

HILL TOP PREPARATORY SCHOOL

2021 - 2022 PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

We believe that our students benefit from clear expectations and are most successful when they understand those expectations. Therefore, Hill Top Preparatory School has taken great care to be as explicit as possible in the Handbook.

Please note that the parent/legal guardian and student signatures on the **Enrollment Contract** signify acceptance of the rules and regulations of **The Hill Top Preparatory School**, which include but are not limited to those stated in this handbook. A parent's/legal guardian's or student's failure to support and/or abide by these rules and regulations can result in disciplinary action.

HILL TOP GOALS

The goals of the Hill Top program are:

- * to develop the compensatory academic skills and content knowledge to prepare students to be suitable candidates for post-secondary education.
- * to build self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-confidence to a level where the students possess the life skills necessary to be responsible and independent adolescents and young adults.
- * to provide a school environment that promotes student wellness through nutrition education and physical activity as part of the learning experience.
- * to enable its students to appropriately adapt to any environment.
- * to develop a strong value system emphasizing integrity, respect for others and ethical behavior.
- * to create an environment that feels safe for students to make academic, social and emotional gains.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM - CURRICULUM

The academic program is broken into three divisions, each of which is led by a team leader and has a core team of faculty members.

Middle School

The Middle School team consists of grades 5 through 8 and focuses on preparing our students for academic, social and emotional challenges. Each year, the students take Reading, Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Skill Development Courses, and Physical Education. The Skill Development Courses focus on exposing the students to or improving their skills in the following areas: computer skills, library skills, the visual arts, the performing arts, and health. All students also participate in group counseling (Group) every year. Finally, middle school students should demonstrate competency in computer and internet applications.

Ninth Grade Academy

The Ninth Grade Academy is a transition year specifically designed to support these students in academically preparing for the expectations of the upper school, while also building their social and leadership skills. In ninth grade, students will take Introduction to Literature, Freshman Seminar, Math, Biology I, Eastern World Cultures, Physical Education, Health and Art Foundations. On a monthly basis, students will work with our Transition Coordinator during Freshman Seminar to begin thinking about life after Hill Top and will also be invited and encouraged to attend college visits and/or meet with representatives. In addition, all students also participate in group counseling (Group) and will have a designated ninth grade mentor.

Upper School

The Upper School team consists of grades 10 through 12 and focuses on preparing our students for graduation, post-secondary education and beyond. Students in grades 10 through 12 must take English, Math, Social Studies, Science and Physical Education every year as well as participate in group counseling (“Group”). Students in grade 12 have the option of eliminating either a math or science course if they have already earned 3 credits in each domain.

To qualify for graduation, Hill Top students must fulfill the following requirements in grades 9-12*:

English:	6-8 credits***
Science:	3-4 credits~(Biology Required)
Math:	3-4 credits~(Algebra I Required)
Social Studies:	4 credits
Phys. Ed:	2.4 credits (.6 units/year)
Health:	1.0 credit
Electives:	3-5 credits
Graduation Project:	0.5 credit

* One credit equals any course that meets 5 days each week for the entire academic year.

~ In Math & Science students must have 3 years of one and 4 years of the other.

*** Students transferring into grades 10 through 12 may not meet this requirement.

ANY COURSE FOR WHICH A STUDENT RECEIVES A FINAL GRADE OF “F” MUST BE REPEATED, EITHER AT HILL TOP OR AT AN APPROVED SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAM.

Students who transfer into Hill Top Preparatory School from other public or private schools will only receive credit if they have received a C- or better in their courses. Students may be expected to repeat courses in which they have received a grade lower than a C-. Courses may be repeated at Hill Top or at an appropriate summer school program with the approval of the Assistant Head of Program.

PHASING

Students at Hill Top are “phased” in each class in order to ensure progress and mastery of both skill and content. As expectations at a given phase are met or additional support is needed, teachers may choose to change the level of academic challenge and/or support by changing a student’s phase. A student’s phase may vary from one class to another.

Significant Accommodations (SA)
<p>Definition: Students work slowly and require a significant level of teacher direction, guidance and oversight along with modified assignments. Work at an SA phase is not at a college-preparatory pace or level.</p> <p>Students at the SA phase would receive one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modified assignments • Modified tests • Phase-appropriate grading (i.e. alternate rubrics) • Slower paced instruction • Use of supplementary materials on quizzes and tests (i.e. notes, textbook, word bank) • Omission of more challenging topics • Significant extensions on assignments • Minimum expectation for individualized work at home • Scribing and/or typing assistance • Significant one-on-one support during class, mentor period and beyond • Practice tests and/or additional literature guides and study materials are provided

- Significant extra time on tests (i.e. greater than 100%)
- Increased support with executive function skills

- Writing assignments in the assignment book or creating lists of work (Upper School only)
- Regularly scheduled mentor periods
- Study Hall activity
- Adaptive activities (physical education and art only)
- Modified penalties for late work
- Retests with no penalties
- Teacher signature of assignment book (9th - 12th grade only)

NOTE: STUDENTS WHO NEED TO BE CONSISTENTLY PLACED AT THIS PHASE IN MULTIPLE CLASSES ARE NOT FUNCTIONING AT THE COLLEGE PREPARATORY LEVEL AND WILL MEET WITH GREATER CHALLENGES OVER TIME. THEY ARE NOT FUNCTIONING AT A LEVEL COMMENSURATE WITH THEIR GRADE LEVEL PEERS. PARENTS MAY BE ADVISED TO CONSIDER AN ALTERNATE PROGRAM AS A RESULT.

Instructional (IN)**

Definition: Work and instruction are delivered at a grade-appropriate, college-preparatory pace with a balance between independent work and teacher direction.

Advanced (A)**

Definition: Student is responsible for highly independent work with limited teacher oversight and instruction.

** Using accommodations can make a difference in student learning and grades achieved. Students working at the Instructional and Advanced phases can receive common academic accommodations based on documentation and Hill Top's discretion, which include but are not limited to:

- Extended deadlines for assignments (up to 100%)
- Retests (for grades below 70%)
- Resubmission of assignments (for grades below 70%)
- Scribing and/or typing assistance
- Additional one-on-one support at any time during the school day
- Oral exams
- Extra time on tests (up to 100%)
- Study Hall activity
- Preferential seating
- Short breaks during class several times per week
- Assistive technology

GRADING SYSTEM

A+	98 - 100%	(4.0)	C+	77 - 79%	(2.33)
A	94 - 97%	(4.0)	C	74 - 76%	(2.0)
A-	90 - 93%	(3.67)	C-	70 - 73%	(1.67)
B+	87 - 89%	(3.33)	D+	67 - 69%	(1.33)
B	84 - 86%	(3.0)	D	64 - 66%	(1.0)
B-	80 - 83%	(2.67)	D-	60 - 63%	(0.67)
			F	0 - 59%	(0)

I (Incomplete) Work not completed by a specified date will become a zero.

F (No Credit) below 60%

(A student receiving an "F" for a final course grade will not receive credit for that course.)

Each marking period, students will receive grades based on content, mechanics and participation.

Academic Progress Reports (APRs)/Report Cards/Evaluative Reports

Academic progress reports will be generated at the mid-point of each marking period and be available to the parents/guardians of each student via the Parent Portal. APRs will not become part of a student's permanent record. Report cards are issued on a quarterly basis. Evaluative reports will accompany the report card at the end of the 2nd and 4th marking periods. These reports are used for informational and communication purposes as well as to determine the receipt of a Gold Award.

Homework

Homework is used as a necessary extension and reinforcement of in-class work. While new material may be assigned for homework, it will always be related to concepts and principles introduced in class. The amount of homework will be reasonable and will be determined by each teacher with consideration given to the phasing system. Students failing to do homework will be graded appropriately and may be required to complete their work during the school day. A Hill Top Prep assignment book is available for each student. Time is given in each class for students to accurately record their assignments. Parents/guardians are asked to provide a quiet study place, establish an appropriate time, check assignment books/PCR and support the School's approach to homework.

Work Policy - Missed Class

Ninth through twelfth grade students must contact/speak with their teacher regarding absence or missed class time. A student who does not make up missed work may face late penalties for work not done in a timely manner as decided by the teacher and dependent on the assignment.

Late Work Policy (New as of February 2021)

Students will be coached by their mentors, counselors and teachers to practice self-advocacy, planning and time management. Students are responsible for communicating with teachers regarding any late work. Students who self-advocate prior to the due date may request an extension. Self-advocacy on the due date may result in the work being late. Assignments turned in one day late will be reduced by a 10% penalty each day if arrangements have not been made with the teacher. It is at the teacher's discretion to determine whether or not an assignment may be submitted late. Seniors and Horizons students have two (2) days to submit late work. Seniors and Horizons students who do not submit work within two (2) days of the deadline will receive a zero for that assignment.

Extra Credit

Extra credit may be given at the teacher's discretion. However, students putting forth minimal effort will not be eligible for extra credit work.

Cheating/Plagiarism

Hill Top Preparatory School students are expected to put forth their best academic effort while maintaining academic integrity. Students found copying the work of other students or allowing others to copy their work will receive a zero on the assignment as well as disciplinary consequences. Students found cheating or plagiarizing on major assignments and tests will suffer both academic and disciplinary consequences. Refer to the relevant policy on page 10 of this Handbook for details.

Activity (8th) Period

A required activity period will be held for the last 45 minutes of the school day on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Non-credited activities will comprise athletic, leadership, artistic expression, technology or academic and other student interests. Students will receive a grade of "outstanding," "satisfactory," or "unsatisfactory." Year-long credited electives are also offered to 9th-12th grade students and will receive a letter grade and 0.5 credits.

Mentors and Mentor Period

- Each student will be assigned an academic mentor who will address both academic and organizational issues.
- Mentor period is held Monday through Friday for 30 minutes.
- Students must meet with their mentor or one of their other teachers during mentor period.
- Students will receive a grade of "outstanding," "satisfactory," or "unsatisfactory."
- Mentors are one of the main points of contact and communication for parents with question or concerns.

Parent/Legal Guardian Conferences

Parent/legal guardian conferences will be scheduled twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring. In the fall, parents/legal guardians are invited to schedule an appointment with the teachers with whom they wish to meet. The purpose of the fall conference is to provide an opportunity for parent(s)/legal guardian(s) to learn from teachers how the school year is progressing. In the spring, parents are required to schedule a conference with the student's mentor and counselor. Student attendance is required at the spring conference. The purpose of the spring conference is to review the student's Personal Education Plan (PEP) and discuss goals for the next school year.

Juniors, Seniors and Their Parents

In keeping with Hill Top Preparatory School's mission of preparing students for the post-secondary environment, juniors and seniors are expected to manage routine maintenance of grades, assignments, deadlines, and other academic responsibilities, including those associated with the Graduation Project. These expectations are in effect because sending graduates to post-secondary education without age-appropriate and comprehensive experience of managing their own educational life would do those students a grave disservice.

