



LIGHTHOUSE EDUCATION CENTER

Student/Parent Handbook

Lighthouse Education Center & ASD Programs

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Berrien RESA

Our Mission: “Optimizing student outcomes through collaboration and transformation.”

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(Revised July 2023)



BERRIEN
RESA

Lighthouse Education Center is a center-based special education facility designed to provide programs and related services to meet the educational requirements of severely emotionally impaired and autism spectrum disorder students. Sensory and self-regulation strategies are often utilized within this program. These strategies may include the use of adapted seating, proprioceptive tools such as neoprene clothing items, movement activities that involve rotation and inversion, and weighted items to assist with body feedback. Students are provided access and items are discontinued if ineffective and are not implemented when a student indicates distress or aversion.

All students are residents of local school districts within Berrien Regional Education Service Agency, and meet the educational requirements established by the state of Michigan. Lighthouse Education Center implements an organized school-wide program that emphasizes immediate positive reinforcement, personal responsibility, appropriate decision-making skills, and the development of socially acceptable behavior. The school is designed to provide Special Education programs and related services to appropriately serve severely emotionally impaired students and autism spectrum disorder students. The Lighthouse Education Center offers students the opportunity for a successful classroom experience, both behaviorally and academically. On a daily basis, students discuss their progress in the school. They continually are taught to take responsibility for their behavior and evaluate their current personal goals.

It is the ultimate goal of the program at the Lighthouse Education Center to develop in each student the skills necessary to re-enter their local school program or a less restrictive regional classroom placement. The staff and administration of the Lighthouse Education Center share in the responsibility and commitment to provide educational excellence for all our students in cooperation with the parents and citizens of Berrien County.

“Optimizing student outcomes through collaboration and transformation.”

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ACCIDENTS OR EMERGENCY ILLNESS

When a medical emergency arises, every effort will be made to contact parents, guardians, or emergency contact. The school nurse/support staff will provide first aid and determine the need for emergency medical treatment based on the nature of the event and the student’s response. If a call to 911 is placed, an authorized representative from the school will accompany the child and remain with him/her until parents/guardians arrive. Our emergency information form, filled out at the time of enrollment, serves as consent for your child to be transported by ambulance to a local medical facility of your choosing to receive emergency care.

ARMED FORCES RECRUITING

Lighthouse Education Center must provide to official armed forces recruiters at least the same access to the high school campus and student directory information as is provided to other entities offering educational or employment opportunities to those students. “Armed forces” means the armed forces of the United States and their reserve components and the United States Coast Guard.

If a student or the parent or legal guardian of a student submits the signed, written opt-out form attached to this handbook, to the Board that indicates that the student or the parent or legal guardian does not want the student’s directory information to be accessible to official recruiting representatives, then the school officials of the school shall not allow that access to the student’s directory information. The Board shall ensure that students and parents and guardians are notified of the provisions of the opportunity to deny release of Directory information. Public notice shall be given regarding the right to refuse disclosure to any or all “directory information” including in the armed forces of the United States and the service academies of the armed forces of the United States.

Annually the Board will notify male students aged eighteen (18) or older that they are required to register for the selective service.

NOTIFICATION OF ASBESTOS 2023-2024

In October of 1987, the U.S. Congress passed the Asbestos Hazardous Emergency Response Act (AHERA) of 1987. In March of 1988, the Administration approved an environmental consultant to help the district meet the new federal regulations.

Berrien RESA has been and follows all AHERA regulations. Berrien RESA Schools have continued to complete the required inspections

and have retained Villa Environmental Consultants, Inc. to both inspect and test for asbestos in accordance with the AHERA regulations. In accordance with AHERA, a management plan was developed, sent to the State of Michigan, and was approved. The management plan for all buildings can be reviewed at the Administration Building, Berrien RESA or individual building management plans can be reviewed in the office of that building.

Berrien RESA will conduct response actions and abatement actions when any asbestos material is expected to be disturbed. In accordance with AHERA regulations, Berrien RESA has been conducting six-month periodic inspections. The next three-year re-inspection of the total school system will be completed in 2025.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

State law requires attendance in school. Section 380.1561 of the Revised School Code reads, “...*the child’s parent, guardian, or other person in this state having control and charge of the child shall send that child to a public school during the entire school year from the age of 6 to the child’s sixteenth birthday. Except as otherwise provided in this section, for a child who turned age 11 on or after December 1, 2009, or a child who was age 11 before that date and enters grade 6 in 2009 or later, the child’s parent, guardian, or other person in this state having control and charge of the child shall send the child to a public school during the entire school year from the age of 6 to the child’s eighteenth birthday.*” Regular school attendance and promptness are marks of a good student and a good citizen. In school, as in other facets of life, regular attendance and punctuality are necessary for success. Erratic attendance, non-attendance, or tardiness hampers student progress and holds a student back from making the most of their ability.

Accordingly, Lighthouse Education Center's general attendance policy is as follows:

1. Adhere to Michigan law, which mandates that a parent/caregiver send their student to school for an appropriate education.
2. All student absences **must** be excused. The Board considers the following factors to be reasonable excuses for time missed at a district program:
 - a. Required court attendance
 - b. Professional appointments (doctor, dentist, etc. with doctor’s note provided)
 - c. Death in the immediate family
 - d. Observation/celebration of a bona fide religious holiday
Such other good causes as may be acceptable to the Superintendent

3. Parents/Guardians/Caregivers must notify the school when their child is absent. The Board reserves the right to require written excuses to verify excuses and to investigate the cause of prolonged absences/excessive tardiness.
4. Unexcused absences/excessive tardiness will be followed up administratively and may be reported to the Truancy Officer.

When your child will be absent, notify the school in writing or by phone at **(269) 429-2351**. Also, contact your child's transportation provider. Provide the student's **name, reason for absence, and expected date of return**. Our school Social Worker is available to help with personal or family difficulties. For students sixteen and over, parents are still responsible and must notify the school if a child is absent. For a student eighteen or over, the school will expect a parent, doctor, or responsible adult to corroborate a student's absence.

Tardiness

A.M. Tardy: If a student is brought to school after 8:45 a.m. but before 9:15 a.m. After 9:15 a.m. the student is absent for the morning.

P.M. Tardy: If a student is brought to school after 11:45 a.m. but before 12:15 p.m. After 12:15 p.m. the student is absent for the afternoon.

BULLYING AND OTHER AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy applies to all activities on school property and to all school-sponsored activities whether on or off school property.

Bullying or other aggressive behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, including Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers, is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes written, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, including hazing, gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student, which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety, or personal degradation.

Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusal to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior. This policy applies to all activities in the District, including activities on school property, in a school vehicle, and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved, or school-related activity or

function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business. Misconduct occurring outside of school may also be disciplined if it interferes with the school environment.

Bullying is defined as any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e. internet, telephone or cell phone, or wireless handheld device) that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly by substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more students; adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school district's educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress; having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student's physical or mental health; and/or causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school. Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, or a combination of all three. Some examples of bullying are: Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling; taking and/or damaging personal belongings or extorting money, blocking or impeding student movement, and unwelcome physical contact. Verbal – taunting, malicious teasing, insulting, name-calling, making threats. Psychological – spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation. This may occur in a number of different ways, including but not limited to notes, emails, social media postings, and graffiti.

Bullying and other aggressive behavior through any means, including electronically transmitted methods (e.g., internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), computer or wireless hand-held device), may be subject to District disciplinary procedures. Such behavior is considered bullying or other aggressive behavior whether it takes place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle if it is considered to have a negative impact on the school environment.

Any student that believes s/he has been/or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to the teacher, the Principal, or Supervisor of Autism, or may report it directly to Lynda Hurlow, Director of Human Resources at 269-471-7725.

