



Herbert Clark Hoover Elementary School

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Dennet J. Sidell Ed.D., Principal

Welcome to the Hoover! I wanted to give you some information about what makes the Hoover a great place to come to school. We have a wonderful faculty and staff that work very well with our parents as partners on behalf of the Hoover children. We are very student focused and work hard to give each child a positive and challenging experience.

Hoover PRIDE

Hoover PRIDE is an acronym for Personal responsibility, Respect, Imagination, Dependable, and Excellence. Over the last couple of years the faculty, staff, and parents have been talking to students about Hoover PRIDE and what it means, what it looks like, and how it will make the Hoover a better place to work and learn.

Principal

Hello, I am Dr. Sidell and I have the privilege to be the Principal of the Herbert Clark Hoover Elementary School. I am in my fourth year as Principal and am looking forward to you being part of our community this coming year. Before coming to the Hoover I was a teacher in grades 5, 4, and 2 for almost twenty years. I taught in Lynn, MA.; Salisbury, MA.; Tokyo, Japan; North Andover, MA.; Dakar, Africa; and Newton, MA. I hold degrees or certificates in Music Education 5-12, Elementary Education 1-6, a Masters in Moderate Special Needs Pre-K-8 and a Doctorate in Curriculum and Systemic Change. I thoroughly enjoy working with children, parents, and teachers and look forward to the time each week that I get to spend in the classrooms.

Administration Assistance and School Receptionist

Mrs. Fabiano will be the first friendly face that you see when you enter the school or the voice that you hear if you call the school. Our office is on the left when you use the main entrance and Mrs. Fabiano will probably be able to answer all of your questions. She has been at the Hoover for 23 years.

Nurse

Mrs. Aiello is our school nurse and her office is to the left of Mrs. Fabiano's desk. Mrs. Aiello will be able to take care of you if you need a Band-Aid, lose a tooth, need some medication, or are just not feeling well. Mrs. Aiello also checks all food for classroom parties – all of our classrooms are peanut-free and we have a peanut-free table at lunch. If a child needs to sit at the peanut-free table for lunch they can invite a friend each day as long as the friend is eating a peanut-free lunch.

Custodian

Mr. Marith is our school custodian and you will see him around the school cleaning or fixing different items. You will also probably see him during your lunch period. Mr. Marith has been keeping the Hoover running smoothly for many years.

Teachers

We have a dedicated and hard-working faculty. Each grade level works closely together to ensure that student experiences will be similar. All classroom teams work endless hours to create a warm and inviting atmosphere where students are able to ask questions, take risks, and learn academic, social, and behavioral skills and strategies. Each classroom will also have special education personnel work with students who need support in various areas (curriculum, social, behavioral, speech and language, occupational therapy, and physical therapy).

Co-Taught Model

The Hoover uses a co-taught model to assist in meeting the needs of all learners. In kindergarten each classroom already has a teacher and a paraprofessional, but in grades 1-5 there will be two general education teachers as well as a special education teacher at each level. In most cases the special education teacher will be working in one classroom, except in grade 5 where the special education teacher will be working with both general education teachers. Clustering students by strengths and needs allows the teacher to differentiate instruction as well as focus activities to groups of students. Also the added professional personnel will allow for more small group—explicit teaching throughout the week. Both classrooms will have students performing above grade level, at grade level, and below grade level. The class with two full-time teachers will be more diverse and complex in its student population, which will allow the other classroom with one teacher to focus on his or her groups of students.

PTO

We have a wonderful and dedicated Parent Teacher Organization. They meet monthly in the evenings and work on building a warm and inviting culture, run several committees that enhance different aspects of the Hoover, provide enrichment programs, run evening school events, and fundraise. We hope that you are able to attend our meetings and will use your talent, energy, and time to assist us in our yearly activities. Please go to our Hoover website to view all of the committees and events that the PTO runs each year.

Events Sponsored by the PTO

Hoover Hoe Down (September) – a cookout for the Hoover community with games for the children.

Golf Outing and Dinner/Dance (October) – our big fundraiser for the year at Mount Hood Golf Club. We have sold out the last two years, so make sure you get your reservations in early.

Frightful Flicks (October) – a time for Hoover children to come together and enjoy a movie.

Holiday Gift Store (December) – a wonderful event where the PTO buys and wraps presents that the students can purchase for their family members.

Valentine's Day Cakewalk (February) – students play a fun musical game and every one leaves with a gift.

Lucky Irish Bingo (March) – a joyous time for students to come and play bingo to earn prizes

Ice Cream Social (June) – families bring their own dinners to eat while socializing with other Hoover families and then get ice cream for dessert.

