



2019-2020

Welcome to Gulf Highlands Elementary
where we work together as a staff to

Go **A**bove **T**he **O**thers to **R**each **S**uccess for ALL!

Dear Gulf Highlands Elementary Families,

Welcome to the 2019-2020 school year. We look forward to the upcoming year as we work with you and your child. It will be a journey of learning and growth because our goal is to help every child achieve the essential standards at their grade level, become responsible citizens, and critical thinkers.

We share a common interest in the progress of your child. Your cooperation and communication will help provide the best possible learning environment. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your child's teacher or administration. All administrative and instructional staff members can be reached via e-mail links on our website ghes.pasco.k12.fl.us or at 727-774-7700. I encourage you to check our website and Facebook page regularly for updates. We look forward to a great year with your child!

Sincerely,

Judy Cosh, Principal

Expectations

We appreciate your support of the below expectations.

By being united, we know your child will have a successful school year!



Contact Information

Principal

Judy Cosh

jcosh@pasco.k12.fl.us

Asst. Principal

Mindy Predmore

mpredmor@pasco.k12.fl.us

website: <http://ghes.pasco.k12.fl.us>

address: 8019 Gulf Highlands Drive, Port Richey, FL 34668

Main Line

(727) 774-7700

Clinic

(727) 774-7705

Cafeteria

(727) 774-7778

STAR Academy

(727) 774-7792

West Bus Garage

(727) 774-0544

Fax

(727) 774-7791

District Office

(727) 774-2000

ABC Program

The Assist, Believe, Care (ABC) project was initiated in 1991 to provide an opportunity to match community resources with needy children. The ABC Program provides school essentials which enhance the possibility for a student's success in school. ABC is an example of a school/community partnership. It is voluntary for both school and community members. All names are kept confidential and any purchase will be made in accordance with School Board guidelines.

Arrival & Dismissal

- 9:25 a.m. Students are allowed on campus to get breakfast from the carts
Students may report to their classrooms
- 9:30 a.m. School begins
- 9:50 a.m. Tardy Bell Rings
- 3:45 p.m. Bike riders, Car riders and STAR Academy students are dismissed
- 3:50 p.m. Bus riders and Walkers are dismissed

It is very important that your child arrives at school on time and stays throughout the entire day to get the most of the instruction provided. Should tardies or early dismissals become an issue, our school social worker will be contacting you to assist as needed.

VERY IMPORTANT & SPECIAL NOTES: (VERY, VERY, VERY IMPORTANT!)



Please maintain consistency in how your child goes home each day. This is the best way to ensure his/her safety.



If you do need to change the route your child will be taking home, written instructions are required. You can use the planner for this type of information.



If there is an emergency and you need someone else to pick up your child from school, written instructions are required. Phone calls are acceptable only if you can positively be identified as the child's parent/guardian. Emergency contacts listed on the emergency card are allowed to pick a child up **ONLY** with permission from a parent/guardian.






During bad weather, in particular when there is thunder and lightning, the walkers and the bike riders will be held until the weather is more favorable. Most of the time, the storms pass quickly and students are sent home their usual way. If we need to hold the students longer than 30 minutes, we will initiate a phone message to alert you of this plan.







On rainy days, buses may be delayed by up to thirty minutes. Please be patient.

In order to keep our gators safe, please follow these important procedures.



Arriving by car loop:

-  Keep your child inside your vehicle until a staff member opens the door.
-  Stay inside your car so the lane will not be blocked once the traffic begins to move.
-  Do not drive around another vehicle unless directed to do so by a staff member.




Departing by car loop:

-  Display your car rider pass so it can be seen easily from a distance.
-  Be prepared to show picture ID if you do not have a car rider pass issued for this school year.
-  Stay inside your car. Your child will be brought to you.
-  Please consider turning off your car if arriving early to the loop to prevent fumes from building up.




Arriving and parking in the parking lot:

-  Remain in your vehicle until 9:25 a.m.
-  Parents must escort their children using the crosswalk only after checking for moving vehicles.

Arriving or departing by bus:

-  Students are advised to be at their bus stop 10 minutes prior to the designated stop time.
-  Parents are responsible for the supervision of their own children until the bus arrives.
-  Students are not allowed to ride a bus other than the one assigned. In addition, no child is allowed to get off at any stop other than the one assigned.