HARASSMENT

Harassment is “Any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of technology, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student that:

- Is based on race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual

orientation and transgender identity), disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status ancestry, or genetic information (collectively, "Protected Classes") that are protected by Federal civil rights laws (hereinafter referred to as unlawful harassment)

- places the student in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property;
- has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits; or
- has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school."

Unlawful Harassment has to be based on a "Protected Class" and laws against "harassment" or creating a "hostile environment" are not meant to

- be a general civility code. Conduct found not to be unlawful harassment:
- Simple teasing.
- Isolated or offhand comments.
- Isolated incidents that do not rise to a level of seriousness (hostile environment) or are not based on a protected category. Some student misconduct that falls under a school's anti-bullying policy also may trigger responsibilities under one or more of the federal anti-discrimination laws enforced by the Department's Office for Civil Rights (OCR).

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Anytime you make a change of your address, telephone number, or place of work, be sure to call the office at Lighthouse Education Center at (269) 429-2351 immediately in order to make the necessary changes in our records. This basic information is extremely important for transportation and emergency purposes.

CHILD FIND

Berrien RESA is not a resident district but is a service provider for the resident school districts within Berrien County. Therefore, Child Find would come into play related to the possible change in services or eligibility on a student's IEP. This could arise from staff and/or a parent's request. All requests for an evaluation must be in writing. When any person in the district receives a written request, they must submit the request to the building administration who will then date stamp the request with the date of receipt. When a request is received, a building-level data review meeting will be held within 10 school days to outline the offer of FAPE in regard to the request.

COMMUNITY BASED INSTRUCTION / OTHER DISTRICT RELATED TRIPS

The Board of Education recognizes that field trips, when used for teaching and learning integral to a course of study or IEP, are an educationally sound and important ingredient in the instructional

program. Properly planned and executed field trips should:

- A. supplement and enrich classroom procedures by providing learning experiences in an environment outside the schools;
- B. arouse new interests among students;
- C. help students relate school experiences to the reality of the world outside of school;
- D. bring the resources of the community - natural, artistic, industrial, commercial, governmental, educational - within the student's learning experience;
- E. afford students the opportunity to study real things and real processes in their actual environment.

For purposes of this policy, a field trip can be defined as any planned journey by one or more students away from District premises, which is under the supervision of a professional staff member and an integral part of a course of study or IEP.

The Board does not endorse, support, or assume liability in any way for any staff member, volunteer, or parent of the District who takes students on trips not approved by the Superintendent. No staff member may solicit students of this District or those from a constituent local district for such trips within the facilities or on the grounds of the District or within non-district facilities used for District programs without permission of the Superintendent. Permission to solicit neither grants nor implies approval of the trip. Such approval must be obtained in accordance with the District's Administrative Guidelines for Extended Trips.

CURRICULUM

The overall goals of the curriculum are to help each child become an adequately adjusted person, to assist in reaching his/her maximum potential, and as much as possible prepare each student for transition to his/her local community after leaving Lighthouse Education Center. Lighthouse Education Center utilizes the recommended curriculum through the State of Michigan and local district requirements for graduation. Major goals and objectives are determined for each child and are reviewed annually. Parents are encouraged to assist the staff in developing the most appropriate individual goals for their child.

Parents/Guardians shall be permitted to inspect all instructional

materials used by the district. Any parent who wishes to review materials must contact the principal prior to coming to the school. Parents' rights to review teaching materials are subject to reasonable restrictions and limits.

DISCIPLINE

The Board requires each student of this District to adhere to the Code of Conduct promulgated by the administration and to submit to such disciplinary measures as are appropriately assigned for infraction of those rules. Such rules shall require that students:

- A. conform to reasonable standards of socially-acceptable behavior;
- B. respect the person and property of others;
- C. preserve the degree of order necessary to the educational program in which they are engaged;
- D. respect the rights of others;
- E. obey constituted authority and respond to those who hold that authority.

Managing student behavior has always been part of operating a classroom and dealing with disruptive students is part of that process. Lighthouse Education Center classrooms have a behavior management component that deals with day-to-day student behaviors. On occasion, an emotionally impaired/and or autistic student may, through his/her inability to reason or understand the consequences of his/her actions, engage in behaviors that may present a danger to him/her or others. The Berrien Regional Education Service Agency has developed procedures for managing these student behaviors to assist staff in crisis situations. These procedures are based upon the Cornell Crisis Therapeutic Intervention (CTCI) program and require extensive training and ongoing practice by all staff.

The major thrust of the Cornell Therapeutic Crisis Intervention program is to diffuse volatile situations through a series of steps short of physical intervention. Physical restraint is always the last response in handling crisis situations. When physical restraint is required and necessary to prevent physical injury to other students, staff, or self, a team approach is used to minimize the potential of injury or harm. Parents are notified of all such incidents, which are documented and recorded. This record of unusual behavior incidents may become the basis for developing a specific, "Behavioral Intervention Plan" for the student.

The Behavioral Intervention Plan will concentrate on developing strategies and alternatives to promote positive change in the student's attitudes and behavior with the overall goal of eliminating future crisis

situations and will be established with parent input, participation, and approval prior to the plan's implementation. A copy of all Incident Reports, the Functional Behavior Analysis, and Behavioral Intervention Plan will be provided to the parents/guardians/caregivers. The Procedures manual for managing student behavior is available at the Berrien Regional Education Service Agency and Lighthouse Education Center offices. Corporal punishment is prohibited in all behavioral management programs and educational settings operated by the Berrien Regional Education Service Agency. The following mitigating factors will be considered as part of any disciplinary proceedings:

- pupil's age
- disciplinary history;
- whether the pupil has a disability;
- the seriousness of the violation;
- whether the violation threatened the safety of any pupil or staff member;
- whether Restorative Practices will be used to address the violation; and whether a lesser intervention would properly address the behavior

DISCIPLINE LEVEL SYSTEM

Level & Definition	Level 1 Misbehaviors	Corrective/Consequences/Responses that staff may impose	Techniques to reduce behaviors / encourage behaviors
<p>Level 1 (mild) Infractions: Minor misbehaviors that can be adequately corrected at the time and in the setting in which they occur.</p> <p>**Does not require formal documentation ; however, record the behavior on your class behavior chart.</p> <p>**Any staff observing this behavior can and should correct it in the setting.</p>	<p><u>Level 1 Misbehaviors:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not completing class work ● Talking back/disrespectful ● Running in school ● Tattling ● Horseplay ● Failure to obey staff/employer ● Hiding in classroom ● Sleeping in class ● Inappropriate/profane gestures ● Profanity or vulgarity towards staff or peers ● Name calling ● Inappropriate drawings/writings ● Off task ● Teasing (isolated) ● Disrespectful gestures (ie: eye rolling) ● Crawling/rolling on floor ● Pencil tapping ● Throwing objects (no safety concern) ● Cheating ● Cussing (isolated) ● Disruptive noise making ● Excessive talking/noises ● Spitting ● Leaving area in room ● Not keeping hands/feet to self ● Spreading rumors/gossip ● Inappropriate sexual behavior/harassment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apologizing ● Gentle verbal reprimand ● Use distractors ● Proximity correction ● Keep a record of behavior (if repeated) ● Contact parents ● Use planned ignoring, when appropriate ● Consequences owed through teacher behavior system ● Student does not earn preferred activity ● Re-assign to alternate location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Model and reinforce correct behavior ● Teach/re-teach expectations in particular setting ● Teach peers to ignore attention seeking behavior <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Actively engage the student ● Utilize LSI ● Remember 3:1 ratio of positive to negative interactions (ie: make 3 positive comments for every corrective comment: greet students, specific praise, smile) ● Group rewards ● Reflect on your relationship with the student, how you can make a connection.

