

## Table of Contents

<b>Message from the Principal</b>	4
<b>Staff Directory</b>	5
<b>School Calendar</b>	7
<b>I. General Information</b>	
Computer Use Policy	8
Breakfast Program	14
Directory Information	14
Field Trips	15
Flowers and Balloons	15
Lost and Found	15
Lunch Program	15
Physical Education	16
Pictures	16
Professional Qualifications of Classroom Teachers	16
Registration and Leaving the District	16
Daily Schedule	17
Lunch Schedule	17
School Closings/Early Dismissals/Delays	18
Student Newsletter	18
Supplies and Fees	19
Telephone - Cell Phone Usage	19
Testing	19
Visitors	20
Visiting/Observing Classrooms	20
Volunteers	20
<b>II. Attendance Policy and Procedures</b>	
Attendance Notification Procedures	20
Excused Absence	21
Unexcused Absence	21
Late Arrival/Early Departure/Tardy	22
Chronic Absenteeism/Habitual Truancy	22
Family Vacations	23
Prolonged Absences	23

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<b>III. Student Code of Conduct</b>	
Discipline	23
Serious Misconduct	23
Conduct Relative to Dress	24
Conduct Relative to Care of Books, Valuables, and Property	25
Playground Conduct	25
Conduct of Walkers/Bikers	26
Transportation and Conduct	26
<b>IV. Academics - Student Achievement</b>	
General Information/Grading Scale	27
Progress Book/Grade Cards	28
Parent/Teacher Conferences	28
Class Placements	28
Third Grade Reading Guarantee	29
<b>V. Health and Safety Service/Practices</b>	
School Nurse	29
Fire, Tornado, and Safety Drills	29
Emergency Evacuation	29
Search and Seizure	30

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### **A Message from the Principal**

We would like to welcome you to the 2024-25 school year! Together we have the opportunity to help shape the future! It is the goal of the elementary staff to provide your child with a supportive and caring environment. We strive to provide many opportunities that will develop self-esteem, self-motivation, and a sense of responsibility while mastering grade level required state learning standards.

We encourage parents to be actively involved in the education of their children. We invite you to participate and help enrich your child's experience. Please read the "Student/Parent Handbook" and refer to it for information that can help guide you and your child. Best wishes for the new school year.



### **Bluffton Schools Mission Statement**

The mission of Bluffton Exempted Village School District is to provide a safe and stimulating environment in which flexibility is encouraged in meeting the needs of every student, and to value all persons and learning in order to develop individuals who demonstrate problem-solving skills, personal responsibility, and a desire for lifelong learning.

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## Bluffton Elementary School Staff for 2024-25

### Office Staff

Kori Bernal	Principal	Pam Markley	Int. Specialist
Julie Oberly	Admin Assistant	Barb Maag	Int. Specialist
Paul Utendorf	School Counselor	Julie Garmatter	Int. Specialist
Courtnee Morris	Director of Tech	Emily Ellerbrock	Int. Specialist
Trystan Eyerly	Tech Asst.	Kathy Moser	Title I Intervention
Sarah Jebesen	School Nurse	Sarah Schulte	Title I Intervention

### Intervention

### Kindergarten

Amy Butte	Kindergarten	Nicole Anderson	Art 1st-5th
Kim Fritsch	Kindergarten	Mary Glick	Music K-5th
Emily Warner	Kindergarten	Ryan Dunlap	Physical Ed. K-5th
Kelly Yarnell	Kindergarten	Rachael Lewis	Strings 4th-5th
Heidi Steiner	Half Day Kdg	Dave Sycks	Band 5th

### Specials

### 1st Grade

Jaime Combs	1st Grade	Beth Ackerman	Pirate-2-Pirate/Aide
Amber Huffman	1st Grade	Rebekah Peralta	Teacher's Aide
Jake Staley	1st Grade	Jennifer Geiser	Teacher's Aide
Teri Steinmetz	1st Grade	Terri Stechschulte	Librarian

### Education Aides

### 2nd Grade

Ashley Fry	2nd Grade
Betsy Liechty	2nd Grade
Jodie Parker	2nd Grade
Linda Sycks	2nd Grade

### Maintenance/Custodial

Mike Wilson	Maint. Supervisor
Andrew Schmidt	Daytime Custodian

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**3rd Grade**

Diana Donaldson      3rd Grade  
Christine McCafferty      3rd Grade  
Julie Inniger      3rd Grade  
Beth Raeburn      3rd Grade

**4th Grade**

Caleb Garmon      4th Grade  
Joanna Gratz      4th Grade  
Karen McCauley      4th Grade  
Makayla Noble      4th Grade

**5th Grade**

Andy Armstrong      Math  
Meredith Bixel      Social Studies  
Taylor Diemer      Writing  
Brooke Graber      Reading  
Jeff Richards      Science

**Allen County ESC Services**

Tracy Rosengarten      Phys. Therapy Asst  
Angie Brown      Speech  
Brad Clark      Gifted  
Mandy Gillham      School Psych Asst.  
Ann Schroeder      Special Education  
Bria Stephens      Occup. Therapy  
Susan Sheehan      Physical Therapy

