



Belair K-8 School

“where STEM is an integral part of everything we do”

Parent/Student Handbook 2019 – 2020

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DISCLAIMER: By no means is this handbook all inclusive. It is intended to help parents, students, and school personnel work together. Many guiding statements are included but not all situations and circumstances are addressed.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION FOR STUDENTS

The Richmond County School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities for students. The following person has been designated to investigate any complaint communicated to the Board of Education alleging non-compliance of non-discrimination policies regarding student activities.

*Associate Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction and Technology
864 Broad Street, Augusta, GA 30901 706-826-1000*

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Richmond County School System does not discriminate in employment or services on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or handicap.

Inquiries can be directed to: *Chief Human Resources Officer, 864 Broad Street, Augusta, GA 30901 706-826-1000.*



Belair K-8 School

*3925 Harper Franklin Avenue
Augusta, Georgia 30909
706-821-2766 (phone) /706-220-2403 (fax)*

Dear Parent (s) and Student(s):

On behalf of the faculty and staff of Belair K-8 School, I would like to welcome you to our school for the 2019-2020 school year. It is truly an honor and a privilege to serve as your principal. Each of us at Belair K-8 appreciate you entrusting us with the opportunities to touch and shape the lives of your children.

It is my hope that you will read this Student Handbook and will become familiar with the rules, policies, and procedures of the school so that we will all be able to work together in providing every child with the best possible learning environment and the highest quality of education. It has been prepared to help keep you informed about important dates and activities at our school. Some policies have been updated and other changes have also been made. It is requested that you support the policies, procedures and rules of our school. If you have any questions or need further clarification on anything contained in this handbook, please contact me at 706-821-2766.

We offer quality educational experiences in all content areas along with art, Spanish, music, physical education, Coding, Engineering, STEM, band, orchestra and chorus. We anticipate a great school year and hope that you will take an active and supportive role in your child's life and his/her education. Let me encourage you to stay in close contact with your child's teacher(s) and take the opportunity to volunteer at our wonderful school

Once again, let me take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your help and support!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Josh Workman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Josh Workman
Principal

“In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education.” -- *Supreme Court Justice Earl Warren*

“Every child deserves a champion – an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be.” ---*Rita Pierson*

Belair K-8 School

Belair K-8 Motto: *“where STEM is an integral part of everything we do”*

Belair K-8 Mission: To inspire and prepare our students for life-long learning by providing challenging educational experiences with a strong immersion in STE(A)M Education.

Belair K-8 Goals:

- To improve student achievement in reading, language arts, math, science and social studies;
- To integrate technology into everyday learning activities for students and teachers;
- To develop STEM awareness and skills for all students; and
- To enhance character/values education and instill pride in self, school, and community.

Belair K-8 Vision: To propel all Belair Falcon Scholars by providing a highly functioning learning environment based upon data-driven professional learning communities.

Belair K-8 Beliefs and Values:

- Every students deserves an opportunity for a quality education.
- All children can learn and achieve personal goals.
- Each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs.
- Awareness and understanding of individual and cultural differences contribute to a positive learning environment.
- High expectations courage students to reach high levels of achievement in physical, emotional, social and academic development.
- A variety of teaching methods is needed to meet diverse learning styles
- Teamwork among school personnel, home and community enhances learning.
- It is the responsibility of the home, school and community to model and encourage good character.
- The commitment to continuous improvement is imperative if our school is going to enable students to become confident, self-directed, life-long learners.

“Excellence in education is when we do everything that we can to make sure they become everything that they can.” – Carol Ann Tomlinson

“Education is the key to unlock the golden door of freedom.” ---George Washington Carver

RCSS 2019 – 2020 Academic Calendar

	2019-2020
<i>Holiday (Independence Day)</i>	Thursday, July 4-Friday, July 5, 2019
<i>Preplanning -</i>	Wednesday, July 31- Monday August 5 2019
<i>First Day of School</i>	Tuesday, August 6, 2019
<i>District Wide Early Release and PL</i>	Wednesday, August 21, 2019
<i>Labor Day</i>	Monday, September 2, 2019
<i>Progress Reports</i>	Thursday, September 5, 2019
<i>District Wide Early Release and PL</i>	Wednesday, September 18, 2019
<i>Beginning of 2nd Nine Weeks</i>	Wednesday, October 8, 2019
<i>Columbus Day Holiday</i>	Monday, October 14, 2019
<i>School Based Prof. Learning/Teacher Work Day/Student Holiday</i>	Tuesday, October 15, 2019
<i>Elementary Early Release/Parent Conferences</i>	Wednesday, October 16, 2019- Thursday, October 17, 2019
<i>Report Cards</i>	Thursday, October 17, 2019
<i>Veteran's Day</i>	Monday, November 11, 2019
<i>Progress Reports</i>	Thursday, November 14, 2019
<i>Thanksgiving Holiday</i>	Monday, November 25, 2019-Friday, November 29, 2019
<i>End of 2nd Nine Weeks</i>	Friday, December 20, 2019
<i>Christmas/ Winter Break/Student Holidays</i>	Monday, December 23, 2019– Monday, January 6, 2020
<i>School Based Prof. Learning/Teacher Work Day</i>	Monday, January 6, 2020
<i>Beginning of 3rd Nine Weeks</i>	Tuesday, January 7, 2020
<i>Report Cards</i>	Thursday, January 9, 2020
<i>MLK Holiday</i>	Monday, January 20, 2020
<i>Progress Report</i>	Thursday, February 6, 2020
<i>School Based Prof. Learning/Teacher Work Day/Student Holiday</i>	Friday, February 14, 2020
<i>President's Day Holiday</i>	Monday, February 17, 2020
<i>District Wide Early Release and PL</i>	Wednesday, March 11, 2020
<i>End of 3rd Nine Weeks</i>	Thursday, March 12, 2020
<i>Beginning of 4th Nine Weeks</i>	Friday, March 13, 2020
<i>Elementary Early Release/Parent Conferences</i>	Wednesday, March 18, 2020-Thursday, March 19, 2020
<i>Report Cards</i>	Thursday, March 19, 2020
<i>Spring Break</i>	Monday, April 6, 2020 – Monday, April 13, 2020
<i>Progress Reports</i>	Thursday, April 23, 2020
<i>Exams</i>	Monday, May 18, 2020-Thursday, May 21, 2020
<i>Last Day of School High School</i>	High School Thursday, May 21, 2020
<i>Last Day of School Elementary/Middle School</i>	Friday, May 22, 2020
<i>Memorial Day</i>	Monday, May 25, 2020
<i>Post Planning</i>	Tuesday, May, 26, 2020-Thursday,, May 28, 2020
<i>Graduation</i>	Tuesday, May, 26, 2020-Thursday,, May 28, 2020

Progress Reports

September 6, 2018
November 15, 2018
February 7, 2019
April 25, 2019

Report Cards

October 18, 2018
January 10, 2019
March 21, 2019
May 29-30, 2019

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Coursework submitted by a student must be the student's own, original work. Students shall not cheat on any assignment by giving or receiving unauthorized assistance (parents completing assignments for students etc.), or commit the act of plagiarism. Students who commit such acts are subject to receiving a grade of zero on the assignment in question as well as possible disciplinary action.

Complete information regarding academic dishonesty can be found in the RCSS Code of Conduct.

ADMISSION/REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

1. **Certified Birth Certificate**---A child must be age five (5) on or before September 1 to enroll in kindergarten or age four (4) on or before September 1 to enroll in pre-kindergarten.
2. **Student's Social Security Number** *or* Copy of student's Social Security Card (optional)
3. **Current Georgia Immunization Certificate**---GA Form 3231
4. **Certificate of Eye, Ear, and Dental Examination**
5. **Documentation of withdrawal from previous school** (if applicable)
6. **Legal Custody Papers** (if appropriate)
7. **Current Proof of Residence** (must contain physical address of the property & must be within past 30 days)

AFTER & BEFORE SCHOOL CARE

Childcare is available before and after school at Belair K-8 through the Great Futures Boys and Girls Club of Augusta. Great Futures is available to students from 6:00 am to 8:45 a.m. and for students needing care after from 4:15 pm to 6:30 pm The cost is reasonable. For more information, contact the Boys and Girls Club of Augusta at 706.504.4071.

*****Please note that students who are not part of Prime Time must be picked up before 4:30 p.m. If not, RCSS Public Safety will be contacted. DFACS may also be contacted if we are unable to reach someone.**

ASSEMBLIES

Assemblies will be periodically held during the school year. All school –sponsored programs are under the direction and supervision of the teachers and administrators. Students are expected to enter and exit assemblies in a quiet, orderly manner and to sit in assigned areas. Wild applause, whistling, heckling and/or booing are not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Students who misbehave during assembly programs will be removed.

Students may also be pulled from assemblies to complete academic work not finished in class. Extra events are privileges that are earned.

ATHLETICS

We offer the following sports for students in grades 6-8:

Baseball	Football
Basketball (girls and boys)	Golf
Cheerleading	Track & Field (girls and boys)

All athletes and coaches are bound by the GHSA Rules with regard to eligibility, conduct, etc. (<https://www.ghsa.net>).

ALL student athletes must have a physical **prior** to trying out and participating in any school sport. Teams are under the guidance and direction of the coaches and school administrators. All athletes must have health insurance coverage in order to play any sport.

A Sports Banquet is held annually in May to celebrate athletic accomplishments. Parents of athletes are encouraged to participate in fundraisers to help off-set the costs of tickets for the banquet which is held off-campus.

***For the day(s) a student is assigned to ISS or OSS, he/she **cannot** participate in extra-curricular activities such as sports, clubs, or academic competitions.

For more details, please review the RCSS Athletics Department Rules and Regulations at www.rcboe.rog/athletics.

ATTENDANCE

Regular, punctual attendance is extremely important for success in school. Early sign-outs should be limited to doctor or dental appointments or other unavoidable obligations. Students checking out before 12:30 p.m. or arriving after 12:30 p.m. will be considered absent. A student's yearly attendance is recorded as part of his/her permanent school record.

When your child is absent, please send a note (from parent or doctor) with the child upon his/her return to school. **Teachers are not required to allow makeup work for unexcused absences or frequent tardies.** Generally, if you are only absent the day of a scheduled test/quiz, you are expected to take that test/quiz on the day of your return. Makeup work/tests due to multiple, intermittent absences will be scheduled at the discretion of the teacher. Excessive absences, for whatever reason, invariably cause lower grades.

Early Dismissals: Any student leaving school before the official dismissal time must be signed out by a parent, guardian or designated person. Students will only be released to the persons indicated on the information sheet. School absence due to early dismissal is treated as all other absences when considering credit for schoolwork and awards.