****NOTE:** These guidelines were developed as guidance to the protocol when dealing with behavior. The severity of the disability will require modifications to the above plan. Baseline behavior should be taken into consideration as well.

DISCIPLINE LEVEL SYSTEM

Level & Definition	Level 2 Misbehaviors	Corrective/Consequences/Responses that staff may impose	Techniques to reduce behaviors / encourage behaviors
<p><u>Level 2 (moderate) Infractions:</u> Does not require immediate administrative involvement</p> <p>**Does require staff who witnessed the incident, to document the incident, using Behavior Incident Report to be sent to the office the same day.</p> <p>**Caseload Teacher to contact a parent. Reporting staff must share information regarding the incident with the Caseload Teacher.</p> <p>**FBA may be required at this time based on the potential for repeat behavior.</p>	<p><u>Level 2 Misbehaviors:</u> ● Repeated Level 1 infractions</p> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Physical assault ● Stealing ● Damaging property ● Bullying ● Inappropriate sexual behavior ● Inappropriate sexual/racial comments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apologizing ● Call or send a letter to parents ● Continue Level 1 consequences that have not yet been implemented ● Additional Behavior Incident Report Form, the administration will return a copy to caseload teacher informing him/her of administrative response to situation ● For students with Individual Behavior Plans, follow their plan ● Administration and special education teachers to collaborate for consequences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community service ● Restoring emotional or material loss ● Counseling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue positive reinforcement strategies from Level 1 ● Consider behavior improvement plan/behavior contract with student ● Consider collaboration with support staff to determine if additional strategies can be implemented

****NOTE:** These guidelines were developed as guidance to the protocol when dealing with behavior. The severity of the disability will require modifications to the above plan.

DISCIPLINE LEVEL SYSTEM

Level & Definition	Level 3 Misbehaviors	Corrective/Consequences / Responses that staff may impose	Techniques to reduce behaviors / encourage behaviors
<p><u>Level 3 (Severe) Infractions:</u> Serious safety violations that require immediate administrative involvement. Student brought to office with complete Behavior Incident Report Form.</p> <p>**Caseload Teacher contact parent/guardian. Reporting to review the incident with Caseload Teacher.</p> <p>**Written documentation required, using Behavior Incident Report Form.</p>	<p><u>Level 2 Misbehaviors:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presence of weapons or dangerous instruments ● Inappropriate sexual behavior (severe) ● Threat of harm to self or others ● Physical aggression ● Bullying (severe) ● Leaving building/campus (out of restricted area) ● Fighting involving immediate injury ● Illegal drugs/alcohol/ Possession/Use ● Student is a MAJOR disruption in the learning environment (ie: another adult intervention and redirection prolonged/ severe disruption continues) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apologizing ● Complete Behavior Incident Report Form and escort student to the office ● Call administration/ office if a student refuses to go, or if immediate assistance is needed in maintaining the safety of students and staff ● Call Cornell 1 or 2 when safety of self or others is imminent ● Behavior Team meeting may be necessary ● Administration will implement aforementioned consequences or others, including but not limited to suspension. ● Suspension of a student will result in a Manifestation Determination meeting. ● Copies of the Behavior Incident Report will be distributed to appropriate staff after the incident. ● Require restitution (ie: restoring; repairing damage done) ● Police report for purposeful assault on staff/student. ● Community service ● Restoring emotional or material loss ● Counseling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implementation of a behavior support plan may be necessary. ● On-going consultation with support staff and administration. ● Mental health services may also be considered.

****NOTE:** These guidelines were developed as guidance to the protocol when dealing with behavior. The severity of the disability will require modifications to the above plan.

DRUG, INHALANTS, TOBACCO, AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

A student shall not sell, possess, use, purchase, deliver or be under the influence of any drug, inhalant, alcohol, tobacco, or other controlled substance defined in the Controlled Substances Act of 1971, being MCL 335.301 et seq. and as defined in other Michigan or Federal Statutes, while on school grounds, or off school grounds at a school activity, function or event. Depending upon the age of the student and the seriousness of the offense, any or all of the following options will be administered: Parent contact, parent conference, police contact, referral to the health department, recommendation to attend health department counseling sessions, involve family with Berrien Substance Abuse Agency, referrals to other agencies as appropriate and possible reconsideration of program placement and discipline up to and including expulsion.

ENROLLMENT

All students entering Lighthouse Education Center must meet the requirements of Michigan Special Education Rules. An Individualized Education Planning Committee (IEPC) meeting is held to determine eligibility, students' needs, appropriate program, and placement alternatives. Committee members include the parents, Lighthouse Education Center administrator, local district representative, MET representative, teacher(s), and ancillary staff/therapist/parent representatives as needed. If Lighthouse is determined to be the appropriate placement alternative, the parents/guardians then complete a series of building enrollment forms including basic student data, transportation form, application for school lunch, etc. In addition, the school will need the student's health appraisal, immunization records, various permissions, and a release of records request. The resident district will verify the birth certificate and residency at enrollment. The office staff is available to assist parents/guardians through this enrollment process.

EXIT OUTCOMES/LEARNER GOALS

- Physical: Demonstrate skills necessary to develop and maintain optimal health and physical well-being.
- Cognitive: Demonstrate functional skills in the areas of problem-solving, perception, and academics.
- Social/Emotional: Demonstrate socially acceptable behavior to

allow participation in a variety of settings, which will promote positive self-esteem.

- Daily Living Skills: Demonstrate skills, which promote optimal independence in domestic and personal care.
- Vocational: Have experience in a variety of work environments and demonstrate skills and behaviors conducive to acquiring and maintaining meaningful work.
- Community: Will participate in a variety of community services and utilize its resources.
- Communication: Express and share personal needs, ideas, and interests, which will promote self-advocacy and interpersonal relationships.
- Leisure/recreation: Able to recognize leisure time and engage in age-appropriate activities in group, individual, and community settings.

All learner outcomes are monitored on a continuing basis and are adjusted to meet individual students' needs. Parents are informed of their child's progress through regularly scheduled parent conferences, teacher contacts, annual reviews, and specific conferences established by parent or teacher request.

EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR

Extended School Year (ESY) must be considered for every student with a disability at each IEP meeting. ESY services must be provided if the IEP team determines that such services are necessary for the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). During the IEP, the team must consider the following question:

Is there one or more annual goals where significant concerns exist regarding skill maintenance during a break in service?

If no, ESY is not needed for a FAPE. If yes, further discussion must be held for each goal area of concern. The determination of ESY must be based on data. During the IEP, the team must consider the following three areas:

1. **Regression/Recoupment**: Substantial regression in critical skills as a result of an interruption of instruction. The student will likely require significant time to recoup lost skills.
2. **Nature and/or Severity of Disability**: The nature or severity of the student's disability is expected to require a longer school year for the student to prevent regression, recoup lost skills, and/or attain the goal of self-sufficiency and independence from caregivers.
3. **Critical Stages/Areas of Learning**: An extended break in instruction at this stage will jeopardize this student's critical

skill

development. This student will suffer a significant loss of skills, behavior, or opportunities in an area deemed to be crucial to reaching the ultimate goal of independence.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that requires the school district, with certain exceptions, to obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's educational records. Each year the District will provide a public notice to students and their parents of its intent to make available, upon request, certain information known as "directory information".

The Board designates as "directory information" the following information about students: name, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, height, if a member of an athletic team, weight, if a member of an athletic team which requires disclosure to participate, grade level, and date of actual or expected graduation, awards or honors received, photographs, videos of students participating in school activities, events or programs.

The Board will make the above information available upon a legitimate request unless a parent, guardian, or adult student has opted out of the provision of this information in some or all circumstances by filling out, signing, and returning the Opt-Out Form (Located in parent/student handbook) within 30 days from the start of the current school year that s/he will not permit distribution of any or all such information. Directory information will not be provided to any organization for any profit-making purposes.

