



# Hillside

SCHOOL

# PARENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024

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## Our Mission

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Hillside School provides specialized instruction enabling students with dyslexia and other learning differences to reach their academic potential and become capable and confident lifelong learners.

## Our Vision

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Hillside School is a leader in the development of innovative teaching strategies for students with learning differences and serves as a community resource about education and the well-being of children.

## Our Guiding Beliefs

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- All children can learn
- The joy of learning is every child's right
- Learning happens best when children are engaged in a supportive environment free of judgment
- Educating children must include care for their affective needs
- Ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the academic program is essential
- Collaboration with parents and professionals promotes student success
- Serving as a resource about learning and the well-being of children supports the whole community

## Contact Information

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Hillside School  
 7415 Lookout Road  
 Longmont, CO 80503  
 Phone Number 303-494-1468

Department	Ext.	Administrator	Email
Main Office	0		<a href="mailto:admin@hillsidelearning.org">admin@hillsidelearning.org</a>
Head of School	2	Jill Michaud	<a href="mailto:jill@hillsidelearning.org">jill@hillsidelearning.org</a>
Admissions	1	Kathy Sherman	<a href="mailto:kathy@hillsidelearning.org">kathy@hillsidelearning.org</a>
Business Office	5	Clara Duchi	<a href="mailto:clara@hillsidelearning.org">clara@hillsidelearning.org</a>
Development <i>(fundraising/events/ communications)</i>	3	Lindsay Eddy	<a href="mailto:lindsay@hillsidelearning.org">lindsay@hillsidelearning.org</a>
Learning Evaluations	1	Kathy Sherman	<a href="mailto:kathy@hillsidelearning.org">kathy@hillsidelearning.org</a>
Professional Development	4	Rachel Pardis	<a href="mailto:rachel@hillsidelearning.org">rachel@hillsidelearning.org</a>
Technology	4	Rachel Pardis	<a href="mailto:rachel@hillsidelearning.org">rachel@hillsidelearning.org</a>

## Daily Scedule

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Students will attend Hillside for either the morning or afternoon session and receive academic intervention in the areas of reading, writing, and math.

**Morning session:** 8:00 to 11:00

**Afternoon session:** 12:00 to 3:00

We believe that it is in the best interest of our students and their learning to spend time outside. Students will have two, fifteen-minute, outdoor breaks during the school day. Students should be prepared to go outdoors when temperatures are 15 degrees or above. In the case of precipitation, wind, or other weather conditions, our administrative team will determine if it is safe for students to be outdoors and decide whether or not to proceed with outdoor break. Please be sure your child brings appropriate clothing and footwear for the current weather conditions.

## Drop Off and Pick Up

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- Hillside's doors will be open for students' arrival ten minutes prior to the start of class - either 7:50am for morning students or 11:50am for afternoon students. If you arrive before this time, we ask that you wait with your child until an administrator opens the door.
- Please enter the parking lot on the right (east) side of the center parking spaces. Students may be dropped off directly in front of the door, with the car then proceeding forward and out of the parking lot in a circle.
- Please do not park in this drop-off lane by the front door.
- Parents can also park in our lot or the parking lot of United Methodist Church next door to the west in order to wait, or to walk your child in.
- We strive to be good neighbors and avoid the backup of cars spilling out onto Lookout Road. Although this is very rare, if you notice it happening, we ask that you use the church parking lot to ensure that traffic is not impeded.
- In the event that someone other than the people designated in the enrollment forms will be picking up your child, please email [admin@hillsidelearning.org](mailto:admin@hillsidelearning.org) to inform us of the change and provide both the name and contact number of the driver.

## Transportation Options

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### Carpools

We recognize the logistical challenges parents face transporting their children to and from Hillside and back to their other school/programs. We encourage parents to organize carpools when possible, as we often have students traveling to and from similar locations. We have organized a google document that all parents can access to help facilitate possible carpools that include students home address and schools. You can access this here.

