



August 7th, 2023

## Welcome to the 2023-24 school year!

Hello and welcome to your new family of Hemet educators!

The Hemet Teachers Association, HTA, is the sole representation for counselors, nurses, school psychologists, speech language pathologists and teachers in Hemet Unified School District. The Hemet Teachers Association is YOUR union. We support one another in the classroom, at our sites and with management in all ways. We are here to help you be successful from the very first day with Hemet USD.

As you begin this exciting journey, you will have questions and you might need support. We are here to help. We know that the first year in a new district, and for some of you your first year as a teacher, can be stressful. We have attached some information below that will help you get started. There are QR codes that link to our Collective Bargaining Agreement and our social media. Our contact information is below.

We are your Executive Board, E-Board. Do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns. Upon becoming a member, you will receive a card that contains your right to representation in meetings with management and the names of the HTA reps at your specific site. Keep that card and contact us anytime.

Again, we are so excited to have you join our team, and welcome to Hemet!

Rebekah Young	HTA President	<a href="mailto:president@htaonline.org">president@htaonline.org</a>
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# HUSD Procedures and Policies



Below is a quick look at common procedures and policies teachers use regularly. To look at all board policies you can go to [hemetUSD.org>board>board policies](http://hemetUSD.org>board>board policies), or follow this qr code:

## Attendance:

HUSD uses Aeries as our attendance and grade reporting system. When absences are selected an automatic parent/guardian notification is sent out.

There is no official policy stating when teachers must take attendance during the school day but some sites have informal practices they follow and you might be asked to follow that timing as well.

## Key Fobs and Doors:

Our district has moved to the security system “SALTO” where a fob is used to open classroom doors. Some sites are still in the process of having this system installed so you may still have a keyed classroom. Either way it is the district policy that all classroom doors are to remain closed and locked during instructional time. If you have an issue such as the air conditioning not working or other reason as to why you would need your door open during school hours, be sure to email your administrator, office manager and cc [htaoffice@htaonline.org](mailto:htaoffice@htaonline.org) with the classroom issue as soon as possible.

## Leaves:

Every full year worked members are granted 10 days of sick leave (12.1.2, p.58). Currently our district represents a full day as 8 hours = 80 hours granted in advance annually. All leaves (i.e. discretionary, personal necessity, sick) are from the same leave “bank”, despite being categorized differently on our pay stubs.

According to the contract “When Unit Members are absent for less than one full work day, the Unit Member shall be charged only for time missed on an hour by hour basis”. (12.1, p.57). This means if you only need to miss part of the day you will only have that portion of leave deducted.

- **Discretionary vs. Personal Necessity Leave**

We are allotted seven (7) total personal necessity leave annually. Of those seven (7) “Up to five (5) days of personal necessity leave may be taken at the Bargaining Unit Member’s sole discretion for events serious in nature which under the circumstances the Unit Member cannot reasonably be expected to disregard and which require the attention of the Unit Member during her/his assigned hours of service.” This is the option in the Frontline absence management noted as discretionary and does not require a reason or approval (article 12.3.3.7 p.62)(these do not roll over and cannot be used to extend holiday vacation breaks).

Any **personal necessity** leave not taken as discretionary requires reason and approval from management (usually site principal) and must go through TalentEd for the request.

- **Frontline absence reporting**

Frontline Education is our employee leave management system. Same day reporting is cut off usually by 6 AM, which means it will not accept your absence after that time. Speak with your office manager or school secretary that handles substitutes and ask how to handle same day absences. Be sure to keep an eye on your leave bank to ensure you aren't losing hours to errors.

## Grading:

HUSD utilizes Aeries for recordkeeping of grades and grade reporting. Elementary grades report quarterly (9 weeks) and secondary reports every triad (6 weeks).

The frequency with which you update your gradebook is teachers discretion. If possible a recommended best practice is to try and update a minimum of every two weeks. You can sync your google classroom to aeries to help streamline the process of grading and uploading assignments.

- **Late homework/absence make-up work board policy:**

BP 6145 states "Although on-time completion of homework is important to maintain academic progress, the Board recognizes that students learn at different rates. Students shall receive credit for work completed in a reasonable amount of time and shall not be penalized for work that is completed late in order to encourage their continued learning.." This policy applies specifically to homework and absence make up work, classwork does not apply. It is your decision to decide how to handle when and how students turn in class assignments. Ask around and see what works for other teachers at your school.

## Behavior/Discipline:

Each school site has a comprehensive discipline action plan and procedures. Check with your site administrator and other teachers on how this is implemented. In addition to your site's behavior plan,

**California Ed Code 48910** gives teachers the right to suspend students from class for the day of suspension and the following day. Ask the parent or guardian to attend a conference as soon as possible.

**See [htaonline.org](http://htaonline.org)>resources>New Teachers for more information.**

HTA Website



Facebook



Instagram



Tik Tok



OUR CONTRACT



# Questions to Ask During the First Days of School

Ask your office manager, administrator, and veteran teachers what the practices are for your site:

1. Where and how do I secure supplies (chalk, erasers, paper, etc.)?
2. How do I check out regular and supplemental texts?
3. What restrooms are my students expected to use and what are the policies for restroom passes?
4. How do I make arrangements for a field trip?
5. How do I sign my class up for the library?
6. How do I get approval for movies/videos?
7. What are the procedures for taking a class to an assembly?
8. What are the rules for the copier? Do I have a code? Do I have a limit? Do I need to bring paper to fill the machine?
9. How frequently am I expected to check my mailbox?
10. On the first day with students is every teacher expected to cover school-wide rules and procedures?
11. To whom do I report serious problems with a student's health or behavior?
12. What should I do if I must leave my room during class?
13. What should I do in case of a medical emergency in my classroom?
14. How do I handle a fight between students?
15. How do I arrange for a substitute if the reporting time for Frontline has passed?

