



Bland County Elementary School Student and Parent Handbook

2023-2024

BLAND COUNTY SCHOOL DIVISION MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Bland County Schools is to provide a safe and challenging environment where students will be allowed to learn and acquire skills necessary for a responsible and productive life while developing an appreciation for their community.

The Bland County School Board Policy Manual is available for public review at the School Board office, school library, public library, and on the Internet at www.bland.k12.va.us.

Message from the Principal

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year!

A child's early experiences in school greatly influence educational growth. Your child's habits and attitudes toward school may be rooted in these early years. Because these attitudes impact learning, it is important for you to be interested and participate in your child's school activities.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with targeted information contained in the Bland County Public Schools Policy Manual and answer questions that you may have about guidelines and procedures used at Bland County Elementary. Please review the handbook with your child. Please feel free to enter into dialogue with me about any of your concerns either by phone or by appointment.

A [school calendar](#) and [other policy guidelines](#) are included in this handbook. We hope that you will keep this booklet for further reference throughout the school year since we have worked to include much information that will apply all year. Since this handbook offers many important guidelines, we ask that you go through the booklet with your child, **then sign and return to your child's teacher the form on page 15 of this handbook.**

It is a pleasure to serve as the principal of Bland County Elementary. I hope, in the coming year, you and your child have an exciting and positive educational experience. I also hope that the working relationships that are developed among the administration, faculty, support staff, students, parents, and community members will be highly beneficial to the success of all students attending Bland County Elementary. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Melissa A. Reardon

Melissa A. Reardon
Principal

School Administration and Contact Information

Principal	Mrs. Melissa A. Reardon	mreardon@bland.k12.va.us
School Counselor	Mrs. Rebecca Umbarger	bumbarger@bland.k12.va.us
Secretary/Bookkeeper	Mrs. Candice Bush	ctbush@bland.k12.va.us

School Contact Information:

31 Rocket Drive Bland, VA 24315	Phone: 276-688-3621 Fax: 276-688-4451
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Suggestions for Parents

To help your child enjoy his/her experience at Bland County Elementary, we would like to make the following suggestions:

- ☐ Get to know your school. Become familiar with class locations, school office, library, cafeteria, gymnasium, and playground.
- ☐ Get acquainted with the teachers and staff. We are here to help you. If you have concerns or suggestions, please let us know.
- ☐ Study and learn as much as you can about our school. We will always be available to help you with problems you may have, but you must ask for help.
- ☐ Get involved in your child's education. The difference between failure and success is most often a concerned parent. Conference with the teacher, check for homework, look at daily work, sign weekly reports, and return them to school. Send the message, "I care about your schooling." You know your child better than anyone, so please keep us informed.
- ☐ Bland County Elementary can be the BEST if we work together!

We are **proud** of our students and staff. It is our sincere hope your child's experience at Bland County Elementary School will be one filled with happiness and success. You are urged to support the school, teachers, and programs. Parents' positive attitudes and support can make a significant difference.

Supportive Services

School Counseling: A full-time school counselor will be on staff at BCES. The counselor will assist students with academic guidance and personal/social counseling. The counselor will also be assisting with anti-bullying tactics and providing Character Education to all students.

- **Title I:** Bland County Elementary is a School-Wide Title I school providing individual and small-group instruction in reading and math.
- **PALS:** Bland County Elementary provides a tutoring program for students in Kindergarten through 3rd grade who need additional instruction in developmental reading skills.
- **Speech Therapist/Physical/Occupational Therapist:** The speech and OT therapists at Bland County Elementary School provide direct therapy services to students who are diagnosed as having significant speech, language, or physical difficulties that affect their education.
- **Mount Rogers Therapeutic Day Treatment:** Bland County Elementary partners with Mount Rogers Community Service Board. MRCSB day treatment counselors serve the students in the Bland County Public School System by providing counseling services and support to families in Bland County.
- **Volunteers:** Parents who would like to volunteer at Bland County Elementary are encouraged to notify the school to participate in volunteer activities. All volunteers must abide by school and classroom rules. **VOLUNTEERS MUST COMPLETE AND APPLICATION AND BE WILLING TO SUBMIT TO A BACKGROUND CHECK IF NEEDED.**

Admission to School

- ☐ According to Virginia law, students entering the first year of school must have reached their 5th birthday by September 30th.
- ☐ A state birth certificate and a school entrance health form are required for admission.
- ☐ An up-to-date immunization record must also be provided and certified by a physician.
- ☐ All students must have a current home address on file in the school office.
- ☐ All students must have emergency phone numbers on file in the school office.
- ☐ Proof of physical residence is required for enrollment.

