request. We also need written permission from you if someone other than yourself will be picking your child up earlier than the normal dismissal time. If for some reason, you need to change dismissal plans for your child after school has begun, **that request must be made by noon.**

Children of estranged parents may be released only upon request of the parent whom the court holds directly responsible for the child and who is

the parent/guardian registered on the school record. The schools will not be a party to other arrangements with estranged parents. Due to congestion, dismissal announcements and bus arrivals, students will not be dismissed from the front office after 2:15 at the Elementary School and 2:45 at the Middle School. Please review ahead of time with your child the plan for dismissal in the event of heavy rain or early closing of school. It is difficult to handle the volume of calls and messages that are received in the office on such occasions.

ELECTRONIC/BATTERY DEVICES:

Cell phones, iPods, bluetooth devices, lasers and other media devices are prohibited in school. **These devices MUST remain off and in the students' backpack/locker until dismissal with the exception of BYOD.** Any devices not kept in their assigned locker or backpack during the instructional day will be confiscated and turned over to the administration.

FAMILY LIFE CURRICULUM: Lopatcong School District offers a Family Life Curriculum for students in Grades 5 & 8. This program is offered as part of a student's regular health program. Units of instruction for each grade level include lessons on family living, growth and development, interpersonal relationships, and responsible personal behavior. This program was developed with input from administrators, teachers, parents, community organizations and religious leaders with the intent to help the child better understand himself and his relationship to his family and society.

FIELD TRIPS: Teachers make every effort to provide the kind of experiences which are directly related to the areas of the curriculum under study. Students cooperatively bear costs involved with the trip, including transportation as per **policy #2340. Permission slips must be signed and returned to school before a student will be allowed to go on the field trip.** If a parent chooses not to include his or her child on the trip, please inform the teacher so other arrangements can be made for the child on the day of the trip.

FIRE/SECURITY DRILLS: Fire drills are conducted once each month. Security drills are also conducted once each month.

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING (HIB policy #5512): The Board of Education prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a

student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe and disciplined environment. Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation, or bullying. For more information on HIB, expectations, consequences, reporting procedures and prevention programs, please refer to Board Policy #5512.

HEALTH SERVICES:

FERPA (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act): There have been new laws enacted to protect the privacy of student health information. In order to be in compliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), we must have the parent's permission to share medically related information with appropriate staff members at the school. This medically related information would include, but would not be limited to, information on severe allergies, history of asthma, medication, hearing/vision problems, etc. **Be sure to complete and return the form to the school nurse if you want your child's medical concerns shared.**

Protocol for Illness: A student who becomes ill while in school will be assessed by the school nurse. If the student does not have a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea, s/he will be allowed to rest in the medical room and then sent back to class. If the child needs to be excused from school, parents will be notified first. If the parent cannot be located, then the individual you designated on the emergency card will be contacted. In the case of an emergency, if the school is unable to reach you or your designated contact, the child will be transported to the nearest emergency facility for further evaluation.

First Aid: The responsibility of the school is to care for accidents that occur during school sessions and not those away from school. If an emergency occurs, the school will provide immediate first aid care, notify the parent or other designated individual on the emergency card and transport to the nearest hospital for further treatment if needed. When your child receives treatment in the medical room you will receive a copy of that documentation from the nurse.

Medication: A "Physician's Authorization Form" must be completed before any medication, including over the counter medications, is administered during school hours. If medication needs to be dispensed the first day of school, the form must be completed and returned to the nurse's attention prior to the start of school. Forms will be made available to you through the Summer PTA

Newsletter and will also be available in the office. **MEDICATION WILL NOT BE DISPENSED WITHOUT SIGNATURES ON THE AUTHORIZATION FORM.**

Immunizations: Parents of sixth (6th) grade students – Please note that **all students entering 6th grade on or after September 1, 2008 must receive 1 dose of Tdap and 1 dose of meningococcal vaccine.** (N.J.A.C. 8:57-4)

Please have your child's physician provide the school with documentation and understand that your child will be excluded from school without immunizations completed.

