

Student / Parent Handbook 2017-2018

Bel Air Elementary



Home of the Bears!

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Principal: Mr. Humphrey
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WELCOME TO BEL AIR ELEMENTARY

The staff and I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of our new and returning families. We are looking forward to beginning our 2017-2018 journey. Preparing a child to thrive in today's global economy takes teamwork. Our team of dedicated teachers and support staff understand the importance of a strong collaborative effort between home and school. It takes involved parents and dedicated teachers and staff working together to ensure that every child, every day, learns at high levels.

As a staff, we will work together to ensure that we are providing educational programs that meet the needs of all of our students. We recognize that along with meeting rigorous Common Core State Standards, students must also learn the essential skills for success in today's world, such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and collaboration.

Every school year is a new beginning for all of us. For your child it means developing new skills, making new discoveries, and renewing and building friendships. We are committed to fostering your child's growth not only academically, but socially and emotionally as well.

As we embark on this new school year, we encourage you to actively participate in your child's education. Whether volunteering in a classroom, chaperoning a field trip, contributing to one of our school-wide fundraisers, or supporting your child with homework, we want you to know that you are a valued member of our learning community. We appreciate all you do for our students. This handbook is to support you and your child to successfully navigate the school year.

WE EMBRACE THE 3B'S

Be Safe 😊 Be Respectful 😊 Be Responsible

Students, families, and staff are expected to model behaviors that promote the Three Bs. Staff and students will be given opportunities throughout the year to experience how the 3 Bs translate into all areas of school life. Positive reinforcement in the form of Bear Paws will be provided to recognize and encourage the 3 Bs.

VISITORS

Parents are welcome to visit our school throughout the year. **District policy requires that all visitors report to the school office in order to secure a visitor's pass prior to each visitation.** School staff has been instructed to ask to see the pass from anyone on campus if the visitor's pass is not readily visible. If there is no pass, the visitor will be directed to the office. If you would like to talk with your child's teacher, please make an appointment for a time before or after school when you can both talk freely. Email is generally the best way to contact your child's teacher. Parents/Guardians are not allowed to interrupt class time during the school day.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Who should Volunteer? Any member of the community who enjoys and takes an interest in children. There are no educational prerequisites. Each volunteer must be TB tested and finger printed. (See Responsibilities below.) Also, please be familiar with Board Policies 1240 and 6020 as well as AR 1240 for more information regarding volunteering.

Objectives of our Volunteer Program:

- To improve education opportunities for all students by providing the teacher with classroom assistance. This provides him / her additional time to apply to the learning environment
- To provide more individual help for students by lowering the adult-student ratio
- To build a closer relationship between home and school
- To enrich the classroom environment through exposure to the personalities and talents of the volunteers
- To provide tasks and working conditions that a volunteer will enjoy and find of value

Responsibilities of a Volunteer

- All volunteers must be fingerprinted through the District Office. In order to be fingerprinted, you must show Personnel proof of a negative TB test. Call **682-8000 x4153** for an appointment. The cost to be fingerprinted is \$32.00. You will not be allowed to volunteer until your fingerprints have cleared.
- **Sign in at the office and get a volunteer sticker each time you come to volunteer!** Please remember to sign out when leaving.
- Keep confidential all matters pertaining to students, teachers and parents that may arise in the classroom.
- Be dependable and punctual. You have an important role in the classroom.
- Notify the teacher in advance if you are unable to come at your scheduled time.
- Refer parents to the teacher when parents ask about their child's progress. It is not your responsibility to evaluate a child's behavior or progress at school.

Field Trip Information:

- All field trip chaperones must be fingerprinted through the District Office. You will not be allowed to chaperone on a field trip until your fingerprints have cleared.
- Chaperones shall **NOT** bring friends or other family members on the field trip.