A note from a parent/guardian explaining the reason for absence is required for each absence. This note, signed by the parent, should be submitted to the homeroom teacher upon the student's return to school.

The student is responsible for all make-up assignments within five (5) days if credit is desired. In cases of unexcused absences, the student may not be given credit for make-up work. The Principal shall have exclusive jurisdiction in classifying excuses.

Special Notes: For a student to be marked present for a full school day, a student must be in attendance for one half or more of the school day. Tardies and/or Early Dismissals on 10 or more days will disqualify a student for yearly Perfect Attendance awards.

Official Absence

An absence due to a student's participation in a recognized school activity or performance is officially excused. The student will not be marked absent from school. However, the student is responsible for getting, completing, and submitting **all** assignments according his or her assignment sheet.

Excused Absence

An absence is excused if it is caused by illness, death in the family, or a medical appointment. A note for all absences is required upon the student's return to school. Occasionally a student will be asked to perform off campus in a community production or other activity. This type of absence will be excused **provided the student is not on academic probation and does not have any current grades below 75.**

- Tests, quizzes and regular assignments: These are to be made up at the convenience of the teacher, and **it is the student's responsibility** to contact teachers regarding make-up work. Students who fail to see the teacher and schedule a time to make up missed work may receive a zero for that assignment or test and may not be permitted to make-up that assignment.
- Pre-assigned essays and projects: Since students have advance notice of these assignments, **they are still due on the assigned day even if the student is absent. Please make arrangements to email, fax, or send any essays or projects to the school on the day they are due, even if the student will not attend school that day.**
- **Assignment Request Sheet:** Students who will be out for 3 or more days or who have been sick for 2 or more days may request an assignment sheet using the following procedure:

- *Absences for 3 or more days with prior notice: A parent must write a note asking for permission* from Mr. Workman 2-3 days in advance. Upon the principal's approval, the front office will issue an assignment sheet that the student can take to his/her teachers, requesting advance assignments.
- *Extended absence due to sickness:* On the second day of an absence due to sickness, a parent may call the school and request an assignment sheet. This sheet will be available for pick up in the front office the following day.
- *Please note that most assignments are available on the website. Assignment sheets may contain only information not readily available on the web.*
- **Unexcused--Absences due to vacations, trips, etc., are considered unexcused.**
- **Parent Notes:**
 - 1) A total of 5 parent notes for absences will be allowed per school year.
 - 2) A total of 5 parent notes for tardiness will be allowed per semester (a total of 10 parent excuses).
 - 3) When these excuses have been exhausted, each absence and tardy thereafter will be considered unexcused and no other parent notes will be accepted.

Absences that are considered Special Circumstances (Prearranged)

The principal may grant an approval under special circumstances. These must be **pre-approved** by the principal and documentation may be necessary.

Truancy

Any student guilty of cutting or skipping school is guilty of truancy. Truants break the contract required by the school, as well as county rules. Discipline will be administered following the Richmond County Code of Conduct. Students who are repeat offenders will be referred to a Richmond County social worker.

Absentee Procedure

When the student returns from an absence, **a note explaining the absence is required within three days.** This note must be dated and signed by the parent/guardian. Please include the full name of the student and telephone numbers of where you can be reached during the day. If the absence is for an excused reason, the note goes to the office for attendance records and we will notify the homeroom teacher. The principal must approve any other type of absence. The student is responsible for obtaining missed assignments. **If the parent knows in advance that the student will be absent, the parent should send a note to the principal stating the date and reason for the absence AHEAD OF TIME. The principal will then decide whether the absence is excused or unexcused and will return the note to the student stamped "Excused" or "Unexcused."**

PLEASE NOTE: According to the Attendance Protocol (in Uniform Code of Conduct booklet), a parent may write excuses for no more than five absences per year.

MISSED WORK MAY BE MADE UP FOR ABSENCES. LATE WORK WILL BE SUBJECT TO A PENALTY ACCORDING TO THE DFA LATE WORK POLICY.

EARLY DISMISSAL

If a student leaves school before 3:10 p.m., he or she must provide the office with a note from a parent/guardian with phone numbers where the parent/guardian can be reached to confirm the early dismissal. Notes may be given to the office or to the homeroom teacher on the morning of the day the early dismissal is requested. **Upon returning from a medical appointment, the student must also give the front office an excuse from the doctor's office; otherwise the early dismissal will be unexcused. EARLY DISMISSALS SHOULD BE KEPT AT A MINIMUM.** Dismissal at the end of the day, to avoid traffic, is not acceptable. We request your cooperation in avoiding early sign out of your student from 3:00-3:10 p.m. **AN EARLY DISMISSAL THAT IS UNEXCUSED WILL BE COUNTED AS A TARDY. THESE TARDIES WILL COUNT IN THE TOTALS FOR DETERMINING DETENTION HOURS.**

Tardiness

Punctuality is expected of Belair students. Classroom teachers handle tardiness according to county policy. Excessive, unexcused tardies are viewed as cuts and such cases will be referred to the administration. Being sick and coming to school a few minutes late will not be counted as excused. "A little sick" and "a little late" is still considered a tardy. **Late carpools are also considered an unexcused tardy. BUS TRANSPORTATION IS PROVIDED FOR ALL STUDENTS and should be used if being on time is a concern.**

Note: Students who arrive at school after 9:00 a.m. will be counted as tardy. Tardy students must report to the office to check in and receive a Tardy Slip in order to be admitted to class. **If a student who is a car-rider is tardy, the person bringing the child to school MUST come into the office, and sign the child in.**

The punishment for the first 16 tardies are as follows:

1. after the first 7 tardies, 5 hours of detention
2. after the next 4 tardies (a total of 11), 1 day of out of school suspension
3. after the next 5 tardies (a total of 16), 3 days out of school suspension.

Unless the students have a written valid excuse, or a medical card, the number of late arrivals will go on record as unexcused. If you are delivering students by car, plan to be here prior to 9:00 a.m. so that car pool students are not tardy. Students are expected to be in homeroom by 9:00 a.m. Students whose school bus arrives late will be marked as an excused tardy.

For detailed information regarding attendance, please refer to the *RCSS Code of Student Conduct and Discipline*.

*****Many incentives will be in place for good attendance such as extra recess and computer time, attendance parties, perfect attendance certificates, public recognition, prizes, etc.**

AUTHORITY OF THE PRINCIPAL

The Principal is the designated leader of the school and, in concert with the staff, is responsible for the orderly operation of the school. In case of disruptive, disorderly or dangerous conduct not covered in the Code of Student Conduct and Discipline, the Principal may undertake corrective measures he/she believes to be in the best interest of the student and the school provided any such action does not violate school board policy or procedures.

BUS DISCIPLINE POLICY

Riding the bus is a privilege, and students can be removed at any time for disruptive and unsatisfactory conduct. If bus rules are broken, the student will be subject to the same disciplinary action that would be taken if the behavior had happened on school grounds. All pupils being transported are under the authority of the bus driver and must obey his/her requests.

All school rules, as described in the *RCSS Code of Student Conduct and Discipline*, apply to students riding the bus. The following is a list of general expectations for our students:

1. Students are to be seated at all times while the bus is in motion. At no time should students have heads, hands, arms or feet outside the bus.
2. Students will maintain a low noise level. The bus driver needs to be able to hear while driving.

3. Abusive or obscene language will not be tolerated. Bus drivers will report any student who uses curse words.
4. Students shall not cause or attempt to cause physical injury, threaten bodily harm, or behave in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to a school employee or other students.
5. Students shall not cause or attempt to cause damage to buses. Costs for the damages will be payable by the student and parent.
6. Use or possession of alcoholic beverages, drugs, weapons, or other objects (including toys) which can endanger other passengers is prohibited.
7. Eating, drinking and chewing gum on buses are prohibited.
8. Students should show respect for bus drivers and other students on the bus.
9. Students should be at bus stop on time, load quickly and quietly in an orderly manner, and move away from the bus stop after exiting/unloading the bus.
10. Students are expected to obey the bus rules while waiting for and riding the bus and at the bus stops in the afternoon. Students who do not meet expectations will be referred to the appropriate school administrators.
11. The bus driver is in charge and may assign seats.
12. Students are videotaped while riding the bus in order to promote safety and to enforce good behavior.

CAR RIDER TAGS

Parents/guardians who pick their child up from school in the afternoons must have a Car Rider tag displayed in the front windshield of the vehicle. If you do not have a Car Rider tag, you will be required to park, come inside, show ID, and pick up your child.

CELL PHONES, PAGERS & OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

A student may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion, if the student utilizes a cell phone or other electronic device to engage in bullying, threats or intimidation, or harassment of any form, to create and/or send and/or receive and/or possess and/or transmit to others pornographic or obscene pictures or messages, to create and/or send and/or receive and/or possess and/or transmit to others offensive or humiliating or inappropriate pictures of one's self or others, to engage in academic cheating in any form, to invade anyone's privacy in a locker room, restroom or other place on a school campus or at a school activity or to engage in academic cheating in any form.

If a student uses a cell phone or other device of this nature at school for any purpose other than those related to education, it will be taken from him/her, and turned in to the office with a note containing the student's name, date, and time along with the teacher's name. The device will be held in the Principal's Office until a parent has been contacted and comes to the school and picks up the device. After the second offense of this nature, disciplinary consequences will apply and the device will be kept for a period of 30 days. Upon the third offense, additional disciplinary consequences will apply and the device will be kept for the remainder of the semester or school year—whichever shall first occur.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a student may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion, if the student utilizes a pager, cell phone or other electronic device to engage in bullying, threats or intimidation, or harassment of any form, to create and/or send and/or receive and/or possess and/or transmit to others pornographic or obscene pictures or messages, to create and/or send and/or receive and/or possess and/or transmit to others offensive or humiliating or inappropriate pictures of one's self or others, to invade anyone's privacy in a locker room, restroom or other place on a school campus or at a school activity or to engage in academic cheating in any form.

Please refer to the *RCSS Code of Student Conduct and Discipline* for more details.

CHARACTER EDUCATION

The Character Education Calendar will allow schools to focus on a single quality and provide opportunities to include related traits as a unit of study. The items in parentheses are related characteristics that will be studied during each given month. Each school will determine how best to emphasize, study, and practice the character quality for each month. Our school counselor will provide lessons and activities for students in support of lessons and activities provided by classroom teachers.

A complete list of character traits can be found in the *RCSS Code of Conduct*.

CONCERNS AND/OR QUESTIONS

Students/parents who are concerned about a specific classroom situation should first confer with the teacher. If the issue is not resolved, the student/parent should make arrangements to see an administrator of the school. If the problem is not solved at this time, contacting the appropriate Central Office personnel, such as the Area Assistant Superintendent, would be the next appropriate step.