**Bluffton Elementary School 2024-25 Calendar**

<b><u>August 16th</u></b>	<b><u>School Picture Day 8a-12pm and 1p-3p</u></b>
<b><u>August 19th</u></b>	<b><u>School Picture Day 8a-12pm and 1p-3p</u></b>
<b><u>August 21st</u></b>	<b><u>Elementary, MS &amp; HS Meet the Teacher 5-6pm</u></b>
<b><u>August 26th</u></b>	<b><u>School Opens, Grades 1-5</u></b>
<b><u>August 26th-27th</u></b>	<b><u>KRA Testing for Kindergarten Students</u></b>
<b><u>August 28th</u></b>	<b><u>First Day of Kindergarten</u></b>
<b><u>September 2nd</u></b>	<b><u>No School - Labor Day</u></b>
<b><u>October 10th</u></b>	<b><u>School Picture Retakes and for those not taken in August</u></b>
<b><u>September 25</u></b>	<b><u>2-hour Delay for Teacher Professional Development?</u></b>
<b><u>October 15th &amp; 16th</u></b>	<b><u>Third Grade Ohio State Testing/ELA Test</u></b>
<b><u>October 25th</u></b>	<b><u>End of 1st Grading Period</u></b>
<b><u>October 28th</u></b>	<b><u>No School/Professional Development Day for Teachers</u></b>
<b><u>November 1st</u></b>	<b><u>Grade Cards Sent Home with PreK-2nd Grade Students</u></b>
<b><u>November 1st</u></b>	<b><u>Grade Cards available online for 3rd-5th Grade Students</u></b>
<b><u>November 25th</u></b>	<b><u>K-5 Parent Teacher Conferences, 5-8pm</u></b>
<b><u>November 26th</u></b>	<b><u>K-5 Parent Teacher Conferences, 9am-4pm &amp; 5-8pm</u></b>
<b><u>November 27th-29th</u></b>	<b><u>No School, Grades K-12 - Thanksgiving Break</u></b>
<b><u>December 20th</u></b>	<b><u>Last Day of School 2024</u></b>
<b><u>January 2nd</u></b>	<b><u>School Reopens 2025</u></b>
<b><u>January 17th</u></b>	<b><u>End of 2nd Grading Period</u></b>
<b><u>January 20th</u></b>	<b><u>No School, Martin Luther King Jr. Day</u></b>
<b><u>January 21st</u></b>	<b><u>Kindergarten Registration Opens</u></b>
<b><u>January 24th</u></b>	<b><u>Grade Cards Sent Home with PreK-2nd Grade Students</u></b>

<u>January 24th</u>	<u>Grade Cards available online for 3rd-5th grade students</u>
<u>February 17th</u>	<u>No School, President's Day</u>
<u>March 21st</u>	<u>End of 3rd Grading Period</u>
<u>March 28th</u>	<u>Grade Cards Sent Home with PreK-2nd Grade Students</u>
<u>March 28th</u>	<u>Grade Cards available online for 3rd-5th grade students</u>
<u>April 18th-21st</u>	<u>No School, Spring Break</u>
<u>April 15th &amp; 16th</u>	<u>Grades 3-5 Ohio State English/Language Arts Test</u>
<u>April 23rd &amp; 24th</u>	<u>Grades 3-5 Ohio State Math Testing</u>
<u>April 24th-25th</u>	<u>Kindergarten Screening</u>
<u>April 28th</u>	<u>Second Grade - Iowa/CogAT Testing Begins</u>
<u>April 29th &amp; 30th</u>	<u>Grades 5 Ohio State Science Test</u>
<u>May 16th</u>	<u>Possible Field Day, Grades K-5</u>
<u>May 23rd</u>	<u>Last day of school - End of 4th 9 weeks, Grade cards issued</u>

**I. General Information**

**Computer Acceptable Use Policy**

The Bluffton Exempted Village School District is pleased to make available access to interconnected computer systems within the district network and to the Internet for the purpose of productivity, research, curriculum delivery, professional development activities, and electronic storage in the pursuit of learning. The District Board of Education has policies which govern the access and use of computer and network systems. This Acceptable Use Policy is a guideline for use and a contractual agreement between the end user of said systems and the Board of Education. All end users of said systems must take responsibility for appropriate and lawful use of their access. Misuse under the guidelines of this document may result in loss of privilege to use computer systems, the network, and/or Internet access and may result in disciplinary action under Board Policy and/or the governing code of conduct.

Upon reviewing, signing, and returning this Policy and Agreement, each end user will be given an opportunity to enjoy access to computer and network systems at school and is agreeing to follow this agreement's guidelines and Board Policy. Anyone under 18 years of age must have his or her parent or guardian read and sign the policy. The Bluffton Exempted Village School District cannot provide access to anyone who fails to sign and

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submit the policy to the school as directed with accompanying signature of a parent or guardian if required.

If you have any questions about the guidelines below, please contact the District Superintendent.

### **I. Personal Responsibility**

By signing this Policy and Agreement, you are agreeing not only to follow the rules in this Policy and Agreement, but are agreeing to report a misuse of the network to your immediate teacher, supervisor, or director. Misuse means any violations of this policy, Board of Education Policy, or any other use that is not included in the policy, but has the effect of harming another or his or her property.

### **II. Term of the Permitted Use**

A properly signed and submitted copy of this document is required to have a computer account activated for a given school year. Accounts will be deactivated on September 15 of the school year for anyone who has not complied. A new agreement must be submitted by September 15 of every school year for an end user to retain access to a computer account.