Arriving/departing by bike:

-  Your child must walk his/her bicycle while on campus.
-  Students must wear helmets if riding a bike to school.
-  Bike riders should lock their bikes in the bike racks during school. Bike helmets can be taken to class. It is the law that all bikers under the age of 18 wear a helmet. Bikes have been stolen from our LOCKED bike area. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged bikes. It is a "Park at Your Own Risk" policy. Skateboards/roller blades are not permitted on campus. Tampering with another person's bike is prohibited. If bicycle privileges are abused, they will be revoked.

Attendance Policy

School attendance is critical to a child's success at school. There is a positive correlation between regular school attendance and academic success. The State of Florida mandates that children attend school between the ages of six (6) and sixteen (16). The school is responsible for monitoring student attendance. The State of Florida enacted legislation to enforce policy that defines whether absences are "excused" or "unexcused". The determination of excused or unexcused absences is made based on information shared by the parent/legal guardian with the school at the time of absence. Upon your child returning to school, please provide in writing the reason for the absence. Absences can be either excused or unexcused based on specific guidelines.

The following is a list of examples that have been provided to the school as reasons for an excused absence:

- 1) Illness of a student.
- 2) An accident resulting in bodily injury to a student.
- 3) An illness or death in the immediate family of the student.
- 4) An observance of an established religious holiday or instruction.
- 5) A subpoena by a law enforcement agency or a court appearance.
- 6) An absence, for any reason, deemed excused by the principal.

Every effort should be made to avoid scheduling vacations or out-of-town trips during the school year. This type of situation interrupts the students' learning when they should be in school.

If a child misses three days without contacting the school or has a pattern of absences, a referral to the school Social Worker will be made. A student is identified as a chronic non-attender or habitual truant when she or he has accumulated five (5) unexcused absences in a calendar month or ten (10) unexcused absences within a ninety (90) calendar day period. Once the school identifies a student as being a chronic non-attender or habitual truant, the school will begin the process required for truancy.

By teaching our students about the importance of regular attendance at school, we believe we can foster a very important quality that employers look for in their workers. We appreciate your support in helping us develop lifelong skills our students need to be productive citizens!

BUS EXPECTATIONS

- Wear your seatbelt
- Sit and remain in your assigned seat.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
- Save all food and drinks for later.
- Talk quietly to your neighbors.
- Respect all parts of the bus.

Infraction of these rules will be dealt in the following manner:

1 st offense	-	Counsel, warning, and/or referral
2 nd offense	-	Parent contact
3 rd offense	-	3 day bus suspension
4 th offense	-	5 day bus suspension
5 th offense	-	10 day bus suspension
6 th offense	-	recommendation of bus expulsion

We appreciate family support in the enforcement of these rules, as riding a bus is a privilege. It is the goal of GHES to provide as great a margin of safety as possible for children who are transported by school buses.

The School Board has approved a Student Code of Conduct for our student population. A copy of this code will be given to your child during the first week of school. This code is more detailed than these pages and should be discussed thoroughly with your child.

Campus Safety

All parents, visitors, and volunteers are required to sign in at the office and will be required to show picture ID. All parents and visitors must obtain permission to visit any classroom, and it must be prearranged. When signing in, visitors must provide photo identification that will be scanned and checked against a nationwide Sexual Offender/Predator database. This system only checks names and birth dates against that database and does not provide nor have access to other criminal information such as bad checks, traffic tickets, warrants, etc. Once a visitor is approved, the equipment will print out a badge for the visitor to wear while on campus.

Parents/guardians who need to pick up their child early should expect to wait up to 15 minutes while we locate and retrieve him/her from class. Please plan accordingly. We will not pull students out of class until you arrive in the office to allow him/her to continue learning.

If you have any custody concerns, you must provide us with original certified custody papers. Only legal documents will be acknowledged. By law, birth parents share equal custody and access to their child's records, unless we have a court order on file that states differently.

Be sure to list only the custodial parents/guardians on the emergency card.

Should a situation arise that requires the removal of students from the school premises, our plan is to escort them to St. Michael's Church. In addition, we are required to teach and practice fire, bus, and disaster drills regularly. This allows us to respond in an orderly fashion, as opposed to in panic mode.