### Hop, Skip, Drive

Hope, Skip, Drive is like an Uber for students. This third-party resource (not affiliated with Hillside School) works off a mobile application and can be used as recurring drives or one-time trips. This platform uses a 15-point certification process to ensure driver safety for its children passengers. You can learn more about this option directly by visiting their website at: [www.hopskipdrive.com](http://www.hopskipdrive.com).

## Other Half of the Day Options

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**Public Schools:** While attending public schools, parents have the right to enroll their child in Hillside for a half-day and still attend a public school for the other half of the day.

**Charter Schools and Independent Schools:** Charter schools and independent schools may decide whether or not our model will work with their program. Hillside has successfully worked with many of the local private and charter schools in Boulder County.

**Homeschooling:** Approximately 20% of our families choose to homeschool their child for the remainder of the day and utilize a variety of educational activities, including tutoring, local homeschooling groups, sports, movement, or arts classes, online classes, etc. For those of you who are looking into homeschooling your child as they work with Hillside, we encourage you to look into your district's requirements for the other half of the day.

[BVSD Homeschool Page](#)

[St. Vrain Homeschool Page](#)

Homeschooling in Colorado comes with the requirement for student progress to be evaluated through assessments in certain grades. To meet this requirement, parents can submit your child's end of year report from Hillside, which will include progress monitoring data and narrative analysis from your child's teacher.

Additionally, if you are interested in connecting with other parents who are homeschooling, please add your name and email address to this [google document](#) so you can reach out to each other.

## Attendance and Reporting Absences

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**Unplanned Absences** - When your child is absent, email both your child's teacher and our administration at [admin@hillsidelearning.org](mailto:admin@hillsidelearning.org) as early as possible. In your email, include the reason for your child's absence. In the case of illness, we will contact you to provide guidance on when your child can return to school, based on their symptoms and current guidance from public health.

**Planned Absences** - Please let your child's teacher know of any pre-planned absences as soon as possible. This allows teachers to plan classroom instruction in the best way for the students who will be in attendance, as well as plan for how to minimize potential disruption to your child's learning when returning to school.

**Field Trips and Celebrations at a Student's Other School** - We want our students to benefit from community building activities at both Hillside and the school where they spend the other half of their day. We encourage students to attend the occasional field trips or performances at their other school; however, we are not able to accommodate regular absences, as that can negatively impact the learning of our students. An example of a regular absence would be specific classes that reoccur on a weekly or biweekly basis. Questions regarding recurring absences should be directed to our Head of School at [jill@hillsidelearning.org](mailto:jill@hillsidelearning.org).

**Illness** - Hillside follows the guidance of our local health officials to make decisions regarding illnesses. Our top priorities are the safety of our students, staff, and their families, along with providing the best educational experience possible.

We ask that you keep your child home if they are exhibiting any sign of illness, including, but not limited to:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

When your child is ill, please let our administration know by emailing [admin@hillsidelearning.org](mailto:admin@hillsidelearning.org). We will walk you through the proper return to school protocol based on your child's symptoms and the current guidance regarding illnesses.

## Health Information

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Any prescription medication a student needs to take during his/her time at Hillside must be dispensed by a staff member according to written parent permission. A doctor's prescription must accompany the medication. If your child needs a particular emergency medication such as an Epi-pen, you will need to provide that to the school along with an allergy action plan, which includes instructions on how to recognize and manage symptoms, as well as steps for emergency treatment.

Over-the-counter medication will be dispensed by Hillside staff according to written parent permission entered on the consent to treat form filled out at the beginning of the year.

If your child has other recurring health issues that may present as signs of illness (seasonal allergies, history of headaches, etc.), please let us know so that we are best informed as we monitor symptoms.



### Immunization Records

In accordance with Colorado law ([Board of Health rule 6 CCR 1009-2](#)), Hillside requires all students to be vaccinated against certain diseases, unless the student has a certificate of medical or nonmedical exemption. Prior to the start of the 2021-2022 school year, parents shall provide a current immunization record for the student, along with any applicable Certificates of Exemptions.

