



Parent Handbook and Calendar

*Brennen Elementary School
2020-2021*

“Bulldogs are the Best!”

*4438 Devereaux Road
Columbia, SC 29205
(803) 738-7204 Fax 738-7904
<http://brennen.richlandone.org>
Mark Shea, Principal
Alicia Lyles, Assistant Principal
Monica Lawton, Assistant Administrator*

BRENNEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



2020-2021

STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK

Mark Shea, Principal

Alicia Lyles, Assistant Principal
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BULLDOG FACTS

SCHOOL COLORS: Maroon and White
SCHOOL MOTTO: "Bulldogs are the Best!"



BRENNEN

AWARDS

Palmetto's Finest Finalist 2011-2012
SC-SIC Dick and Tunky Riley Honor Roll Finalist School
Red Carpet School 2010-2013
Palmetto Gold 2002-2006, 2009-2010, 2011-2015, 2018-2019
Palmetto Silver Award 2008-2009
Healthier Generation Award-Bronze National Recognition 2011, 2018-2019

FREQUENTLY CALLED PHONE NUMBERS

Brennen: 738-7204

Cafeteria: 738-7206

Health Room: 738-7352

Media Center: 738-7251

Registration/Attendance: 738-7208

Extensions: 2116 – Principal’s Secretary

2112 - Assistant Principal

2102 – Guidance

2117 – Curriculum

Richland One: 231-7000

Transportation: 695-5505

Food Services: 231-6953

Special Education: 231-6778

AAP: 231-6835

SCHOOL MISSION

As a member of Richland One, we at Brennen Elementary School will prepare every student to be a successful, contributing citizen in a global society by providing an effective and high quality education.

CAFETERIA INFORMATION

Richland One offers meals at no cost to all students, regardless of family income. The average district family could save more than \$400 per child in a school year. Parents will not have to complete any forms or other paperwork.

Thanks to the federal program called Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), all 24,000 Richland One students will be able to eat breakfast and lunch for free.

Expectations for eLearning 2020-21 School Year

Addendum to Student/Parent Handbook

Brennen Elementary believes in creating a respectful, responsible, and safe atmosphere while students are at school. Our eLearning will follow the same set of expectations. During eLearning, all students are responsible for continuing to practice positive digital community by protecting and respecting their peers and teachers at Brennen. We must understand, practice, and model positive and productive behaviors when we are online learning. Because a remote or digital learning environment is still a classroom, school expectations and rules are to be followed just as expected in the regular educational setting/classroom.

Respectful

- Choose a distraction-free workspace and be mindful about keeping distractions to a minimum, remembering EVERYONE can see you.
- Make respectful comments, showing respect for all opinions and viewpoints.
- THINK before posting, always using appropriate language in all electronic communications, including emails, audio recordings, and video recordings.
- If you would like to speak or answer a question, use the online class participation features that your teacher will go over with you.
- Bullying in any form, including cyber bullying, will not be tolerated.
- Sending discriminatory or harassing digital communications will not be tolerated.

Responsible

- Just as students are required to be on time and present at school, students are expected to be on time and present during eLearning.
- Attendance will be taken daily during eLearning.
- Have materials ready.
- Use the chat feature to contribute and show engagement.
- Help others who may need assistance.
- Look into the camera and be ready to learn.
- Wear clothing that would be school appropriate and following Brennen's dress code while learning with peers. No pajamas unless directed by a teacher.

Safe

- Practicing cyber safety includes not making anything public for others to see outside of your class and teacher.
- If you would like to use the chat feature (up to each teacher), remember that it is public, and a record of the chat can be saved.
- Follow Richland School District One's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). The policy comes up each time you sign in to your device.

Brennen always wants to create a learning environment that is safe and orderly. In order for our students to have success, we know that the same practices that occur in the physical classrooms can be used to create safe, predictable, and positive eLearning experience. Any student that violates district or school-wide behavior expectations shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL TIMES FOR STUDENTS

Students may not arrive at school before 7:00 am. School personnel are not available before this time to adequately supervise students. **Students may not wait outside the school doors unsupervised.** Parents who bring students to school early are asked to watch for the unloading of the morning buses as a signal for unloading their own children. In addition, parents that drop off students in the morning please be aware that there is no parking in the front of the school between 7:00 am-8:00 am.

