



**HAMILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
**A CALIFORNIA DISTINGUISHED SCHOOL**

# **Parent Handbook**

## **2009-2010**

2089 Rose Villa Street  
Pasadena, CA 91107  
Ph: (626) 396-5730  
[www.bobcatbuzz.com](http://www.bobcatbuzz.com)

**School Hours:**  
**Monday: 8:45am – 1:30pm**  
**Tuesday-Friday: 8:45am – 3:10pm**

**Office Hours:**  
**8:00am – 4:30pm**

# HAMILTON - CA DISTINGUISHED SCHOOL 2009-10 HANDBOOK



## Table of Contents

<b>Welcome/Principal's Message</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Mission Statement</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>California Distinguished School Award</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Faculty/Staff Directory</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Calendar</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Registration/Enrollment</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Schedule/School Information</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<i>Bell Schedule</i> .....	9
<i>Before School Care</i> .....	10
<i>After School Programs</i> .....	10
<i>After School Clubs/Enrichment Programs</i> .....	11
<i>Drop off and Pick Up Procedures</i> .....	12
<i>Meals</i> .....	14
<i>School Library</i> .....	15
<i>Student Supplies</i> .....	15
<i>Communications</i> .....	16
<i>Classroom Map</i> .....	17
<b>School Rules and Policies</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<i>Attendance (including absences, early release, etc.)</i> .....	18
<i>School Discipline Philosophy</i> .....	19
<i>Student Awards</i> .....	20
<i>School Uniform/Dress Code</i> .....	21
<i>Parents/Guardians/Visitors on Campus</i> .....	22
<i>Report Cards</i> .....	22
<b>Health and Safety</b> .....	<b>23</b>
<i>Medication</i> .....	23
<i>Health Insurance/Information</i> .....	23
<i>Emergency Procedures/Disaster Preparedness</i> .....	23
<b>Curriculum</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<i>Math/Science/Technology Academy</i> .....	25
<i>Core Curriculum</i> .....	27
<i>English/Language Arts Curriculum</i> .....	27
<i>Math Curriculum</i> .....	27

<i>Science Curriculum</i> .....	28
<i>Social Studies Curriculum</i> .....	28
<i>Movement Education (Physical Education)</i> .....	28
<i>Music Programs</i> .....	29
<i>Art Programs</i> .....	29
<i>Gifted and Talented Education (GATE)</i> .....	30
<i>English Language Learners (ELL)</i> .....	30
<i>Special Education</i> .....	30
<i>Hamilton Homework Policy</i> .....	31
<b>Getting Involved</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<i>Parent and Teacher Association (PTA)</i> .....	32
<i>Statutory Councils</i> .....	36
<i>Donations</i> .....	37

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## Welcome/Principal's Message

Dear Parents:

Welcome to Hamilton! We are pleased to provide you with the Hamilton Elementary School Handbook for the 2009-10 school year. The purpose of this Handbook is to provide you with basic information about our school and how it works in order to assist you and your child with a smooth transition into the new school year.

Our website, [www.bobcatbuzz.com](http://www.bobcatbuzz.com), offers additional information about Hamilton including a more detailed calendar of events that is updated throughout the year. We also encourage you to sign up for our weekly email ("Hamilton Happenings") which details events that will be happening at school during each upcoming week. A link to subscribe is provided on our home page.

We are proud of Hamilton's many recent achievements, which provide a foundation for continued growth and excellence in this upcoming school year:

- Hamilton was named a 2008 California Distinguished School – the only Pasadena school and one of only 6% of all elementary schools in the state to receive this award. This award identifies and honors the state's most exemplary and inspiring public schools.
- Hamilton's Academic Performance Index (API) score for 2008 (latest data available) rose yet again to reach 842.
- We continue to develop our Math/Science/Technology Academy which provides a unique, hands on approach to learning these disciplines.

Hamilton is fortunate to have an active and growing parent body working to enrich the academic, cultural, and social opportunities at the school – we welcome your involvement!

We hope that you find this Handbook helpful and informative and that it becomes a trusted reference for answering many of your questions.

Thank you,

Frances Weissenberger  
Principal  
Hamilton Elementary School

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## **Mission Statement**

As a team of teachers, staff, parents, and community members, our educational philosophy is embedded in all we do. Our mission is: “to provide a safe environment where students can develop responsibility, a positive self concept and the social and academic skills necessary to provide for the future. Students will have the ability to express personal creativity and to realize maximum individual potential in a safe and respectful environment. The school will help students to attain the skills, knowledge, desire and self discipline necessary to contribute to our diverse community”. Our goal is to cultivate each child’s love of learning through artistic, imaginative, and academic avenues. We actively teach our children to embrace the wonder of the world in which they live while striving to create confident and capable students with integrity and a sense of social responsibility.

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## **California Distinguished School Award**

Hamilton is proud to have been named a 2008 California Distinguished School, an honor awarded to just 6% (or 343) of the state’s 5586 elementary schools. This award identifies and honors the state’s most exemplary and inspiring public schools. Hamilton was the only Pasadena school to be chosen this year.

Schools that met or exceeded specific Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and Academic Performance Index (API) growth targets were eligible to apply - approximately 1,500 this year. Applicants were required to complete an extensive written application detailing their school’s practices in the areas of leadership and collaboration, professional development, students with special needs, student support, family and community partnerships, and school environment and culture.

Hamilton had the distinction of receiving a perfect score on the written application. State evaluators then visited the school to meet with the principal, teachers, staff, parents, and involved community members to further assess Hamilton before notifying the principal that Hamilton had been selected for this prestigious award.

More information regarding the California Distinguished School Award can be found at [www.cde.ca.gov/ta/sr/cs/index.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/sr/cs/index.asp).

# Faculty/Staff Directory

Please note: subject to change

GRADE	TEACHER	ROOM	PHONE Ext	EMAIL
Pre-Kindergarten	Delores Seiffert Maria Flores (am Aide) Houric Azilazian (pm Aide)	102	26102	DSeiffert9@pusd.us
Kindergarten	Judy Norquist	107	26107	JNorquist89@pusd.us
Kindergarten	Pat Carlton	108	26108	PCarlton53@pusd.us
Kindergarten	Lucia Garcia	109	26109	LGarcia93@pusd.us
Kindergarten	Andrew Delscamp	111	26111	adelscamp63@pusd.us
First Grade	Kim Enriquez	105	26105	KEriquez04@pusd.us
First Grade	Julie Alvarez	101	26101	JAlvarez83@pusd.ust
First Grade	Jennifer Mably	B-2	26302	JMably17@pusd.us
First Grade	Brenda Sandoval	103	26103	bsandoval@myway.com
SDC (1-3)	Valentin Sanchez William Chacon (Aide) Angela Whitehead (Aide) Geraldine Trapp (Aide)	B1	26301	vsanchez29@pusd.us
SDC (4-6)	Erika Maldonado	201	26201	EMaldonado19@pusd.us
Second Grade	Carmen Cid	202	26202	Ccid9@pusd.us
Second Grade	Sandra Serrano	204	26204	SSerrano76@pusd.us
Second Grade	Becky Sanders	203	26203	
Third Grade	Kathleen Sullivan	205	26205	KSullivan86@pusd.us
Third Grade	Stephanie Kwan	B-3	26303	
Third Grade	Robert Marrufo	211	26211	RMarrufo23@pusd.us
Third Grade	Andre Prosperi	114	26114	AProsperi45@pusd.us
Fourth Grade	Carmela Calderon	225	26225	ccalderon85@pusd.us
Fourth Grade	Christine Wielgosz	223	26223	CWielgosz42@pusd.us
Fourth Grade	Nichole Anderson	229	26229	NAnderson00@pusd.us
Fifth Grade	Dawn el-Rhashid	207	26207	delrhashid68@pusd.us
Fifth Grade	Joycelyn Knight	209	26209	JKnight@pusd.us
Sixth Grade	Geoff Davis	210	26210	GDavis92@pusd.us
Sixth Grade	Kim Knudson	206	26206	KKnudson871@pusd.us
Resource/LDRT/CRT	Erika Cooper	208	26044	ecooper83@pusd.us
Guidance				
RSP	Dee Hawkins Peggy Deardon (Aide)	Library	26028	
Speech	Jessie Blois	Backstage	26027	
Psychologist	Cloda Jones	Backstage	26026	CJones@pusd.us
Computer Lab	Karen Goss	115	26115	KGoss78@pusd.us
Library	Sue Sloat	111D	26064	ssloat@pusd.us
Office Manager	Barbara Kolb	Main Office	26094	BKolb@pusd.us
Clerk Typist	Susie Lamphere	Main Office	26001	
Principal	Frances Weissenberger	Principal Office	26099	fweissenberger@pusd.us
Nurse	Susan MacLaughlin(W/Th)	Health Office	26089	smaclaughlin@pusd.us
Health Clerk	Dorothy Manson (M/T/F)			
Foothill Therapist	Karina Kazaryan/Laura Mullen	Backstage	26026	
LEARNs	255-8991	206A	26049	
Movement Ed.	Trea Dewhurst	Auditorium	26039	
Cafeteria	Maricela Quintanar	Cafeteria	26054	396-5731
Instructional Aides	Patti Cook, Rosa Eto, Ashken Ghazarian, Trea Dewhurst	208	26044	
Custodians	Antonio Partida - Head Custodian Darrell Thomas - Evening Custodian - Evening Custodian		26034	

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# 2009-10 School Year Calendar

Below is the Calendar for the 2009-2010 school year as of this publishing. Dates are subject to change. Please check the school website for updates and more information at [www.bobcatbuzz.com](http://www.bobcatbuzz.com).