## “What I Wish I Had Known”

Teachers share their best advice to help new educators start their first year with confidence.

### by NEA Member Benefits

Being a new teacher can be daunting, from managing your own classroom to navigating the ins and outs of being a school employee. To help you get off to a great start, we polled NEA members to find out what advice they wish someone had shared with them when they were new teachers.

We selected some great pieces of advice that represent a wide range of topics, from learning to be flexible in the classroom to building mentor relationships with experienced teachers at your school.

**Empathize with your students:** “Get to know your kids, and let them get to know you. You are a big part of their lives just as they are of yours. Feel their challenges, their sacrifices, their joys and their hurts, and you get memories that will last a lifetime.” — Erin Havlin, high school chemistry teacher

**Be flexible at school and at home:** “The most important thing to remember is to be flexible. Planning is important, but a teacher needs to be able to quickly modify plans when new situations arise. Also, it’s important to give all you can to your job, but you need to take care of yourself mentally and physically as well!” — Patricia Swiatek, inclusion teacher

**Understand your role in students’ lives:** “There must be a balance between enthusiasm and cynicism for you to survive the long run. If you start out with nothing but optimism and enthusiasm, the kids and or parents will quickly break your heart and spirit. However, if you go in with the understanding that you can’t affect everything about the child and their life but only your small piece of it, then you can maintain both your sanity and drive that makes you want to enter the classroom, even on bad days.” — Nicholas Smyk, paraeducator

**Find a mentor:** “You do not have to reinvent the wheel. Veteran educators are always willing to share their experience and lesson plans with you if you ask for assistance. Don’t shut your door and expect to go it alone. Seek out help from those teachers who are respected by their students and their peers. And when you become one of those teachers, be willing to take others under your wing.” — Laurie Brandon, high school English and social studies teacher

**Manage your classroom fairly and firmly:** “Classroom management is very important. Have fair rules, consequences and rewards. Do not try to be the student’s friend. They need to respect you first and then they can be your friend, like being a parent instead of a playmate. Always keep promises you make to students, and if you tell them you are going to do something as a consequence or punishment, then follow through. If you don’t, they will not respect you.” — Diane Mentzer, library media specialist

**Ask for help, and learn from your mistakes:** “Don’t be afraid to ask for help. Develop relationships where you can be honest and get advice and new ideas. Don’t be afraid of mistakes, and don’t be afraid to make mistakes!” — Kendra Wisenbaker, fifth-grade teacher

**Get advice and support from teachers:** “Be prepared for anything! College courses do not prepare you for the reality of teaching. However, there is a great group of teachers to talk to and look to for advice. That’s what I found when I joined NEA student and then my local when I became a teacher. I’m always thankful that I have that connection to other teachers so we can share our stories and advice.” — Amy (Murphy) Gabriel, fourth-grade teacher

**Build professional relationships within your school:** “Establish relationships with all other employees in the building so that you can observe expert educators in action and also so that you can get help from building maintenance and the cafeteria when you need it. You’ll need all of this help and support at some point! Learn to tactfully address issues with colleagues, and don’t take it to the level of lounge gossip—ever.” — Bev Supanick, ESOL educator

**Make a personal connection with your students:** “First and foremost, you must genuinely love the children. Curriculum, lesson plans, paperwork and tests are all important and necessary, but the real difference is made in that personal connection. One day, I was sitting on the floor adjusting a bass xylophone when my 1 p.m. class arrived. They soon gathered around me on the floor, and I did nothing on my lesson plan. We all connected in a personal way and had a wonderful impromptu class together.” — Janet Sinks, elementary music teacher

**Continue learning to better yourself:** “Join your local association. Become active in that and start working your way through being involved with all the association has to offer. Take advantage of professional development, and continually stay abreast of best practice and research and then implement that in your day-to-day teaching. After a few years of teaching, I’d recommend studying for National Board Certification. I believe it is the road to becoming a better teacher and a leader in the field.” — Roxann Dittmer, special education preschool teacher

**Keep up with the times:** “Never stop learning! I enjoy taking classes to keep up with technology and all the latest teaching trends. It energizes me to be in a group of adults, talking about the things we do every day. I always learn a new tip or strategy for my ‘little bag of tricks.’” — Kim Howe, educational technician

**Don’t let work overshadow your personal life:** “Work to maintain work/life balance. Teaching can be exhausting, overwhelming and difficult, but spending too much time at school and too much time at home doing schoolwork can make it worse. You’ll be a better teacher if you keep that balance.” — Amy Verner, fourth-grade teacher

**Always remember your motivation:** “Constantly remind yourself why you are in the profession. You’re not going to get rich, there are going to be more headaches than you anticipate, and there are going to be times that you tell yourself ‘it’s not worth it.’ If you keep in mind the kids you’re reaching and the difference you can make in one kid’s life, it will be worth it. Focus on your success stories, and don’t focus on the kids that won’t allow you to reach them (for whatever reason). And write down the funny stuff that happens. It’s good to have a drawer full of those things when you’re having a bad day.” — Aaron Frazee, high school social studies teacher.