

Riverview Elementary School

2014 - 2015 Family Handbook



Office Hours

The school office opens at 8:35 and closes at 4:00. There is no supervision for children before 8:35 or after 4:00. Students ***MAY NOT*** enter the building until after 8:35 when the appropriate staff members are available to supervise them.

Attendance Policy

Being present is an important role in academic achievement. If a student is late or absent, they miss valuable academic time that cannot be replaced in the classroom. Under Maryland State Education Code 7-301, each person between the ages of 5 and 16 years of age shall attend a public school regularly during the entire school year. Good attendance is extremely important. Please see that your child is at school every day and on time. The doors open at 8:35. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the breakfast program here if possible. The first bell rings at 8:45. Announcements will begin at 9:00. We expect all students in their classrooms to begin instruction by 9:00. Any student entering the building after the 9:00 bell is late and will be marked late in our attendance system, per BCPS policy.

Absence Policy

The following are Riverview Elementary policies and procedures concerning absences and tardies:

- Your child must attend at least 3 ½ hours in the school day to be counted present for the day. If your child arrives at school after 12:15 they will be marked absent for that day.
- Repeated absences and/or chronic tardiness will result in the school contacting the Pupil Personnel Worker to help assist in improving attendance. Failure to comply on the part of the

parent or guardian may result in legal procedures and fines, as per BCPS policy and Maryland State Law.

- If a child is tardy, they are missing valuable instructional time. The instruction in the classroom begins promptly at 9:00. Any student arriving after the 9:00 bell rings needs to come to the office for a late pass and will be counted tardy. Morning activities are the building block of a good start to the day.
- Students must bring a note to their teacher upon return to school explaining their absence. Please keep in mind that vacations or missing days to go out of town are not excused absences.

Breakfast & Lunch Procedures

Students will be allowed into the classrooms for breakfast at 8:45. Breakfast will be served from 8:45 – 9:00 for all students. The first bell will sound at 8:45.

It is helpful to put student funds on student accounts. This will help the cafeteria manager keep track of funds, limit snacks if indicated and give written notification if funds are low.

Students will be provided the opportunity to purchase a Baltimore County lunch daily. The teachers have a designated lunch-time in their schedules. The lunch schedules are created around academic blocks of instructional time. Any student who forgets his/her lunch will need to see the appropriate cafeteria staff member to provide a loan of lunch money if funds are available. We are encouraging healthy eating habits therefore students are only permitted to purchase one snack per day. We are continuing with our Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program at least 2 days per week. Students will have an opportunity to sample a large variety of fruits and vegetables at no cost to parents. Students will not be taken away from instructional time to retrieve a lunch. The office staff will communicate with the teacher which student's lunch or backpack needs to be picked up from the office.

Arrival Procedures

- Our doors open at 8:35. At this time, students AND parents will only be allowed to enter the building through the front doors. This is to ensure a safe and secure building.
- Please be mindful that there is no supervision before 8:35. Please try to drop your child off as close to 8:35 as possible.

- **Students will enter the building and line up according to their grade level and home room teacher in the gymnasium or the cafeteria.**
- **Kindergarten and First Grade students will report to the cafeteria to line up and be picked up by their teachers at 8:45. Grades 2-5 will report to the gymnasium to line up and be picked up by their teachers at 8:45.**
- **PreK students will be met in the lobby by their teacher, and teaching assistant, to walk to their classrooms.**
- **Please plan on saying your goodbyes in our "Goodbye Zone" in the front lobby. This encourages responsibility and independence.**

Dismissal Procedure

- **Children should not be picked up early on a regular basis. Children will not be released for early dismissal after 3:15 unless it is a true emergency. All requests for early dismissal must be made in writing to the teacher or the school office should be called before 3:00. Teachers utilize every bit of instructional time of the day. Picking up a child early on a regular basis could interfere with his/her instructional program. Repeated early dismissals will result in a Pupil Personnel Worker referral.**
- **If you are having someone else pick up your child, please determine the responsible party as early in the day if possible. All changes should be called into the office by 3:00 if possible.**
- **No child will be asked to wait in the office for dismissal. The office is a busy and hectic place. Safety is our number one priority. The best supervision of students until dismissal time occurs in the classroom by the student's classroom teacher.**
- **Students will not be released to anyone that does not appear on the student emergency card or early dismissal form. As you fill out the paperwork at the beginning of the year, take time to write as many people as you would like to authorize to pick up your child. The office staff will request to see identification if we do not recognize the person picking your child up, or there is no accompanying note.**
- **Children must be picked up by 3:30 every day. Students picked up after our regular dismissal time must be signed out from the office. Repeated late pick up will result in a referral to the Pupil Personnel Worker. Policy states: "Chronic late pick ups can result in contacting government authorities."**

- **For the safety and security of our students we will dismiss in the following order:**
 - **3:25 –Pre-K and K**
 - **3:28 – 1st and 3rd Grade**
 - **3:31- 2nd and 4th Grade**
 - **3:33- 5th Grade**