## AUGUST 2009

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Late       | Hamilton School Office Opens                                   |
| Aug./Early |  |
| Sept.      |  |
| Late       | Students who did not register in the spring are able to do so. |
| Aug./Early | Start of application period for Free/Reduced Lunch Program.    |
| Sept.      |  |

## SEPTEMBER 2009

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| Sept. 8  | Hamilton Back to School Picnic (5:00-6:30 p.m.): Class lists posted; sign-ups for after school programs; other school information available. |
| Sept. 10 | <b>First Day of School</b>   |
| Sept. 16 | First General PTA Meeting  |

## OCTOBER 2009

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| Oct. 7  | Back-to-School Night (Minimum Day Schedule-Early Dismissal)         |
| Oct. 14 | Hamilton School Tour for prospective families - 9am, school office  |
| Oct. 21 | PTA Meeting   |
| Oct. 28 | Staff Development Day – Pupil Free Day ( <b>no school</b> )         |
| Oct. 30 | Halloween Parade at 2:00pm; (help students into costumes at 1:45pm) |

## NOVEMBER 2009

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Nov. 4     | Hamilton School Tour for prospective families - 9am, school office |
| Nov. 11    | Veteran's Day ( <b>no school</b> )                                 |
| Nov. 25    | Parent/Teacher Conferences – Pupil Free Day ( <b>no school</b> )   |
| Nov. 26-27 | Thanksgiving Recess ( <b>no school</b> )                           |

## DECEMBER 2009

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| Dec. 2  | Hamilton School Tour for prospective families - 9am, school office |
| Dec. 16 | Winter Concert   |
| Dec. 18 | Shortened Day  |
| Dec. 21 | First Day of Winter Recess ( <b>no school: Dec. 21-Jan. 4</b> )    |

## JANUARY 2010

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| Jan. 5  | Return from Winter Recess  |
| Jan. 6  | Hamilton School Tour for prospective families - 9am, school office |
| Jan. 18 | Martin Luther King Day ( <b>no school</b> )                        |

## **FEBRUARY 2010**

- Feb. 3 Hamilton School Tour for prospective families - 9am, school office
- Feb. 5 Fall Semester Ends – Pupil Free Day (**no school**)
- Feb. 8 First Day of Second Semester
- Feb. 12 Lincoln’s Birthday (**no school**)
- Feb. 15 Washington’s Birthday (**no school**)

## **MARCH 2010**

- Mar. 3 Hamilton School Tour for prospective families - 9am, school office

## **APRIL 2010**

- Apr. 7 Hamilton School Tour for prospective families - 9am, school office
- Apr. 12-16 Spring Break (**no school**)

## **MAY 2010**

- May 5 Hamilton School Tour for prospective families - 9am, school office
- May 31 Memorial Day (**no school**)

## **JUNE 2010**

- June 2 Hamilton School Tour for prospective families - 9am, school office
- June 3 Open House (Minimum Day Schedule-Early Dismissal)
- June 24 Last Day of School (Shortened Day – Early Dismissal)

We anticipate that PTA Meetings will generally be scheduled the third Wednesday of each month. School Site Council (SSC) and English Learner Advisory Council (ELAC) Meetings will be scheduled at the beginning of the 09-10 school year Please check [www.bobcatbuzz.com](http://www.bobcatbuzz.com) for specific dates.

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# Registration/Enrollment

## **New Students**

**If you are new to the school and live within the neighborhood attendance area:**

Please enroll your child in January during the prior school year. This will enable the school to plan for the upcoming school year (number of teachers, resources needed, etc.) and will help the school to know how many open enrollment seats to release to those families who live outside of the Hamilton neighborhood attendance area but who would like to attend our school. While neighborhood registration technically continues through the start of the school year, *parents are advised to register early as enrollment at Hamilton is contingent upon space availability.*

**If you live outside the neighborhood attendance area and would like to attend Hamilton:**

Please contact the Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD) for details on the District's open enrollment process. This usually occurs in January of the prior school year. Check [www.pusd.com/oe](http://www.pusd.com/oe) for more information. If you have been accepted to Hamilton through the open enrollment process, please enroll during the period specified by your acceptance letter.

## **How to Enroll:**

Please bring the following information to enroll for your first year at Hamilton Elementary School:

- Open Enrollment letter (if applicable)
- Birth Certificate
- Proof of TB test done within one year or less of the start of school
- Up to date Immunization Record (contact district for details)
- 2 forms of proof of address, such as a utility bill.

The school office will provide you with the following forms that must be completed and returned for registration to be complete:

- Physical Exam Form
- Dental Health Screening Form.

## **Continuing Students**

If you are currently attending Hamilton Elementary School, you will automatically be enrolled for the following school year – this applies to all students including those who (a) live within the neighborhood attendance area; (b) were admitted through open enrollment; or (c) are attending Hamilton on a District permit. If you do not plan to return to the school, please notify the office so that they may assign your seat to another student.

Please contact the school office at (626) 396-5730 with any questions.

## **School Tours**

Tours of Hamilton for prospective families are generally held the first Wednesday of the month at 9:00am during the school year. Check [www.bobcatbuzz.com](http://www.bobcatbuzz.com) or call the office at (626) 396-5730 for exact dates.

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# Schedule/School Information

## Bell Schedule

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<b>Monday (8:45-1:30)</b> <b>Tuesday – Friday (8:45-3:10)</b>
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7:45	Morning Supervision begins
8:40	Line-up (first bell rings)
8:45	SCHOOL BEGINS (second bell rings)
<i><u>RECESS</u></i>	
10:15-10:30	Kindergarten Recess
10:45-11:00	Grades 1-3 Recess: East Playground Grades 4-6 Recess: West Playground
<i><u>LUNCH</u></i>	
10:45-11:05	Pre-K AM Lunch
12:10-12:30	Pre-K PM Lunch
11:15-12:00	Kindergarten Lunch
11:45-12:30	Grades 1 & 2 Lunch
12:15-1:00	Grades 3 & 4 Lunch
12:45-1:30	Grades 5 & 6 Lunch
(12:30-1:15)	Grades 5 & 6 Lunch (Mondays)
1:30	DISMISSAL (Monday)
3:10	DISMISSAL (Tuesday-Friday)
3:10-6:00	After School Programs (registration required)

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**NOTE:** Times subject to change. Check [www.bobcatbuzz.com](http://www.bobcatbuzz.com) and school notices for updates.  
Minimum Day Schedule (Back-To-School Night/Open House): 8:45am-12:25pm.  
Office hours: 8:00am-4:30pm.

### Friday Morning Assemblies:

Weekly school assemblies for grades 1-6 are held every Friday at 8:45am on the north playground. These assemblies provide an opportunity for school-wide announcements, student awards, and Library Birthday Book Club dedications (see school library section). Parents are always welcome and it is a great way to stay informed about what is happening at the school.

### Monthly Awards Assemblies:

The last Friday Morning Assembly of each month is called the Monthly Awards Assembly. At these assemblies, awards such as Student of the Month and Honor Roll are presented.

## **Before School Care**

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Morning supervision is provided beginning at 7:45am in the cafeteria, Monday through Friday. All students are expected to eat breakfast and/or read quietly; during this time a credentialed teacher is also available to provide homework help.

Students in Grades 1-6 are dismissed at 8:15am to the playground for supervised play.

Kindergarteners sit together in the cafeteria and are then escorted to their classrooms by a teacher's aide (they are not released to the playground before school).

There is no charge for this service.

## **After School Programs**

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Hamilton offers two after school care programs that operate Monday from 1:30pm to 6:00pm and Tuesday through Friday from 3:10pm to 6pm:

### **PasadenaLEARNS**

PasadenaLEARNS offers a balanced program consisting of homework help, leadership development, visual and performing arts classes, structured recreation, and other academic enrichment activities. Students are required to attend daily. PasadenaLEARNS is offered on a sliding scale fee basis. For more information, contact Marie Novelo at (626) 255-8991.

### **Citywide Recreation (aka "Parks and Rec")**

Citywide Recreation provides a variety of activities including arts and crafts, games, and various sports, as well as time for students to work on their homework. This program is operated by the City of Pasadena's Human Services and Recreation Department at Hamilton Elementary School. Students must be registered and attend regularly to participate. There is a \$25 fee per child per semester (\$22.50 for each additional child per semester).

