

Hajjar Elementary School



Hajjar Hawks

We are Hajjar ... Learning Today for a Better Tomorrow

Student & Family Handbook 2021-2022

September 2021

Dear Hajjar Families,

On behalf of the staff at the Hajjar School, I am happy to welcome you to another school year. We are looking forward to a productive partnership with you to ensure our children can achieve their highest potential. We know that in order for children to be successful here at school that they need support from all of us. We recognize that a strong partnership with you will make a difference in your child's education. We welcome your participation in our school community, and encourage you to become involved in the School Council or the Hajjar Parent Association (HPA), please see page 18 of this handbook for more information. Both groups support our ongoing efforts to provide for our students in many ways throughout the year.

We are continuing to promote a school community based on respect, responsibility, and cooperation from all. We strive to provide a quality education in a safe and nurturing environment while considering the individual needs of each student. Along with the rest of the district, we continue to work to improve our school culture using a system of positive behavioral interventions (PBIS) with students.

We appreciate your support and wish you and your child an exciting, fun filled, academically challenging year. We are confident that creating a strong partnership between the school and your family will result in a successful school year.

The purpose of the handbook is to assist you in understanding the procedures of our school. Should you have questions or concerns we encourage you to contact us at 978-528-8550.

Respectfully,
[Elizabeth F. Devine](#)
Principal

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Central Services Directory

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Jill Geiser

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Director of Finance & Operations

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Billerica Public Schools Website

<https://www.billericak12.com>

Hajjar Elementary Directory

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Assistant Principal

Mary Alise Herrera

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Secretary

Holly Cunningham

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Nurse

Krista Shell

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Social Emotional Learning Specialist

Megan McGreenery

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Vision and Mission Statement

Billerica's Theory of Action

Our approach to the education and **CARE** of children

- ❖ Fosters collaboration and partnerships within the school and larger **Community**
- ❖ Ensures a safe, welcoming and respectful **Atmosphere** for all
- ❖ Prepares our students for the **Rigors** of higher education and its **Relevance** to the global society
- ❖ Promotes and celebrates the **Excellence** of each of us and ensures **Equity** for all



Because we CARE... our Vision, Mission & Core Values

Vision

The Hajjar School is the place where we will become well-rounded and prepared for our successful futures.

Mission

We at the Hajjar promote confidence, respect diversity, maintain high expectations, and believe all students will learn. We ensure that they are well prepared academically, socially, and emotionally for their futures.

Core Values

Respect ~ Responsible ~ Safety ~ Kindness

Motto

We are Hajjar...Learning Today for a Better Tomorrow

Hajjar Daily Schedule

School Hours

8:35-2:45

- No student is allowed to enter the building until 8:25am, unless he/she attends Early Morning Care.
- Students arriving after 8:35am will be marked tardy.
- All students will have a 25/30 minute lunch daily.
- All students will have a 15/20 minute recess daily (depending on the grade).
- All students will have a 45 minute special subject daily.

Early Release Days

Throughout the year, early release days are scheduled for the purpose of Parent/Teacher Conferences, Professional Development, and teacher planning. These dates are listed in the school calendar.

Dismissal time for early release days is 12:45 PM. Lunch will be served on early release days.

Half Days

There are three (3) scheduled half days during the school year. These days are the Wednesday before Thanksgiving break, the day before the Christmas break and the last day of school. ***Please note that dismissal time on half days will be 11:40 AM.*** Lunch will not be served on these days.

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

Student Arrival Procedures

Arrival Procedures for All Students Who Arrive By Car (8:25 a.m.)

- All students being dropped off must be dropped off in the car lane by the café doors.
- Please use the Call St. entrance and take the first right in the parking lot. Proceed to the lane in front of the café.
- Pull your car all the way up to the door.
- Let your child(ren) unload.
- Have your child(ren) get out the passenger side of the car.
- Please do your best to keep the flow of traffic moving safely by not getting out of your car.

Arrival Procedures for All Students Who Walk to School (8:25 a.m.)