Parents are encouraged to maintain contact with teachers to ensure maximum progress for their child. Appointments to discuss a student's schoolwork or conduct should be requested in advance through the school secretary so that records can be assembled and reviewed adequately. The office number is 706-821-2766. Certain Early Release days are designated for Parent-Teacher Conferences. Dates for these conferences are listed on another page of this handbook. Reminder notices will be sent home.

CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

One of the most important lessons education should teach is *discipline*. At Belair K-8, we believe it is the shared responsibility of the home and the school to accomplish this goal. It is the training that develops self-control, character, orderliness and efficiency. *Discipline* is the key to good conduct and proper consideration for other people. Good discipline is maintained by recognizing and praising good behavior and taking corrective action when necessary.

Belair K-8 School students are expected to put forth their best effort and to act appropriately at all times in a manner that will promote a safe, orderly learning environment. Any behavior which causes the learning atmosphere to be disrupted or which infringes upon the rights of others in the school will not be tolerated and may subject the student to corrective measures.

Conduct Rules

Good student conduct sets the tone for other positive things to happen in school. As a result, a positive school climate plan has been developed and will be implemented. Parents will be an integral part of the plan and will be directly involved with its implementation. The students themselves play an important role in their own educational programming. In such an atmosphere, the class is neither teacher-dominated nor student-controlled; rather, it is a joint effort to learn, relate, and experience.

Our method of discipline shows the student three things that include:

- 1) What they have done wrong;
- 2) How to solve the problems they created; and
- 3) How to assume responsibility for their own actions.

This method uses logical and realistic consequences and leaves the student's dignity intact. Self-discipline by students is the ultimate goal of the discipline program at Belair.

The following are general rules of conduct for all students at Belair K-8 School during school hours, on a school campus whether or not during school hours, at school activities, whether at home or away, on a school bus, or at school bus stops:

1. Disturbances that disrupt the learning opportunities for others in class are prohibited.
2. Students are expected to obey reasonable commands of all school personnel.
3. Rude, discourteous, disobedient, or defiant behavior is prohibited.
4. Profanity, obscenities, and/or insulting remarks will not be tolerated in school or on school grounds.

5. Threatening and/or intimidating another student or adult is prohibited including such statements as “I’m going to kill you.”
6. Hitting, roughing, fighting, and physical abuse with intent to hurt another student or adult is prohibited.
7. Assault and/or battery on school employee or another student is prohibited.
8. No student shall leave campus without permission from the office.
9. Failure to tell the truth, forging or knowingly using a forged signature, stealing, cheating, and plagiarism (giving or receiving information) is prohibited.
10. Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student.
11. The willful damage or destruction of property is prohibited.
12. Tampering with fire safety equipment and/or setting off a false alarm is prohibited.
13. Bullying in any form is prohibited.

Richmond County Schools Code of Conduct

It is the purpose of the Richmond County School District to operate in a manner that will provide for the welfare and safety of all students who attend the schools within the district. In accordance with that purpose, the Board of Education has adopted a policy which requires all schools to adopt codes of conduct that require students to conduct themselves at all times in order to facilitate a learning environment for themselves and other students. These standards for behavior require students to respect each other and school district employees, to obey student behavior policies adopted by the Board and to obey student behavior rules established at each school within the district.

The school’s primary goal is to educate, not punish; however, when the behavior of an individual student comes in conflict with the rights of others, corrective actions may be necessary for the benefit of that individual and the school as a whole. Accordingly, students shall be governed by the policies, regulations and rules set forth in this Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct is effective during the following times and in the following places:

- during school hours;
- at school or on school property at any time whether or not school is in session;
- off school grounds at any school activity, function or event and while traveling to and from such events;
- on vehicles provided for student transportation by the school system;
- on system school buses and at school bus stops.

Also, students may be disciplined for conduct off campus which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student’s continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process.

Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the Code of Conduct and to be supportive of it in their daily communication with their children and others in the community. Consistent with Georgia law and the mandate of the Georgia General Assembly, all parents/guardians are encouraged to inform their children of the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be charged as an adult.

For detailed information regarding the *RCSS Code of Student Conduct and Discipline*, please visit www.rcboe.org.

******Students assigned to OSS or ISS cannot take part in extra-curricular activities and attend any afterschool functions including, but not limited to, sports, academic competitions, and clubs.***

Authority of the Principal

The principal is the designated leader of the school and, in concert with the staff, is responsible for the orderly operation of the school. In cases of disruptive, disorderly or dangerous conduct not covered in this Code, the principal may undertake corrective or disciplinary measures which he or she believes to be in the best interest of the student and the school provided any such action does not violate school board policy or procedures.

Progressive Discipline Procedures

When it is necessary to impose discipline, school administrators and teachers will follow a progressive discipline process. The degree of discipline to be imposed by each school official will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior of a particular student and will take into account the student's discipline history, the age of the student and other relevant factors.

The Code of Conduct provides a systematic process of behavioral correction in which inappropriate behaviors are followed by consequences. Disciplinary actions are designed to teach students self-discipline and to help them substitute inappropriate behaviors with those that are consistent with the character traits from Georgia's Character Education Program.

Student Support Team

The Richmond County Board of Education provides a variety of resources that are available at every school within the district to help address student behavior problems. The school discipline process will include appropriate consideration of support processes to help students resolve such problems. These resources will include Student Support Teams/Response to Intervention Teams, school counselors, school social worker, behavior analysts, and chronic disciplinary problem student plans.

Parental Involvement

This Code of Conduct is based on the expectation that parents, guardians, teachers and school administrators will work together to improve and enhance student behavior and academic performance and will communicate freely their concerns about, and actions in response to, student behavior that detracts from the learning environment. School administrators recognize that two-way communication through personal contacts is extremely valuable; therefore, they provide information to parents as well as on-going opportunities for school personnel to hear parents' concerns and comments.

Parents and students should contact the principal of the school if specific questions arise related to the Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct specifies within its standards of behavior various violations of the Code, which may result in a school staff member's request that, a parent or guardian come to the school for a conference. Parents are encouraged to visit the schools regularly and are expected to be actively involved in the behavior support processes designed to promote positive choices and behavior.

Georgia law mandates that any time a teacher or principal identifies a student as a chronic disciplinary problem student, the principal shall notify by telephone call and by mail the student's parent or guardian of the disciplinary problem, invite the parent or guardian to observe the student in a classroom situation, and request at least one parent or guardian to attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

Georgia law also states that before any chronic disciplinary problem student is permitted to return to school from a suspension or expulsion, the school shall request by telephone call and by mail at least one parent or guardian to schedule and attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

The law allows a local board of education to petition the juvenile court to require a parent to attend a school conference. If the court finds that the parent or guardian has willfully and unreasonably failed to attend a conference requested by the principal pursuant to the laws cited above, the court may order the parent or guardian to attend such a conference, order the parent or guardian to participate in such programs or such treatment as the court deems appropriate to improve the behavior, or both. After notice and opportunity for hearing, the court may impose a fine, not to exceed \$500.00, on a parent or guardian who willfully disobeys an order of the court under this law.

Georgia law also provides that, under certain circumstances, a teacher has the authority to remove a student whose behavior is in violation of the student code of conduct from his or her classroom if the student repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn or if the student poses an immediate threat to the student's classmates or the teacher. The procedure is detailed in local policy and state law.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Curriculum and instruction will be based on the full implementation of the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE), STEM Frameworks of Instruction, and the RCK12 Curriculum.

- Literacy and numeracy will be the foundation upon which all other courses, projects, skills sets, applications, etc. are built
- Interdisciplinary – formal, physical, life, social, & applied sciences
- Challenging & rigorous curriculum driven by problem-solving, discovery, exploratory learning, active learning to find solutions
- “A meta-discipline” that transforms subject matter by incorporating science, mathematics, technology & engineering
- The force that creates an interest for elementary age students in mathematics and science that provides a foundation for middle school, high school and beyond
- The provider of integration of hands-on, real-world learning tasks, coupled with academic theory, to help students master rigorous math and science concepts
- The building blocks for greater capacity in teachers through content specific, rigorous and ongoing professional development and training
- Use project-based learning to reinforce real world applications.

DETENTION

Disciplinary infractions will result in the assignment of morning detention from 7:45 a.m.-8:45 a.m. Detention procedures are as follows:

1. Report to the front office by 7:45 a.m. The detention teacher will take all students to the detention location. If you are more than 5 min. late you will not be able to serve that morning.
2. Detention is served on the date assigned. Rehearsals, work, etc., are not an excuse for not serving detention. Detention students may be given work activities to do in the school as their detention.
3. Sign out in the detention book after completing your time.
4. If you do not notify the office before you cannot serve a detention, you will be given another hour of detention. In addition, if you are a “no-show” you may also be given additional detention hours.
5. If you accumulate detention hours that are not being served, you will be suspended.

DROP OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Morning Drop-off:

Please enter the drop-off line at the far end of the school. Pull up and stop in front of the doors or where school employees direct you to do so. Please wait until your child has completely exited your vehicle and made it onto the walkway before driving away. Always be sure to check for children before driving away. DO NOT drop your child off in any area other than the drop-off line. Students are not allowed to cross lanes of traffic or parked cars.

If you plan to come into the school with your child, please park in front of the school in a designated parking spot and escort your child(ren) into the building.

If you arrive after 9:05 a.m., you will need to park your vehicle and walk your child into the Front Office, sign him/her in as tardy and pick up a Tardy Slip for admittance to class.

Afternoon Pick-up:

Please do ***not*** come into the school to wait for your child(ren) to be dismissed prior to dismissal time. Parents/guardians should not go to the classrooms to get their child(ren). All car riders will be dismissed at 4:00 p.m. Younger children will be dismissed before older children (elementary before middle). Large numbers of parents coming into the school and waiting for dismissal creates additional noise, distractions, and safety concerns.

In an effort to create a safe and efficient dismissal process, all parents/guardians are encouraged to use the drive-thru pick-up procedure. Two lines may be formed in front of the school. Please be sure your Car-rider ID Card is displayed in your windshield on the passenger side. A faculty/staff member will call inside for your child and will then arrange for your child to safely get to your vehicle. Students MUST wait for a school

employee to tell them when to go to their vehicle. This is a matter of safety for everyone! Students will *not* be allowed to cross the traffic lanes unescorted.

For parents whose children are car-riders, you are welcome to wait on the sidewalk beside the school (near the pickup zone), but you should refrain from going anywhere else in the school prior to the official dismissal time.