### **III. Purpose and Use**

- A.** The Bluffton Exempted Village School District is providing access to its computer network and the Internet for educational purposes only. If you have any doubt about whether a contemplated activity is educational, you should consult with your immediate teacher, supervisor, or director to help you decide if a use is appropriate. The following guidelines and procedures shall be complied with by staff, students, or community members who are specifically authorized to use the District's computers or network services:

**Expectations for the use of the computer/network include but are not limited to:**

- 1.** Making full use of Computer and Network access to enhance, enrich, and enliven the education process at all levels of the district.
- 2.** Making use of the Computer and Network access to store files, run approved software programs and simulators, perform research, produce original documents, projects, and presentations, and communicate in the pursuit of instruction and learning.
- 3.** Seeking to help and/or advice when appropriate from your immediate teacher, supervisor, or director.
- 4.** Using appropriate language and etiquette at all times as defined in Board policy and the applicable code of conduct.
- 5.** Keeping electronic messages brief and using appropriate language.
- 6.** Reporting any security problem or misuse of the network to your immediate teacher, supervisor, or director.



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**The Board of Education assumes that all users understand the following guidelines for use of the computer/network:**

1. Understand that school provided Email is not guaranteed to be private. Systems managers have access to all messages relating to or in support of illegal activities and such activities may be reported to the authorities.
2. Understand that all electronic data that passes through a district owned computer or over the district's network is subject to monitoring and seizure and may be handed over to law enforcement officials.
3. Understand that all electronic data created for the purpose of administration or instruction under the Board approved curriculum for a course or program should be assumed to be property of the District.
4. Understand that the rules and regulations of on-line etiquette are subject to change by the Administration.
5. Understand that the user in whose name a computer account is issued is responsible for its proper use at all times. Users must log off the computer to conclude a session or lock the computer if stepping away. Users retain responsibility for the activity of anyone accessing the computer and/or network under their account. Users shall keep personal account information, home addresses and telephone numbers private. They shall use this system only under the login and password information issued to them by the District. Users shall not grant others access to a computer and/or the network under their login and password.
6. Understand that computer systems and the District network shall be used only for purposes related to education or administration. Commercial, political and/or personal use of said systems is strictly prohibited. The administration reserves the right to monitor any computer activity and on-line communications for improper use. An exception may be considered when a portable computer is assigned to staff for the purpose of at-home productivity outside of regular working hours. Staff is also permitted to check personal email should said email account be used for both work and personal use.
7. Understand that vandalism results in the cancellation of user privileges. Vandalism includes uploading/downloading any inappropriate material, creation or deployment of computer viruses and/or any malicious attempt to harm or destroy equipment or materials or the data of any other user.

**Unacceptable uses of the computer/network include but are not limited to:**

1. Do not violate the conditions of Federal and State laws dealing with students and employees' rights to privacy;
2. Do not reveal your personal home address or phone number or those of other students or colleagues or arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone you "meet" on the computer network or Internet.

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3. Do not use profanity, obscenity or other language which may be offensive to other users. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
  4. Do not use the computer and/or network for financial gain or for any commercial or illegal activity.
  5. Do not use the computer and/or network in such a way that it disrupts the use of the computer and/or network by others.
  6. Do not use the system to encourage the use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco nor shall they promote unethical practices or any activity prohibited by law or Board policy.
  7. Do not view, download or transmit material that is threatening, obscene, disruptive or sexually explicit or that could be construed as harassment or disparagement of others based on their race, national origin, citizenship status, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion or political beliefs.
  8. Do not place copyrighted material on the system without the author's permission.
  9. Do not read other user's email or files or attempt to interfere with another user's ability to send or receive electronic mail or attempt to read, delete, copy, modify or forge another user's email.
  10. Do not repost (forward) personal communication without the author's prior consent.
  11. Do not copy commercial software and/or other material in violation of copyright law.
  12. Do not "hack", gain, or attempt to gain unauthorized access to computers, servers, computer systems, internal networks, or external networks.
  13. Do not access and/or view inappropriate material.
  14. Do not download and/or install freeware or shareware programs without the approval of the Technology Department.
  15. Do not plagiarize copyrighted or non-copyrighted materials for personal gain, recognition, or as graded work.
  16. Do not use, install, or attempt to install any items to a school issued computer without direct supervision of an administrator.
  17. Do not use social network sites and/or forum sites and/or blog sites for the purpose of posting slanderous or otherwise harmful information, whether true or untrue, about the character and/or actions of the district's students or staff on district or personal technology equipment.
  18. Do not use messaging or communication services on school issued tablets or personal devices without the consent of your teacher, supervisor, or director.

#### **IV. Privacy**

Network and Internet access is provided as a tool for education, the Bluffton Exempted Village School District reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store at any time and without prior notice, any and all usage of the computer network and

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Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All such information files shall be and remain the property of the Bluffton Exempted Village School District, and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such materials.