- Students who walk will be allowed in the building beginning at 8:25 a.m.
- Please help your student practice parking lot safety by using the crosswalks.
- Students who walk to school will enter through main entrance, (Call St.) and Kindergarten entrance (Rogers St.).

Arrival Procedures for All Students Who Take The Bus to School (8:25 a.m.)

- Students arriving to school via school bus are admitted to the building beginning at 8:25.



All students will proceed directly to their classroom and classes will begin promptly at 8:35.

Reminder: No students should arrive earlier than 8:25 a.m., as there is no supervision.

Early Morning Care

The Hajjar School will offer Early Morning Care for a yearly fee of \$540.00. Our Early Morning Care program allows you to drop your child off any time after 6:30 a.m. in the Hajjar Cafeteria. The Early Morning Care program is staffed by Hajjar school staff. If you are interested in having your child attend, please fill out the application on our school website. The school wide behavioral expectations and rules apply during Early Morning Care.

Student Dismissal Procedures (Early Dismissal)

If a child is being dismissed prior to the end of the school day, a parent and/or guardian, must report to the main office before picking up the student and sign them out in the main office. If you are unknown to the office staff, you will be required to provide a **your license as a photo Identification**.

If a student is going to be dismissed to an adult other than a parent or guardian, the school must be informed in writing of the name of the person picking up the child. Please bring **your license as a photo Identification, as it will be checked** before dismissing any students. Children will not be dismissed early to walk or bicycle home alone.

End of Day Dismissal Procedures

Dismissal Procedure for Students Who Are Dismissed For Car Pick Up

- Please use the Call St. entrance and take your first right in the parking lot. Follow to the lane in front of the café doors.
- Teachers will be waiting to send students to cars.
- Please affix your car number to your rear view mirror. We will call students by car number. Please inform your child of your car number. We will provide you two car number tags and Velcro.
- Please do your best to keep the flow of traffic moving safely by not getting out of your car.

Dismissal Procedures for Students Who Are Being Dismissed by an Adult

Students being dismissed to an adult will be dismissed from through main entrance, (Call St.) and Kindergarten entrance (Rogers St.)

Dismissal Procedures for Students Who Are Walking Home Alone

If a child walks or bicycles alone to school, he/she is doing so with parental knowledge and permission. Students will be dismissed out the main door and walk home after all buses have been called. Written permission needs to be on file in the office if your child will be walking home alone.

We encourage parents to review bike safety with their children. **Please remember that children age 12 and under are required by law to wear bike helmets.** Please park bicycles in the bicycle rack. Helmets may be stored on the bike or in the classroom.

Dismissal Procedures for Students Who Are Taking the Bus.

Students will be called to their buses by the bus name. Students are expected to walk to the bus and follow the bus expectations. As per School Committee Policy EEA "All K-4 students must have a parent, guardian, or other approved individual present at the bus stop in order for the students to be released from the bus.

If **no** parent, guardian, or other approved individual is present, the student(s) will be returned to the school they attend for pick-up. Year-long exceptions will only be valid with written consent from a parent /guardian submitted to the principal of your child's school."

Students who are eligible for bus transportation will be provided a bus pass from the child's school. **Students are not allowed to ride a bus to which they are not officially assigned.**

Attendance Policy

According to Chapter 76, section 1 of Massachusetts General Law, students are expected to attend class every day that school is in session. Billerica Public School believes that regular and punctual school attendance provides an essential foundation for educational progress and assists students in developing habits necessary for success in college and career. Students, who are absent, miss critical classroom instruction, opportunities for social interaction with teachers and peers, and clarification of assignments.

Extended absences impair academic progress and undermine student grades. The goal of the Attendance Policy is to ensure that each student keeps his/her absences to a minimum so that he/she can take full advantage of the educational programs and actively participate in the school community.

If a student is going to be absent from school, parents must call the school prior to 8:35 a.m.; if a phone call isn't received by 8:35, the school will call your household, informing you that your child is absent. In order for an absence to be considered excused we must receive the proper notification.