OBSERVATIONS

In accordance with the MDUSD Board Policy 1250, we are committed to working with our parents to ensure they have access to their child's educational program. This right is afforded to parents as long as the observations can be done in such a way that ensures the safety of all the children in the program and in a way that does not cause an undue interference in the instruction process. Our goal is to work collaboratively with parents while providing students, staff, and administration the safe and effective learning environment they deserve. **To minimize distractions to learning, observations will be kept to 30 minutes with a maximum of three observations per year unless mutually agreed upon by the principal and parent.** Please note that observers must be accompanied by the principal, vice-principal or principal's designee. Appointments may be made through the office by contacting 925-458-2606.

INTERRUPTION POLICY

Working together we will be able to keep disruptions to the classroom minimized. Incoming and outgoing messages to or from students may disrupt a student's learning. Maximizing instructional time is a top priority. You can help us eliminate unnecessary classroom interruptions by:

- Reminding your child to take their homework, musical instruments and lunch when they leave home.
- Writing a note to your child's teacher when necessary for them to leave school early. Children should be picked up in the school office where you sign them out, not at their classroom.
- When you need an appointment with a teacher, please call/email in advance to make an appointment. During the instructional day, teachers are teaching and are not available for conversation. Outside phone calls will go through to voicemail.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

A Student Emergency Card is included in the Walk-through packet. It requests location and phone number of parents' employer and name and phone number of persons to contact if parents cannot be reached. Also, please provide a doctor's name and phone number and space for additional important information. **This information needs to be updated every year.**

You, as the parent or legal guardian, are responsible for providing this emergency information to the school, as well as keeping the information updated. In case of a real medical emergency, the school will always try to contact you and then those contacts you have listed. However, if none of the contacts are successful, it will be necessary to call 911 (emergency hotline). **The family will be responsible for any costs incurred.**

Help us keep these cards current by notifying the office of any changes throughout the year. Your cooperation is necessary to make sure the school is able to provide the best possible protection, health, and welfare of your child.

ATTENDANCE – Every School Day Counts

“Regular school attendance is the foundation for student learning.” It is essential for learning and the success of your child to be in school every day. We track excused, unexcused absences and tardies

to assist us in building a strong foundation for regular attendance. For your reference please note the following:

The District states that an **EXCUSED ABSENCE** is defined as:

- Illness or injury of the student which necessitates the absence of the student. This does not include absence due to illness or injury of the parents or siblings of the student. *It refers to the student only.*
- Student attendance at a medical, dental, optometric, counseling (for mental or emotional issues) or chiropractic appointment. The appointment must be for the student, *not for any other person.*
- Student attendance at the funeral service of an immediate family member. Family member is defined as; mother, father, brother, sister, grandparent, any other relative living in the immediate household. Aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews and cousins *are not immediate family* members unless they live in the same household. Funeral excused absences are limited to no more than one day for a funeral within California and three days for a funeral outside of the State.
- To obtain required immunizations
- Exclusion from school i.e. head lice, lack of immunizations or physical examinations.
- Appearance in court
- Observance of a holiday or ceremony of his/her religion

Unexcused Absence:

All absences for any reason not included under excused absences should be defined as unexcused.

Tardy:

A student is tardy when he/she arrives at school after it has begun. An excused tardy is defined as medical, dental, optometric, counseling or chiropractic appointments. Children are encouraged to establish a habit of promptness. Students are at a disadvantage when they enter late, as they frequently miss directions given by the teacher. Students that come in late are to check into the office before going to class. Any tardy over 30 minutes is considered a truancy.

Reporting Absences:

There are no provisions under State Law for excused absences. Our district loses funding every time your child is out of school for any reason. Please call the Attendance Hotline (458-2606) before 8:00 a.m. if your child is absent. A phone verification or written note is required within 72 hours to excuse an absence. Make sure to include the following information regarding attendance: 1) Student's name, 2) Teacher or room number, 3) Reason for absence, 4) Homework if needed-a note will be given to the teacher. If attendance is not excused within 72 hours, it will be considered truant. Students will be recognized throughout the year for perfect attendance (this includes no tardies).

ARRIVAL

Adult supervision does not begin until 7:30 a.m. All students must proceed to the Multi-Use Room where they can have breakfast. A Noon Supervisor will escort the students to the blacktop at 7:45 where they will proceed to the room number, kneel or sit down and wait for their teacher to arrive.