#### **V. Failure to Follow Policy and Breach of Agreement**

The user's access to district computer systems, the network, and the Internet is a privilege, not a right. A user who violates this policy and breaches his/her agreement, may at the discretion of the Administration, have his or her access terminated for the remainder of the school year. The Bluffton Exempted Village School District reserves the right to refuse reinstatement of access for subsequent school years. A user breaches his or her agreement not only by affirmatively violating the above policy, but also by failing to report any violations by other users that come to the attention of the user. Further, a user violates this Policy and Agreement if he or she permits another to use his or her account or password to access the computer network and Internet, including any user whose access has been denied or terminated. The Bluffton Exempted Village School District may take other disciplinary action.

#### **VI. Warranties/Indemnification**

The Bluffton Exempted Village School District makes no warranties of any kind, either express or implied, in connection with its provision of access to and use of its computer networks and the Internet provided under this Policy and Agreement. It shall not be responsible for any claims, losses, damages or costs (including attorney's fees) or any kind suffered, directly or indirectly, by any user or his or her parent(s) or guardians) arising out of the user's of its computer networks or the Internet under this Policy and Agreement. By signing this Policy and Agreement, users are taking full responsibility of his or her user, and the user who is 18 or older or, in the case of a user under 18, the parent(s) or guardians) are agreeing to indemnify and hold the Bluffton Exempted Village School District that provides the computer and Internet access opportunity to the Bluffton Exempted Village School District and all of their administrators, teachers and staff harmless from any and all loss, costs, claims or damages resulting from the user's access to its computer network and the Internet, including but not limited to any fees or charges incurred through purchases of goods or services by the user, The user or, if the user is a minor, the user's parent(s) or guardians) agrees to cooperate with the Bluffton Exempted Village School District in the event of the Bluffton Exempted Village School District's initiating an investigation of a user's use of his or her access to its computer network and internet, whether that use is on a Bluffton Exempted Village School District computer or on another's outside the Bluffton Exempted Village School District's Network.

#### **VII. Updates**

Users may be asked from time to time to provide new or additional registration and account information, which must be provided by the user if he or she wishes to continue

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to receive service. If after you have provided your account information, some or all of the information changes, you must notify the Technology Specialist of the change.

**Student Agreement Form**

(Every user, regardless of age, must read and sign below):

I have read, understand and agree to abide by the terms of the foregoing Acceptable Use Policy and Agreement. Should I commit any violation or in any way misuse my access to the Bluffton Exempted Village School District's computers, computer network, and/or the Internet, I understand and agree that my access privilege may be revoked and disciplinary action may be taken against me as outlined in the applicable Handbook or Code of Conduct.

If I am signing this Policy and Agreement when I am under 18, I understand that when I turn 18, this Policy and Agreement will continue to be in full force and effect and I agree to abide by this Policy and Agreement.

**(Please Print Clearly)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

User Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I am 18 or older

\_\_\_\_\_ I am under 18

**Parent or Guardian Network Usage Agreement**

(To be read and signed by parents or guardians of students who are under 18)

As the parent or legal guardian of this student, I have read, understand and agree that my child or ward shall comply with the terms of the Bluffton Exempted Village School District's Acceptable Use Policy and Agreement for user access to the Bluffton Exempted Village School District's computers, computer network, and Internet. I understand that access is being provided for educational purposes only. However, I also understand that it is impossible for the Bluffton Exempted Village School District to restrict access to all offensive and controversial materials and understand my child's or ward's responsibility for abiding by the Policy and Agreement. I am therefore signing this Policy and Agreement and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Bluffton Exempted Village School District that provides the opportunity to the Bluffton Exempted Village School District for computer network and Internet access against all claims, damages, losses and costs, of whatever kind, that may result from my child's or ward's use of his or her access to such networks or his or her violation of the foregoing Policy and Agreement. Further, I accept full responsibility for supervision of my child's or ward's use of his or her access account if and when such access is not in the school setting. I

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hereby give permission for my child or ward to use the building-approved account to access the Bluffton Exempted Village School District's computers, computer network, and Internet.

**(Please Print Clearly)**

Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Please do not sign and return. This is a sample only. This form will be included with the Emergency Medical Form.**

### **BREAKFAST PROGRAM**

A small grab-n-go breakfast (cereals, pop tarts, or granola items with milk) be served before school on a daily basis 7:35-8:05 a.m. in the Middle School Cafetorium. The price of a breakfast is \$1.50. Free and reduced prices will be honored through the completion of online application on Payschools for the 2024-25 school year.

### **DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

The District proposes to designate the following personally identifiable information contained in a student's education record as "directory information"; it discloses that information without prior written consent, except that directory information is not released for a profit-making plan or activity. Such information includes: student's name, student's address, telephone number(s), student's date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, student's achievement awards or honors, student's weight and height, if a member of an athletic team, major field of study, dates of attendance ("from and to" dates of enrollment) and date of graduation. Within the first three weeks of each school year, the District publishes the above list, or a revised list, of the items of directory information which it proposes to designate as directory information. For students enrolling after the notice is published, the list is given to the student's parent(s) or to the eligible student at the time and place of enrollment. Parents have until September 15<sup>th</sup> (or two weeks after registering your student during the school year) in which to advise the District in writing (a letter to the Superintendent's office) of any or all of the items which they refuse to permit the District to designate as directory information about that student.

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## **FIELD TRIPS**

In an effort to offer a variety of experiences for students, educational trips are taken throughout the year, with students transported by bus. Permissions slips signed by parents are required at the beginning of the year in order for students to participate in field trips. The parent's signature acknowledges that the parent is aware that the child will be away from school at various times. Teachers will communicate about the nature and purpose of each trip prior to the day of the trip.