Online registration is available August 1-September 10, 2009 at

<http://activenet.active.com/cityofpasadena>.

Several walk-in registration dates will also be available at the beginning of the school year at the Jackie Robinson Community Center at 1020 N. Fair Oaks Ave., Room 214.

For more information, contact the East Area Coordinator at (626) 744-7532.

Applications for both after school programs are available at the Back to School Picnic prior to the start of school or by contacting the respective on-site program directors.

## **After School Clubs/Enrichment Programs**

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Programs and times are subject to change based on participation. Registration flyers will be sent home with all students in the fall. They will also be available in the school office and on our website at [www.bobcatbuzz.com](http://www.bobcatbuzz.com).

### **Chess Academy**

Students in grades K-6 have the opportunity to participate in the Chess Academy on Tuesdays from 3:10-4:10pm. Each class consists of a group lesson, playtime/tournament, and 1-on-1 instruction during play time. This program is run by the San Diego Chess Academy. Each session is approximately 7 to 10 weeks long; participation fees apply. For more information visit [www.sdchessacademy.com](http://www.sdchessacademy.com) or call (760) 721-4400.

### **Spanish Classes**

Hamilton offers an after school Spanish program run by Berlitz on Monday afternoons from 1:30-2:30pm (and possibly Wednesdays, 3:10-4:10pm). Berlitz offers an interactive and fun language-learning experience featuring the conversational Berlitz Method®, native-fluent instructors trained to work with children, small groups that foster participation, and age appropriate curriculum and materials. Participation fees apply.

### **Mad Science**

The Mad Science program will be offered at Hamilton on Thursdays from 3:10-4:10pm. Children will learn about electricity by creating indoor lightening and investigate powers of magnets. They will build a periscope and witness an underwater volcano. Children will also explore light, color and sound waves. These sessions are hands-on and child centered. Participation fees apply.

### **Karate**

Shaolin Kenpo Karate will be offered at Hamilton on Friday afternoons from 3:10-4:10pm. Shaolin Kenpo Karate is infused with training methods from Muay Thai, Boxing and Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. The program is progressive and, while rooted in tradition, it integrates modern and innovative teaching methods. Children will develop courage, respect, memory, teamwork, focus, coordination, good manners and more. Participation fees apply.

### **Scout Troops**

There are several Daisy/Brownie/Girl Scout troops that meet at or near Hamilton once a month. If your child wishes to participate, please contact the Girl Scouts Mt. Wilson Vista Council at (626) 445-7771. Volunteers anticipate starting a Boy Scout Troop at Hamilton in the near future. If your child wishes to participate, please contact the San Gabriel Valley Council of the Boy Scouts of America at (626) 351-8815.

### **Other Potential Clubs**

If you are a parent interested in starting a club at the school, please contact the principal, Mrs. Frances Weissenberger at [fweissenberger@pusd.us](mailto:fweissenberger@pusd.us) or (626) 396-5730.

## Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures

For the safety of our children, please follow the procedures and rules below when dropping off and picking up your child(ren) from school.

### **Drop Off:**

#### **General Info:**

- Students are expected to be in their classrooms and ready to learn by the time school starts at 8:45am. Parents should plan to have their children at school no later than 8:40am.
- Morning supervision begins at 7:45am in the cafeteria and students can be dropped off starting at that time (see Before School Care section).

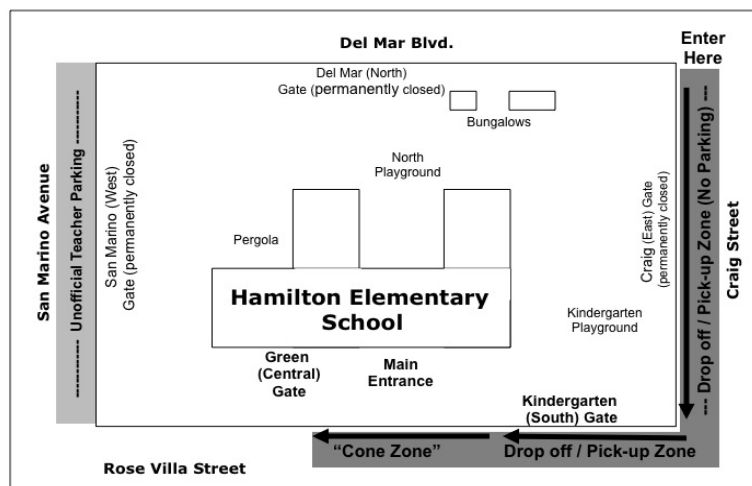
#### **How it works:**

- **Kindergarten:** Kindergarteners must be walked to their classroom (or the cafeteria if arriving before 8:40am) each day by a parent/guardian/designated adult. Kindergarteners are not allowed to use the drop off line – parents must park and walk them to the classroom.
- **Grades 1-6:**
  - Parents may either:
    - a. Walk their child(ren) to the line up area on the north playground; or
    - b. Drive through the Drop Off Line and drop their child(ren) in front of the school along Rose Villa in the “Cone Zone” (see map).
  - When the first bell rings at 8:40am, students line up by room number on the north playground and are then walked to class by their teacher when the second bell rings at 8:45am.

#### **Drop Off Line Procedures:**

Please enter the drop off line only from Craig Street onto Rose Villa as shown on the map. A teacher will be available for passenger unloading in this half-block area from approximately 8:00am until 8:45 am.

- Enter the designated drop-off lane and proceed forward slowly.
- Continue forward slowly until reaching the safety “Cone Zone” before stopping to let students out. Please pull all the way to the front of the “Cone Zone”, even if there is no one behind you.
- Make sure the passenger door is unlocked and if needed, give the aides or volunteers who are working as valets a sign that it is okay for them to open your vehicle door.
- Follow the hand signals and instructions of those working the Drop Off Line.



## **Pick Up:**

### **General Info:**

- Students are released from school at 3:10pm (1:30pm on Mondays) through the Kindergarten Gate on Rose Villa only (see map). This gate is teacher monitored to ensure safety.
- No student will be released without a parent or designated guardian present. For children wishing to walk home, parents must make arrangements with their child's teacher and student must be of an appropriate age and maturity to walk home independently.

### **How it works:**

- **Kindergarten:** Kindergarteners must be picked up from their classroom by a parent/guardian/designated adult. They may also be released to an older sibling attending the school to proceed to the Pick-Up Line if arrangements have been made with the school in advance.
- **Grades 1-6:** Parents may either:
  - a. Meet their child on foot outside the Kindergarten Gate; or
  - b. Remain in their vehicles and participate in the vehicle Pick-Up Line.

### **Pick-Up Line Procedures:**

- Pull into the Pick-Up Line zone which starts at the Kindergarten Gate on Rose Villa and winds around the corner along the west side of Craig (see map).
- Remain in your vehicle and follow the line as it moves forward.
- As you approach the Kindergarten Gate on Rose Villa, a Hamilton staff member will ask for your child's name. They will call your child's name and release him/her from the Kindergarten Gate to your vehicle.
- Once your child is safely in your vehicle in his/her booster seat (if applicable) with his/her seatbelt fastened, please exit the Pick-Up Line to make room for more cars.
- If the Pick-Up Line is full, please drive around the block rather than blocking street traffic. Vehicles that double park or stop in the middle of the street will be ticketed.

### **Important Safety Rules & Reminders:**

*It is important to be safe and courteous when driving or parking near the school and to obey all traffic and parking laws. Please be aware that the Sheriff's Department tickets frequently for moving and parking violations around the school.*

- **Do not double-park in order to drop off or pick up your child.**
- Do not allow your child to exit through the door on the side of on-coming traffic.
- Do not use a cell phone with hands as per recent law.
- Do not perform U-turns in front of the school.
- **Do not park in the drop off/pick up line (on Craig or Rose Villa) as shown on the map.**
- Use cross walks to keep yourself and your child safe as you cross the street.
- Entry to the school in the morning will only be through the main entrance and the ramp by the auditorium (Green Gate), both on Rose Villa.
- Drop offs are not allowed in red zones.
- Please avoid parking along the east side of San Marino Avenue between Del Mar and Rose Villa as this area is unofficially designated as teacher parking.
- Be aware there is no parking on Oakdale (one block south of the school) between San Marino and Oak on Thursday mornings 7-11am for street cleaning.

*Note that these procedures may be modified as needed in our ongoing efforts to ensure student safety.*

## Meals

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### **Breakfast**

Breakfast may be purchased in the cafeteria between the hours of 7:50am and 8:35am for \$1.00. Free/reduced breakfast is available for those who qualify (see below).