Students need to be in class, not just walking in the building, at 7:30 am. Students who arrive late do not have the opportunity to prepare and organize themselves for the school day. **Parents must sign students in when arriving at or after 7:30 am. When late, it is important that parents bring students into the building and sign them in to ensure student safety. After 7:30 am, parents and students need to enter the school using the main entrance on Devereaux Road.**

Plan how your child will go home each day and be sure the child knows this information. Teachers need this information in writing. Please notify the teacher in writing when there will be a change. If a student is a bus rider and there is a change in the stop or a friend is riding the bus home, then the parents must submit a letter to the front office **24 hours in advance and this request must be approved by district transportation. Parents are asked to avoid calling the school to change pick-up plans, except in emergencies.**

Students will not be called to the office for early dismissal after 2:00 pm. Students riding buses are dismissed at 2:30 pm. Other students are dismissed at 2:35. Car riders may not be dismissed until 2:35 and should be picked up promptly, no later than 2:55 pm. Also, parents need to decide whether their car riders will be picked up on

the side or in the front of the school. Parents will be given labeled, placards for their rear view mirrors for either the front or side pick-up locations. **If students are picked up after 2:55 pm., parents are asked to come in and sign the late pick-up log in the front office.**

HOMework

Homework is important. It is an extension of the learning that takes place in school. Homework can provide practice and drill that reinforces classroom learning and provides opportunities for independent study, research and creative thinking. Parents can help their children by arranging a quiet comfortable place for the students to work and ensuring that assignments are completed. Teachers may assign homework each Monday- Thursday nights. Students and parents should learn and abide by the homework requirements of individual teachers. Parents may email or call the individual mail boxes for each teacher to get homework information and to leave messages for teachers.

SCHOOL RULES

Dress Code - Dress appropriately. These items are not appropriate for school: shorts, skirts, or dresses shorter than **fingertip length**; shirts that expose the stomach; spaghetti strap tops; undershirts worn as top shirts; shirts with sleeves or collars cut off; clothes with inappropriate language on them and baggy pants that fall below the waist line. Tights and leggings may not be worn unless with a shirt or dress fingertip length. Hats are not to be worn in the building. Students who are inappropriately dressed, based on an administrator's discretion, will not be able to go to class until a parent or caregiver is able to bring appropriate items.

Brennen will again utilize Multi-Tier Student Supports (MTSS) for all students. This provides our students with school-wide expectations in order to promote and maximize academic achievement along with behavior competence. This is a school-wide strategy for helping all our students achieve important social and learning goals. We know that when good behavior and good teaching come together, our students will excel in their learning.

We encourage our students to refrain from wearing SMART Watches such as Gizmo's, Apple Watches, or any of similar type. They are very expensive and do not want to be liable if one is lost or stolen. In addition, they are a distraction to the student and learning environment especially when it rings.

Our school counselors will work with students in classroom guidance, small groups, and offer individual support to our students. We will also teach these expectations continually throughout the year. Our school-wide expectations will continue to be:

Respectful
Responsible
Safe

In each area of the school, there are rules that align with these expectations. When you visit Brennen, you will notice these rules posted around in designated areas. Our school rules will specifically address expectations to provide for a safe school environment and give more time for instruction. We will apply consistent consequences and positive reinforcement for all students. By detailing every expected behavior and teaching to students in a positive way, we will have a common language for everyone in the building including students, teachers, and staff.

Student Expectations-

In the classroom:

1. Use good manners and a quiet voice.
2. Stay in your seat unless given permission to move.
3. Take good care of school property.
4. Listen carefully and do not interrupt.

In the hallways/walkways:

1. Walk quietly and do not run.
2. Keep hands and feet to yourself.
3. Stay in line.
4. Walk to the right of the hallway.