## Snacks and Drinks

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More and more the importance of nutrition is showing up in research on the brain related to both learning and behavior. The brain cannot store energy and takes energy directly from glucose in the blood supply.

Students at Hillside have time to eat a snack during their two scheduled breaks. Some students may need to eat more often and, if that is the case, Hillside will make appropriate accommodations. Water bottles may be kept at the work table at all times.

***Please do not send the following types of items for snack:***

- soft drinks or soda of any kind
- juice drinks with red food coloring (creates permanent stains)
- candy of any kind
- microwave popcorn
- any food that is primarily sugar—like donuts or pastries.

During student birthdays or class celebrations, students may bring in treats for the class. Please be sure to inform your child's teacher of any allergies or food sensitivities. Sugary treats will be shared before a break or at the end of the day, so that they don't interfere with learning.

### Class Celebrations

Hillside students work hard every day. Our teachers will often implement an age-appropriate behavior management system that rewards that hard work, effort, and good citizenship. Some teachers may choose to have a class celebration when the class reaches a predetermined goal, which may include rewards such as treats (pizza, cupcakes, etc.), art projects, a field trip

to the park, or a class movie. In the case that a movie is played, the teacher will ensure that the content of the movie is appropriate for the particular students in the class. If there is any question regarding content, the teacher will reach out to parents prior to showing it. Movies are limited to no more than one per semester.

## School Cancellation Due to Weather or Other Emergencies

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Urgent information regarding unexpected school closures will be communicated via text message. Parents must sign up to receive these text alerts by texting the keyword 'Hillsidelearning' to **41372**.

Hillside follows Boulder Valley School District for all weather closures. In the event that BVSD calls a delayed start due to weather, Hillside will cancel morning classes. In addition to joining the You can check for BVSD closures at <http://www.bvdsd.org>.

## School Calendar

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Hillside's annual academic calendar is posted on our website at <https://hillsidelearning.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/2023-24-Hillside-Academic-Calendar.pdf>.

## Events

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Please mark your calendars for these special Hillside community events. More details will be emailed prior to each event.

### School Events

**August 9:** New Family Orientation at Hillside School

**August 27:** Hillside Potluck at Waneka Lake Park

**September 14:** Back to School Night at Hillside School

**April TBD:** Hillside Bowl-A-Thon Fundraiser

**May 16:** Student Appreciation Ceremony

## Fundraising

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Hillside School relies on the generosity of our greater community to support much of what we do here for our students and the greater dyslexic community. There are many opportunities throughout the year for Hillside parents to support our mission further. Below are specific awareness events we organize, but Hillside fundraises throughout the entire year. Please reach out to our Director of Development, Lindsay Eddy ([lindsay@hillsidelearning.org](mailto:lindsay@hillsidelearning.org)) if you wish to discuss these opportunities further.

### December 5: Colorado Gives Day

For 24 hours, Colorado residents come together to raise funds for local nonprofits like Hillside. We rely on Colorado Gives Day gifts to help support the programs we offer that make an impact on the entire local dyslexic community. From our regular school year program to our free consultations and speaker series, these are all made possible thanks to donations made on CO Gives Day. A percentage of donations made on this day are “matched” by a community foundation - making each dollar worth more for Hillside. The more we raise, the more we receive from this foundation.

### February 13: Founder’s Day (Annual Fund)

On February 13, Kathy Sherman and Suzanne Neuman made the decision to finally address a major need in our community and create a specialized school for dyslexic students. Nineteen years later, Hillside has provided life-changing intervention for nearly 1,000 students and has supported hundreds of other families as they navigate through the dyslexia diagnosis. This year we will celebrate this monumental day by raising the necessary funds for our annual fund, which supports our life-changing program where every dollar is truly valued.