Two federal laws require school districts that receive assistance under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three Directory Information categories – names, addresses, and telephone listings – unless parents have notified the district that they do not want their child's information disclosed without their prior written consent. If you do not want the district to disclose Directory Information about your child without your prior written consent, you must complete the "Opt-Out Form" located at the back of this handbook.

FIRE/TORNADO/LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES

Michigan law dictates that public schools conduct emergency drills during the school year and the summer school/extended school year. Accordingly, fire, tornado, and lockdown drills are held periodically throughout the year so that our staff and students are prepared in case of an emergency. Every precaution is taken to ensure the safety of the students. Should a tornado be sighted, the school is notified by the Office of Emergency Preparedness from the Berrien County Sheriff's Department and proper action is taken for the safety of the students and personnel. Students will not be released from school until we are notified that it is safe. It is important that we keep our lines clear to receive incoming messages. **PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL FOR INFORMATION DURING A TORNADO THREAT.** In the event an emergency evacuation should occur, Lighthouse will prepare a one (1) day's supply of medications that are maintained in an emergency kit. These kits will be kept up-to-date with any changes throughout the school year.

FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

Berrien RESA Food Service Department is dedicated to providing healthy meals to all students according to the federal guidelines. Breakfast and lunch are available to ALL students. The meal is planned to meet the requirements of nutrition and quality established by the Federal Government.

In the event of a 2-hour delay, breakfast will not be served. Lunch will be provided at the regularly scheduled time. Milk is included with all meals. Students who bring lunch from home will have to pay \$0.65 for milk if it is wanted. Please send the necessary milk money in a sealed envelope marked with the student's name and the amount of money enclosed.

Berrien RESA participates in CEP (Community Eligibility Provision) which provides FREE school meals to ALL students, regardless of their income. This will continue until 2027. CEP promotes equity by ensuring all children have equal access to nutritious meals, eliminating out-of-pocket meal costs for families. CEP improves student attendance and improves test scores. Families still need to fill out the Education Benefit Form. This form provides the district with information for funding of education programs that our students need. It also collects information needed to ensure the school receives state and federal funding for these programs.

Adult Meals are \$5.25

If you have any questions, contact the Food Service Department at (269) 473-2600, Ext. 2304. ****If your child is allergic to certain foods or other substances, please have your physician complete the “Special Diet Statement” form in your enrollment form packet or request it from the office.**

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

For all other FNS nutrition assistance programs, State or local agencies, and their subrecipients, must post the following Nondiscrimination Statement:

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, and reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible State or local Agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information is available in languages other than English. To file a complaint alleging discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866)632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
Fax: (202)690-7442; or
Email: program.intake@usda.gov

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

Introduction

As a public body under the Freedom of Information Act, the District has developed procedures and guidelines to implement and assure compliance with FOIA. The District has also created the following written public summary of the specific procedures and guidelines explaining how to submit written requests to the District and how to understand the District's written responses, deposit requirements, fee calculations, and avenues for challenge and appeal.

How to Submit Written Requests

FOIA requests must be submitted in writing to the District. The request can be sent by email or mail to:

Email: chris.machiniak@berrienresa.org

Berrien RESA

Attn: FOIA Coordinator

P.O. Box 364

Berrien Springs, MI 49103

Requests must sufficiently describe a public record so as to enable the District to find it. Requests should also include a contact telephone number to allow a District employee to make contact to resolve issues, clarify the scope of a request or help identify a specific document containing the information sought.

How to Understand the District's Written Responses to FOIA Requests

The District must respond to a FOIA request within five business days. In some cases, the District may extend the time period by 10 business days to fulfill a request completely. A response does not necessarily mean the records are provided within five days.

The District can grant the FOIA request, deny the request, or grant it in part and deny it in part. Fees are calculated according to the District's FOIA procedures and guidelines and documented in a detailed fee itemization form. The fee must be paid before a public record is made available. And, in some cases, the District will require a good-faith deposit before it processes a public records request.

If the request is denied, the District will provide the basis for its denial in a written notice. The District will also provide notice of an individual's rights to appeal the denial to the Board of Education and/or to file a

lawsuit against the District in circuit court.

Deposit Requirements

The District will require a good-faith deposit from a requestor before processing a public records request if the entire fee estimate or charge exceeds \$50, based on a good-faith calculation of the total fee. The deposit will not exceed one-half of the total estimated fee as identified in a detailed fee itemization. The District's response shall also include a best efforts and good-faith nonbinding estimate regarding the time frame it will take the District to comply with FOIA in providing the public records to the requestor. If the total amount charged in a previous records request has not been paid in full, the District may require a deposit of up to 100 percent of the estimated fee before processing a subsequent public records request.

Fee Calculations

The District may charge a fee for a public records search, for the necessary copying of public records for inspection, or for providing a copy of a public record under the District's procedures and guidelines. The fee shall be limited to actual mailing costs, and to the actual incremental cost of duplication or publication including labor, the cost of search, examination, review, and the deletion and separation of exempt from nonexempt information. Labor costs shall be estimated and charged in increments of 15 minutes in most cases, with all partial time increments rounded down. The District shall not charge for the cost of search, examination, review, and the deletion and separation of exempt from nonexempt information unless the failure to charge a fee would result in an unreasonably high cost to the District because of the nature of the requests in the particular instance. Under such circumstances, the District shall specifically identify the nature of the unreasonably high costs. The first \$20 of a fee will be waived if a requestor submits an affidavit of indigency. The requestor must include a statement that the request is not being made in conjunction with outside parties in exchange for payment or other remuneration.

Avenues for Challenge and Appeal

If the District charges a fee that an individual thinks is too high, or denies all or part of a public records request, the requestor may submit to the District Board of Education a written appeal that specifically states the word "appeal" and identifies the basis for which the fee should be reduced or the nondisclosure determination should be reversed. Written appeals may be sent to the email or mailing address listed above and will be forwarded to the Board of Education or the Superintendent for scheduling on the agenda of the next Board meeting. Additionally, the requestor may pursue a fee reduction or appeal the denial by commencing a civil action in circuit court.

More Information

This is only a summary of the FOIA procedures and guidelines. For more details and information, copies of the District's FOIA Procedures and Guidelines are available at no charge at the District's central office and on the [District's website](http://www.berrienresa.org): www.berrienresa.org.

FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENT (FBA)

A Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) is a process that identifies specific target behavior, the purpose of the behavior, and what factors maintain the behavior which interferes with the student's educational progress.

Indirect FBA Process

The Indirect FBA focuses on using simple verbal or written interviews with teachers, the student, and others involved in the target behavior. In the interview process, the target behavior, the circumstances that support the behavior, and the function of the behavior are identified. Based on this information, a hypothesis can be developed, and a written plan can be formulated by the team. Follow-up interviews or other data (e.g. disciplinary referrals, attendance records, etc.) can be used to determine the success of the intervention or if a more comprehensive Direct FBA needs to occur.

Direct FBA Process

The Direct FBA is a comprehensive assessment process that is appropriate when the target behavior is severe in duration, frequency, and intensity and/or is complex and deeply ingrained in the student's behavior patterns. The process is also appropriate when critical decisions are being made in regard to verifying a disability, making placement decisions, or choosing intervention methods that are intensive or intrusive.

GRADING PERIOD/PROGRESS REPORTS

Students shall receive a report card/progress report at the end of each 9-week period indicating their progress for that portion of the academic term. The progress report indicates the extent to which the student has acquired the necessary learning goals outlined for 1 year at their individualized educational planning committee (IEP).

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

Parents should contact the school administration regarding

procedures for homebound instruction due to a medical condition. The District will provide homebound instruction only for those confinements expected to last at least five (5) consecutive school days.