The School Day

Students should be in their classrooms by **8:30 a.m.** The school day ends at **3:15 p.m.** Instruction is ongoing throughout the day with breaks for lunch, a short recess period, and snacks.

Bus Unloading and Loading

- It is unlawful to pass a bus if its stop signs are out and the yellow lights or red lights are flashing.
- Loading and unloading of buses is a serious time and is monitored closely by each bus driver and teacher.
- Please follow the designated traffic patterns in the morning.
- Pay particular attention to the restricted parking areas and traffic patterns in the morning and afternoon. Traffic flows one way around the building.
- Do not U-turn at the office side of the building in the mornings.
- Stay in line and drop students off at the designated area.
- Due to the number of students involved, the traffic rules are very important for the safety of all students.

Morning Schedule

Students should not arrive before 7:50 a.m. The school staff is not prepared to administer proper supervision for children before **7:50 am.** The arrival of students by bus or those who are brought to school by their parents must follow the following procedures:

- All students will **enter through door #9.**
- Students wishing to eat breakfast will be routed to the cafeteria.
- From 7:50 am- until 8:15 am PreK-3rd grade will report to the cafeteria and 4th-6th grade will report to the gym.
- Homeroom teachers will supervise students in each classroom beginning at 8:15 am.
- The Shuttle bus to BCHS will depart BCES at 8:00 am. The shuttle from BCHS will arrive at the alternate school site at approximately 8:20 am.

Afternoon Schedule ALL dismissals will be called over the PA.

- 3:18 Car riders dismissed to the Cafeteria. While car riders are loading, first-load shuttles should be prepped to load
 - Parents who are picking students up at the end of the day for parent pickups should not be lined up in the parking lot adjacent to the main office **before 3:00 p.m.** Please DO NOT block the school entrance or traffic flow into the parking lot.
- 3:28: First-load buses: **#3 & #9,** (shuttle to BCHS) Students exit to buses through door #10 (cafeteria)
- 3:30: Students that ride the last load buses will be dismissed to the cafeteria (preK-3rd) and gym (4th-6th) Last-load buses: **#4, #26, #27,** (shuttle from BCHS), **#28, #29,**
- 3:50: Last Load Buses Dismissed

Parking

- If you arrive after 8:30 A.M. and before 3:15 P.M., you may park in the parking lot adjacent to the main office to attend IEP meetings, parent/teacher conferences, and educationally-related meetings.
- If no parking is available, there is additional parking across the street in front of the building.

School Attendance

- Regular attendance in school is mandated by Virginia State Law (VA Code: Section 22.1-254).
- Regular attendance is vitally important to your child's academic success. Help your child understand the importance of regular attendance.
- It is your responsibility to get your child to school each day and on time.
- **Parents are required to provide a written note or doctor's note explaining the specific reason for their child's absence. After 10 absences, a doctor's note/professional note is the only form of explanation that will be accepted as an excuse, unless extenuating circumstances warrant otherwise.**
- Notes are kept on record in the student's attendance file.
- A copy of the attendance policy will be sent home at the beginning of the school year in the Back to School Packet. Please be sure you read and are familiar with the attendance policy.
- Bland County's attendance policy can be found in the Bland County Schools Policy Manual located at the Board Office, in the school's office, and on Bland County Public Schools' website [Attendance Policy](#), and as follows:
 - Teachers will keep an accurate record of daily absences by students.