Examples of independent junior and senior responsibilities include, but are not limited to, maintaining assignment books, making parents/legal guardians aware of upcoming requirements or events, meeting deadlines, submitting paperwork to the college counselors, and arranging to make up work before/after short absences, or even after foreseeable extended absences, (such as school or family trips).

Mentors and Graduation Project advisors are available as consultants and resources to juniors and seniors at their request. Just as in college, academic advisors and learning support staff will assist a student only at the student's request. At the discretion of the mentor, Headmaster, Assistant Headmaster, and/or Academic Committee, exceptions will be made for serious unforeseeable circumstances, such as extended illnesses. In those cases, mentors, Graduation Project advisors, or classroom teachers may be asked to communicate directly with the parents/legal guardians and others with regard to deadlines, make-up work, etc.

GRADUATION PROJECT

The purpose of the graduation project is to provide Upper School students the opportunity to develop themselves as learners, writers and citizens in unique off-campus experiences. Students may undertake community service, begin a job or internship, learn a new skill or write a research paper and then teach a class of their instructors and peers. We hope these experiences expand student understanding of the world and their place in it.

In order to meet the requirements set forth by Hill Top Preparatory School, successful completion of a graduation project is mandatory. We expect students to complete these projects as sophomores, juniors or seniors with presentations given to the school community in May of the year that the project is undertaken. Additional details are provided in the Graduation Project Handbook, available on the school's website. During the academic year, students will meet with the Graduation Project Supervisor and an in-school project advisor as needed.

AWARDS

Academic Awards

At the end of each semester, Hill Top Preparatory School gives out academic awards. These awards, listed below, recognize students for both academic achievement and effort.

Honors - Awarded to students who have achieved a grade point average between 3.0 and 3.5 for the semester with no grade below a B-. Students receiving a "U" unsatisfactory for mentor period, group, activity period will not be eligible to receive this award.

High Honors - Awarded to students who have achieved a grade point average between 3.6 and 4.0 with no grade below a B- for the semester. Students receiving a "U" unsatisfactory for mentor period, group, activity period will not be eligible to receive this award.

Special Recognition - Awarded for a variety of reasons, such as community service, improved academic performance, increased effort, etc.

Additional Recognitions

Students may be recognized at various points throughout the year for effort, acts of kindness and compassion, and/or other gestures that may be considered “above and beyond.”

Spirit of the Hawk - The Spirit of the Hawk is how Hill Top recognizes the positive impact our students make in the community. The Spirit of the Hawk character education program enables faculty members to highlight students who show courage, perseverance, leadership or service (The Spirit of the Hawk Pillars). During Community Meeting, any faculty member may give a brief explanation of how a student exhibited one of the four traits and present the student with a Spirit Tag.

The Unsung Hero Award - Voted on by the faculty and awarded at the end of the year, this award recognizes the student who, more than any other, has consistently gone above and beyond the call of duty in numerous areas of the school community for the benefit of others.

Headmaster’s Award - Voted on by the faculty and awarded at the end of the year to one middle school student and one upper school student, this award recognizes the students who have made the most dramatic turn-around in academic performance and relationships.

Middle-School Award - Voted on by the faculty and awarded at the end of the year, this award is presented to a middle school student in recognition of his or her excellence in academic performance and relationships.

Upper-School Award - Voted on by the faculty and awarded at the end of the year, this award is presented to an upper school student in recognition of his or her excellence in academic performance and relationships.

ATHLETICS

The following intramural and/or interscholastic sports are typically offered during the school year: soccer, cross country, horseback riding, basketball, tennis, outdoors club, bowling and golf. All students participating in athletics are required to have written physician’s approval prior to the beginning of the first practice of the season. Sport forms are attached to the “Physician’s Report of Physical Exam.”

Eligibility for Sports

Students are eligible for sports as long as they consistently exhibit responsible behavior and their schoolwork is up to date with no failing grades. Should the academic standards for scholastic eligibility as adopted by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s Board of Education not be met, it is at the discretion of the coach and Athletic Director in consultation with other relevant parties (i.e. teacher, mentor, counselor, Assistant Head of Student Life, Headmaster) to render the student ineligible for sports. The ineligibility will continue indefinitely until the situation is remedied. |

Although academic work is the priority, absence from practice and/or games due to homework will not be excused. A student who cannot balance academic and athletic responsibilities will not be permitted to participate on a team. Commitment to one’s team demonstrated by regular attendance in practices and games is highly valued. Any student who does not regularly attend practices or games may be removed from that team at the Head of Student Life’s discretion. Detention or other disciplinary actions pre-empt participation in athletics and all other activities.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Consistent daily attendance is required and crucial to success. Students benefit greatly from structure, multi-sensory instruction, class participation, and interactions with peers and teachers. Our attendance policy (8 absences per semester) reflects the importance we place on students being present for in-class instruction.

General Procedures

- If a student is going to be absent or late, **THE PARENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CALLING TO NOTIFY THE SCHOOL.** If a student fails to arrive at school by usual means and time, the school may attempt to notify the parent/legal guardian.
- **The parent/legal guardian must provide a signed note indicating the reason for the student's absence or tardiness.** Students may not sign their own excuse or permission notes or call in their own absence. If a note is not provided, the absences will be listed as unexcused (see below re: unexcused absences).
- Students arriving late to school must check in at the front office and receive a note before going to class.
- After the sixth (6th) absence in a semester or third (3rd) tardy in a marking period, the parents should expect a letter from the Receptionist as a reminder of the School's attendance policy.

Absences

- Only extended medical and clinical leaves will be recorded with no credit lost. A clinical or medical leave is a period of time during which a student is **under the care of a health care professional** for the treatment of medical, social, emotional or behavioral concerns. Any non-clinical absences will count toward the eight (8) day limit per semester.
- If a student is absent from school, he/she may not participate in school activities or school athletic events that same day.
- Any student missing three (3) or more consecutive days will be required to bring in a note from a physician.
- One (1) week notice to the Receptionist's office is required for college trips, religious observance and vacations that require the student's absence.
- Unexcused absences are the same as cutting school and may result in disciplinary action (see p. 12). Missed homework, class work and tests/quizzes will be made up; the amount of credit given will be at the discretion of the teacher.
- **LOST TIME CANNOT BE MADE UP; THEREFORE, SHOULD A STUDENT ACCRUE MORE THAN 20 ABSENCES DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR, THE ACADEMIC COMMITTEE WILL CONVENE TO DETERMINE WHETHER CREDIT WILL BE GRANTED. STUDENTS WHO LOSE CREDIT DUE TO ABSENCES MUST EITHER REPEAT THE COURSE DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR OR ATTEND SUMMER SCHOOL.**

Vacations

Vacation taken when Hill Top Prep is in session is discouraged. However, should it be necessary for you to schedule such a vacation, the Receptionist and mentor must be notified at least one (1) week prior as to the exact dates of the time away. Hill Top will not generally approve such a request unless a student's work is up to date. Arrangements for work to be completed during time away must be made no later than one (1) week prior to the scheduled vacation. Students will be expected to make up work missed while they were away within one (1) week upon return. Please remember that this time away from school will count toward the eight (8) day limit per semester.

Religious Holidays

Parents of students who will miss school due to religious observance must inform the Registrar in writing at least one (1) week prior to these holiday absences. This time away will not count toward the eight (8) day limit.

Tardiness

ANY STUDENT ARRIVING LATE TO SCHOOL TWO (2) TIMES DURING ANY MARKING PERIOD FOR ANY REASON OTHER THAN A MEDICAL APPOINTMENT OR BUS LATENESS MAY RECEIVE DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES.

COUNSELING

Perspectives Course

The Perspectives Course consists of Group Counseling sessions and Social Emotional Learning activities. Each student enrolled at Hill Top will participate in this course. Students will meet in a group setting twice a week and they will have a typical group counseling session followed by a structured session to work on social emotional development. The curriculum will focus on self-reflection, self-awareness, social interactions and the importance of contributing to your community by focusing on the thoughts and feelings of others. The activity portion of this will require writing prompts, reading, video/film watching and even some on and off campus trips. In order for the sessions to be effective, an understanding of confidentiality is critical. Students will be expected to follow guidelines on confidentiality and not share the information about other students outside of the Perspectives course. To the extent necessary to preserve student safety and prevent illegal conduct, Hill Top Counseling staff may be obliged to disclose information learned from students. Students are reminded that a breach of confidentiality will lead to disciplinary action. At each report period, students will receive an O, S, or U (Outstanding, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory) for the Perspectives course. This will be based on student's behavior, participation in structured activities and attendance during in person and virtual sessions.

One-On-One Counseling

Students may be scheduled on a weekly basis or as needed to meet with their counselor one-on-one. Counselors will provide a safe environment for students to talk about social, emotional or academic concerns. Counselors must communicate home to families if a student is at risk of hurting themselves or hurting someone else.

Communication

A student's Counselor will communicate with the teachers, families and wrap-around services to provide consistency for a student's social, emotional and academic development. A release form must be completed by a parent/guardian in order for the Counselors to communicate with the student's wrap-around services.

Student Mentor Program

Upper School students will have the opportunity to be a Mentor to younger students. They will work closely with their Counselor to provide support and guidance to younger students. This will allow them to build leadership skills by being active listeners, positive role models and demonstrating empathy.

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

The happiness and wellbeing of our school community depend upon our positive interactions with one another. We need to respect each other's differences, strengths and weaknesses and remember that we are all part of one school. Hill Top students will find that the faculty, staff and administrators treat them with the utmost respect. We expect that this respect will be mutual. We also expect that all students will be respectful to one another as we are a very small school with a family-like atmosphere. This fact allows for a wonderfully supportive environment, a free-flowing exchange of ideas and opinions and an opportunity for everyone to succeed.

Awards System

Hill Top encourages its students to perform to the best of their ability, act as responsible members of the School community and enhance their own personal growth both in and out of school. To reward students who put the time and effort into achieving these goals, Hill Top offers an Award System. Through this system, students achieve varying degrees of independence as well as privileges based on their performance in the classroom, their behavior at school and their participation in positive extracurricular programs either in or out of school.

If a student has achieved a B (3.0) average with no grade lower than a B-, no grades of Unsatisfactory (U), and has accumulated no more than one disciplinary referrals in a review period, he/she is eligible for the **GOLD AWARD**. Earning a Gold Award makes student eligible for privileges.

Students who earn Gold Awards for 6 out of 7 review periods throughout the school year and have met attendance requirements will be awarded the **PLATINUM AWARD**. This award is made at the end of the year.