On the playground:

1. Stay in the designated areas.
2. No wrestling or rough play.
3. Use equipment properly.
4. No throwing sand or objects.
5. Do not return to the classroom without permission.

In the cafeteria:

1. Use soft voices.
2. Stay in your seat.
3. Use good table manners.
4. Follow directions given by the cafeteria staff.

In the restroom:

1. Use facilities properly; no playing or loud noise.
2. Do not write on the walls or abuse the facilities.

Additionally, our students are asked to use our Lifelong Guidelines and LIFESKILLS. Each week we will focus on a different LIFESKILL. The LIFESKILLS are posted in each classroom and they serve as a guideline for students, staff and parents to always do their personal best and to enhance our learning environment to be most conducive to learning. The Lifelong Guidelines are: **TRUSTWORTHINESS, TRUTHFULNESS, ACTIVE LISTENING, NO PUT-DOWNS AND PERSONAL BEST.** Our LIFESKILLS are: **CARING, COMMON SENSE, COOPERATION, COURAGE, CURIOSITY, EFFORT, FLEXIBILITY, FRIENDSHIP, INITIATIVE, INTEGRITY, ORGANIZATION, PATIENCE, PERSEVERANCE, PRIDE, PROBLEM SOLVING, RESOURCEFULNESS, RESPONSIBILITY and SENSE OF HUMOR.**



BUS TRANSPORTATION

It is imperative that you discuss bus safety with your child. Your child should observe the following rules whenever he/she rides the bus.

1. Be on time to the bus stop. Drivers are not permitted to wait.
2. Students in PK, K5, and 1: Parent and/or guardian must meet the bus each afternoon. If a parent/guardian is not present at the bus stop, your child **WILL** be brought back to Brennen for pick up from the front office.
3. Do not eat, drink, play radios, or bring animals, weapons or explosives onto the bus.
4. Ride the same bus everyday unless you have a note from your parents that has been approved by the transportation office.
5. Talk only to the people in the seat next to you. Do not talk to the driver or make any loud noises. Be quiet at railroad crossings.
6. You may be sitting close to a peer while on the bus. Be sure to stay in your personal space, which means **KEEPING** hands, feet, and objects to yourself and out of the aisle. Do not block any exit.
7. Remain seated with hands and head inside the bus until the bus comes to your stop.
8. Leave the bus one at a time in an orderly manner.
9. Do not operate the bus door, tamper with the emergency door, or damage any part of the bus. If you see anyone doing these things, report him/her to the driver.

If your child violates these rules, the principal is authorized to administer the following penalties:

First Offense: Up to one week suspension from riding the bus.

Second Offense: Up to two weeks suspension from riding the bus.

Third Offense: Up to three weeks suspension from riding the bus.

If after a third offense suspension, a student's misconduct continues, he/she can be suspended from bus riding for the rest of the school year. You will be notified in writing of all complaints received and the actions taken.

Whenever a student is suspended from the bus, every effort will be made to contact you. Even though a child is suspended from the bus, he/she can still come to school. However, the parents must provide transportation to and from school. You will be notified in writing or by phone whenever this misconduct is discussed with your child and if the child has been suspended from the bus.

The bus driver is in charge of his/her bus. The driver may assign seats to students, and will do so if deemed necessary. Riding the school bus is a privilege. It can be taken away.

SPECIAL STUDENT ACTIVITIES

FRIENDLY HELPERS - Fifth grade students have the opportunity to receive training and provide volunteer service during their recess and lunch times. They help teachers, listen to and read to students, assist with school wide recycling, and help out in many other ways.

SAFETY PATROL - Each semester fifth grade students are chosen as members of our Safety Patrol. Their duties are to assist in monitoring the hallways and opening the car doors for students in the mornings.

STUDENT COUNCIL – Third through fifth graders may be elected by classmates to work on activities to promote school spirit, develop leadership, and implement school events (spirit days, hospitality, and community service).

STRINGS - Instruction in playing stringed instruments is provided to interested fifth grade students. Rental instruments are available through the district.