<u>Cafeteria</u>	
Breakfast:	\$1.00
Lunch:	\$1.75
Milk:	\$0.35
Juice:	\$0.30

### **Lunch**

Students may either bring their lunch to school or purchase one in the cafeteria for \$1.75. If your child brings a lunch from home, he/she may purchase milk for \$0.35 or juice for \$0.30 in the cafeteria if so desired. Parents/guardians may deposit money in an account tied to their child's identification number to be used for purchasing cafeteria food at the school. Students may either pay with cash or use their account. When the account is running low, the cafeteria staff will tell the student so that the parent/guardian can deposit more money in the account. Money may be deposited to a child's account by submitting cash or check (made payable to "Pasadena Unified School District") to cafeteria staff between the hours of 7:50am and 1:00pm. Free/reduced lunch is available to those who qualify (see below).

### **Snacks**

Students are welcome to bring their own healthy snack from home to eat during recess. Snacks are not organized or provided by the school.

### **Food Restrictions**

Food brought to school by students should be healthy and nutritious. The following items are NOT allowed on campus and will be confiscated: gum, candy, soda, and large bags of chips or Cheetos.

### **Free/Reduced Meals**

As part of a federal mandate, free or reduced breakfast and lunch are available to those who qualify. Applications are mailed out to returning families in late August. If you are a new family to PUSD or a returning family who did not receive an application in the mail, you may obtain one from the school office or by calling Food Services at the Pasadena Unified School District at (626) 396-5850. **Students on the lunch program from the previous year will not be on this year's program after Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> unless a new application has been approved by Food Services.**

## School Library

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The Hamilton library is staffed six hours a day by our librarian and has over 9,000 books. It is open daily for class, small group, and individual student visits. All classes have scheduled library visits during which stories are read, library reference and research skills are taught, and time is made for browsing and book checkout. Grades Pre-K- 4 visit 30 minutes every week; grades 5-6 visit every other week for 45 minutes. The library is also open to all students in grades 1-6 every day during morning recess.

### **Checking Out Books**

- **Kindergarteners:** may check out books during their weekly visit that will remain in their classroom.
- **Students in grades 1-6:** may check out books to take home provided their parent or guardian has completed the required permission slip which is sent home at the beginning of the school year (also available at [www.bobcatbuzz.com](http://www.bobcatbuzz.com)). Note that some teachers of grades 1-2 may opt to have library books remain in the classroom.
- **Parents:** may also register to check out books.

### **Birthday Book Club:**

To honor your child's birthday you may wish to purchase a book for the Hamilton Library. Choices can be made from the librarian's list of pre-purchased, library quality books with special binding. A special label stating that this book was donated in honor of your child's birthday will be affixed to the book's inside cover and your child will have the opportunity to be the first one to check that book out of the library. Birthday Book presentations are made each week at the Friday Morning Assembly. If your child's birthday falls in the summer, you may want to participate in May or June.

To participate, please visit the library, speak with the librarian to choose which pre-purchased library quality book you wish to purchase from her list, and submit your donation for the appropriate amount (\$10, \$15, or \$20 – cash or check made payable to "Hamilton PTA") to the librarian.

The librarian will send a note home the month prior to your child's birthday explaining this opportunity. If you have any questions, please contact the librarian.

## Student Supplies

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- Students do not need to bring any school supplies with them on the first day of school unless otherwise informed by their teacher.
- At the beginning of the school year, each teacher will distribute a list of supplies that students should have at school and at home (if any).
- School Supply donations are welcomed – please see the "Wishing Wall" outside the main office, the electronic Wish List at [www.bobcatbuzz.com](http://www.bobcatbuzz.com), or contact your teacher for more specifics on what is needed.

## Communications

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Hamilton strives to keep its families informed about school events and activities through several different means:

### **Tuesday Folders:**

Each Tuesday, your child will be sent home with a “Tuesday Folder” containing the flyers and announcements for that week. Be sure to ask your child for this folder so you don’t miss out on important information. While an attempt is made to send home all information on this day, there will be times that flyers are occasionally sent home on other days.

### **www.bobcatbuzz.com:**

Our volunteer created and updated website contains a variety of information about the school and its policies as well as a calendar of events that is updated on an ongoing basis. Electronic versions of flyers to which we have access are also posted in an “Electronic Tuesday Folder” on the website.

### **Hamilton Happenings Weekly Email:**

A weekly email is sent out each Thursday evening listing the events for the upcoming week along with updates on school issues. To subscribe to this email, please visit [www.bobcatbuzz.com](http://www.bobcatbuzz.com) and click the box in the upper left corner.

### **Upcoming Events Flyer:**

This monthly flyer is created by the school and lists the school events for that month. It is sent home in each student’s Tuesday Folder.

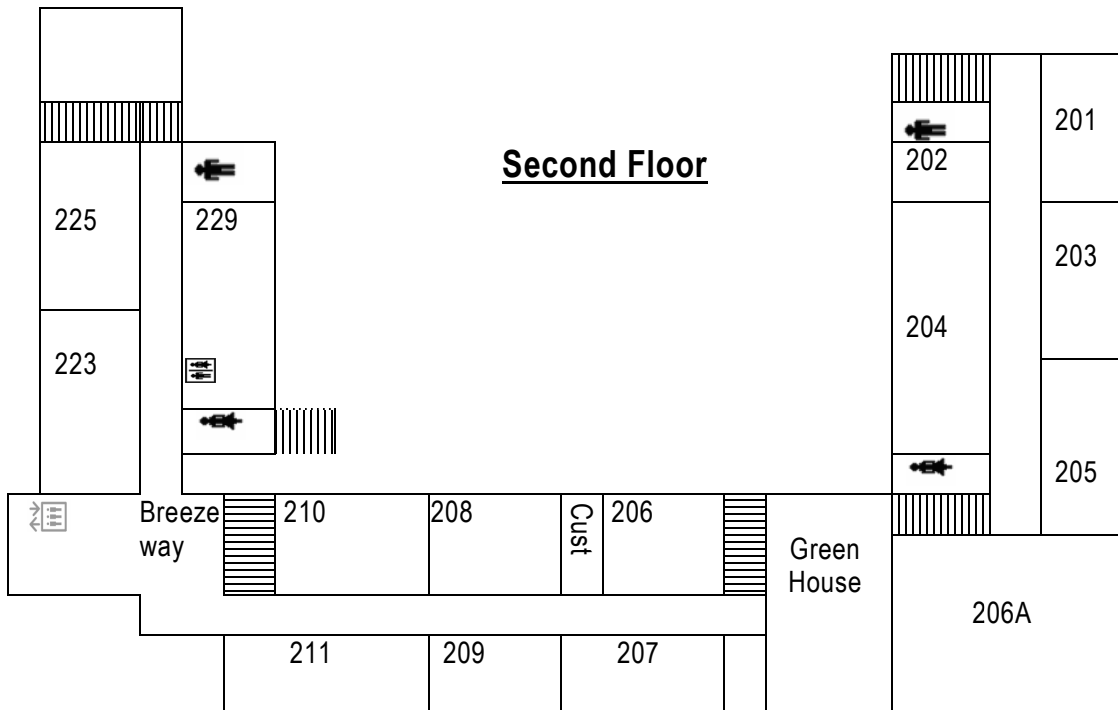
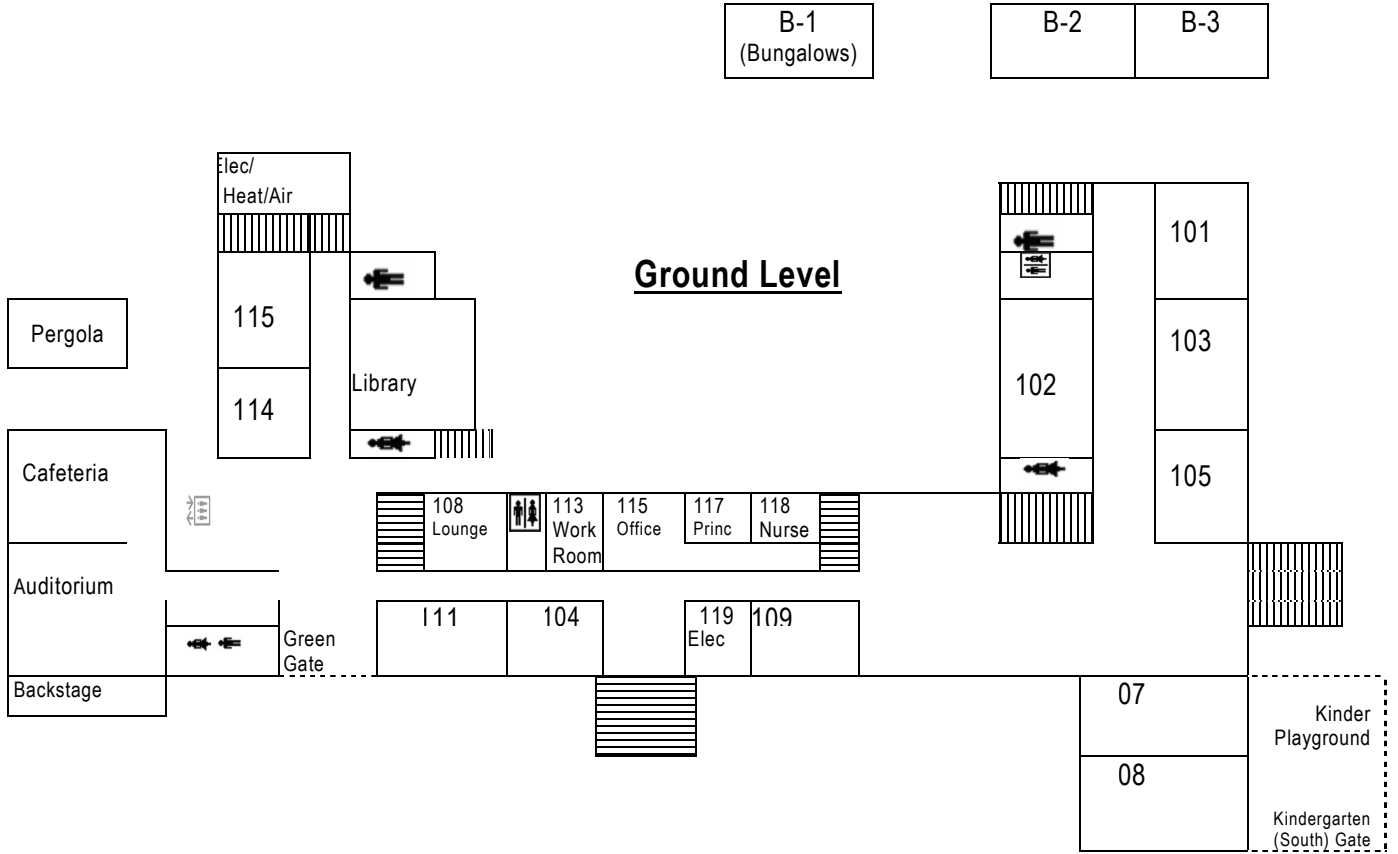
### **Phone Messages:**