Discipline System

Hill Top Prep maintains a commitment to provide a very supportive and caring environment. Any **behavior that interferes with teaching and learning places a strain on our community. These behaviors may result in disciplinary action.** The Assistant Head of Student Life handles all disciplinary issues on an individual basis. Disciplinary consequences are based upon predetermined levels, but may be modified according to circumstance, degree of seriousness and the well being of the student or school community. The Assistant Head of Student Life, in consultation with the faculty, counseling staff, the Disciplinary Committee and the Headmaster, is responsible for the assignment, coordination and supervision of disciplinary consequences. Disciplinary issues that are deemed by the Assistant Head of Student Life to be serious in nature may be immediately referred for review to the Disciplinary Committee, which is comprised of the Assistant Head of Student Life, the Assistant Head of Program and the Director of Counseling Services.

The disciplinary system is a tool that is used to discourage, monitor, and provide consequences for inappropriate behavior in school and at School events. Under this system any faculty or staff member may issue a disciplinary referral (write-up) as set out in the disciplinary policy.

Minor infractions of the disciplinary policy that occur in the classroom will result in the following consequences:

- 1) **Verbal Warning** - no disciplinary referral will be issued, but if the behavior continues consequences will follow.
- 2) **Teacher-Supervised Detention** - the student receives a disciplinary referral and serves a detention either during lunch or activity period.
- 3) **Referral** - the student is referred to the Head of Student Life for more significant consequences.

Major infractions of the disciplinary policy regardless of where they occur on campus will result in a referral to the Assistant Head of Student Life's office and appropriate consequences will be determined by the Assistant Head of Student Life and the Disciplinary Committee.

When very serious infractions or repeated violations of Hill Top's Disciplinary Code occur, the Disciplinary Committee will meet to discuss the issue and appropriate consequences, which could include suspension, expulsion and/or probationary status. The student(s), along with their parent(s) or legal guardian(s), are invited to meet with the Disciplinary Committee **after which** a recommendation is made to the Headmaster who will then make the final decision. In such cases, the student(s) are suspended out of school until the Headmaster's final decision has been made.

If a student is unable to remain in class due to his/her behavior, the student will be temporarily removed until the Assistant Head of Student Life feels that the student is able to return to class. If the student is unable to return to class that day, a parent or legal guardian will be asked to pick up his/her child. A disciplinary referral will be recorded for the inappropriate behavior and further consequences may be issued.

- I. **Behavioral Expectations: Proper student behavior (by way of example, without limitation)**
 1. **Respect other people**
 - a. Do not tease, make fun of or embarrass others.
 - b. Do not call others offensive names or use offensive language.
 - c. Always extend courtesy and cooperation to members of the Hill Top community and all guests.
 - d. Do not, under any circumstances, hit or touch anyone inappropriately or in any way that the individual does not want to be touched.
 - e. "Public displays of affection," which cause others to feel uncomfortable, are not permitted.
 2. **Respect property**
 - a. Do not take, deface or damage others' property.
 - b. Do not litter; clean up after yourself and help others clean up.
 - c. Do not alter the state or contents of any classroom (i.e. computer, etc).

3. Other school rules:

- a. Cell phones may be necessary for safety and communication purposes; however, unapproved use during school hours is prohibited. Students using their phones for academic purposes must have the permission of their teacher prior to accessing the phone. Students who need to make a phone call must see the Receptionist. The first offense of unapproved use of a cell phone will result in confiscation for the day. The second offense will require the student to turn in his/her cell phone to the Assistant Head of Student Life at the beginning of each day for one (1) week. The third and subsequent offenses will require a parent/legal guardian to pick up the cell phone and attend a meeting to discuss further action.
- b. Food and drink (with the exception of water) is prohibited in the classroom.
- c. Due to health concerns, highly caffeinated energy drinks are not permitted on campus.
- d. Students are permitted in designated areas only and must be supervised at all times.
- e. All students are expected to attend school daily and report to class on time (see Attendance Policy).
- f. Hill Top is a drug-free and tobacco-free campus. The use and/or possession of drugs, vaping paraphernalia or tobacco on campus, in school or private vehicles or at any School related activity is strictly prohibited.
- g. Skateboards, in-line skates, and roller-skates are prohibited.
- h. Due to the distraction to learning, game systems are prohibited during school hours. Although game systems may be helpful during long bus rides, they **MUST BE OFF** and out of sight during school hours. The first offense will result in confiscation for the day. The second offense will require the student to turn in his/her system to the Assistant Head of Student Life at the beginning of each day for one (1) week. The third and subsequent offenses will require a parent/legal guardian to pick up the system along with a meeting to discuss further action.
- i. Loaning or borrowing money to/from another student is prohibited. Students are asked to see the Business Manager or Assistant Head should money be needed for lunch or any other reason.
- j. Abuse of any privilege by any student(s) may result in the termination of that privilege for that student, groups of students, or the entire student body.

NOTE: Hill Top is not responsible for personal equipment (i.e. iPods, iPads, AirPods, game systems, etc).

Expensive equipment or other belongings are brought to the School premises or School related events at the student's risk.

4. Serious Infractions:

- a. Smoking or vaping
- b. Fighting or other violent acts
- c. Threats, intimidation or harassment
- d. Consistent insubordination
- e. Destruction of property
- f. Theft
- g. Bringing a weapon to school, or use of any object as a weapon
- h. Forgery, plagiarism, falsification, cheating or other misrepresentation
- i. Possession or use of any prohibited and/or controlled substances
- j. Vandalism

5. Plagiarism/Cheating

Academic dishonesty and plagiarism include, but are not limited to, the misuse of electronic information such as software plagiarism, copying another student's work either with or without his/her knowledge, allowing someone to copy your work, invasion of privacy or violation of copyright laws. In some cases, plagiarism can be as simple as the quotation of a sentence or two without quotation marks or proper identification of the true author. In more serious cases, a significant fraction of the work was created by someone other than the student claiming the work as his or her own. The consequences for plagiarism/cheating on major projects and tests are as follows:

- a) **First Offense of Plagiarism** - The student will be given an opportunity to redo the long-term project or paper for 50% credit. However, should the student choose not to redo the work, he or she will not receive a grade above a 59% for the marking period. Disciplinary, the student will serve the equivalent of one week's detention.
- b) **Additional Plagiarism Offenses** - The student will be placed on a Disciplinary Contract. The student will receive a zero for the work and will not have the opportunity to resubmit it. He or she will not receive a grade above a 59% for the marking period. The Disciplinary and Academic Committees will meet with the student and parents to discuss the violation to determine consequences, ranging from after school detention to out of school suspension and possible expulsion.
- c) **First Offense Cheating** - The student will be required to retake the test or quiz or redo the assignment, but will only receive 50% credit. Appropriate Disciplinary consequences will be implemented according to the standard Disciplinary policy.
- d) **Additional Cheating Offenses** - The student will be placed on a Disciplinary Contract, which will remain in effect throughout the student's tenure at the school. The student will receive a zero on the test, quiz or assignment. Violation of this contract will result in a meeting of the Academic and Disciplinary Committees to determine the consequences, which may include expulsion.

6. Dress Code

All students are expected to be neatly and appropriately dressed during the school day and at all school events.

Boys should wear clean, collared shirts. Oxford, polo or golf-style shirts may be worn buttoned at least to the second button from the top. Shirts are not required to be tucked in; however, no undergarments are to be visible at any time. Pants may include khakis, corduroys, jeans or cargo pants that are clean and without holes or frays. In warmer months, shorts may be worn as long as they are clean and without holes or frays and are at least mid-thigh in length. Dress shoes or sneakers are acceptable footwear.

Girls may wear all of the above as well as dresses and skirts that are of appropriate length (no shorter than mid-thigh). Girls may also wear tops (not t-shirts) without collars as long as they cover the midriff, shoulders and chest. Leggings may be worn; however, a long blouse or sweater must be worn to reach the mid-thigh.

Students are encouraged to bring appropriate exercise clothes to change into on days they have PE. Sweatshirts with hoods up and hats may only be worn outside.

If a student is unsure about the appropriateness of an article of clothing, they are encouraged to bring the article to school for approval prior to wearing it. Students dressed inappropriately will receive a disciplinary referral and be asked to change. If the student does not have an appropriate change of clothes, he or she will be loaned an outfit. Repeated infractions will result in further disciplinary action. On special occasions, such as graduation, field trips and certain sports activities, alternative dress will be specified. This dress code will be strictly enforced.

II. Disciplinary Code - Levels of Disciplinary Actions

A. Levels of Disciplinary Action

1. Conference with teacher with possible consequences.
2. Detention by teacher (40 minute maximum).
3. After-School Detention (see below for clarification).
4. In-School Suspension

4. Out-of-School Suspension and mandatory conference with parent(s)/legal guardian(s).
5. Probationary Contract
6. Expulsion

Sit Downs

Sit-downs are the first line of intervention. These are problem-solving sessions facilitated by one or more members of the counseling team to address conflict between members of the Hill Top community. They may involve a pair of students, a group of students, and/or students and faculty. The Assistant Head of Student Life, the teacher, the counselor or the student may initiate a sit-down.

After-School Detentions

After-School Detentions will be held from 3:20 - 4:30 and will be scheduled with the Assistant Head of Student Life. Detentions will be served on the day of the infraction. If detentions are not served in the appropriate amount of time, further consequences may be assigned. It is the responsibility of both the student and their parent(s)/legal guardian(s) to arrange to be **picked up promptly at the end of the detention**. After-School Detention takes precedence over all other activities.

Suspensions

Suspensions occur when a student's behavior indicates that he/she must be removed from the School community. Suspensions may also include a clinical intervention. In-school suspensions are used when a student is not able to remain in class and when a student needs to be accessible to his/her group counselor and teachers, but separated from other students. Out-of-school suspensions are used for more serious behavioral infractions. Students are expected to complete work during out-of-school suspension. The student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will be required to come in with the student for a conference before the student is readmitted to school. During a suspension, zeros will be given for in-class grades such as Participation. Further, teachers are not obligated to allow a student to make up work missed due to a suspension. Any work missed due to a suspension is due the day the student returns to school or within the time specified by the teacher. Finally, the "school day" includes all activities, breaks and athletic events held that day. Students are not eligible to participate in any athletic even or School-sponsored activity on the same day in-school or out-of-school suspension is served.

Probationary Contract

A probationary contract may be required in response to serious academic or disciplinary concerns. Probationary contracts stipulate specific behavioral and/or academic requirements that the student must fulfill in order to remain enrolled at Hill Top. Students who are not able or are unwilling to abide by the stipulations set forth in the probationary contract may be asked to leave the school. All contracts will be reviewed regularly, but may remain in force for the duration of the student's Hill Top career. The student and his or her parent(s)/legal guardian(s) must sign and abide by the contract.

Expulsion

Expulsion is used in cases where an infraction is deemed very severe. The Disciplinary Committee makes recommendations regarding expulsions to the Headmaster with the final decision being made by the Headmaster exclusively. No tuition adjustment is made in cases of expulsion.