Communicable Diseases and the Return to School: Please note the common student related illnesses and when it is permissible to return to school:

- Chickenpox – until recovery and pox are dried
- Head lice/Scabies/Flea Infestation – until treated
- Impetigo – untreated, a student will be excluded from school
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) – until treated
- Streptococcal sore throat (including Scarlet Fever)
- Most physicians will recommend that after a child is on antibiotics for at least 48 hours, s/he may return to school.

Too Sick for School?: When should your child stay home from school? Here are a few guidelines you might wish to follow:

- A chronic cough or difficulty breathing may indicate a severe cold, bronchitis, flu, asthma or even pneumonia.
- Diarrhea, Vomiting – if your child has repeated episodes of diarrhea and vomiting, general weakness, and/or dehydration, consult a doctor and keep your child out of school at least 24 hours or until the illness passes.
- Fever – most pediatricians advise parents to keep their children home at least 24 hours after the fever has passed.
- Ear Infection – unless properly treated, ear infections can cause permanent hearing damage. You should follow the 24 hour rule for fever.
- Chronic pain, lethargy (tired, sleepy) & irritability.
- Chickenpox – please call the school nurse to let her know if your child has contracted chickenpox. Your child should be kept home for at least one week from the time you first noticed the symptom.
- The illness prevents the child from participating in school activities.

Screenings: Scoliosis is an abnormal curvature of the spine. It is important to detect scoliosis in its early stages so that appropriate measures can be taken to correct it. During the month of October, a scoliosis screening

program is conducted by the school nurse and the physical education staff that are trained to spot early abnormalities. All 5th-8th grade students are checked. Parents will be notified if there are any results that need to be referred to your family physicians. You will be notified about vision and hearing screenings as they are scheduled.

HOMEWORK ON WEB

Homework is typically listed in Google Classroom or on the Teacher’s web site, depending on grade level.

ID BADGES: All Staff and Middle School students will be issued an ID badge and must be worn throughout the entire school day. A copy of student ID badges will be held in the office should a parent need it for identification. Students who fail to wear their ID badge during the school day will be subject to the Code of Conduct.

INSURANCE: Parents have the option of purchasing insurance coverage through the school’s insurance company. Forms are sent home in early September for you to review the options and coverage available. The Lopatcong Board of Education does not provide blanket coverage for its students. If a child is injured in school, the parent’s medical insurance, or the student accident insurance (if applicable), would be responsible for payment. The Board of Education would only be responsible for payment if it was proven through litigation that it was negligent.

LOCKERS: All Middle School students are given a locker and a combination number (**THE COMBINATION SHOULD NOT BE SHARED WITH ANYONE ELSE**).

LOST AND FOUND: Many unclaimed items are left in school until the end of the school year. Please mark your child’s belongings so they can be returned to you if they are found in the building. Unclaimed items are stored in a bin in the All Purpose Room for the Elementary School and in the Middle School.

LUNCH:

The **Elementary School schedule for lunch** is as follows:

- Grade 1 10:50
- Grade 2 11:35
- Grade 3 10:50
- Grade 4 11:35

The **Middle School schedule for lunch** is as follows:

- 10:40 – 11:10 Grades 5 Grade 6 11:30 – 12:00
- 11:40 – 12:10 Grades 7 Grade 8 12:15 --12:45

GENERAL CAFETERIA RULES:

- Be respectful and courteous to adults and students
- Don’t ask for or give food or money to someone else
- Remain in your seat
- Use appropriate table manners
- Follow cafeteria procedures

POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES:

- Demerits
- Change of seat
- Removal from table
- Lunch detention in cafeteria
- Lunch detention(s) in the office
- Permanent removal from lunch room
- Detention/In-School Suspension

Free Lunch Program 2021-2022The USDA has approved free lunches for all students during the school year!

