

# Blythe Elementary School

*“We are fierce about learning”*



## Parent/Student Handbook 2025 – 2026

*Mrs. Tammy Hendley, Principal*  
*Dr. Sandra Jones, Asst. Principal*  
*Dr. Shontier Barnes, Area Asst. Superintendent*

290 Church Street, Blythe, GA 30805  
706-592-4090 (phone)/706-592-3708 (fax)

**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.**

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**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.*



***The History of Blythe Elementary School***

The first school to serve the Blythe community was built in 1894. Called the “Old Hood House,” it is located at the corner of Church Street and Highway 88. The school was a three room, frame building with an enrollment of 35 students. The largest room was for elementary students, and one of the smaller rooms was the high school. A wing was added to the rear of the building and was used to teach home economics.

In 1917, Mrs. Elsie Wright Murphy, then teacher and principal of the school, decided Blythe needed a new school. She collected contributions from neighbors and friends, and in 1920, the sum of \$13,500.00 was turned over to the Richmond County Board of Education and a new, larger school was constructed. This school served the community until it burned on August 18, 1975.

The present Blythe Elementary School was opened on August 25, 1977 with grades K-7. Mr. Frank Boulineau was the principal with a faculty of 20 teachers.

*---Taken from notes by Emily Templeton Welch*

## Blythe Elementary School

290 Church Street, Blythe, Georgia 30805  
706-592-4090 (phone) /706-592-3708 (fax)

Dear Parent(s) and Student(s):

On behalf of the faculty and staff of Blythe Elementary School, welcome to our school for the 2025-2026 school year. It is an incredible honor to serve as your principal. Each of us at BES appreciates you entrusting us with the opportunities to touch and shape the lives of the children of Richmond County.

It is my hope that you will read this Parent/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 706-592-4090.

We offer quality educational experiences in all content areas (reading, English Language Arts, math, science, health, social studies, and writing) along with music, STEAM, and physical education. 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 drop by the school for lunch or a visit and check out all the great things that go on each day at BES.

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

Sincerely,

*Tammy Hendley*

Tammy Hendley  
Principal



## **Blythe Elementary School**

**BES Motto:** “*we are fierce about learning*”

**Blythe Mission:** To lay the foundation for our students’ life-long learning by providing opportunities for them to grow academically, physically, socially and emotionally in a nurturing, yet challenging environment in all academic areas such that students’ individual potential can be maximized while equipping them to meet the challenges in the world around them.

**Blythe 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 enhance character/values education and instill pride in self, school, and community.

**Blythe Philosophy:** We believe that education is the foundation on which all aspects of life are built. Education is a continuous life process, and it is our responsibility to help each child reach his/her fullest potential. We further believe that by providing a quality educational program we will enable our students to grow physically, intellectually, morally, and emotionally, such that they may become productive citizens of a democratic world. Collaboration between home, school, and the community will assist in fostering successful and meaningful partnerships.

**Blythe Beliefs and Values:**

- Every student 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 encourage 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.

## **ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT STAFF**

Tammy Hendley, Principal  
Asst. Principal

Sandra Jones,

Leslie Adams, Bookkeeper/Secretary  
Barbara Cooper, Registrar  
Linda Kumpf, Administrative Assistant  
Guidance Counselor  
Hope Thomas, Instructional Specialist  
Specialist  
Carlette Howard, School Nurse  
Social Worker

Julie Carter,

Laura David, Media

Jessica Lewis,

## **FACULTY AND STAFF**

### **Pre-Kindergarten**

Amanda Caines & Sarah Grove  
My'Asia Mutch & Maritza Rodriguez

### **Kindergarten**

Shantel Kinzer & Cheryl Scruggs  
Candice Young & Shannon Ivey  
Kimberly Lewis & Laquiesha Curtis

### **First Grade**

Breyn Allen  
Anna Hurley  
Ronda Painter

### **Second Grade**

Joyce Godbee  
Angela Rhea

### **Third Grade**

Tammie Hooks  
Lori Smith  
Jean Taylor

### **Fourth Grade**

Deja Fludd  
Jackie Neil

### **Fifth Grade**

### **Connections**

Victoria Hammond---Music  
Tabitha Carroll---P.E.  
Rhonda Smith---STEAM

### **Special Education**

Kathy Burns  
Rebecca Edwards  
Courtney Brie Weston  
Andre Patterson  
Korease Collins  
Karla Chase  
Maiya Walker  
Mileena Alma  
Gabriel Stacy

### **Custodians**

Fred Scruggs, Head Custodian  
Janice Wright

Rico Walton

### **School Nutrition**

Erica Crawford, Manager  
Gwen Woodall  
Sharon Martin  
Mary Parker  
Patricia Blanco

### **Other Services**

Rachel Misner---Strings/Orchestra

Beverly Franqui  
Megan Whittaker

Rodnecia Walker---Gifted  
April Freeman—ESOL  
Logan Strickland---Speech & Language  
Julie Meeks---Psychologist

**Augmented EIP**

Belva Cochran  
Valerie Skinner

**PROGRAM CONTACTS**

**504 Plans:** Dr. Sandra Jones

**Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl:** Laura David

**Math Team:** Jean Taylor, Jackie Neil

**Media & Technology:** Laura David

**Migrant Education:** Tammy Hendley, April Freeman

**Morning Care:** Victoria Hammond, Tabitha Carroll

**PBIS Contact:** Julie Carter, Tammy Hendley

**PreK:** Dr. Sandra Jones

**MTSS/RTI:** Dr. Sandra Jones

**School Council:** Tammy Hendley

**Science Fair:** Beverly Franqui, Jean Taylor

**Site Safety:** Tabitha Carroll

**Special Education:** Dr. Andre Patterson

**Spelling Bee:** Beverly Franqui

**Student Council:** Julie Carter

**Testing:** Dr. Sandra Jones

**Textbooks:** Dr. Sandra Jones, Laura David

**Title I:** Tammy Hendley, Hope Thomas

**Title IX:** Dr. Sandra Jones

**Yearbook:** Beverly Franqui, Amanda Caines

*“The more that you read, the more things you will know, the more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.”– Dr. Seuss*

E D U C A T I O N

## RCSS 2025 – 2026 Academic Calendar

<b>Event</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Considerations</b>
Pre-Planning/In-service	July 28 – Aug. 1, 2025	
Elementary Schools Open House	July 31, 2025	<i>12:00 – 6:00 p.m.</i>
Open House for K-8, Middle & High Students	Aug. 1, 2025	<i>12:00 – 6:00 p.m.</i>
First Day of School for Elementary Students	Aug. 4, 2025	
First Day of School for Middle and High School Students	Aug. 5, 2025	
Labor Day Holiday	Sept. 1, 2025	
Fall Semester Progress Report #1	Sept. 12, 2025	
Fall Parent Conference Window	Sept. 15 – Oct. 10, 2025	
PowerUp Asynchronous Learning Day	Oct. 9, 2025	
Student Holiday/Professional Learning Day	Oct. 10, 2025	
Fall Break	Oct. 13 - 14, 2025	
Fall Semester Progress Report #2	Oct. 31, 2025	
Veterans Day/School Holiday	Nov. 11, 2025	
Thanksgiving Holidays	Nov. 24 - 28, 2025	
End of 1 <sup>st</sup> Semester and Early Release for All Grades	Dec. 19, 2025	<i>For all grades</i>
Christmas Holidays/Winter Break	Dec. 22, 2025 - Jan. 2, 2026	
Student Holiday/Professional Learning Day	Jan. 5, 2026	
First Day of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester / Students Return	Jan. 6, 2026	
Report Cards	Jan. 13, 2026	<i>For 1<sup>st</sup> Semester</i>
MLK Holiday	Jan. 19, 2026	
Spring Semester Progress Report #1	Feb. 12, 2026	
Student Holiday/Professional Learning Day	Feb. 13, 2026	
School Holiday	Feb. 16, 2026	
Spring Parent Conferences Window	Feb. 17 – Mar. 16, 2026	
Spring Semester Progress Report #2	Mar. 27, 2026	
PowerUp Asynchronous Learning Day	Apr. 3, 2026	

Spring Break	Apr. 3 – 13, 2026	
Last Day of School/End of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester/ Early Release for All Grades	May 22, 2026	
Memorial Day Holiday	May 25, 2026	
Post Planning/In-service	May 26 – 27, 2026	
Report Cards	May 27, 2026	

**Progress Reports**

September 12, 2025  
 October 31, 2025  
 February 12, 2026  
 March 27, 2026

**Report Cards**

January 13, 2026  
 May 27, 2026

*“Children are apt to live up to what you believe of them.”*  
 --Lady Bird Johnson

*“A person who won’t read has no advantage over one who can’t read.”*  
 – Mark Twain

*“A good education is a foundation for a better future.”* – Elizabeth Warren

*“Develop a passion for learning. If you do, you will never cease to grow.”*  
 -- Anthony J. D'Angelo

*“Intellectual growth should commence at birth and cease only at death.”*  
 -- Albert Einstein

## **Georgia’s Student Bill of Rights**

*We, the Georgia Department of Education, in pursuit of preparing ALL students for life, establish this Bill of Rights to affirm the learning conditions, opportunities, and supports every K-12 student needs to thrive.*

1. The right to a quality education.
2. The right to learn in safe schools with small class sizes.
3. The right to recess, play, and Georgia-grown school meals.
4. The right to be taught and supported by well-trained, well-respected, and well-paid teachers, leaders, and support staff.
5. The right to a 21st-century education supported by a modernized education funding formula.
6. The right to more instructional time and less screen time.
7. The right to understand and respect the founding of our Nation, and the important role we play in shaping its future.
8. The right to Georgia-owned and Georgia-grown academic standards.
9. The right to be prepared for life – to read and communicate effectively, to master and apply math, to solve real-world problems, and to make informed financial decisions.
10. The right to be worth more than a high-stakes test score.
11. The right to access opportunities aligned to personal needs, interests, and passions – including career, technical, and agricultural education; work-based learning; fine arts; computer science; STEM/STEAM; world languages; special education services; extended learning; and advanced coursework such as gifted, dual enrollment, articulated credit, AP, IB, or Cambridge.
12. The right to graduate with a diploma that is more than a piece of paper – one that serves as a direct pathway to enrollment, employment, enlistment, or entrepreneurship.



## **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 disciplinary action.

## **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)

## **AFTERSCHOOL & BEFORE SCHOOL CARE**

Childcare is available before and after school at BES. Early Care begins at 6:30 a.m. and lasts until 7:50 a.m. at which time students may go to breakfast or to homeroom. Students attending Early Care should be dropped off at the side entrance (near the Cafeteria). Students who have not entered the building by 7:30 a.m. will be required to wait in the car and not enter the Morning Care Program.

Afterschool Care is available through the Blythe Recreation Department (Loud Crowd). Students enrolled in this program will ride a bus from Blythe Elementary School to the Rec. Dept. The cost is reasonable. For more information, contact the Blythe Recreation Department.

## **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 11:30 a.m. or arriving after 11:30 a.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.

### **Tardies:**

Students who arrive at school **after** 8:30 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.

### **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:**

Tardies and/or Early Dismissals on 10 or more days will disqualify a student for yearly Perfect Attendance awards.

### **Georgia Compulsory Attendance Law**

Any parent, guardian, or other person residing in Georgia who has control or charge of a child or children between the ages of 6 and 16 years of age and any child residing in Georgia and in Richmond County between the ages of 6 and 16 years of age is required under Georgia law to enroll and attend school. Under the provisions of Georgia's Compulsory Attendance Act, each day's absence from school after a student has accumulated five (5) days of unexcused absence, whether consecutive or not, can constitute a violation of the law and can subject the parent and student to penalties which may include a fine of not less than Twenty-Five Dollars (\$25.00) and not greater than One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00), imprisonment not to exceed thirty (30) days, community service, court supervisor as a juvenile offender, or any combination of these penalties.

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

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

### **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 DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

Students who are car riders will report to the Cafeteria each afternoon at dismissal. Students sit by grade level and are expected to lay their head down and refrain from talking during the first 10 minutes or so of dismissal. This is necessary so that faculty, staff and students can hear the names of car riders being called over the radio and so that car rider dismissal is conducted in a safe and orderly manner.

### **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 on the passenger side 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 AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES POLICY**

To promote the best possible learning and social environment in the classrooms and schools of Richmond County, students will adhere to the terms of this policy. The intent of the cell phone policy is to limit access to and use of cell phones in order to avoid distractions from learning and the loss of instructional time.

Under the terms of the RCSS cell phone and electronic devices policy, all cellular phones, smart phones, smart watches, any type of headphones, earbuds, and other devices or accessories used to electronically communicate are considered personal electronic communications devices and will be referred to as “cell phone(s)” and/or “electronic communication devices” throughout this policy.

The use of cell phones, electronic communication devices and/or accessories is prohibited for all students at all times during the instructional day, which is defined as the time the student arrives on

campus until the end of the school day and/or the time the student leaves campus. The instructional day includes, but is not limited to, class periods, class changes, study halls, and any other structured or non-structured instructional activity that occurs during the normal school day. Students are not allowed to use cell phones in the common areas, hallways, restrooms, locker rooms or any other areas during the instructional day. [Note: The school site administrator, or designee, *may* offer an incentive for **high school** students to utilize phones during lunch time, if certain criteria are met, as decided upon by the administration.]

The possession of cell phones and electronic communication devices on school property is a privilege extended to students, and the School System is not responsible for any lost, stolen or damaged electronic communication devices or cell phones, nor will the administration or school officials investigate missing or damaged cell phones.

If students choose to bring cell phones or electronic communication devices to school, students are expected at all times to adhere to the following rules relative to cell phones and electronic communication devices and/or accessories:

1. Regardless of whether student is accessing the School System's Technology Network while operating a cell phone or electronic communication device, all applicable provisions of the Internet Acceptable Use Policy and the Code of Student Conduct and Discipline must be followed.
2. Cell phones, electronic communication devices, and/or accessories must be turned completely off (not on silent or vibrate mode) and put away out of view (as directed by school administration) during the instructional day, as defined above.
3. No text messaging, application-based communication, or social media use is allowed during the instructional day.

**DISCIPLINE:** Due to the potential disruption a cell phone and electronic communication devices may cause to the instructional environment and safety of the school, the disciplinary actions and consequences for violation of this rule are as follows:

**First Offense:** The first offense will result in the electronic device being confiscated, to be picked up by the student or parent at the end of the same school day. The incident will be recorded in the student's discipline record within the student database (*e.g.*, Infinite Campus).

**Second Offense:** The second offense will result in the electronic device being confiscated, to be picked up by the parent on the Friday following confiscation, at the specific time designated by the school. The incident will be recorded in the student's discipline record within the student database (*e.g.*, Infinite Campus).

**Third Offense:** The third offense will result in the electronic device being confiscated, to be picked up by the parent on the Friday following confiscation, at the specific time designated by the school. The student will receive one day of in-school suspension (ISS). The incident will be recorded in the student's discipline record within the student database (*e.g.*, Infinite Campus).

**Fourth Offense:** The fourth offense and thereafter will result in the electronic device being confiscated for ten (10) school days, and the parent must schedule a conference with an administrator to retrieve the electronic device. The student will receive three days of in-school

suspension (ISS). The incident will be recorded in the student's discipline record within the student database (e.g., Infinite Campus).

***\*\*\*At Blythe Elementary School, we will utilize the loss of students' second recess instead of ISS.***

***\*\*\*On the third offense, the student will lose his/her second recess for two (2) days instead of ISS.***

***\*\*\*On the fourth offense, the students will lose his/her second recess for five (5) days instead of ISS.***

Further incidents may result in the student losing the privilege of bringing electronic devices on campus, in-school suspension, out of school suspension, and any other forms of discipline deemed appropriate under the circumstances.

***\*\*\**** Emergency calls may be made in the main office. Parents may contact their children by calling the school's main office. School office staff are able to relay emergency messages from parents to students. Miscellaneous messages cannot be delivered during the school day; students should discuss their appointments and other activities with parents/guardians outside of school instructional time. Students with serious medical conditions or other unusual circumstances may be given special permission by the school principal to use a cell phone if it is determined to be essential for the health of the student.

#### **Noncompliance:**

All administrators, teachers and/or staff members are authorized to confiscate cell phones, electronic communication devices and/or accessories any time a student is in violation of the Cell Phone/Electronic Communications Device policy. A student's refusal to surrender his/her electronic device(s) to school personnel will be considered noncompliance and insubordination, resulting in two (2) days of out of school suspension, and any other forms of discipline deemed appropriate under the circumstances.

Note: These progressive discipline steps in no way diminish the discretion of the school administrator, who has the right to issue more severe discipline depending upon the facts and circumstances.

### **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. 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.

### **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 706-592-4090.

## **CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE**

One of the most important lessons educators can teach is *discipline*. At Blythe Elementary, 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.

Blythe Elementary 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 BES.

The following are general rules of conduct for all students at Blythe Elementary 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](http://www.rcboe.org).

### **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.

## **DROP OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES**

### **Morning Drop-off:**

Please enter the drop-off line at the side of the school. Pull up and stop in front of the doors where students enter the building. BES staff members will be on duty to assist with getting students into the building. Please wait until your child has completely exited your vehicle and made it onto the sidewalk before driving away. Always be sure to check for children crossing the lanes 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 one of the designated parking spots and escort your child(ren) into the building.

If you arrive after 8:30 a.m. you will need to park your vehicle and walk your child to the Front Office, sign him/her in as tardy and pick up a Tardy Slip for admittance to class.

### **Afternoon Pick-up:**

All car riders and walkers are dismissed through the lobby doors on the parking lot side of the school. The procedures are as follows:

- A Car Rider Tag showing students' names will be given to parents.
- The card should be placed on the passenger side of the car's dashboard or attached to the passenger side visor for easy visibility.
- Every child being picked up by that car will be listed under that number.
- Cars will line up around the side parking lot.
- Students are expected to sit quietly in the Cafeteria during dismissal. (See Car Rider Dismissal Procedures above)
- Students will be called to go to their assigned vehicle.
- Students will be escorted to the car and safely loaded into the car by a BES staff member.
- All drivers must remain in their vehicle so that dismissal continues as safely and quickly as possible.
- No students will be dismissed from the Car Rider Area except by this means.

## **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.

Students will not be called for early dismissal after 2:40 p.m.

## **EFFECT OF STUDENT HANDBOOK**

The policies, rules, and regulations shown in the Blythe Elementary 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 changes occur.

**\*\* 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 and safety drills/lock downs will also be conducted. 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-TV, WJBF-TV, WAGT-TV
- **Radio:** WGAC
- **Website:** [www.rcboe.org](http://www.rcboe.org)

## **ENROLLMENT AND WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES**

### **Enrollment**

*Students new to Richmond County Schools, transfers from within the state of Georgia, and out-of-state transfers need the following documents:*

- Latest copy of student's report card or withdrawal form from previous school (if applicable)
- Legal guardian's photo ID
- Social Security Card
- Proof of Residency
- Official Copy of Birth Certificate
- Completed Eye, Ear, and Dental Form\*\*
- Completed Immunization Form\*\*
- Home Language Survey

*Transfers from within Richmond County Schools need the following documents:*

- Latest copy of student's report card or withdrawal form
- Legal guardian's photo ID
- Proof of Residency

\*\*The Eye, Ear, and Dental Form and the Immunization Form may be obtained from any Georgia Health Department, Eisenhower Medical Center at Fort Gordon, or any Georgia pediatrician's office or clinic.

### **PreK Requirements**

- Certificate of Immunization (Form 3221)
- Dental, Hearing, Vision and Nutrition Certificate (Form 3300)
- Certified Birth Certificate
- Copy of child's Social Security Card
- Valid Photo ID of custodial/enrolling parent
- Valid proof of residence
- Child must be 4 years old by September 1

### **Kindergarten & First Grade**

- All required items listed above AND
- Child must be five (5) years old by September 1 to enroll in Kindergarten
- Child must be six (6) years old by September 1 to enroll in First Grade.

### **Withdrawal**

Students currently enrolled in Blythe Elementary School may be withdrawn using the following procedure:

- Contact the school at least 24 hours in advance of intended withdrawal date;
- Provide the office staff or teacher with the name of the school you are transferring to;
- Return all textbooks, library books, electronic devices (issued by the school) to the office;
- Pay any money owed (lost textbook or library book fees, etc.);
- On the student's last day of attendance at Blythe Elementary, gather all of the child's belongings, sign and receive a copy of the withdrawal form.
- The student's records will be sent to the receiving school within 48 hours of the completed withdrawal.

### **EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS & PROGRAMS**

BES offers the following extra-curricular activities/clubs/programs for students:

**Bible Time Christian Release:** Students in Grades 3-5 go to Blythe Methodist Church for 45 minutes one day per week. A signed permission slip/enrollment form is required to participate.

**CHAMPS:** Choosing **H**ealthy **A**ctivities and **M**ethods **P**romoting **S**afety is an educational program for Georgia's youth, which provides guidance, and the skills, ability and knowledge to be safe, healthy, and happy, in preparation for a successful life. This is for 5<sup>th</sup> grade students.

**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](http://www.georgia4h.org)

**Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl:** This is for students in Grades 4 and 5 at BES. 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, Mrs. Laura David.

**Science Fair:** Students in Grades 4 and 5 will participate in the Blythe Elementary Science Fair by creating and displaying an approved Science Fair Project. The projects must be completed individually. This will be graded and included as part of each student's grade during the appropriate grading periods. If the students place high enough at the BES Science Fair, they will have the opportunity to participate in the RCSS District Science Fair.

**Strings:** Students in Grades 4 and 5 may choose to participate in Strings for approximately one (1) instructional hour (during the school day) each week. Being part of this group requires dedication to practice on the chosen instrument, local travel and afterschool (including nights and weekends) performances.

## **FUNDRAISING**

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

## **GENERAL SCHOOL RULES**

**CLASSROOM RULES** *(These are general rules. Each classroom teacher has his/her own 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.
6. Sanitize hands frequently.

### **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 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 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, soda or drinks in place of 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.
4. Put all trash in trash cans. No littering!
5. No running on sidewalks.
6. Play only in your designated area.
7. Do not leave the fenced in area without permission from an adult.

### **RESTROOM RULES**

1. Have a hall pass unless accompanied by an adult.
2. Use facilities properly. Flush urinals and toilets after each use.
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-8 are enrolled in a five (5) hours per week resource program which provides thematic units of study. 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-5 are required to perform academically as well as on grade level in all content area classes.

There will be two semesters/grading periods each year. Work that is being made up must be made up within (five) 5 days after the absence unless prior arrangements have been made with the School Office or the child's teacher.

### **Grading System for Kindergarten Assessment (GKIDS):**

NA	=	Not Assessed	PR	=	Progressing
ND	=	Not Demonstrated	ME	=	Meets the Standard
EM	=	Emerging	EX	=	Exceeds the Standard

### **Grading System for Grades K-3**

#### **Standards-based Grading 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.

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 – 5**

A = 90-100	B = 80-89	C = 70-79	F = Below 70
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### **Report Cards and Grade Reports**

Report cards will be issued at the 18 week and 36 week intervals. A parent/guardian's signature is required before report cards are returned to the child's homeroom teacher

Progress Reports will be issued twice during each semester.

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. This is especially true for the purpose of "pulling up grades" at the end of a grading period.

The complete RCSS Grading policy can be found on the District website [www.rcboe.org](http://www.rcboe.org).

## **GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING DEPARTMENT**

Blythe Elementary School has a comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling program with many components. Our school counselor is 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.

## **HEALTH ISSUES**

The information contained below is relevant to health and wellness in light of COVID-19 and other illnesses.

If a child exhibits any symptoms of COVID-19, the child should not be sent to school. If a child has fever at any level, the child should not attend school.

If a child has been exposed to COVID-19, the child should be tested and remain at home if running fever or until symptoms lessen. If the student does not have any symptoms, he/she may attend school.

Children should also stay home for the following reasons:

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

- A single episode of watery diarrhea probably warrants not going to school.
- Children with fever 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.

When students experience minor injuries at school, basic medical care is provided. Wounds are generally cleansed, and a bandage/dressing is applied. Antibiotic ointment is not applied to students' injuries unless provided by parent/guardian and kept in the Clinic. Student Accident Reports are completed when injuries occur. A copy of the report is sent home with the student within 24 hours of the injury. Parents may also be notified by phone or through Class Dojo.

\*\*\*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

## **HOMWORK**

Homework is important. Students in grades K-5 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 Blythe. Honors and awards presented to students in Grades PK-5 are as follows:

- **Best Effort Award**---students who continually give their greatest effort to achieve something or do something, especially when tasks, assignments or objectives are difficult
- **Student of the Month/Citizenship**---for students nominated by homeroom teachers that meet the citizenship goals as designated for the month---coordinated by the Counselor
- **Perfect Attendance**---for students with zero (0) absences for the designated period---will be calculated in the Office. Mrs. Hendley will handle the list for this award. *[Tardies and/or Early Releases in excess of ten (10) times will disqualify a student from receiving the Perfect Attendance Award for the year.]*
- **Music Award**---one (1) student per homeroom based on participation, completion of assignments/ tasks/activities, etc.---chosen by Mrs. Hammond.
- **STEAM Award**---one (1) male student and one (1) female student per homeroom based on participation, completion of activities/assignments, etc.---chosen by Ms. Rhonda Smith.
- **P.E. Award**---one (1) male and one (1) female student per homeroom based on participation and sportsmanship---chosen by Coach Carroll.
- **iReady**---one (1) student per homeroom in Math and one (1) student per homeroom in Reading will be recognized for iReady Growth between diagnostic assessments. Also, one (1) student per homeroom in Math and one (1) student per homeroom in Ready will be recognized for the highest iReady score in each area after the three diagnostic assessments (BOY, MOY, EOY).
- **Special Recognitions** – awards for miscellaneous outstanding accomplishments.

Students in **Grades K-3** will also receive the following awards:

- **Most Outstanding Award (EOY only)** -- Students (1 boy and 1 girl from each class) who are well-rounded, academically outstanding, and cooperative.

Students in **Grades PK and Kindergarten** will also receive the following awards:

- **Most Improved Award (EOY only)** -- Students (1 boy and 1 girl from each class) who have demonstrated the most improvement overall in academics and/or behavior.

Students in **Grades 4 and 5** will also receive the following awards:

- **“A” Honor Roll** – recognizes students working on grade level who earned all A’s in all subjects except conduct.

- **“AB” Honor Roll** – recognizes students working on grade level who earned an 80.0 overall average except conduct.
- **Distinguished Scholar Award** – given to students who earn all A’s in all subjects including conduct.
- **Conduct Award** – given to students in Grades 4-5 who earn a 90 or higher in Conduct.

Students in **PreK** will receive the following awards:

Conduct Award	Perfect Attendance	Creativity
Miss/Mr. Manners	Patience	Congeniality
Good Friend	Kindness	Good Helper
Student of the Month		

## **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.

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

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Articles that have been found at school should be placed in the Lost & Found boxes located inside the Cafeteria. 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.

## **MEDIA CENTER**

Books are available for checkout daily from 8:00 a.m. until 2:45 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 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.

Elementary school students who fail to or refuse 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, the child will need to 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 6<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **Administration of Medication**

Medications should be given at home whenever possible. Once-a-day medication should be given at home, before school. If medication must be taken with food, milk or toast can be given with it at home. If medication is twice a day, both doses should be given at home, before and after school, unless specified differently on prescription.

- If your child must take medication at school, before any prescribed medications can be given, an Administration of Medication Form must be filled out completely by the prescribing physician and signed by both physician and parent/guardian. If medication changes (dose/strength, time), a new Administration of Medication Form must be filled out and signed by physician and parent/guardian.

- If more than one medication is to be given, an Administration of Medication Form must be filled out and signed for each medication.

- If your child needs to take any over the counter medication, a note from parent stating name of child, name of medication and the amount and time to be given must be signed by parent/guardian. All medications, whether prescription or over the counter, must be in its original container with name of medication and directions and child's name if prescription.

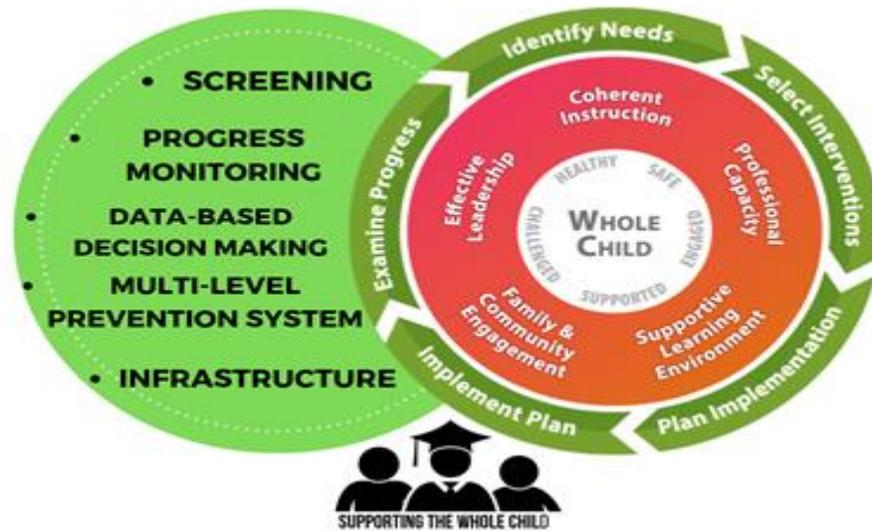
- Medication cannot be brought to school by a student unless authorized for self-administration.

***\*\*\*ALL MEDICATIONS MUST BE PICKED UP BY THE LAST DAY OF EACH SCHOOL YEAR BY A PARENT/GUARDIAN OR THE MEDICATION WILL BE DISPOSED OF.***

### **MTSS---MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS**

Georgia operates within a three-tiered, multi-level prevention system. Students receive services at all levels, depending on their needs. When all components are implemented, research shows results include strengthened Tier 1 instruction with 80% of students responding to core curriculum.

Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students represents a cross-divisional effort among Teaching and Learning, School and District Effectiveness, Federal Programs, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, and Special Education.



The essential components of Georgia's framework are aligned with the nationally vetted Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) including: Screening, Progress Monitoring, Multi-Level Prevention System, and Data-Based Decision Making. Georgia added Infrastructure as a fifth component to ensure schools can develop a systemic and preventive educational system that can easily be personalized for every child. The following are critical elements of Infrastructure: Leadership, Effective Teaming, Professional Learning, and Family & Community Engagement.

## What falls under the MTSS umbrella?



### **Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports**

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an evidence-based three-tiered framework to improve and integrate all of the data, systems, and practices affecting student outcomes every day. PBIS creates schools where all students succeed. Kortney Bell and Javon Jackson are the PBIS Coordinators for RCSS. Ms. Julie Carter, Counselor, is the Blythe PBIS Coordinator.

### **Response to Intervention & Student Support Teams**

In Richmond County, we have been implementing SST, as required by state law, and Response to Intervention (since July 2007). Support Services worked in collaboration with Teaching and Learning to develop effective processes and procedures for the district to address the areas of student growth at the Tier 2 and Tier 3 levels. Information about RTI and SST can be found on the District's website or by contacting our MTSS Facilitator, Dr. Bridgette Jackson. Additional training will be offered as resources become available for a more comprehensive and preventative Multi-Tiered System of Supports.

See additional information under SST/RTI Section of this handbook.

### **School Based Mental Health**

Richmond County School System is devoted to assisting students in all areas that impact academic achievement, including mental health. We currently have school-based mental health support counselors to assist with interim and short-term counseling, while outside support is arranged. In addition, the APEX program is a state-funded program that provides school-based mental health services at the Glenn Hills cluster of schools. Please contact the school counselor for more information or a referral to the program.

### **Wraparound Services**

Our school system offers wraparound services within our schools and at the Success Center, located at 1740 Walton Way, Augusta, 30904 (Tubman Education Center). For available individual school supports, please contact the school social worker, Jessica Lewis.

## **PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)**

PTO Meetings are scheduled throughout the school year. The PTO offers parents a regular opportunity to communicate with teachers and become actively involved in school improvement. The annual membership fee is \$5.00. Membership includes free admission to PTO sponsored dances for all children in that household. Our PTO supports our school in numerous ways and through many programs and activities.

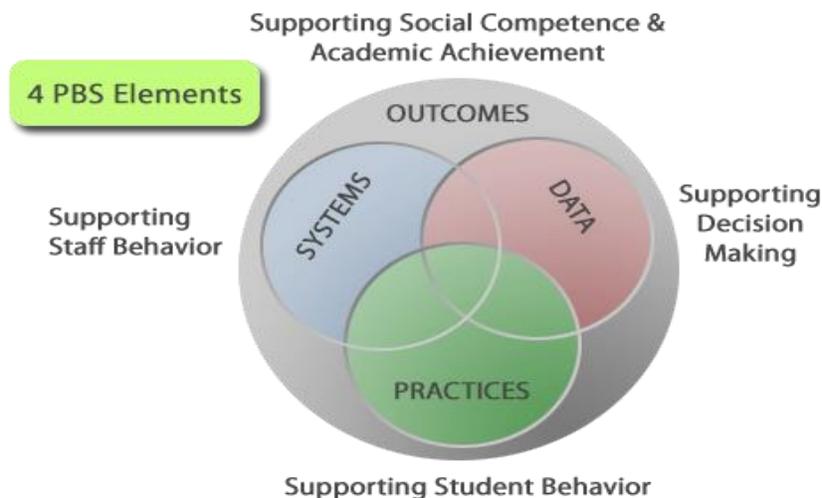
## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION (P.E.) REQUIREMENTS**

Each student is required to participate in P.E. each school year. The P.E. program consists of exercise, building motor skills, sportsmanship, team sports and individual sports. In order to actively participate in P.E., students must dress appropriately. Tennis shoes, sneakers or athletic shoes are required in order to prevent injury to the student and damage to the gym floor. The following are NOT allowed on the gym floor: sandals, heels, or hard soled shoes. Girls must wear shorts under their dresses/skirts when participating in P.E.

If your child is unable to participate in P.E., a medical excuse is required. A note of this type should be provided at the time of being unable to participate or at the beginning of the school year if the problem is long-term or permanent.

Students in P.E. will participate in the state-wide assessment throughout the year measuring height, weight, and activity level. The data is compiled twice per year, and parents receive a copy of their child's report at the end of the school year.

## **POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORTS (P.B.I.S.)**



Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an evidence-based, data-driven framework proven to reduce disciplinary incidents, increase a school's sense of safety and support improved academic outcomes. More than 22,000 U.S. schools are implementing PBIS and saving countless instructional hours otherwise lost to discipline. The premise of PBIS is that continual teaching, combined with acknowledgement or feedback of positive student behavior will reduce unnecessary discipline and promote a climate of greater productivity, safety and learning. PBIS schools apply a multi-tiered approach to prevention, using disciplinary data and principles of

behavior analysis to develop school-wide, targeted and individualized interventions and supports to improve school climate for all students. (OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports, 2009)

		<b>LEARNING ZONES (classrooms, gym, Media Center)</b>	<b>ARRIVAL &amp; DISMISSAL (buses &amp; car riders)</b>	<b>CAFETERIA</b>	<b>COMMON AREAS (hallways, lobby, restrooms)</b>
<b>P</b>	<b>POSTITIVE ATTITUDE</b>	Best effort  Encourage others  Listen & follow directions	Be positive, upbeat  Be alert  Be courteous: "Good morning, Good afternoon"	Say "Please and "Thank You"  Friendly conversations	Walk quietly in the hallways  Be good role models  Use restroom quickly and quietly
<b>A</b>	<b>ACT RESPONSIBLY</b>	Follow all classroom rules  Prompt/Prepared/ Present  Ready to learn  Return materials in good condition	Be on time/ present  Know your bus or car #  Practice safety	Stand quietly & wait your turn  Clean up your area	Go straight to your destination  Walk on the right side in a straight line  Report vandalism
<b>W</b>	<b>WORK FOR SUCCESS</b>	Stay on task  Participate fully  Enjoy learning	Keep up with your belongings  Listen for changes	Use tableware & napkins  Stay seated on your bottom	Keep hands off walls & bulletin boards  Put trash in trash cans  No playing
<b>S</b>	<b>SHOW RESPECT</b>	Use positive language  Listen to all adults  Keep hands, feet, objects to yourself	Listen to staff & drivers  Follow all rules  Follow procedures (single file line)	Use good manners  Eat only your food  Keep hands & feet to yourself	Respect privacy  Maintain personal space  Listen for directions

**Blythe Bearcats are "PAWSitively" Amazing!**

## **PROMOTION, PLACEMENT AND RETENTION POLICY**

### **K-5 Promotion Requirements**

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 through 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade**

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.

For promotion to the next grade, students in K-3 must have at least an overall score of 2 in ELA and Math. The overall score will be calculated as the average of the 4th term scores on each indicator for ELA and Math.

##### **Grades Four and Five**

In addition to State Promotion Requirements in grade five, students in grades fourth and fifth must:

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

##### **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 ½ 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.

## **PURCHASES**

Any money, including checks and money orders, sent to school should be placed in a sealed envelope with the child's name and teacher's name on the front of the envelope. Be sure to include a note inside the envelope explaining what the money is for.

## **READING CHALLENGES**

The goal of the reading challenge is to promote reading and expose students to the love of language and literacy. Challenge periods have been set to represent reading 20 minutes per day during the challenge periods.

Reading done in the classroom, during content lessons, or at home can all count toward meeting the reading goal. Parents and teachers reading to students can also be counted towards the reading goals. Teachers may log minutes into *Beanstack* as a class or in class readings and parents may utilize *Beanstack* at home to record student reading minutes. Minutes can also be recorded on weekends and holidays.

Reports will be readily available in *Beanstack* to quickly monitor student progress in the challenges and to determine the winners at the end of each challenge period.

Students in the all grade levels at Blythe Elementary School will participate in the Blythe Bearcats Reading Challenge.

### **Awards for Each Challenge Period:**

Awards will be given to students during each challenge period based on the following increments: 300 minutes, 500 minutes, 800 minutes and 1000 minutes.

The student with the highest number of minutes read at the end of each challenge period will also receive the Top Classroom Reader Award.

Classes with the highest total number of reading minutes during each challenge period will be rewarded with a banner of distinction and a reward such as popsicles, ice cream, etc.

### **Awards for the EOY:**

Students who logged the most minutes in each class by combining the total minutes of all three challenges will receive the All Star Classroom Reader.

The class who logged the most minutes by combining the total minutes of all three challenges will be rewarded with a banner of distinction and additional rewards.

### **Timeline for Reading Challenges**

<b>Challenge Period</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Reading Goal</b>
Parent Letter goes home	August 25, 2025	
Challenge Period #1	Sept. 4 – Nov. 16, 2025	1,000 minutes
Challenge Period #2	Nov. 17, 2025 – Jan. 31, 2026	1,000 minutes
Challenge Period #3	Feb. 1 – Apr. 24, 2026	1,000 minutes

## **RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROPERTY**

Students are personally responsible for textbooks, 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.

## **RIGHT TO REQUEST TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS**

Per Title 1 requirements, parents may request the following information on their child's teacher:

- Whether the teacher met state qualifications and certification requirements for the grade level and subject he/she is teaching,
- Whether the teacher received an emergency or conditional certificate through which state qualifications were waived, and
- What undergraduate or graduate degrees the teacher holds, including graduate certificates and additional degrees, and major(s) or area(s) of concentration.

## **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.

### **School Parties:**

- PreK – 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

### **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 FREE at BES.
- Breakfast will be served from 7:50 - 8:20 a.m. each morning for students in Grades PK-5. Breakfast will be served to students arriving on late buses.
- Lunch is served daily from 10:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Classes are scheduled individually.
- Parents are welcome to eat with their child in the cafeteria or in an adjacent courtyard 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.***
- Large bags of chips and other snacks are not allowed in the Cafeteria as they create disruption. Chips should be in individual packages.
- Candy and soft drinks are not acceptable food items for breakfast or lunch.
- 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.
- Ice cream, chips, etc. are available for purchase by students.
- Money may be deposited in a student's account for the purpose of purchasing additional meal items or ice cream.

### **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 may be administered at BES during the 2022-2023 school year:

- Kindergarten: GKIDS
- Grades 1 and 4: Cog AT (Cognitive Abilities Test)
- Grades 3 – 5: Georgia Milestones Assessment.

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.

### **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 and for the season/weather.

#### **The following *are* acceptable and expected:**

- Neat, clean clothing and shoes;
- 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.
- Shirts must be at least three (3) adult fingers wide on each shoulder.
- 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:**

- Clothing or accessories advertising alcohol, drugs, tobacco, violence, sex, or weapons;
- Clothing, hats, hairstyles or accessories containing inappropriate language, gestures, messages or designs including sexual orientation or preferences, politics, race, religion, etc.;
- Sun dresses, tank tops, tube tops, halter tops, off-the-shoulder blouses, one-shoulder blouses, see-through shirts, muscle shirts, fishnet or mesh material shirts, spaghetti straps, crop-tops, 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 should be no more than 3 inches above the top of the knee when standing);
- Any clothing item that shows a student's undergarments;
- Baggy or sagging pants;
- Bike shorts or yoga pants;
- Heeled and/or high platform shoes or shoes with wheels (wheelies) as these are all unsafe and inappropriate on normal school days or events;
- Combs, picks, hairnets, scarves, bandanas, sweatbands, hair rollers, etc.;
- Bandanas (colored or white) at any time or on any part of the body;
- Hats, caps, stocking caps, do rags, etc., except on special designated "Hat Days"; (*Hats and caps are appropriate for Hat Days; however, do rags and stocking caps are NOT acceptable for Hat Days.*)
- 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 Blythe Elementary 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. BES'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.

## **TITLE I PROGRAM**

Title I is a federally funded program designed to provide additional educational services in designated schools to students in core curriculum. BES 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 706-826-1000.

## **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 2:00 p.m.) or faxed to the school office at 706-592-3708. 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**

**All** visitors **must** show a valid picture ID to be allowed into the building. **All** visitors **must** report to the Office upon arrival on campus and entering the building. Visitors will be allowed to conduct business or visit classrooms as authorized by the Principal. Visitors **must** sign in using the computer in the Front Office and obtain a Visitor's Pass before going to any area other than the Office.

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 BES.

Visitors and volunteers are expected to be appropriately and modestly dressed and to show respect for others at all times.

During your visit to the school or your child's classroom, the regular school program must continue, so please do NOT expect the teacher to hold a conference with you at that time. As a courtesy to the teacher, please make a prior appointment for visitation. In addition, we request that younger siblings are not taken to the classrooms when volunteering because of the interference on teaching and learning.

By action of the 2012 Georgia General Assembly, all school volunteers in Georgia are now "mandated reporters" of suspected child abuse. [O.C.G.A. Section 19-7-5]. Therefore, if by direct observation, verbal/written communication, or by some other means you become aware or form a

reasonable suspicion that a child has been abused either at school or at home, you must report this information to the principal. Once you have reported your knowledge, it then becomes the responsibility of the administrator to report the suspected child abuse to the appropriate state or local investigative agency. To reiterate, if you become aware or have a reasonable suspicion that a case of child abuse exists within the school and you fail to report your suspicions, your observations or any written or oral communication you receive, etc., directly to the principal or her designee immediately, then you can be exposed to criminal liability.