Check Writing Policy

The following information must appear on every check presented to any Pasco County school, P.L.A.C.E. program, or District department:

Full Name

Current Street Address (no P.O. Box)

Home phone number (with area code)

Child's student number (lunch number)

Should your bank return your check unpaid, the school's bank will automatically forward the returned item to CHECKCare. These checks are not returned to the school. Once a check is debited from our account as an unpaid item, we cannot accept payment for it. CHECKCare will be responsible for recovering the face value of the check, plus a Florida state authorized fee. You will receive a written notice from CHECKCare asking you to contact them in 5 days. If written attempts to contact you are unsuccessful, CHECKCare may debit the amounts from your checking account electronically. Multiple payment methods are available and you will work directly with CHECKCare to resolve payments or any other issues. This toll free number can be called with any questions you might have: 1-888-339-2439.

Dress Code

Students are prohibited from wearing tank tops or midriff tops. No short shorts or spandex shorts, strapless shoes or flip-flops are allowed. Ball caps can be worn, correctly with the bill facing forward, outside only. T-shirts with any pictures or writings pertaining to inappropriate language, drugs, alcohol, smoking, guns or violence are strictly prohibited.

Please label clothing in case it becomes lost or stolen. At the end of each month, all lost clothing will be given to charity. Lost and found items are housed in the cafeteria.

Field Trips

Every student going on a field trip must have a parent release form signed by a parent/guardian prior to going on the excursion. Your child's teacher will provide this form. Any students who are not attending the field trip will be placed with another class during the day. In order for a parent to attend field trips with their own children, he/she must have a volunteer application approved and on file at the school.

Homework

Please expect your child to have, at the least, nightly reading and math Monday through Friday for 30 minutes. The purpose of homework is to reinforce skills and to practice introduced skills. It is not used to introduce new skills or as a disciplinary measure. The district guideline is 10 minutes of homework for every year in elementary school. A third grader should have approximately 40 minutes of nightly homework. If your child is not bringing homework home or if your child is spending too much time on homework, please contact your child's teacher.

Illness/Accidents/Medications

The Clinic Assistant monitors the clinic, administers medication and performs vision, height and weight screenings for all students at designated grades. Student health records are also maintained by the Clinic Assistant.

School Board regulations state that in order to administer prescription or nonprescription medication to students during school hours, the following requirements must be met:

- must be prescribed by a physician
- must be in its original container with proper labeling and current date
- must have a completed and signed "Medical Procedures" form on file
- medication must be counted and verified by a parent/guardian and an authorized school employee
- a second bottle must be provided for field trips with only enough medication for that day

If your child has any unusual health problems, please let the Clinic Assistant know. Each year the Clinic Assistant makes a list of special health concerns. This list is confidential but allows us to handle these situations appropriately when they arise. Should any health concerns develop during the school year, please contact the Clinic Assistant as soon as possible.

District policy states that students must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. We also recommend a 24-hour recovery period following the stomach flu. Should your child come down with a communicable disease like Mumps, Chicken Pox, Measles, Strep Throat, etc., please contact the Clinic Assistant immediately.

Please discourage your child from using someone else's comb or brush. Head lice do not carry disease nor does their presence mean that your child is dirty. However, to prevent the spreading of lice in the school, this condition must be treated at once. You may wish to consult your doctor or the Health Department for recommendations on treatment.

Internet Consent

Our policy at GHES regarding use of the internet is to follow the District School Board's Electronic Network Access Policy as described below.

- An overview of the policy will be provided to all students by the classroom teacher.
- Students and parents/guardians will be required to sign a Student Agreement form to allow access to the internet and an additional form to access Google Apps. These forms will be provided during a lesson by the teacher early in the school year.

- Completed forms will be kept at our school for the 2019-2020 school year only.
- Each student’s access to the internet will be under the direct supervision of a school staff member and monitored as a regular instructional activity.

Meal Programs

A nutritious breakfast and lunch are served at school each day. Parents are encouraged to prepay. Each student has an account through which lunch and/or snack money can be paid. **myschoolbucks.com** offers the opportunity to add lunch money to a child’s account online. If necessary, it is possible to flag your child’s account to prevent him/her from purchasing snacks, please notify the cafeteria manager of your request. Checks written to the school for meal/snack money cannot be used for payment on any other items. Please include your child’s student number on the check.

Applications for free and reduced price lunches must be completed each year. For the 2019-2020 school year we hope to have the majority of our families apply online at www.pasco.k12.fl.us/nutrition/free_reduced. It allows for quick processing. Please use our school’s computers if you need access to the Internet.