The school, PTA, and school district periodically make recorded phone calls to all families at the school about upcoming events and important information such as early dismissal times.

### **Room Parents:**

Each classroom has two room parents who provide an important communication and coordination role between parents and the teacher. If you would like to serve as a room parent, please contact the PTA or email [info@bobcatbuzz.com](mailto:info@bobcatbuzz.com).

# Classroom Map



Note: Map not to scale

↑ NORTH

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# School Rules and Policies

## **Attendance (Including absences, early release, etc.)**

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Regular attendance is important for your child's education. Children are not only required to attend school unless they are ill, but the school loses money if a child is absent from school for any reason.

### **Notification of Absence**

If your child is absent, please call the school at (626) 396-5730x1 before 9:00am on the first day of the absence. If you know your child will be absent in advance, please inform the school. Please submit a signed note to your child's teacher or the office with the child's name, date(s) of, and reason for absence or fill out an attendance form (available in the office or at [www.bobcatbuzz.com](http://www.bobcatbuzz.com)) within three (3) days of your child's return to school.

### **Extended Absence**

If you know your child will be absent for five (5) or more consecutive school days, please complete an Independent Study Plan with your child's teacher. Completing this form will ensure that your child will not fall behind while he/she is out of school and also enables the school district to receive funding for the days your child is absent. An Independent Study Plan form can be obtained from your child's teacher or the office.

### **Tardies**

Students arriving late to school miss learning time and disrupt the learning of others. If your child arrives at school after the second bell rings at 8:45am, he/she should report to the office for a tardy (pink) slip before proceeding to class. Hamilton appreciates your help in encouraging daily and timely school attendance.

### **Early Release Procedure**

In the event that you need to pick up your child before the end of the school day, please notify your child's teacher in advance. When you arrive at the school, please report to the office to sign your child out. Grades 1-6: Office staff will call your child's teacher to have him/her sent to the office to meet you. Kindergarten: Parents may pick up their child in the classroom after signing him/her out in the office. Children will only be released to parents, legal guardians, or persons listed on the Emergency Card. For other arrangements, written permission must be sent to the office by the parent/guardian.

## School Discipline Philosophy

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Fundamental to Hamilton Elementary School's mission is developing children who are thoughtful, caring, and responsible members of our community. We treat our students as individuals, worthy of respect and capable of making good choices. Further, the school utilizes positive incentives to promote and reinforce good behavior while simultaneously enforcing specific consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Incentives include special monthly award assemblies, achievement privileges, and prizes. Consequences include recess or lunch detention, litter pick-up, citations, and, in rare instances, home suspension or expulsion. We believe this balanced approach promotes a safe school, a warm and friendly classroom environment, and demonstrates that good discipline is a solid foundation on which to build an effective school.

Students at Hamilton are guided by specific rules and classroom expectations that promote respect, cooperation, courtesy, and acceptance of others. These rules include what we call our "Super Seven":

1. We respect each other's rights, property, opinions, and differences.
2. We think before we act and speak.
3. We take pride in everything we do: our work, our appearance, and our school.
4. We always tell the truth.
5. We solve our problems without fighting.
6. We use appropriate language.
7. We are responsible for our actions.

District-wide rules are listed in detail in the "PUSD Handbook for Appropriate and Expected Standards of Conduct" which is distributed to all families each fall.

## **Student Awards**

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### **Blue Slips**

The Blue Slips program encourages positive behavior on campus by rewarding students “caught being good”. Teachers, administrators, and staff hand out blue slips to students in grades 1-6 for positive behavior they see around campus and/or in the classroom. Teachers collect tickets acquired during the week. At Friday Morning Assemblies, tickets for all classes are combined into one box, approximately 15 tickets are drawn, and those students receive a special prize.

### **Student of the Month**

Each month, teachers of grades 1-6 nominate two (2) students to receive a “Student of the Month” award that is presented at the Monthly Awards Assembly held the last Friday Morning Assembly of each month. Recipients are treated to a special morning snack with the principal in the cafeteria following the assembly. Teachers will generally notify parents in advance if their child is going to be a Student of the Month.

### **Honor Roll Awards**

Honor Roll Awards are presented quarterly to students who (a) have perfect attendance during that quarter (K-6); (b) are members of the “E Club” – which means they have received a notation of “excellent” for citizenship in all of their classes for that quarter (grades 4-6); or (c) are on the Honor Roll for making a GPA of 3.0 or higher for that quarter (grades 4-6). Recipients are announced at the Awards Assembly and are treated to a special surprise. Their names are also posted in the showcase located in the school entry hall.

### **Bobcat Credit Card Merit System (grades 4-6)**

Students in grades 4-6 have the opportunity to earn Bobcat Cards which they wear at school signifying that they have earned special privileges within their classroom and throughout the school. Students earn “credit” for meeting or exceeding expectations each week. When a student earns four (4) weeks of “credit”, he/she receives his/her grade-level credit card (4<sup>th</sup> grade: Bobcat Blue; 5<sup>th</sup> grade: Bobcat Gold; and 6<sup>th</sup> grade: Bobcat Platinum). Every effort is made to encourage positive behavior so that all students gain the appropriate card. Once earned, the card must remain in the student’s possession at all times in order to gain and keep privileges.

## School Uniform/Dress Code

Hamilton has adopted a uniform policy in order to avoid distraction, minimize competition, eliminate undue expense, and call forth from students a serious attitude toward education.

<b>HAMILTON SCHOOL UNIFORM</b>	
PANTS & SKIRTS: Long Pants, Walking Shorts, Skirts, Skorts, & Jumpers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navy Blue, Khaki, or Plain Blue Denim</li> <li>• Waistband must be fitted – otherwise a belt must be worn</li> <li>• Baggy or low riding pants not allowed</li> <li>• Bicycle shorts only permitted under skirts or jumpers</li> </ul>
SWEATPANTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navy Blue</li> </ul>
SHIRTS – Long & Short Sleeve Polos; Turtlenecks; Hamilton school t-shirts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navy Blue, Light Blue, White, or Red – with or without the Hamilton Logo</li> <li>• Hamilton school t-shirts</li> </ul>
BUTTON-DOWN SHIRTS; BLOUSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White</li> </ul>
SWEATERS, SWEATSHIRTS, & JACKETS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student choice</li> </ul>
WINTER HATS OR SCARVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not permitted (except during cold weather)</li> </ul>
SHOES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be closed-toed – no sandals allowed</li> </ul>
GIRL OR BOY SCOUT UNIFORMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be worn on scheduled meeting dates</li> </ul>
JEWELRY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If worn, must NOT get in the way of play or cause classroom distractions.</li> </ul>

Free dress day is the first Friday of each month. Please note that the following are examples of inappropriate attire that are NOT PERMITTED on free dress days: sandals, short shorts, blouses or shirts exposing midriff, spaghetti straps, jerseys, tank tops, and low riding or baggy pants/shorts/skirts.

Please notify the school in writing at the beginning of the year if your child has a medical condition or religious reason that requires a modification to the dress code.