B. Consequences for Unexcused Tardiness and Absences

1. Tardiness to class
 - a. Students who are late to class must make up the time at the teacher's discretion or a disciplinary referral will be made.
 - b. Students who are chronically tardy will be referred to the Assistant Head of Student Life for further disciplinary action.
2. Cutting class/school
 - a. Any student who cuts class will receive a disciplinary referral. Repeated offenses in this area will result in referral to the Disciplinary Committee.
 - b. Any student who cuts a full day of school will receive a disciplinary referral and an automatic referral to the Disciplinary Committee.
 - c. Content for any missed class or classes will be made up for a maximum of 50% credit at a time to be determined by the teacher(s) and/or the Assistant Head of Student Life.
 - d. The student will receive zeros for in-class grades such as Participation.

III. Other Disciplinary Issues

It is important that we do whatever is necessary to protect the health, safety and well being of all members of the school community. Accordingly, the school reserves the right (and in some cases may be required) to contact law enforcement authorities.

A. Search

In our commitment to protect all members of our community, Hill Top Preparatory School reserves the right to search a student or any person at any time on the Hill Top campus, in a School vehicle, or on a School trip or activity. This right to search includes the person, possessions, property, book bags, and vehicles. Failure to comply will result in serious consequences, even expulsion. A student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will be notified by phone immediately if/when it becomes necessary to search a student and/or the student's possessions.

B. Threatening Behavior or Words

So that all members of Hill Top feel physically and emotionally safe, **all threats are taken seriously**. All forms of threat are prohibited. Threats "in jest" are inappropriate and will have disciplinary consequences. **A student who makes a serious and intentional threat will be immediately suspended and referred to law enforcement officials**. The student will be required to undergo a psychological evaluation. The courts will determine consequences for the student, but Hill Top reserves the right to take any disciplinary steps it deems appropriate.

C. Weapons

Weapons or the use of an object as a weapon is forbidden. Bringing, possessing, or using a firearm, knife or weapon of any sort on the Hill Top campus or during any school activity or trip may result in immediate expulsion. Law enforcement authorities will be summoned to address the problem if necessary or appropriate. If a student has knowledge of another student or person violating this rule and fails to inform school authorities in a timely manner, that student may also be expelled.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY

IN THE CASES OF DRUG AND/OR ALCOHOL POLICY INFRACTIONS HILL TOP WILL NOTIFY POLICE.

Being under the influence of any medication not specifically prescribed for the student or any controlled or other substance while at Hill Top is strictly prohibited. The use, trafficking, and/or possession of any controlled substance or paraphernalia (including, but not limited to, alcohol, illegal drugs, non-prescription and/or prescription drugs not prescribed for that student and any associated paraphernalia) on campus, in cars, in School vehicles or at any School-sponsored activity is strictly prohibited. An offense will result in the student being required to submit to an immediate drug test (see below). Additionally, the student will be referred to the Disciplinary Committee for consideration for expulsion or probation. Probation may include periodic random drug testing, drug treatment, random searches, community service, and/or other requirements deemed appropriate. Probationary status will be reviewed annually by the Disciplinary Committee. Depending on the circumstance, expulsion from Hill Top may occur.

Secondarily, there are students at Hill Top who are prescribed medication for a variety of reasons. It is important to note that any personal misuse or distribution of personal medication to another individual is treated as seriously as the situation described above.

Drug Testing

Hill Top Preparatory School may require a student to take a drug test at any time. The drug test must be performed immediately at the Disciplinary Committee's request at an approved facility at the family's expense. The parent(s)/legal guardian(s) must forward the results to the school as soon as they are made available. Any parental/legal guardian non-cooperation with this policy may result in grounds for immediate expulsion. Drug tests are mandated by the school only when a student's behavior or change in behavior creates a strong suspicion that the student's behavior has been altered through the use of illegal substances or medications not prescribed to that particular student. Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will be notified immediately by phone when any such suspicion exists.

DRIVING PERMISSION

The procedure for acquiring driving permission is as follows:

- 1) A written request from the student must be given to the Assistant Head for Student Life. It should be dated and include the student's and parent's(s')/legal guardian's(s') signature(s).
- 2) The request will be reviewed for approval by the Assistant Head of Student Life. The considerations include the student's responsibility, behavior, attitude, diligence in meeting academic obligations, respect for property and punctuality.
- 3) If driving permission is granted, the student will be given a Driver's Contract stating the rules. The student and parent/legal guardian must sign this sheet and return it to the Director of Transportation before the student may begin driving to school.
- 4) The student must park in designated areas only and obey all driving regulations while on campus.
- 5) Driving permission must be renewed each year.
- 6) Students may not travel to or from school, on either a one-time or regular basis, with another student or that student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s), without written permission from both sets of parents/legal guardians.
- 7) To maintain one's driving privilege, student drivers must sign in at the Front Office before the start of school each school day and must sign out at the same location at the end of the school day.

Driving to Hill Top is a privilege and may be suspended or revoked if it is abused. If a student's request to drive is not granted, the student may reapply for this privilege as determined by the Director of Transportation. On occasion, a student will be given driving permission on a probationary basis.

ENROLLMENT CONTRACTS

Hill Top's staff reviews each student's overall social, emotional and academic performance during that academic year, as well as the overall appropriateness of Hill Top's program for that student. A committee carries out further review of each student's status. These recommendations are forwarded to the Administrative Committee, which decides whether the Enrollment Contract is to be issued, held, or not renewed for the following year. Each contract that is issued with an Addendum will have specific requirements that the student must meet in order to return to Hill Top the following year. Parents/legal guardians of students for whom contracts have specific Addendums will be notified of the decision regarding re-enrollment at the end of the third or final marking period.

FEES

A fee schedule, which includes an application fee, new student fee, deposit and tuition payment information is provided with the Enrollment Contract and Financial Contract. In addition, Hill Top requires each student to have a small fund, which is kept in the business office. The amount will be \$25 cash in small bills. Students can access these funds for emergencies or in the case of a school trip where the students may need a small amount of spending money. Questions regarding fees should be directed to the Business Office. Hill Top Preparatory School reserves the right to change its prices and pricing policies without prior notice. See Financial Standing below.

FINANCIAL STANDING

Students, former students, and graduates are in good financial standing when their accounts with the business office are paid in full. Those individuals whose accounts are not paid in full will not receive transcripts, diplomas, or other forms of recognition, recommendation, or comment from this institution. Hill Top reserves the right to ask that a student not come to school until tuition has been paid, as stated in the enrollment contract. If the payments of a student's tuition, fees, or financial accounts are delinquent at the end of a semester, academic records and reports will not be released. A student may not attend classes the next marking period until the financial delinquency has been paid or satisfactory arrangements have been made in writing with the school's Business Office. If a student transfers to another school and accounts are delinquent, Hill Top Preparatory School will not release academic records to the receiving school until the accounts are paid. Additionally, the student will not receive any credit for courses taken at Hill Top. A student may graduate only after all financial obligations are satisfied.

FLEXIBLE INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS (FID) AND ONLINE LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

Each year, we are faced with circumstances that prevent us from travelling to Hill Top. Through the use of our student information system and one-to-one laptop program, we hope to provide a successful, educational experience for our students by utilizing a flexible instructional day (FID) or online learning.

Online learning will be employed when we cannot be on-campus for a prolonged period of time. During online learning Hill Top's behavior, dress, attendance, technology use and work policies apply. Students will attend online classes for synchronous instruction.

A flexible instruction day (FID) is what we employ when we have consecutive snow days, loss of power or other short-term event. The purpose of the FID would be to provide consistency in instruction. Hill Top will follow the plan outlined below on a FID.

When we have a closing:

By 8:00am, the Hill Top Administration will decide if the day is or is not a FID and the information will be communicated to all parents, students and faculty. If the day is designated a traditional closure, no additional instructional work is given to students as the day is not an instructional day. If the day is designated as a FID, follow the procedures below.

On a Flexible Instructional Day (FID):

By 10:00am, students should expect an email from their English, math, science and social studies teachers. Students may also receive assignments from the teacher of any class that would have met that day (i.e health, information skills, etc). Each email will contain information regarding an assignment that students must complete that day.

FID assignments will:

- be emailed for each course assigning FID work.
- indicate when the teacher will provide instructional support via email. This support will be offered for a minimum of one hour.
- be due by 10pm, unless otherwise specified by the teacher.
- indicate how the students should submit their work (collect a hard copy, submitted electronically, etc)

Points of note:

- Faculty will plan assignments that students can do with resources they would have access to from home.
- If we have consecutive FIDs, a new assignment would be expected for each day.
- To ensure student engagement and mastery, in the first class after a FID, faculty will review work assigned during the FID.
- If we have a FID where only a small number of students lose power, the affected student will need a note from their parent to be excused from the assignment being due. Once we return to school, these students should work with their teachers to catch up on missed material.
- If a student does not complete the FID assignment, the student will lose the point value or grade for the assignment. The loss of points could negatively affect a student's marking period grade. It would be in the best interest of the student to complete the assignment. Parents should contact their child's teacher if there are extenuating circumstances that prohibit their student from completing the assignment satisfactorily.
- If a teacher has a test scheduled for a day that becomes a traditional closure or a FID, the teacher will email the expectations for the student regarding that test. As a general rule, students should assume that the test would be given on the next regularly scheduled class for the course.

GUESTS AND VISITORS IN SCHOOL

Requests to have a guest must be directed to the Assistant Head at least one or more full school days prior to the requested visit. The School, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to reject a request or requests to have a guest. The Assistant Head will deliver the School's decision to approve or deny the request. The School requires that the parent/legal guardian of the host student and the parent/legal guardian of the guest sign permission forms. If visitation is approved, the guest will follow the host's schedule with the exception of Group and will be expected to participate in all scheduled activities. Hill Top students will be held responsible for the behavior of their guests. In addition, all visitors, including former students and parents, must sign in at the front office and display a guest-badge at all times.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

- Physical Examinations are required of new students, students entering 6th and 11th grade, and students who will participate in after school Sports and Outdoors Club.
- Dental examinations are required of new students and students entering 7th grade.
- Immunization requirements for **all students K-12:**

DTP- 4 doses
 Polio- 4 doses
 MMR - 2 doses
 Hepatitis B - 3 doses
 Varicella - 2 doses

7th grade dose of:

Tdap
 MCV

12th grade dose :

MCV

- Exemptions for immunizations can be medical, religious, or philosophical. An exemption form must be submitted to Hill Top.
- Documentation of the health requirements must be submitted in Magnus or by mail:

Physical Examination form
 Dental form
 Administration of Medication at School form (if applicable)

HILL TOP CUP

Growth at Hill Top Prep is measured not only academically, but socially as well. Hill Top students are strongly encouraged to become and remain active participants in the school community. Hill Top offers dozens of opportunities to get involved in the community including athletics, the arts, Fun Friday trips, skiing and camping excursions, clubs, dances and many more activities.