### April TBD: Hillside Bowl-A-Thon Fundraiser (Scholarship Fund)

This event for the entire family is a fun way to get the kids and parents involved in coming together to help raise vital funds for our students. Money raised at this event will determine the amount of scholarship that can be awarded to incoming students for the following academic year.

### Capital Campaign

The Hillside School and Community Center for Dyslexia building was approved by Boulder County in 2022, providing Hillside the opportunity to further grow these programs and extend our reach into the community. Hillside is actively fundraising to get shovels in the ground as soon as possible. If you are interested in supporting this campaign, please contact Lindsay Eddy at [lindsay@hillsidelearning.org](mailto:lindsay@hillsidelearning.org).

## Parent-Teacher Communication

At the beginning of the year, your child's teacher will contact you about preferred means of communication. If you have questions or concerns during the year, you may reach out to your child's teacher to schedule a time to meet.

Hillside also has a scheduled Back to School Night and three conferences in which teachers and parents can share information about classroom procedures, student strengths, goals, and progress.

Back to School Night	September 14	Teachers will share information about their daily class routines, homework policies, behavior systems, goals for the class, and other whole-class information. (Virtual or In-Person: TBD)
Fall Conferences	October	Individual conferences to discuss student strengths and goals.
Mid-Year Conferences	January	Individual conferences to discuss student progress. These are accompanied by a short written report.
End of the Year Conferences	May	Individual Conferences to discuss student growth and ongoing areas of need. Teachers will provide an indepth written report for each student.

We value direct feedback framed in a constructive manner. If you have a concern that involves your child's teacher, please communicate directly with the teacher about it. If you prefer to involve the Head of School, or if you would like support with that communication, please contact Jill Michaud.

## Student Behavior

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With a teacher:student ratio of 1:4, it is critical we protect the class dynamic to ensure we create a safe place where effective learning can happen. Individual teachers will have their own strategies to help facilitate student behavior, but as a general statement the following guidelines will be used to distinguish what is not welcomed in the classroom:

- Any behavior or language that is demeaning, hurtful, racist, sexist or threatening is not accepted at Hillside School.
- We discourage any verbal, nonverbal and physical behaviors that serve to significantly interfere with the learning of others.

As with any type of social interaction, issues or conflicts may normally arise at times between students. If the students themselves do not easily resolve such issues, appropriate adult support and intervention will occur. Philosophically, Hillside believes that such conflicts should be treated as a learning experience, and will work to create an opportunity for social/emotional growth.

For more complex situations that meet the criteria noted in the general statement above, the following hierarchy of interventions will take place:

- **First level** - The teacher who is involved with the student(s) and/or a member of the administrative team will intercede by a variety of means depending on the circumstances such as conflict mediation, developing a cooperation agreement, etc. Parents are not always notified.
- **Second level** - If behaviors are not responsive to the First Level actions, a meeting will be held which may include appropriate staff, Jill Michaud, parents and student(s) who will establish a behavior management plan that is acceptable to all involved.
- **Third level** - As stated in the parent contract “Retention of the student during any academic year, and re-enrollment of a student for any subsequent academic year, is conditional upon timely performance of the obligation of the undersigned set forth herein ... and upon behavioral performance by the student consistent with the standards of Hillside School as stated in the Hillside Handbook.”

**This means a student may be dismissed immediately and permanently from Hillside without any of the First and Second level interventions if any of the following occur:**

- If a student exhibits dangerous behaviors (physically, verbally or nonverbally) that present a serious risk to the safety, or emotional well-being of other students or adults. This will be up to the discretion of the Head of School.
- Also, if the process to modify behavior, as noted in Levels 1 and 2, is not successful, a student may be asked to leave Hillside permanently.

## Technology

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Hillside School employs an outside technology support company that monitors our servers, firewall, and internet access, and supports all additional technology needs.

Hillside School uses the Google for Education Plus platform for all device management, document creation and storage, browser security and management, and email. Students are issued a secure email for the purpose of creating their individual logins and passwords for use on the school Chromebooks.