Homebound instruction requires notification to be made by a physician who is either an M.D. or a D.O. or a licensed physician's assistant, hospital, or licensed treatment facility. A physician must: certify the nature and existence of a medical condition; state the probable duration of the confinement; request such instruction; present evidence of the student's ability to participate in an educational program.

HOMELESS

Children who are identified as meeting the Federal definition of "homeless" will be provided free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the same manner as all other students of the District. To that end, homeless students will not be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless. The District shall establish safeguards that protect homeless students from discrimination on the basis of their homelessness. The District shall regularly review and revise its policies, including school discipline policies that may impact homeless students, including those who may be a member of any of the Protected Classes.

Homeless children and youth are defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and include children and youth who meet any of the following criteria:

- A. share the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason
- B. live in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to a lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- C. live in emergency or transitional shelters
- D. are abandoned in hospitals
- E. have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, or
- F. live in a car, park, public space, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train station, or similar setting

Pursuant to the McKinney-Vento Act, an unaccompanied youth includes a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

A student who is in Foster Care: If a child who is under probate court jurisdiction and/or is under the care and responsibility of a child welfare agency is placed in foster care, the child will be permitted to enroll in

and attend the appropriate grade in the school selected by the department of human services or a child-placing agency without regard to whether or not the child is residing in the district.

HOMEWORK

Students' progress reports will reflect the completion of Individualized Education Program goals/objectives. Homework is also part of the student's education and reinforces the skills they are working to achieve. Homework will not generally be used for disciplinary reasons but only to enhance the student's learning.

LOCKER/STORAGE CUBICLES

There are no privacy expectations in school lockers/cubicles or its contents. The principal or designee may search lockers/cubicles or contents. Law enforcement agencies may assist.

LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found area is in the Lighthouse Education Center office. Students who have lost items should check there and may retrieve their items if they give a proper description. Unclaimed items will be given to charity at the close of the school year.

MANDATED REPORTING

Michigan Child Protection Law requires certain professionals to report their suspicions of child abuse or neglect to Children's Protective Services (CPS) and/or Adult Protective Services (APS) at the Department of Human Services (DHS). These people are mandated reporters and have established relationships with children based on their profession. Mandated reporters include the following school personnel: Administrators, Nurses, Social Workers, Teachers, Psychologists, Therapists, and transportation personnel. All employees in a public school system are mandated reporters.

NONDISCRIMINATION

The Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry, genetic information or any other legally protected category, (collectively, "Protected classes"), in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities.

NURSING

Communicable Diseases

Lighthouse Education Center is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for the students and employees. Communicable diseases must be reported to the school nurse, who will file the required report with the Berrien County Health Department. Please inform the nurse if your child has been diagnosed or is suspected to have any of the common communicable diseases listed below.

Our nursing staff provides health checks on students that appear to be ill through symptoms and/or behavior. Students who are found to have a fever of 100.4° or greater, vomiting, diarrhea (2x or more), or those too sick to have a meaningful school interaction will be excluded for a minimum of 24 hours from symptom onset. Students suspected of having any contagious illness will be isolated from the classroom and parents/caregivers will be advised to come and remove them from school. Exclusion and limited contact improve the safety of students and staff. It is important to have a plan of action available to provide alternative care during the school day if the need should arise.

Please do not send your child to school if he/she has a fever, cold, bad cough, frequent draining from nose, eyes, or ears, flu, stomach/intestinal upset, or any contagious disease, or any illness that would prevent them from being able to fully engage in educational activities during the school day. Upon the discretion of the program supervisor, in consultation with the school nurse, a doctor's permit may be required before a child may return to school.

Disease	May Return	Approximate Recovery Time
Cold Sores	No exclusion, if drainage can be contained	Varies – 4 – 10 days depending on severity
Cold Symptoms	Reduction of cough & runny nose, no fever	Depending on condition; 1-6 days

Chicken Pox	No new eruptions All pox dry & crusted	Depending on condition or fever, may have old scabs
Diarrhea, non-specific, A. Roto virus and B. most salmonella all other types	A. Permission from Health Dept. B. Excluded when diarrhea cannot be contained or presence of fever	Varies
Fifth Disease (erythema infectiosum)	No exclusion, if no fever	Varies – from 4 days to several weeks
Hand-Foot-Mouth Disease	No exclusion, if lesions are not draining	Generally, several weeks
Hepatitis	Doctor note	Several weeks or longer
Impetigo	24 hours of antibiotic treatment, no fever	Varies
Measles (Rubella)	Doctor note	4-8 days
Measles (Rubeola)	Doctor note	Minimum of 4 days after appearance of rash

Mononucleosis	Doctor note	Varies
Mumps	Doctor note	When swelling and fever are gone

A. Pediculosis * B. Scabies (Head & Body Lice)	A. 24 hrs. after treatment with nurses clearance B. Doctor note	Varies, may require repeated treatment
Pertussis (whooping cough)	Doctor note	6-10 weeks average; can last weeks to months.
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	Nurse's clearance.	Varies
Ringworm	Nurse's clearance.	Varies
Strep infection A. Scarlet fever B. Strep throat	Doctor note (typically 24 hrs. after treatment has begun and no fever present)	Varies
Tuberculosis	Doctor note	Varies
Upper respiratory infection	Varies by diagnosis	

**Head lice are a common problem all schools face especially in the spring and fall. The School Nurse will work with the families that are in need of treatment for their student(s) once identified.*

In the event of communicable diseases that are more serious in nature, Board Policy will be followed regarding school attendance/closings.

Return to school after medical hold/Hospitalization

A medical hold can be used prior to a student's return to make sure staff have a plan in place for a successful transition back to school. Medical holds are put in place by program supervisors in collaboration with the school nurse. This could be following an extended illness, medical procedure, hospitalization, or extenuating circumstances.

Paperwork for returning to school after a medical hold/hospitalization must be received by the school no later than 1:00 pm for review.

Parents will be contacted by the school to discuss student return.

In the event of communicable diseases that are more serious in nature, Board Policy will be followed regarding school attendance/closings.

COVID-19

Berrien RESA holds the health and safety of students and their families as a top priority. It is now more important than ever that parents monitor newsletters and other informative materials coming home with their students that may contain updates on critical changes to healthcare and the school environment. Health professionals at Berrien RESA are working daily to monitor recommended changes to the way we handle illness in the school setting so that we have the most current information available to keep everyone safe and healthy. If you have any questions related to COVID-19, feel as if you or your student may have been exposed, have symptoms, or have tested positive please call the School Nurse's Office immediately at 269-473-2600 X-2525 for detailed guidance. We appreciate everyone's assistance and patience during these uncertain times.

Immunizations

Michigan law requires all students to submit a signed statement by a physician that they have been properly immunized. When you receive the letter requesting the most current immunization record, please send it to the school as soon as possible. This proof of immunization may be a signed document from your private physician or Health Department Clinic, which includes the vaccine name and month/year of each dose. Your child must be as up-to-date as possible toward completing the immunization series.

Medication

Please keep us informed of any health problems (new or changing) and let the school nurse know if your child is taking **any medication. All medication shall be kept in a labeled container as prepared by a pharmacy, physician, or pharmaceutical company with the pupil's name, the name of the medication, dosage, and the frequency of administration. Please note:** All medication administered through Berrien RESA programs must be approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Substances currently not regulated by the FDA include most dietary supplements, vitamins, minerals, herbs, and essential oils. All students that require the use of **physician-prescribed** medications (including prescription, **over-the-counter**, emergency, and/or feedings), devices, and durable medical equipment for chronic medical conditions, must complete the appropriate medication administration forms (signed by parent and

physician). The school nurse will review these forms and create a care plan to ensure the child's safety during transport and while at school.