SCHOOL/FIELD TRIPS – As a part of your child’s learning experience, field trips are planned throughout the school year. Children participating in field trips must complete a permission slip and return it to the teacher in a timely manner. **Students with behavior problems may be denied the opportunity to take part in a field trip unless accompanied by a parent.** Due to the nature of some field trips, a fee may be required.

CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS AT SCHOOL – Typically, birthdays are announced on the school’s morning news show or over the intercom system. Birthdays that fall during weekends, holidays, or the summer are announced before the birthday, if at all possible. Parents may bring small treats, such as cupcakes, to celebrate a child’s birthday. We try to incorporate these small treats during lunch. We cannot hold birthday parties at school. Please do not send/bring lots of food and drink to celebrate a birthday. Also please do not bring/send birthday presents, balloons, or flowers to children at school, as this disrupts the school day and is unfair to other students. Children and teachers may not distribute invitations to birthday parties held away from school to individuals in a class, unless all children in the class are receiving the invitations. **Teachers may not give out addresses or phone numbers of other students to parents.**

ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY RULES

If your child is absent, please send a note explaining his/her absence the first day back in school. Excuses from parents or a licensed medical doctor must be sent to the school within 48 hours of student’s return to school. Our teachers will make every effort to help your child with work missed due to absences.

Excused (lawful) Absences

Student’s absences will be excused if they fall in the following categories:

- Extended or chronic illness with a doctor’s statement. If the student will be out for a long period, the parent should call the school and ask about homebound instruction.
- Doctor or dental appointments.
- Contagious illness such as the flu that could spread to other students and staff.
- Serious illness or death in the family, which is limited to three (3) days, unless approved by the principal.
- Recognized religious holidays.
- School related activity, such as field trip approved by the principal.
- The principal must approve all other absences in advance.
- Suspensions are counted as excused (lawful) absences for truancy purposes.
- In all cases of excused (lawful) absences, the student will be given an opportunity to make up the school work missed.

Unexcused (unlawful) Absences

A student will not be excused for the following reasons:

- The student decides not to attend the school without a good reason and without the parent's knowledge.
- Any reason not listed under "Excused (lawful) Absences."

Unexcused absences will be handled in the following way:

- Three days in a row or five days at any time-the school will contact the parent. The school will try to find out why the student has been absent. The parent will be asked to come to school for a conference, and the school will develop a plan, with the parent and the student, to improve the student's attendance. The parent will be asked to sign a form stating that the school has tried to involve him/her in such a plan.
- The school guidance counselor, and on occasion, district social workers, may be asked to assist with contacting the parent/guardian and developing an attendance plan.
- If student absences continue after an intervention plan has been developed, the school will complete a petition and the parent/ guardian and student will be summoned to appear before a judge in Family Court.
- After a Family Court hearing, if the student doesn't attend school as ordered by the court, the school will file a complaint against the parent with the Solicitor's Office. If the parent is found guilty, she/he can be fined \$50 and/or put in jail for 30 days each day the student has an unexcused (unlawful) absence.

ILLNESS AND ACCIDENTS AT SCHOOL

If a student becomes ill or is hurt at school, parents are notified as soon as possible. Parents may need to seek medical attention for students. Our health room is only a place for students to wait for parents to pick them up. Children with fever will be sent home and **should remain home until they are free of fever for 24 hours.** We recognize that special arrangements must be made in order to care for sick children, but please cooperate to have your child picked up as soon as possible. We do not have the staff or facilities to care for sick children and must operate within our guidelines for the health and safety of all of our students and staff.

The school makes every effort to control the spread of head lice. The school nurse will send students home to be treated who have head lice and will recheck the student periodically. Parents are asked to notify the nurse when a student has lice. The nurse will check students individually, as needed, contact parents, and do all that is possible to prevent the spread of lice. The nurse instructs students in prevention strategies and can share suggestions for at-home treatment with parents.

Health Requirements:

State law requires that each child, kindergarten through fifth grade, meet state immunization requirements. Students who do not have a valid birth and immunization record on file will not be allowed to attend school. Although not required, it is highly recommended that the student has a physical check-up before starting school each fall. The teacher should be informed immediately of any new development concerning the student's physical condition.