Uniforms can be purchased at a variety of retailers including Children’s Place, Old Navy, Target, and most department stores.

**Hamilton Logo Uniform Shirts and Sweatshirts** are sold by the PTA as a fundraiser at the Back to School Picnic prior to the start of school, PTA Gatherings/Meetings, and other events throughout the year. Both child and adult sizes are available – show your school spirit!

## Parents/Guardians/Visitors on Campus

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Hamilton encourages the partnership between parents and staff in the education of our children, thus parents/guardians are always welcome on campus whether visiting, observing, or volunteering. To ensure a safe environment for all members of our community, and to minimize classroom disruptions, we respectfully require visitors on campus to comply with the following:

### Visitors to campus:

- All visitors (regardless of purpose of visit) must sign-in at the main office when they arrive and sign out when they leave. This is for the safety of visitors, students, and staff – the school needs to know who is on campus at all times, especially in the event of an emergency.
- All visitors must wear a visitor badge while on school grounds.

### Classroom Observation:

- Parents may observe the classroom in which their child is enrolled by making an appointment with the classroom teacher prior to the day of their visit.\*

### Classroom Volunteers:

- Parents may volunteer to help in the classroom with the approval of the classroom teacher. Classroom volunteers work under the direct supervision of the classroom teacher.
- Volunteers are asked to arrange their volunteer time in advance of the day they will be working so that the teacher can plan how to best utilize their help. This also allows teachers and volunteers to coordinate in a way that minimizes classroom disruptions.
- For safety reasons, all classroom volunteers are required by PUSD to submit a completed “PUSD Volunteer Application” form, along with proof of a negative tuberculosis test (TB Test) within the last 4 years, prior to their first day volunteering in the classroom.
  - Volunteer Application Forms: are available at [www.bobcatbuzz.com](http://www.bobcatbuzz.com) and [www.pusd.us](http://www.pusd.us) as well as in the Hamilton main office. Please submit completed application forms with proof of negative TB Test to the Hamilton main office.
  - TB Tests: are offered free of charge at the PUSD Health Care Clinic at 351 S. Hudson Ave., Pasadena, CA 91109, Room 130. Tests are given Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday – 8-9am and 2-3pm. You will need to return several days later to have the test read.
- Please contact Ms. Erika Cooper at (626) 396-5730 x26044 with any questions.

\*Per the California Education Code, classroom observation visits typically last no longer than 30 minutes.

## Report Cards

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Report Cards measure student progress toward the California Academic Content Standards. All students are expected to meet or exceed the grade-level content standards by the end of each school year. A list of the academic content standards for your child’s grade level is available from your child’s teacher. These standards can also be found at the California Department of Education website at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/>.

The first report card is presented to the parents/guardians at the parent-teacher conference held in November. Thereafter, report cards are sent home in February, April, and June. November, February, and April report cards require parents to sign and return the report card envelope to acknowledge receipt (keep the report card as your copy).

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# Health and Safety

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## Medication at School

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- The school nurse is on campus on Wednesdays and Thursdays. The Health Clerk is available during the remaining weekdays.
- Parents/Guardians must complete a Medication Form for any medication that will be provided to students during the school day.
- Teachers are not permitted to dispense medication. All medication will be stored and distributed by the school nurse or designated administrative personnel. This includes cough drops and any over the counter medications.
- Medication Forms are available in the front office, from the school nurse, or at [www.bobcatbuzz.com](http://www.bobcatbuzz.com).
- Medication must be delivered by a parent or guardian to the school nurse in the original, labeled bottle.

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## Health Insurance/Information

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- Parents/Guardians are required to submit emergency contact information, student health and health insurance information on a series of forms distributed at the beginning of the school year. It is important that this information is provided and kept updated for use in case of an emergency.
- The district contracts with a health insurance company. Any student may participate in this program for a sliding scale fee, depending on the income level of the family. Forms for District Health Insurance are distributed at the beginning of the year and available in the front office.
- 24-Hour free nurse advice is available through Pasadena Healthcare Link by calling (626) 744-7445. The call center provides free reliable and confidential health information in English and Spanish. Fliers are available in the office or visit [www.ci.pasadena.ca.us/publichealth/](http://www.ci.pasadena.ca.us/publichealth/)

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## Emergency Procedures/Disaster Preparedness

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Hamilton has a written Disaster Preparedness Plan and engages in Emergency Drills several times during the school year. In the event of a natural disaster, school-based or other, Hamilton staff will follow procedures to ensure the immediate safety of all students. Normal school instruction will resume when the school is deemed secure and safe. If, for whatever reason, instruction cannot continue, the school will make efforts to contact parents or emergency contacts so that students can return home. Parents or designees on student's emergency contact lists should proceed to the school to pick up their children. Please make sure to update your child's records with the office staff if any changes occur to your emergency contact information during the school year.

### **Disaster Preparedness Supplies**

At Hamilton, the safety and well-being of our children is our first concern and the PTA has taken steps to ensure that each classroom is equipped with an emergency backpack complete with first-aid kit and other necessary supplies in the event of an earthquake or other emergency. Parents are asked to provide an “Emergency Comfort Pack” for each of their children that will be stored in their classrooms. Parents can assemble packs themselves or purchase one from the PTA for \$10. Suggestions for pack contents include:

- 3 Water or juice boxes
- Granola bar, crackers or other nonperishable food items
- 1 solar blanket
- Antibacterial hand sanitizer
- Small pocket game or small stuffed animal
- Letter written to your child
- Family photo

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# Curriculum

Hamilton provides all students with a strong, well rounded “liberal arts” educational foundation consisting of academics, the arts, and physical education through our core curriculum. Math, science, and technology are given additional emphasis through our Math/Science/Technology Academy. Our goal is to create critical thinkers who will be ready to enter the digital world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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## Math/Science/Technology Academy

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Hamilton’s Math/Science/Technology Academy (the Academy) is designed to help children develop a greater understanding of the concepts they are learning through hands on experimentation and to develop a strong sense of inquiry. The backbone of the Academy is a series of weekly science, math, and computer labs.

The Academy is structured as follows:

- **Grades K-3:** The focus is to build strong language arts and math skills and knowledge. Science and social studies are integrated throughout the curriculum. All students in these grades receive 40 minutes of Computer Lab once a week (see description below). Hands on science experiments are conducted utilizing Project SEED (see Science Curriculum below).
- **Grades 4-6:** Studies build upon the skills learned in K-3 to explore topics in more depth. At each grade level, the two teachers team teach by each specializing in two of the four main subject areas: Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Writing is infused throughout the curriculum. All students participate in three hands on labs each week that bring their classwork to life:

### **Science Lab**

- The Science Lab provides hands on experiments related to that week’s curriculum topics. Students are guided in their development of problem solving and scientific thinking skills as they apply the scientific method to both prepared experiments and those of their own creation.
- All students in grades 4-6 attend science lab for 90 minutes each week.

### **Math Lab**

- The weekly Math Lab provides hands on reinforcement of math concepts taught earlier in the week. Students “play” with numbers and mathematical concepts using manipulatives and games in order to better understand these concepts and the importance of math applications to “real world” situations.
- All students in grades 4-6 attend math lab for 90 minutes each week.

## **Computer Lab**

Hamilton's fully-equipped state-of-the-art Computer Lab is staffed by a full-time, credentialed teacher and funded through the combined support of the Hamilton PTA, PEF grants, and individual donors. Instruction integrates technology with grade level curriculum and standards.

- In the Computer Lab students learn both:
  - Technical Skills – such as how to operate a computer and utilize various software packages for report, analysis, and presentation purposes; and
  - Research Skills.
- Students also have the opportunity to apply these skills towards projects they are working on in their homeroom classes.
- **Grades K-3:** All students participate in a weekly, 40 minute Computer Lab.
- **Grades 4-6:** All students participate in two - 45 minute Computer Labs per week.

## **Annual Hamilton Science Fair**

The Academy culminates each spring with the Hamilton Science Fair where students put into practice the skills and knowledge they have acquired throughout the school year. Students participate in the scientific process as they ask a scientific question and test their hypothesis.

- Students grades 4-6 are required to each prepare their own project for participation outside of class time with parental guidance.
- Students grades K-3 prepare a project to enter as a class group; students who are interested may also prepare their own individual project to submit.

Implementation of the Math/Science/Technology Academy program began in the fall of 2006. It is anticipated that the Academy will more fully incorporate students in the lower grades in the future.

Look for flyers and check the Hamilton website ([www.bobcatbuzz.com](http://www.bobcatbuzz.com)) for updates on the Academy funding and development and for opportunities to participate in meetings and informational forums in this area.

## Core Curriculum

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The Math/Science/Technology Academy is built on a strong foundation provided by our core curriculum. Hamilton utilizes curriculum programs specified by the Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD) for use at all of its elementary schools in language arts, math, science, social studies, music, and art. Hamilton provides additional offerings in physical education, instrumental music, and a hands-on art program in conjunction with the Armory Center for the Arts.