INDEPENDENT STUDY CONTRACTS

Periodically, students have short term travel opportunities or other circumstances that prevent them from attending school. Such students may be placed on Independent Study contracts if their absence is **at least 5 days or more in length** to be approved. Upon the student's return, all assigned work must be turned in to have absences excused. Please let the office know at least two weeks in advance of absence if you are requesting an Independent Study Contract.

MAKE-UP WORK FOR CHILDREN OUT ILL

If your child has to be out of school more than one day due to illness, you may request make-up work. Please call the school office, 458-2606, before 10:00 am, and the teacher will have the work ready for pick up in the office **at the end of the second day of your child's absence**. Or you may request that the work be sent home with a "homework buddy". It is typically unrealistic for teachers to be expected to prepare work for individual children and have it ready on the same day as it is requested. Your understanding of this process is appreciated.

HOME AND HOSPITAL INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS

Our District offers a Home and Hospital instruction service. If a student's medical condition requires an absence of **three weeks or more**, parents and/or physicians may notify the school and a certificated teacher will be assigned to work out a home lesson schedule with the student's regular school and teacher. Each student is entitled to five hours of individual instructions per week during a prolonged absence. A responsible adult must be at home whenever a Home Teacher is present. There is no waiting period for home teaching. Teaching can start as soon as the family physician indicates, in writing, that the student's medical condition will require an absence of three or more weeks.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS DURING SCHOOL DAY

Children who must leave school during the school day should have a note from their parent giving the reason and time student is to be excused. If a parent is going to pick up a student, please come to the office and we will call your student to the office. At that time, you will need to sign out your student. For your child's protection, it is our policy not to release the child to anyone other than the parent/guardian or designated contacts on the emergency card. In case of illness or missing the bus, your child will not be released to anyone not designated on the Student Emergency Card. It is the parents/ guardians responsibility to add names to the contact list.

ANIMALS AT SCHOOL

Your cooperation in keeping dogs and other pets at home will aid in maintaining a safe school environment. Pet behavior may be unpredictable. It is impossible to predict what a normally docile animal will do on a playground with many children. If a student wishes to bring a small animal for study or observation, they must have permission from the teacher and/or office. Pets are to be taken home after sharing; the pet cannot remain at school.

FIELD TRIPS

During the school year, students will have opportunities to go on field trips. You will receive an Elementary School Field Trip Permission Slip from the teacher prior to the trip. Your child must turn this form in to their teacher. For the the majority of field trips, the class will take a school bus.

CLASS CELEBRATIONS

Class celebrations are held at the discretion of the teacher and are typically limited to two celebrations during the year. Teachers may provide sign up sheets so that you can contribute to the celebration. Teachers will review food policies with families. We encourage healthy snacks.

LOST AND FOUND

We encourage parents to label their child's belongings and help remind them to take responsibility for their care. Lost or unclaimed clothing is placed in the "Lost and Found" area which is kept inside the

Multi-Use Room. Small items are turned in to the office. Items not picked up will be given to charity at the Winter Break and at the End of the School Year.

BEL AIR SITE COUNCIL MEMBERS

The School Site Council (SSC) is a school site advisory committee made up of the Principal, teachers, support staff and parents. This committee is responsible for overseeing the evaluation of our school site plan (Strategic Plan). The SSC meets monthly at an open meeting at school. Parents may contact members of the SSC for more information or to provide input, or are most welcome to attend. Watch the bulletin board at the front of the school and our website for upcoming meeting dates. Parent members are elected to their position and serve two years. Elections take place in the Fall. If you are interested, please contact Diana DeRoque at deroqued@mdusd.org or call 458-2606.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ELAC)

This governing body is composed of our families who have student(s) that have English as their second language. An annual meeting will be held in October of each year to determine how they would like to be represented.

STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM (SST)

Effective teamwork between the family and school improves the quality of education for your child. As part of the general education program, our Student Success Team meets to explore ways to help students be more successful. The parent is an important member of this team. Bel Air has a CARE Team, which is a school site general education team to review students who have encountered challenges in the general education program. The team uses a systematic problem solving approach to assist students who are not making satisfactory progress academically, socially, and emotionally.