MEALS PLUS is the School lunch software used in our cafeterias. Every student has an account so students can buy lunch in cash or can use their pre-paid account. Parents can send cash or checks to be added to the student account or parents can go online to make bank deposits or credit card deposits to their student’s account.

NOTE: there is a transaction fee for both credit card and bank deposits – please go online to find more information. Parents can also view their student’s lunch history online, have low balance notifications sent to you in email, and have the ability to control whether or not ala carte items can be purchased and how much can be purchased.

To find out more information or to sign up, go to:

www.lopatdsd.org □ PARENTS □ LUNCH

MUSIC: All students (Grades 1-8) are scheduled for a general music class. In addition to the general music program, students have the opportunity to participate in vocal and instrumental evening programs. The district offers a 5th through 8th Grade Chorus and Band.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION: Physical Education is provided for students in Grades K-8. Students are encouraged to participate in a wide area of activities, including physical fitness. Students in 1-8 are required to wear sneakers on the days they are scheduled for physical education.

REGISTRATION: It is the policy of Lopatcong Township School District to admit to the Kindergarten class children who will **have reached five years of age on or before October 1**. Registration for Kindergarten and Grades 1-8 should be initiated as soon as you move into the district. Transfer card, proof of residency, immunization record and original birth certificate must be presented at time of registration.

STUDENT ATTIRE (DISTRICT): In order to create a positive school atmosphere, attire and grooming should be modest, comfortable and clean. Parents should exercise discretion so that the child’s attire is appropriate and in good taste. Attire should not constitute a health or safety hazard to the wearer, not be potentially destructive to school property; not constitute a disruptive influence upon the educational process and be appropriate to the student. The **dress code** is available through the parent portal. Please be sure to review it with your child.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT: The Student Discipline/Code of Conduct Policy establishes standards, policies, and procedures for positive student

development and student behavioral expectations on school grounds and, as appropriate, for conduct away from school grounds. Every student enrolled in this district will observe promulgated rules and regulations and the discipline imposed for infraction of rules. Please visit the district website to review **Policy - #5600 Student Discipline/Code of Conduct and Regulation 5600 – Student Discipline/Code of Conduct.**

STUDENT AGENDA BOOK: All Middle School students are issued a Student Agenda Book at no cost. Any additional Student Planner Books will cost **\$7.00** per book.

STUDENT SERVICES:

Intervention and Referral Services for Student in General Education: At present, this team of individuals may include a Parent, Administrator, Teacher, Nurse and Guidance Counselor. The purpose of the I&RS Team is to brainstorm interventions that are appropriate, family supported, and individualized for specific student needs. The interventions in the general education program should effect the necessary change for successful student participation in the mainstream. The recommendations for interventions are coordinated with the classroom staff and monitored through follow-up meetings. Requests for this service may be made by the classroom teacher or parent.

Child Study Team Services: Members of the Child Study Team include a Psychologist, Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant, School Social Worker, and Speech Therapist. If a parent suspects that their child may have developmental delays, a written request to determine the eligibility for services can be made to the Director of Special Education. The district provides a continuum of programs and services to meet the needs of children with special needs in accordance with New Jersey laws.

STUDENT PROGRESS AND REPORT CARDS: Reports of student progress are made through parent/teacher conferences and report cards (and on line for Middle School). Parent/teacher conferences are held in the fall for Grades K-8. Marking periods are scheduled in **60 day** cycles. At mid-marking period, some students may receive progress reports if there is evidence that a child is failing or in danger of failing a class. Students may also receive notices of commendation. **Report Cards will be available through the Parent Portal.**

STUDENT WELLNESS & NUTRITION POLICY:

In order to adhere to Federal/State Nutrition Guidelines and Board policy, parents may not bring food to be served to students unless it is for a “Special School Celebration” as defined by the Lopatcong Township Board of Education. Foods that are determined to be “minimal nutritional value” by the United States Department of Agriculture may not be served. For a list of “Foods of Nutritional Value” please contact your child’s school. Food brought in for Birthday celebrations must receive prior approval from the school nurse one week prior to the event.