## **FLOWERS AND BALLOONS**

In order to maintain a minimum of class and office disruptions, student balloons or flowers should not be delivered to the school. They will not be permitted to be taken on a school bus.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Lost and found articles should be turned into the elementary office. Missing or stolen property should be reported to teachers and the office as soon as possible. The school will do all in its power to aid in the recovery of such items. Any item that remains at the end of the year will be given to a charity or will be destroyed. A table displaying lost items is available in the cafetorium.

## **LUNCH PROGRAM**

A class "A" supervised lunch is prepared for children daily, with menus published once a month. The price of lunch including milk is \$2.50. A carton of milk purchased separately is 50 cents.

Students may deposit money in their accounts any day of the week before school. They need to drop their money, in a sealed envelope with name and ID number, in a locked box in the cafeteria. Students may buy extra items from the lunch menu. Parents may block this feature by calling the cafeteria.

The food service is willing to help students who have lost or forgotten their lunch money on occasion but lunch charges are for emergencies only. If charging privileges are abused then the privilege will no longer be available to that individual. Parents are not able to eat with their students in the cafeteria under any circumstances.

## **LUNCH RECESS**

Children are expected to go outside in the fresh air prior to lunch, except during severe cold or inclement weather. Students will have recess before lunch because we are hoping they will eat better, digest better, and return to class more ready to learn. If a medical reason exists prohibiting a child from going outside at noon, a note from a parent explaining the reason should be sent to the teacher.

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## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

For the safety of students, rubber-soled shoes should be worn for physical education classes. In the event that a student is to be excused from participation in a physical education class, a written note from a parent should be sent to the homeroom teacher. A note from a doctor is required and should be given to the homeroom teacher if a student needs to be excused for more than one week.

## **PICTURES**

Students will have an opportunity to have pictures taken at the beginning of each school year, when MS/HS students come to pick-up their schedules. Parents of preschoolers may also take advantage of this opportunity. Contact the office for photo information. Student Memory books will be sold annually.

## **PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF CLASSROOM TEACHERS**

Parents have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct their child. Federal law allows parents to request the following information about each of their child's teachers:

1. The Ohio Department of Education has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.
2. The Ohio Department of Education has decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances.
3. The teacher's college major, whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and if so, the subject (s) of the degrees.
4. Whether any teachers' aides or similar paraprofessionals provide service to their child, and if they do, their qualifications.

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## **REGISTRATION & LEAVING THE DISTRICT**

### **KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION**

Children must be 5 years old **prior** to August 1<sup>st</sup> to be admitted to kindergarten. All children entering kindergarten are screened in the spring before admission or upon registration during the school year. Parents of future kindergartners are able to register their students using FinalForms in late January and a Google Form will be sent out to schedule your appointment by late March. Parents will need to make available to the school the following: birth certificate, immunization record, custody papers (as appropriate) and proof of residence (utility bill, rent receipt). After completion of registration materials, scheduling an appointment students will be ready for screening in late April. An orientation meeting will take place during the screening of future kindergarten students.

### **REGISTRATION - STUDENTS TRANSFERRING INTO THE DISTRICT**

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Parents/guardians of students moving into the Bluffton School District should register immediately (otherwise the previous school continues to be responsible for maintaining records of absences) including signing a release of records form that is available at the Bluffton Elementary Office.

The registration paperwork can be found on FinalForms on the school website under quick links or by using the following link, [Bluffton FinalForms](#), must be completed prior to the child starting school.

Some of the necessary documents for registration are: birth certificate, immunization record, custody papers (as appropriate) and proof of residency (utility bill, rent receipt). (Full website <https://www.blufftonschools.org/parents/student-registration>)

### **STUDENTS TRANSFERRING OUT OF THE DISTRICT**

When transferring to another school, please inform the Bluffton Elementary School office to assure accurate recording of information.

### **SCHEDULES**

The school does not provide supervision on the playground before 8:00 a.m. and after 3:00 p.m. Therefore, students should arrive at the school after 8:00 a.m. and are expected to go directly home after school. Once students arrive at school they are expected to remain on school property throughout the day. Parents dropping students off should do so after 8:00 a.m. Parents should pick students up at the front entrance for 3:00 p.m. dismissal. Bus riders will be dismissed at 3:05 p.m.

#### **DAILY SCHEDULE**

- 7:45 a.m. Students may enter the school building
- 8:10 a.m. School begins (Tardy bell at 8:10)
- 10:50 a.m. Lunch Begins (Kindergarten)
- 12:15 p.m. Lunch Ends (5th Grade)
- 3:00 p.m. Dismissal of Walkers/Parent Pick-ups
- 3:05 p.m. Dismissal of Bus Riders

#### **LUNCH SCHEDULE**

	(recess begins)	(lunch times)
Kindergarten	10:40	10:50
Grade 1	10:55	11:05
Grade 2	11:10	11:20
Grade 3	11:20	11:30



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Grade 4	11:35	11:45
Grade 5	11:45	11:55

### **SCHOOL CLOSINGS/EARLY DISMISSALS/DELAYS DELAYS AND/OR CLOSINGS**

When it is necessary to close or delay school due to bad weather, announcements will be announced on the Alert System (See below for details), Lima Radio (WIMA and T102) and Findlay (WFIN). School closings are televised on WLIO TV 35 and announced on their website. (The WLIO school closing link is also on the Bluffton Schools' home page.) Please use these resources to find out if the school day has been altered. Delays are typically announced before 6:30 a.m. Please do not call the school concerning delays or closings. It is imperative that the phone line stays open on bad weather days in the event of an emergency situation.