- The school will make a reasonable attempt to contact a parent/guardian of each student who is absent every day and to obtain an explanation for the student's absence where there is no indication that the student's parent/guardian is aware of and supports the absence. A log will be kept of call attempts.
- After three (3) unexcused absences, the school will send a letter home reminding the parent/guardian of the number of absences and the importance of good attendance.
- Upon a fifth (5th) unexcused absence, and per Virginia law, a parent conference will be scheduled to develop a plan to encourage student attendance.
- If a sixth (6th) unexcused absence occurs, the school administrator will schedule a conference with the student and parent/guardian within 10 days in an attempt to resolve the student's noncompliance with the compulsory attendance law. The school may include community service providers to assist the student and family with the issue of non-compliance.
- If an eighth (8th) unexcused absence occurs, the Principal shall enforce the compulsory attendance rules by either or both of the following: (i) filing a complaint with the juvenile and domestic relations court alleging the pupil is a child in need of supervision as defined in § 16.1 -228 or (ii) instituting proceedings against the parent according to § 18.2-371 or § 22.1-262. In filing a complaint against the student, the Principal shall provide written documentation of the efforts already undertaken to resolve the pupil's absence. If the student's parents have joint physical custody of the student and the school has notice of the custody arrangement, then both parents shall be notified at their last known addresses. The Principal shall contact the Superintendent when a student is referred to the court for failure to comply with the compulsory attendance regulations.
- If a student is absent for more than ten (10) days during the school year, whether the combination of absences is excused or unexcused, a doctor's note will be required for the 11th and all subsequent absences for absences to be considered excused. The procedure for three (3) unexcused absences will be followed. The family will be invited to the school for a conference. Additional absences will be considered unexcused and the procedures listed in (4.-7.) above will be followed. Extenuating circumstances will be considered in the application of this policy.
- Students who miss more than 10 percent of the total number of days enrolled for the school year will be considered chronically absent.
- Students with excellent attendance habits will be recognized in a variety of ways throughout the school year.
- The qualifications for perfect attendance are to be present every day, no tardies, and no early checkouts.
- Should we not receive a phone call stating that your child will be absent, an alert system called "SchoolMessenger" will automatically begin calling the phone numbers you have provided the school after 11:00 A.M.

Tardiness

- Tardy students (**arriving after 8:30 am**) must report to the main office with a parent to check in and receive a "tardy slip" before they will be admitted to their classroom.
- Please make every effort to ensure your child arrives at school on time every day. Tardies have a negative impact on the educational program of our school.
- Excessive tardies are addressed in the [Bland County School Board Attendance Policy](#).

Early Check-outs

- Students will not be allowed to leave the school during the day without being checked out of school by an authorized person.
- Parents or guardians will provide information in writing to the office listing names of those they designate to pick up their child or check out their child in their absence.
- Please schedule doctor and dentist **appointments outside of in-person (i.e. face-to-face) school hours** whenever possible.
- Excessive checkouts have a negative impact on student learning and produce interruptions in the instructional process of other students in the classroom. Please do not check out your child unless it is necessary.
- Excessive checkouts are addressed in the [Bland County School Board Attendance Policy](#).

"Ident-A-Kid" Computer Program

(Check-in and Out)

- Bland County Public Schools are equipped with a computer and computer program designed to enhance the safety of students coming late to school and checking out early.
- All parents, guardians, relatives, and friends designated to bring a student to school, or to check them out early, are required to do so on the "Ident-A-Kid Computer."

- ☐ The information that is housed in the computer helps BCES keep an accurate record of your child's attendance and tracks who is checking your child in/out throughout the school year.
- ☐ Once the appropriate information is entered into the computer, printers provide tardy slips and re-entry slips that the student must carry to his/her teacher.
- ☐ A photo of anyone checking a child out is housed on record in the **"Ident-A-Kid Computer."**
- ☐ Anyone who gets permission to move about the school for approved reasons must possess a visitor's pass provided in a print-out form with name and picture. You will be assisted when using the program.

Visitors: Anyone who is not a Bland County Public Schools employee or student.

- ☐ **Visitor access to the building will be restricted, please contact the main office for more information**
- ☐ All visitors will go directly to the main office to sign in, using the "Ident-A-Kid Computer Program."
- ☐ Identification tags will be provided to any parent, volunteer, or visitor approved for visiting during regular school hours.
- ☐ You are asked to return to the office to sign out and return the visitor's tag before leaving the school building.
- ☐ Students will be called to the office to converse with parents or guardians. A phone call to the office to speak with your child is preferred.
- ☐ Unauthorized persons will not be allowed to speak with students.
- ☐ Requests for non-BCES students to attend classes or ride buses will be denied.
- ☐ Former students are not allowed to visit the school during instructional hours unless approved by the principal.