Parents and Community Members

We are very fortunate to have such a wonderful and involved parent population. There are many opportunities for you to volunteer in your child's classroom as well as opportunities to work in other classrooms. Parents donate their time and talents in numerous ways, such as room parents, lunch, library, office, guided reading, Read Naturally program, classroom activities or celebrations, garden, multicultural festival, PTO-sponsored events, traffic, and Regarding Art program. We are also investigating using parent or community volunteers for math work and during writing periods as well.

Hoover Website, E-Notices and Connect-Ed

Our talented Communications Team (parent volunteers) has created a user-friendly website that is updated on a regular basis. E-Notices go out each Monday by e-mail and list the weekly events as well as important announcements. Connect-Ed is a phone service used by the Principal for important announcements and by the Superintendent (Mr. Casey) for school delays or cancellations. These are the three main ways that the Hoover communicates with parents. We are working hard to “Go Green” and send home as few paper announcements as possible.

Enrichment Programs

The PTO sponsors many enrichment programs that enhance the learning experiences of our students. Programs can be whole school or tailored to a certain grade level to match their curriculum. Examples include Bully No More, Ball in the House, Zoo New England Animal Habitats, Museum of Science Traveling Programs, Bugworks, Historical Perspectives Abigail Adams, and much more.

We also have programs running on each early release day throughout the year (on these days when school dismissal is at 12:30 p.m.). There are seven of these days and they are used for Teacher/Parent conferences and for building-based professional development. Parents can pay \$20 for their first child and \$15 dollars for each additional child for each program. Pick-up would be at 2:20 p.m. A few of the programs that we ran last year included Rock Climbing, David Hall the Magician, Curious Creatures, Ed the Wizard, and Mad Science.

SmartBoards

Nine of our twelve classrooms have an interactive SmartBoard hard-wired in the classroom. The PTO bought three SmartBoards last year and the students and faculty raised \$15,000 to put toward technology. The SmartBoards are great tools for teaching new skills, strategies, and information, but the real strength of the SmartBoard is when students K-5 are able to interact with it. Students are able to “see it,” “hear it” and “touch it.” It is truly a multi-modal approach to learning and it is exciting to see how quickly both teachers and students are learning the many benefits that a SmartBoard brings to the classroom. We will continue to work toward fitting our remaining classrooms with SmartBoards by the end of this school year.

Garden

This spring we started a Hoover Garden. It is thriving its first summer and I cannot wait until the fall for the students to see the results of their labor. Kindergarten planted a salad garden and a salsa garden. First grade planted pumpkins, zucchini, and squash. Second grade planted a vegetable soup garden. Third grade planted flowers. Grade four planted corn, tomatoes, pumpkins, carrots, and peppers. The garden is a wonderful way for students to have hands-on experience in the disciplines of science, nutrition, and health and wellness, while also learning civic responsibility. We have donated over a hundred vegetables to the Melrose Food Pantry and we will be making salsa and red sauce from the tomatoes for the students to have in the lunch room during the school year.

Having Fun!

It is also very important that the children have fun! We have several events throughout the year that allow students to show their various talents while having fun. Each year we have a Field Day which we call Spirit Day. Students K-5 take part in team and individual events such as: ring toss, volleyball, relay races, cup stacking, basketball shoot, cart races, and face painting. In the afternoon we host the annual Grade 5 versus the Hoover Faculty kickball game. The whole school comes out to watch this exciting and enjoyable match.

During the year we also have theme days, when the whole school takes part in wearing a particular item or color. Examples of past theme days are hat day, pajama day, Red Sox day, clash day, Patriots day, and Hoover colors day (red and white).

Grades 3-5 can take part in the annual Hoover Variety Show. The dress rehearsal is performed for the entire student body and the show is performed for parents and extended family members. In past acts children have sung, danced, told jokes, performed magic acts, played the piano or violin, been an MC, or played in a band.

Environmental Camp

All fifth graders who wish to attend a week long science camp are welcome. Families have the opportunity to pay for the camp experience independently or can assist with fundraising activities. The camp is chaperoned by Hoover faculty and staff and it is a wonderful experience for children.

Giving Back to the Community

The Hoover is very conscious of being part of a neighborhood as well as being a part of the global community. We have participated in the Read to Feed program, collected food for the local food pantry, sponsored blood drives, collected winter coats, made Thanksgiving and holiday baskets, and donated food from our school garden to families in need. We are always looking for ways to reach out and assist individuals in our neighborhood as well as someone on the other side of the world.

I can't wait to meet you and have you as part of our Hoover family. Please call me at (781) 979-2180 if you have any questions.

Dr. Sidell