The Hill Top Cup is a yearlong challenge, which provides a little extra incentive for students to become socially engaged. Students are divided into teams, which compete to be the most actively involved group of students in the School. Each time a student participates successfully in a student life activity, they earn a point for their team. Teams also earn points through their combined efforts during several team challenges each year. The progress of each student and each team is tracked by the Head of Student Life. Each marking period, the team with the most points earns an off campus lunch trip. At the end of the year, the team with the most Hill Top Cup points overall, is presented with the coveted Hill Top Cup and enjoys a reward day off campus.

HORIZONS PROGRAM

The Horizons program is designed to offer students an additional year of support as they prepare to transition to their post-secondary career. Students will work closely with transition faculty to strengthen academic areas in need improvement, build executive function and self-advocacy skills, and explore interests through dual enrollment opportunities at local colleges.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES POLICY

Hill Top is committed to education in all aspects of human development relevant to adapting its student body and staff to the challenges and demands of society. Relevant to this commitment is the adoption of the following policy on infectious diseases, such as Hepatitis and HIV/AIDS, which shall apply to all employees and students of Hill Top Preparatory School.

Hill Top strives to support employees and students with infectious diseases. The School will make reasonable modifications in its practices and procedures in order to allow students or employees with an infectious disease to remain at the School and participate in School activities.

Universal precautions pertaining to blood and bodily fluids are to be used. These precautions include, but are not limited to, appropriately washing hands, using gloves when near or handling blood or bodily fluids, disposing of waste material appropriately and cleaning affected areas with bleach solution.

IDENTIFICATION CARDS

Identification cards will be issued to all Hill Top students to be used on various field trips and for admission purposes to some community functions.

ILLNESS

All students are expected to attend school unless they are ill. Should a student become ill in school, the parent/legal guardian will be notified and suitable arrangements will be made to have the student go home. In the event of serious illness or injury requiring emergency attention, every effort will be made to contact the parent/legal guardian. Should emergency room treatment be necessary, the student will be taken to the nearest hospital. While on campus, the nearest emergency room is Bryn Mawr Hospital

Homework will be given to a student with an illness if the student will be out of school for an **extended period of time** and the parent/legal guardian requests the work with sufficient notice for the teachers to prepare the assignments.

Any student who has been absent from school due to a serious illness or who has sustained an injury that has required medical treatment and/or hospitalization may not return to school nor participate in school athletics and/or extracurricular activities without written permission from the attending physician. This note should be given to the Receptionist with a copy to the Athletic Director and the Nurse. Any student who has been absent from school due to viral or bacterial infections (e.g. flu, respiratory infections, gastroenteritis, strep throat), fever (temperature over 100.6 degrees), etc., is asked not to return to school until well. Because we are concerned about spreading communicable diseases throughout the school, parents/legal guardians are asked not to send their child(ren) to school when the student is ill.

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEP)/PERSONAL EDUCATION PLANS (PEP)

The Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a school district document. IEPs are written for students whose tuition is being paid by his/her school district. Regardless, Hill Top feels that it is important for our staff to be part of this process. The meetings are to be held at Hill Top and arrangements must be made through the Assistant Head - Program. Typically, the student's counselor and mentor are present at the meeting in addition to the Assistant Head - Program. Prior to the IEP meeting, the Hill Top staff will gather grades, testing results, strengths, needs, goals, etc from the student's teachers and this information will be made part of the IEP at the meeting. Should this process lead to a Due Process Hearing, please contact the school so that Hill Top's guidelines for participation may be explained.

Hill Top Preparatory School creates a Personal Education Plan (PEP) for each student every year, reflecting the needs and accommodations at Hill Top. It does not project future needs in other environments. The student's teachers, mentor and counselor meet to discuss the student's areas of strength, areas of need and any accommodations. This form will be shared with parents/legal guardians and students at the spring conference. Further, the PEP is used during IEP meetings, to aid in testing and more.

LUNCHES

The school does not have a cafeteria and leaving campus during lunch periods is not permitted. Therefore, students should either bring lunch or purchase their lunch through Hill Top's hot lunch program. Students may purchase lunch online.

MEDICATIONS

If a student is prescribed medication to take while at school, an Administration of Medication at School form must be completed and signed by doctor and parent each school year. Students prescribed inhalers or EpiPens must complete an Administration of Medication form and submit an asthma or allergy action plan. Students may carry inhalers and EpiPens with a doctor's note indicating that they are trained in self administration.

If a student takes a medication at home before school, the school suggests that a dose be sent to the Nurse. This allows a student who may have missed the morning dose to receive that dose at school.

All medication, prescribed and over the counter (OTC) is kept in the Nurse's office during the school day. All prescription medication is to be sent to the Nurse in the original pharmacy labeled bottle, with the student's name, medication, dose and time of administration.

OTC medication must be in the original container and be accompanied by a note from the parent.

PLEASE INFORM THE SCHOOL NURSE OF ANY CHANGES IN YOUR CHILD'S MEDICATION. EVEN IF YOUR CHILD DOES NOT TAKE THE MEDICATION AT SCHOOL. CHANGES IN MEDICATION TAKEN AT HOME CAN HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE STUDENT AND THEIR SAFETY WHILE AT SCHOOL.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

Membership in the National Honor Society conveys recognition for the accomplishments of outstanding students. Chapters in more than 12,500 high schools across the nation strive to give practical meaning to the Society's goals. The objectives of the Hill Top Chapter of the National Honor Society are to create enthusiasm for learning, stimulate a desire to render service, promote leadership, and develop character in the students.

To be eligible for membership, the candidate must be a sophomore, junior, or senior who has been in attendance at Hill Top for at least one semester. Candidates must have a cumulative high school scholastic average of at least 3.3 in all academic subjects.

Induction into the Hill Top chapter of the National Honor Society is a privilege, not a right. No student is inducted simply on the basis of a high academic average. Rather, each student's grades are considered in conjunction with that student's service, leadership potential, and character (as demonstrated by activities and teacher evaluations). The selection of each member of the chapter shall be with the approval of the faculty. Once selected, every member has the responsibility to continue demonstrating these qualities and meeting the obligations associated with both the Hill Top chapter and the national organization.

PARENT/GUARDIAN AVAILABILITY

Regardless of the age of the student, parents/legal guardians must provide to the Receptionist notification of any moves, changes in phone numbers (including cell phones), vacations, business trips, etc. **Parents/legal guardians must provide a phone number where they can be reached at all times.** Should parents/legal guardians find it necessary to be away from home overnight, the Receptionist should be notified in advance and provided with the name of the adult who is responsible for the student in the parent's(s')/legal guardian's(s') absence, along with a contact phone number, address where the student will be staying and the duration of parent's(s')/legal guardian's(s') absence.

PARENT/GUARDIAN BEHAVIOR

A critical component for a student's progress at Hill Top Preparatory School is parental/legal guardian support of, and cooperation with, the school's programs and staff. Honest inquiry in the best interest of the student is encouraged. However, behavior that is disruptive, disrespectful, or detrimental to the School community or programs will not be tolerated. **In addition, sending or responding to any electronic communication (i.e. email, texts, phone calls) with your child during the school day is strongly discouraged. If contact needs to be made, parents/legal guardians should contact the school directly.**

In extreme cases, if in the Headmaster's judgment the behavior of a student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) interferes with or is not supportive of the School's mission, progress, or staff, that student may be permanently dismissed from school and/or the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) may be required to refrain from coming to campus. In addition, such behavior may lead to Enrollment Contracts for the upcoming school year being withheld or cancelled.

PERMISSION TO RECORD AND ACCEPTABLE USE

No one may use a recording device to record non-class or class activities while at school without permission from the School and all participating individuals. No student may record any class activity without permission from the teacher and all participating individuals. The student may only use the recordings to further his/her education. Such agreements will identify the class period(s) for which such recordings are permitted and will permit the teacher to require that certain class sessions not be recorded. Such recordings may not be shared, duplicated or provided to others in any way, nor may they be played for others to hear, other than, in the case of the teacher, for the students in the class. Any use, which in the sole and absolute discretion of the Headmaster, violates the letter or spirit of this policy may result in withdrawal of permission to record and may result in discipline up to and including termination or expulsion.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

All students are required to take physical education each year unless the student has a medical statement from a physician stating the reason for the student's inability to participate and the length of time for which such physical education restriction is to apply. If an extended incapacity occurs, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requires that an alternate activity related to physical education be provided if credit is to be given. Such credit is required for graduation. Students are expected to wear sneakers or appropriate footwear for physical education classes and whatever proper safety equipment is dictated by the activity. Therefore, no open toe shoes (i.e. flip flops, sliders, sandals, etc) are permitted. Students will not be permitted to participate in physical education class without proper footwear and will receive no credit for that day. Any questions concerning physical education should be directed to the Director of the Physical Education Department.

POST-SECONDARY TRANSITION

A successful Hill Top career culminates in students transitioning to a post-secondary option that best fits their talents and interests. Hill Top students have gone on to four-year and two-year colleges, technical and trade programs and employment. In order to help each student find the option that is best for them, individual meetings and group classes are offered beginning in 9th grade. Parents are also encouraged to be involved and communicate openly with the Director of Post-Secondary Transition.

Standardized Testing - Accommodations and Administration

The Director of Post-Secondary transition will make official accommodations requests for both ACT and College Board exams (SAT and Subject Tests). In order to do this, current psycho-educational testing must be on file at Hill Top and families must sign a release allowing the school to share documentation with testing agencies.

Hill Top is not a test center for either the ACT or the College Board, but can administer the tests to students who have school based accommodations. Staff will be available to proctor students any time a test is offered with the exception of the June ACT (administration calendars can be found at actstudent.org or collegeboard.org). Because testing is often individualized, and in recognition of the complexities of today's society, if a female student is the only person scheduled to test in a room, she will be paired with a female proctor.

College Applications

Students are expected to take responsibility for their college application process, but can depend on support from all faculty and staff at Hill Top. The goal is for students to take ownership of the process and have a number of options to choose from as they leave Hill Top.

A part of the application process, whether for college or a job, involves a letter of recommendation. Students must speak to teachers in person to request a recommendation. Requests must be made at least 10 school days prior to any deadline. Students must also sign a FERPA waiver, waiving their right to see the letter of recommendation. Students who fail to submit a signed waiver (through SCOIR, our application platform, and the Common Application) will not have recommendations submitted on their behalf.

Both students and the Director of Post Secondary Transition are asked in the application process to report on the student's disciplinary history, specifically out of school suspensions and expulsions occurring from 9th through 12th grade. Most colleges have stated that the purpose of this question is not to find a reason to deny admittance, but to understand how a student handles and takes responsibility for mistakes. Students are expected to be honest in their application and to use this question to demonstrate to admissions committees the lessons they have learned from their experiences. Those who have been suspended, either at Hill Top or at a previous school, should make an appointment with the Director of Post Secondary Transition to discuss how they can best answer these questions to show their personal growth. Hill Top staff will not answer this question on counselor or teacher recommendations. However, the Director of Post Secondary Transition will speak personally with any schools or employers who call to discuss a student's application. The purpose of any such conversation will be to advocate for the student in the review process.