EARLY STUDENT DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

On the rare occasion when a child needs to be signed out before the regularly scheduled dismissal time, parents/guardians must come into the Office, sign the student out on the computer at the front desk, and an office worker will call the child to the office for dismissal. Students will **not** be called to the office ahead of time so they can “be ready” when the parent/guardian arrives. Students will **not** be sent out to vehicles. Early dismissals count as tardies as part of the attendance protocol.

EFFECT OF STUDENT HANDBOOK

The policies, rules, and regulations shown in the Belair K-8 School Handbook are regulatory in nature and are not to be construed to give rise to any substantive or vested rights. The Board of Education, the Superintendent, and the Principal reserve the right to amend, suspend, repeal, modify, or revoke the policies, rules, and regulations at any time as to any students or related persons without incurring any obligation with respect to the old or existing policy, rule, regulation, or administrative procedure.

The ultimate administrative responsibility for the school is vested in the Principal who must treat each situation, whether disciplinary or administrative, from the perspective of what is in the best interest of the individual student concerned, the other students in the school, and the ongoing education mission of the school and of the Richmond County School System.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

It is critical for the school to know where parents work, how to reach them or who to call in the case of an emergency. Any change in the status of the above-mentioned should be reported to the child’s teacher or the school office as soon as change occurs.

**** At least one (1) emergency telephone number is REQUIRED for every student.**

EMERGENCY DRILLS AND INCLEMENT WEATHER

Fire drills will be held throughout the year. When the fire alarm is activated, students should quickly walk to the exit as directed by their teacher. Once outside the building, students should assemble in the area as directed by their teacher. Once the drill has been completed, teachers will be given a signal indicating when to return to the building.

Tornado drills will also be conducted. The administrative staff will provide instructions for this emergency procedure.

Lockdown drills will be conducted during the year. The administrative staff will provide instructions for this emergency procedure.

In the event that school is canceled due to other inclement weather, school closure announcements will be broadcast or announced on the following stations:

- **Television: WRDW, Channel 12 News (Augusta); WJBF, Channel 6 News (Augusta); WFXG, Fox 54 News (Augusta)**
- **Local Radio stations**

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS & PROGRAMS

4-H CLUB: To assist youth in acquiring knowledge, developing life skills, and forming attitudes that will help them become self-directing, productive, and contributing citizens. 4-H provides events, classes, activities, and forums at local, state, and national levels. 4-H and Georgia schools have been partners for more than 100 years. All events are planned to enhance positive youth development and education. A full listing of state events can be found at: www.georgia4h.org

All Star Derby---4th grade students will work through the stages of the engineering design process to design, create, test, and race model racecars. All work related to the All Star Derby, as well as the race competition, will be completed at school.

Annual Art Show---The annual Art Show will be held each spring. Each student will have a framed piece of their original art on display. This one-night-only show will provide a wonderful opportunity for family and friends to celebrate success in the arts.

Art Club--- is a place where students who are interested in art can come together and interact with other students with interests in art, be able to work on different art projects, and participate in community service activities. Throughout the year the students will work on pieces over several weeks and create seasonal and thematic crafts as well. This club is for students in grades 3-8.

Chorus: Students demonstrating vocal talents may audition and be selected to represent Belair at various functions and performances. Being part of the Belair Chorus will require afterschool practice and performances, including but not limited to nights and weekends, will require some parent transport, etc. This groups are under the direction of Dr. Phyllis Johnson-Porter and Mrs. Gretchen Salomone.

FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America—Middle Level)---is open to students in grades 5-8. Students will explore careers and delve into business principles with real world activities including job shadow projects, community service activities, and leadership development programs. Students will sharpen their communication, leadership, and teamwork skills, preparing them for high school and the workplace. Students can also attend online and in-person events and conferences to compete against other students or hone their leadership skills through interactive workshops and seminars. Local, state and national dues will cost approximately \$15.00 per student.

First Lego League & Robotics Team---Is open to students in grades 4-8. The purpose of this club is to inspire young people to be science and technology leaders and innovators, by engaging them in exciting mentor-based programs that build science, engineering, and technology skills, that inspire innovation, and that foster well-rounded life capabilities including self-confidence, communication, and leadership.

FIRST LEGO League (FLL) is a global program created to get kids excited about science and technology. FLL utilizes theme-based Challenges to engage kids in research, problem solving, and engineering. The cornerstones of the program are its Core Values, which emphasize contributions of others, friendly sportsmanship, learning, and community involvement. Our mission is to inspire young people to be science and technology leaders, by engaging them in exciting mentor-based programs that build science, engineering and technology skills, that inspire innovation, and that foster well-rounded life capabilities including self- confidence, communication, and leadership. Each annual Challenge has two parts, the Project and the Robot Game.

Working in teams of up to 7 kids and guided by at least one adult coach, team members have about 10 weeks to:

- a. Build an autonomous robot that will, in 2 minutes and 30 seconds, complete pre-designed missions
- b. Analyze, research, and invent a solution for a given assignment
- c. Create a clever presentation about their solution to perform in front of a panel of judges.

Flag Patrol: 7th Grade students are selected to raise and lower the flags in front of the school each day. They are taught proper flag etiquette. Students serve on a rotation basis. Being chosen to serve on this committee is a privilege. Students on this committee must be well-behaved, respectful and be in good academic standing.

Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl: This is for students in Grades 4 through 8 at Belair. Students in grades 4-12 across the state read and are quizzed on the 20 Georgia Book Award Nominees, while high school students read and are quizzed on the 20 Georgia Peach Teen Book Award Nominees. The books change yearly. This group is under the direction of our Media Specialist.

International Night is a fun event that will be held in January where families host a room showing off their cultural background by representing their native country. A cultural display and tasty treats from each country will be available for sampling as families walk around the school exploring the many cultures represented at the school.

Invention Convention--project that will allow 3rd grade students to participate in a long term, problem based, and creativity task. Students will examine real problems in their lives, or the lives of family and friends, and use the engineering design process as they complete the different stages of the Invention Convention process, to create an invention which solves the initial problem. This project will span several months and help students work through a long-term, multi-step project. An actual working invention will be the end goal, but a strong emphasis will be placed on the process which guides students as they take an idea and turn it into a reality.

Journalism and Media Club Students will learn, research, collaborate on, write, format and digitally publish articles about FSA, community events and students' interests. They will enjoy fun and exciting activities while also learning practical journalism, research, interviewing and writing skills to last a lifetime.

Junior National Beta Club---this is open to students in Grades 4 - 8 who meet the academic guidelines set forth by the National Beta Club. This club promotes the ideals of academic achievement, character, service and leadership among elementary and secondary students. The qualifications for membership on the part of the student shall be: (a) worthy, moral and ethical character; (b) exemplary achievement, and commendable attitude. The standards and means for appraising these qualities shall be determined by the administration of the school. All students must be performing at or above grade level in order to be eligible for membership. Beta Club dues are \$25.00 per student.

Math Night will be held once a year in the fall. All students will be invited on a scavenger hunt solving fun math problems and practicing real-world math skills! Students and parents will have a blast as they go on an exciting math adventure! Different questions are given for each grade level, and parents must accompany students.

Math Olympiad Club: In Elementary & Middle School Math Olympiad Club, students will receive enhanced instruction, explore real contest challenges, and may compete as a Math Olympiad team member. The purpose is to promote enriched critical thinking and nurture mathematical talents in our youth through more logic-based problems and creative problem solving strategies with ease and efficiency. Math Olympiad functions much like a football or soccer team, requiring preparation, commitment, coaching and practice throughout the year! These math problems stimulate the mind, enhance pattern recognition, and require logical reasoning capabilities. Students will extend their mathematical knowledge and critical thinking skills acquired in the math classroom with the assistance of coaches, who will guide students through math contest problems during the weekly practices. Math Olympians will be selected from the applicants who apply during the first week of the school. This club includes intense focus on Math competitions. This is for students in grades 3-8.

Orchestra/Strings: Students in Grades 4-8 will have the opportunity to participate in Orchestra/Strings. Students in Grades 4 and 5 will participate for approximately one (1) instructional hour (during the school day) each week. Students in grades 6-8 will participate for approximately one (1) hour each day of the school year. Being part of this group requires dedication to practice on the chosen instrument, local travel and afterschool (including nights and weekends) performances. This group is under the direction of Mr. Robert Browning.

Safety Patrol: 8th Grade students are selected to serve as safety monitors in the hallways before school and after school during dismissal. They assist in keeping the noise levels at an acceptable volume, remind students of school rules (no running in the halls, keeping hands and feet to themselves, walking in a line on the right-

hand side of the hall, etc.), escort groups of students to buses and daycare vans, etc. Being chosen to serve on this committee is a privilege. Students on this committee must be well-behaved, respectful and be in good academic standing.

Science Fair---elementary-aged students will participate in and experience a scientific project. Each science fair project must consist of a student-led scientific investigation following accepted scientific methods. All 4th-8th grade students will be required to participate and will turn in a notebook or journal and a display board or poster. Students may work individually, or in teams of 2-3 with siblings or students in their homeroom. Students in lower grade levels will work collaboratively to create a class project.

Spanish Club---a student organization that teaches Spanish and about Hispanic culture. This club is for Grades K-8.

Spelling Bee---is a spelling competition where students compete in their school against other students and may be able to compete against students from other local and state schools as well as schools from across the country. This is open to students in Grades 3-8.

STEM Buddies---Students in upper grades will pair together with students from younger grades for STEM activities and challenges throughout the year.

STEM Design Challenges---2 per semester; correlated to STEM standards

Student Council for 5th Grade & 8th Grade---elected by 5th grade students and by 8th grade students; are responsible for meeting with counselors to be the voice of the students; will work to keep the school moving forward to fulfill its mission and purpose; will actively work to improve the school both with short and long term goals, while developing organization and leadership skills.

Talent and Variety Show---open to all students. Auditions will be in early January and the show will occur in late January or early February. This will be a family friendly event.

Writing Showcase (Author's Tea)---All students will have an opportunity to showcase their writing. This will be an event during the school year in which each grade level is assigned a month and where each child shares their work with the class, parents and community members.

Yearbook Club---is a unique opportunity for students to combine cooperative teams and individual talents to showcase our school through a yearbook. Students will use journalism skills, creative writing techniques, technology skills, photography skills and design skills to create a one of a kind publication that will be made available to our school towards the end of the year.

FAMILY CHANGES

If the status of a student's custody changes after the student is enrolled, the enrolling parent/guardian or agency shall notify the school of the new address and contact phone numbers. Parents/guardians may be required to facilitate and obtain appropriate guardianship or custody of their child to avoid referral to an outside agency or withdrawal.

The school must have a current address and phone number on every student. In the event that you move, change employment, change phone numbers or contact people, you must notify the office and your child's teacher in writing immediately.