### **BLUFFTON EXEMPTED VILLAGE SCHOOLS ALERT SYSTEM**

If you would like to be notified of the delays and/or cancellations via a text message on your cell phone, visit the school's website at [www.blufftonschools.org](http://www.blufftonschools.org) and sign up. On the website's home page, under the "Parents" heading, click on "Parent Alert System" and follow the simple steps to subscribe to alerts. Contact the office if you have any questions.

### **TWO YEAR KINDERGARTEN DELAY SCHEDULE: PLAN B**

When school is delayed for two hours, the two year Kindergarten class will go to Plan B. This means that the two year kindergarten students will attend school, but will stay in school one hour later than usual. **The two year kindergarten class dismissal for walkers and bus students will be at 12:00 noon.** School will be dismissed at the normal time for students in grades K-5.

### **THREE HOUR DELAYS**

If school is delayed three hours, the elementary starting time will be 11:10 a.m. and will dismiss at the normal time. Lunch will be served within 20 minutes of the normal time. **The two year kindergarten program will be canceled.**

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

During inclement weather, at the time of special emergencies or early release events, it may be necessary to dismiss school early. Emergency changes will be announced over the same radio and TV stations as listed for school closings. Scheduled early release times will be noted in Student Newsletters. Parents should have arrangements made with their children about where to go in such situations. Parents will need to provide the school with information if drop-offs are at a different location from the usual routine. An early dismissal form will be sent home with students the first week of school.

### **STUDENT NEWSLETTER**

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A periodic Student Newsletter will be published and emailed home using MailChimp. Parent emails will be added using those uploaded via FinalForms.

### **SUPPLIES & WORKBOOK FEES**

A supply list will be sent home with every student at the end of the school year. It will also be posted on the school's website. It is expected that each child brings the supplies to school. This applies only to students in grades 1-5. Please contact the office if help is needed to purchase these supplies.

A school supply/workbook fee is charged to cover the cost of some of the consumable supplies such as: reading workbooks, scholastic newspapers, and art fees. There is a collaborative effort to keep the costs down and at the same time have the materials needed for daily learning experiences.

Student Newsletters announce school fee costs for each grade level. Remittance should be made by October 16th. If a parent is unable to cover the entire cost the family's fees at one time, arrangements can be made for an alternative process of payment.

### **TELEPHONE – CELL PHONE USAGE**

Students may be called to the office phone in case of an emergency but otherwise phone messages will be passed on to the teacher to give to the students. Students may use school phones for emergencies.

- If a student carries a cell phone, then it **MUST BE** kept in his/her locker or book bag with all sounds turned off. If a cell phone is seen being used during school hours it will be confiscated. Students are permitted to use their cell phone after school is dismissed.
- Students who have a wearable device (ie. Apple Watch, Gabb Watch, Gizmo, etc;) may wear it during the school day to function as a watch only. Students **MAY NOT** use these devices during the day to call or text, play games, or function as a calculator. Students found to be doing so will have their device confiscated to be given back at the end of the school day.
- **Parents**, you can help your child by communicating directly with the school and using the "School Mode" feature to ensure that your student does not violate this procedure. It is a great way to help your child set appropriate boundaries, follow procedures, and still have access to the devices they need for after school!

### **TESTING**

Third grade students will take the Ohio State English Language Arts tests in late October. Students in grades 3-5 will take the Ohio State English Language Arts tests in mid-April. They will take the Ohio State Math tests in early May. Fifth grade students will take the Ohio State Science tests in late April. Achievement testing in second grade

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will begin in early May. A parent may request a school policy or information regarding student participation in state mandated assessments.

### **VISITORS**

For the protection of our children and to maintain a log of all non-employed persons entering the school such as parents/visitors/volunteers/college students, it is required that each person sign in at the office and get a name tag before moving throughout the halls or going to a classroom. If a person is seen in the school without a name tag, the person will be asked to report to the office to check in. All persons entering the building are expected to demonstrate respect for school personnel, students and property. Those not conducting themselves appropriately will be asked to leave. Such individuals will not be permitted to return to the building until approval is given by an administrator.

### **VISITING/OBSERVING CLASSROOMS**

It is required that parents desiring to visit their child's classroom during the instructional period contact the teacher prior to the visitation. Arrangements for the visit should be mutually convenient.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

We value and encourage parents and community members to help tutor and perform other types of volunteer work in the school. If interested in volunteering, contact the elementary office, a teacher, the Pirate-2-Pirate coordinator, or indicate an area or interest on the PTO fall survey. Contacts will be made in a timely manner. All volunteers must check in at the office upon arrival and departure.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY & PROCEDURES**

State law requires prompt and regular attendance of school age children. The following information includes various policies and procedures, plus notification of absence, excused/unexcused, late arrival/early departure/tardy, family vacations, habitual/chronic truancy and prolonged absences.