Medicine:

Medication should be generally given to students at home. Ask your doctor if your child's prescriptions can be taken before and/or after school. If not, the doctor's instructions and signed permission from the parent must be on file at the school before any prescribed medication will be given. The doctor's instructions must include the student's name, name of the medicine, dosage, how it is to be administered and anticipated reactions of the student to the medicine. Whenever the medicine is changed, the parent is responsible for notifying the school. Parents are asked to bring medicine to the nurse, rather than sending it by a child. Over-the-counter medicine must be in the original container and a medication form must be completed, as well. Forms are available in the health room.

STUDENT SERVICES

Brennen has two full time guidance counselors. The elementary guidance program is an integral part of the total educational process addressing important issues faced by children. The guidance services include individual and small group counseling, consultation with parents, teachers and administrators, crisis intervention, and classroom guidance activities. Please feel free to call you school counselor at 738-7204 to discuss any concerns you may have concerning your child.

CONFERENCES

At least two parent- teacher conferences are recommended during the school year. Parents are asked to make an appointment with the teachers of each of their children. Additional meeting times may be arranged at any time during the school year if necessary. Our teachers can do a much better job with students if they can share their understanding of the student directly with parents.

SECURITY PROCEDURES FOR ALL VISITORS

Parents and all visitors **MUST** be buzzed in and then report to the office to get a visitor's pass. When visiting, please remember that classes are in session and that the educational program comes first and should not be disrupted. Please do not enter or remain in classrooms where testing is in progress. Please be aware that all visitors, as well as students, may be searched at any time while they are on Brennen's campus. As always, we want to keep our dismissal and environment safe and orderly. All parents and visitors, please be reminded that:

- 1) ALL visitors must sign-in in the front office.
- 2) Visitors are not allowed to pick up their children directly from the classroom without checking in with the office.
- 3) Please limit walking down the hallways between 2:00-2:30 during dismissal to help with traffic congestion.
- 4) Please do your best to inform your child and their teacher of any transportation changes before they begin the school day.

We have multiple designated spaces for parents to pick up their children in the afternoon. Please tell your child if they are front or side car riders, walkers (kindergarten playground), bus, or daycare riders so that they can be in the designated locations.

TRAFFIC AND PARKING

Traffic, at arrival and dismissal times, is very busy at Brennen. We must all work together to ensure the safety of our children by driving slowly, not double parking to let students in or out of cars, not backing up in the traffic lanes, and watching for students at all times. Arriving at school around 7:15 am for arrival or 2:50 pm for dismissal will decrease the wait time and the stress of morning or afternoon traffic. Parking in the bus lane is not permitted at all during the school day. Please use the parking lot. **Please do not park in the driveways or lawns of our neighbors. Parking on the sidewalks along Devereaux Road prevents our walking students from coming to school safely and is illegal.** Carpool or allow your student to ride the bus whenever possible to help reduce traffic problems. Please see attached traffic flow map.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL (SIC)

Members of SIC are elected in August/September each school year. The primary function of the council is to provide input into plans for school improvement. South Carolina state law requires each school to use test scores, survey information, and other pertinent data to set up an improvement plan for targeted areas of concern in that school. Serving on the council are teachers, parents and community representatives. Your representatives will want to hear from you this year. SIC meetings will be held on the second Monday of the month.

Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO)

Brennen's PTO plays a vital role in making Brennen the highly regarded school that it is. Over the last several years, through successful fundraisers and generous support from sponsors, the PTO raised approximately \$50,000 dollars each year. This money is used to enhance all aspects of student and faculty life. Volunteers provide a strong support system for teachers and staff. Volunteering at Brennen can include chaperoning a field trip, being a homeroom mother, helping with fundraisers, copying papers, reading to children, working in the office, or any number of other tasks. Please join the PTO this year by logging on to www.BrennenPTO.org to make our school stronger than ever. Complete the volunteer survey form and find a place to serve. Volunteering is the easiest way to know what is going on at your school, In addition, follow the Brennen PTO on Facebook and Twitter (BrennenElemPTO).