FIELD TRIPS

Students who demonstrate repeated or chronic misbehavior or earn an "F" in Conduct will be required to have a parent chaperone on field trips.

Students may also lose the privilege of attending a Field Trip as a form of punishment. Parents will be notified if this occurs.

Students **MUST** have a signed permission slip (for each field trip) in order to participate in a field trip. Costs associated with field trips are expected to be paid by the parents/guardians.

FUNDRAISING

During the course of the school year, students will have opportunities to participate in fundraising activities. These activities are sponsored by the school, the Athletic Booster Club, and PTO/PTA. Participation is optional. We do **not** encourage students to sell items door-to-door.

GENERAL SCHOOL RULES

ASSEMBLY RULES

1. Enter and leave quietly.
2. Sit in your assigned area.
3. Be courteous during the program (Listen. Do not talk).
4. Show appreciation at the appropriate time by applause only.

CLASSROOM RULES *(These are general rules. Each classroom teacher has his/her own set of rules.)*

1. Listen to and follow all directions given by the teacher.
2. Talk only with permission and at appropriate times.
3. Control unnecessary movement.
4. Do not disrupt class.
5. Be prepared with necessary materials and assignments.

HALL RULES

1. Walk only. No running.
2. Stay in line and remain on the right side of the hall.
3. Be quiet and courteous.
4. Stop at the restroom or water fountain only with permission.
5. Always have a hall pass.

LUNCHROOM RULES

1. Stand in a straight line, not leaning on the wall.
2. Use quiet voices only.
3. Do not play with food.
4. Clean your personal space before you leave.
5. Place trays in the window one at a time.
6. Walk only.
7. All food must remain in the cafeteria.
8. All students are required to get a tray or bring a lunch from home.
9. Students are not allowed to bring fast food items in their original containers.
10. Students should not bring non-nutritional food items, such as cookies, candy, chips, or drinks in place of a lunch. These items included in a lunch from home are acceptable.
11. Student lunches cannot be warmed at school.

PLAYGROUND RULES

1. Use equipment properly and safely.
2. Wait for your turn.
3. Do not throw rocks, sticks, dirt, etc.
4. Put all trash in trash cans. No littering!

5. No running on sidewalks.
6. Play only in your designated area.

RESTROOM RULES

1. Have a hall pass unless accompanied by an adult.
2. Use facilities properly. Flush urinals and toilets after each use.
3. Wash hands before leaving restroom.
3. Behave quietly and safely.
4. Do not place foreign objects or excess paper in sinks or toilets.
5. Do not play in the water.

GIFTED EDUCATION

Richmond County Schools provide programs for all qualifying system students in grades K-12 who exhibit superior performance, advanced learning needs and demonstrate higher level motivation and creativity. The identification process uses multiple criteria as mandated by the Georgia Department of Education.

Students may qualify based on mental abilities and achievement or on three (3) of four (4) components including mental abilities, academic achievement, creativity and motivation or mental abilities alone for grades K-2.

An automatic referral process requires all schools to screen intelligences and achievement test scores on their students twice annually. Students may also be referred by parents, peers, teachers, principals or counselors. Referrals are solicited in May for August testing and in November for January testing. Parents of students referred are notified of test dates two or more weeks in advance by Gifted Program personnel.

Students entering the system who had prior placement in a gifted program will be placed at once if they meet the Georgia Department of Education eligibility requirements. Gifted Program personnel will evaluate those who do not have the required eligibility documentation.

Qualifying students in K-5 are enrolled in a five to six (5-6) hours per week resource program which provides thematic units of study. Qualifying students in Grades 6-8 are enrolled in five or more hours per week inside their core content classes. Parents receive a progress report three (3) times per year.

Parents are invited to an annual review to evaluate student's progress in the program and are provided with the Curriculum Focus for the upcoming year. Continuation in the program is dependent upon maintenance of an overall 3.5 GPA in academic classes, satisfactory performance in both regular and gifted classes, motivation and behavior, attendance, attitude and completion of all assigned tasks. Students who meet these conditions will automatically continue in the program. Students who do not meet these terms at any time during the school year will be allowed a six (6) weeks probationary period. If satisfactory improvement is not shown, the student will be removed from the program. Parents will be notified by letter at the beginning and ending of the probationary period. Students who leave the program will be reassessed and must meet current criteria for reentry.

GRADING POLICY

Students in Grades K-8 are required to perform academically as well as on grade level in all content area classes. There will be four nine weeks grading periods each year.

Standards Based Report Card for Grades K-3

The purpose of the new reporting system is to provide parents, teachers and students with more accurate information about students' progress toward meeting standards. Parents will be more aware of what their children should know and be able to do by the end of each grading period. progress is measured as follows:

The new report card for grades K-3 will include a grading scale (1-4).

- 1 - Beginning Learner
- 2 - Developing Learner
- 3 - Proficient Learner
- 4 - Distinguished Learner

If an indicator is not measured during the grading period, the student will NOT receive a mark on the report card.

How are standards-based report cards different from traditional report cards?

On traditional report cards, students receive one grade for each subject. On a standards-based report card, each of the subject areas is divided into a list of skills and knowledge indicators that students are learning.

Grading System for Grades 4 – 8

A = 90-100 B = 80-89 C = 75-79 D = 70-74 F = Below 70

Report Cards and Grade Reports

Report cards will be issued at nine-week intervals throughout the school year. A parent/guardian's signature is required before report cards are returned to the child's homeroom teacher

All graded class work and tests will be sent home each week. Parents/guardians are asked to examine these materials, sign them and return these papers to the child's teacher(s) the following day. Parents should contact the child's teacher or the School Office immediately if questions or concerns should arise.

Homework

Teachers assign homework as practice for the skills being taught at school. These assignments reinforce what the students are learning each day in the classroom. Thus, it is very important for parents to work with students to complete the assigned homework. Homework is assigned almost every night and can usually be completed within one hour.

Extra Credit

Occasionally a teacher may offer the opportunity for a student to earn extra points or extra credit; however, this is not something we do as a general practice.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

Belair K-8 School has a comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling program with many components. Our school counselors, Shea Beasley and Danese Holloway, are available as a support system to help students experience educational success. Individual counseling, small group counseling, and classroom guidance opportunities are services provided to improve student performance, self-awareness, and interpersonal skills. In addition, the school counselors provide information on careers, study skills, decision-making skills, and other life skills. Through collaboration with educators, parents and community resources, our counselors assist with guiding students through their educational experience to ensure positive results.

HALL PASSES

When leaving a classroom, students must have a Hall Pass or a signed note from his/her teacher showing permission to be out of class. If students are caught in the hallway without a pass, an administrator will be notified. At which time, the administrator will determine if the students left the assigned area (cut class) or if the teacher was negligent in following the policy.

The only exceptions to this rule is in the case of a medical emergency or during the scheduled class changes.

HEALTH ISSUES

Early in the morning it is often difficult to make a decision about whether or not your child is sick enough to stay home from school. With minor symptoms, you often cannot tell whether he/she is going to get better or worse during the course of the day.

The main reasons for keeping your child home are:

- If he/she is too sick to be comfortable at school; and/or
- If he/she might spread a contagious disease to other children.

As a rule of thumb, a child should stay home if there is:

- A fever over 100.4° F;
- Vomiting more than once;
- Diarrhea;
- A very frequent cough;
- Persistent pain (ear, stomach, etc.); and/or
- A widespread rash.

If any of these symptoms occur during the school day, you will be notified and required to take your child home. If the parent cannot be contacted, the emergency number provided will be called. If no contact can be made, the student will be kept in class or in the nurse's station until contact is made or until dismissal time. Home, work, and emergency telephone numbers should be kept up to date with the school office and the homeroom teacher. This is for the safety of your child!

Most of the above listed problems need to be discussed with your child's pediatrician to determine if an office visit is needed. On the other hand, children who don't have a fever and only have a mild cough, runny nose, or other cold symptoms can usually be sent to school without harm to themselves or others.

The following guidelines apply:

- Minor cold or allergy symptoms should not be a reason to miss school.
- If your child's cough is worse than you might expect with a common cold, you may need to consult your child's doctor.
- A single episode of vomiting, without any other symptoms, may not be reason enough for the child to miss school, but be sure the school can reach you if symptoms occur again during the day.
- A single episode of watery diarrhea probably warrants not going to school.
- Children with fever (generally considered to be over 100.4°) should stay home until there is no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications such as Tylenol or Motrin.
- Children diagnosed with strep throat or scarlet fever should remain out of school until they are without fever and have been on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Children with pinkeye should see their doctor. If diagnosed, children should remain home until they have been on antibiotic eye drops at least 24 hours or until their doctor recommends their return.
- Middle ear infections are not contagious to others. Children should stay home if they have fever or pain.
- Children who have been diagnosed with the flu should stay home until symptoms improve (usually 5 to 7 days) or until the doctor recommends returning.
- Impetigo is contagious and is passed by direct contact. The child's physician will recommend the length of time to be out of school.
- Chickenpox is highly contagious. Children with chickenpox must stay home until all bumps are scabbed and no new bumps have appeared for 2 days. Your child is contagious at least 2 days before the rash started, so you need to notify the school and classmates.
- Ringworm is a contagious fungal infection. It may be treated with anti-fungal creams and should be covered during school hours.

- Scabies should be treated immediately.
- Head Lice: It is the policy of this administration that no child should have to endure or cause another child to endure public school nuisances such as pediculus capitis (head lice). Because this human parasitic insect can cause great annoyance to its host (children and adults), school medical personnel will routinely check students for infestation. If the school health professional determines that a student is infected, the student's parents or guardians will be contacted and requested to come to the school for a conference, and to remove the child from school for treatment and remediation of the condition. A student will be checked upon returning to school. The child will not be allowed to return to school until he/she is nit and/or bug free.

Whenever there is doubt about sending your child to school, consult your child's doctor before doing so. A phone conversation may be all that is necessary. You may also call the Children's Healthcare of Atlanta 24-hour nurse advice line at 1-404-250-5437 for advice when your child's doctor's office is not open.

****Remember to send a written excuse when your child is absent due to illness per the Attendance Policy.*

This general healthcare information should not be used as a substitute or in place of contacting your child's healthcare provider. © Children's Healthcare of Atlanta

HOMework

Homework is important. Students in grades K-8 may have homework on a daily basis. If your child tells you every night that he/she has no homework, please contact the teacher.

In the event your child doesn't have homework, he/she should read at least 30 minutes, practice sight words or spelling words, practice basic math skills (multiplication facts, etc.), and/or review material from the day's lessons.

There is overwhelming evidence that completion of homework has a dramatic, positive impact on achievement. If students take an assignment home that is an expansion of the work being done in class, we fully expect them to do it to the best of their ability. It is important that your child does his/her assignments.