### **ABSENCE NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES**

Parent(s)/guardian(s) must notify the school office as early as possible on the day a student is absent unless previous notification has been given. To do so, call the [school office](tel:419-358-7951) at 419-358-7951 between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. or email Mrs. Marquart at [marquartt@blufftonschools.org](mailto:marquartt@blufftonschools.org) anytime prior to 8:30 a.m. When calling or emailing please provide the following information:

1. Student's name, grade and homeroom teacher.
2. Parent/guardian's name and relationship to the student.
3. Reason why student will be absent.

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Notification must be done EACH DAY the student is absent unless prior notification of the length of the absence has been given. Bluffton Elementary School is responsible by State Statute to account daily for each child as part of the Missing Child Act. Therefore, when a student is absent and the school office has not receive a call or email by 8:30 a.m. confirming the reason for the absence:

1. Call parents/guardians to inquire the whereabouts of the student(s) who are missing.
2. A message will be left if there is no answer.

The administration will issue notification letters regarding the number of absences a student has accumulated in accordance with HB 410.

Anytime a student exceeds 38 hours absent in one month or 65 hours absent in one year, excused or unexcused without a medical excuse, parents will receive a written notification due to EXCESSIVE ABSENCES.

Anytime a student exceeds 42 hours unexcused absent in one month or 72 hours unexcused absent in one year, parents will received a written notification due to HABITUAL TRUANCY.

### **EXCUSED ABSENCE**

Below are six examples of reasons for an excused absence include but are not limited to:

1. Personal illness of the student.
2. Illness in the student's immediate family.
3. Death in the student's immediate family.
4. Quarantine for contagious disease.
5. Religious reasons.
6. Other circumstances or emergency situations which the principal deems legitimate.

If a student's absences (excused or unexcused) exceed 5 days within any nine week grading period or 10 days within a school year, a medical certificate will be required from a doctor upon return if the additional absences are to be excused. There may be special situations in which the principal will deal with each case on its individual merits, relative to exceeding the 10 day limit. After 10 days, even if a parent/guardian calls their student in with a legitimate excuse, it will be marked unexcused unless accompanied by a medical excuse.

### **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to:

1. The student is needed at home.
2. Oversleeping/missed the school bus.
3. Car trouble of any kind.

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4. Running non-emergency errands.
  5. No notification by parent/guardian as to a reason for the absence.
  6. "Personal reasons" (unless specific reasons are given and prior approval is obtained from the principal).

If a student's absences (excused or unexcused) exceed 5 days within any nine week grading period or 10 days within a school year, a medical certificate will be required from a doctor upon return if the additional absences are to be excused. There may be special situations in which the principal will deal with each case on its individual merits, relative to exceeding the 10 day limit. After 10 days, even if a parent/guardian calls their student in with a legitimate excuse, it will be marked unexcused unless accompanied by a medical excuse.

Schoolwork missed during an unexcused absence may be turned in for a reduced grade up to 100% reduction (ie. a Zero).

#### **LATE ARRIVAL/EARLY DEPARTURE/TARDY**

Students arriving at 8:10 a.m. and before 10:00 a.m. are considered tardy. Three tardies in a nine week period may result in a detention.

Students arriving late should check in at the school office before going to their homerooms. Parents must check students out at the school office before students may leave.

Students having doctor or dental appointments causing them to be late or leave early will be excused with a note from the doctor. Without a note, these absences will be excused with a parent call, unless exceeding 5 days in a given 9 week period, or 10 days in a given school year.

#### **HABITUAL/CHRONIC TRUANCY**

According to Ohio Revised Code\* the following criteria are used to determine truancy:

- A student, child of compulsory school age, will be considered "habitually" truant when they have been absent without a legitimate excuse for five or more consecutive school days, seven or more school days in one month, or twelve or more school days in a school year.

If a student is deemed habitually truant from school a written notice will be sent, an intervention team will be formed including the parent, and an in-person meeting will be scheduled to discuss an intervention plan. Following the meeting if attendance does not improve charges shall be filed with juvenile court.

A student, child of compulsory age, will be considered "chronically" truant when they have been absent without a legitimate excuse for seven or more consecutive school

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days, ten or more school days in one month, or fifteen or more school days in a school year. (Is this necessary anymore?)

Students who are truant 10% or more of the required attendance days (18 days) and who has failed two or more required courses at his grade level may not be promoted to the next grade level. The principal and teachers may choose to place a child in the next grade level despite this poor attendance.

### **FAMILY VACATIONS**

Excused absences for family vacations will be restricted to a maximum of 10 days per year, and five days in any semester. If a vacation is planned during the school year, students must have a "Vacation" form completed and returned no later than one week prior to leaving (when the absence exceeds one day) if their absence is to be excused.

Students are responsible for making up all work that is missed while absent for a vacation. Teachers are not required to provide work prior to a student leaving on vacation, but teachers may request that work be completed prior to leaving.

- If students are required to complete work prior to leaving, all work must be complete and turned in before leaving.
- If students are provided work to complete while on vacation, work must be turned in upon return.
- If students are provided missed work upon return to school they will have an equal number of days to complete work that they missed.

Vacations should always be scheduled to avoid state testing whenever possible. Contact the office for dates of required state tests.