Any senior who incurs a suspension after applications have been submitted will be expected to work with the Director of Post Secondary Transition in order to craft a letter to be submitted to all schools to which they have applied informing admissions committees of the change in status. Over the years, many Hill Top students have answered this question openly and honestly. None have been denied acceptance at the school of their choice.

RESIDENCE

Students in attendance at Hill Top are required to live at home or in a residence approved by Hill Top in consultation with the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

SCHOOL BAGS

School bags are required, should be an appropriate size and must remain with the student at all times. As a safety issue, school bags are not to be left in the Mansion's front hall, in hallways or in any way obstruct traffic flow.

SCHOOL DAY

The school day begins at 8:20 a.m. and ends at 3:20 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. On Wednesday, the school day ends at 2:40 p.m. As needed, a student may request, or be invited to attend, a tutorial/coaching period from 8:00 a.m. to 8:20 a.m. Students should not plan to arrive on campus earlier than 8:00 am. Additionally, students should not plan to stay at school later than 15 minutes beyond dismissal of school or an after-school activity. Beyond these times, a \$10 supervision fee for every fifteen minutes or portion thereof will be charged to the student's account.

SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS

School office hours are maintained on most days from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Parents should not assume that staff will be present beyond these hours.

SPIRIT DAYS

Each year, all Hill Top students take part in Spirit Days. Spirit Day programs are developed around the Spirit of the Hawk character education and recognition program and consist of activities, projects and experiences both on and off campus that reflect the four Spirit of the Hawk Pillars: Courage, Perseverance, Leadership and Service.

Spirit Days are anything but traditional, classroom-based education. They are opportunities for our students to participate and learn in ways that are not possible during a typical week of school. The activities and experiences are designed to address the social and developmental needs of Hill Top's students and as such, represent an integral component of the Hill Top curriculum. On Spirit Days, students will have opportunities to broaden their understanding of the world and themselves while developing and strengthening skills that will serve them in the classroom and beyond.

Attendance during Spirit Days is mandatory for all students, except seniors.

STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Student accident insurance is provided to all students. This insurance is secondary to your family's medical/accident policies and covers any injury that occurs at school, a sports activity or any school-sponsored event. Questions about student accident insurance should be directed to the Business Office. All parents must provide proof to the School that they have adequate health and accident insurance for the student as a condition for attending Hill Top.

TECHNOLOGY

Hill Top Preparatory School is lending faculty members and students laptop computers. Graphing calculators are lent to students enrolled in Algebra II, Pre-calculus and Calculus. This technology can be used on and off campus by faculty and students to enhance, enrich, and facilitate teaching, learning, administrative duties, and School communications. The use of this technology must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of the School. Irresponsible use of the School laptop may result in the loss of borrower privileges. The School reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to suspend or revoke access to School provided technology at any time for any reason. As members of the HTPS community and as holders of a school-issued laptop for the duration of the school year, we expect students to uphold the following standards of good and decent digital behavior.

Acceptable Use

Basic principles of human decency apply to us whether we are in front of a laptop, iPad, smartphone, behind the wheel of an automobile, or at the checkout line at the supermarket. The rules of civility that bind us together certainly extend into our digital lives. As members of the HTPS community and as holders of a school-issued laptop for the duration of the school year, we expect students to uphold the following standards of good and decent digital behavior.

- Use of technology should not be distracting to you or other students in the class.
- Technology difficulties may not be used as an excuse for failing to meet the expectations of the course.
- Read all school and course communications on a daily basis. For example: emails, Google Classroom, and course web site postings.
- Come to class with your laptop prepared: necessary files and software backed up and accessible, fully charged, and in its case. You must plan your day so that you can have adequate power for all academic requirements.
- Respect your technology. Remember, it is school property on loan to you. Keep it away from food and drink that may easily damage the computer, magnets, little children, and pets.
- Remember, everything you post online, whether it is social media or a forum, is permanent. You may delete a post, but that post still exists as a link elsewhere on the web, and you cannot change that. Think twice before you hit “send”.
- Be respectful of others and use appropriate language in written communication, especially email. It is extremely difficult to express inflection and tone of voice in email, so it is best used to communicate factual information and not to work out personal problems.
- Use the network, computer systems, and communication tools in constructive ways.
- Do not be disruptive to others or discriminatory in any way.
- Access only appropriate material(s). Do not transmit or attempt to access offensive or obscene material.
- Use legally obtained software only.
- Only use your own login and credentials, and not another’s. Do not misrepresent yourself online. Respect the privacy of other people’s files and email.
- Respect academic rules regarding proper documentation and potential plagiarism concerns. When in doubt, consult a teacher.
- Nothing is considered private in your email or on your computer. HTPS can and will search your computer if there is reason to believe that it contains something dangerous or illegal.
- Online entertainment activities such as video game playing and instant messaging compete with academic uses of network resources and are prohibited on school grounds without teacher permission.

Internet Safety

In addition to network filtering within the school campus, our cloud-based web filter and AI-based scanning of HTPS Google accounts provides additional levels of security while at school and anywhere outside the school campus. Laptops have installed the appropriate web filtering applications to ensure this ongoing filtering and monitoring. At school, Internet use is monitored via web-based filtering software which “blocks” access to restricted sites. In addition, HTPS reserves the right to install applications to monitor the actions of individual users in order to ensure compliance of its policies pertaining to acceptable computer use.

During remote learning, students may be recorded during live learning sessions or video conferencing such as Google Meet. The school is responsible to abide by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines to use any recordings for educational purposes within the school community.

- Be safe: Do not reveal personal information, such as your home address or phone number to anyone you do not personally know. Do not use your real last name, your social security number, or any other information that would allow a person to locate you.
- Never agree to meet a person you have only encountered on the Internet in a secluded place or private setting.
- Don't open emails, files, or click on web links in emails from people you don't know or you don't trust or seem unlikely to have been sent by anyone you know.
- Don't respond to email messages that are of a sexual nature, harassing, threatening, or make you feel uncomfortable. Immediately report these to a teacher or parent/guardian.
- Don't give out your password to anyone but your parents or guardian. Contact a school teacher/staff immediately with any safety concern for yourself or others.

Illegal Activities

Any illegal actions on the School's network may be reported to the authorities.

Examples include: posted drug or alcohol related activities; threatening the safety of another; vandalism; libel; gambling; promoting a pyramid scheme; distributing obscenities; receiving, transmitting, or possessing child pornography; infringing copyrights; making threats; installing or distributing unlicensed or illegal software. The copying or distribution of commercial software from HTPS-owned computers is against the law; anyone found doing so would be subject to the school's policies on theft. The school will not be responsible for any financial obligations resulting from school-provided laptops, technology or access to the Internet.

HTPS school-issued computers remain school property while on loan to students. HTPS maintains the right, at its sole discretion, to take back or to withhold the computer, and to access any data on the device without warning. HTPS also maintains the right to monitor all incoming and outgoing email and online activities. The Technology Director and other designated school administrators have the ability/authority to monitor all network-based school communications including, but not limited to, email messages, Internet access, social media posts, and file transfers/downloads.

Laptop Care and Maintenance Agreement

Each student is responsible for the wellness, safety, and security of his/her assigned laptop. When not in use, all computers **must** be kept protected at all times and stored in the student's approved backpack. This includes all periods of travel between classes and before and after school. If damage occurs, it is the student's responsibility to report the problem to the technology department immediately. If a student cannot provide a detailed description of the cause of the damage, the full cost of repair will be the responsibility of the student/parents and billed accordingly.

1. In case of warranty repair or damage the Technology Department will arrange for repair of the computer and a loaner computer will be assigned to the student upon receipt of the signed, detailed form from his/her parents and advisor. The student will retain the loaner for the duration of the repair period. A limited number of loaner laptops are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Loaners are subject to the same rules and regulations as individually assigned laptop computers. If it is determined at the school's sole discretion that the damage was the direct result of misuse by the student, the parents of that student will be notified and invoiced for the actual cost of the repair, or replacement (up to \$1,400). If the damage was verified to be the result of an accident, the parents will be responsible for the laptop insurance deductible of \$100.
2. In the event that a computer, adapter, or other related equipment is *damaged*, the student must notify the technology department or the Assistant Head - Student Life IMMEDIATELY. Although all HTPS-owned laptops are covered under the school's laptop insurance insurance plan, this warranty/insurance ONLY applies to damage that is considered "normal wear and tear". Laptop insurance does NOT cover broken parts when the damage is a result of negligence or abuse. In addition, they do not cover the cost of battery replacement due to improper charging methods used by the student.
3. In the event that a computer, adapter, or other related equipment is *lost or stolen*, the student must notify the technology department or the Assistant Head - Student Life IMMEDIATELY.

Although laptop insurance insurance does cover the cost of replacement due to direct theft, they do NOT provide coverage for laptops that are lost. Insurance considers loss to be the direct result of negligence and is therefore not covered under our policy. This includes loss inside the school, or outside the school. Laptops should never remain unattended in a classroom, or any other public space inside the school. This includes inside a backpack after school during athletic practices or events. All backpacks and laptops should be stored

inside a locked locker when not in use. If it is determined at the school's sole discretion that the loss of a laptop, power adapter or computer sleeve was the direct result of negligence by the student, the parents of that student will be notified and invoiced for the actual cost of the repair, or replacement (up to \$1400).

The loss of a power adapter is the responsibility of the parents and students. The school will charge the cost of a power adapter replacement to the students' parents.

Note that use of student laptops is NOT permitted for international travel, either personal or as part of a school-sponsored activity. The cost of repair due to damage, or loss, of a student laptop during or after such travel will be the sole responsibility of the student and parents.

Unacceptable Risk

If the School, in its sole judgment, determines that the computer or the software installed on it will be subject to unacceptable risk, the school reserves the right:

- (1) to deny out-of-school use to any student;
- (2) to place in-school use under strict control;
- (3) to exclude the student from using a school-supplied portable.

Responsibilities

The Computer Program allows the student exclusive use of the computer at school and at home during the standard school year. All portables obtained through the school are supplied with a required protective hard-shell cover for the computer. Students must keep their laptop in the hard-shell cover at all times, and always transport the laptop in this case inside an approved backpack. If the Undersigned and/or the Student decide to remove the hard-shell cover, the School's insurance will provide no coverage and 100% of the repair or replacement cost will be borne by the Undersigned.

The Student agrees to follow all aspects of the HTPS Technology Expectations and Use Agreement, as well as such additional rules and procedures for computer use that the school or individual teachers may implement during the school year. Failure to follow these policies may result in temporary or permanent suspension of laptop privileges.

The Undersigned agree to be responsible for a \$100.00 deductible per incident for theft or accidental damage, or the full cost of replacement or repair in the case of negligence. Any damage or loss believed to be the result of willful disregard for the assigned computer, or the computer of another person will be considered carefully by school administration and may result in a charge to the parents for the full amount of repair or replacement of the equipment.