Early Dismissal: Weather or Emergency

- ☐ Bland County Schools will operate on a **One-Hour Delay Schedule**, and a **Two-Hour Delay Schedule**, or may cancel school when there is inclement weather.
- ☐ This information will be communicated to you using the county's **"Schools Messenger"** system, REMIND, and/or Class Dojo.
- ☐ You may visit the Bland County School's website (<http://www.bland.k12.va.us>).
- ☐ In case of any emergency school closing, students will be transported home by buses.
- ☐ Parents who are aware of an early dismissal will follow the appropriate check-out procedures.
- ☐ You must fill out the information required on the **Personal and Emergency Data Sheet** (Green Sheet) that is included in your child's **Back to School Packet**. Please advise us of any changes that may occur throughout the school year.

Changes Regarding Transportation

WE REQUEST ALL TRANSPORTATION CHANGES BE IN WRITING AND/OR CALLED INTO THE OFFICE BY 2:00 P.M. EACH DAY.

Students who do not ride their regular bus home or will change from bus to car rider or car rider to bus rider may make transportation adjustments under the following conditions:

1. A written request from home is presented to the principal.
2. There is available room on the bus.
3. The student presents an approved bus pass from the principal to the driver of the bus that has been requested.
4. The parent speaks directly to the school secretary about the change.

Students Riding the Bus

- ☐ BCPS bus routes can be found at https://www.bland.k12.va.us/apps/news/show_news.jsp?REC_ID=518217&id=0
- ☐ Public school transportation is a privilege and not required by law.
- ☐ Students will be given an assigned seat and must sit in that seat only. Students who are living in the same household will be assigned to sit together.
- ☐ Students who do not follow bus rules may be suspended from riding the bus.
- ☐ Strict adherence to bus safety rules by the student is required at all times. The privilege of riding a school bus will be taken away if a student misbehaves or compromises the safety of others.

Bus Transportation Guidelines

Bus drivers have the responsibility of transporting students to and from school in a safe manner. **All students will be expected to follow safety rules by practicing the following:**

- ☐ What is Not Allowed to be Brought on a School Bus
 - All hazardous or illegal objects (knives, sharp objects, illegal drugs, guns, tasers, etc. are strictly prohibited on the bus.
 - Except service animals, pets and other animals are not allowed on the bus.
 - No tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs are allowed on the bus at any time.

- Waiting At the Bus Stop
 - Arrive at the bus stop three to five minutes early.
 - Stay away from the road and off private property.
 - Do not chase a school bus.
 - Wait to move toward the bus until it comes to a complete stop and the doors open.
 - Students crossing roads must do so under the direction of the bus driver and cross only in front of the bus.
- Riding the Bus
 - All rules of conduct that apply in the classroom or on school property also apply on the bus.
 - Be courteous. Do not use profanity, name-calling, or teasing.
 - Do not create any disturbance that may distract the driver's attention from his/her driving.
 - Remain seated at all times.
 - Keep hands to yourself. No objects are to be thrown on or out of the bus, and no body part is to be extended from the bus at any time.
 - Keep aisles clear, and help keep the bus clean by throwing all trash away in the proper place.
 - The emergency door is to be used only in the case of a true emergency.
 - Only handheld electronics may be used on the bus, and the volume must be set to where only the user can hear it.
 - Students may not get off the bus at an undesignated bus stop without prior arrangements and authorization from parents and the school.
- Getting Off of the Bus
 - Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before starting to unload.
 - Move away from the bus after exiting.
 - Do not attempt to retrieve dropped items anywhere close to the bus. Instead, notify the driver.
 - When crossing the road, always cross in front of the bus.
 - Look for a signal from the driver before crossing the road.
 - Check for oncoming traffic one more time before crossing the road.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

- **Conference times between parents and teachers will be mutually agreed upon and scheduled at appropriate times that do not interfere with classroom instruction.**
- Conferences may be held during the teacher's planning time, before school, or after school.
- Let us know your conferencing needs, and we will plan our time to accommodate you accordingly. Exceptions include IEP meetings, special services meetings, and outside agency meetings that are routinely scheduled during the school day.
- Unexpected interruptions in the learning process affect the minute-to-minute and hour-to-hour organization provided to individuals and groups of students by their teachers. Instructional time will not be interrupted by visits with the teacher.
- Teachers cannot be called from the classroom to take a call.
- **Conferences should be scheduled at a time when teachers can better accommodate the needs and concerns of the parents and not during morning duty time for teachers.**

Office Phone Use by Students

- Students are not to use personal communication devices to contact any individual, including parents for any reason during school operating hours. Students may, however, use the school phone when an appropriate need arises.
- Students must request to use the phone and will be supervised by the school secretary, teacher, principal, or aide.
- Messages from parents/guardians will be communicated directly to students from the office.