The team may organize resources, develop remediation plans, clarify issues and problems, establish accountability, and may direct referrals to other support services. Composition of the study team includes parents, and if appropriate, students. A request to have a Student Success Team meeting should be made directly to the student's teacher or principal.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI) / ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT (ELD)

Each grade level has a designated 30 minutes daily when there is no new instruction being given. During this time, students are deployed to various intervention / enrichment groups. This is in an effort to provide targeted interventions as well as enrichment opportunities for our students. Groups are flexible and students move in and out of various groups depending upon their needs.

SCIENCE/STEM FAIR

The main goal of the Science Fair is to promote individual effort in the areas of science and to establish a climate of enthusiasm for experimentation and excellence. Students third through fifth grade may enter projects. Each child will receive a recognition award for participating. Top participants are moved on to the district level Science Fair.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC For students in grades 4 and 5. Instrumental instruction includes small group lessons and lessons with the larger group. Information is sent home at the beginning of the year so that all interested students may participate.

VOCAL MUSIC All students grades 1st through 5th grade participate in Vocal music each week for 30 minutes.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

A strong school/home partnership is important to the success of our students. Communication regarding your child's academic, social and emotional growth is key. We keep you informed of your child's progress. Report cards are sent home each trimester. In addition, teachers maintain communication with parents between report card periods by means of informal progress reports, telephone calls and e-mail. All teachers can be reached via e-mail using their last name and first initial followed by @mdusd.org. A few teachers do have web sites linked to our Bel Air web site. If you have questions about your child's progress, do not hesitate to contact the teacher.

STUDENT/STAFF SAFETY

Bel Air is a safe, secure and peaceful school. It is an orderly and purposeful school where students and staff are free to teach without the threat of physical and psychological harm. A Comprehensive School Safety Plan is updated annually (or as needed) to assure practices and programs that provide student and staff safety. A positive school climate packet is also part of this handbook.

SAFETY DRILLS

Fire drills are held monthly throughout the year. Routes children are to take are discussed with students during the first few days of school. We also practice intruder, shelter-in-place, and earthquake drills. We have a site safety committee that reviews our procedures as well as conducts safety walk throughs on an annual basis. The Site Council oversees the safety plan. The safety plan can be viewed in the principal's office.

EARTHQUAKE / DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PLAN

Earthquakes and other disasters usually happen without warning. Although it is impossible to predict exactly what will happen should a major disaster occur in this area, Bel Air's staff and parents believe that an ongoing program of awareness and preparedness will do much to reduce the confusion that often accompanies such a crisis. Our policy is to develop awareness in students of the causes of earthquakes, how to prepare for them and what to do during and after a quake by engaging in practice drills and simulations. We also encourage you to work out a disaster plan at home. We identify hazards in the classroom and eliminate or minimize them. We also obtain and store supplies which might be needed in the event of a major disaster and we acquaint staff with first aid procedures.

It is imperative that the entire Bel Air community be aware of the procedures which will be followed at school should an emergency arise. During and immediately after an earthquake, the teacher or other person in authority will implement the following action:

- If indoors: Teacher and students will **STAY INSIDE** until the shaking has stopped. They will take cover under desks and or tables. When the earthquake is over, they will **LEAVE THE BUILDING** and go to an **OPEN** or **CLEAR AREA** away from buildings, utility poles and downed wires.
- If outdoors: Teacher and students will **STAY OUTSIDE**. They will immediately drop to the ground. As soon as possible they will move quickly and quietly, without running, away from buildings, trees and exposed wires.

