

# Blue Ridge School Parent & Student Handbook



95 Bobcat Drive, Cashiers, NC 28717  
Phone (828)743-2646 Fax (828) 743-5320  
Kheri Cowan, Principal

## **MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENTS**

Blue Ridge School takes pride in the fact that we are a small community that allows us to really get to know our students and work closely with them, their families and other stakeholders in our community to provide the best learning experience possible. We believe that it takes a committed effort by all stakeholders to make a difference for our students. We encourage and value the input and participation of families and community members as we strive to provide students with a safe, caring, positive, and rigorous learning experience that will help prepare them for the challenges of school and life in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## ***Vision***

*Learning for All*

## ***Mission***

To engage, enlighten and enrich the students of Blue Ridge School.

## ***We pledge to show BOBCAT PRIDE by respecting:***

- Learning
- Property
- Others
- Myself

## ***Bus Information/Bus Routes***

Specific bus routes are available in the school office once routes are finalized for the 2022-23 school year.

On regular school days, buses arrive at school at between 7:30 am and 7:50 AM and leave school at approximately 3:05 PM each afternoon.

On Schedule B days, buses will run 2 hours later than usual and will arrive at school between 9:30 am and 10 AM.

Early dismissals due to weather will be announced through Connect Ed calls, local television and radio, the [Blue Ridge School and Early College Facebook](#) and on the [Jackson County Public Schools](#) website.

## ***Clubs and Organizations***

**Blue Ridge School PTO** is a parent-run organization that strives to unite parents and other stakeholders in support of students, faculty/staff and the school as a whole. PTO meetings will be held at least quarterly, and dates and times will be published in newsletters, on our Facebook page, school calendar, and school marquee, and will be included in weekly ConnectEd calls. We invite parents and other family members to attend.

**Battle of the Books** is offered to students in grades 6-8 and meets during the school day according to student schedules. Additional information is sent home at the beginning of the year regarding participation expectations, but may also be obtained by contacting the Media Center Coordinator.

**Junior Appalachian Musicians (JAM)** is an after-school program that teaches children about Appalachian music and traditions, in addition to teaching them to play native instruments, including the banjo, guitar, fiddle and mandolin. JAM is a community program, and information will be sent home at the beginning of the school year through our Music teacher, Sarah Hall.

**Lego Robotics** is offered to students in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades and meets after school. Students work together to complete a project and to program a robot to complete specific tasks. Information is available through our 3rd grade teacher, Mrs. Debbie Houtzer.

**Middle School Sports** are available to 6<sup>th</sup> grade students who are in good standing academically and behaviorally, and who are attending school regularly. We currently offer middle school soccer, volleyball, basketball and baseball. Students who are failing classes and/or who have excessive absences, tardiness

and/or early outs, will not be able to participate. (See the Jackson County Board of Education Policy 4400 for additional information on absences, tardiness and early outs.)

### ***Drop-Off and Pick-Up of Students***

All students who do not ride the bus should be dropped off and picked up in the front circle. *For safety reasons, no students are to be dropped off or picked up in the student lot or in the back area of the school where the buses and faculty park.* Please be sure not to block the access road to the back of the school if the line should extend beyond the actual loop. Also, for the safety of our students and those helping to open doors and load/unload children, PLEASE DO NOT USE CELL PHONES in this area.

To help keep traffic moving smoothly, we ask that students have backpacks, lunches, sports equipment and other items ready when they arrive in the drop-off area. Parents or visitors wishing to come in to drop-off or pick-up a student must park in the front lot, or vacant spots in the student lot, and check in at the front office.

### **Regular School Days**

**Students should be dropped off** no later than 7:50 AM when the first bell rings so they can make their way to the classroom and be prepared for beginning instruction at 8:00 AM. Breakfast is free for all students and begins at 7:30 AM. If your child would like breakfast, please drop them off by 7:45 AM.

**Student pick-up** will begin each afternoon at approximately 3:00 PM. Because we want to ensure the security of our students during a very busy time of the day, STUDENTS WILL NOT BE DISMISSED BETWEEN 2:40 AND 3:00 PM. Our office personnel must be available to attend to safety-related issues during that time. We encourage parents/guardians to make appointments for afterschool, however, if you must pick up your child early, please do so before 2:40 PM.

### **Schedule B (2 hour delay)**

Students should be dropped off no later than 10:00am, as classes will begin promptly at 10:00am.

### **Early Dismissal**

Early dismissal procedures are the same as regular student pick-up. Early dismissals due to weather will be announced through Connect Ed calls, local television and radio, and on the Jackson County Public Schools website. *Please make sure there is a plan in place for early dismissal, including emergency contacts on file.*

### ***Media Center***

Students in grades K-6 receive instruction weekly through our media center coordinator in computers and literature and media center resources. Teachers also have an opportunity to use the computer labs as needed for research, keyboarding, and other computer-based learning activities.

### ***Parking Information***

Visitor parking includes spaces in the front of the school and in the first parking lot on the left as you enter school grounds. Please do not park in spaces designated for school personnel. All visitors must check in at the front office.

Student parking is located in the first parking lot on the left when you enter school grounds, and parking permits may be obtained from Blue Ridge School's Resource Officer, Deputy Ashe. Faculty and staff

parking is located between the elementary and high school buildings. Because parking is limited, we ask that parents and visitors do not park in these spaces during the regular school day. After hours, parents may use both parking lots as needed.

### ***School and Classroom Visits***

Parents and other visitors should check with the front office prior to scheduling visits. Volunteer applications are available at <https://www.jcpsnc.org/>.

### ***School Day/Schedule***

*The Blue Ridge School Schedule is as follows:*

**7:30-8:00 AM** *Student Arrival and Breakfast\**—All students report to the cafeteria until the 7:50 bell.

**7:50 AM** *First Bell*—Students go to classrooms and get materials ready to begin the day

**8:00 AM** *Second Bell—School Begins.* Students are expected to be in class and ready to start the day. Attendance is taken, and the school day begins.

***It is important that parents/guardians do all they can to ensure that students are at school every day, on time, ready to begin by 7:50 AM. Students being dropped off at 8:00 AM are already late for class.***

*\*Students who need breakfast must be dropped off by 7:50 AM to ensure they get breakfast before school begins at 8:00 AM.*

### ***School Telephones***

School telephones are available in all classrooms and labs for emergencies. Parents calling students should call the front office and leave a message, which will be delivered to the student. Although students may possess cell phones, they are only permitted to have phones out with teacher permission. If an emergency arises and students must be contacted during instructional time, parents may contact the front office.

For a Full-Staff Directory use the Jackson County Public Schools website.