Excused absences include emergency or scheduled visits to a doctor, dentist, or other medical professional, surgery, mandated court appointments, religious observances, and bereavement. If proper documentation is provided, the absences listed above will not be counted as unexcused absence but will be documented as an excused absence.

- Three (3) unexcused absences will result in an additional phone call from the school.
- Five (5) unexcused absences will result in a meeting or phone call and the development of an action plan.
- Ten (10) unexcused absences will result in a report being filed with the Supervisor of Attendance.

A student who misses a test or quiz due to an absence or tardiness is required to make-up the assessment within two days.

Non-Scheduled Vacations/Extended Vacations

Teachers are not responsible for providing homework and/or classwork if a family chooses to take a vacation, which differs from those on the school calendar. We encourage students to keep a journal of their activities, practice math facts, and read while on the trip. Upon returning from vacation, students will have twice the number of days as they missed to complete and make up missed classwork. Non-scheduled vacations/extended vacations are considered an unexcused absence and will be documented as so.

Behavioral Guidelines

The Hajjar School will consistently build respect and well-prepared citizens through implementing a positive behavior system across the entire school community.

Our community rules are based on the principles of being respectful, being responsible, and being safe, so we are ready to learn.

General Guidelines (these apply to all areas of the school)

BE SAFE	BE RESPONSIBLE	BE RESPECTFUL
Keep your hands, feet and objects to yourself Use your coping strategies when necessary. Line up behind the person in front of you in an orderly way.	Show your best effort Listen to adults Be honest - Tell the truth	Listen to each other Use kind words Take care of our belongings and school property
BE A LEARNER Now We Are Ready to... persevere in our learning and not interfere with the learning of others.		

No weapons, including pocketknives, water guns, scissors, tools or sharp implements of any kind may be brought onto school property. Any violations will be subject to disciplinary action under the Education Reform Act of 1993. Any parent with questions regarding the acceptability of articles carried to school should contact the principal for clarification.

Recess Expectations

BE SAFE	BE RESPONSIBLE	BE RESPECTFUL
Keep your hands, feet and objects to yourself Use your coping strategies when necessary Line up behind the person in front of you in an orderly way Play in designated areas Use equipment and playground materials appropriately	Show your best effort Listen to adults Be honest - Tell the truth Go directly to your line when the whistle blows Follow all playground rules Take care of all recess equipment Immediately report issues to the teacher on duty	Listen to each other Use kind words Take care of our belongings and school property. Include others Be a friend if someone is on the Buddy Bench Pick up and return the equipment to the rack

Bus Conduct & Expectations

Students who are eligible for transportation provided by the Billerica Public Schools will be assigned a bus and provided a bus pass for that bus. Only students who are assigned to the bus will be allowed to ride that particular bus. Students may not choose to ride another bus for the purpose of after school activities.



Bus Expectations

BE SAFE	BE RESPONSIBLE	BE RESPECTFUL
Keep your hands, feet and objects to yourself Use your coping strategies when necessary Walk to the bus in an orderly way Line up behind the person in front of you in an orderly way Stay seated, facing forward	Show your best effort Listen to adults Be honest - Tell the truth Keep the bus clean Be a problem solver Keep all items in your backpack Leave food and drinks in your backpack	Listen to each other Use kind words Take care of our belongings and school property. Use quiet voices Follow the bus driver's directions

Lunch/Cafeteria Expectations

We ask that students observe the basics of good manners during the lunch period and leave their own table area clean. Cafeteria aides are present in the cafeteria daily during lunch hours to assist with behavior management. Their main duty is to supervise and remind students, when necessary, of their responsibilities. The cafeteria aides will report misconduct to the principal.

BE SAFE	BE RESPONSIBLE	BE RESPECTFUL
Keep your hands, feet and objects to yourself	Show your best effort	Listen to each other
Use your coping strategies when necessary	Listen to adults	Use kind words
Choose one seat and stay in it for the entire lunch	Be honest - Tell the truth	Take care of our belongings and school property.
Walk	Use the materials for what they were made for	Speak politely with an indoor voice
Face the table during lunch	Clean up after yourself	Use proper manners
	Eat and only touch your food	Food stays in your mouth

Bullying Intervention & Prevention

In May 2010, Massachusetts passed an anti-bullying law. The law defines bullying as **repeated** written, verbal, or electronic communication, or a physical act or gesture that happens during school, at the bus stop, on the bus, or while walking to and from school. This also includes before and after school activities or out of school activities that carry into the school.