TRAFFIC AND STUDENT SAFETY

It is imperative that we all work together to keep all "lives" safe here at Bel Air. Realizing that parking is limited and the traffic may become congested, it is a must that everyone adheres to the following:

- **Do not park in the red zones in the front of the school.**
- **During school hours, the staff parking lot is for staff only.**
- Use the crosswalks.
- **Students should be dropped off and picked up in the main parking lot. No parking is permitted in the white zones in the front of the school**
- The driver should be at the wheel at all times. Students should exit from passenger side of car near the sidewalk. After loading or unloading safely move out into the flow of traffic. If your child is not available for pick-up, please leave the area, circle and return. This inconvenience is necessary for the best interest of all.
- Most importantly, model following the law and safety procedures.
- Practice the life skills of patience, responsibility and cooperation.
- Walking is good for us all and may be an enjoyable special time with your child.

MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

The administration of medication to students may be done in **exceptional circumstances** wherein the child's health may be jeopardized without it, and when a written request using a **district authorization form** has been submitted by the parent and approved by the principal. The parent and the student's physician must sign this form.

Only medication that is required by a physician to be taken during school hours will be administered by designated school personnel. The Medical Authorization Form includes a physician verification of this requirement. All medication must be provided in the **original container** with labels listing the student's name, name and number of pharmacy, physician's name and the dosage to be administered.

Students **may not carry any medication** without consent from the doctor. All medications carried by students without consent will be confiscated and held for parents. Parents will be notified in a timely manner if such a circumstance occurs. Under no circumstances may school personnel provide aspirin or any other over-the-counter medicine to students without a completed authorization form. Medication includes aspirin, cough syrups/cough drops, etc.

NURSING

A school nurse is not available to elementary schools on a regular basis. For this reason, keeping your child's emergency card updated on file at school is crucial.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The Governing Board is committed to maintaining an educational environment that is free from harassment. The Board prohibits sexual harassment of students by other students, employees or other persons, at school or at school-sponsored or school-related activities. The Board also prohibits retaliatory behavior or action against persons who complain, testify, assist or otherwise participate in the complaint process established pursuant to this policy and the administrative regulation. Any student who feels he/she is being or has been subjected to sexual harassment shall immediately contact his/her teacher or any other employee. Please refer to MDUSD's Parent Information Packet for more details.

NONDISCRIMINATION/HARRASSMENT

District programs and activities shall be free from discrimination, including harassment, with respect to the actual or perceived ethnic group, religion, gender, color, race, ancestry, national origin, and physical or mental disability, age or sexual orientation. Any student who feels that he/she is being harassed should immediately contact the teacher or principal.

The Governing Board shall ensure equal opportunities for all students in admission and access to the educational program, guidance and counseling programs, athletic programs, testing procedures, and other activities.

The Board prohibits intimidation or harassment of any student by any employee, student or other person in the district. Staff shall be alert and immediately responsive to student conduct which may interfere with another student's ability to participate in or benefit from school services, activities or privileges.

Students who harass other students shall be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including counseling, suspension and/or expulsion. An employee who permits or engages in harassment may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

ANTI-BULLYING

The district believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. The district, schools, and community have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance and acceptance. The district will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any student. A student shall not intimidate or harass another student through words or actions. Such behavior includes direct physical contact, such as hitting or shoving, verbal assaults, such as teasing or name calling; and social isolation or manipulation. This policy applies whenever a student is on school grounds, traveling to and from school or a school sponsored activity, during the lunch period, whether on or off campus and during a school sponsored activity.

SCHOOL RULES

Students will...

1. Be safe, be respectful, be responsible.
2. Walk on campus.
3. Use appropriate language and conduct at all times.
4. Stay in designated areas.
5. Always carry a pass to leave classroom or yard.

RECESS RULES

Students will...

1. Be safe, be respectful, be responsible.
2. Eat snacks only at lunch tables.
3. Kick balls on grass.
4. Walk in designated areas.
5. Use play structure properly.
6. Never jump from play structure.
7. Use the slide one at a time, sliding down with feet first.
8. Use bars safely.

CAFETERIA RULES

Students will...

1. Be safe, be respectful, be responsible.
2. Use inside quiet voices.
3. Sit at appropriate table.
4. Allow anyone to sit next to them.
5. Keep food to self.
6. Throw trash away.
7. Raise hand and wait to be excused by supervising adult.

ASSEMBLY RULES

Students will...