(Times are approximate)
- **Kindergarten, 1st, 4th and 5th grades will be dismissed from the main lobby doors. PreK, 2nd and 3rd grade will be dismissed from the second set of doors to the left of the main lobby doors.**
- **If a student needs to get his or her sibling they may do so only after he or she is dismissed from class. Please make sure your child knows where to meet the person picking him/her up at dismissal.**

Release of Students During the School Day

- **Students should remain on the school grounds throughout the entire day, unless a parent, guardian, or other designated person signs them out of school. Any student who leaves the school grounds without permission will have disciplinary actions.**
- **All Student emergency forms MUST be updated if any information changes. New phone numbers must be sent to the office as soon as your number changes.**
- **The office needs copies of any court/custody documents that relate to dismissal. In order to sign your child out of school, you must present the office with identification. No one under the age of 18 will be able to sign your child out of school.**
- **Parents are encouraged NOT to take children out of the school early on a regular basis. Parents will be required to sign-out each student that leaves before dismissal. A record will be kept of early dismissals and a conference with the administrative team will occur if needed and a possible PPW referral may result.**
- **In case of an emergency, please call and speak with an administrator or office staff member.**
- **Students will only be released for early dismissal to a parent or another adult other than the parent/guardian with a note or phone call from the parent.**
- **When you visit our school for the first time, you will be asked to present a government-issued photo ID or a driver's license to a staff member in the school office. Your ID will be scanned into the system and your ID will be compared against sexual offender databases throughout the country. If your name appears on any**

of the lists or you refuse to allow the school to scan your ID, you will not be allowed access to the school. Please make sure that every time you visit our school you have identification with you.

Visitors

- **Parents play an important role in their child's education. Continued support of the instructional program and reinforcement of the concepts at home are key elements to supporting a successful school. We have a few guidelines for visiting your child's classroom at Riverview Elementary.**
- **For the safety of your children, anyone wishing to visit/volunteer in the building must complete the required volunteer training course. Multiple trainings are held throughout the year. Volunteer training takes approximately 20 minutes.**
- **Every visitor is required to sign in at the front office when they enter the building after they are buzzed into the building, as per BCPS policy. Safety is a top priority. All visitors need to sign in and receive a badge. If you are in the hallway without a badge, a staff member will ask you to report to the office to sign in.**
- **When you visit our school for the first time, you will be asked to present a government-issued photo ID or a drivers license to a staff member in the school office. Your ID will be scanned into the system and your ID will be compared against sexual offender databases throughout the country. If your name appears on any of the lists or you refuse to allow the school to scan your ID, you will not be allowed access to the school. Please make sure that every time you visit our school you have identification with you.**
- **All conferences with teachers, administrators and other school personnel must be scheduled in advance. Please leave a message in the office 410-887-1428/1429, email the teacher, or write a note to the teacher in your child's agenda. Your child's instructional strengths and weaknesses require thoughtful planning on the teacher or administrator's part. Taking time to prepare for a conference will provide more thoughtful solutions to the issues.**
- **If you have an emergency, speak with a member of the administrative team or office staff immediately at 410-887-1428/1429. We value every minute of instruction time and do not interrupt instruction except for extreme emergencies. We know you appreciate our commitment to your child's instructional program.**
- **Please be patient with the office staff and administrative team, especially during busy times of arrival and dismissal. We will do**

our best to serve each parent and child in a timely manner. Please remember our morning announcements begin at 9:00 and afternoon announcements are at 3:15. These are our busiest times of the day. Thanks for your patience during our busiest times.

Parking Lot/Front Loop

- **UNDER CONSTRUCTION. LOOK FOR NEW PARKING GUIDELINES.**

Phone Use

- **Office phones are not for student use on a regular basis. Our phone number is 410-887-1428/1429. Our fax line is 410-887-1465. We only have two available phone lines for the entire school. Individual student calls should be limited.**
- **Special arrangements for after school activities should be made prior to school. Any changes in a student's schedule should be called in to the school by 3:00.**
- **Students will not be called from class for telephone calls unless it is an extreme emergency. Parents, we ask that you do not call to speak to your child during the instructional day. If you have a message for your child, you can leave it with the office staff, and it will be delivered to your child.**
- **Students may not use cell phones in school for ANY reason during the school day. In case of an emergency, students can come to the office and a staff member will assist them in making an emergency phone call. Cell phones are permitted but must remain off during the school day. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones. Cell phone conversations/texts must take place after school outside the building (students and adults).**
- **ALL CELL PHONES MUST BE TURNED TO SILENT OR OFF WHEN ENTERING THE BUILDING. OUR OFFICE IS A VERY BUSY PLACE; PLEASE DO NOT USE YOUR CELL PHONE WHEN VISITING THE SCHOOL. WE ARE MODELING POLITE BEHAVIOR FOR OUR STUDENTS.**

Textbooks

School textbooks that come home should be covered at all times. Each textbook is very costly, and requires protection against the elements. Math textbooks cost anywhere from \$30 – \$50 each. Please do your part to help keep our textbooks in good shape. Student

textbooks should be kept in their desks, or in their lockers when not in use.