The purpose of homework is:

1. To reinforce materials taught at school;
2. To instill in the child a sense of responsibility;
3. And to involve the parent in the learning process.

Homework may be written assignments or other activities such as listening, reading, watching a TV program, doing research, playing an educational game, routine studying such as drill review or memorization. Homework assignments that stimulate thinking and allow young people to make discoveries lead to creative and challenging experiences. The amount of homework will not exceed the student's abilities to accomplish it in a reasonable amount of time.

HONORS AND AWARDS

Student recognition is a valuable part of the school program at Belair. Honors and awards presented to students are as follows:

- **Accelerated Reader Awards** – recognizes students who meet their AR goal with 85% average and one (1) student per homeroom with the most AR points.
- **“A” Honor Roll** – recognizes students working on grade level who earned all A's or S's in all subjects except conduct. This only applies to students in Grades 4-8.
- **“AB” Honor Roll** – recognizes students working on grade level who earned an 80.0 overall average except conduct. This only applies to students in Grades 4-8.
- **Highest GPA in core academic and connections classes** - for students in Grades 6-8.
- **Special Recognitions** – awards for miscellaneous outstanding accomplishments.

- **Perfect Attendance Awards** – to encourage students to be at school every day. [*Tardies and/or Early Releases in excess of ten (10) times will disqualify a student from receiving the Perfect Attendance Award for the year.*]

A separate Sports Banquet is held annually in May to celebrate athletic accomplishments. Parents of athletes are encouraged to participate in fundraisers to help off-set the costs of tickets for the banquet which is held off-campus.

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

Research indicates that one of the factors affecting student achievement is uninterrupted instructional time. Teachers have prepared a full day of instruction for your child. If your child arrives late or leaves early, he/she will miss part of that instruction. If a parent interrupts a class during instructional time, the entire class loses instruction. For this reason, all conferences must be scheduled before school, after school, or during the teacher's planning period.

All visitors must check in at the Front Office before going to any other area of the school. If a parent/guardian wishes to observe in the classroom, arrangements must be with the school 24 hours in advance. Siblings and other small children are not allowed in the classroom while a parent visits, observes or volunteers. Parents are not allowed to interact with children other than their own during these observations. Parents must refrain from correcting, questioning, or disturbing other children for any reason.

It is imperative that instructional time be protected, and it is the intent of the administrators and office staff of Belair to do so.

LOST AND FOUND

Articles that have been found at school should be turned in to the Main Office. Lost articles can be claimed by properly identifying the lost item. We recommend that parents mark all personal items with the student's name so they can be quickly identified and returned to the owner without delay. All unclaimed items will be donated to a charitable organization or discarded.

MAKEUP ASSIGNMENTS

Upon returning to school following an absence, it is the student's responsibility to contact the teacher(s) to request makeup work. The teacher shall courteously and promptly allow the students to make up the missed assignments and tests. The contact should be made on the day the student returns to school unless the teacher allows a longer time. Makeup work must be completed by the student within the time limit specified by the teacher. In the event of an extended absence, student work may be requested by calling the school. The parent will be able to pick up the work at the end of the day following the request. Classwork and tests missed due to unexcused absences may be subject to a 10% grade reduction.

Any student who serves a short-term out-of-school suspension shall be allowed to make up missed assignments and tests. It shall be the student's responsibility to obtain the missed work from the teacher(s) and complete the work within one week of returning to school. The teacher(s) will promptly and courteously allow students the opportunity to make up missed assignments and tests.

MEDIA CENTER

Books are available for checkout daily from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Students may go to the Media Center before and after school, at recess (with a pass from the teacher), and at other times as the individual teachers allow.

Lost or damaged books or magazines are the responsibility of the student who checks them out. **ALL** lost or damaged books/magazines must be paid for by the student/parent who checked the items out of the Media Center.

Any student who fails to or refuses to pay for lost or damaged textbooks, library books, or media materials at the replacement cost shall be denied the issuing of additional textbooks, library books, or media materials, as well as report cards, diplomas, or certificates until full restitution is made.

MEDICAL CARE (SCHOOL CLINIC & NURSE)

There will be a school nurse on duty for several hours each day. All prescription medications should be sent to school in the original prescription bottle that has the doctor's name and pharmacy, the name of the student, the name of the medication, and dosage directions on it. Over-the-counter medications such as Tums or Tylenol need to be sent in the original container as well. The school nurse needs a note from the parent giving permission and instructions for all medications to be administered at school. An *Authorization of Medication Administration* form must be completed for those children receiving daily medications. Students should report to the clinic at the proper time to receive their medication.

The first dose of any new medication should be given to the child by the parent/guardian at home before sending it to the school. We want to make sure the child has no adverse or allergic reaction(s) to any new medication(s).

The school nurse will maintain first aid supplies at the school. Tylenol **WILL NOT** be administered to any student unless the student has a Permission Form on file with the nurse. If your child is not able to swallow a caplet or tablet, you will need to send either a liquid or chewable form of the medication for the nurse to administer.

If your child suffers from asthma and requires an inhaler or special medication, parents are required to provide the Principal or his designee a statement or copy of the prescription from the student's physician specifying the name of the medication and its purpose in order for the student to have this medication on his/her person at school while participating in school-sponsored activities, while under the supervision of school faculty/staff members, or while participating in before or after-school activities and to administer the medication to him/herself.

It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian of a student to inform the school of any changes in dosage, time of dispensing, etc. If a question arises about the medication, the parent and/or physician whose name appears on the prescription will be called for clarification.

Health Concerns and Issues:

Parents should inform their child's teacher of any health problems that the student has. These health problems include, but are not limited to, asthma, blood disorders, seizures, food allergies, substance allergies, medication allergies, reaction to bee stings, etc. If a child is on any daily medication for a certain medical condition or has special medication for an emergency-type situation, the school, especially the child's teacher(s), needs to be aware of these conditions and provided with the appropriate medication(s).

Chicken Pox, Mumps, Measles, Head Lice, Scabies and Ringworm are just some of the extremely contagious diseases that appear at school from time to time. If your child contracts one of these contagious diseases, we would ask that the child remain out of school until he/she is free of the disease and fever before returning to school. If your child is found to have one of these diseases while at school or the child returns to school before the disease runs its course, you will be contacted and asked to pick up your child from school.

Health and Immunization Records:

State law requires that each student have proof of proper immunization of childhood and/or other diseases. All students must present a statement from the Health Department or a doctor, which indicates that all immunizations are up-to-date. Students whose immunization records are not current will be unable to enter school until this situation is rectified. All children entering the 6th Grade will be required to have the chicken pox vaccination or proof of immunity.

For more information or to get **Form 3189**, contact the local Health Department or your doctor.

Using Prescription Auto-Injectable Epinephrine:

Like asthma medication, a student may carry or possess and self-administer a prescription auto-injectable epinephrine while in school, at a school-sponsored activity, while under the supervision of school

personnel, or while in before school or after school care on school operated property. Under Georgia law, however, a student is only permitted to do so if the student's parents or guardians fulfill the following:

- (a) Provide the school with a written statement from a physician appropriately licensed under Georgia law detailing the name of the medication, method, amount, and time schedule by which the medication needs to be taken, and confirming that the student is able to self-administer the auto-injectable epinephrine; and
- (b) Provide the school with a written statement by the parent or guardian consenting to the self-administration, and
- (c) Providing a release for the school nurse or other designated school personnel to consult with the physician regarding any questions that may arise with regard to the medication, and releasing the school system and its employees and agents from civil liability if the self-administering student suffers an adverse reaction as a result of self-administering auto-injectable epinephrine.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a student may be subject to disciplinary action if he or she uses auto-injectable epinephrine other than as prescribed or violates any of the other provisions in this handbook which apply to the possession, use, transfer, or sale of prescription drugs with the auto-injectable epinephrine.

PROGRAMS & OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE STUDENT LEARNING

In addition to a structured curriculum in all content areas. Belair offers the following supplemental instructional programs and opportunities to assist students in learning. This list is not all inclusive:

- **Accelerated Reader**---A program used as an incentive for students to read and to increase student comprehension for students in grades K-5.
- **iReady**---A computer-based program designed for individual students needs in reading and math. This program is used at school to support instruction and enhance students' knowledge and skills. It is also available for use at home. This program monitors students' performance and makes adjustments to instruction based on students' performance.
- **Locally developed benchmarks**---Tests administered three times each school year in order to monitor student progress and inform teachers of student performance and needs.
- **MyOn**---A personalized literacy environment that incorporates:
 - A state-of-the art learning platform
 - Enhanced digital reading content
 - Daily news articles written for students
 - The Lexile® Framework for Reading
 - Cutting-edge literacy tools
 - Embedded metrics to monitor activity and growth
- **Brain Pop/Brain Pop, Jr.**---Provides engaging learning games, animated movies and activities designed with relevance, depth and humor to encourage student learning. Students are challenged to reflect, make connections, and engage in deeper, curiosity-driven learning.
- **STAR Reading**---A progress monitoring piece used to place students on appropriate Reading levels for Accelerated Reader.
- **Study Island**---An online supplemental skill builder used to provide supplemental instruction/skills in Reading and Math for grades K-5. This program is accessible from home.

PROMOTION, PLACEMENT AND RETENTION POLICY

K-8 Promotion Requirements

ELEMENTARY (K-5)

A student shall be promoted when, in the professional judgment of the teacher/s and the principal and other professional school staff, he/she has successfully mastered the identified instructional standards of Georgia Public Schools (K-5) and Richmond County Board of Education.

State Promotion Requirements

- No third grade student shall be promoted to the fourth grade that does not achieve grade level on the state-adopted assessment and meet the local promotion standards and criteria established by The Richmond County Board of Education*
- No fifth grade student shall be promoted to the sixth grade that does not achieve grade level on the state-adopted assessment and meet the local promotion standards and criteria established by The Richmond County Board of Education*

Additional Richmond County Promotion Requirements

Kindergarten

To meet promotion requirements, a student must master essential standards for Language Arts and essential standards for Mathematics as identified on the Richmond County Board of Education report card.

Grades First through Third

To meet promotion requirements, a student must master essential standards for Language Arts, Math, Science, Health and Social Studies as identified on the Richmond County Board of Education report card.

Grades Four and Five

In addition to State Promotion Requirements in grades third and fifth, students in grades first - fifth must:

- a) Obtain a passing grade on the report card in Mathematics and Language Arts; and
- b) Obtain a passing grade on the report card in two of the following: Social Studies, Science and/or Health.

MIDDLE SCHOOL (6-8)

A student shall be promoted when, in the professional judgment of the teacher/s and the principal and other professional school staff, he/she has successfully mastered the identified instructional standards of Georgia Public Schools and Richmond County Board of Education.