The nurse will work closely with parents/guardians and physicians so your student's health care plan can be modified as changes in their health conditions warrant. The appropriate forms must be updated and signed by the parent/guardian and physician prior to implementation in the school setting.

We appreciate your cooperation and open communication regarding your child's medical needs.

To contact the school nurses please call 269-429-2351 or email them at priscila.jardine@berrienresa.org.

OFF-SITE PROGRAMS

Lighthouse Education Center operates some offsite programs throughout the county. In general, the information in this handbook applies to the off-site program. There may be some minor differences in starting/ ending times, lunch times, etc., to accommodate integration in regular school buildings and community site location schedules. **The local district handbook takes priority for the off-site classroom. Please refer to your student's program calendar.**

ONE- OR TWO-WAY AUDIO COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Parents and students are expressly prohibited from using covert means to listen-in or make a recording (audio or video) of any meeting or activity at school. This includes placing recording devices, or other devices with one or two-way audio communication technology (i.e. technology that allows a person off-site to listen to live conversations and sounds taking place in the location where the device is located), within a student's book bag, on the student's person or otherwise in an area capable of listening in or recording without the express written consent of the Superintendent. Any requests to place a recording device or other device with one- or two-way audio communication technology within a student's book bag or on a student's person shall be submitted, in writing, to the Principal. The District representative shall notify the parent(s), in writing, whether such request is denied or granted within five (5) days.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parent Conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring of each school year. Please consult your school calendar for the exact dates. In addition to the regularly scheduled parent conferences, annual IEPs

are also convened for each student to review goals, progress, program services, and any necessary revisions. Further, Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team meetings are convened for any student who is scheduled prior to the mandated three-year psychological reevaluation. Every effort is made to combine these conferences/meetings, as they are extremely important to the progress your child makes in school.

Parents and teachers are urged to request a conference anytime during the year as questions, concerns, or special situations arise. We strongly believe that student progress can be maximized, and problems minimized with parents and teachers working closely together.

2023-2024 PESTICIDE ADVISORY

Berrien RESA has adopted an Integrated Pest Management program. Inherent with this are Berrien RESA's efforts to reduce pesticide use as much as possible. While it may occasionally be necessary to apply a pesticide, this program **does not** rely on routine pesticide applications to resolve problems. We use various techniques such as habitat alteration, sanitation, mechanical means, exclusion, etc. to prevent pests from becoming a problem.

As required by Michigan law, you will receive advanced notice of non-emergency application of a pesticide (insecticide, fungicide, or herbicide), other than bait or gel formulation, which is made to the school, school grounds, or buildings. This advance notice of a pesticide application will be given 48 hours before the application by the following two methods:

1. Posting at the primary entrances to your child's school. The entrances that will be posted are the main entrance and those that have a sidewalk that leads directly to a parking lot.
2. Posting in the common area located by the main office of the school.

Please note that notification is not given for the use of sanitizers, germicides, disinfectants, or anti-microbial cleaners. In certain emergencies, such as an infestation of stinging insects, pesticides may be applied without prior notice to prevent injury to students, but you will be promptly notified following any such application, via the two posting methods identified (above).

You may review the school's Integrated Pest Management program and records of any pesticide application upon request by contacting Troy Boone, at 269-471-7725 ext. 3221 or troy.boone@berrienresa.org.

Parents or guardians of children attending the school are also entitled

to receive the advance notice of a pesticide application, other than a bait or gel formulation, by first class United States mail postmarked at least 3 days before the application, if they so request. If you would like to be notified by mail please contact the Facilities and Operations Department at 269- 471-7725, Ext. 3221. Please give your name, mailing address, and what school(s) your child or children attend and they will put your name on the advance.

PHYSICAL/VERBAL/CRIMINAL SEXUAL ASSAULT

Physical assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor which may or may not cause injury, may result in charges being filed, and subject the student to expulsion. Physical assault is defined as “intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.”

Verbal assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor or making bomb threats or similar threats directed at school buildings, property, or a school-related activity will be considered verbal assault. Verbal threats or assault may result in suspension and expulsion. Verbal assault is a communicated intent to inflict physical or other harm on another person, with a present intent and ability to act on the threat.

"At school" means in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises.

“Under state law, the District **may** suspend up through permanent expulsion of a student who commits Criminal Sexual Conduct (CSC) with another District student, **regardless of location** (on or off school property). The District **shall** suspend or permanently expel a student who is convicted, by plea or adjudication, of CSC with another District student.” Mandate kicks in only after there has been a Court proceeding and adjudication – which could be months later.

If a student is convicted of CSC against another student in the District, the Court (not the District) shall order that the convicted student not attend school in the same building as the victim.

Remember: School District is NOT a party to the Order or PPO. The parties to the proceeding, not the school, are responsible for complying with any Order from the Court.

POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS (PBIS)

The district will utilize Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to enhance academic and social behavior outcomes for all students. PBIS implemented by the District will include socially valued and measurable outcomes, empirically validated and practical practices, systems that efficiently and effectively support the implementation of these practices, and continuous collection and use of data for decision-making.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

'Restorative Practice' means practices that emphasize repairing the harm to the victim and the school community caused by a student's misconduct. The school will consider restorative practices to remediate offenses such as: interpersonal conflicts, bullying, verbal and physical conflicts, and harassment and cyberbullying – before imposing discipline under this policy. Such practices include, but are not limited to, victim/offender conferences that are initiated by the victim (and approved by the victim's parents or legal guardian), are attended by the victim, a victim advocate, the offender, members of the school community and supporters of the victim and offender. This is the "restorative justice team." The purpose of the conference is for the offender to accept responsibility for the harm caused to those affected, and to participate in setting consequences to repair the harm.

Outcomes of restorative practices:

- An opportunity for the offender to accept responsibility for the harm caused to those affected, and to participate in setting consequences to repair the harm, such as any combination of: apologizing;
- Participating in community service,
- Restoring emotional or material losses, or counseling;
- Paying restitution

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Students attending Lighthouse Education Center may attend activities in their local school district of residence or charter school. Please contact the appropriate school office or check their web page for activities and events for your child. The student may also participate on athletic teams, but eligibility requirements established by the local district must be followed.

SCHOOL CLOSING/TWO (2) HOUR-DELAY

In case of extenuating circumstances, it may be necessary to cancel/delay school. Listen to the following Radio/TV stations:

FM Radio Stations: 94.3, 97.5, 101.5, 103.7, 99.9, 98.3, 94.9, 96.1, 107.1

TV Stations: WNDU – NBC 16, WSBT CBS 22, ABC TV – ABC 57

If Berrien RESA is closed, your child does not have school and the bus will not pick him/her up. If there is a 2-hour delay, the school start time for students will be 10:30 am. Buses should arrive two hours later than your original pick-up times. Dismissal will still be 3:00 pm.

If the district where you reside is closed/delayed, transportation may make a reasonable attempt to safely travel through the closed district to pick up your student. Parents are responsible for knowing of emergency closings and delays.

Off-site classrooms located in local districts will close when the district where the classroom is located closes due to weather conditions only.

SCHOOL HOURS

The students' school day is from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Dismissal for half-days is at 11:30 a.m.

ASD / EI offsite classrooms will follow the hours outlined on their ASD / EI school calendar and included in your enrollment packet and available on the Berrien RESA website at www.berrienresa.org.

Lunch is served on the following schedule:

Elementary Students: 11:40 a.m. – 12:10 p.m.

High School Students: 12:10 a.m. – 12:40 p.m.

SCHOOL MESSENGER

Emergencies occur, schedules change, and buses run late. The district uses a system to instantly alert families/caregivers if/when these events happen. In order for you to be contacted/notified via phone, e-mail, or text message you will need to ensure that the contact information is accurate and up to date.