TECHNOLOGY: The Lopatcong Township School District has a 1:1 student device program. Each student in the district is assigned a Chromebook for use in the classroom. Middle School students are able to take home their device to work on homework and projects. Elementary School students will not take their device home on a regular basis, but they are equipped to take it home if necessary. Parents are required to sign off on a 1:1 contract that covers appropriate use and care of the technology.

TELEPHONING SCHOOL AND USE OF SCHOOL PHONE:

Occasionally, it may be necessary for you to relay a message to your child or to a teacher. It is felt you will use your good judgment in being selective in the type and frequency of the messages. If you call school during the school day to speak to teachers, they will be unable to take your call while teaching. You may leave a message on the voice mail, and the teacher will return your call during his/her preparation period or after school.

Students will not be permitted to use the office telephone to call home about forgotten homework. If a parent needs to be contacted during the day regarding an emergency, the teacher or office personnel will make a call from the office.

VACATIONS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR: Vacations **should not** be scheduled during the school year. Valuable instructional time may be lost when vacations are scheduled during school time. Parents are asked to avoid scheduling vacations at this time. A form is required to be completed and returned to the main office. Vacations are counted as unexcused absences.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL: Entrance to both the Lopatcong Township Elementary and Middle Schools must be made through the front doors of the school only. For the safety of all, you will be asked the purpose of your visit. If you are picking up your child, you will be asked to wait in the lobby. A sign out sheet will be provided. Also, drop off of students’ books, instruments, lunches, etc. will also occur in the lobby. A staff member will retrieve and distribute the items. We thank you for your cooperation in helping us to ensure the safety and security of students and staff. All visitors are required to wear visitor badges while they are in the building. Before leaving the building, visitors must sign out in the visitor’s log.

VOLUNTEERS: Volunteers are always needed and welcome to assist in the district. If you are interested in helping us out during the school day, please complete a volunteer form that is distributed by the Superintendent. This form **MUST** be Board approved prior to you volunteering at a school activity. Any person volunteering who will have “significant contact” time with students must be HIB trained at school. Please call the main office for details.

PLEASE NOTE:

According to Policy #9180, **ALL VOLUNTEERS will be required to submit a volunteer form 1 week prior to the board meeting to volunteer for each school year.** To avoid end of the year disappointment, please fill out the form if you have any desire to help with parties, trips or even read in your child’s classroom. Filling out the form DOES NOT obligate you to volunteer.

M.S. WALKERS: Students who live 2.0 miles or less away from the school are issued guidelines on safety measures they should follow on their way to and from school. The Lopatcong Township Police Department provides crossing guards at strategic intersections. Students should refrain from listening to ipods and talking on cell phones at these intersections so that they can hear the crossing guards’ directions. Report any incidents that happen walking to and from school to the Lopatcong Township Police and to an administrator at the Middle School. **Due to the large number of students walking to and from school, bicycling is a safety issue. At this time, students are not permitted to ride bikes to and from school. In addition, rollerblading and skate boarding to and from school are not permitted.**

WALKERS - ARRIVAL:

Middle School students: Crossing guards will be located at Belvidere/Roseberry, Belvidere/Brakeley, Red School Lane/Lynda, Red School Lane/Charles, Red School Lane/Baltimore, Buckeley Hill/Canterbury, and Buckeley Hill/Stonehenge. Doors will open at 8:15 AM for student arrival.

WALKERS - DISMISSAL:

Middle School Students will be dismissed at 3:00 from Stonehenge Drive. Students must cross streets only by a crossing guard and may not use vacant fields or private property as a shortcut. Doing so may warrant trespassing charges.

WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENT: Arrangements should be made in advance when a child will be transferring to another school. At least one day's notice is necessary to allow all the records to be gathered and transfer cards completed. Parents may call the school or send the needed information in a note. The information should include the new address, name of the new school and the date of departure.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION STATEMENT: The Lopatcong Board of Education declares it to be the policy of this district to provide an equal opportunity for all children to achieve their maximum potential through the programs offered in school regardless of race, color, religion, gender, ability, ancestry, national origin, place of residence, or social or economic background. In keeping with this policy and state and federal affirmative action guidelines, all staff members are reminded that aspects of these requirements will be monitored for compliance and documented as part of our record keeping and accountability to these state and federal agencies. Accordingly, teachers shall analyze any new instructional materials or materials presently in use to detect any bias based upon color, race, religion, gender, national origin, etc., and report any noteworthy violations. They shall ensure that all students have equal access to programs and activities and are not segregated on the basis of race, color, religion, gender or national origin in any duty, work, play, study or athletics. For information, contact the Affirmative Action Officer at (908) 213-2995.

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN: The Lopatcong Township School District has been inspected for asbestos, and although some building materials

containing asbestos are present in the Lopatcong Elementary School, they have been determined not to be of danger to the occupants. A management plan, approved by the New Jersey Department of Health is on file in the district office and available for review by the public. The district has completed all semi-annual inspections and is in compliance.

PEST MANAGEMENT: The Lopatcong Township School District has an Integrated Pest Management plan (IPM) which serves as a tool to prevent and control pests using non-chemical products. The goal of the plan is to limit the use of chemical based products and to provide a safe environment. For more information, contact the IPM Coordinator at (908) 213-2995.

RIGHT-TO-KNOW SURVEY: This survey is updated yearly and on file in the district office. The Department of Health and Senior Services monitors and reviews the district's compliance. The Lopatcong Township School District has been found to be in compliance.

SECTION 504 INFORMATIONAL NOTICE: Section 504 is an Act which prohibits discriminations against persons with a disability in any program receiving federal financial assistance. The Act defines a person with a disability as anyone who:

- has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities
- has a record of such impairment
- is regarded as having such impairment

In order to fulfill its obligation under Section 504, the Lopatcong Township School District recognizes its responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a disability will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices within the school district. Questions may be directed to the Principal at Lopatcong Elementary School (908) 859-0800 or at Lopatcong Middle School (908) 213-

The Lopatcong Township PTA is a very active and dedicated group of parents, educators, school administrators and other citizens.

Our mission is:

- To support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community, and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children;
- To assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children;
- To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation.

Please visit our website at lopaccong.org/pta for an up-to-date listing and description of our committees; for an up-to-date calendar of events; and for copies of our monthly newsletter.

Becoming a member of our PTA is a great place to start in becoming involved with your child’s education. Please contact any officer or Executive Board member at any time throughout the school year to get involved.

ELECTED OFFICERS FOR 2021-2022

President
Out-going President
Vice President

Jenn Dampier

Secretary
Treasurer

STANDING COMMITTEES/APPOINTED CHAIRPERSON(S) FOR 2023-2024:

BUDGET/FINANCE
COMMUNITY/PARENT AWARENESS
HOSPITALITY
LEGISLATION/ BY-LAWS
MEMBERSHIP
COMMUNICATIONS

ROOM REPRESENTATIVE

PTA EXECUTIVE BOARD ZOOM MEETINGS 7 PM

PTA EXECUTIVE ZOOM MEETINGS 6 PM
And GENERAL MEETINGS 7PM

All are welcome to attend!

We are looking forward to a great year!

ACTIVITY COMMITTEES:

8TH GR. PROMOTION:

4TH GR. PICNIC:
FUNDRAISERS:
FAMILY FUN NIGHT:

**GOLF TOURNAMENT: **
HOLIDAY SHOPPE:
LOCKER LADDERS:
SANTA BREAKFAST:

SCHOLARSHIP:
SCHOOL STORE:
TEACHER/STAFF
APPRECIATION:

