

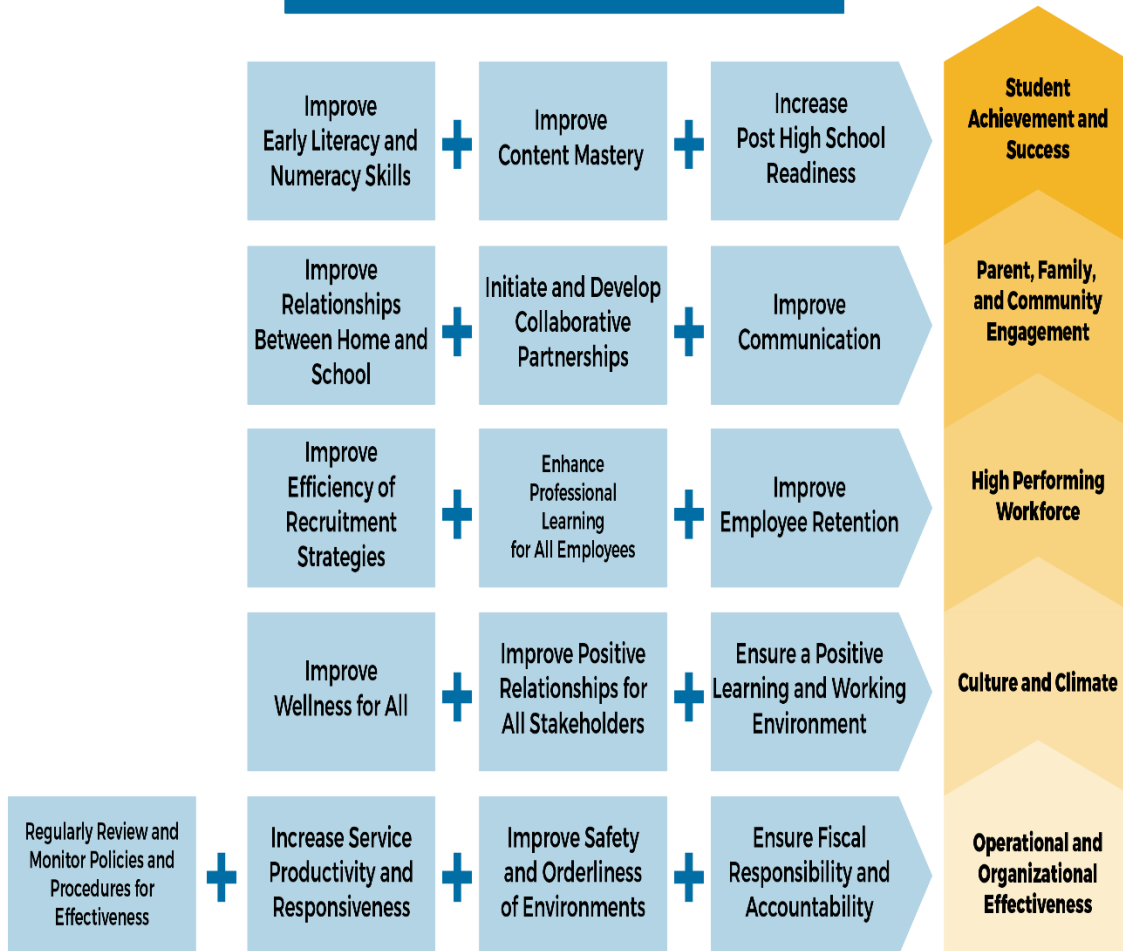
Blythe Elementary School

Faculty & Staff Handbook 2023 – 2024

Tammy Hendley, Principal
Sandra Jones, Asst. Principal
Nathan Benedict, Area Asst. Superintendent

290 Church Street, Blythe, GA 30805
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Strategy Map: 2020-2025



RCSS Mission Statement

Building a globally competitive school system that educates the whole child through teaching, learning, collaboration, and innovation.

RCSS Vision Statement

The Richmond County School System will provide an equitable education for all students to prepare them for life beyond the classroom.

Blythe Elementary School

Blythe 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 students deserves an opportunity for a quality education.
- All children can learn and achieve personal goals.
- Each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs.
- Awareness and understanding of individual and cultural differences contribute to a positive learning environment.
- High expectations 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.

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

“The most important instructional resource will ALWAYS be the teacher. Not the technology, activities, or programs. The Teacher!”
---Tom Loud

ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT STAFF

Tammy Hendley, Principal
Pamela Baxley, Bookkeeper
Linda Kumpf, Admin. Assistant
Hope Thomas, Instructional Specialist
Dr. Bridgette Jackson, MTSS Facilitator
Jessica Lewis, Social Worker

Dr. Sandra Jones, Asst. Principal
Barbara Cooper, Data Specialist
Julie Carter, Guidance Counselor
Laura David, Media Specialist
Carlette Howard, School Nurse
Julie Meeks, School Psychologist

FACULTY AND STAFF

Pre-Kindergarten: Amanda Caines & Maritza Rodriguez; Rebecca Hildreth & Taylar Sims

Kindergarten: Shantel Kinzer & DaShonda Carter; Kimberly Lewis & Krystle Miller;
Candice Young & Shannon Ivey

First Grade: Lauren Celis, Anna Hurley, Dr. Doretha Smith

Second Grade: Joyce Godbee, Angela Rhea, Lori Smith

Third Grade: Tammie Hooks, Catanna King

Fourth Grade: Deja Fludd, Jaclyn Neil, Jean Taylor

Fifth Grade: Beverly Franqui, Casey Sandford

Early Intervention (EIP): Belva Cochran, Valerie Skinner

Special Education: Kathy Burns, Karla Chase, Andre Patterson, Brie Weston, Korease Collins,
Becky Edwards, Judy Mance, Emily Hawkins

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

Other Services: April Freeman---ESOL; Rachel Misner---Strings/Orchestra; Emily Hawkins---
Speech & Language; Rodnecia Walker---Gifted

Custodians: Fredrick Scruggs, Rico Walton; Janice Wright

School Nutrition: Amanda McGuire, Sharon Martin, Patricia Blanco, Burdell Brooks,
Mary Parker

COMMITTEES, POINTS OF CONTACT & TEAMS

4-H Club: Hope Thomas

Attendance Review Team: Tammy Hendley, Barbara Cooper, Jessica Lewis, Julie Carter, Bridgette Jackson

Crisis Team: Julie Carter, Jessica Lewis, Tabitha Carroll, Andre Patterson, Pam Baxley, Tammy Hendley, Sandra Jones

Data Team: Andre Patterson, Jaclyn Neil, Tammie Hooks, Hope Thomas, Tammy Hendley, Sandra Jones

Employee Appreciation: Tammy Hendley, Sandra Jones, Julie Carter, Jessica Lewis, Hope Thomas, Pam Baxley, Barbara Cooper, Linda Kumpf

Early Morning Care Coordinator: Victoria Hammond

F/S Birthday Recognitions: Tammy Hendley, Sandra Jones, Pamela Baxley

Faculty Fund/Sunshine Club: Pam Baxley, Becky Edwards, Shantel Kinzer

Field Day: Tabitha Carroll

Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl: Laura David

Honors and Awards: Tammy Hendley, Pam Baxley, Barbara Cooper, Shantel Kinzer

Leadership Team: Tammy Hendley, Sandra Jones, Pam Baxley (parent & Bookkeeper), Hope Thomas, Julie Carter, Jessica Lewis, Laura David, Andre Patterson, Catanna King, Shantel Kinzer, Beverly Franqui, Joyce Godbee, Danielle Crump/Ward (parent), Maritza Rodriguez (parent), Tabitha Carroll (parent & teacher)

Math Team: Jean Taylor, Casey Sandford

Mental Health Team: Julie Carter, Jessica Lewis, Julie Meeks, Tammy Hendley, Sandra Jones, Andre Patterson

Outdoor Garden Committee: Jean Taylor, Beverly Franqui, Rhonda Smith

P.B.I.S: Julie Carter, Jessica Lewis, Jaclyn Neil, Tammy Hendley, Sandra Jones, Doretha Smith

RTI Coordinator: Bridgette Jackson

Science Fair: Beverly Franqui, Jean Taylor

Site Safety: Tammy Hendley, Sandra Jones, Hope Thomas, Laura David, Julie Carter, Tabitha Carroll

Spelling Bee: Beverly Franqui

STEAM Club: Beverly Franqui, Jean Taylor

Student Birthday Recognitions: Tammy Hendley, Sandra Jones, Pamela Baxley, Barbara Cooper, Linda Kumpf

Student Council (5th grade students only): Julie Carter, Beverly Franqui, Casey Sandford

Title I Contacts: Tammy Hendley, Hope Thomas, Jessica Lewis

Title IX Contact: Sandra Jones

Wellness Committee: Tammy Hendley, Sandra Jones, Julie Carter, Tabitha Carroll, Rebecca Hildreth, Tammie Hooks

Yearbook: Beverly Franqui

Blythe Elementary School's Faculty and Staff are ON POINT!!!

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

RCSS 2023 – 2024 Academic Calendar

Event	Dates	Considerations
Pre-Planning/In-service	July 27 – Aug. 2, 2023	
Elementary Schools Open House	Aug. 1, 2023	<i>12:00 – 6:00 p.m.</i>
First Day of School	Aug. 3, 2023	
Labor Day Holiday	Sept. 4, 2023	
PowerUp Asynchronous Day	Sept. 5, 2023	
Fall Semester Progress Report #1	Sept. 15, 2023	
Fall Parent Conference Window	Sept. 18 – Oct. 6, 2023	
Student Holiday/Professional Learning Day	Oct. 5, 2023	
PowerUp Asynchronous Learning Day	Oct. 6, 2023	
Fall Break	Oct. 9 - 10, 2023	
Fall Semester Progress Report #2	Oct. 27, 2023	
School Holiday	Nov. 10, 2023	
Thanksgiving Holidays	Nov. 20 - 24, 2023	
End of 1 st Semester and Early Release for All Grades	Dec. 19, 2023	<i>For all grades</i>
Christmas Holidays/Winter Break	Dec. 20, 2023 - Jan. 1, 2024	
Student Holidays/Professional Learning Days	Jan. 2 - 3, 2024	
First Day of 2 nd Semester / Students Return	Jan. 4, 2024	
Report Cards	Jan. 9, 2024	<i>For 1st Semester</i>
MLK Holiday	Jan. 15, 2024	
Spring Semester Progress Report #1	Feb. 15, 2024	
Student Holiday/Professional Learning Day	Feb. 16, 2024	
School Holiday	Feb. 19, 2024	
PowerUp Asynchronous Learning Day	Feb. 20, 2024	
Spring Parent Conferences Window	Feb. 20 – Mar. 8, 2024	

PowerUp Asynchronous Learning Day	Mar. 8, 2024	
Spring Semester Progress Report #2	Mar. 28, 2024	
School Holiday	Mar. 29, 2024	
Spring Break	Apr. 8 – 15, 2024	
Last Day of School/End of 2 nd Semester/ Early Release for All Grades	May 22, 2024	
Post Planning/In-service	May 23 – 24, 2024	
Memorial Day Holiday	May 27, 2024	
Report Cards	May 28, 2024	

Progress Reports

September 15, 2023
October 27, 2023
February 15, 2024
March 28, 2024

Report Cards

January 9, 2024
May 28, 2024

"It may be the teacher's first year of delivering instruction, **but it is the students' only year to learn the content.**" ---Paul Bambrick-Santoyo

*The students we serve can't afford for us to waste time.
Our profession needs to understand there is a sense of
urgency.*

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 disciplinary action.

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

BADGES

All employees are provided a district name badge with picture identification. The ID badge is to be worn at all times while fulfilling assigned duties. The badge is an access key to assigned facilities during specified times appropriate for the employee's position. The ID badge should never be shared with another person. If the badge is lost or damaged contact the Human Resources Department for a replacement. Damaged badges should be returned to Human Resources. An employee may be charged \$5.00 for each replacement badge. The employee badge is district property and should be returned upon separation of employment or at the request of the employee's supervisor.

In addition, all employees are provide a Centegix Crisis Alert badge. This badge is to be work at all times while working on campus. This badge should be worn such that students are not able to press or activate the Centegix badge.

BULLETIN BOARDS

Bulletin boards inside classrooms should have current student work samples posted which contain appropriate commentary. Bulletin boards should be changed at least twice per nine weeks. Seasonal displays must be current.

Student work samples should be displayed outside classroom doors and should include appropriate commentary.

Bulletin boards in the main entryway will be handled by the Principal and the Counselor.

Bulletin boards on both sides of the Media Center will be handled by the Media Specialist.

Bulletin boards in the Cafeteria will be handled by the School Nutrition staff.

Bulletin boards in the hallways should be changed on a monthly basis by the grade level/department as indicated below:

Bulletin Board #1 Outside Cafeteria (closest to Music Room)

Month	Grade/Dept.	Month	Grade/Dept.
July/August	PreK	January	PreK
September	Kindergarten	February	Sped. Dept.
October	2 nd Grade	March	2 nd Grade
November	1 st Grade	April	Kindergarten
December	Sped. Dept.	May	1 st Grade

Bulletin Board #2 Outside Cafeteria (closest to Car Rider Entrance/Exit)

Month	Grade/Dept.	Month	Grade/Dept.
July/August	5 th Grade	January	4 th Grade
September	4 th Grade	February	3 rd Grade
October	3 rd Grade	March	Connections
November	Connections	April	Instructional Coach & MTSS Facilitator
December	Instructional Coach & MTSS Facilitator	May	5 th Grade

Bulletin Board at the End of 1st Grade Hall/Outside Office

Month	Grade/Dept.	Month	Grade/Dept.
July/August	Counselor & Social Worker	January	1 st Grade
September	2 nd Grade	February	2 nd Grade
October	ESOL & Gifted	March	Counselor & Social Worker
November	Office	April	ESOL & Gifted
December	1 st Grade	May	Office

BULLYING

Bullying will not be tolerated! No person shall willfully attempt to or threaten to inflict injury on another person or give any display of force that would give the victim reason to fear or expect bodily harm. A student shall not use any form of harassment to make a student feel threatened. Violation of this policy shall be dealt with immediately and will be considered a serious infraction of the discipline code. See complete details for Bullying and Cyber Bullying in the RCSS Code of Conduct.

BUS RIDER TAGS

Students in Grades K-3 riding RCSS buses must have a Bus Rider Tag attached to their person or their bookbag. The tag should have the child's name, parents' names, address, telephone number, and bus number on it. These tags will be furnished by the RCSS Transportation Department.

CANVAS LMS

All teachers are required to use Canvas to build the digital learning environment that meets the unique challenges faced by their students. This includes, but is not limited to,

asynchronous activities and lessons, lesson plans, teaching modules, videos, etc. This must be done on a regular basis.

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 parents/guardians do not have a Car Rider tag, they will be required to park, come inside, show ID, and pick up their child.

CERTIFICATION FOR EMPLOYEES

It is the responsibility of each certified employee to maintain a valid certificate issued by the Professional Standards Commission. Failure to maintain a valid certificate is grounds for dismissal. All certified employees are required to go online to www.gapsc.com to establish an individual account for the purposes of renewing and/or updating their certificates. This is the process by which updated and renewed certificates will be processed. The GAPSC no longer mails teaching certificates. They will be sent to your school or home email. From there, you will be able to print a copy.

Any time a certificate is updated or renewed, a copy should be printed and provided to your principal. This copy will be placed in your personnel file.

CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS

The Code of Ethics for Educators defines the professional behavior of educators in Georgia and serves as a guide to ethical conduct. The Georgia Professional Standards Commission has adopted standards that represent the conduct generally accepted by the education profession. The code defines unethical conduct justifying disciplinary sanction and provides guidance for protecting the health, safety and general welfare of students and educators, and assuring the citizens of Georgia a degree of accountability within the education profession.

Definitions.

(a) “Breach of contract” occurs when an educator fails to honor a signed contract for employment with a school/school system by resigning in a manner that does not meet the guidelines established by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

(b) “Certificate” refers to any teaching, service, or leadership certificate, license, or permit issued by authority of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

(c) “Child endangerment” occurs when an educator disregards a substantial and/or unjustifiable risk of bodily harm to the student.

(d) “Educator” is a teacher, school or school system administrator, or other education personnel who holds a certificate issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission and persons who have applied for but have not yet received a certificate. For the purposes of the Code of Ethics for Educators, “educator” also refers to paraprofessionals, aides, and substitute teachers.

(e) “Student” is any individual enrolled in the state’s public or private schools from preschool through grade 12 or any individual under the age of 18. For the purposes of the Code

of Ethics for Educators, the enrollment period for a graduating student ends on August 31 of the school year of graduation.

(f) “Complaint” is any written and signed statement from a local board, the state board, or one or more individual residents of this state filed with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission alleging that an educator has breached one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators. A “complaint” will be deemed a request to investigate.

(g) “Revocation” is the permanent invalidation of any certificate held by the educator. A Voluntary Surrender is equivalent to and has the same effect as a revocation. A Voluntary Surrender shall become effective upon receipt by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

(h) “Denial” is the refusal to grant initial certification to an applicant for a certificate.

(i) “Suspension” is the temporary invalidation of any certificate for a period of time specified by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

(j) “Reprimand” admonishes the certificate holder for his or her conduct. The reprimand cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.

(k) “Warning” warns the certificate holder that his or her conduct is unethical. The warning cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.

(l) “Monitoring” is the quarterly appraisal of the educator’s conduct by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission through contact with the educator and his or her employer. As a condition of monitoring, an educator may be required to submit a criminal background check (GCIC). The Commission specifies the length of the monitoring period.

(m) “No Probable Cause” is a determination by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission that, after a preliminary investigation, either no further action need be taken or no cause exists to recommend disciplinary action.

(n) “Inappropriate” is conduct or communication not suitable for an educator to have with a student. It goes beyond the bounds of an educator-student relationship.

(o) “Physical abuse” is physical interaction resulting in a reported or visible bruise or injury to the student.

Standards

(a) **Standard 1: Legal Compliance** - An educator shall abide by federal, state, and local laws and statutes. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to the commission or conviction of a felony or of any crime involving moral turpitude; of any other criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, trafficking, sale, or possession of a controlled substance or marijuana as provided for in Chapter 13 of Title 16; or of any other sexual offense as provided for in Code Section 16-6-1 through 16-6-17, 16-6-20, 16-6-22.2, or 16-12-100; or any other laws applicable to the profession. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of nolo contendere, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought; a situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted; and a situation where an adjudication of guilt or sentence was otherwise withheld or not entered on the charge or the charge was otherwise disposed of in a similar manner in any jurisdiction.

(b) **Standard 2: Conduct with Students** - An educator shall always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Committing any act of child abuse, including physical and verbal abuse;
2. Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment;

3. Committing any sexual act with a student or soliciting such from a student;
4. Engaging in or permitting harassment of or misconduct toward a student;
5. Soliciting, encouraging, or consummating an inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, or physical relationship with a student;
6. Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student; or
7. Failing to prevent the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs by students under the educator's supervision (including but not limited to at the educator's residence or any other private setting).

(c) Standard 3: Alcohol or Drugs - An educator shall refrain from the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs during the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Being on school or Local Unit of Administration (LUA)/school district premises or at a school or a LUA/school district-related activity while under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs; and
2. Being on school or LUA/school district premises or at a school-related activity involving students while under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcohol. A school-related activity includes, but is not limited to, any activity sponsored by the school or school system (booster clubs, parent-teacher organizations, or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum i.e. Foreign Language trips, etc).

(i) For the purposes of this standard, an educator shall be considered "under the influence" if the educator exhibits one or more of the following indicators, including but not limited to: slurred speech, enlarged pupils, bloodshot eyes, general personality changes, lack of physical coordination, poor motor skills, memory problems, concentration problems, etc.

(d) Standard 4: Honesty - An educator shall exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to, falsifying, misrepresenting, or omitting:

1. Professional qualifications, criminal history, college or staff development credit and/or degrees, academic award, and employment history;
2. Information submitted to federal, state, local school districts and other governmental agencies;
3. Information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel;
4. Reasons for absences or leaves;
5. Information submitted in the course of an official inquiry/investigation; and
6. Information submitted in the course of professional practice.

(e) Standard 5: Public Funds and Property - An educator entrusted with public funds and property shall honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Misusing public or school-related funds;
2. Failing to account for funds collected from students or parents;
3. Submitting fraudulent requests or documentation for reimbursement of expenses or for pay (including fraudulent or purchased degrees, documents, or coursework);
4. Co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts; and

5. Using school or school district property without the approval of the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee.

(f) Standard 6: Remunerative Conduct - An educator shall maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Soliciting students or parents of students, or school or LUA/school district personnel, to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee;

2. Accepting gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal use or gain where there may be the appearance of a conflict of interest;

3. Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee; and

4. Coaching, instructing, promoting athletic camps, summer leagues, etc. that involves students in an educator's school system and from whom the educator receives remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee. These types of activities must be in compliance with all rules and regulations of the Georgia High School Association.

(g) Standard 7: Confidential Information - An educator shall comply with state and federal laws and state school board policies relating to the confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test material and other information. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Sharing of confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information, family status and/or income, and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law;

2. Sharing of confidential information restricted by state or federal law;

3. Violation of confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, violating local school system or state directions for the use of tests or test items, etc.; and

4. Violation of other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

(h) Standard 8: Required Reports - An educator shall file with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission reports of a breach of one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators, child abuse (O.C.G.A. §19-7-5), or any other required report. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Failure to report to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission all requested information on documents required by the Commission when applying for or renewing any certificate with the Commission;

2. Failure to make a required report of a an alleged or proven violation of one or more standards of the Code of Ethics for educators of which they have personal knowledge as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner; and

3. Failure to make a required report of any alleged or proven violation of state or federal law as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require

reporting sooner. These reports include but are not limited to: murder, voluntary manslaughter, aggravated assault, aggravated battery, kidnapping, any sexual offense, any sexual exploitation of a minor, any offense involving a controlled substance and any abuse of a child if an educator has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused.

(i) Standard 9: Professional Conduct - An educator shall demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards and preserves the dignity and integrity of the education profession. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to a resignation that would equate to a breach of contract; any conduct that impairs and/or diminishes the certificate holder's ability to function professionally in his or her employment position; or behavior or conduct that is detrimental to the health, welfare, discipline, or morals of students; or failure to supervise a student(s).

(j) Standard 10: Testing - An educator shall administer state-mandated assessments fairly and ethically. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Committing any act that breaches Test Security; and
2. Compromising the integrity of the assessment.

Reporting.

(a) Educators are required to report a breach of one or more of the Standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. Educators should be aware of legal requirements and local policies and procedures for reporting unethical conduct. Complaints filed with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission must be in writing and must be signed by the complainant (parent, educator, or other LUA/school district employee, etc.).

(b) The Commission notifies local and state officials of all disciplinary actions. In addition, suspensions and revocations are reported to national officials, including the NASDTEC Clearinghouse.

Disciplinary Action.

(a) The Georgia Professional Standards Commission is authorized to suspend, revoke, or deny certificates, to issue a reprimand or warning, or to monitor the educator's conduct and performance after an investigation is held and notice and opportunity for a hearing are provided to the certificate holder. Any of the following grounds shall be considered cause for disciplinary action against the educator:

1. Unethical conduct as outlined in The Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-10 (GaPSC Rule 505-6-.01);
2. Disciplinary action against a certificate on grounds consistent with those specified in the Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-10 (GaPSC Rule 505-6-.01);
3. Order from a court of competent jurisdiction or a request from the Department of Human Resources that the certificate should be suspended or the application for certification should be denied for non-payment of child support (O.C.G.A. §19-628.1 and §19-11-9.3);
4. Notification from the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation that the educator is in default and not in satisfactory repayment status on a student loan

5. Suspension or revocation of any professional license or certificate;
6. Violation of any other laws and rules applicable to the profession (O.C.G.A. §1613-111); and
7. Any other good and sufficient cause that renders an educator unfit for employment as an educator.

MORAL TURPITUDE

“Turpitude in its ordinary sense involves the idea of inherent baseness or vileness, shameful wickedness, depravity.... In its legal sense it includes everything contrary to justice, honesty, modesty or good morals.... The word ‘moral,’ which so often precedes the word turpitude, does not seem to add anything to the meaning of the term, other than that emphasis which often results from a tautological expression. All crimes embraced within the Roman’s conception of the *crimen falsi* involve turpitude; but it is not safe to declare that such crimes are the only ones involving turpitude.” In *Ramsey v. State*, the court said that a crime involving moral turpitude is one which is *malum in se* rather than *malum prohibitum*. In Georgia, the test for whether a felony is one involving moral turpitude is “does the [crime], disregarding its felony punishment, meet the test as being contrary to justice, honesty, modesty, good morals or man’s duty to man?”

- Larceny after trust --Soliciting for prostitutes
- Voluntary manslaughter --Murder
- Making a false report of a crime --Criminal issuance of a bad check
- Sale of narcotics or other illegal drugs
- Larceny or a misdemeanor theft by taking
- Fraud or false pretenses in obtaining something of value
- Pattern of failure to file federal tax returns in years in which taxes are due.

- Public drunkenness --Driving under the influence

- Carrying a concealed weapon
 - Fighting
 - Simple Assault
 - Child abandonment
 - Possession of less than one ounce of marijuana
 - Misdemeanor offense of obstructing a law enforcement officer
 - The federal misdemeanor offense of Conspiracy in Restraint of Interstate Trade and Commerce.
- Unlawful sale of liquor
 - Simple Battery
 - Misdemeanor criminal trespass
 - Misdemeanor offense of escape

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

All school personnel shall adhere to Georgia State Board Policy IDDF--Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information. Schools and school districts are mandated by Federal law, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), to protect educational records. "Educational records" refers to those data elements that are (1) directly related to a student; and (2) maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting on behalf of the agency or institution. FERPA permits school districts to disclose information designated as "Directory Information" without consent of a parent or student. Directory information is considered information which is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It includes student information found in athletic and extracurricular programs, yearbooks, honor roll, and other recognition lists, graduation programs, etc. Extra care must be taken to protect "non-directory" student information as well as personally identifiable information contained within student records, either in electronic or paper form.

Among the items considered non-directory information are:

Advisement records	Courses taken	Grades
Disciplinary actions	Schedule	Test scores
Student Number		

Personally identifiable information in education records is defined as a student's first and last name with one or more of the following data elements:

- A list of personal characteristics or any other identifiers that would make the students identify easily traceable.
- Name of student's parent(s) or other family member(s).
- Social security number.

COUNSELOR AND CITIZENSHIP LESSONS

The Counselor will provide monthly lessons to all classes on the monthly Citizenship topics. Every homeroom teacher must sign up for their monthly time for these lessons. A Google doc will be provided by Ms. Carter for this purpose.

DRESS CODE FOR FACULTY & STAFF

Blythe Elementary employees are recognized as professionals; therefore, such employees are expected to maintain a high standard of personal appearance in school buildings, on school grounds, and at school functions during normal school hours. The personal conduct and attire of all faculty/staff members shall be above reproach and shall contribute to promoting positive

morale in the school and community. Faculty/staff members should make sure that their personal appearance is professional and adheres to the guidelines set forth below.

Appropriate school attire includes:

- dresses and skirts no more than 2” above knee while standing and properly fitting;
- pants/slacks/capris which are not sheer, see-through, or low-riding;
- blouses, tops, shirts which do not allow undergarments to be seen;
- blouses/shirts/tops must be at least three (3) inches wide across the shoulders;
- Blythe shirts or other Richmond County school shirts worn in support of Richmond County school teams and/or other school-related events;
- shoes which are neat and clean (e.g., loafers, wedges, clogs, mules, slides, thong-style shoes (***no flip flops***), boots, flats, and sandals are appropriate.

NOTE: Special days will be approved for faculty and staff to wear blue jeans. Jeans are not acceptable attire during Open House, Honors Programs, or Parent Teacher Conferences.

Athletic or tennis shoes are for P.E. teachers ***only*** unless approved for special days and activities, pre-planning, post-planning or other in-service days. Flip-flops may be worn on in-service days, pre-planning, and post-planning days but are ***not*** appropriate on regular school days. (Flip-flops are considered shoes with rubber bottoms with little or no support. Dressy sandals, slides, or thong-style shoes with hard or leather bottoms/soles are not considered flip-flops.)

P.E. teachers may wear wind suits, shorts of modest length (no more than 2” above the knee while standing), other appropriate athletic attire, and athletic or tennis shoes. Other Blythe employees with health conditions that warrant wearing athletic or tennis shoes should meet with the Principal to obtain permission. Medical documentation may be required.

The following clothing items and footwear ***are not acceptable*** under any circumstances on a regularly scheduled school day:

- blue jeans containing holes through which skin or undergarments are visible;
- overalls;
- overly tight or revealing clothing items of any kind;
- clothing items made of spandex (body suits, stretch pants, bicycle shorts);
- flip flops; slippers; bedroom/house shoes;
- sweat pants/suits, yoga pants, jogging suits, or workout clothing;
- low-cut tops (cleavage should ***not*** be visible); tops with cut-out backs;
- one-shoulder blouses, off-the-shoulders blouses, tank tops, midriff tops, tank top style dresses; top or dresses with spaghetti straps;
- tight and/or see through clothing (tops or bottoms);
- sleepwear or loungewear;
- t-shirts other than those bearing the name of Blythe or a school-related/school-sponsored activity;
- short skirts or skirts with high slits;
- any clothing item which allows undergarments to show;
- shorts of any length (other than those approved for P.E. teachers and on Field Day—no more than 2” above the knee while standing and properly fitting.

Please be reminded that leggings and jeggings may ONLY be worn with a blouse that completely covers the buttocks.

Also, please be reminded that no article of clothing that depicts drugs, alcoholic beverages, weapons, profane or obscene language, sexual overtones, or make disparaging comments about another's racial, ethnic, or religious heritage may be worn at any time.

All clothing and shoes should be neat and clean in appearance. All Blythe employees will be expected to adhere to the dress code as specified.

Upon the third violation of the dress code, the faculty or staff member will receive written documentation regarding the violations. This documentation will become part of the employee's personnel file and may be reflected on his/her annual evaluation.

DRESS DOWN DAYS/BLUE JEANS DAYS

Faculty and staff members will have many opportunities to wear jeans. Some of the Jeans Days will be "free" while some will require payment. Faculty members (certified employees) may pay \$30 and wear jeans every Friday unless otherwise indicated by the Principal. Staff members (classified employees) may pay \$20 and wear jeans every Friday unless otherwise indicated by the Principal. Payments are due by October 1, 2023. If writing a check, please make the check payable to Blythe Elementary School for the appropriate amount. Give the money to Mrs. Pamela Baxley, Bookkeeper.

Jeans may be worn during Preplanning and Postplanning with the following exceptions: Open House and district-wide Professional Learning (off campus).

Dress Down Days/Blue Jeans Days do **not** make it permissible for anyone to wear inappropriate clothing and shoes or anything not allowable under the Dress Code Policy.

DROP EVERYTHING AND READ (D.E.A.R.)

Drop Everything And Read time, better known as DEAR time, is a time regularly set aside in the classroom schedule for both students and their teachers to "drop everything and read." DEAR time conveniently accommodates a variety of student interests and ability levels, since each student selects for himself/herself the book(s) he/she wishes to read.

DEAR is not intended to be a substitute for other language arts instruction – DEAR supplements the regular reading program by encouraging independent reading, but it does not replace guided reading.

DEAR is an important part of the daily/weekly classroom schedule. It is scheduled for the same time each day or week, thus students recognize that DEAR time is a priority and can look forward to this special period.

When DEAR becomes a regular part of the classroom schedule, each student should bring a book from home or select a book from the library before DEAR time begins. When DEAR time arrives, every student should be prepared to immediately pull out a pre-selected book and begin to read.

Blythe Elementary School will implement D.E.A.R. every day from 2:45 – 3:05 p.m.

DROP OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Morning Drop-off:

Parents will enter the drop-off line at the side of the school. They should 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. Once the child has completely exited the vehicle and made it onto the sidewalk, they can then drive away. Children should NOT be dropped off in any area other than the drop-off line. Students are not allowed to cross lanes of traffic or parked cars. If parents plan to come into the school with their child, they will need to park in one of the designated parking spots and escort their child(ren) into the building.

If parents arrive after 8:30 a.m., they will need to park their vehicle, walk the 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:

- All car riders will receive a car rider tag. Each child's name must be written on the card.
- The card should be placed on the passenger side of the car's dashboard or attached to the passenger side visor for easy visibility.
- Cars will line up around the side parking lot.
- Students will be called to go to their assigned vehicle.
- Students are seated in the cafeteria and will be dismissed from there.
- 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.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

The Board of Education recognizes an expanding reliance on electronic communication due to the convenience, speed, cost-effectiveness, and environmental advantages it provides. As role models, teachers and other staff should be conscious of their electronic communication with staff members, students and parents.

The following expectations are necessary:

- Only use electronic communication on a professional level.
- Notify supervisor of your plans and always copy them. Should a student communicate inappropriately, notify your supervisor immediately.
- If your school site provides an electronic platform like Remind 101, Microsoft Teams or Class Dojo, stick to that platform.

E-MAIL

The district maintains e-mail accounts for the majority of employees to facilitate communication with supervisors, coworkers, district staff, parents of students, and others, to carry out the employee's responsibilities. An email account and its use is a privilege and is subject to the district's Internet Acceptable Use Policy which can be found in the online policy

manual. Employees are prohibited from using e-mail to forward or distribute messages for the purpose of soliciting funds or business, marketing, sale of items or distribution of inappropriate material. With very limited exceptions, all communication using a district e-mail account is a public record and is subject to open records requests and must adhere to the district's records retention guidelines.

At Blythe Elementary, employees should check their emails very frequently/several times per day. Employees should respond to all emails or Calendar Invites in a timely manner (24 – 48 hours).

EMERGENCY DRILLS AND INCLEMENT WEATHER

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

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

Lockdown drills will be held throughout the year. When the code is given or the alarm sounds, everyone must follow the outlined procedures for whichever type of lockdown (soft or hard).

In the event that school is canceled due to other inclement weather, school closure announcements will be broadcast or announced on the local radio and television stations.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMS

Blythe Elementary 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 one hour one day per week. A signed permission slip/enrollment form is required to participate.

CHAMPS: Choosing Healthy Activities and Methods Promoting Safety 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 5th 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

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.

STEAM Club: Students in Grades 4 and 5 who are interested may join. It is limited to the first 10 in each grade level who sign up and return their completed forms. The Club will meet on Tuesdays from 3:30 – 5:00 p.m. Students must have transportation. The Blythe and RCSS Code of Conduct will apply.

FACULTY FUND

This committee is set up to provide remembrances for staff and families, recognition for staff at special times, staff breakfasts, staff luncheons, flowers, cards, meals, etc.

Mrs. Baxley, Mrs. Edwards, and Mrs. Kinzer are diligent in handling the funds to make sure the money is spent fairly and when needed.

The cost to join for certified staff is \$25 and is \$15 for classified staff. Cash and checks are accepted. Everyone is encouraged to join.

FACULTY MEETINGS

Blythe Elementary will have a monthly Faculty Meeting. Attendance is *mandatory* for all certified employees. Classified employees will be given advanced notice when they will need to stay for a faculty meeting. Every effort will be made to keep meetings to the minimum time necessary. However, there may be times when additional meetings will be necessary. The Principal will provide as much advanced notice as possible for all meetings. Regularly scheduled Faculty Meetings will be on the monthly calendar.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are structured activities that occur outside the classroom. Instructional trips should be planned as such with specific instructional objectives. Appropriate instruction shall precede and follow each field trip which will enhance the amount and quality of students' learning.

Timeline for Submitting Field Trip Requests to Central Office: *Minimum of 30 days prior to departure/date of trip*

Timeline for Submitting Field Trip Meal Requests to School Nutrition/Cafeteria Manager:
Minimum of 3 weeks prior to departure/date of trip

It is the trip sponsor's responsibility to make meal arrangements with school's nutrition manager. It is NOT allowable to stop at restaurants or fast food establishments for lunch on local trips without prior approval.

FUNDRAISING

During the course of the school year, students, faculty and staff will have opportunities to participate in fundraising activities. These activities are sponsored by the school and the PTO. All fundraisers must be pre-approved by the Principal and must have all required documentation. Student participation is optional. ***Please do not encourage students to sell items door-to-door.***

GRADE INTEGRITY ACT

The Grade Integrity Act of 2007 states that administrators cannot require a teacher to change a grade. However, principals and superintendents have the authority to change a grade in the event it is deemed necessary to do so.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

Blythe Elementary School has a comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling program with many components. Our school counselor is available to provide a support system to help students experience educational success. Individual counseling, small group counseling, and classroom guidance opportunities are services provided to improve student academic performance, improve student behavior, increase students' self-awareness, and improve interpersonal skills.

In addition, the school counselor provides information on careers, study skills, decision-making skills, and other life skills. Through collaboration with educators, parents and community resources, our counselor assists with guiding students through their educational experience to ensure positive results.

HARASSMENT

The Board of Education and Blythe Elementary are committed to providing a workplace free from distractions caused by harassment; all forms of discrimination based upon race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age or disability at all times and during all occasions while at school, in the workplace or at any school event or activity. It is the Board's and Blythe's expectation that all personnel conduct themselves in a highly professional manner and respect co-workers, students, parents and customers. In this regard, the Board and Blythe prohibit harassment, all

forms of discrimination, and other unprofessional conduct. Harassment may include, but is not limited to, conduct or speech which entails unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, taunts, threats, comments of a vulgar or demeaning nature, demands or physical contact which creates a hostile environment. There may be other speech or conduct which employees or students experience as inappropriate or illegal harassment which should also be reported; harassment can take many forms and it is not possible to itemize every aspect of the harassment forbidden by this policy. All employees are to adhere to the Board Harassment Policy GAEB found at www.rcboe.org under “Policies.” Any employee who believes they are subject to harassment or discrimination should follow the procedures found in Policy GAAA found at www.rcboe.org under “Policies.”

Harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Unwelcomed sexual advances;
- Requests for sexual favors;
- Verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature;
- Leering, staring, sexual flirtations, propositions;
- Slurs, derogatory comments, degrading descriptions;
- Sexual jokes, stories, drawings;
- Touching, teasing, etc.

You must report any suspicions, information regarding or knowledge to an administrator immediately. This applies to faculty, staff and students. Harassment is illegal under Title IX.

HOMEWORK

Homework is important. Students in grades K-5 may have homework on a daily basis. In the event no homework is assigned, encourage students to 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 should be to:

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 K-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 Mrs. Carter.
- **Perfect Attendance**---for students with zero (0) absences for the semester---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. Victoria Hammond.
- **STEAM Award**---one (1) student per homeroom based on participation, completion of activities/assignments, etc.---chosen by Mrs. Rhonda Smith
- **P.E. Award**---one (1) male and one (1) female student per homeroom based on participation and sportsmanship---chosen by Mrs. Tabitha 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		

HOUSEKEEPING

Custodial services are provided on a daily basis. Classrooms should be not dirty or unclean. Trash and other discarded items should be placed in the trashcans. Classroom floors should be clean and clutter-free at all times. Teachers are expected to supervise students in maintaining a system of good housekeeping practices at all times.

Windows in classroom doors should never be completely covered. There should always be enough space to see inside the classroom. No materials should be attached to classroom doors. This is mandated by the State Fire Marshall's Office.

Doors shall not be covered with any type of flammable materials.

Teachers should assume responsibility for and give attention to the following items:

1. Properly ventilated classrooms;
2. Locking doors when out of the classroom during the day;
3. Locking doors and windows at the close of the day;
4. Turning off the lights when leaving the classroom for more than a few minutes during the day and at the end of the day;
5. Repair requests should be reported on Maintenance Forms and turned in to the office;
6. Place trash cans by interior exit door before leaving each day;
7. Place student chairs on top of desks or tables before leaving for the day.

INFINITE CAMPUS

Each teacher is responsible for entering grades for the students in his/her classes. This information should be entered and updated on a weekly basis. All grading deadlines, for the purposes of Progress Reports and Report Cards, must be adhered to.

Graded assignments must be labeled with the name and date of the assignment.

Tests/exams should be given periodically in an effort to determine mastery and progress.

Tests/exams should be marked as such in the Gradebook.

It is every teacher's responsibility to make sure his/her gradebook is set up correctly. Questions regarding setup should be addressed with the Data Specialist/Registrar.

Grading policies must be provided to parents—particularly in the case of weighted grading. Failure to follow these grading guidelines may result in a letter of reprimand being placed in an employee's personnel file.

INTERNET USAGE FOR EMPLOYEES

School employees must exercise great caution when using technology including, but not limited to email accounts, Facebook, MySpace, SnapChat, TikTok, and Twitter, due to the public nature of these programs. School employees should refrain from posting any personally identifiable information about students, fellow employees, supervisors, or themselves on public sites or in chat rooms as these are public in nature and may cause liability issues for the employee, the school, or the school district.

Names and information must never be used in these exchanges. Avoid exchanges and posts that could jeopardize students, the school, or any employee. Posts, including pictures, have led to lawsuits for slander and libel as well as reports to the PSC. Some cases have resulted in

the revocation of teaching certificates, termination, and criminal charges being filed against school employees. All school personnel shall adhere to Georgia State Board Policy IDDF--Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information.

School business should not be publicly broadcast or posted on public websites. School activities, events, and business are not personal matters and should not be treated as such.

Remember: Be friendly—not a friend with regard to students and other persons under age.

INTERVENTION, REMEDIATION & ACCELERATION

Intervention, remediate and acceleration/personalized learning will take place on each regularly scheduled school day. During this time, students in K-5 will work on literacy and language skills, math skills, and test taking skills. This will be documented in lesson plans and on RTI forms for students receiving services and/or interventions through the RTI process.

This program is mandatory and is an orchestrated school-wide effort to improve student skills and understanding in all content areas.

Groups should be created based on students' benchmark results, skills and knowledge deficits. Groups will change as students master content and acquire skills.

This is not optional!

KEYS

Keys are issued to teachers each school term. These keys are restricted issue and may NOT be duplicated by employees. Employees must NOT be dependent upon the use of the custodian or secretary's keys for the opening and locking of the classrooms. All school-issued keys must be turned into the office annually.

LESSON PLANS

All RCSS teachers have an obligation to teach the standards using the district approved curriculum. Evidence of doing so can be found in part in Lesson Plans. Lesson Plans are due on Fridays or Mondays one week **prior** to being taught. They must be written and implemented based on the local and state curriculum maps, pacing guides, etc. found in Canvas LMS.

Lesson Plans should be uploaded into the assigned OneDrive file.

All teachers are required to turn in five (5) days Emergency Lesson Plans no later than August 31, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.

MANDATED REPORTING

In Georgia law, it designates certain professionals as mandated reporters of child abuse or neglect [OCGA 19-7-5(c)(1)].

Mandated reporters must report when they have "reasonable cause to believe that suspected child abuse has occurred." The old standard was reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused. The addition of "suspected" lowers the threshold for what you must report. In other words, adults caring for children must report incidents not only when they think

abuse has occurred, but when they suspect that child abuse may have occurred.

If you are an educator, you must make a report, immediately but no later than 24 hours, to your local DFCS office or law enforcement and are subject to criminal penalty for failing to do so.

MEDIA CENTER GUIDELINES

Our Philosophy: The Media Center is an integral part of the school providing materials and services that support and enrich instruction. Media Center personnel are ready at all times to assist and support teaching and learning. Our goal is to provide students with the materials and services that will make teaching and learning challenging, interesting, exciting, and successful.

General Information:

The Media Center operates on a flexible schedule. All students will use their student ID# to check out materials from the Media Center. The Media Specialist will plan times with individual teachers for instruction for each class. Teachers may secure the use of the Media Center at other times by making requests to the Media Specialist.

Electronic communications media includes, but is not limited to movies, videos, and CDs. Electronic communications media purchased by the school or school system may be used in a school/classroom when it relates directly to a subject being studied, correlates with the curriculum guide and GPS, and serves to enhance and enrich student learning. ***The Principal or Asst. Principal must approve the use of electronic communications media, videos, tapes, CDs, etc.*** The request form is available from the Media Specialist.

Approval will only be given for the use of materials meeting the following criteria:

- Is not rated PG, PG-13, R or X;
- Is the property of the school or school system;
- Has not been brought from home by a student, faculty or staff member; and
- Has not been rented at a local video store.

Book Check-out Policies:

- Students must get permission from their teacher to come to the Media Center to check out a book at any time other than their class's regularly scheduled time.
- Students with overdue books will not be allowed to check out another book.
- Students with lost, damaged or overdue books will not receive their Report Cards or any information regarding promotion or retention until the book has been turned in or the fees have been paid.
- A student is responsible for every book they check out to the media center. If a book is damaged or lost, parents are responsible for paying the replacement cost of the book. (\$20 is the average replacement cost of a hard cover book.)

Media Center Behavior: The Blythe Media Center is a "Quiet Zone".

Along with the students checking out books, teachers may send students to do work and take AR tests on the computers. All students using the Media Center **MUST** be quiet!

Other behavior rules include:

1. Walk to and from the classroom to the Media Center.

2. MUST have library card, hall pass or note from teacher to come in the Media Center.
3. Quickly pick out a book to check out.
4. Playing around is not acceptable.
5. Gum, candy, drinks, etc. are NOT allowed.
6. Do not move books from their designated area.

Any student who does not follow the rules will be removed from the Media Center. Students who repeatedly fail to follow the rules will not be allowed to come to the Media Center except with their teachers.

Book Care: Any damaged book must be paid for at book replacement cost.

Book Care Guidelines:

1. NO writing in the books.
2. Do not leave books in places where they can get messed up or lost such as the floor, outside, on the bus, in the bathroom, etc.
3. Keep books in book bag or desk when they are not being read. (Keep away from little brothers or sisters.)
4. Books should NEVER be allowed to get WET.
5. Do not damage the book by cutting it, ripping it coloring in it, letting it get dirty, bending the book backwards, tearing out pages, etc.

MEDICAL CARE (NURSE/CLINIC) AND TREATMENT OF STUDENTS

There should be a school nurse on duty 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. 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 should be completed for those children receiving daily medications. Students should report to the clinic at the proper time to receive their medication.

The school nurse will maintain the first aid supplies at the school. Tylenol ***SHOULD NOT*** be administered to any student unless the student has a Permission Form on file with the nurse.

Teachers should never give medication to students! This does not, however, preclude first aid treatment for minor injuries that may be administered by a teacher.

Prescription medication may be given at school provided the parent has given consent and has been approved. All medications should be kept in the school clinic. Medical forms should be on file for every student and will be maintained by the nurse.

In the event a student becomes ill or is injured, he/she should be escorted to the school clinic if possible. In the event the student is unable to travel, the office should be notified **IMMEDIATELY**. An Accident or Incident Report form should be completed by the teacher and returned to the office.

Should a student ask to go to the nurse, teachers should assess the situation and screen referrals to the school nurse. Use your best judgment in determining whether or not a

child needs to see the nurse.

Unlike other prescription medicine or drugs, a student may possess and use his/her asthma medication while in school, while 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 if the student or his or her parents provide to the Principal or her designee a statement or prescription from the student's physician specifying the name and purpose for the medication which the child is to possess and self-administer.

Using Prescription Auto-Injectible Epinephrine

Like asthma medication, a student may carry or possess and self-administer a prescription auto-injectible 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 have met the required criteria. fulfill the following:

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a student may be subject to disciplinary action if he or she uses auto-injectible 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-injectible epinephrine.

Advise parents/guardians that children should 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;
- Fever;
- A very frequent cough;
- Persistent pain (ear, stomach, etc.); and/or
- A widespread rash.

If any of these symptoms occur during the school day, parents/guardians will be notified and required to take the child home. 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.

Students should not attend school if suffering from any of the symptoms or illnesses below:
Be sure to share this information with parents/guardians:

- 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.
- COVID-19; Students should be symptom free before attending or returning to school;
- 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.

***Remember—parents should send a written excuse when their 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

MORNING AFFIRMATIONS

Three morning affirmations will be announced on the intercom during announcements. After each one, the faculty, staff and students should repeat them. The affirmations will change every six (6) weeks.

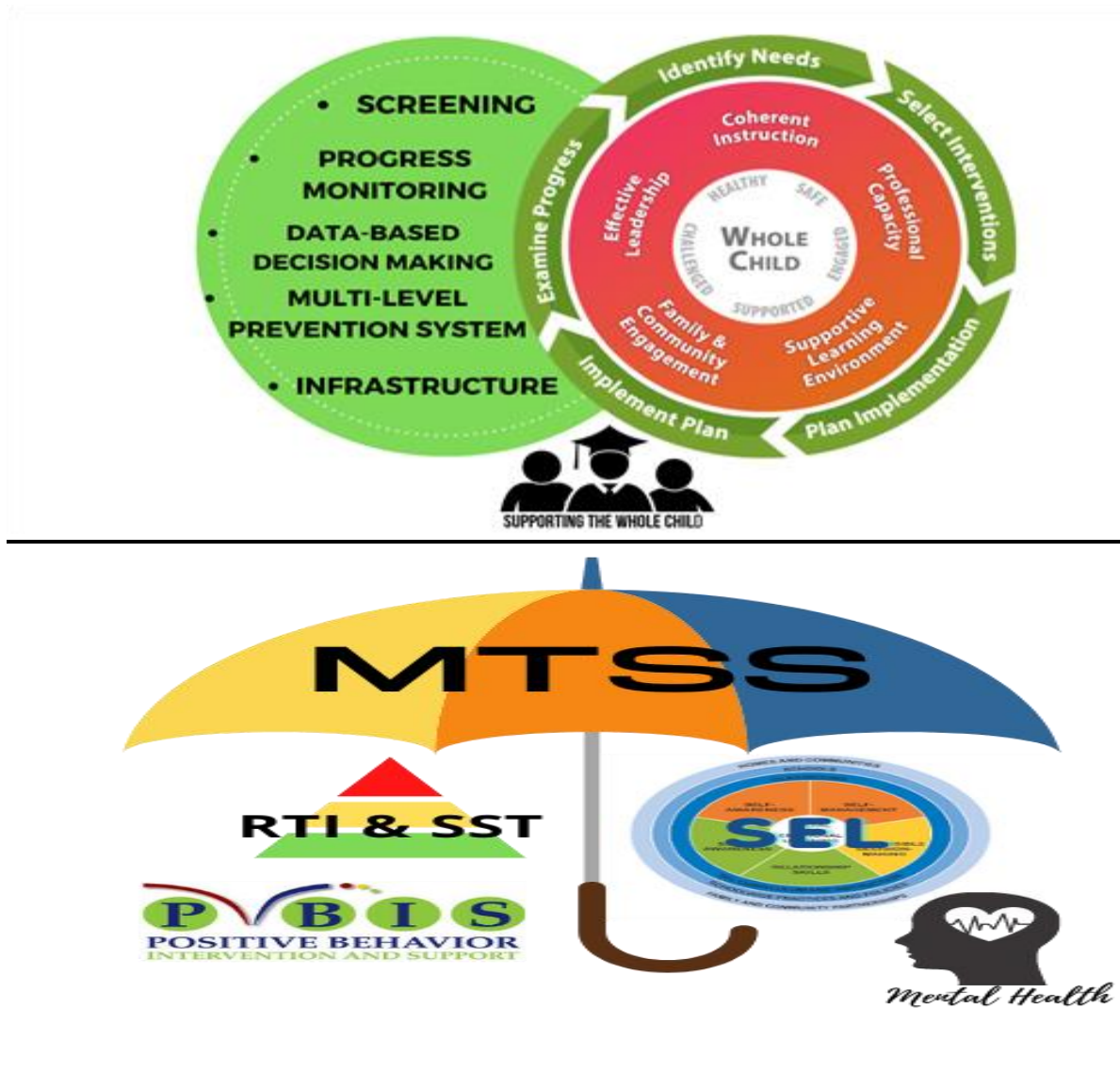
MORNING WORK FOR GRADES K-5

Students should have morning work to complete between 7:50 and 8:20 a.m. each day. The morning work may be a preview of the day's lessons, a review of the previous day's lessons, or a skills-building lesson/activity. Avoid using Homeroom for playtime or free time.

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.

OPEN RECORDS ACT

The Open Records Act states that any email sent or received on a government computer (desk tops and lap tops) is public record. This includes using personal accounts on government computers. Government issued computer should not be used for private and/or personal business.

Any information accessed, stored, or transferred to or from a school computer is subject to the Open Records Act and is the property of the Richmond County School System.

PARENT CONTACT & PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

- Teachers are encouraged to maintain open lines of communication with parents to ensure maximum student progress and include parents in the decision-making processes regarding their children.
- Teachers are expected to make every possible effort to meet with parents before and after school and during planning periods (within reason) for the purpose of holding Parent-Teacher Conferences. They should be prepared to meet any and all parents of the students they teach and be prepared to discuss any issues relevant to any student assigned to them.
- Teachers should maintain a file/folder on each of their students. All written documentation should be kept to show the efforts, strategies, and interventions that have been used to best meet the needs of the child. Keep copies of all written communication to and from parents.
- ***Documentation must be maintained on any student who is failing one or more content area classes—especially reading and math.***
- All teachers will be **required** to maintain a Contact Log in Infinite Campus. These contacts may be made via telephone, email, and/or face-to-face. Please note that contact may be made for many reasons—good and bad. Be sure to contact parents with good information as well as with concerns or other issues.

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.

PERMANENT RECORDS

Student records and information are confidential. Parents/guardians and those persons working with the student are allowed access to student records and information. Access to student records and information is the right of each parent/guardian and will not be denied due to physical limitation or geographical location. The Richmond County Board of Education will assume that the parent has the authority to inspect and review data relating to his/her child unless the agency has been advised that the parent does not have the authority under applicable state laws governing such matters as guardianship, separation, and divorce.

Permanent records should never be taken from school or kept in classrooms overnight. Special education records should never be taken from the school and should be kept in a secure location at all times.

Teachers who wish to review records for students in his/her classroom may check these records out from the secretary. Permanent records should be checked during the first month of school for accuracy of general information.

With permanent records, it is expected that:

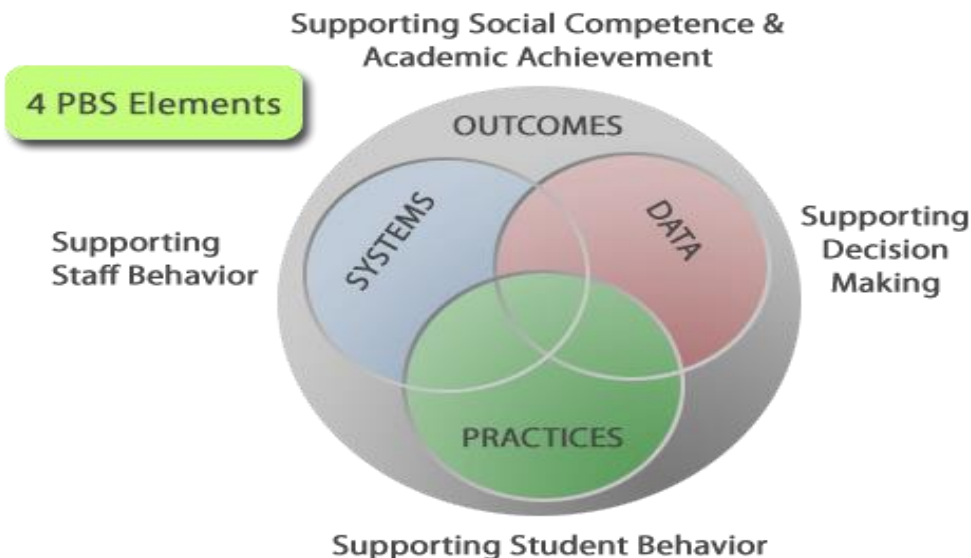
1. All information will be listed accurately;
2. All entries on the record will be made in ink except in cases where information should be indicated in pencil;
3. All course titles/subjects will be listed accurately;
4. All grades for pupils in grades K-5 must be listed;
5. Attendance information for the school year must be recorded for every student that was enrolled during the year;
6. Teachers should return the permanent records of any students not in his/her homeroom or not attending school during the current school year. Teachers should request any permanent records they need but do not have.
7. All test scores should be recorded (Ga. Milestones, CogAT, iReady, benchmarks, etc.), either manually or by applying computer-generated labels.

All legal documents, such as custody papers should be copied with the teacher keeping a copy, a copy being placed in the permanent record, and a copy given to the Principal. (It is not the school's responsibility to interpret custody agreements or arrangements. In the event of a dispute regarding custody, outside assistance will be secured.)

PERSONALIZED LEARNING (GRADES 3-5)

Students in grades 3-5 should have 25 minutes for math and 25 minutes for ELA each day (50 minutes total) for personalized learning (remediation or enrichment). This should be built into the daily schedule. Students will utilize FEV Tutor during these times.

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)

Classroom Clip Chart

LEVEL	EXPECTATIONS & REQUIREMENTS
Pawsitively Amazing!!! (100)	If students move their clip up to <i>Pawsitively Amazing</i> , they add a special decoration to their clip and receive a note to take home. This level is reserved for extraordinary behavior and will not be given out loosely. This level will remain special and may not be reached daily.
Way to Go!!! (95)	Students move to <i>Way to Go</i> for continuing to make good choices throughout the day. Please congratulate your child when they reach this level.
Ready to Learn (90)	All students begin the day on <i>Ready to Learn</i> . They will move up or down during the day depending on the choices they make. This is an acceptable level to stay on. They were good and did not get in trouble. It means they didn't go above and beyond.
Oopsie! (85)	Students move to <i>Oopsie</i> as a reminder that they need to follow the classroom rules.
Paws to Think About It (75)	When students move to <i>Paws to Think About It</i> , they must reflect on their choices by completing a "Think About It" sheet. This will be sent home to be signed by the parent. The student may lose classroom privileges depending on the severity of the behaviors.
Consequences (65)	When students move to <i>Consequences</i> when they choose to make inappropriate choices. Parents will receive a phone call at this level. Students can work their way back off of this level if their behavior improves; however, daily points will not be calculated for rewards/conduct grade.

The **Classroom Clip Chart** is also part of our P.B.I.S/School-wide Positive Behavior Plan. Student choices are tracked on a Clip Chart. All students begin the day on green in the middle of the chart. Clothespins are moved up or down depending on choices. Clips that are moved down may be moved back up if the teachers sees the student making improved choices. In addition, once a clip has been moved up, it may be moved down. All clothespins are moved back to green at the end of the day. A daily behavior grade will be entered as shown. All classes and teachers are involved in using this plan.

		LEARNING ZONES (classrooms, gym, Media Center)	ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL (buses & car riders)	CAFETERIA	COMMON AREAS (hallways, lobby, restrooms)
P	POSTITIVE ATTITUDE	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
A	ACT RESPONSIBLY	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
W	WORK FOR SUCCESS	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 Avoid playing
S	SHOW RESPECT	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

P.A.W.S.

PRINTING AND COPYING

Items requiring copying in large numbers (more than 15) should be copied on the RISO. Working with colleagues to collectively print items in large quantities (such as for an entire grade level) will be beneficial to everyone.

Faculty and staff members should avoid printing personal items and materials on the school's copiers and RISO machines.

Students are NOT allowed to make copies for teachers.

RECESS

The Board of Education requires each elementary school to schedule recess for all students in kindergarten and grades one through five every school day; however, that recess shall not be required on any school day on which a student has had physical education or structured activity time or if reasonable circumstances impede such recess, such as inclement weather when no indoor space is available, assemblies or field trips exceeding their scheduled duration, conflicts occurring at the scheduled recess time over which the classroom teachers has no control, or emergencies, disasters, or acts of God.

The school principal is authorized to determine the length, frequency, timing, and location of breaks at each school. In determining the schedule for recess or unstructured break time for students, the principal shall consult with appropriate instructional personnel at the school and system level as appropriate, to ensure that break does not interfere with and provides support for academic learning. The principal shall also issue directions concerning the responsibility for supervision of students so that break time will be a safe experience for them.

Decisions to withhold break time shall not be inconsistent with any behavioral plan developed by the school for the student, including a Section 504 Plan or an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP).

Break time cannot be withheld from students for disciplinary or academic reasons.

At Blythe, students may earn a second recess of 15 minutes. They can lose the second recess but not the first one.

PreK students receive two outdoor activity periods per day as required by Bright from the Start guidelines.

Recesses must be completed by 2:15 p.m. Recess is not allowed after 2:15 p.m.

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.

SCHEDULES

Teachers are required to post their Schedules outside their classroom door. If a schedule changes, a revised schedule should be printed and posted. The posted schedule must be up-to-date at all times.

SCHOOL FOOD SERVICES

- All students eat at no cost to the parents/guardians.
- Teachers should not plan any classroom parties during lunch hours.
- Students are allowed to purchase chips, ice cream, and other extra items from the cafeteria every day.
- Faculty and staff should pay for meals as they are eaten or in advance by putting money on their account.
- Other points of attention include:
 - (a) Check to ensure that students clean up around their assigned tables before leaving;
 - (b) See that students pick up all paper around trash cans; uneaten food and food scraps are not to be left on table;
 - (c) Good table manners should be taught and maintained by each teacher.
- All students must learn their ID number. Students in PreK -2nd Grade should wear a tag or clothespin to lunch with their name and ID # on it.
- The following items are NOT allowed in the cafeteria: fast food items or glass containers.

Breakfast---All breakfasts will be eaten in the classroom (Grab 'n Go). Students will receive breakfast upon entering the building each morning.

Lunch---All classes will eat in the cafeteria. Teachers should line students up alphabetically by last name to go through the serving line. Students purchasing ice cream or chips should be at the end of the class's line.

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 – 2nd Grade will be allowed to have parties to celebrate Christmas, Valentines, Easter, and the end-of-the-year.
- Grades 3 – 5 will be allowed to have parties at Christmas and the end-of-the-year.
- Valentines may be exchanged in Grades 3-5.
- Student Birthday Parties: If parents plan to provide refreshments for their child's birthday, this should be discussed and arranged with the child's teacher ahead of time and may only take place during the last 30-60 minutes of the school day.

- Balloons and flowers are NOT allowed at school.
- Food items should NOT be homemade.
- Be sure parents know about food allergies PRIOR to bringing food to share.
- Birthday party invitations will NOT be distributed at school unless everyone in the class receives an invitation.

SEL (SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING) (K-2)

Students in Grades K-2 will receive 20 minutes of SEL instruction each day using the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum called Sanford-Harmony. This should be built into the daily schedule.

SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE

As online technologies become more interactive, the Richmond County School System is providing new methods for supporting teaching and learning, including social media, home access to learning activities, and enhanced online resources. Social media includes all types of communication shared in an electronic format, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, wikis, e-mail, social networks, instant messaging, and video-hosting sites, as well as emerging technology that encourages sharing and electronic collaboration. Each vehicle has its own style and privacy options. These technologies must meet standards and expectations for communication with students, parents, staff, and community members. Information regarding FERPA and the school district's media release expectations are detailed in the Student/Parent Handbook.

Some additional guidelines around social networking are important to remember:

- Treat school-related social media as a secondary form of communication with parents and students. District-approved or district-hosted communication tools (such as e-mail and the school website) are the primary resources for communication to parents and students about school-related matters.
- Communicate with students and parents about school-related matters through district approved or district-hosted electronic accounts and applications, such as district e-mail and the school or department website.
- Do not share information, pictures, or work examples of students and staff unless you have approval such as personal information, images, and work examples on social network sites.
- Consider the information being distributed and its impact on your credibility as a staff member and your ability to perform your duties.
- Only allow "true friends" access to your personal information, and carefully consider what you post about your professional activities and environment on personal social networking sites.
- Directly connect the use of social networking to the academic purpose of the classroom when maintaining a site for teaching and learning purposes.
- Remember that staff members are expected to follow the ethical and professional standards for educators and associated procedures. If you choose to post information about your work, strive to post only information that is a positive reflection of your efforts to educate students and interact with others.

- Respect Richmond County School System time and property. You should participate in personal social media conversations on your own time.
- Use your best judgment. What you write may have serious consequences. Once you post something on social media, you can't "get it back." Even deleting the post doesn't mean it's truly gone. Ultimately, you bear sole responsibility for what you post.
- Avoid the offensive. Don't post any defamatory, libelous, vulgar, obscene, abusive, profane, threatening, racially or ethnically hateful, or otherwise offensive or illegal information or material.
- Don't misuse trademarks.
- Make no endorsements. Don't use your school or the district's name to endorse or promote products, political positions, or religious ideologies.
- Don't violate copyright. Don't post information or other material protected by copyright without permission of the copyright owner.
- Do not misrepresent yourself. Don't disguise, impersonate, or otherwise misrepresent your identity or affiliation with any other person or entity.
- Don't promote yourself for personal or financial gain. Don't use your school system affiliation to promote, endorse, or benefit yourself or any profit-making group or agency.
- Follow terms of service. Be familiar with a social media site's terms of service and follow them. For example, having two personal profiles on Facebook violates its terms of service.

SOCIAL WORKER REFERRALS

If you need to make a referral, fill out the SWARM referral in Infinite Campus. Referrals may be made for a number of reasons, including but not limited to, attendance, behavior, hygiene, suspected abuse or neglect, lack of food or resources, etc.

SPECIAL EDUCATION INFORMATION

School copies of psychological evaluations on individual students, not in special programs, are kept in SST files. Access to psychological information by teachers and other school personnel who work with the student may be obtained through the principal.

Special Education teachers must notify the regular education classroom teacher and provide a copy of each student's modifications to each of his/her teachers. Copies of 504 plans are maintained in the Assistant Principal's office and are uploaded into Infinite Campus.

Please remember that student information is confidential and cannot be shared with anyone other than the school employees who directly work with the student, the school counselor, administrators, and the parents or legal guardians of the child.

STATE AND STANDARDIZED TESTING

State mandates require student participation in a wide array of assessments. The purpose of the testing program includes monitoring student progress, assessing program effectiveness, planning for instructional improvement, and making placement decisions for special programming. Several of the assessments are utilized as part of the system's promotion/retention policy. The following specific tests will be administered at Blythe during the 2023 - 2024 school

year:

Kindergarten: GKIDS

Grades 1 and 4: CogAT

Grades 3 – 5: Georgia Milestones. Benchmarks, EOCs (End of Course tests)

Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA) as determined by a student's IEP.

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 Georgia Milestones Assessments (GMAs).

STUDENT 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.

- Absence from school may be excused for the following reasons: student illness; serious illness or death in family; court appointment; and religious holidays.
- School attendance is not permitted when any condition described as contagious by the Health Department or by medical doctor is present. Examples: head lice, ringworm, impetigo, measles, chicken pox, etc.
- Parent notes will be limited. Parent notes must be a lawful excuse or it will be unexcused.
- All written excuses must be received within 3 days after the date of return. After 3 days, the absence will automatically become unexcused.
- A doctor's excuse is required for (three) 3 or more consecutive days of absence.
- Students will be allowed only five (5) unexcused absences per year.
- Students will be referred for truancy prevention at (five) 5 unexcused absences.
- At 6 unexcused absences, students and parents may be referred for court action.
- Suspension days **DO NOT** count as unexcused absences.

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.

Early Dismissals:

Any student leaving school before the official dismissal time should be signed out by a parent, guardian or designated person. Students should 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 by the homeroom teacher to the office upon the student's return to school.

The student is responsible for all make-up assignments within the designated time established by the teacher(s) if credit is desired. In cases of unexcused absence, the student may not be given credit for make-up work. The principal shall have exclusive jurisdiction in classifying excuses.

Early dismissals for Students will NOT be allowed between 2:45 – 3:05 p.m.

Special Notes:

Tardies and/or Early Dismissals in excess of 10 will disqualify a student for yearly Perfect Attendance awards.

STUDENT CONDUCT/DISCIPLINE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

One of the most important lessons education should 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 Blythe.

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 and cheating (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. Igniting flammable substances in school or on campus is prohibited.
14. Fireworks, sand poppers, sparklers, matches, lighters, firecrackers, etc. are prohibited.
15. Possession, sale, or distribution of drugs, alcoholic beverages, or tobacco products on school property is prohibited.
16. Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while attending school or any school activity is prohibited.
17. Possession or use of any instrument designed for and/or capable of inflicting bodily injury on another person is prohibited.
18. Sexual offenses are prohibited, including but not limited to sex acts or sexual touching, whether or not the other participant consents.
19. 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.

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.

Response to Intervention 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, school counselors, 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.

****For additional information on School Board Policies regarding student conduct and discipline, please visit the Richmond County Schools website at <http://www.rcboe.org>.*

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Complete referrals (i.e., RTI Forms, V & H, and Checklists) for evaluation **must be submitted** within 5 days of received parent consent.

All information contained in a student's IEP is confidential and should only be discussed with the teachers of that student, the parents/guardians, school administrators, counselor or social worker. To do otherwise, is a violation of FERPA and the District's confidentiality requirements.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

- Teachers and/or paraprofessionals should stand just outside the door of their classrooms when students are entering or leaving as a group.
- Teachers and paraprofessionals should supervise students who are passing in the hallway to ensure they are walking on the proper side, moving along quickly but without running, and moving with minimal noise and disturbance.
- Teachers and paraprofessionals should spread out over the playground area during recess duty so that adequate supervision is provided.
- All teachers and paraprofessionals assigned to duty are expected to be on time and remain on duty for the entire time.
- When students are required to stay in during recess, ***they should be left in the care of another teacher who is not on duty. They should not be left alone!***
- Student supervision is an absolute necessity. They should be directly supervised from the time they arrive on campus until they depart each day. Teachers should always be in the room if **any** students are present. Student safety is a top priority.
- Teachers should not leave their classrooms during homeroom.
- Teachers must escort classes/student groups to buses and daycare vans each day.
- *If students lose their recess privilege, they should not be made to stand on the pavement or concrete for the entire recess—especially during the hot months.*
- **Students should never be left unattended!!!**

TEACHER ABSENCES AND SUBSTITUTES

When a teacher is absent, the following steps must occur:

1. Log into Frontline as soon as you have determined you are unable to work and enter your absence so that the system can attempt to locate a substitute for you.
2. If you are unable to log in to Frontline or if it is after 6:30 a.m. on the morning of the intended absence, please contact the bookkeeper, Pamela Baxley, to inform her of your absence and to get her assistance in securing a substitute for you.
3. Teachers **must** contact the Principal via text message or phone call if they are unable to come to work. Call or text 706-339-4722.
4. Teacher must then make sure the following information is available for the substitute:
 - a. Detailed lesson plans for the school day(s) including:
 - Textbook titles and page numbers to be used in each subject;
 - Explanations for use of teacher-made worksheets or other supplementary materials;
 - Special events for the day and procedures to follow;
 - Time requirements for each subject or activity;
 - Explanation of what to do with students' work at end of lesson and at the end of the day;
 - Supplementary work in case time allows;
 - Duty schedule;
 - Copy of class rules; procedures for misconduct;
 - Classroom procedures;

- Seating chart;
- Special student health problems;
- Special discipline problems.

In summary, substitutes should know what to do each minute of the day and where everything should be placed.

TECHNOLOGY

Students in Kindergarten through 2nd Grade will have access to iPads (with protective cases) during the instructional day. Teachers are responsible for distributing, collecting and charging these devices on a daily basis. Teachers are responsible for teaching students how to properly use, transport and care for the iPads.

Students in Grades K-5 will have devices issued to them for use at school and at home. Students will be allowed to take the devices home if a signed parent permission form is on file with the school. Teachers are responsible for teaching students how to properly use, transport and care for the laptops

Teachers will also have a laptop to assist them in performing their assigned duties and responsibilities. Teachers are responsible for the proper care and usage of these devices. They will serve as the teacher's dedicated computer.

iPads:

- Must only be used while in the protective case;
- Should be properly plugged in and charged each night;
- Must not be written on, marked on, colored on, or decorated in any way;
- Should not be exposed to excessive heat or cold, moisture or liquid of any kind;
- Should not be dropped or thrown down for any reason;
- Should be held with BOTH hands when being moved;
- Should be safely and completely placed on the work surface.

Laptop Carts:

- All laptops should be shut down properly and placed correctly in the corresponding slot in the cart before being returned to the Media Center;
- Must be checked out from the Media Center;
- Should not remain in classrooms overnight;
- Must be plugged in to charge overnight after use.

Student Laptops:

- ❖ Must be closed when being moved from one place to another inside the classroom;
- ❖ Should be properly shut down each night;
- ❖ Should not be exposed to excessive heat or cold, moisture, or liquids of any kind;
- ❖ Should not be written on, marked on, or decorated in any way.

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 2:30 p.m.) or faxed to the school office at 706-592-4090. **Telephone calls are 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 should go home their regularly scheduled way.

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

VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS

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 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 Blythe.

Volunteers must go through a training and screening process prior to working in the school system. A list of pre-approved volunteers is available in the office.

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.

Blythe Elementary Expectations 2023-2024

- Consistency is the key to success!
 - Be consistent with Instruction, Discipline, Attendance and Attitude
- Be at your door in the morning and afternoon.
- Supervise, Supervise, Supervise!
- Duty stations---on time---the whole time;
- Maximize instruction; most effective instruction does not take place while sitting at the teacher's desk;
- Be hesitant giving hall passes;
- Follow your discipline plan; document steps taken before office referral;
- Make parental contact regularly—for good and bad reports; document the contact;
- Follow all policies and procedures when dealing with money;
- Implement and follow the accommodations with fidelity as provided by the student's IEP or 504 Plan;
- Meet all deadlines;
- Follow all policies and procedures;
- Follow RTI with fidelity;
- Work collaboratively with colleagues; be mindful of the needs of others;
- Be neat and clean (classrooms, etc.); if you make a mess, clean it up.

***Be where you are supposed to be,
doing what you are supposed to be doing,
when you are supposed to be doing it.***

Expectations of Faculty and Staff

1. Look ahead, not back.
2. Set high expectations and goals—for yourself and your students.
3. Practice safety at all times.
4. Be creative—think outside of the box.
4. Be positive! Positive attitudes are contagious.
5. Be firm, fair, consistent, and loving with your students. Care about each one, and make sure they know you care.
6. Respect your colleagues.
7. Frequently and effectively communicate with parents.
8. Confer discreetly with students when disciplining (public rules, private discipline).
9. Talk with me about a problem/challenge before it gets to be a big one.
10. Be professional in your actions and your appearance.
11. Protect and defend confidentiality.
12. Be present and on time.
13. Be familiar with the faculty/staff and student handbooks.
14. Read memos and check your e-mail several times each day.
15. Strive to be the best teacher, colleague, friend, and role model you can be.

We will experience success by:

- Taking a personal and academic interest in all students;
- Reviewing and using data to drive curriculum and instruction;
- Building time into the weekly schedule for professional collaboration;
- Creating a warm and friendly atmosphere where children feel safe and parents feel welcome;
- Having and maintaining positive outlooks and open minds;
- Believing all students can and will learn;
- Supporting our students and each other.

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According to **Bill Milliken**, “It's relationships, not programs, that change children. A great program simply creates the environment for healthy relationships to form between adults and children. Young people thrive when adults care about them on a one-to-one level, and when they also have a sense of belonging to a caring community.”

How to Improve Student Behavior:

- Have public rules but private discipline.
- Praise in public; correct in private.
- Praise for what is right, and train for what is wrong.
- Teach students to take responsibility for their actions.

L.A.S.T.

L—Listen & observe;

A—Ask questions as needed;

S—Seek help & offer support;

T—Take care of yourself



POLICIES, PROCESSES & PROCEDURES



ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Attendance must be taken by 9:00 a.m. every day in Infinite Campus. If students arrive after 8:30 a.m. (unless they rode a late bus), they should be marked tardy.

If a student arrives after 8:30 a.m., the child should get a Tardy Slip from the office. Office personnel will mark the student “tardy” in IC.

All homeroom teachers will have a Red Attendance Folder. This folder will be used to keep students’ excuses for absences and/or tardies.

When a note or excuse is received, the teacher should make sure the student’s first and last name and date of absence/tardy are on the note, then put it in the Red Attendance Folder.

Teachers should send their Red Attendance Folder to the office every Wednesday morning by 10:00 a.m. Mrs. Cooper will enter the excuses into IC and will file the notes/excuses in student folders in the office. The empty folders will be placed in teachers’ mailboxes after the contents have been emptied.

CLASSROOM GUIDELINES

1. The following items must displayed in every classroom:
 - a. Fire Drill Evacuation map
 - b. Profile of a Graduate poster
 - c. P.A.W.S. poster
 - d. Classroom rules
2. Daily Schedules must be posted outside the classroom door.
3. Classrooms make a definite statement about teachers. Choose to display pride in yourself and your school to parents, students and colleagues by maintaining an organized, clean, and stimulating learning environment. Teach students to keep their work areas neat and clean.
4. Current student work samples should be displayed. Bulletin boards should be current and relevant to the curriculum and standards.
5. Learning targets and success criteria should be appropriately posted in all classrooms. They should be directly related to the lesson(s) being taught at the time. Having these posted in the classroom is an integral part of the evaluation process that will be used to evaluate teachers.
6. Foods and drinks should only be present in classrooms when such items are a part of the curriculum. Students are not allowed to eat or drink as a normal part of classroom activities. Teachers and other staff members should not consume food or drinks in the presence of students during the course of a class.
7. *Students should not be sent to the cafeteria to get ice or food during instructional time. Students should not be sent to the vending machines to get food or drinks for teachers or other staff members.*
8. Maintaining and implementing effective classroom management techniques will bolster student learning and achievement.
9. A well-ordered environment, plus positive academic expectations, will yield effective classroom experiences for all students.
10. Student behavior should be managed such that in appropriate student behaviors do not interfere with teaching and learning.

11. Providing relevant, meaningful instruction for the entire instructional period will help alleviate student behavior problems.

COLLABORATIVE & VERTICAL PLANNING

Collaborative Planning

Each grade level and department are required to meet and plan collaboratively at least once per week. Notes must be taken (on a provided form) and submitted in the shared One Drive folder for each grade level or department.

In addition, grade levels and departments will meet with the Instructional Specialist at least twice per month at a separate time.

Participation and compliance are required.

Weeks of the Month	Content Areas/Topics
Week 1	ELA/Reading
Week 2	Math
Week 3	Science & Social Studies
Week 4	Technology (<i>The Interactive Classroom</i>)

Vertical Planning

All grade levels will meet collectively two or more times per semester to plan and ensure that each grade level is appropriately preparing students for the next grade level.

These meetings will be held around the administration of iReady, Content Mastery Assessments, and the Georgia Milestones Assessments. Participation is mandatory.

EMAIL, MAILBOXES, & MICROSOFT TEAMS

Check your email *at least* three times per day. The majority of our communication will take place electronically.

Check your office mailboxes several times per day (before school, at lunch, before dismissal).

Be sure to regularly check Teams for notifications.

It is a good idea to set your email and Teams accounts to notify you of new mail and posts.

EMPLOYEE JOB PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

All employees of the Richmond County School System are hired for the express purpose of supporting the educational program for children. As a result, all employees are expected to perform their jobs and conduct themselves in such a manner as to serve as an appropriate role model for children.

The following guidelines are offered to ensure that employees understand expectations for job performance, but these guidelines are not intended to be all-inclusive.

Employees of the Richmond County Board of Education are expected to:

- Report to work promptly and follow all required sign in/sign out procedures as assigned;
- Perform job responsibilities outlined in the job description accurately and proficiently;
- Adhere to all policies and procedures as established by the Richmond County Board of Education and the local school or department;
- Refrain from use of tobacco or alcoholic beverages in the work place. Use of illicit drugs is prohibited;
- Attend work and required meetings and trainings as scheduled unless sick, personal, medical or other approved leave;
- Report absences from work as required by local school or department procedures;
- Recognize the school principal as the immediate supervisor when assigned directly to a school or when providing services in school;
- Refrain from touching or talking to students or employees of the Board of Education in a manner which could be construed as sexually or physically threatening or otherwise unacceptable or harmful;
- Respect and protect public property from harm, damage, or loss;
- Refrain from borrowing, taking or bothering the personal property of others or public property without proper authorization.

EMPLOYEES SIGNING IN AND OUT

All employees are required to personally sign in and swipe their ID badge every day. You will only have to sign out if you leave before the regular dismissal time or if you work less than full-time at Blythe.

FIRST DAYS OF SCHOOL

Please arrive at school and be in place *by 7:30 a.m.* on the first seven days (Aug. 3-4, 7-11). Everyone is on duty a.m. and p.m. during the two weeks of school.

GRADING POLICY

I. RATIONALE/OBJECTIVE

The Teaching and Learning Department of the Richmond County School System (the System) is authorized to devise a grading system for reporting student progress toward academic standards to parents/guardians and for recording this progress in each student's educational record.

The grading system may include but is not limited to a grading philosophy, a framework of effective grading practices, and administrative procedures for grading and reporting student achievement.

The department is also authorized to establish differentiated quality points based upon the academic demands of specified high school courses.

II. GRADING PHILOSOPHY

The following tenets represent the System's core beliefs about grading.

A. Purpose of Grading---We believe the purpose of grading is to accurately reflect student progress and achievement toward mastery of standards, so that ...

- students have timely and meaningful feedback for continuous growth;
- teachers have useful data for planning and evaluating instruction; and
- parents have reliable information for supporting student success.

B. Guiding Principles

We believe ...

1. The grading system should be based on mastery of standards.
2. The grading system should be equitable.
3. The grading system should be clear and consistent.
4. The grading system should be timely and meaningful.
5. The grading system should be supportive of learning.

III. GRADING PRACTICES---The following practices support the System's grading philosophy and are consistent with current educational best practices.

Guiding Principle 1: The Grading System should be based on Mastery of Standards

- *Grades should reflect a curriculum with assessments that are aligned to standards.*
- *Grades should reflect what students know and are able to do, based solely on the standards.*
- *Grades should accurately reflect the students' level of content mastery.*

BEST PRACTICES	PRACTICES TO AVOID
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Determining students' grades based solely on a body of evidence aligned to learning criteria, goals and standards.2. Ensuring all student work, formative and summative, is directly aligned to standards and learning targets.3. Teaching the language of the standard and the academic vocabulary supporting the standard.4. Providing clear and concise proficiency measures, written in student-friendly language, for students to use to guide their work.5. Using a variety of developmentally appropriate methods and tools to track progress on the standard, including methods for students to self-assess throughout the	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Being vague about the standard, the learning target, and the criteria for success.2. Failing to monitor student progress toward standards, and failing to teach students how to monitor their own progress toward standards.3. Not providing standards-based feedback on assignments.4. Using formative assessments to calculate student grades.5. Relying on a single demonstration of the level of mastery.6. Giving extra credit or increasing a grade for just completing more work.

learning process.	
6. Separating achievement grades from behavior and work ethic grades.	

Guiding Principle 2: The Grading System should be Equitable

- *Grading should be fair and impartial.*
- *Grading practices should provide multiple opportunities and ways for students to demonstrate learning.*
- *Grades should reflect achievement based on a body of evidence.*

Best Practice	Practices to Avoid
1. Allowing students time to fully master a standard before grading.	1. Allowing only one opportunity for students to demonstrate mastery.
2. Using multiple pieces of evidence to determine a student's mastery of content.	2. Grading assignments that are intended for practice.
3. Providing students opportunities to show in a variety of forms what they know and can do.	3. Reducing grades for late assignments or reassessments.
4. Giving feedback on multiple formative assessments before giving a summative assessment.	4. Allowing only students with low grades to be reassessed.
5. Establishing reasonable due dates and timelines for assignments that will hold students accountable.	5. Using assessments that are not differentiated.
6. Providing relearning opportunities to all students and allowing all students to be reassessed.	6. Basing achievement grades on student participation, attendance or behavior.
7. Assigning grades based on individual achievement, not group performance.	7. Assigning a "group grade" rather than an individual academic grade.
8. Providing accommodations and modifications as specified in IEP and 504 plans.	8. Grading on a curve.

Guiding Principle 3: The Grading System should be Clear and Consistent

- *Grading policies and expectations should be clear to all stakeholders.*
- *Students should have clear understanding of learning standards, goals and success criteria.*
- *Grading practices and procedures should be consistent among elementary schools, among middle schools, and among high schools.*

Best Practices	Practices to Avoid
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicating grading procedures and practices to students and their parents, including opportunities for relearning and reassessment. 2. Using common and consistent grading scales and weights. 3. Collaborating with grade-level and department teams to establish consistent grade books, grading processes and expectations. 4. Clearly communicating standards, learning targets and success criteria on all assignments. 5. Using rubrics, aligned to standards, to assess mastery and to communicate success criteria to students and parents. 6. Providing students with exemplars of strong and weak work prior to assessments. 7. Giving students clear and constructive feedback in a timely manner. 8. Ensuring consistency in implementing assessment and grading accommodations as stated in the student's IEP/504 Plan. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using grading scales, weights and procedures that are inconsistent with district or school grading practices. 2. Using rubrics that have vague or subjective criteria. 3. Using rubrics that include neatness and organization as major criteria for an achievement grade, unless such criteria is part of the standard. 4. Withholding feedback or grades from a student or their parent.

Guiding Principle 4: The Grading System should be Timely and Meaningful	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assignments and assessments should have a useful purpose aligned to standards and should reflect appropriate rigor and relevance.</i> • <i>Grading should be timely and should provide students with meaningful feedback to favorably impact content mastery.</i> • <i>Grading should provide constructive feedback to all stakeholders.</i> 	
Best Practices	Practices to Avoid

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensuring formative assessments are aligned to the summative assessments and are used to guide daily/weekly instruction. 2. Using the Rigor and Relevance Framework as a tool for adding rigor and relevance to instruction and assessment. 3. Creating a clear picture of students' readiness and determining what they need next in their development. 4. Helping students to identify the skills they have mastered and to develop a growth mindset as they work toward learning goals. 5. Ensuring feedback is given often and matches the learning target and criteria for success. 6. Determining and using the most appropriate form of feedback (conversation, written, oral, whole or small group, individual). 7. Ensuring feedback is descriptive and contextualized so students can use it to continue their progression towards mastery. 8. Providing tools and opportunities for students to give peer and self-feedback. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Failing to communicate the purpose and relevance of assignments. 2. Providing students with no feedback, infrequent feedback, or vague feedback about their progress. 3. Conveying negative, judgmental, or evaluative feedback, or using a tone that demotivates students. 4. Delivering feedback in a manner that is beyond a student's comprehension or understanding. 5. Providing parents with unclear, inconsistent or infrequent information about their child's progress toward mastery of standards. 6. Summarizing multiple items into a single grade.
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Guiding Principle 5: The Grading System should be Supportive of Learning	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assessment and grading should be instructionally aligned to guide continuous learning.</i> • <i>Classwork and homework should be aligned to the learning target and used to check for understanding and provide feedback.</i> • <i>Homework should be an extension of class to allow time for completion, reinforcement, and preparation for the next lesson.</i> 	
Best Practices	Practices to Avoid
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensuring all assignments have a direct alignment with the standards and are labeled accordingly. 2. Sharing examples of strong and weak work. 3. Giving timely, descriptive feedback that communicates where the student is in relation to the learning goal and what the 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Grading while the student is still practicing new learning. 2. Grading formative assessments. 3. Providing feedback only after an assessment has been graded. 4. Giving feedback only in the form of a score or grade.

student needs to do next to reach the goal.	
4. Teaching students to reflect, self-assess, and set goals.	5. Assigning homework that does not align with standards and support growth toward identified learning targets.
5. Only assigning homework that is directly aligned to the standards.	6. Grading homework that is given for practice or to check for understanding.
6. Ensuring students have a clear understanding of the purpose of their homework, and are able to see a clear and direct connection between their homework, the standards, and the assessments.	7. Using homework as a punishment or reward.
7. Differentiating homework based on student needs.	
8. Entering scores in the gradebook in the learning management system after students have had time to practice, receive feedback, and adjust their learning.	

IV. ASSESSMENT---The System provides a variety of assessments which serve different purposes. See Section VII for definitions of assessment terms.

A. Basic Types of Assessments

1. **Diagnostic Assessments** typically happen before students begin a course or lesson and are used to gauge pre-knowledge (a pre-assessment). The term may also refer to assessments used to “diagnose” readiness or specific needs so that interventions can be implemented.
2. **Formative Assessments** happen throughout a lesson and are used to measure progress and to provide feedback for growth.
3. **Common Formative Assessments** are assessments that groups of teachers (such as grade level or content area teams) design together to give collectively to their students, followed by collaboration on how best to respond to students’ performance.
4. **Summative Assessments** happen at the end of a lesson (or other end point) and are used to measure mastery of standards.
5. **Content Mastery (Benchmark) Assessments** are given periodically throughout a school year to establish baseline achievement data and measure progress toward a standard.
6. **Universal Screening Assessments** are given periodically throughout a school year to identify students’ strengths, needs and growth opportunities.
7. **Standardized Assessments** are given periodically throughout a school year and may be used for diagnostic, formative or summative purposes.

B. Features of Formative and Summative Assessments---Formative and summative assessments provide essential information teachers and students use day-to-day. It is important that graded assessments are those designed to reflect mastery of standards. While any assignment might merit grading, it is important that teachers grade those assignments best used to measure mastery following repeated instruction, practice activities, and feedback.

Formative Assessments	Summative Assessments
Are given throughout instruction (when students are learning and practicing).	Are given after instruction (when students have completed some or all of a unit of study).
Are designed to check for understanding and provide feedback.	Are designed to measure and evaluate mastery of standards that comprise a unit of study.
Are aligned with and given <u>prior</u> to the summative assessment.	Are aligned with and given <u>after</u> formative assessments and feedback.
Are useful as pre-assessments to identify students' prior knowledge.	Are useful for teacher and student reflection to determine the need for reteaching, relearning and reassessment opportunities.
Are useful for informing changes in grouping, pacing and assignments.	Are useful in the same manner as formative assessments when results are used to inform and adjust instruction.
Are checked and analyzed but are not graded . Results are not included in the body of evidence to determine students' final grades.	Are graded . Results are recorded in the official gradebook and are included in the body of evidence to determine students' final grades.

C. Systemwide Assessments

The following assessments are given periodically throughout the school system.

Assessments	Grade Level	Purpose
ACCESS for ELLs	K – 12 ESOL	ACCESS for ELLs is used to determine the English language proficiency levels and progress of English language learners in the domains of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The test is given annually to all English language learners in GA.
Advanced Placement (AP)	9 - 12	AP exams are offered through The College Board. The tests are the culmination of year-long Advanced Placement courses. Students take these exams in May.
Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)	K - 12	A test designed to measure a student's academic aptitude and gifted abilities. The test is made up of three sections: verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal. Two types of norms are used when tests are scored - age norms and grade norms.

Content Mastery Assessments (CMAs)	3 – 8 HS Tested Subjects	CMAs are benchmark assessments all schools give periodically as determined by the Richmond County School System. They measure progress toward mastery of standards and provide useful information at the student, class and school levels.
End-of-Pathway Assessments (EOPA)	9 - 12	EOPAs are taken by students enrolled in CTAE courses. The assessments determine students' knowledge associated with their career pathway. They allow pathway completers to earn industry-recognized credentials.
GA Alternate Assessment (GAA)	3 – 5 6 – 8 11	A GA assessment designed to measure the degree to which students with significant cognitive disabilities have mastered alternate achievement standards in the core content areas of English language arts, math, science, and social studies.
GA Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS)	K	A year-long, performance-based assessment aligned to state standards. It provides ongoing diagnostic information about students' developing skills in ELA, math, science, social studies, personal/social development, and approaches to learning.
GA Milestones	3 - 5 6 - 8 9 -12	State-developed assessments designed to provide information about how well students are mastering state standards in the core content areas of ELA, math, science, and social studies. It's a key component of the state's accountability system (the CCRPI).
iReady	K - 8	A universal screener given three times per year. Tests are designed to identify students' strengths and needs in reading and math.
Keenville	1 - 2	A state-developed, formative assessment designed to measure the state's adopted educational content standards and provide important skill-building activities.
NWEA MAP	9 - 12	A universal screener given three times per year. Tests are designed to identify students' strengths and needs in reading and math.
Panorama	Pre-K - 12	A universal screener that measures the student's skills like growth mindset, self-efficacy, social awareness, emotion regulation, and self-management.
PSAT and SAT	8 - 12	The PSAT provides students the opportunity to understand and practice the SAT. Students receive detailed reports that provide a comprehensive skills analysis for college readiness.
Work Sampling Online (WSO)	Pre-K	A formative assessment that is aligned with the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS).
YouScience	6 -12	YouScience is a career assessment that focuses on students' aptitudes and interests. Students have an

	opportunity to explore and identify which career paths are best suited for them.
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D. Using Assessment Data in the Classroom

All the different types of assessments and corresponding data comprise a balanced assessment approach within our schools. All data can be used in various ways to enrich, to prevent and close gaps, and to show progress. Teachers should follow data analysis protocols and use data to inform instruction. Data should lead to some of the following decisions:

1. Determining how to group students to effectively reteach, enrich, or practice a standard.
2. Determining individual student learning goals.
3. Determining the most appropriate Response to Intervention for students.
4. Determining which standard will become the focus of Common Formative Assessment.
5. Determining high interest choices of formative assessments, projects, etc.

V. GENERAL GUIDELINES---The following guidelines ensure consistency in managing grading-related issues and processes:

A. Roles and Responsibilities

An effective grading system requires purposeful involvement of key stakeholders.

Principal responsibilities include ...	Teacher responsibilities include ...
Collaborating with teachers to establish equitable grading practices and procedures.	Collaborating with other educators and participating in training about grading practices.
Ensuring that grading practices and procedures are consistently applied within their school.	Giving students and parents clear explanations of grading procedures.
Monitoring school-wide grades for performance and integrity.	Monitoring students' progress, providing feedback, collaborating with students to create relearning plans, and providing reassessment opportunities.
Providing training in best practices for assessing, grading and reporting student achievement.	Ensuring achievement grades are based solely on mastery of standards.
Promptly responding to student, parent, and teacher requests for assistance with grading concerns.	Teaching students to monitor their grades and their progress toward learning goals.
	Updating the gradebook on a weekly basis.
	Promptly responding to student and parent

	requests for assistance with grading concerns.
Student responsibilities include ... Completing all assignments, graded and non-graded, on time. Planning ahead for completing long-term assignments. Checking their work for accuracy and completion. Maintaining academic integrity and honesty. Monitoring their grades and their progress toward learning goals. Collaborating with their teacher to establish and complete relearning plans, when appropriate. Promptly asking their teacher for assistance related to grading concerns.	Parent responsibilities include ... Expecting their child to complete all assignments, graded and non-graded, on time. Ensuring their child has an appropriate time and place for completing homework. Monitoring and guiding their child's work as needed, but not doing the work for the student. Supporting their child in creating and completing relearning plans. Checking the student gradebook portal on a regular basis. Promptly communicating with the teacher when grading questions concerns arise.

B. Conduct - Impact on Grades---Conduct is important in a school setting and important to the learning environment. Misconduct should be addressed with appropriate prescribed school and/or school system consequences in an effort to improve the behavior and to maintain a positive learning environment for all students.

Misconduct should **not** be reflected in a student's academic grade.

C. Academic Dishonesty---The Student Code of Conduct, Rule 1(A)(t), states that no student shall cheat, alter records, plagiarize, receive unauthorized assistance or assist another in any type of academic dishonesty.

The determination that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty will be based on the judgment of the classroom teacher and a supervising administrator, taking into consideration any written materials, observation, or information from witnesses.

Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. Additionally, the task may be entered as incomplete and the student required to redo the assignment or retake the assessment.

D. Late Work---Late work is defined as assignments that are submitted after the specified deadline. This does not apply to work submitted late due to absence from school.

Students are expected to submit assignments on time. Multiple incidents of late work may result in teacher-student-parent conferences to examine and correct the student's work habits.

Graded assignments that are submitted late should be scored to accurately reflect the level of mastery of standards.

E. Make-up Work---Students are expected to make-up assignments and assessments that were missed due to absence from school. Students are responsible for asking teachers for the make-up work upon returning to class.

Make-up work should be completed by the student within the time specified by the teacher.

Teachers should provide reasonable timelines for completing make-up work. Generally, such work should be completed within 5 days of returning to school. A student should not be required to take a quiz or test on their first day back to school if the assessment was first-announced during their absence.

Graded assignments should be scored to accurately reflect the level of mastery of standards.

F. Homework---Teachers are not required to assign homework. However, when assigned on an as needed basis, homework can be a valuable part of the instructional process. It allows students to practice what has been taught; it lets parents see what students are learning and where they are in their level of understanding; and it gives teachers the opportunity to provide useful feedback to students.

Guidelines for homework assignments:

1. **Communication:** Teachers should communicate homework expectations and procedures to students and parents.
2. **Standards-based:** Homework should be directly aligned to classroom instruction based on clear standards and learning targets.
3. **Preparation:** Teachers should ensure that students are prepared to practice work correctly. Give clear instructions and examples as needed.
4. **Relevance:** Assignments should be meaningful for students and promote positive self-efficacy rather than frustration.
5. **Considerations:** Teachers should consider students' time, resources, and special needs when creating homework assignments and determining how feedback will be provided.
6. **Amount:** Teachers should emphasize *quality over quantity* when assigning homework, and should use professional judgement when determining the amount, the timing, and the frequency of homework.

As a general guide:

- Elementary school students should not have more than **15-45 minutes** of homework total across all content areas per night, Monday -Thursday.
- Middle school students should not have more than **30-60 minutes** of homework total across all content areas per night, Monday - Friday.
- High school students should not have more than **45-90 minutes** of homework total across all content areas per night, Monday - Friday.
- Students enrolled in college-level courses (AP, IB, Dual Enrollment, etc.) should not have more than **30-60 minutes** of homework per night, per college-level course.

7. **Feedback:** Teachers should provide students feedback on written homework assignments. Students are more likely to do homework if provided specific and meaningful feedback.

8. **Grading:** Homework for practice or preparation for instruction is intended to build skills and understanding.

This type of homework does not evaluate learning and, therefore, is ***not graded***. Rather, the intent of such homework is to help students learn and to prepare them for subsequent tasks that are graded.

Projects and large assignments requiring additional work time may be assigned as homework that **is graded** upon completion.

G. Relearn & Reassess (R&R) Procedures---Giving additional opportunities to achieve mastery is important because students do not all reach proficiency at the same time and in the same way. Relearning content or skills toward proficiency should result in a chance to be reassessed, as a student's grade should reflect the best evidence of meeting the learning target.

Schools are expected to develop and communicate R&R procedures to students and parents. Such procedures should incorporate the following guidelines:

1. Completion of a student-created **Relearning Plan** should be a component of the process.

Relearning plans should include having the student:

- analyze their errors or misconceptions on the previous summative assessment.
- determine how to relearn the content to bring about mastery;
- complete and turn in any missing assignments;
- commit to date(s) and time(s) to redo the assignment or retake the assessment; and,
- share the plan with their parent and teacher for approval.

2. Reteaching should be a component of the process. This should not be a repeat of the original lesson, but rather a mini-lesson with strategies to target the student's errors and opportunities to provide feedback.

3. **For grades K-3**, students should relearn and then be reassessed for any competency not mastered.

4. **For grades 4-12**, after any **major assessment**, students should have the opportunity to submit a relearning plan for parent and teacher approval. Upon satisfactory completion of the plan, as determined by the teacher, students should be given a **minimum of two** opportunities to be reassessed. Students scoring **below 70** on a major assessment should be expected to complete a relearning plan unless exempted with parent approval.
5. Teachers should have discretion to determine if R&R opportunities will be given for any **minor assessment**.
6. Major assessments include unit tests and projects, but **do not** include Content Mastery Assessments and final exams. Minor assessments include graded classwork and quizzes.
7. Reassessments should be a different version from the original.
8. The reassessment score should replace the original score (the scores should not be averaged).
9. Schools should provide reasonable timelines for the R&R process. Generally, reassessments should be completed within **7** school days of receiving the original grade. Teacher should have discretion to extend the timeline to address extenuating circumstances.

H. Accommodations and Modifications

1. **Accommodations** are changes in instruction that enable students to demonstrate their classroom abilities. They provide equity, not advantage.

Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities do not reduce or lower the standards or expectations for content and do not invalidate assessment results. Therefore, students with accommodations may earn the same credit as those not receiving accommodations.

Accommodations will adhere to the State Special Education Accommodations Manual and the decisions of the IEP/504 Team. ELL (English Language Learner) teachers will follow the accommodations found in the Student Assessment Handbook and the Accessibility & Accommodations Manual.

2. **Modifications** according to the IEP or 504 Plans are alterations that change or reduce learning expectations. These modifications can increase the gap between the achievement of students with disabilities and expectations for proficiency at a particular grade level. Consistent use of modifications could adversely affect students throughout their educational career. Modifications on statewide assessments may invalidate the results and may not be appropriate or allowed on statewide assessments.

The report card will designate modified curriculum by the assigned special education-designated course number.

VI. GRADE RECORDING & REPORTING GUIDELINES

The following guidelines ensure consistency in grade recording and reporting procedures.

A. Assignment of Grades---While the grading system has been developed cooperatively between the Teaching and Learning Department, the Student Services Department, and local school educators, **the final evaluation of students and the assignment of grades is the responsibility of teachers and school administrators.**

B. Maintaining the Gradebook---Grades are used for communicating with students and parents concerning progress toward standards mastery. Clear communication allows students to track their own progress so report card grades are not a surprise. The following are guidelines for maintaining the official gradebook:

1. All teachers should maintain grades in the System's electronic gradebook (Infinite Campus).
2. The grades entered should reflect only performance toward mastery of standards.
3. The grades entered should reflect grade replacement through reassessment.
4. Only the teacher of record (or principal designee) should enter grades in the gradebook.
5. Teachers should enter grades in a timely manner, typically within 2 days of assignment collection. Larger assignments, such as projects and essays, may take longer to grade and record.
6. The grades posted in the gradebook should be the complete set from which the student's final grade will be determined.
7. Grades recorded in the gradebook are considered official documentation of students' academic performance and should be protected as a confidential student record.

C. Grade Changes---In accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-989.20, no classroom teacher shall be required, coerced, intimidated, or disciplined in order to change the grade of a student. This Rule shall not apply when a teacher has failed to comply with the grading Policies or Procedures adopted by the System or written procedures established by a school within the Richmond County School System that are applicable to the grading process unless such a Policy, Rule, or Procedure would require a student be given a grade different than the actual grade achieved. Under these circumstances a teacher may be disciplined.

Nothing in this Rule shall be construed to prevent a principal or other school administrator from discussing the grade of a student with a classroom teacher. Further, this Rule shall not be construed to prevent a central office administrator, Superintendent, or other System administrator from changing a student's grade. Any grade change made by a person other than the classroom teacher must be clearly indicated in the student's school records and must indicate the person responsible for making such grade change.

D. Impact of Zeros---In a typical 100-point grading scale, where 69 and below is considered failing, a zero can have a severe effect on a student's overall average. As a result, the student may lose confidence and motivation, and their final grade may not accurately communicate what they have actually learned and are able to do. It is important for teachers to recognize this limitation in the 100-point scale.

In cases where a student's grade falls below 60, the teacher may, at their discretion, record a 60 rather than the actual grade earned. The teacher may exercise this option when, in their professional judgment, the student's academic efforts warrant it. A zero may be recorded if a student refuses to respond to an assignment.

E. Grade Reporting Cycle

1. Teachers should enter grades in the Infinite Campus gradebook on a weekly basis throughout the semester. This allows students and parents to have continuous access to current student grades.
2. Each semester represents an 18-week grading period.
 - **Progress Report 1** will be issued at the end of the first 6 weeks.
 - **Progress Report 2** will be issued at the end of 12 weeks.
 - **Semester Report Card** will be issued at the end of the 18-week grading period.
3. Each progress report will reflect the student's **cumulative** achievement (the result of all grades since the first day of the semester).
4. The student's final grade will reflect their cumulative achievement from the first day to the last day of the semester.
5. This process allows teachers to evaluate the student's progress toward mastery of standards based on the full body of evidence from the entire semester.

F. Late Enrollment---Students enrolling in the System when two weeks or less remain in the evaluation period will receive evaluation marks based on the transcript from the sending school. Parents/guardians will be notified of this procedure.

G. Notification of Failure---The principal will follow the established system procedures requiring parent/ guardian notification prior to a student receiving a failing grade for an evaluation period. The System's guidance on RTI parent notification should be followed.

H. Non-Academic Grade Reporting (Work Habits and Behaviors that Support Achievement)---Teachers and parents recognize the value of helping students cultivate soft skills and dispositions that are important for college, career and life success. However, it is imperative that teachers separate behavior and work-ethic grades from academic achievement grades.

Teachers should use the following criteria and scale for reporting information on students' work habits and behaviors that support achievement:

Elementary (Grades K – 5)	
Work Habits and Behaviors that Support Achievement	
Follows oral and written directions	Works independently
Works cooperatively	Participates in class
Completes class work	Completes homework
Produces best work	

	4	3	2	1
Grading Scale	Consistently Demonstrated	Frequently Demonstrated	Occasionally Demonstrated	Rarely Demonstrated

Secondary (Grades 6 – 12)				
Work Habits and Behaviors that Support Achievement				
Continuous Learner		Productive Collaborator		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a growth mindset and ability to persevere. • Shows motivation, initiative, and effort to achieve academic and career goals. • Engages in reflection and accepts feedback for individual improvement and self-advocacy. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates empathy, cooperation, and flexibility. • Resolves conflicts appropriately. • Actively participates in team activities to achieve common goals. 		
Responsible Citizen		Critical Thinker		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates personal integrity, honesty, and ethical behavior. • Exhibits pride in producing quality work and fulfilling responsibilities. • Shows respect toward people, property, and the use of resources. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates openness to new and diverse perspectives. • Analyzes and interprets situations, patterns, and data. • Weighs evidence to make complex decisions. 		
Effective Communicator		Innovation Problem-Solver		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates ability to engage others in productive interactions. • Listens attentively and asks questions to clarify understanding. • Conveys ideas clearly in verbal, written, visual, and digital formats. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays curiosity, inventiveness, and originality. • Creates products and shares ideas to solve challenging tasks. • Uses information from a variety of sources to develop unique solutions. 		
Grading Scale	4 Consistently Demonstrated	3 Frequently Demonstrated	2 Occasionally Demonstrated	1 Rarely Demonstrated

I. Elementary School

1. Academic Grade Reporting: Kindergarten – 3rd Grade

Student performance in Grades K-3 will be recorded and reported by numerical grades on a 4- point, standards-based scale.

a. **Calculation of Final Grades---**Final grades will be determined at the end of each semester based on the cumulative body of evidence for each standard. The **mode** of all

assessment scores per standard will be used to identify patterns of performance over time and guide determination of final grades.

Minimum number of assessment scores collected per 6-week progress report = **5**

Content Mastery Assessments will be given quarterly in all Grade 3 core content areas. These assessments will be scored by standard.

b. **Academic Grading Scale**

4	Distinguished Learner	Makes applications and inferences beyond expectations
3	Proficient Learner	Meets standards consistently and independently
2	Developing Learner	Progressing toward meeting standards
1	Beginning Learner	Limited progress toward mastery of standards
ND	Not Demonstrated	Not yet demonstrated
NA	Not Applicable	Not applicable at this time

2. **Academic Grade Reporting: Grades 4 - 5**

Student performance in Grades 4-5 will be recorded and reported in all courses by numerical grades, based on a 100-point scale.

a. **Calculation of Final Grades**

Final grades will be determined by the cumulative semester average using the following criteria:

- **Minor Grades = 60%:** Examples include quizzes, labs, and other graded assignments to assess certain standards in a unit of study.

Minimum number of minor grades per 6-week progress report period = **5**

- **Major Grades = 40%:** Examples include unit tests, essays, research papers, project-based assignments, and other culminating assessments to measure mastery of standards that comprise a unit of study.

Minimum number of major grades per 6-week progress report period = **2**

- **Content Mastery Assessments:** These assessments will be given quarterly in all core content areas.

b. **Academic Grading Scale**

A	Represents an average of 90-100
B	Represents an average of 80-89
C	Represents an average of 75-79
D	Represents an average of 70-74
F	Represents an average of below 70

c. In grades 4-5 a letter grade of “D” or above will indicate that the student's academic performance complies with the Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2.13, Grading Systems, which establishes 70 as a minimum passing score.

3. **Honor Roll**---Students in grades 4 and 5 meeting the following criteria will be recognized as follows:

a. **All “A/B” Academic Achievement Honor Roll**

Criteria: “A” or “B” in each subject

b. **All “A” Academic Achievement Honor Roll**

Criteria: “A” in each subject

VIII. DEFINITIONS

A. Assessment---Gathering and interpreting information about student achievement (group or individual) using a variety of tools and techniques. It is the act of describing student performance, primarily for the purpose of enhancing learning. As part of assessment, teachers provide students with feedback that guides their efforts toward improved achievement. (O’Connor, 2009)

A planned process in which evidence of students’ status is used by teachers to adjust their ongoing instructional procedures or by students to adjust their current learning tactics. (Popham, 2011)

B. Assessment Types

1. **Benchmark Assessment**---Given periodically throughout a school year to establish baseline achievement data and measure progress toward a standard. They provide teachers with information about which content standards have been mastered and which require additional instruction, identifying students’ strengths and needs. (nwea.org)

2. **Common Assessment**---Used in a school or district to ensure that all teachers are evaluating student performance in a more consistent, reliable, and effective manner. They allow educators to compare performance results across multiple classrooms, courses, schools, and/or learning experiences. Common assessments may be “formative” or “summative.” (edglossary.org)

3. **Criterion-Referenced Assessment**---The use of standards, objectives, or benchmarks marks as reference points for determining students’ achievement. (Wormeli, 2018). Criterion-referenced tests are designed to measure student performance against a fixed set of predetermined criteria or learning standards. (edglossary.org)

4. **Diagnostic Assessment**---Generally, diagnostic assessments refer to pre-assessments given to identify students' prior knowledge or readiness. The term may also refer to assessments used to "diagnose" specific challenges or needs so that interventions can be implemented. ([Center for Assessment](#))
5. **Formative Assessment**---Frequent and ongoing ways to check students' progress toward mastery; the most useful assessment teachers can provide for students and for their own teaching decisions. (Wormeli, 2018)
6. **Norm-Referenced Assessment**---Refers to [standardized tests](#) that are designed to compare and rank test takers in relation to one another. Norm-referenced tests report whether test takers performed better or worse than a hypothetical average student, which is determined by comparing scores against the performance results of a statistically group selected group of test takers, typically of the same age or grade level, who have already taken the exam. ([edglossary.org](#))
7. **Performance Assessment**---Typically requires students to complete a complex task, such as a writing assignment, science experiment, presentation, performance, or long-term project. Performance assessments may also be called "authentic assessments," since they are considered by some educators to be more accurate and meaningful evaluations of learning than traditional tests. ([edglossary.org](#))
8. **Portfolio Assessment**---A collection of work, some teacher-selected and some student-selected, used to assess a student's growth over time; often includes student's own reflections. (Wormeli, 2018)
Portfolios can be a physical collection of student work that includes materials such as written assignments, journal entries, completed tests, artwork, and lab reports. Portfolios may also be digital archives that include content such as student-created videos, multimedia presentations, spreadsheets, websites, and photographs. ([edglossary.org](#))
9. **Pre-Assessment**---Assessments administered before students begin a lesson, unit, course, or academic program for the purpose of determining prior knowledge or general academic readiness, and/or for establishing a baseline against which progress can be measured over time. ([edglossary.org](#))
10. **Screening Assessment**---Assessments used to determine whether students may need specialized assistance or services, or whether they are ready to begin a course, grade level, or academic program. ([edglossary.org](#))
11. **Summative Assessment**---Completed after the learning experiences; usually requires students to demonstrate mastery of all the essential understandings, though they can be explored over several different tasks; gradable. (Wormeli, 2018)

C. Central Tendencies (Calculating Grades by Mean, Median, and Mode)

1. Mean: Averaging all scores.

Provides for mathematically precise scoring. However, averaging grades can create a false sense of central tendency by allowing outlier scores to skew the results, thus creating an inaccurate report of student proficiency.

2. Median: Identifying the middle score by rank. Provides for more stability in scoring by diminishing the impact of outlier scores. Requires converting common scores to a scale. Has the greatest impact when performance is highly variable.

3. Mode: The most frequently occurring score. Provides for accurate and consistent scoring by focusing on the pattern of scores over time. Outlier scores do not skew the accuracy of reporting, but scoring is less accurate with a small sample size.

Professional judgement must be used with all three central tendencies, and always consider a body of evidence or patterns. Disaggregation of scores based on individual standards gives the most accurate reporting of where students are with levels of mastery towards the standards. There must be clear, consistent evidence over time to calculate a grade. (Nickelsen)

D. Criteria for Success---Qualities (and sometimes quantities) that must be present for performances, products, tasks or formative assessments so there is clarity for student mastery of the Learning Targets and standards. A tool for students that provides the criteria to be successful on the learning at hand. It guides feedback. (Nickelsen)

E. Differentiated Instruction---Instruction that matches the needs of students with the requirements for achievement. Differentiated instruction is characterized by using multiple, flexible approaches to learning targets for students at varying levels of readiness and with different interests and attitudes toward the targets. (Moss & Brookhart, 2012)

F. Feedback---Communication that tells students what they did in relation to the goal of an assignment; does not include an evaluative component. (Wormeli, 2018)

Feedback is a two-way recurring conversation between teacher and student. Teachers give feedback to students about their learning to show them where they are, but the teacher also receives feedback from students that allows the teacher to adjust instruction. (Vatterott, 2015)

Good feedback should be part of a classroom assessment environment in which students see constructive criticism as a good thing and understand that learning cannot occur without practice. (S. Brookhart, 2008)

G. Grades/Grading---The number or letter reported at the end of a period of time as a summary statement of student performance. (K. O'Connor, 2002).

The overall indicator of student achievement. (R.J. Marzano, 2000); Grades must be accurate, fair, specific, and timely—the criteria for an effective grading policy. (D.

Reeves 2011); Grades are more often than not subjective and thereby likely to be more distorted in their accuracy than teachers realize. Grades are not always accurate indicators of mastery. (Wormeli, 2006)

H. Learning Target---A description of what the student is going to learn by the end of today's lesson, stated in developmentally appropriate language that the student can understand. Learning target language is framed from the point of view of a student who has not yet mastered the target and includes student "look-fors" – criteria that students can use to judge how close they are to the target – stated in language that describes mastery (rather than grading or scoring). The learning target is connected to the specific performance of understanding for today's lesson. (Moss and Brookhart, 2012)

I. Reassessment---Giving students the opportunity to redo an assignment or retake an assessment for the purpose of demonstrating additional learning acquired through completion of an approved relearning plan. (Nickelsen)

J. Relearning Plan---A student-designed plan to achieve mastery of standards missed in a previous assessment. This plan consists of but does not limit itself to the student: (1) analyzing the errors or misconceptions on the summative assessment; (2) determining how to relearn the content to bring about mastery; (3) completing and turning in any missing assignments; (4) committing to date(s) and time(s) to retake or redo the assessment; and, (5) sharing the plan with their parent and teacher for approval. (Nickelsen)

K. Rubric---A rubric is typically an evaluation tool used to measure learning expectations against a consistent set of criteria. Rubrics are used as scoring instruments to determine grades or the degree to which learning standards have been demonstrated or attained by students. (edglossary.org)

A smaller-scale continuum of scores in which each score correlates to a clear descriptor of performance. (Wormeli, 2018)

L. Standard---A statement that describes what and/or how well students are expected to understand and perform. (O'Connor, 2009)

M. Standards-Based Grading---Measuring student progress relative to specific learning standards. This system of evaluation isolates the learning of content and mastery of skills from other factors, such as behavior. Refers to the practice of making sure students learn what they were taught and actually achieve the expected standards - i.e., that students meet a defined standard for proficiency. (edglossary.org)

HOMEROOM PROCEDURES

Each school day begins with a homeroom period in which general business is conducted.

A. Attendance Report: Check the roll each morning and take attendance in Infinite

Campus by 9:00 a.m. If no one is absent, you must still submit attendance by computer with no one marked. If you have not taken attendance and a tardy student comes into class, mark student tardy but do not send the student back to the office for a tardy slip. If you have already taken attendance, send the tardy student back for a tardy slip so attendance can be corrected in the office. If a substitute is in your classroom, attendance will be recorded on an absentee slip and sent to the office. Daily attendance is maintained via Infinite Campus. Attendance reports may be printed from the program. Parents/guardians will receive a Shout Point call when their student is absent.

- B. Transportation Changes:** Changes in transportation are acceptable in written form only. Written form is defined as hand written note from parent/guardian, email, text message or Class DoJo/Remind message. If unclear, contact parent during planning time. **DO NOT** wait to verify at dismissal time. Early dismissals will be called to the office by intercom. If a student brings a parent note for early dismissal, hold student in classroom until the office calls for the child.
- C. Student Excuses:** A student who has been absent should bring an excuse signed by the parent or guardian stating the reason for the absence(s). If a student is absent for two or more days, teachers should contact parent to determine why the student is out. Teachers should notify an administrator should attendance become a problem with a student.
- D.** Homeroom teachers should submit parent notes & medical excuses to the Office in the red Attendance Folder every Wednesday.

MEDIA CENTER

All K – 5 homeroom teachers will sign up for a weekly visit to the Media Center. Teachers should remain with their class while the class is in the Media Center checking out books, devices, etc. Teachers will use a Google doc provided by Mrs. David to sign up for their weekly times.

MONEY

All money should be properly documented and turned in to Mrs. Baxley by noon each day (when money is received). Money should not be kept in classrooms overnight nor should money be taken home.

MORNING DUTY

Those persons assigned to morning duty **must** be in place at 7:50 a.m. Teachers **must** be at their classroom doors by 7:50 a.m. ready to receive students.

INTEREST INVENTORIES & LEARNING STYLES INVENTORIES

In Grades 2 -5, each teacher must have all students in his/her homeroom complete an

Interest Inventory and a Learning Styles Inventory. This should be done within the first five (5) days of school.

Completion of these inventories will assist teachers in understanding students' interests and how the students learn best.

This information should be shared with team teachers including sped. teachers and paraprofessionals who work with the students.

PROMOTION, PLACEMENT AND RETENTION POLICY

K-8 Promotion Requirements

ELEMENTARY (K-5)

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

State Promotion Requirements

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

Additional Richmond County Promotion Requirements

Kindergarten

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

Grades First through Third

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

Grades Four and Five

In addition to State Promotion Requirements in grades third and fifth, students in grades 4 and 5:

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

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.

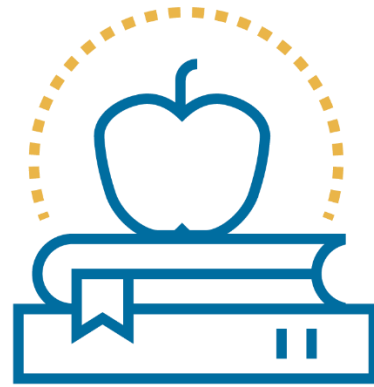
SCHOOL FOOD SERVICES

- All students eat at no cost to the parents/guardians.
- Teachers should not plan any classroom parties during lunch hours.
- Faculty and staff should pay for meals as they are eaten or in advance by putting money on their account.
- Other points of attention include:
 - (d) Check to ensure that students clean up around their assigned tables before leaving;
 - (e) See that students pick up all paper around trash cans; uneaten food and food scraps are not to be left on table;
 - (f) Good table manners should be taught and maintained by each teacher.
- All students must learn their ID number. Students in PreK -2nd Grade should wear a tag or clothespin to lunch with their name and ID # on it.
- The following items are NOT allowed in the cafeteria: fast food items or glass containers.

Breakfast---All breakfasts will be eaten in the classroom (Grab 'n Go). Students will receive breakfast upon entering the building each morning.

Lunch---All classes will eat in the cafeteria. Teachers should line students up alphabetically by last name to go through the serving line. Students purchasing ice cream or chips should be at the end of the class's line.

Teaching with Clarity



WHAT ARE THEY LEARNING?

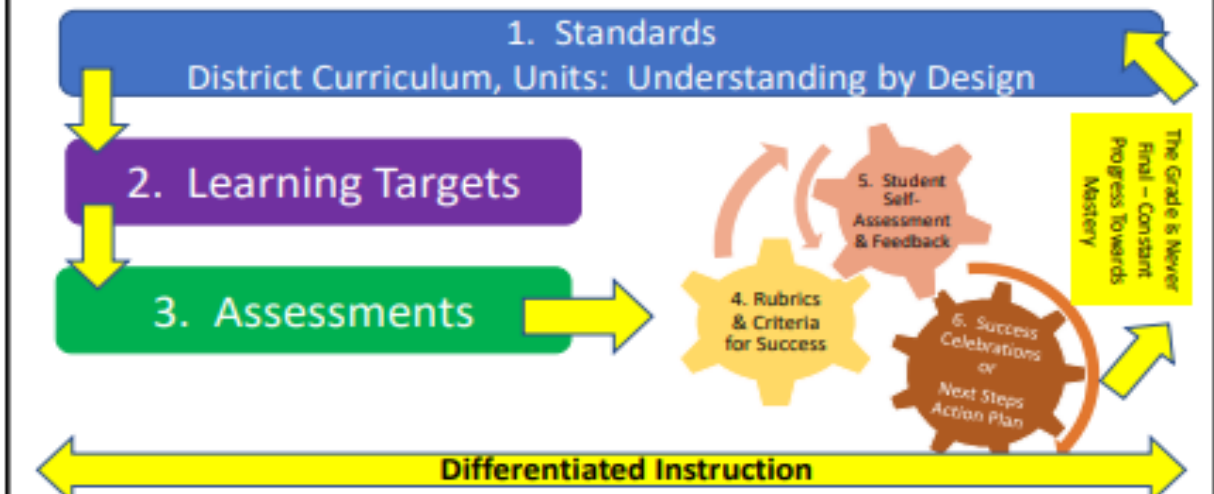
WHY ARE THEY LEARNING IT?

HOW WILL THEY KNOW THEY LEARNED IT?



Direct	Indirect	Interactive	Experiential	Independent
Structured Overview Lecture Explicit Teaching Drill & Practice Compare & Contrast Didactic Questions Demonstrations Guided & Shared - reading, listening, viewing, thinking Modeling Think Aloud	Problem Solving Case Studies Reading for Meaning Inquiry Reflective Discussion Writing to Inform Concept Formation Concept Mapping Concept Attainment Cloze Procedure	Debates Role Playing Panels Brainstorming Peer Partner Learning Discussion Laboratory Groups Think, Pair, Share Cooperative Learning Jigsaw Gamification Interviewing Conferencing	Field Trips Narratives Conducting Experiments Simulations Games Storytelling Field Observations Role-playing Model Building Surveys	Essays Computer Assisted Instruction Journals Learning Logs Reports Learning Activity Packages Correspondence Lessons Learning Contracts Homework Research Projects Learning Centers

STARSS Grading Going From Standard to a Grade



IDENTIFY AND COLLECT ESSENTIAL DATA

This step starts during the lesson planning process and then is completed during the implementation of the lesson. Data can be gathered through formative or summative assessments, or through qualitative analysis.



EXAMINE DATA FOR TRENDS, ISSUES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

The teacher now sorts the data according to various characteristics such as student strengths and weaknesses. It is an opportunity to gather data points from a number of methods, including, item analysis, question stem analysis, distractor analysis, qualitative data gathering, interview or survey data, written data, performance data, and project-based data.



SUMMARIZE THE DATA

The teacher can now translate the findings into summary statements or needs statements that will inform instructional decisions. It is during this step that teachers should hold data conversations to determine the next steps.



MAKE INSTRUCTIONAL DECISIONS BASED ON THE DATA

During this step, the teacher decides what actions they will take: i.e., reteach the lesson, pull a small group to close a gap in understanding, move on to the next topic, etc.

Food for Thought...

“Teacher clarity is the ability to name all of one’s planning steps about goals, content, methods and media using examples to explain them to students. Before instruction can begin, the teacher must articulate success criteria for achievement to students.” -- John Hattie

“To be effective, feedback needs to be **clear, purposeful, meaningful,** and compatible with students' prior knowledge. It should provide logical connections.” -- Hattie and Temperly

Assessment is "a process of gathering data in order to provide feedback and inform next steps in instruction. Neither assessment nor feedback is judgment or evaluation; they're just information to use to improve learning." -- Rick Wormeli