A safe learning environment is one in which everyone develops emotionally, academically and physically in a caring and supportive atmosphere free of intimidation. All students have the right to be themselves and express their own thoughts and opinions. Bullying of any type has no place in a school setting. Please refer to pages 11- 16 in section 2 of this handbook, for the entire Billerica Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

What can I do if I am the target of a bully? *First, do not be afraid to report the bullying.* The bullying will often get worse if you do not report what is happening to your parents, your principal, and your teacher. Teasing and bullying can make you feel isolated and alone and can damage your self-esteem. Protect your self-esteem by asking for help. **Telling on a bully is not tattling.** Adults want help to be sure you are safe both at school and outside of school.

Some tips on what you can do to empower yourself and to stop the bullying include:

- If you feel comfortable, tell the bully to stop what they are doing that is bothering you. This may be easier if you have a friend with you.
- Do not start teasing the bully or hit them.

- Tell other adults that you trust including the school principal, the school counselor/school psychologist, school nurse, and your teacher. You will need to have someone to talk to about how you are feeling as well as to have the reassurance that the bullying will not re-occur.
- When reporting the bullying try to be as specific as possible. It is important for the principal to know who is the bully, when is the bullying occurring, where it is occurring. The principal will also want to know if the bullying has happened before and for how long it has been occurring and if there have been witnesses to the bullying such as other students or school staff.
- Tell your parents about the bullying immediately. They will take their own follow-up steps to ensure your safety at home and at school.
- Believe that you do not deserve to be mistreated by a classmate or student at school or on the bus or at outside of school activities.

How can I help my child if he or she has been bullied?

1. Listen calmly to your child about what is occurring. Try to be comforting without letting your child know how upset you are about what is happening. Remaining in control will help you to focus on your child's feelings and be able to ask the specific Who, What, When, Where questions that will be required to gain a full understanding of what is occurring. Take notes about *what your child is sharing* so that you can thoroughly answer the questions that will be asked of you when you make a report to the school principal.
2. Encourage your child to talk about his or her feelings with a trusted adult.
3. Remember to reinforce that your child should not try to engage the bully or decide to take matters into his or her own hands by hitting the bully or retaliating.
4. Practice role-playing what your child would do if he or she found themselves with the bully.
5. Advise them to stay in groups of their friends and not to be alone in areas where the bully could speak to them without the benefit of witnesses.
6. Reiterate that they are not at fault for the bullying and that they did the right thing by sharing what was going on with you.
7. Reassure your child that you will work with the school to protect them and ensure that the bullying does not occur.

General Information

Appropriate Dress

The style of dress or appearance is generally determined by the student and parents. However, students should consider health, safety, and weather conditions when selecting school clothing. Clothing that presents a danger to the health or safety of a student, or is distracting to the educational process is not permitted. Any

article of clothing seemingly offensive either by appearance, language, or intent will be considered inappropriate.

Students should arrive well-groomed and appropriately dressed for school activities. We recommend clothes and shoes that are comfortable and practical for activities such as gym, outdoor recess and art projects. If a student's attire is inappropriate, the parent will be notified and asked to bring a change of clothing.

Sneakers should be worn on the day that the student has physical education (gym). Sneakers need to be tied or fastened, and should not be "slip-on".

Birthday Celebrations

Each child's birthday will be announced daily on morning announcements during the week of the child's birthday. ***We encourage parents to donate a book to the library in honor of their child's birthday in lieu of food treats.***

Cancellations, Delayed Starts and Early Release

School cancellation or delayed start notices can be heard on most news and radio outlets. ***Also, an automated voice message and email will be sent out to families, and the information will be posted on social media.***

Please be sure that emergency dismissal information for your child is clearly written on the office emergency form sent home in September. Any change in the dismissal arrangements should be made in writing to the classroom teacher.