Responsibility of the School

The School agrees to reserve a laptop computer, configured with system and application software, for use in support of each student's schoolwork during the school year. Student laptops are released during the first full week of classes and returned immediately following final exams.

The School will insure each student laptop against accidental damage or theft for the total value of the computer, less a \$100 laptop insurance supplemental insurance deductible. This coverage will be provided only if:

- 1) damage is reported to the School within a reasonable time after it occurs
- 2) theft is reported to the School and, in consultation with the School, to local police promptly
- 3) the cost of repair or replacement exceeds the \$100 deductible
- 4) the student satisfies the School that all precautions and requirements for safe use and storage were met and the loss or damage was not due to negligent disregard of such requirements by the student.

Otherwise, full responsibility for the cost of repairing or replacing the computer will fall to the parent/guardian/student.

General User Rules:

- Users should have NO EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY. School equipment is not for personal use. Hill Top reserves the right for authorized personnel to review all email and files for content and appropriate use. Users hereby waive any right to privacy for any such material.
- Each student is provided an individual @hilltopprep.org email address to be used for all School-related activities ONLY. This email is not to be used for personal electronic correspondences, online product registrations or any other uses outside of Hill Top Preparatory School related activities.
- Vandalism may result in cancellation of privileges. This includes any malicious attempt to harm equipment or software, destroy data of another user, and/or the Internet and other networks that are connected to the system.
- The Internet is to be used for scholarly research and as a means of obtaining needed academic information. Accessing pornographic, vulgar, violent, militant/extremist material or inappropriate content. is prohibited and may be grounds for discipline, termination or expulsion. When on the Internet, do not reveal any personal information about yourself or others, and do not attempt to purchase goods or services.
- Cell phones and other web-based devices are to be used only for communication with parents during non-school hours or for educational purposes with prior approval. Students may not access the School network nor access the Internet on any non-School issued device without written permission from a teacher or the Technology Director.
- Users should save all School-related files to the cloud services provided - Google Drive. This information will be available 24/7. Users may be asked to switch to another laptop because of maintenance or repair. Therefore, make sure all files are stored using a cloud service so they can be accessed from any School computer. User files are 100% the user's responsibility. The School will not provide assistance for retrieving files lost to improper back-up by the user.
- Users are never to access anyone else's account or allow anyone to use their account.
- Users should NOT attempt to install software or hardware, or change ANY system configuration, without prior consultation with the teacher and the Technology Director.
- Sound on a device must be turned off except when it is used as intended by the teacher as part of a class.
- The School is responsible for regular maintenance covered by the laptop warranty. Only Hill Top Technology Staff may conduct maintenance and repairs.
- Hill Top will provide policies that encourage the widest possible access to electronic information systems by students, faculty, and staff, while establishing reasonable controls for the lawful, efficient, and appropriate use and management of the system. Hill Top is not responsible, however, for claims and damages of any nature due to a student's use or inability to use the School network and web-based resources, including email.
- By signing the handbook acknowledgment form, users agree and understand that the laptop is an educational tool to be used to enhance the learning process in all subject areas, and that irresponsible use of the School laptop may result in the loss of borrower privileges.
- Hill Top Preparatory School has a zero tolerance policy for bullying and cyber-bullying. Any user who violates the bullying and cyber-bullying policy through the use of school-owned technology devices, whether at school or elsewhere, will face disciplinary consequences. Any student who experiences bullying or cyber-bullying or has information about a bullying or cyber-bullying incident should report the incident(s) to their Counselor or Mentor immediately. Any incident of bullying or cyber-bullying that violates the Pennsylvania Crimes Code will be reported to the police. Please refer to the attached Hill Top Preparatory School Bullying and Cyber-bullying Policy.

3D Printer Policy:

- Hill Top’s 3D printer is available to all students to make three-dimensional objects in plastic filament using a design that is uploaded from a digital computer file.
- Hill Top’s 3D printer is to be used for academic purposes only.
- Students will not be permitted to create material that is: prohibited by local, state or federal law; unsafe, harmful, dangerous or poses an immediate threat to the well-being of others; obscene or otherwise inappropriate for the education environment; or in violation of another’s intellectual property rights (not to be used to reproduce material that is subject to copyright, patent or trademark protection).
- The Technology Department reserves the right to refuse to print any 3D request.
- 3D printed objects must be picked up by the individual who printed them, otherwise they will become property of the Tech Lab or will be disposed of.
- Only designated faculty will have hands-on access to the 3D printer.

3D Printer Procedures:

- Design creation: The 3D printer can be used with basic knowledge of Tinkercad, Google Sketchup, and Makerbot. Creating a new design requires an advanced knowledge of 3D modeling software.
- The design file must be saved as an .STL file format.
- Submitting a design for printing: Students wanting to use the 3D printer shall email their .STL file to the Technology Teacher and the teacher will add the model to the printing queue.
- By signing the handbook acknowledgment form, students agree and understand that the 3D printer is an educational tool to be used to enhance the learning process in all subject areas, and that irresponsible use of the 3D printer may result in the loss of privileges or discipline.

TEXTBOOKS

Each year, students receive one set of textbooks for each class. In an effort to be more environmentally friendly, textbooks will not be looked at as consumable items. As a result, in certain subjects, we will collect the books at the end of each year and reuse them in the following year. The list below contains consumable items by subject area. Furthermore, students whose negligent care makes the textbook unusable in the future will be responsible for replacing the book. To assist in the preservation of the reusable textbooks, students are required to cover the textbook at the beginning of the academic year. In some cases, students will be provided electronic copies of texts and they are responsible for maintaining and appropriately using those texts.

Subject	Consumable
English	Vocabulary Workbooks Reading Comprehension Workbooks Study Skills workbook Grammar workbook
Other	Spanish I Spanish II

If a student needs additional books for medical reasons, a request should be made to the Assistant Head of Program in writing and an additional fee will be charged at that time. The book(s) will not be issued until the fee is received and/or until the book is made available. Additional books will not be issued for students who simply forget to bring materials home as this does not support the skills we are trying to instill with regard to organization.

TRANSPORTATION

The school district in which a student resides is responsible for transportation to and from school if Hill Top is within 10 miles of the district's boundaries by PA State guidelines. Parents/legal guardians should contact their school district transportation office to make arrangements for this. Each school district will be notified by Hill Top of the names of enrolled students from their districts.

Students coming by public transportation should leave home in time to arrive at their Hill Top pick up point in Bryn Mawr by **8:00 a.m.** There, they will be met by the School driver and transported to the campus. **No open food or drink is permitted on the School van.** Hill Top may not return to pick up students at the station if they are late. Students should make a point of carrying the School telephone number (610-527-3230) with them at all times in case of emergency. Students returning home by public transportation must board the first available shuttle. Students should not expect to be transported in staff-owned vehicles. Occasional van riders should not exceed two (2) trips per week.

Arrangements for one student to go home with another must be made in advance and a note must be given to the Director of Transportation **from each set of parents/legal guardians.** Phone calls giving permission may not be accepted and are not encouraged except in the case of emergency. Permission slips giving blanket permission for a student to go home with any other student anytime desired will not be accepted. Transportation questions should be directed to the Director of Transportation. All permissions must be in writing and signed by all parents/legal guardians involved.

While en-route to and from school, students are subject to all of the rules of the School. Any violations will be enforced accordingly, which may result in removal from the student's mode of transportation.

TRIPS

Notification and information about field trips will be sent home prior to each trip. Certain field trips are considered part of the academic curriculum and are, therefore, mandatory. However, other trips (skiing, camping, etc) are considered privileges and are only offered to students who are both academically and behaviorally sound. If a student is struggling behaviorally or academically, it may be determined that it is in the student's best interest to be in class and may not be permitted to participate in these opportunities. Furthermore, students must be present the day before and after the non-academic trip. **If a student is not in attendance the days prior to and following a non-academic trip the student may not be permitted to participate in this or future trips.** Additionally, if a student's behavior is inappropriate on a field trip, the student may be denied participation on future trips. A student's eligibility for the trip will be decided at the team meeting prior to the trip and students and parents/legal guardians will be notified if a student is found ineligible for a trip. Finally, if the cost of a field trip creates financial hardship for a student's family, please contact the Headmaster or the Business Manager.

WEATHER EMERGENCIES AND SNOW DAYS

- Decisions regarding school closures will be indicated on the School's voicemail, its automated message system and will also be available by radio on **KYW-1060 AM** and the local television affiliates of **ABC, CBS, NBC, and FOX.**
- The Hill Top School closing number is **Delaware County #443.**
- Should School have to be dismissed early for a weather emergency, the local television affiliates and automated announcement system will be employed.
- In the event of any confusion or questions, parents should telephone the School (610 527-3230) for information.
- For late or delayed openings, students should follow their school district guidelines as to delays in transportation.

Hill Top Preparatory School Bullying and Cyber-bullying Policy

Pennsylvania law defines bullying as:

“an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act, or series of acts directed at another student or students; which occurs in a school setting; that is severe, persistent or pervasive; and that has the effect of doing any of the following:

1. substantially interfering with a student’s education
2. creating a threatening environment
3. substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school

Hill Top Prep is committed to providing a safe and supportive academic and social environment, in which every student is free to express themselves as individuals, pursue their personal goals and achieve excellence both academically and socially. Therefore, Hill Top will not tolerate student behavior that seeks to undermine the self-esteem, confidence or sense of safety of another Hill Top student or group of students within the school setting. Such behaviors are considered “bullying” and may include verbal, written, physical or online interactions, comments or acts. The use of technology in the school setting or through the use of school issued equipment or accounts with the intention of doing harm to the self-esteem, confidence or sense of safety of other members of the Hill Top community will be considered bullying. All members of the community should familiarize themselves with the Acceptable Use Policy for Technology regarding devices, accounts and Internet access issued by Hill Top Preparatory School.

When a student is suspected, or accused of bullying, the Head of Student Life will investigate the matter to determine whether or not there is evidence that bullying has occurred. If, in the opinion of the Head of Student Life, there is a case for a bullying charge, the matter will be brought before the Disciplinary Committee to hear the arguments from both sides, make a final determination and when necessary, assign consequences. Students who feel that they have been bullied should speak immediately with the Head of Student Life or a trusted faculty member. The Head of Student Life will investigate any such report thoroughly and in a timely manner.

Consequences for bullying vary based on factors including the disciplinary standing of the student, the nature of the incident and the willingness of the student to cooperate and make amends for their behavior. Restricted social time, after school detentions, in and out of school suspensions as well as expulsion are all possible consequences for confirmed acts of bullying. Students who are dishonest, struggle to accept responsibility or who make false allegations against others are at greatest risk of dismissal from school.