All students at Hillside School are assigned a Chromebook for use in the classroom. This Chromebook will be shared with a student who uses it for the other half of the day. Students are given their own account and login that is separate from all other individuals who may use their Chromebook. Students are expected to sign out of their account upon conclusion of their session in order to protect their individual account.

By signing in to the Hillside Chromebook, the student agrees that the equipment will not be subjected to unnecessarily rough usage, that it will be used in accordance with its design, and that its use will conform to all applicable laws and Hillside School policies and regulations. The student agrees not to allow the use of the equipment for purposefully searching on the internet for inappropriate or harmful content, for illegal purposes, or for operating the student's own or another's personal or commercial business.

While Hillside uses technology protection measures to limit access to material on the internet considered harmful or inappropriate to students, it may not be possible for Hillside to absolutely prevent such access. In the rare case that a student encounters material that may be considered inappropriate, Hillside will notify the child's parent or guardian immediately.

Normal and reasonable wear and tear are expected. However, it is the student's responsibility to provide reasonable care while in possession of the Chromebook. The student and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for the cost of repair and/or replacement of devices damaged either deliberately or through negligence.

## Tuition and Fees Information

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### Tuition Payments

As a convenience to our families, Hillside allows payment of the annual tuition to be made in Full, Semester, or Monthly payment plans. With each payment plan option, an initial deposit of \$2000 must be made to ensure your child's spot is held for the school year.

#### Full Year Payment

This option is payment of Hillside's tuition in full. This payment option is due at the time of registration via Tuio.

#### Semester Payment

For families not wishing to pay full tuition in advance, Hillside provides a semester installment option. These payments will be split into two payments and will be due on the following dates:

1. Fall Semester **(Due June)**
2. Spring Semester **(Due November)**

#### Monthly Payment\*

This option will allow parents to pay their child's tuition through 10-12 monthly installments. These payments will be due on the 3rd of each month until full payment has been received.

\*The monthly payment plan has an additional charge for finance and service costs of \$250. Payments on these plans are required to be made using Hillside's direct debit authorization (ie. Tuio).

All tuition and fees are due and payable by 11:59 p.m. on the assigned due dates. A \$25 late fee will be billed on payments received after the fifth day past the due dates and on all returned checks. While we try to work with families when there is a sudden financial hardship, in the case of nonpayment of tuition and fees, a student may be asked to leave.

# Tuition Agreement and Financial-Aid

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## Tuition Agreement

All parents must fill out and sign a Tuition Agreement upon enrollment or re-enrollment. Those who desire special consideration because of financial concerns may apply for financial aid by filling out an application. The annual tuition may be paid by choosing one of several payment options on the Agreement. No credit is given for absenteeism or partial attendance.

## Need Based Financial Assistance

Limited funds are available. Application for assistance may be completed via our Director of Admissions, Kathy Sherman.

## Late Enrollment

Families entered during the school year will be charged a prorated tuition amount. An initial deposit must be made and will be followed by the options to pay in monthly installments, by semester, or full year's tuition.

## Early Withdrawal

The Head of School must be notified, in writing, of any pending withdrawal as soon as possible. Knowing that a place for the student is held pursuant to enrollment, Hillside is not obligated to refund deposits or tuition paid, or cancel unpaid obligations when a student is withdrawn, dismissed, or absent for any reason. However, in the event that a student withdraws from Hillside prior to the end of the 2023-2024 academic year, Hillside will make a reasonable attempt to fill that student's place. If an appropriate replacement is admitted to the program, the outgoing student's tuition will be returned for the prorated amount based on the incoming student's start date, minus a \$500 administrative withdrawal fee.



## Nondiscrimination in Enrollment

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Hillside School offers admission to educational programs in its school without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability.

*It is our intent to provide an optimal educational experience and learning environment to facilitate the maximum progress for your child.*

**Thank you for being a part of the Hillside community!**