## English/Language Arts Curriculum

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### **Grades K-6: Open Court**

- Open Court is a fundamental language arts program for Grades K-6. It maintains strong instruction in the areas of learning how to read (decoding), understanding what you read (comprehension), learning how to apply what you have read (inquiry and investigation), and how to communicate with others in print (writing). It also includes spelling, vocabulary, grammar usage and mechanics, penmanship, and listening and speaking skills. (From [www.sraonline.com](http://www.sraonline.com).)
- The Open Court Reading Program includes themes by grade level that are incorporated into reading and other curriculum modules.

## Math Curriculum

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### **Grades K-5: Houghton Mifflin California Math**

Houghton Mifflin California Math offers teachers, students, and parents research-based approaches in an accessible format so all students can reach grade-level success – and beyond. This program includes high-interest activities which engage students right from the start and differentiated instruction that addresses the needs of all learners. At each grade level the program focuses on basic skills development, problem solving, and vocabulary expansion to help students master key math concepts. The program incorporates assessments – including lesson-level interventions to meet the needs of all learners – to monitor students’ progress. [www.eduplace.com/parents/hmcam/](http://www.eduplace.com/parents/hmcam/)

### **Grade 6: Holt Mathematics**

Holt Mathematics focuses on developing each student’s conceptual understanding and skills by (a) focusing on key ideas in mathematics, (b) providing sophisticated problem-solving lessons, and (c) offering differentiated instructional options to meet the needs of students with different learning styles. Holt Mathematics develops a foundation for algebra while improving problem solving skills.

[www.hrw.com](http://www.hrw.com)

## Science Curriculum

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### **Grades K-6: Harcourt Science**

The science curriculum, provided through Harcourt, is designed to stimulate curiosity and student inquiry. It integrates support for reading and science literacy, reaches all learners through numerous components and strategies for differentiated instruction, reinforces learning through exciting visuals and electronic components, and provides inquiry-based hands-on learning to make science real.

Grades K-5 Standards cover the following themes: Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, and Earth Sciences. Each unit is accompanied by an “Investigation and Experimentation” component. Grade 6 focuses more in-depth on Earth Sciences.

### **Grades K-6: Project SEED (Science for Early Education Development)**

- Project SEED is based on the principal that the way to learn science is by doing science.
- Using a series of science experiment kits, children expand their knowledge of various topics and experience the scientific process by “posing questions, making observations and recording data, organizing the information, looking for patterns, discussing ideas, developing claims (supported by data) about how the world works, and communicating their findings to others.” (from [www.capsi.caltech.edu/frameSeed.html](http://www.capsi.caltech.edu/frameSeed.html))

## Social Studies Curriculum

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### **Grades K-6: Pearson Scott Foresman**

The Pearson Scott Foresman program blends printed text, digital, and activities-based instructional methods. It provides a complete digital curriculum with online books, video, assessment and interactive learning tools – allowing teachers to easily build a lesson, teach the whole class or assign work to an individual child. It allows teachers to accommodate students’ learning styles, as well as their own teaching preferences and needs.  
[www.pearson.com](http://www.pearson.com)

The Social Studies curriculum covers the following statewide curriculum grade level topics:

- **Grade K:** Here We Go
- **Grade 1:** All Together
- **Grade 2:** People and Places
- **Grade 3:** Communities
- **Grade 4:** California History
- **Grade 5:** History of the United States
- **Grade 6:** Ancient History

## Movement Education (ME) (Physical Education)

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Hamilton employs a full-time movement education (ME) teacher who provides instruction to all students (K-6) two to three times a week. During ME instruction, students learn about a variety of different sports and also learn about nutrition, making healthy choices, and general physical fitness.

## Music Programs

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### **Silver Burdett Making Music Curriculum Program (K-6)**

- The Silver Burdett Making Music curriculum teaches the basics of singing and musical notation and includes songs from many cultures and time periods; children sing and play instruments on a regular basis.

### **Hamilton’s Instrumental Music Program**

- Weekly instrumental music lessons are provided through small group instruction. Third graders are eligible for violin. Students in grades 4-6 may take string (violin, viola, cello, or bass), woodwind, or brass instruments. (Guitar, drums, and piano are not offered.) While PUSD has a limited number of instruments available for rent, parents should plan on renting instruments from a music store.

### **Assemblies**

- Music and performing arts assemblies are provided for all students throughout the school year. These assemblies are paid for by the Hamilton PTA.

## Art Programs

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### **SRA Art Connections (K-6)**

Art is incorporated throughout the curriculum by classroom teachers on an ongoing basis. The SRA Art Connections curriculum teaches fine arts from around the world as well as the major concepts of art.

[www.sraonline.com](http://www.sraonline.com)

### **Armory Center for the Arts (K-6)**

Additionally, the Armory Center for the Arts has partnered with Hamilton Elementary School to provide an Artist in Residence on campus through a project called “Art Central” ([www.armoryarts.org/programs/school.html](http://www.armoryarts.org/programs/school.html)). This instructor implements a variety of programs for all grade levels to enable students to develop their visual and performing art skills, techniques, and understanding:

- **Grades K-3:** students participate in an 8 week program organized around Open Court themes.
- **Grade 4:** Children Investigate the Environment (CIE): An 8 week program based on the concept that “observation and experimentation are integral aspects of both science and art. Students explore a local natural resource using drawing, painting, sculpture, installation, and expressive writing” through a series of field trips to Eaton Canyon.
- **Grades 5-6:** Fun with Language, Arts and Reading (FLARE): Gives students opportunities to create original works of art in a variety of media, as well as learn about artworks created by others. Students are encouraged to develop an imaginative and expressive voice while being guided in building vocabulary and research skills.
- Students also have the opportunity to visit the Armory Center for the Arts.

## **Gifted and Talented Education (GATE)**

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GATE is a program for students determined to be academically talented. At Hamilton, these students are clustered together at each grade level in a class with a GATE certified teacher in order to provide them with instruction that keeps them challenged and engaged and enables them to excel academically. Currently all students are tested for the GATE Program at the end second and fifth grades; or by teacher or parent request. (Please note that the District is considering changing the grade levels at which GATE testing is done.)

Last year a GATE Club was piloted for our 5th graders and will be expanded this year to include grades 4th-6th. The club meets Friday mornings 8am-9am and is run by a volunteer parent advisor. Parents and community members are brought in to instruct the children in things that they have identified as areas of interest. Last year the club explored computer programming, chemical reactions, catapults, grammar, and animation. If you would like more information or are interested in presenting for the club please contact us at [info@bobcatbuzz.com](mailto:info@bobcatbuzz.com).

## **English Language Learners (ELL)**

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Students who are identified as English Language Learners are provided with additional educational resources to assist them in their acquisition and mastery over the English language. Parents/Guardians should contact their child's teacher for more information on services available for English Language Learners and their families.

## **Special Education**

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- The Pasadena Unified School District provides Special Education services to children identified as having special needs as young as two years old. The extent of participation in services is dependent on the needs identified for each individual child and may range from areas such as weekly speech therapy sessions, to ongoing RSP services, to placement in a Special Education classroom.
- Parents who feel that their child may be in need of Special Education services are encouraged to discuss this with their child's teacher or with school administrators so that a referral can be made.
- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to speak with their child's teacher with any questions or for more information about any of the programs provided at the school.

## **Hamilton Homework Policy**

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- Homework serves many important purposes for our students. Through homework, students can reinforce academic skills taught in school, learn how to research effectively, develop ideas and become life-long learners.
- Homework is the responsibility of the student. It is the student's job to develop regular study habits and to do most of the work independently. At times, long-term assignments may require the assistance of the parent.
- According to the Pasadena Unified School District Board Policy, students in grades 1-3 are expected to spend an average of 30 minutes a day on homework and an average of 45 minutes a day in grades 4-6, four to five days a week. Homework assignments in Kindergarten are designed to stimulate students to talk with their parents and share new knowledge.

After much research, Hamilton Elementary School has developed the following homework plan for our students:

### **Kindergarten:**

- Read for 15 minutes daily
- Complete simple assignments and projects

### **First-Third Grades:**

- Read for 20 minutes daily
- Complete simple assignments including decodable books, high frequency word practice, math facts, journal writing, unfinished work, etc.
- Do Saxon Math Homework
- Work on long-term projects

### **Fourth-Sixth Grades:**

- Read for 30 minutes daily
- Do a 15 minute journal entry/or writing assignment
- Complete any unfinished math, science, reading or social studies assignments/projects not done in class
- Work on long-term projects.