While Hill Top takes any behavior that negatively impacts others very seriously, we recognize that the learning profiles of our students sometimes increase the potential for social miscues and errors in judgment. This recognition neither excuses behaviors that are harmful nor withholds consequences for those responsible. It does enable Hill Top, with parent/guardian cooperation, to use all circumstances, positive and negative, as learning experiences for our students. Communication and cooperation between the school, students and parents is essential and expected in all matters of student misconduct.

COMPLIANCE POLICIES

No Harassment Policy

The School is dedicated to fostering an environment that promotes kindness, acceptance, and embraces differences among individuals. Therefore, the School will not tolerate any type of harassment by a student, employee, or any third party (including vendors, contractors, donors, volunteers, parents, and visitors). Students should be aware that their off-campus behavior is also covered under this policy, regardless of when and where the conduct occurred or who was affected by the student's inappropriate behavior. Harassment is broadly defined to include unreasonable conduct or behavior that is personally offensive or threatening, impairs morale, or interferes with the educational environment of students and includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, comments, teasing, and other offensive conduct relating to race, color, age, religion, sex, national origin, handicap or disability. Harassment can take place between individuals of the same gender or different genders. Harassment also includes sexual harassment.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Demanding sexual favors
- Requests for pictures of a sexual nature. Sexual nature includes but is not limited to nude pictures or pictures showing one's genitalia or private body parts.
- Taking, sending, or posting images of a sexual nature without consent
- Spreading lies or information about another individual's sexual activity
- Coercing sexual activity by threat of punishment or offer of reward
- Forced sexual activity
- Obscene or sexually suggestive graffiti
- Displaying or sending pornographic pictures or objects
- Offensive touching, pinching, grabbing, kissing or hugging
- Restraining someone's movement in a sexual way
- Sexual or lewd jokes, remarks, leering, whistling, brushing against the body, or other suggestive or insulting gestures or comments about another's body
- Intimidating or suggestive remarks about an individual's gender, gender identity, or gender expression whether actual or implied.

Examples of other forms of harassment based on race, color, age, religion, sex, national origin, handicap or disability include, but are not limited to:

- Offensive, intimidating, or inappropriate comments, postings, or conduct relating to race, ethnicity, or color (using racial slurs, racial or ethnic jokes, comments, name calling based on race or ethnicity, etc.)
- Offensive, intimidating, or inappropriate comments, postings, or conduct teasing or joking about another person's disability, failure to speak English clearly, religious background, practices, clothing, or beliefs, or similar behaviors.

Harassment can occur through any type of communications method, including face-to-face communications, phone, text, email, postings on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat GroupMe, etc.), camera phones, or other forms of technology. The communications can be direct or indirect, such as through friends or others. Any such offensive conduct, whether on or off campus, on a school bus, or at a school-related event, can constitute harassment.

It is the responsibility of all members of the community to ensure that their words, actions, and interactions with others always reflect the intent to promote respect and trust. Attempts to justify behavior as a "prank" or "joke" do not change its harassing nature if the object of the joke or prank is not a willing participant. Whatever the basis for the harassment, it is prohibited.

In addition, no faculty member, coach, or other employee is authorized to engage in any of the conduct prohibited in this policy, to engage in overly-friendly personal interactions with you, text or email with you about non-school related matters, enter into a sexual or romantic relationship with you, or ask you to meet with them off campus or in unsupervised areas of campus. Faculty members, coaches, and other employees are also not allowed to make any academic or disciplinary decision based in any way on a student's submission to or rejection of sexual or

romantic conduct or advances. No faculty member, coach, or other employee has the authority to suggest to any student that the student's continued attendance or future advancement will be affected in any way because the student enters into or refuses to enter into a form of sexual or other personal relationship with the faculty member or other employee.

All concerns relating to harassment (or if bullying is on the basis of one of the grounds set forth in this policy) should be reported immediately to the Head of School. We also expect that anyone, whether student, faculty, staff or family member who witnesses, or has knowledge of an incident of harassment, will report the incident to the appropriate individual identified above.

When the School administration becomes aware of harassment, the situation will be promptly investigated as confidentially as reasonably possible. Any student found to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal from school for serious violations, even in the case of a single expression, act, or gesture. Conduct need not meet the legal definition of harassment to violate the School's expectations for appropriate behavior and be actionable. No adverse action will be taken against any person who makes a good faith report of harassment. Retaliation in any form against anyone for making a complaint under this policy or for participating in an investigation is strictly prohibited. Any retaliation should also be reported pursuant to this policy and is itself a cause for disciplinary action.

Sexual Misconduct

We are committed to creating a learning environment characterized by safety, trust, and respect for all. Sexual misconduct whether between students or adults and students is contrary to the standards and ideals of our community and will not be tolerated. Sexual misconduct includes any of the following types of activities:

- Any sexual activity between students and adults;
- Any sexual activity between age appropriate students for which clear and voluntary consent has not been given in advance or in which consent has been exceeded;
- Any sexual activity with someone who is incapable of giving valid consent because, for example, that person is under the age of consent, sleeping, or otherwise incapacitated or impaired;
- Any act of sexual harassment, intimate partner violence, or stalking;
- Any digital media stalking and/or the nonconsensual recording of sexual behavior and the nonconsensual sharing of any recording; or
- Non-consensual sexual advances and propositions, or other undesirable verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. (See the School's Harassment/Bullying policy for additional information on sexual harassment).

Consent is defined as an affirmative, unambiguous, informed, and voluntary agreement to engage in specific sexual activity. Consent can be revoked at any time. However, sexual conduct between or among students that is unwanted, offensive, or makes a student uncomfortable, whether it occurs on or off campus, and affects the student's ability to be comfortable in the school environment is a violation of our School values.

All concerns relating to sexual misconduct should be reported immediately to the Head of School. We also expect that anyone, whether student, faculty, staff or family member who witnesses, or has knowledge of an incident of harassment, will report the incident to the appropriate individual identified above.

Reports of sexual misconduct or sexual assault are taken seriously; the safety and well-being of our students is our first priority. Parents and students who become aware of any form of sexual misconduct, whether on or off campus, should also immediately report the information to the appropriate Division Head or the Head of School. In accordance with Pennsylvania state law, the School reports suspected instances of sexual misconduct to ChildLine and/or local law enforcement.

Upon a report of student-to-student sexual misconduct, including harassment, the School will provide interim support and reasonable protective measures to support the complainant and/or the accused party and the safety of the community. Until all procedures have been completed, the complainant and the accused must avoid all unnecessary contact. If the School determines at any stage that a student poses a threat of harm or disruption to the school community, the School may take immediate action, including removing the student from School, restricting the student's movement on campus, and so on.

As stated elsewhere, the School expects that students will treat all persons with dignity both at School and beyond. The School reserves the right to take action if it learns that a student's actions violate the School's rules and expectations, regardless of when and where the conduct occurred or who was affected by the student's inappropriate behavior.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The School does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, participation in, or employment in its services, programs and activities, on the basis of race, color, age, national origin, sex, religion, or disability/handicap. The School further does not discriminate on the basis of a person's citizenship status or genetic information.

Discrimination occurs when the School's actions, procedures, policies or employees treat an individual adversely in an educational context solely on the basis of the individual's race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability or handicap.

To file a complaint alleging discrimination by the School on the basis of race, color, age, religion, sex, national origin, handicap or disability, please contact: Peter Cunningham, Business Manager, Hill Top Preparatory School, 737 South Ithan Avenue, Rosemont, PA 19010, 484-222-2813, or email him at pcunningham@hilltopprep.org.

Investigation and Anti-Retaliation

When the School administration becomes aware of harassment or discrimination, the situation will be promptly investigated. Any student found to have violated the School policies prohibiting harassment or discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal from school for serious violations, even in the case of a single expression, act, or gesture. Conduct need not meet the legal definition of harassment or discrimination to violate the School's expectations for appropriate behavior and be actionable. No adverse action will be taken against any person who makes a good faith report of harassment or discrimination. Retaliation in any form against anyone for making a complaint under the School's policies or for participating in an investigation is strictly prohibited. Any retaliation should also be reported pursuant to this policy and is itself a cause for disciplinary action.

Services for Students with Disabilities

We understand that there may be new circumstances that arise, or accommodations that are not already in place, which may cause a parent to request that the School provide an adjustment or accommodation for a student's medical needs or physical, mental, or learning disability. As the range of requests has grown over the years, the School believes that it is appropriate at this time to outline the School's policy and general guidelines for addressing such requests.

General Policy: In general, it is our School's policy to provide accommodations or adjustments for a student's minor needs in circumstances in which the administration determines, in its sole discretion, that doing so is within the reasonable ability of the School and/or its staff and will not result in a significant disruption to the teacher's ability to instruct other students, to classroom or school order and discipline, will not result in a threat of harm to the safety of other students or employees, will not require a fundamental change to our educational environment or mission, and will not impose responsibilities on school employees for which they are not trained or could not reasonably become trained. We also ask parents to realize that, given the size of our school and our available resources, we may not be able to provide all requested accommodations. To the extent we agree to provide accommodations, we may require a sharing of responsibility for the accommodation.

Interactive Process and Accommodation Plan: Once a request for accommodation is received, the School will enter into the interactive process with the parent (and possibly student) to discuss the need and information that the School will need (discussed below). Once the documentation is provided, the appropriate personnel at the School will assess the accommodation requests and determine what accommodations can/should be provided at school, at home, and through third-party providers. After discussing these issues with the parent and coming to an agreement on the terms, the School will set forth the agreement in an Accommodation Plan, which will be signed by the School and the parent and will be distributed to those persons needing to implement the accommodations.

Release for Communications with Physician: Sometimes, the documentation received from the physician may raise questions or be unclear as to the recommendations. In that case, the School will request that the parent(s) sign a Release of Information form, permitting the School to contact the medical professional, when necessary. In addition, if there is any cost associated with the physician's cooperation (i.e., to answer a set of questions submitted, etc.), the parent must agree to bear the cost of such process.

Assessment of Request: Once the parent's request and medical documentation has been received by the School, appropriate persons within the administration will meet with the parents to clarify information and to discuss whether the School will be able to implement the accommodation requested. In some cases, the parent may be asked to provide (at the parent's cost) any special or personal equipment needed, training for the school's staff, or other associated matters. In addition, the School may advise the parent that the School will allow a particular accommodation, but the full responsibility for doing so will rest with the parent. For example, if the student needs medical testing or have certain types of medicines administered during the day that the School believes are beyond the scope of the School's responsibility, the School may allow the parent to make arrangements to visit the campus for the purpose of testing and administering.

Limitations on Requests: Please understand that the School is not a medical facility and does not have the personnel, training, or equipment to handle certain types of medical procedures best left to the student, parent, or physician. Examples of accommodations made for students include appropriate classroom locations, extended time on tests, use of computers, and/or dispensing with medication through the Clinic.

Concerns or Complaints. If a parent believes that the accommodation request has not been handled properly or that the Accommodation Plan has not been implemented properly, the parent should contact the Head of School.