Should the Superintendent of Schools determine an early dismissal is necessary, students will be sent home before the end of the day. **IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARENTS TO INSTRUCT THEIR CHILDREN IN THE PROCEDURE THEY WANT THEM TO FOLLOW, I.E. WHICH NEIGHBOR TO GO TO, ETC.**

Classroom Placements

The team of grade-level teachers and other staff members, including the principal, assistant principal, social/emotional team, and special education personnel, collaborate to determine classroom placement. Many factors go into student placement. We need to strive for a reasonable balance of boys and girls, a balance of student abilities, and reasonable class sizes. In addition, consideration is given to the placement of students with various learning styles and needs of children matching the teaching strategies used by staff. The process begins in early March, and the students will participate in Sneak-a-Peek day in June where the students will meet their next teacher.

Contacting School Personnel

Communication amongst all the stakeholders, students, parents, and teachers is essential to providing a positive elementary experience. Parents are encouraged to call, email, or arrange to meet with your child's teacher to discuss their child or any concerns you may have.

In an effort to reduce paper consumption, newsletters and announcements will be sent out electronically. Hard copies of all correspondence can be sent home to families that don't have email access, please see the general communication document in Part II of the District Handbook.

CORI

All adults who work or volunteer at the Hajjar School must complete a background check. The CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) request form needs to be filed in the main office. A photo id will also be required. Please allow approximately three weeks for processing before you plan to volunteer.

Custody Stipulations

It is extremely important that you inform the office of any custody stipulations/restrictions that are in place. It is the parent's responsibility to provide legal documentation each year, or any time custody rights are updated. All matters will be handled in a confidential manner. Our priority is the safety and well-being of each child. The school will remain neutral on all issues.

Disciplinary Consequences

Respecting others (both classmates and staff) will help all children be successful here at the Hajjar School. We expect children to solve problems through discussion rather than physical contact. An adult is always nearby to help with conflict resolution, through student and staff discussion, reasonable and appropriate guidelines for self-control and good citizenship will be reinforced.

Our students are well behaved and rarely require disciplinary action. Teachers, administrators and staff make every effort to resolve issues informally. If the rules are disregarded, appropriate action will result through teacher and/or assistant principal/principal involvement. This may include a lunch or recess detention during the school day, or an after school detention which would be discussed with the parents and or guardian prior.

Electronic Devices

Cell phones and all other electronic communication devices are not permitted to be used during the school day, or on the buses. In the event that it can be demonstrated that the use of a device is a necessity during the day or on the bus the Principal/Assistant Principal may waive this policy to accommodate the needs of a particular student. All phone calls to or from students should be made through the main office.

Students are prohibited from using a cell phone or other electronic devices to record conversations, send or receive text messages, take pictures, or other such communication. Students seen using their phones or other electronic devices during the school day will have them taken away until dismissal. If there is a second offense the phone or device will be confiscated and parents/guardians will be asked to pick up the device in the main office. The school is not responsible for the loss of electronic devices and or cell phones.

Emergency Drills

Fire drills are held four times a year to test the mechanical fire alarm system and to teach students the safest way to exit the building in case of a true alarm. Upon hearing the alarm, students are to exit the building quickly and quietly under the direction of the teacher. In addition, our staff and students practice "lock down" procedures on a regular basis, using the ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate) protocol.

Field Trips

Field trips are a voluntary extension of the classroom and serve to enrich the curriculum. Any student who chooses NOT to participate in a field trip must still attend school. At the discretion of the principal/assistant

principal, a student whose behavior in the days prior to a field trip is deemed unsafe for the field trip may be required to remain at school. A supplementary lesson will be required. The school’s core values and community rules that are applicable within the school also apply the field trips. Students participating in field trips must submit a signed parent consent form prior to each scheduled trip.

Students must be present on the day of the field trip to participate. For example, if a student is absent on the day that his/her class goes on a field trip, he/she will not be allowed to go on the field trip with another class.