Money/Valuables at School

To avoid student confusion--Please put money that you give your child to use at school in an envelope marked with your child's name, teacher's name, and the purpose for its use.

- Separate checks should be written for the purchase of school insurance or pictures.
- Teachers or the school secretary will provide written receipts accordingly.
- Students should not bring valuables from home that they consider important or costly. Students should be reminded never to leave money or valuables unattended.

Crisis Management

- Bland County Elementary School has developed a crisis plan to ensure the safety of all students and staff.

- ☐ The Plan addresses procedures for school personnel and students to follow when emergencies are encountered.
- ☐ Drills used to simulate a crisis and most commonly practiced include fire, tornado, earthquake, and lockdown.
- ☐ In extreme cases of emergency, personnel, and students could be evacuated from the school and campus.

Please be mindful of the following should a crisis arise

- ☐ **Lockdown** – **No One** will be allowed **in or out** of school during a lockdown situation until Law Enforcement and the Superintendent give an “All Clear Status” to the school principal.
- ☐ Law Enforcement will direct any parent or visitor away from the area or campus should they arrive during a lockdown.
- ☐ **Communication** - Staff and parents will not contact anyone outside of their respective schools using a communication device (others do not need to be put in harm’s way or procedures compounded for Law Enforcement to carry out when trying to identify or apprehend perpetrators).
- ☐ **Evacuation** - Should personnel and students be evacuated, they will be transported to the following location: Bland County Courthouse, Bland Virginia.

Breakfast and Lunch Program

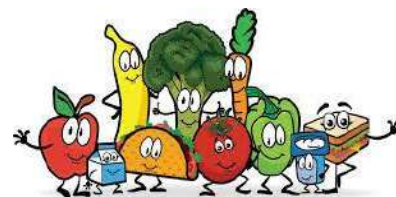
- ☒ School breakfast and lunch are free to all enrolled students during the 2023-24 school year. Any items not part of the free tray will be subject to a charge, including an additional tray. The school breakfast and lunch program is a service designed to provide nourishing meals for students.
- ☒ Every child will be issued a 5-digit number that will be used for his/her cafeteria account.
- ☒ If you want to send money weekly or daily, the money will be entered into your child’s account.
- ☒ Checks should be made payable to Bland County Elementary School.
- ☒ Parents may also make payments to their child’s account through the use of **MySchoolBucks®!** By using a credit/debit card or electronic check. (See <https://www.myschoolbucks.com/ver2/getmain?requestAction=home> for more information)
- ☒ A child will never be refused a meal for lack of money.
- ☒ **Charging is NOT allowed for EXTRAS.**
- ☐ Monthly breakfast and lunch menus will be sent home at the beginning of each month and posted both on the school website and Bland County Public Schools website.

2023-2024 Meal Prices

Elementary Student Lunch: \$ <i>free to all students</i>	Student Reduced Breakfast: \$ N/A
High School Student Lunch: \$ <i>free to all students</i>	Adult Breakfast: \$2.75
Student Reduced Lunch: \$ N/A	Adult Lunch: \$4.33
Student Breakfast: \$ <i>free to all students</i>	Extra Vegetable or Fruit: \$1.25
Entrée: \$1.75	Milk: \$0.60 Juice: \$0.55

BLAND COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS- SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAM

The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs are integral in ensuring that students have access to nutritious meals to support their academic success. It is also imperative to protect the financial stability of the school nutrition program.



- To ensure all students receive nourishment during the school day, all students will have the opportunity to receive a school breakfast and/or lunch (the reimbursable tray).
- Ala carte items will only be sold when students have cash or have a positive balance in the terminal.
- Adult meal charges are not permitted.
- This written policy will be posted on the SBO website. It will also be shared with all faculty/staff and school nutrition employees.

Cafeteria Rules

For everyone’s lunchtime enjoyment, it is important to obey the following rules:

- ✓ Each teacher will instruct their students on good eating habits, cafeteria etiquette, the proper way of going through the serving line, and how and where to return trays.
- ✓ Students will remain seated when eating.
- ✓ Students will be quiet “inside voices” during lunch.
- ✓ Students will clean up their eating area.