Candy/Gum/Toys

It is not the aim of the school to infringe upon the personal belief systems of families. However, because we manage over 500 students, we must adhere to some policy for items brought from home. Please be cautious about the items that your child brings to school. Make sure their special belongings are not lost or stolen if brought to a large school setting. Many children have similar toys, backpacks, and items that look alike. Please label all your child's belongings prior to the first day of school. There should be no gum or candy brought to school. Other items to leave at home are Gameboys, MP3 players, Yugio cards and other personal gaming items. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Emergency Dismissal Policy

An emergency dismissal form will be sent home to each parent at the beginning of the year. On this form, the parent/guardian will determine their family emergency plan if school is forced to close early. Classroom teachers keep these forms, and will refer to them if we experience an early closure.

If any information changes, please notify the office immediately. In case of emergency it is critical we are able to reach you. Please send the new phone numbers as soon as your number changes.

Homework Policy

Homework is meant to reinforce the concepts already taught in class and to provide additional independent practice for the concepts introduced. It is also used to extend and to enrich the learning environment and build and strengthen study skills. All classes will receive homework Monday - Thursday. Occasionally, long range project will be assigned over the course of the weekend.

Average homework time should be as follows:

Grades 1-3 30 minutes a day for all subjects

Grades 4/5 60 minutes a day for all subjects combined

Student Responsibility

- Note and understand the homework assignment
- Complete assignment and return it to school on the required day
- Obtain homework after absence
- Be responsible with paperwork
- Obtain materials that you need to complete the assignment

Teacher Responsibility

- Set specific homework procedure that is clear to students and parents
- Provide a specific place that homework is posted
- Reinforce good work habits in the classroom

Parent Responsibility

- Provide a regular time and place to do homework
- Help provide materials to accomplish the homework such as pencils, paper, etc
- Limit the amount of television and other activities during homework time
- Monitor homework and assist when needed to reinforce the concept

Emergency Drills

Fire drills are conducted randomly throughout the year to prepare students for a possible emergency situation. Students are expected to line up quietly with their class and exit the building in an orderly manner. Students who are not behaving appropriately during an emergency drill will have a related consequence.

Riverview Elementary will have several emergency drills throughout the school year. We will practice regular fire drills, lock-down drills and severe weather drills throughout the year. The school has a safety plan that is filed with the Baltimore County School system and Police Department. We are doing everything possible to ensure a safe learning environment. For early school closures, or emergency situations, please listen to the local media for late openings or early closings. Remember to update school emergency cards with any new information as needed.

Volunteer Policy

For the safety of your children, all volunteers (helpers, visitors to classrooms, cafeteria, field day, library, field trip chaperones etc.), MUST complete volunteer training EVERY SCHOOL YEAR. Trainings are scheduled on a regular basis and those dates will be posted in the newsletter, on the school website and often will accompany the field trip permission form. No training will be offered 48 hours prior to a trip or event as we need time to process applications. **THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS.** Please plan to attend training early in the school year.

Medication Policy

All medication (prescription, non-prescription, cough drops, tums etc.) are to be given to the nurse. Prescription medications must be given to the nurse by parent/guardian with a medication form completed by your child's physician. Discretionary medications are given by the nurse upon request with the completion of the discretionary medication permission form. Children who suffer from chronic/critical and/or life threatening illnesses sometimes require immediate access to their medications. It is vital that your child, if diagnosed with such an illness (i.e. asthma, diabetes, etc.) and prescribed such medicines, have them available in the nurse's office with doctor's orders for administration. Students requiring these medications who do not have them available must sometimes be transported to the hospital. The decision to transport students to the hospital is made by the emergency medical professionals responding to a 911 call. Parents are notified when/if 911 is called. Please make sure your child's required medications are brought to the nurse's suite no later than the end of the first week of school. Lack of required medications will result in a referral to the Pupil Personnel Worker.

Dress Policy

Although school uniforms cannot be required, we strongly suggest a uniform dress policy. Navy or light blue polo shirts or white button up shirts and khaki pants or skirts are suggested. This will help to develop a sense of pride and unity in our building, as well as eliminating the "I don't want to wear that!" argument in the mornings. Research also proves that schools that have the school uniforms see a decrease in bullying and undesirable behaviors. It is also much less costly to purchase and outfit students. You may purchase these items at local stores such as Target, Walmart or Conrad's, as well as SuperKids Uniform store in Security Square Mall. We encourage students to dress "professionally" for their "job" here at Riverview. Please refer to the Baltimore County Public Schools Behavior Handbook for any questions.