No student will be denied access to a field trip due to financial reasons. Please contact the main office if you need assistance.

Fun Club

The Fun Club is an afterschool program in which the Billerica Boys and Girls Club rent space from the Billerica School Department. The club is held in the cafeteria of the Hajjar. There is a modest cost. Please arrange for consistent alternate transportation (i.e. bus, pick up, etc.) if your child is not attending Fun Club all five days.

Homework

Homework is an excellent way for students to apply, review, and practice skills taught in class. It helps students learn to accept responsibility and learn to work independently. Therefore, all students are expected to complete all homework assignments. Students in grades 3 and 4 are responsible for recording their homework assignments each day.

Parents should be aware that homework is generally assigned Monday through Thursday. **Students in all grades are expected to read independently, or be read to, for 20–30 minutes at home on a daily basis.** The amount of homework assigned is based upon what the average child will be able to accomplish in the time prescribed in the following table:

Kindergarten	15–20 minutes
Grade 1	20-30 minutes
Grade 2–3	30–45 minutes
Grade 4	45–60 minutes

In addition to daily homework, students may also be assigned long-term projects. With these assignments, parents are encouraged to monitor their child’s progress on a regular basis in order to avoid a last minute rush for completion.

Parents are urged to create a positive attitude toward homework by providing a quiet place for the work to be done and checking its completion. Children should be encouraged to put completed homework in a folder or a backpack each night. This will eliminate confusion the next morning. Parents are encouraged to communicate with the teacher about any problems, concerns, or questions they may have about homework.

Illness & School Nurse

A registered nurse is assigned to each school, and is available for students requiring medical attention. Parents are notified immediately in the event of a serious illness or accident. An emergency form for each student is on file with the nurse. Parents should ensure that all information is accurate and current each school year.

Illness at Home

If your child has a fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or other symptoms of illness, please do not send him/her to school until the symptoms are gone for 24 hours without medication. Children with contagious diseases, strep throat, conjunctivitis, impetigo, etc. may not return to school until 24 hours after the start of an antibiotic.

- Please be aware of any updated COVID-19 illness protocols that may be necessary throughout the school year.

Illness at School

It is not uncommon for children to come down with an illness while at school. We require all parents fill out a health history and immunization report so that we will know your child's reactions to illness. Also, we require parents to sign an emergency form so that we provide emergency medical care if necessary. Please know that the school will make every attempt to reach the parent or designated person before independently deciding upon emergency care.

Health Screenings

Students in grades kindergarten, first, second, and third will be screened annually for vision and hearing. Students in grade four will only have their vision tested. Height and weight will also be screened for students in first and fourth grade. All vision and hearing tests will be administered by our nurse using a state approved test. Parents or guardians will be contacted if there is cause for concern.

Instrumental Lessons

Students entering the fourth grade may begin the study of a string, wind, or percussion musical instrument. During the course of the year, group lessons are held once a week for thirty minutes during the school day. *Students are responsible for any missed classroom work.* During this time, students are instructed in all aspects of learning to play a musical instrument including instrument care, tone production, note reading, and comprehensive musicianship. Throughout the school year, students perform numerous concerts with these ensembles, as well as solo and small group performances for both the school and community.

Kindergarten Screening

Kindergarten screening is provided by the Billerica Public Schools within the last few weeks of the school year prior to entering kindergarten. The children are screened in the areas of vision/hearing, fine motor/gross motor, speech and language, cognition, visual motor and visual memory. Children with problematic development will be referred, with parental permission, for further testing and possible specialized intervention.

Kindergarten Registration

Kindergarten registration will be held in early March via a Central Registration process. Parents should make every effort to register at this time. Registration packets can be downloaded from the district website at: <https://www.billericak12.com/resources/registration>

Orientation for incoming kindergarteners and their parents will be held in the spring and fall.