1. Be safe, be respectful, be responsible.
2. Use audience manners.
3. Sit respectfully.
4. Wait for teacher to dismiss.

BATHROOM RULES

Students will...

1. Be safe, be respectful, be responsible.
2. Use inside quiet voices.
3. Flush toilets.
4. Wash hands.
5. Throw trash away.
6. Respect others' privacy.

STEPS TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- Verbal warning.
- Yard duty referral to teacher.
 - Teacher/Principal consultation.
- Yard duty referral or Citation issued.
 - Principal consultation.
 - Student Behavior Reflection form.
 - Parent(s) notified. (Parent should sign the citation and return form to school next day.)
- More serious offenses may result in district policy procedures.

POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES

- Parent(s) notified
- Benching
- "Clean Up"
- Letter of apology
- School Community service
- Counseled by the Principal
- Time out in Principal's office with reflection task
- Time Out in another classroom
- Loss of privileges
- In School Suspension
- Suspension from school

RECOGNITION

Students who demonstrate the 3 Bs and use Life Skills will be recognized throughout the school year. On the 1st Friday of every month, students will be recognized for perfect attendance and for being Safe, Respectful and Responsible. Parents / Guardian are encouraged to attend these assemblies to support and celebrate their student's accomplishments. Classroom teachers may also reinforce positive behavior with their own behavior system. Fridays, we show our school pride by wearing our school colors, blue and gold, Bear Pride Fridays.

SPECIAL GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS:

APPROPRIATE DRESS FOR SCHOOL

ALL STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO WEAR THEIR SCHOOL UNIFORM TO SCHOOL EVERYDAY (unless specified otherwise). The Governing Board believes that appropriate dress and grooming contribute to a productive learning environment. Wearing apparel should be suitable for physical education and other play activities. Girls should wear shorts under their skirts when playing on the bars.

The following are considered inappropriate and/or unsafe attire for school:

- Very tight and/or very short shorts
- Shorts should pass the “hand” test.
- Strapless tops and see-through tops without suitable undergarments. No “spaghetti” straps.
- Shoes must have a closed toe.
- Flip flops and sandals are not appropriate for safety reasons.
- Clothing, jewelry & personal items (backpacks, fanny packs, gym bags, waters bottles etc.) shall be free of writing, pictures or any other insignia which are crude, obscene, vulgar, profane or sexually suggestive, which bear drug, alcohol or tobacco company advertising, promotions and likenesses, or which advocate racial, ethnic or religious prejudice.

Each school shall allow students to wear sun-protective clothing, including but not limited to hats, for outdoor use during the school day. The Principal may determine that hats are prohibited in certain locations or areas where sun-protection is not necessary.

We trust parents’ good judgment in the matter of appropriate dress for school, and ***we appreciate your support.*** However, students who dress inappropriately will be sent home to change.

BICYCLES:

- All students must wear bicycle helmets.
- Bikes **must be walked to the bike rack** once students have entered the parking lot or the campus.
- Students with bicycles must enter through the side gates.
- Students need to **lock bicycles** in the bike area.
- Bikes may not be stored in the office.
- Students are not to be in the bike area at any time except to place bikes there when arriving or to remove them when leaving.

Skateboards, Scooters, Inline Skates (rollerblades) and Shoes with Wheels are not allowed at school. The Mt. Diablo Unified School District, based on injury statistics, has a *ban* on scooters, both motorized and non-motorized.

POSSESSION OF CELLULAR PHONES

Students may possess but not use cellular phones and other electronic signaling devices during the instructional day. The electronic signaling device must remain turned off during the instructional day. For more information, see the MDUSD Parent Handbook.

BEL AIR PARENT / TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

The Parent/Teacher Association (PTA) is an organization that helps promote the common good and general welfare of the students of Bel Air School. The PTA is non-profit, non-partisan, and encourages parent volunteerism. It is run by an executive board elected by the membership. Board and General Meetings are held monthly (except July and August). The meetings are open to all parents. The support from parents through PTA makes it possible to provide your child with a varied and enriching educational program.