- ✓ Students will return trays carefully and line up orderly and quietly.
- ✓ Students are under the direct supervision of the teacher or aide attending them.
- ✓ Due to safety regulations, microwaves are not available for use in the cafeteria. Students will either need to get a tray or bring a packed lunch that does not require the use of a microwave.

Makeup Work

- It is the **responsibility of the student** to ask the teacher about the work they missed in class and about the make-up work they need to complete.
- Parents who wish to pick up a student's make-up work must do so **after school hours**.
- If work is to be picked up that day, parents are advised to call the school before dismissal and then report to the office after school hours where assignments can be picked up.

Homework

Students may have homework daily. Homework provides

- Additional practice on learned skills and additional learning of subject matter covered in class.
- Continued learning and academic enrichment opportunities, while developing good study skills and work habits.
- Parents should take an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the subject content the student is responsible for learning and comprehending in class.
- Daily homework should not be used by parents, and will not be used by teachers and the administration of BCES, for punishment or disciplinary reasons.
- If your child has difficulty with homework, please schedule a conference with his/her teacher. The parent is an effective teacher at home when they:
 - Provide suitable study conditions (desk/table, proper lighting, books, and supplies).
 - Reserve time for homework; turn the television off and the area free of other distractions.
 - Students will be given a school-home communication folder for homework to be sent back and forth between home and school.



Grading & Report Cards

- Report cards will be sent home at nine-week intervals. Parents will review their child's report card, sign it, and return the card to school the following day.
- Parents may access their child's grades on PowerSchool using the username and password that is sent home at the beginning of the year. Contact the Guidance Office for details and assistance.
<https://blandcounty.powerschool.com/public/home.html>
- Questions concerning grades or student work should be directed to the student's teacher. Parent conferences are strongly encouraged throughout the school year.

Grading Scale

A 94 – 100%
B 86 – 93%
C 78 – 85%
D 70 – 77%
F Below 70%

School Quality Profile

- Bland County Public Schools School Quality Profile may be viewed at
<https://schoolquality.virginia.gov/schools/bland-county-elementary>

Screening of Students

- Students **PreK-3** are to be screened in speech, voice, language, gross motor skills, fine motor skills, vision, and hearing 60 working days from their initial enrollment.
- All students in grades **4-6** will be screened in vision and hearing during the school year.
- If your child is suspected of having problems in these areas, you will be notified in writing.

Textbooks

- Students are responsible for their textbooks (if applicable).

- ☐ The books are the property of the school division and must be accounted for at the end of the year.
- ☐ Students should report damages to their teachers.
- ☐ Students will be charged for any books that are damaged or not returned.

One-To-One Technology (Chromebooks & iPads)

- ☐ Following BCPS' One-To-One Technology Initiative students in
 - o PreK - 6th grades will be issued Chromebooks as a learning tool.
 - o There is a yearly fee of \$20 to cover the cost of insurance on the device.
- ☐ The Chromebooks and iPads are the property of Bland County Public Schools and will be loaned to students for educational purposes only for the academic school year.

School Insurance

- ☐ Application forms for insurance will be sent home at the beginning of the school year.
- ☐ The school does not sell accident insurance.
- ☐ **Scholastic Insurers** provide envelopes to BCES that parents may use to purchase coverage directly through the mail. These envelopes are contained in your child's **Back to School Packet**. Please [click here](#) for more information.

School Pictures

- ☐ Each year the school contracts a photographic firm to take pictures of all students.
- ☐ The choice of company is based on the quality of work and a cost of savings factor.
- ☐ The company reimburses BCES with a percentage of its profits. The amount of reimbursement is deposited in the school's general fund.
- ☐ No child is required to purchase pictures.
- ☐ Occasionally, pictures taken of a school event are released to newspapers, printed in the school yearbook, or used for slide presentations.
- ☐ **Parents are provided with an opt-out form if they choose not to have their child's picture displayed publicly.**

Family Life Education

- ☐ Beginning in the 1989-90 school year, the Virginia General Assembly required that all school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia teach a Family Life Education Program. The program meets the criteria adopted by the Virginia Board of Education.
- ☐ Parents may request that their child be scheduled for the entire program or a specific section.
- ☐ An opt-out form is provided to parents who do not want their children to participate.
- ☐ The Family Life Education Objectives adopted by the Bland County School Board for use in Grades K-6 are available online.
- ☐ Forms indicating your preference for your child's participation are included in the Back to School Packet. Please complete the form and return it to your child's teacher.