A child is eligible to enter Kindergarten with the following:

- The child is five years of age on or before August 31, of that year.
- Proof of Residency
- Proof of Age
- An immunization certificate covering the following is presented: diphtheria, measles, mumps, polio and pertussis.
- An examination by the family physician is required within six months preceding entrance, and every three to four years thereafter.



Open House Night and Parent Conferences

Parent conferences can be arranged with your child's teachers at any time convenient to both parties. Arrangements can be made by sending a note to the teacher or calling the office. Each year a Back to School Open House will be held in September for parents to meet their child's teacher.



Also, we have two formal parent teacher conferences with afternoon (1:00-3:00) and evening (6:00-8:00) appointments scheduled by teachers. These occur in November and April.

Report Cards and Progress Reports

Progress reports are issued electronically three times a year, at mid-term. A progress report is a non-graded report informing parents of their child's academic and social development.



Report cards are distributed electronically three times a year. The report card has a detailed explanation of the marking system used to communicate each child's progress toward the curriculum standards established for that grade level in the Massachusetts Curriculum Standards. Progress report and report card schedules are noted on the district calendar.

You can access your child's progress report and report card through the Aspen Parent Portal. If you need help accessing the portal, please email your child's name and your name to portalhelp@billerica12.com.

School Records

The vast majority of the materials found in student folders are duplicate copies of materials given to the child and parents: report cards, standardized test information, etc. Regulations pertaining to the release of information about students shall be in conformity with Sections 34A, 34B, and 34E of Chapter 71 of the General Laws, Chapter 71B of the General Laws and Section 13 and Chapter 76 of the students' rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment and destruction of student's records. Parents of Billerica students or the students themselves, when they reach eighteen years of age, may review their records as maintained by our schools upon written request.

If you are moving from Billerica, please call the main office to sign a records release form. Your new school district will request your child's records soon after you register with them. We cannot furnish records without your written consent.

Safe School Guidelines

The Hajjar School makes every effort to ensure an effective and safe school environment. Students and teachers promote the monthly themes of good character, which are communicated daily.

All doors are secured while school is in session, and the staff is trained in evacuation and safety procedures. School, playground and cafeteria expectations are established and enforced; students are supervised at all times. There are staff monitoring the hallways before school and during dismissal. In addition, our school has developed a crisis plan to address emergencies that arise unexpectedly. Grade-level leaders assist with communication during a crisis, and designated staff members work together to respond to and manage any crisis situations. Follow-up services, such as notification letters summarizing the situation and describing available support services, are provided when necessary.

The Hajjar is a smoke-free school. There is no smoking permitted in the building or on the school premises.

School Visitors

School policy is to accept only those visitors who have legitimate business at the school. All adults are required to enter and exit via the main entrance, which is monitored by cameras and requires authorized entry. As a matter of courtesy and safety, all guests, visitors, and parents must first report to and register at the office upon entering the building. ***Please bring a license with you to ensure proper identification.*** After signing in, visitors are required to wear an identification badge.

Parent Engagement

Hajjar Parent Association

The Hajjar Parent's Association (also called the HPA) is a non-profit organization formed to offer support to students and staff and to enhance the educational atmosphere at the Hajjar School. The HPA also raises funds through book fairs, bake sales, and many other means to help defray the cost of school activities and to provide the school with the extras not available through the School Department budget.

All parents of children attending the Hajjar School are considered members and are encouraged to participate in the HPA. An elected Board consisting of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer lead the group according to established by-laws.

Board Members can be reached via email. A list of current Board Members is sent home each fall with a volunteer flyer informing parents of where their help is needed during the year. The HPA also holds regularly scheduled open meetings to answer questions and plan for upcoming events. All parents are welcome and encouraged to attend these meetings.

Hajjar School Council

One of the provisions of the 1993 Education Reform Act requires each school in Massachusetts to elect a school building council with its members composed of the principal, parents, teachers, and members of the community. The council is representative of the Hajjar community and provides a vehicle to advise the principal of policies and programs at this particular school. The School Council is responsible for writing the annual School Improvement Plan, which determines the yearly goals.