During School: If a severe storm starts or is forecast while school is in

session, the buses may leave early to return children home. **If there is a bad weather forecast and you are not at home, please call and let us know where your child may be taken.**

**Every effort will be made to reach parents or other emergency numbers if school is dismissed early.

SCHOOL SAFETY

To provide a safe, secure learning environment and protect students, staff, and visitors, a walk-through metal detector and hand-held scanners, along with a search of each student's possessions will be used on a daily basis.

Anything that is found in the course of a search that may be evidence of a violation of school rules or the law may be taken and held or turned over to the police. The School reserves the right not to return items that may have been confiscated. In the course of any search, students' privacy rights will be respected regarding any items that are not illegal or against school policy.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

The Board of Education has charged school authorities with the responsibility of safeguarding the safety and well-being of the students in their care. In the discharge of that responsibility, school authorities may search school property such as lockers used by students or the person or property, including vehicles, of a student, in accordance with the following policy.

The Board recognizes that the privacy of students or his/her belongings may not be violated by unreasonable search and seizure and directs that no student be searched without reasonable suspicion or in an unreasonable manner. The extent of the search will be governed by the seriousness of the alleged infraction, the student's age, and the student's disciplinary history.

A search of a student and his/her possessions, including vehicles, may be conducted at any time the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education, if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is in violation of law or school rules. A search may also be conducted to protect the health and safety of others. All searches may be conducted with or without a student's consent.

The Board acknowledges the need for in-school storage of student possessions and shall provide storage places, including desks and lockers, for that purpose. Where locks are provided for such places,

students may lock them against incursion by other students, but in no such places shall students have an expectation of privacy as to prevent examination by a school official. The Board directs the school principals to conduct a routine inspection at least annually of all such storage places. In the course of any search, students' privacy rights will be respected regarding any items that are not illegal or against Board policy.

Anything that is found in the course of a search that may be evidence of a violation of school rules or the law may be taken and held or turned over to the police. The school reserves the right not to return items that have been confiscated. In the course of any search, students' privacy rights will be respected regarding any items that are not illegal or against school policy.

All computers located in classrooms, labs, and offices of the District are the District's property and are to be used by students, where appropriate, solely for educational purposes. The District retains the right to access and review all electronic, computer files, databases, and any other electronic transmissions contained in or used in conjunction with the District's computer system, and electronic mail. Students should have no expectation that any information contained on such systems is confidential or private.

Review of such information may be done by the District with or without the student's knowledge or permission. The use of passwords does not guarantee students' knowledge or permission. The use of passwords does not guarantee confidentiality, and the District retains the right to access information in spite of a password. All passwords or security codes must be registered with the instructor. A student's refusal to permit such access may be grounds for disciplinary action.

SECTION 504 AND ADA

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are both civil rights statutes for persons with disabilities. All students eligible for services under IDEA are eligible for protections under Section 504 and ADA. Compliance with the requirements of Section 504 and the ADA will be coordinated by the Supervisor of Ancillary Services and Compliance. S/he may be reached at the Berrien Regional Education Service Agency Administrative Center, 711 St. Joseph Avenue, P.O. Box 364, Berrien Springs, Michigan 49103 or by calling 269-471- 7725.

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

The school phone number is (269) 429-2351. If you wish to talk with your child's teacher, the best times to call are 8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

and 3:00 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. Teachers are with students between 8:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. During this time, they will be available only for emergency calls. Non-emergency phone messages will be placed in the teacher's mailbox and they will return your call as soon as possible. Administrators, social workers, and secretaries are available throughout the day.

STUDENT APPEARANCE AND DRESS

All students are expected to be neat, clean, and appropriately dressed for school. This means light clothing for spring and fall, and warm clothing for winter. Extremes in dress that might cause health or safety problems and/or disruptions in school will not be allowed.

Coats may not be worn to class under ordinary circumstances. Please send a sweatshirt or sweater to keep at school if a student gets cold.

The skirt and short length must reach the palm of hand length when arms are extended toward the floor.

No exposed midriff when the student extends arms toward the floor.

It is important to mark boots, caps, mittens, etc. with your child's name. Properly labeled items will be returned to students immediately. A lost and found box is maintained so that unlabeled items can be retrieved. Please remember that the students do go outside to play and should be dressed appropriately for the prevailing weather conditions.

The Board of Education recognizes that each student's mode of dress and grooming is a manifestation of personal style and individual preference. The Board will not interfere with the right of students and their parents to make decisions regarding their appearance, except when their choices interfere with the District's educational program.

Accordingly, the Superintendent shall establish such grooming guidelines as are necessary to promote discipline, maintain order, secure the safety of students, and provide a healthy environment conducive to educational purposes. Such guidelines shall prohibit student dress or grooming practices which:

- A. present a hazard to the health or safety of the student himself/herself or to others;
- B. interfere with school work, create disorder, or disrupt the educational program;
- C. cause excessive wear or damage to District property;
- D. Prevent the student from achieving his/her own educational objectives because of blocked vision or restricted movement.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

All students in grades 3-8 and 11 must participate in the MStep state-wide assessment, and those in grade 11 the College and Career Ready WorkKeys and the SAT. Students with low academic levels may participate in the MI-Access Assessment as determined during the Individual Education Development (IEP) meeting. The MI-Access assessments are the Functional Independence, Supported Independence, and Participation assessments.

K-12 students in an emotional impairment classroom at Lighthouse also participate in the Northwest Education Assessment (NWEA), which is taken 3 times a year; fall, winter, and spring with progress monitoring assessments given throughout the school year.

Students in Kindergarten, First, and Second grade will participate in the state-level literacy and mathematics exams.

Parents and students should watch school newsletters and the local press for announced testing times.

STUDENT COMMUNICATIONS

The administration reserves the right to address off-school online speech or expression on social media sites that will 1) cause an actual disruption at school, 2) express a true threat, and 3) material that is substantially likely to cause a disruption at school.

STUDENT DIRECTORY “OPT OUT FORM”

The primary use for Directory Information by the district is to include this type of information in certain school publications. It is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. Examples of school publications are:

- a playbill or program, showing your child’s roles in a drama or music production
- the annual yearbook
- honor roll or other recognition lists published at school or in newspapers
- graduation programs
- sports statistics listed in programs, such as football which may include height and weight of team members
- school or district website

Directory information can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent’s prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to:

- other schools the student is seeking to attend (transcripts, etc.)
- class ring manufacturers
- state or federal authorities auditing, evaluating programs or enforcing state or federal laws
- a court by order of a subpoena

The school district has designated the following as Directory Information:

- Address
- Date and place of birth
- Dates of attendance
- Degrees, honors and awards received
- Email address
- Grade level
- Major field of study
- Most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Participation in school-sponsored activities and sports
- Photograph
- Student name
- Telephone number
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams

I, _____ have chosen to “Opt Out” of releasing all
(Parent/Guardian Name)

Student Directory information for my student _____
Student Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

STUDENT DRIVING POLICY

Lighthouse Education Center students are **not** allowed to drive any motor vehicle including, but not limited to, automobiles, trucks, motorcycles, scooters, etc. to and from school.

STUDENT DROP-OFF/PICK-UP

Special circumstances may arise when you will be bringing your child to school or picking him/her up.

DROP-OFFS: Notify the Transportation Department early so the driver does not make an unnecessary stop. Sign your student in at the office

to make sure he/she is included in the lunch count and the office is prepared should an emergency arise. Students should not be brought to school before 8:30 a.m. since no supervision is available prior to that time. Please do not take your child directly to the classroom.

PICK-UPS: Notify the Transportation Department so that the driver is not waiting for a “missing” student. Do not take your child directly from the classroom without signing him/her out in the office. We must be aware that the student is out of the building. Students must be picked up before 3:00 p.m. since no supervision is available after that time. A student will be permitted to leave only with the parent, legal guardian, or person designated by the parent in written form. These procedures are designed specifically for the safety of your child.