State Promotion Requirements

- No eighth grade student shall be promoted to the ninth grade that does not achieve grade level on the state-adopted assessment and meet the local promotion standards and criteria established by The Richmond County Board of Education*

Additional Richmond County Promotion Requirements

To meet promotion requirements, students in grades six through eight must:

- a) Obtain a passing grade on the report card in:
 - Mathematics
 - Language Arts
- b) Obtain a passing grade on the report card in at least one of the following:
 - Social Studies
 - Science
- c) Obtain a passing average in at least half of all connections courses.

Communication for Grades K-8

If a student is not meeting the above requirements, the parent/guardian will be notified in the following manner:

1. Midway through the first nine weeks (4 1/2 weeks of instruction): A parent conference should be held to discuss strengths and weaknesses and offer suggestions for student improvement. A parent conference shall be scheduled to develop an educational plan for each student experiencing difficulties.
2. End of second nine weeks (18 weeks of instruction): At the end of the second nine weeks, the report card and the report card envelope will indicate with a check mark when the student is not making satisfactory progress toward promotion. The report card envelope will also indicate promotion difficulties. A parent conference must be held for each student not making satisfactory progress toward promotion.
3. End of third nine weeks (27 weeks of instruction): At the end of the third nine weeks, the report card and report card envelope will indicate with a check mark when the student is not making satisfactory progress toward promotion. The report card will also indicate promotion difficulties. A parent-teacher conference shall be held at this time to evaluate student progress in order to determine improvement needed to meet promotion requirements.
4. End of the school year-fourth nine weeks (36 weeks of instruction): Conference must be scheduled for all students who are not meeting promotion requirements. The parent/guardian of a student who has been retained will be notified in the final report card.

In addition to the communication described here, when a student does not perform at grade level in grades levels 3, 5, and 8 on the state adopted assessment (s) specified above the school system will also follow communication guidelines and procedures outlined by the Promotion, Placement and Retention State Rule 160-4-2.11 adopted November 6, 2014 and effective November 27, 2014.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROPERTY

Students are personally responsible for textbooks, computers, iPads, library books, instructional materials, and desks assigned to them. Students must pay for any damages. Assessment of damage will be determined by the school administration. However, elementary school students who fail or refuse to pay for lost or damaged textbooks, library books, or media materials at the replacement cost shall be refused additional textbooks, library books, or media materials and will have their report cards, diplomas, certificates, etc. held until the restitution has been paid in full.

RETURNED CHECK POLICY

In order to protect the school from returned checks, all returned checks will cost the person writing the check a fee of \$30.00 or more through (Envision) our check recovery system.

SAFETY

A sincere effort has been put forth to make our school as safe as possible. Protective measures and procedures have been established with the safety of each child in mind. In order to enhance safety, everyone must abide by the following:

1. All exterior doors and lobby doors are locked.
2. To enter the building, visitors must buzz the office and ask for admittance. From there, visitors may enter the Front Office to sign in and receive a Visitor's Pass.
3. Students will not be released to persons who are not listed on the student's information sheet. Persons picking up students will need to be prepared to show ID.
4. Tornado drills, fire drills and other safety activities are conducted frequently to enhance safety.
5. Blocking the bus area, driveways and fire lanes is restricted.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Emergency Drills: Regular monthly emergency drills will be held throughout the school year so students will be trained and prepared to respond properly in the case of an emergency.

Field Day: The P.E. teacher may organize and conduct a school-wide field day, by grades, during the month of May involving students and teachers in outdoor physical activities.

Field Trips: Field trips for all classes are encouraged and scheduled in order to enrich the curriculum and to provide first-hand experiences for the students. Students must bring permission slips, signed by the parent/guardian, in order to participate in these activities.

School Parties:

- PreK – 2nd Grade will be allowed to have parties to celebrate Christmas, Valentines, Easter, and the end-of-the-year.
- Grades 3 – 5 will be allowed to have parties at Christmas and the end-of-the-year.
- Valentines may be exchanged in Grades 3-5.
- Student Birthday Parties: If parents plan to provide refreshments for their child's birthday, this should be discussed and arranged with the child's teacher ahead of time and may only take place during the last 30-60 minutes of the school day.
- Balloons and flowers are NOT allowed at school.
- Food items should NOT be homemade.
- Be sure to inquire about food allergies PRIOR to bringing food to share with your child's classmates.
- Birthday party invitations will NOT be distributed at school unless everyone in the class is receiving an invitation.

8th Grade Dance:

8th graders will have an annual dance in May of each school year. Only Belair students may attend. School administrators hold the right to revoke attendance privileges due to school misbehavior.

This is NOT a prom. It is not necessary, nor is it recommended, for parents to rent tuxedos, limousines or purchase formal dresses for this dance.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

School councils are designed to provide advice, recommendations and assistance, and represent the community of parents and businesses. The Council must consist of at least seven (7) members. The Principal, two (2) teachers, and four (4) parents will serve on the Council.

SCHOOL FOOD SERVICES

- All students will eat breakfast and lunch at no cost to parents/guardians at Belair.
- Breakfast will be served from 8:45 – 9:00 a.m. each morning for students in Grades PK-5.
- Lunch is served daily from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Classes are scheduled individually.
- Parents are welcome to eat with their child in the cafeteria as their schedule(s) allow.
- Commercially prepared foods should not be brought to the school by parents for a student's meal. ***"Fast food" is NOT allowed in the Cafeteria.***
- Beverages brought into the lunchroom must be in a plastic container or can. ***No glass containers!***
- Students will not be served tea from the cafeteria.
- Students are expected to use good table manners at all times and to assist with keeping the lunchroom clean.
- Lunches will be prepared for ALL field trips.

SCHOOL INSURANCE

School insurance is available to all students wishing to purchase it. A form will be available for each student at the beginning of school. Purchase of this program is optional.

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER

School social work services are offered to all Richmond County students and families. Requests for services may be made by referral. School social workers assist both parents and students with problems related to attendance, health, behavior, economic or social problems and hospital/homebound activities. Social workers coordinate referrals to other community agencies when necessary.

STATE AND STANDARDIZED TESTING

State mandates require student participation in a wide array of assessments. The purpose of the testing program includes monitoring student progress, assessing program effectiveness, planning for instructional improvement, and making placement decisions for special programming. Several of the assessments are utilized as part of the system's promotion/retention policy. The following specific tests will be administered at Belair during the 2018-2019 school year:

- Kindergarten: GKIDS
- Grades 1 and 4: Cog AT (Cognitive Abilities Test)
- Grades 3 – 8: Georgia Milestones Assessment
- Grade 8: End of Course (EOC) Assessment in Algebra I, American Government, Physical Science.

The state assessment program requires that students in kindergarten take the GKIDS and students in Grades 3-5 will take the Georgia Milestones Assessment. Individual test results will be provided to parents as soon as possible after the results are returned to the school. GA Milestones results will be used to guide and direct us in our instructional planning and a part of the Richmond County School System's Promotion/Retention policy.

The school Principal or Assistant Principal(s) shall annually notify parents or guardians that placement or promotion of a student into a grade, class, or program will be based on the academic achievement of the student on criterion-referenced assessments and other criteria established by the school. Promotion and retention of students in Grades 3 and 5 are based on meeting standards on the required portions of the GA Milestones Assessments.

End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments

Local school systems shall assess students at the completion of core high school courses specified by the SBOE, in accordance with O.C.G.A. 20-2-281 (a), to measure student achievement in the four content areas of English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.

1. With the exception of the following courses, Ninth Grade Literature and Composition, Algebra I, Coordinate Algebra, and Biology, a student shall be exempt from taking the end-of-course assessment for a core subject course if he or she earns a post-secondary credit in that course through dual enrollment pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-149.2 or 20-2-161.3. Postsecondary grades earned, in this situation, shall be used in the state accountability system. *All students enrolled in Ninth Literature and Composition, Algebra I, Coordinate Algebra, and Biology must take the EOC.*

S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)

The Many Benefits of STEM Learning

The good news is that STEM covers a multitude of necessary skills: hands-on, critical

thinking, problem solving, student-driven, creativity, innovation, collaboration, inquiry, leadership, and teamwork. STEM integrates the curriculum—teachers are no longer just presenting a math lesson, then a science lesson, then a reading lesson, etc. Classrooms are implementing units or themes centered around different science subject matter. For example, kindergarteners are learning about structure and design through literature such as *The Three Little Pigs*. The story is read and students ask questions such as how could those little pigs have built a more secure structure so that nasty wolf couldn't have blown down those poorly constructed houses? Then students design and build their own structure and the big bad wolf (accompanied by a leaf blower/hair dryer) tries to blow it down. All content area subjects are needed for this unit: reading and writing are required for the basic premise and design, math is needed to calculate measurements or supplies, soft skills such as collaboration and communication are needed to build the structures, technology can be used throughout by videoing before and after attempts so students can go back and redesign—all under the umbrella of a science-driven theme. Students are engaged and problem solving throughout, and they love it.

Another benefit of STEM education is brain development. The human brain functions best by making connections. The brain needs both socio-emotional and cognition to function. STEM teaches many soft skills such as teamwork, problem solving, communication, and self-confidence.

STEM also allows for hands-on experiences for students. Using more sensory experiences maximizes these connections and takes the learning process to a higher level. This kind of engagement and integration stimulates brain development, allowing for more depth in a shorter amount of time. The earlier that STEM can be brought into the classroom, the better—it can lay the foundation for optimum learning and brain growth.

Everything on this planet is somehow related to science—most decisions and designs involve some type of STEM. STEM education is all about creating innovative, critical thinkers in a global society. It strives to integrate these concepts to make learning more meaningful and engaging. In doing so, students will be able to ask questions, problem solve, obtain, evaluate, and interpret information, as well as have the perseverance needed to get the job done.

STEM Labs- are special places where students are able to explore their world using a hands-on learning approach. Students at our school will experience the STEM Lab one or more class periods each week.

Lessons are approached from a comprehensive variety of learning experiences including problem based, project based, and inquiry based learning activities. Our students are encouraged to engage in authentic scientific inquiry and problem solving using real world experiences. Elements of Technology, Math, and Engineering are integrated into lessons at every grade level.

Through group work and various creative projects, we also offer many opportunities for students to improve their 21st century skills: Creativity and Innovation, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Communication and Collaboration, Global Awareness, Initiative and Self-direction, Flexibility and Adaptability & Effective Interaction with others.

Classroom Integration- Our classroom teachers and STEM Labs also collaborate on longer term projects. Additionally, our classroom teachers integrate Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math into their daily schedules. Each grade level has the flexibility to integrate these topics in a manner that is appropriate to the learning needs of their students.