Billerica Special Education Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

The Billerica Special Education Parent Advisory Council for children with special needs was formally organized when parent advisory committees were mandated for each school district by Massachusetts State Law Chapter 766.

The SPED PAC is composed of parents/guardians of students with disabilities residing in Billerica. The members of the PAC are open to sharing and supporting other parents of students with special needs. The goals of the PAC include: communication, sharing, educating, advocating and supporting each other.

School Nutrition and Cafeteria

The Billerica Public Schools is offering free breakfast and lunch to all students during the 2021-2022 school year.

At Billerica Public Schools we know that good nutrition AND learning go hand in hand. The Billerica Schools Nutrition Services program provides students with wholesome, nutritious and delicious meals that meet the USDA dietary guidelines for all Americans. Breakfast, lunch and healthy snacks are offered in each café. Menus are emailed home monthly and posted online along with nutritional and other valuable information. Students are offered 5 components at lunch: grains, meat or a meat alternative (protein), fruits, vegetables and milk. As required by the USDA, students must take at least 3 components as part of their lunch and one of those components must be a fruit or vegetable. Students are encouraged to take all 5 components. (For breakfast, students must take 3 food items.)

Meal Magic (Point of Sale): All students are provided individual Meal Magic account information that includes: a unique PIN (used for café purchases) and a personal ID # (one time use for online set up) for access to student accounts on www.sendmoneytoschool.com. Student PIN, ID and balances remain through grade 12, and carry from year to year. Account deposits can be made with cash/check at the register or online at: www.sendmoneytoschool.com. If a student forgets his/her PIN, this information is available at the register or with any School Nutrition employee. Parents should be familiar with the Student Charging Procedure (sent home each year and posted online) in order to avoid disruption to account purchases. Please visit the school nutrition website for further information on Meal Magic.

Household Applications (Free and Reduced Eligibility): Household Applications are available to complete online (quickest response time) throughout the school year at www.lunchapp.com. Applications for SY20 can be downloaded from the district website. It is important that you complete the entire application. Unless you have received a Direct Certification letter (for the current school year) from Billerica Schools Nutrition Services, a Household Application must be completed each year, or if there is a change in household information.

To find out more about our healthy school meals, Meal Magic, household applications, Student Charging Procedure, ingredient labels, Field Trip order forms, etc., please visit the school nutrition page on the BPS website: www.billericak12.com, or find us on Facebook and Twitter. If you need further information, please contact the Billerica Schools Nutrition Services department at 978-528-8782.

To prepare for the classroom and to encourage healthy lifestyle choices we provide students with access to a variety of healthy, affordable and appealing foods every day.

School Parties and Celebrations

Whenever food is offered as part of the celebrations, we encourage healthy and nutritional food choices. Healthy celebrations are an important part of providing a healthy school environment. Children are excited about new and different things, including fun party activities and healthy snacks. Parents need not worry that children will be disappointed if typical party foods are not served in the classroom.

When parents send in food, it is difficult to ensure the safety of children with food allergies. Schools can protect food allergic children by providing non-food celebrations or, if food is served, obtaining it from known sources such as the Billerica School Food Service Program. *Schools can provide a safe positive learning environment by providing healthy celebrations that shift the focus from the food to the child.* Staff members are encouraged to use non-food incentives and rewards in place of using food or candy. When food is served, make it count with healthy choices!

In accordance with the District's Wellness Policy, nutritious snacks are recommended.

- Low-fat or nonfat plain or flavored milk, 100% juice, water, flavored/sparkling water (without added sugars or sweeteners), sparkling punch (seltzer and 100% fruit juice)
- Fresh fruit - wedges or slices, Dried fruit, 100% fruit snacks
- Fresh vegetables – baby carrots, grape tomatoes, celery sticks, cucumber spears, red and green pepper strips, cauliflower and broccoli florets with reduced fat dressing or yogurt-based dip
- String cheese, cheese cubes or slices with whole grain crackers
- Low-fat pudding cups, low-fat yogurt squeeze packs or cups
- Pretzels, low-fat popcorn, trail mix, animal crackers, graham crackers, oatmeal raisin cookies