Student Code of Conduct

All BCES students and their parents/guardians should review the Bland County Public Schools' Code of Conduct located within the school board policy. The BCPS Code of Conduct can be found at this link: <https://www.bland.k12.va.us/pdf/policy/SectionJ%20-%20Students.pdf> The Code of Conduct (Policies JFC & JFC-R) begins approximately on page 44 of this document. A copy of the student code of conduct is also available in the Back to School Packet.

Student Dress Code

Bland County Student Code of Conduct states that, *"Clothing should fit, be neat and clean, and conform to standards of safety, good taste and decency. Clothing that exposes cleavage, private parts, the midriff, undergarments, or that is otherwise sexually provocative is prohibited. Examples of prohibited clothing include, but are not limited to; sagging and/or low-cut pants, low-cut necklines that show cleavage, tube tops, halter tops, backless blouses or blouses with only ties in the back, clothing constructed of see-through materials..."*

Specific items/areas addressed:

- ☐ All shorts, dresses, and skirts must be no higher than five (5) inches from the kneecap.
- ☐ Ultra tight/possibly see-through Leggings, tights, Spandex, and hose, are only acceptable underneath shorts, skirts, sweaters, and shirts that come down to the 5-inch from the knee cap rule.
- ☐ Pants and slacks including denim jeans, yoga, sweat, jeggings, and workout pants must not be worn so tight that they are provocative or revealing.
- ☐ Clothing that displays promotions for illegal substances, contains inappropriate pictures, or profanity will not be worn.
- ☐ Shirts must be full-length and cover the shoulders. (No spaghetti straps) and expose the underarms.
- ☐ Holes in pants or shorts must be lower than the 5-inch from knee cap mark.
- ☐ Hats, Pajamas, school school-appropriate costumes will be allowed only on designated days. Hooded sweatshirts are permitted as long as the hood is not worn while inside the building.
- ☐ Wallet chains need to be left at home.
- ☐ All pants must be worn around the waist. (No saggy pants with underwear exposed.)

*Students, who violate the dress code, will be directed to correct the situation and parents will be notified for assistance.

General Disciplinary Procedures

- ☐ Discipline promotes order and the development of self-control and character.
- ☐ It teaches students how to be courteous, considerate of others, and mannerly.
- ☐ It shapes attitudes and is the key to good conduct and behavior.
- ☐ Failure to heed the rules imposed by those in authority and who are responsible for student conduct and safety at BCES are subject to consequences as provided in the Bland County Public Schools Code of Conduct.
- ☐ When disruptive behaviors occur, a conference will be held between the student and administrator to discuss inappropriate behavior, potential consequences if the behavior continues, and alternative forms of good behavior.
- ☐ The principal will follow policy when making decisions about disciplinary measures to use when correcting a student.
- ☐ Parents of the student involved will be notified if the principal deems it necessary. Good communication between the parent and teacher eliminates most undesirable behaviors. It is the responsibility of the teacher to keep parents informed about their children. In most cases, parent intervention will improve behavior.
- ☐ Children are instructed and encouraged to report aggressive behaviors exhibited by fellow students to an adult. We hope that intervention will prevent further aggressive behavior or violence. Parents should report their child's concerns about aggressive behaviors exhibited by students towards them to the teacher or principal.
- ☐ The rules of conduct apply before, during, and after school hours, on all properties owned by Bland County Public Schools, at school activities, en route to school activities, functions, and events, as well as within online and virtual environments, and any other time the operations and administration of the school are impacted. Please review the Code of Conduct for students of Bland County Public Schools on the Internet or pick up a hard copy at BCES.

Behavior Expectations

- ☐ BE SAFE: Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself
- ☐ BE RESPECTFUL: Treat others the way you want to be treated. Respect yourself, others, and the school environment.
- ☐ BE RESPONSIBLE: Be a good listener and follow directions. Take care of your classroom and school.

Public Displays of Affection

- ☐ Students will refrain from all public displays of affection during school hours. These include holding hands, hugging, kissing, and inappropriate touching.
- ☐ Violation of this policy will result in an office referral.
- ☐ Repeated offenses will result in an assigned consequence ranging from a phone call home to In-School Suspension.

Consequences of Inappropriate Behavior

The following are possible responses to inappropriate behavior, but others may apply.