Computer Programming/Coding & Engineering---On a rotating nine-weeks basis, students will be given opportunities to learn computer programming and engineering starting in Kindergarten and building in rigor with each grade level.

STEM Skills:

- Using analytical skills to research a topic, develop a project and timeline, and draw conclusions from research results;
- Using science skills to break down a complex scientific system into smaller parts, recognize cause and effect relationships, and defend opinions using facts;

- Using mathematic skills for calculations and measurements;
- Attention to detail by following technical directions, recording data accurately, formative and summative assessment;
- Technical skills, troubleshooting, repairing, and utilizing software and modern equipment;
- Communication and cooperation skills to listen to others' needs or interact with project partners;
- Teamwork skills for successful project completion;
- Creativity to solve problems and develop new ideas;
- Leadership skills to lead projects or help others;
- Organization skills to keep track of lots of different information;
- Time management skills to function efficiently.

Focus on 21st Century Skills

- Core subjects and 21st Century themes
 - Global awareness
 - Financial, economic, business, and entrepreneurial literacy
 - Civic literacy
 - Health literacy
 - Environmental literacy
- Learning and innovation skills
 - Creativity and innovation
 - Critical thinking and problem solving
 - Communication and collaboration
 - Information, media, and technology skills
 - Life and career skills

Soft Skills---personal qualities, habits, attitudes and social behaviors that make an individual a good employee.

- Verbal/written communication skills
- Leadership skills
- Organization skills
- Curiosity & imagination
- Technology experience
- Teamwork skills
- Time management
- Following directions
- Desire to learn
- Creative problem-solving skills

STUDENT DRESS CODE

Students are expected to dress and groom themselves in a neat, clean, and tasteful manner. All students shall maintain their appearance so as not to unreasonably distract, disrupt or interfere with the instructional process or the orderly operation of the school. Children should come to school in clothing that is comfortable and suitable for all school activities. In the selection of clothes, parents are urged to use good judgment and select clothes that are appropriate for school.

The following are acceptable and expected:

- All shirts and blouses tucked inside pants, skirts and shorts.
- Appropriate shoes must be worn at all times; Tennis shoes should be worn when participating in the school's physical education (PE) program.
- Shoelaces should be tied at all times.
- Pants with holes or cut-outs are permissible **only** if the holes/cut outs are lower than mid-thigh.

- Tights and leggings *only* when worn under skirts or dresses at the appropriate length.
- All pants, jeans, shorts, etc. must be fastened at the waist at all times and are to be worn at the appropriate waist level.

The following are NOT acceptable:

- Slide style flip flops/shower shoes;
- Clothing or accessories advertising alcoholic beverages, drugs, tobacco, or weapons;
- Clothing, hats, hairstyles or accessories containing inappropriate language, messages or designs;
- Sun dresses, tank tops, tube tops, halter tops, see-through shirts, fishnet or mesh material shirts, crop-tops, one-shoulder or off-the-shoulder blouses, and blouses with open backs;
- Shirts, tops, blouses, or sweaters which show cleavage;
- Bare midriffs – all shirts, blouses, etc. must cover the top of pants, slacks, shorts, etc., whether standing or sitting;
- Pants, shorts, skirts, etc. with writing on the buttock area, as well as lace-up legs;
- Any clothing item that is too tight or loose;
- Any clothing item that is too short (shorts, skirts, and dresses must be as long as the length of the middle finger when hands are down by the student’s side AND at least mid-thigh);
- Any clothing item that shows a student’s undergarments;
- Baggy or sagging pants;
- Heeled and/or high platform shoes (unsafe and inappropriate on normal school days or events);
- Combs, picks, hairnets, scarves, bandanas, headbands, hair rollers, etc.;
- Bandanas (colored or white) at any time or on any part of the body;
- Hats, caps, stocking caps, dew rags, etc., except on special designated “Hat Days”;
- Sunglasses or shades inside the building;
- Visible body piercings other than earrings;
- Extreme colored or dyed hair that causes a disruption to the instructional process in the classroom.

The school administration reserves the right to delete or add to the specific guidelines concerning the Student Dress Code as the need arises to address the ever-changing issues related to changing fashions.

Should a question arise concerning the appropriateness of a student’s dress, the school administration reserves the right to determine what they deem as appropriate and what is NOT in regards to the disruptive nature of the clothing, dress, adornment, etc. to the educational process.

***Continuous violations of these regulations will result in disciplinary action.

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM (SST) and RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI)

The Student Support Team (SST) is a regular education, problem-solving process at Belair K-8 School. Student Support Team committees are established to review referrals of students who are experiencing academic and/or behavioral difficulties. The purpose is to provide support to students, parents, and teachers with the outcome being improved student performance. SST committees may include an administrator, counselor, regular education teacher, special education teacher, school social worker, parent, school psychologist, and others, as appropriate for the case under review. The Student Support Team seeks to identify specific needs of individual students and plan alternative instructional strategies for children prior to or in lieu of referral for special services.

Response to Intervention (RTI) is the process of aligning appropriate assessment with purposeful instruction for all students. It is a tiered approach that provides layers of intervention for students needing support requires a school wide common understanding of the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards

(CCGPS), assessment practices, and instructional pedagogy. Belair's RTI process includes several key components:

- A 4-Tier delivery model designed to provide support matched to student need through the implementation of standards-based classrooms.
- Evidence-based instruction as the core of classroom pedagogy.
- Evidence-based interventions utilized with increasing levels of intensity based on progress monitoring.
- The use of a variety of on-going assessment data to determine which students are not meeting success academically and/or behaviorally.

Students requiring interventions to meet individual learning expectations will receive support through a systematic and purposeful process.

TECHNOLOGY

Students in Grades K-2 will have an iPad to work on during the school day. They will not be allowed to take the devices home. Students in Grades 3-8 will have a laptop to use during the day and will be allowed to take the device home. Students are required to take care of the devices at all times.

Students and parents/guardians will be required to sign a Technology Agreement before the devices will be issued. Devices that are taken home must be charged overnight so they are ready for use at school. Devices, chargers, and cases must be brought to school every day.

Damage to the devices will result in fines. Failure to pay fines, repeated damage to the device, and/or violation of the RCSS Acceptable Use Policy will result in a student not being allowed to use the device other than at home or during school hours.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are free of charge, but children and parents are held responsible for their proper care and use. Lost books must be paid for before we can issue your child another book. Refunds will be made if the book is found at a later date. Textbooks costs are based on the age and condition of the books when lost. Report cards will be withheld at the end of the year if lost books have not been paid for.

TITLE I PROGRAM

Title I is a federally funded program designed to provide additional educational services in designated schools to students in core curriculum. There are two types of Title I programs: Targeted Assistance and School-wide. Belair has carefully developed an instructional plan to provide a research-based, well sequenced, and timely improvement program. Parents are encouraged to become involved in parent activities held throughout the year. Questions regarding Title I program services may be directed to the Principal, Assistant Principal or to the Program Director at the RCSS Board Office 706-860-1000.

TRANSPORTATION

Parents should instruct students before they leave home as to where to go in the afternoon and should refrain from calling the school office to make arrangements unless it is an emergency.

Transportation changes must be provided to the school office in written form. Written, signed notes may be sent with the student, delivered to the school office during the day (before 3:00 p.m.) or faxed to the school office at 706-220-2403. Emails or text messages to your child's homeroom teacher are also acceptable.

Telephone calls will not be accepted except in case of extreme emergencies. In case of an emergency, parents/guardians must speak with an administrator in order for transportation changes to be made over the telephone.

If a written, signed note is not received and no emergency change has been approved, the student will go home the regularly scheduled way.

Our students are young, and it is very confusing when they have more than one way or one place to go home to. Please try to arrange for your child to go home the same way and to the same place each day or use a set schedule for every week.

Students will **not** be removed from buses after they are loaded or have left the school.

VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS

Belair encourages parents to visit the school, but with prior notice. "Drop - in" visits are not appropriate. Anyone visiting a classroom or a teacher (by appointment) must report to the front office to obtain a visitor's pass. Please do not go directly to a teacher's room. Remember that teachers cannot conference in front of other students. Please call the assistant principal's office to make appointments for parent conferences.

Volunteers are invaluable in helping to meet the needs of students and staff. They offer positive influences to promote character and well-being. They assist our school in many ways, such as reading to students, working with student classroom activities, coordinating school-wide student activities, and assisting with media center materials. Parents/guardians are encouraged to be active participants at Belair.

For parents whose children are car-riders, you are welcome to wait on the sidewalk beside the school (near the pickup zone), but you should refrain from going anywhere else in the school prior to the official dismissal time.

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"In early childhood you may lay the foundation of poverty or riches, industry of idleness, good or evil, by the habits to which you train your children. Teach them right habits then, and their future life is safe." ---Lydia Sigourney

"At the desk where I sit, I have learned one great truth. The answer for all our national problems - the answer for all the problems of the world - comes to a single word. That word is "education". ---former President Lyndon B. Johnson

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS TO PARENTS

1. Please do not allow your child is not to bring dangerous or distracting articles to school, such as toy guns and knives, water guns, toys, radios, jewelry, etc.
2. Place names on all articles of outer clothing (coats, gloves, hats, caps, sweaters, raincoats, etc.)
3. The school maintains a lost and found box. Please feel free to investigate if your child loses or misplaces something.
4. Instruct your child never to converse with a stranger, never to accept a gift from a stranger, and never to get into a car with a stranger.
5. Your child must have plenty of sleep (8 hours or more) each night for him/her to do good school work.
6. If there is something that you want to know about school, if something happened at school that worried you or your child, if there is a misunderstanding, or if you need more information for any reason, see your child's principal.
7. Visit your child's school. You, as a parent, are not only welcome at school, you are urged to visit. It is highly desirable that you attend the various meetings.
8. You will also want to know your child's teacher. If you wish to confer with a teacher, please call the school and make an appointment. You should not take his/her class time to discuss an individual problem.

IDEAS FOR HELPING YOUR CHILD

Parents can do their part to improve homework when they:

1. Cooperate with the school to make homework effective.
2. Provide your children with suitable study conditions (desk or table, lights, books, and supplies).
3. Reserve a time for homework. Turn off the television and cell phones.
4. Encourage your children, but avoid undue pressure.
5. Show interest in what your children are doing, but do not do the work for them.
6. Understand that the school expects homework to be completed and returned.

Children will improve their study habits by observing the following:

- Study conditions should include good lighting, ventilation, and quiet.
- Be sure you understand each assignment.
- Form the habit of using a certain time and place for study.
- Try to develop the skill of working independently.
- Have necessary materials at hand.
- Spend enough, but not too much time on each subject.