Students without lunch or money for lunch may charge their lunches for that day. All charges need to be paid in a timely manner. Students are limited to \$10.00 in charges at any given time. Students exceeding this amount will receive a nutritious cheese sandwich, two side items, and milk.

Breakfast is FREE to all students. Our breakfast carts are open from 9:25 a.m. to 9:50 a.m. Students will grab breakfast from the cart stationed outside on their way to class.

	2019-2020 Meal Prices
Reduced Price Breakfast	\$0.30
Reduced Price Lunch	\$0.40
Elementary Breakfast	\$1.35
Elementary Lunch	\$2.50
Secondary Breakfast	\$1.50

Secondary Lunch	\$3.00
Adult Breakfast	\$1.75
Adult Lunch	\$3.75

P.E./Recess

Physical Education (P.E.) is a part of our school curriculum and each child is required to participate. If for some reason, such as illness, your child should not participate for one or to two days, please send a written explanation to the school. If a child needs to be excused from P.E. for a longer period of time, a note from a doctor is required. Also, remind your child that no P.E. means no recess! Students should wear appropriate footwear at all times. We have recess daily.

Personal Property

In order to help prevent accidents or injury, the following items are not to be carried on buses or brought to school: animals, insects, baseball bats, skateboards, radios, knives, glass objects, tobacco, chewing gum, tape recorders, or any item considered dangerous or appearing dangerous. It is illegal to bring in, use, or distribute drugs or alcohol on school premises or as part of any school activities. Gulf Highlands is a DRUG FREE zone.

We strongly encourage all students to leave valuables at home. The probability of damage and/or theft is too great, and those items are a distraction to students throughout the day. Such items will be confiscated from the child and may be retrieved by a parent or guardian unless law enforcement becomes involved. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Also, students should not bring unnecessary amounts of money to school.

Photographic Consent

Throughout the year, students are videotaped and photographed while participating in various school activities, such as our morning news show. Photographs are kept in our school photo album and/or yearbook as well as being posted on our website. If parents/guardians object to their children being photographed, please notify the school in writing.

Physical Examinations

A physical examination is required for all kindergarten students, private school students and all students coming from out of state prior to registration for school. For transfers inside the state of Florida, if upon receipt of your child's records from his/her previous school a physical is not included, the family will be required to supply this document.

P.L.A.C.E. and STAR Academy

Our school site is very fortunate to house STAR Academy for the families in our community at no cost. Our STAR Academy is located in our cafeteria, opening each weekday morning at 7:00 a.m. and closing each evening at 5:30 p.m. P.L.A.C.E. is a fee based program and located at Schrader for our families and provides convenient before and after school transportation and care from 6:30 am to 6:00 pm. P.L.A.C.E. and STAR Academy are also open during the winter and spring breaks as well as during summer. For the exact schedule, visit the district website. To check into the program, go online at <http://www.pasco.k12.fl.us> or call (727) 774-7792.

School Advisory Council

The School Advisory Council (SAC) is a link between the school and the local community. The partners are parents, business people, community members, professional educators, and other school staff. The SAC assists in the implementation of the School Success Plan by analyzing school data, assessing initiatives, and allocating funds to support those initiatives. The SAC meets on a monthly basis. If you are interested, please let Mrs. Cosh or Mrs. Predmore know.

School Parties

Class parties will be planned periodically by the teachers. Your assistance will always be welcome if you are an approved volunteer. Any treats supplied to the school need to be commercially prepared and delivered to the school in their original sealed containers.

Birthdays are a special time for children. Please enjoy this remarkable day with your child while at home. Flower arrangements and/or balloons cause a distraction and will not be allowed in the classroom. If you would like to supply a treat for the class that day in honor of your child's birthday, please contact the teacher ahead of time.

Volunteer Program

We encourage volunteers throughout the school to enhance the students' learning environment. Parents are encouraged to volunteer for their own child's classroom as well as others. Should this arrangement be overly distracting for the volunteer's child, an alternate placement will be implemented. Due to liability, younger children are not allowed to accompany parents while volunteering.

All volunteers are required to fill out a county-wide registration form **each school year**. In order to chaperone a field trip, these forms must be filled out and approved in advance. Volunteer applications are available online at www.pasco.k12.fl.us. Click on Pasco County Quick Links, then select volunteer application.