- ☐ Conference with principal
- ☐ Conference with principal and parent/guardian

- ☐ Loss of privileges (play time, free time, etc.)
- ☐ Silent Lunch (eating without talking seated at a designated area)
- ☐ Detention/Time-out
- ☐ In-School Suspension (ISS)
- ☐ Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)
- ☐ Expulsion

Use of Personal Electronic Devices

- ☐ Students will refrain from bringing cell phones, CD players, MP-3 players, hand-held video games, etc. to school.
- ☐ Students caught with these items between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 3:45 p.m. will have them confiscated.
- ☐ All confiscated items will be turned in to the office where they will be kept until the last day of school unless a parent comes in to sign for the item.

Administration of Medications

- ☐ School personnel cannot administer any prescription medication without the expressed authorization of a physician and a parent/guardian.
- ☐ School personnel will not administer any type of medicine without parental request.
- ☐ Special forms will be filled out by a medical doctor when prescribed drugs are to be given to a student regularly. **The proper form for allowing the school to administer medication can be secured from the school nurse or the school's main office.**
- ☐ The **parent or guardian** of a student who needs to take a prescription or non-prescription medication during the school day **must bring the medication in its properly labeled bottle to the school nurse and complete the necessary permission forms.**
- ☐ The school nurse will administer all medication to students.
- ☐ For safety reasons, students shall not be allowed to bring medications to school. The only exception to this policy would be medication that a child must have with them in case of an emergency. Examples of those medications would be anaphylaxis kits for bee stings or inhalers for asthma.
- ☐ **Under no circumstances are students to have medicines in their possession.**

Personal and Emergency Data Sheets

- ☐ Emergency Information will be completed by a parent or guardian for each child enrolled in BCES. This information lists parents' home and work telephone numbers, doctors' names and numbers, and persons to contact in emergencies if parents cannot be reached.
- ☐ In medical emergencies, the school may only give first aid and must be able to contact someone who can make decisions about medical attention. When a child is sick or injured, it may be necessary to contact an adult other than his/her parent/guardian who can assume responsibility for the child. It is essential that this person is within a reasonable distance from the school and can pick the child up.
- ☐ If there are any changes in this information, parents are asked to contact the school as soon as possible.

Sex Offender Registry

- ☐ Information regarding registered sex offenders in Bland and surrounding counties can be obtained online at <http://sex-offender.vsp.virginia.gov/sor/>. This website is updated several times a week and copies of all offenders living in Bland County are kept on file in the main office.

Custody and Legal Issues

- ☐ Unless certified legal documentation (provided by the parent) is filed in the school office stating that only one parent has sole legal custody of a child, school officials cannot refuse a child to either parent.
- ☐ If joint custody is awarded by the court system, both parents have the right to be informed of student progress and school events.
- ☐ Please inform your child's teacher if both parents wish to receive this information.

Field Trips

BCES students will be provided opportunities to attend field trips as extensions of learning. Students must be in satisfactory academic standing to attend field trips that are considered extracurricular. Disciplinary infractions, academic progress, and attendance are evaluated to determine academic standing. All school rules are applicable on these

school-sponsored trips. Parents must sign a permission slip and provide insurance information before a student is eligible to attend the trips.

Birthday Celebrations/Classroom Parties

Various parties and celebrations will be conducted throughout the school year with principal approval. All plans to bring food items to school must be approved by the teacher at least one week before the event. Due to student allergies and other medical conditions, we ask that all food items brought to school for parties be pre-packaged/store-bought food items with ingredients clearly labeled. Celebrations will take place during the designated classroom snack time frame. Visitors to the classroom during these times of celebrations must check in through the main office.

Safety Drills

Fire drills will be conducted at least once a week during the first month of school and once a month thereafter. As mandated, BCES will also conduct other emergency drills including tornado, earthquake, and lockdown.

Lost and Found

Lost and found items will be kept in a designated area in the cafeteria. At the end of each month, items that have not been claimed will be donated to a local charity organization.





***Bland County Elementary School
Student and Parent
Handbook***

2023-2024

Please complete and return this page to the student's teacher.

I have reviewed the 2023-2024 Bland County Elementary School Handbook with my child which includes the Bland County Public School policy for Student Conduct.

Student's Name: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

Grade: _____

Date: _____

Parent's/Guardian's Signature: _____