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## Getting Involved

Hamilton believes that parent/guardian involvement is critical to student success. To this end, Hamilton encourages families to get involved in their children’s education and the volunteer opportunities that are available in the school. The main avenues for getting involved at Hamilton are:

- A. Parent and Teacher Association (PTA)
- B. Statutory Councils (SSC and ELAC – see below)
- C. Donations

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### A. Parent and Teacher Association (PTA)

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The Hamilton PTA is a volunteer group of parents and teachers, led by an elected board. The PTA seeks to:

- (a) build a healthy and nurturing school community;
- (b) cultivate a collaborative environment through effective communication;
- (c) enhance academic and enrichment programs; and
- (d) support classrooms through room parents and a volunteer network.

Our mission as parents and teachers is to PARTNER together, to PROVIDE a thriving academic environment and enrichment programs for our kids, and to BUILD a strong Hamilton community.

The Hamilton PTA currently serves three primary roles:

1. Volunteer Coordination
2. Social/Community Building Events
3. Fundraising (to support our mission and goals)

Your help/participation is welcomed and encouraged throughout the year!

*“Together we partner, provide, and build for our kids!”*

#### **1. Volunteer Coordination**

The PTA coordinates volunteers on campus both in the classroom\* and around school, as well as on various fundraising and social events projects. It is the PTA’s goal to have each family volunteer a minimum of just three hours during the school year (this is the “Three for Me” Program).

There are a variety of ways to volunteer at the school both in the classroom and on specific PTA projects. Volunteer tasks can be big or small, done at school or sometimes at home. Some examples include (but are not limited to):

- being a room parent (see below)
- staffing a booth for a shift at the carnival
- bringing punch or cookies to the Family Dance
- being an event or field trip chaperone
- cutting/assembling/stapling papers for your child’s teacher
- reading to a child in class
- helping to supervise children at lunch
- set-up or clean-up for a school event
- many others – your ideas on how to help are welcomed and encouraged!



## **Room Parents**

Room Parents provide an important communication and coordination function at the school. The PTA's goal is to have two Room Parents per classroom. Room Parent responsibilities include:

- Developing a classroom parent contact list
- Publicizing teacher's wish lists to parents
- Supporting and promoting Teacher Appreciation Week
- Assisting the teacher to seek volunteers for the classroom, field trips and/or special projects
- Recruiting volunteer parents for events throughout the year.

\*Classroom Volunteers: Room parents may coordinate volunteers who work in the classroom on a regular basis, but more often, these volunteers coordinate directly with the teacher. Check with the teacher to see what he/she prefers. If you make arrangements to volunteer regularly in the classroom, don't forget to complete a PUSD Volunteer Application – see p. 22 for more details.

## **2. Social/Community Building Events**

The PTA organizes several fun social events during the year for students and their families. Anticipated events for this year include:

- A Family “Themed” Night (past themes have included “Art Night” and “Space Night”)
- A Family Dance
- Dr. Seuss' Birthday Party (during Literacy Week).

## **3. Fundraising**

The purpose of PTA fundraising at Hamilton is to enable us to enhance and support programs and activities at Hamilton as well as to provide supplies, equipment, and other resources not provided by the school budget. In recent years, the PTA has funded a variety of items and activities including, but not limited to, new tables and seating for the cafeteria, new library books, field trips, assemblies, emergency supplies, and installation of the large donated play structure.

In order to continue to support our children and the Hamilton School community, the following fundraisers are anticipated for the upcoming school year:

- Fall Fundraiser: Gifts, Wrapping Paper, Frozen Foods, and More Sale (through Kids First Catalog and Claim Jumper Catalog) – This is our primary fundraiser held in the fall through which we plan to raise the majority of the funds needed to implement our programs for the year. In addition to purchasing catalog items, family and friends have the option of making a straight donation, 100% of which goes directly to Hamilton PTA programs. Credit for prizes is earned through both sales and donations solicited.
- Family Restaurant and Chuck E. Cheese Nights
- Jog-a-Thon
- Recycled Book Fair
- Banner Ads along Del Mar fence
- eScrip (see below)

## **eScrip**

eScrip is a program through which participating merchants donate money to the Hamilton PTA in exchange for our support of their establishments. When you make purchases at participating restaurants, stores, and websites using your eScrip registered grocery club cards, credit cards, and debit/ATM cards, those merchants donate a percentage of each purchase to the Hamilton PTA.

eScrip is an easy way for schools to raise funds because the only thing you have to do to participate is register your cards by visiting [www.eScrip.com](http://www.eScrip.com), clicking on “Sign Up”, and following the directions. Our group name is “Hamilton Elementary School PTA”. Be sure to verify that you have selected our school by checking the address (2089 Rose Villa St. in Pasadena) as there are many schools with the name “Hamilton” participating in eScrip.

Remember, a large number of on-line vendors participate in eScrip (including Amazon, Land’s End, Macy’s, Expedia.com, 1-800-FLOWERS, etc. – pretty much any store that mails out catalogs). All you have to do is access their website by clicking through from the eScrip.com Merchant Mall list and a percentage of your purchase made on an eScrip registered credit card will automatically be donated to Hamilton.

eScrip is not just for parents and teachers – we encourage you to invite your friends and family members to register their credit, debit, and grocery club cards to support our school.

## **PTA Logistics**

### **How do I join the PTA?**

- To join the PTA, simply fill out a PTA membership form, include dues of \$10 per family (cash or check made payable to “Hamilton PTA”), and return to the main office or to your child’s teacher.
- PTA membership forms are available at PTA meetings and events, in the front office, in classrooms, and at [www.bobcatbuzz.com](http://www.bobcatbuzz.com).

### **How do I volunteer?**

- The PTA welcomes your participation! If you are interested in volunteering in the classroom, at an event, serving in an elected office, being a room parent, or helping the school in any other way, please contact your child’s teacher or the PTA at [info@bobcatbuzz.com](mailto:info@bobcatbuzz.com).
- Please note that while the PTA encourages your membership, you do not have to be a member of the PTA to volunteer at the school.

### **PTA Gatherings/Meetings and Events**

- PTA Gatherings/Meetings are generally held the third Wednesday of the month in the cafeteria. Check flyers, e-mails and/or [www.bobcatbuzz.com](http://www.bobcatbuzz.com) for updated information on PTA Gatherings/Meetings and events.
- PTA information is also posted on the PTA display board located in the main hall to the right of the main office door.

## **B. Statutory Councils**

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### **School Site Council (SSC)**

The School Site Council (SSC) is a state mandated, elected group of parents, teachers, and school employees that works with the principal to develop, review, and evaluate school improvement programs at the school.

Questions that we ask in carrying out our responsibilities include:

- What are the goals and priorities of our school?
- What data do we have that shows how well we are achieving the school goals?
- What new programs should be implemented to achieve these goals and how will we know if our new programs are effective?
- Are there particular groups of students who are not doing as well as others, what supports could we put in place to help these students and how will we fund those supports?
- Do we have programs that are ineffective or unrelated to the goals and is it possible to eliminate those programs?

Through discussion and by answering these questions, the SSC carries out its specific duties and responsibilities which include:

- Developing and approving the School Plan (“*Single Plan for Student Achievement*”) and budgeting the related expenditures in accordance with all state and federal laws and regulations. A key part of this is to obtain recommendations from all school advisory committees.
- Recommending the approved Plan and expenditures to the PUSD Board of Education for approval.
- Providing ongoing review of the implementation of the Plan with the principal, teachers and other school staff members and periodically, and at least annually, evaluating the progress made toward school goals to raise the academic achievement of all students.
- Conducting discussions with staff and teachers on various issues that arise from time to time.

All parents are welcome to attend SSC meetings held monthly in the school library. Please check school fliers, emails, and [www.bobcatbuzz.com](http://www.bobcatbuzz.com) for specific dates and times.

### **English Learners Advisory Council (ELAC)**

- English Learners Advisory Council (ELAC) meets regularly to advise the principal, school staff, and School Site Council on programs and services for English Learners.
- All parents/guardians are welcome to participate in meetings that are held monthly in the cafeteria. Please check school flyers, emails, and [www.bobcatbuzz.com](http://www.bobcatbuzz.com) for details.

## **C. Donations**

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### **Teacher Wishlists**

- All of the teachers at Hamilton provide “Wish Lists” of items desired for their classrooms. These are for items that are in excess of the budgeted allotments for teacher supplies but are important items for teachers to run a classroom effectively.
- All parents/guardians are encouraged to view their child’s classroom Wish List throughout the year and to provide items to teachers. Wish Lists are posted on the “Wishing Wall” in the hallway outside the main office as well as on our website at [www.bobcatbuzz.com](http://www.bobcatbuzz.com). The “Wishing Wall” board may be moved to central locations during school events.

### **Donations**

- Hamilton has been fortunate over the past several years to receive monetary donations from families for a variety of needs and items. Donations have enabled the school to develop a state-of-the-art Computer Lab, employ a full-time computer teacher, and provide unique and important playground equipment like the handball courts and large play structure.
- Donations to Hamilton are fully tax deductible.
- If you are interested in making a donation to Hamilton and/or learning more about donation needs, please contact the principal.

Disclaimer: All information within this Handbook is subject to change.