If you have any transportation questions, please talk to your child’s bus driver, call First Student Transportation (Berrien RESA transportation) at (269) 471-9308, or call your local district transportation office.

STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The school is here for the benefit of the students. The staff is here to assist each student in becoming a responsible adult. If a student has suggestions that could improve the school, s/he should feel free to offer them. Written suggestions may be presented directly to the building/program administrator.

When concerns or grievances arise, the best way to resolve the issue is through communication. No student will be harassed by any staff member or need fear reprisal for the proper expression of a legitimate concern. Any suggestions, concerns, and grievances may be directed to the building/ program administrator.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Lighthouse Education Center uses a system of positive behavior supports to teach and reinforce in students the use of appropriate social and life skills. The PBIS program is the basis for each teacher’s level and point system and the manner in which students are evaluated in the point system. The components of the PBIS program are “Be Safe, Be Responsible, Be Respectful”.

STUDENT VALUABLES

Students are encouraged not to bring items of value to school. This includes items such as CD players, MP3 players, I-pads, tablets, radios, toys, extra money, or any personal communication device with wireless, etc., or any device that takes photos of any kind. The school will not be liable for loss or damage to these items. The teacher will let you know

about any special programs or “show and tell” types of activities where these items may be permissible. The school may confiscate such items and return them to the student’s parents should it become a disruption or an issue.

Cellular Phones/Electronic Devices

Lighthouse Education Center recognizes the positives of students using cellular and electronic devices during transportation. Students may bring these devices with them for the bus/van ride, they will be expected to turn the device into the designated staff member during the check-in process and the device will be returned to the student at dismissal.

SUPPORT SERVICES

THERAPY: The Speech and Language, Occupational, and Physical Therapists are fully certified and approved in their professional field. In addition to providing direct service to eligible students, the therapists also evaluate students referred for direct services and provide consultation to classroom instructional staff. Although every effort is made to follow the prescribed service time for therapies as stated in the IEP, exceptions do occur. If the student is not available for a regularly scheduled therapy session due to holidays, student absences, snow days, or medical issues, it is possible that the missed therapy session may not be “made up” or rescheduled.

HEALTH: The nurse supervises the giving of any medications at school (these cannot be given without a physician’s order) and works with the child, the family, and their physician. Parents are encouraged to call the school nurse regarding any health concerns. The school nurse is also responsible for school health programs including Hearing and Vision Screening, and special clinics held in the community. The school nurse can also assist parents and the physician in carrying out a positive health plan for the student.

SOCIAL WORK: The school social worker is fully approved with a MSW and is available to assist students and their families with concerns, future planning, and relationships with other community agencies. The school social worker serves as a member of the Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MET), a diagnostic team that re-evaluates student eligibility for special education, program placements, and related services and provides counseling for students both individually and in small group situations.

SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL

Students at Lighthouse Education Center may be suspended from

school in accordance with Board of Education Policy, should they be found guilty of a gross misdemeanor or persistent disobedience. The length of the suspension should be in relation to the severity of the offense.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation to Lighthouse Education Center and all off-site classrooms is provided by either the local school district or First Student Transportation (Berrien RESA transportation). As parents/caregivers, you can understand why good behavior on the bus is necessary for safety reasons. Riding the bus is a privilege and a child can be refused permission to ride the bus if their behavior endangers the safety of himself or herself, other students, or the safe operation of the bus.

If you choose to transport your child to/from school, prior to 8:40 a.m. you can join the transportation line to drop off your student. After 8:40 a.m., you must bring them into the building and sign them in at the office. Students should not be brought to school before 8:30 a.m. since no supervision is available prior to that time. At pickup time in the afternoon, you can join the transportation line to pick up your student or you can sign them out in the office.

It is the parent's responsibility to let the transportation office and the school know when their child will not be attending school and to call when he/she is ready to return to school. It is also the parent's responsibility to see that your child gets on and off the bus safely. Please refer to the transportation handbook as well as your local district transportation policies for detailed bus rules and other transportation information.

VIDEO RECORDING ON DISTRICT PROPERTY

The Board of Education has installed video cameras on District property for building and grounds security. The Board of Education authorizes the use of video surveillance and electronic monitoring equipment at various school sites throughout the District and on school buses. The video surveillance/electronic monitoring equipment shall be used to protect Board property and assets from theft and vandalism, through deterrence and video documentation. The system is not designed nor intended to protect individuals from being victims of violent or property crimes, nor to detect other potentially illegal and undesirable activities that may occur, although information may be used as evidence in such cases.

VISITORS

Alumni, parents, agencies, and community members are welcome to visit Lighthouse Education Center. Due to the nature of the program, we require visitations to be scheduled with the principal. School programs, activities, field trips, absences, etc., may make it difficult to accommodate your wish to visit a particular classroom or program if you simply “drop-in”. In all cases, please sign the register located in the office and receive a visitor’s pass before visiting building classrooms, students, or staff. The principal/supervisor has the right to prohibit entry or to expel any person when there is reason to believe the presence of such a person would be harmful to the good order of the school.

WEAPONS OFFENSES

In compliance with State and Federal law, the Board may expel any student who possesses a dangerous weapon in a weapon-free school zone in violation of State law or commits either arson or criminal sexual conduct in a District building or on District property, including school buses and other school transportation. For purposes of this policy, a dangerous weapon is defined as "a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over three (3) inches in length, pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles" or other devices designed to or likely to inflict bodily harm, including, but not limited to, air guns and explosive devices. The term "firearm" is defined as: a) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of the explosive; b) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; c) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or d) any destructive device. Such a term does not include an antique firearm. This policy shall also encompass such actions as false fire alarms, bomb threats, or intentional calls to falsely report a dangerous condition. This will result in immediate reporting to the parent or guardian and the local law enforcement agency after the discovery of the weapon and could result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension/expulsion. The method used for consideration of the mitigating factors is at the sole discretion of the school board.

WORK-BASED LEARNING

Work-Based Learning (WBL) is a program to provide students with a planned program of job training and other employment experiences related to a chosen career. There are six major recognized types of work-based learning experiences for secondary students in Michigan, as well as an additional school-related component, regarding the employment of minors as follows:

1. student/visitor;
2. volunteer;
3. work-based learning non-CTE programs (paid and unpaid student learner);
4. work-based learning state-approved CTE programs (paid and unpaid student learner);
5. in-district/in-school placement (unpaid student learner) and
6. minor employee with a work permit

Depending on the type of learning experience, the pupil might be engaged for one hour, one day, one semester, or even one year in length. The learning experience may be paid or unpaid, serves all students, and can be an in-school or out-of-school placement.

Work-based learning requires additional paperwork, monthly evaluations, and additional pupil accounting rules that need to be followed. Any classroom utilizing work-based learning should be familiar with all the requirements and communicate with the Berrien RESA Transition Coordinator.

NONDISCRIMINATION CLAUSE/TITLE IX

The Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation or sexual identity), disability, age, religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry, genetic information, or any other legally protected category, (collectively, "Protected Classes"), in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities.

Title IX Coordinator/Compliance Officer and for all other concerns: Breanna Bell, Director of Human Resources Berrien RESA, 711 St. Joseph Avenue, Berrien Springs, MI 49103

Title IX Investigators:

Kevin Clark, Technology Services Director and Breanna Bell, Director of Human Resources

Title IX Decision Maker:

Chris Machiniak, Assistant Superintendent

Title IX Appeals:

Eric Hoppstock, Superintendent

[Title IX Final Rule \(Clark Hill\):](#)

For procedural information, please review Berrien RESA's Board policies.