### **PROLONGED ABSENCES**

Students unable to attend school for an extended period of time due to surgery or a prolonged illness but are still able to study at home are encouraged to contact the school to make arrangements for school work to be sent home, or, as appropriate, request (physician recommendation) a home tutor until the student can return to school

### **III. STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

Consequences for inappropriate actions are a tool for building positive character in our students. Our goal is for students to be respectful, responsible, and safe individuals who function successfully in society. Teaching responsibility is a shared task of parents, students and school personnel.

It is essential to have appropriate communication among faculty, staff, students, parents, and administration when consequences are required. Any parent concerned about student conduct and discipline should contact the appropriate teacher as the first step in resolving the situation. If additional communication is needed, a conference

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involving parents, teacher and the building principal may be requested by any involved party. The student involved in the incident may be involved in the conference if requested.

The Board of education in compliance with State Law has adopted a Code of Conduct for the Bluffton Exempted Village School District. Violation of this code may result in a student being considered for loss of privilege (ie. lunch time, recess), after-school detention, Saturday School for three hours beginning as early as 8am, removal, suspension, or expulsion from school or school related activities. Parents may contact the office and request a copy of the Board adopted Code of Conduct Policy. The principal holds the authority to assign appropriate consequences as needed. These consequences can include categories of serious misconduct are noted below.

### **SERIOUS MISCONDUCT**

1. Any action that causes harm to themselves or another student or staff member including but not limited to:
  - a. Fighting another student or staff member
  - b. Bullying another student or staff member (defined below<sup>\*\*\*</sup>)
  - c. Setting fire to or damaging any school building or property
  - d. Harassment (General/Racial/Sexual) on school property
  - e. Students shall not leave school grounds unless permission is granted by the principal
2. Any action that is threatening in nature including but not limited to:
  - a. Using or possessing weapons including guns, knives, etc; on school property
  - b. Threatening to fight or harm another student or staff member
  - c. Bullying another student or staff member (defined below<sup>\*\*\*</sup>)
3. Any action that is disrespectful or disobedient towards an adult or other student including but not limited to:
  - a. Repeated failure to comply with directions of school personnel
  - b. Disruption of school
  - c. Disrespectful behavior towards an administrator, faculty or staff member on the school grounds or in public
  - d. Bullying another student or staff member (defined below<sup>\*\*\*</sup>)
  - e. Non-adherence to school rules relative to appropriate internet usage (using or directing others to use unacceptable sites)
4. Any action that is illegal in nature including but not limited to:
  - a. Using or possession of on school property: tobacco, narcotics, alcoholic beverages and stimulant drugs
  - b. Using or possessing weapons including guns, knives, etc; on school property
  - c. False Alarms or false 911 calls
5. Full discretion rests with the principal in matters of student misconduct.

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Bullying is any intentional written, verbal, or physical act that a student had exhibited toward another particular student more than once and the behavior both: a.) causes mental or physical harm to the other student; b.) is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student.

Bluffton students are expected to not only adhere to those rules regarding extreme behaviors which may result in dismissal but to adhere to a standard of respect toward self, others and property, whether in the classroom, hallway, cafetorium, restroom or playground.

### **CONDUCT RELATIVE TO DRESS**

Student dress can also contribute to safety issues, particularly on the elementary school playground. At Bluffton, students are expected to dress in a way that is appropriate to participate in physical education class, go outside and play at recess, and be discreet, limiting distractions to themselves and others. Please see the following standards that will be used to address student attire:

1. Clothing should appropriately cover a student's shoulders, torso, legs, or underwear.
2. Clothing should never contain inappropriate language, symbols, images, or advertisements.
  - a. This includes alcohol and tobacco
  - b. This includes images from rated-R movies
3. Students, male or female, should not wear hats while in the building.
4. Students should wear appropriate footwear to participate safely in recess and physical education class.
5. Full discretion rests with the principal in matters of dress code.

### **CONDUCT RELATIVE TO CARE OF BOOKS, VALUABLES AND PROPERTY**

Students are responsible for the proper care of all school related materials including library books and chromebooks. If items are lost or damaged, the student is responsible for replacement or repair costs.

Each student is expected to assume responsibility for the care of all school property. Students who damage property whether accidentally or on purpose are responsible for paying for the damage. Disciplinary action will be taken by the school concerning malicious behavior that results in damages.

Students are urged to keep anything valuable (such as electronic games/devices/toys/cards) at home and are responsible for their personal property at school. The school will not be responsible for the loss of valuable items of students.



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## **PLAYGROUND CONDUCT**

These rules are in effect during school hours:

1. Always Follow Playground Equipment Rules
  - a. Students should follow adult recommendations at all times while on the playground. Inappropriate use of playground equipment may lead to serious injury.
2. Look Before Using
  - a. Students should be careful while using playground equipment being sure to look for broken equipment or other students before using.
3. Be Mindful of Surroundings
  - a. Students should be careful when running and playing around swings, monkey bars, or other playground equipment so as to avoid running into equipment or other students.
4. Avoid Wet Equipment
  - a. Students should never use slides when they are wet or covered in ice/frost so as not to soak their clothing.
5. Play Games Away from Playground Equipment
  - a. Students should avoid the mulched area when playing games so as to not accidentally run into equipment or other students who are using equipment

Any violation of these rules constitutes a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

## **CONDUCT OF WALKERS/BIKERS**

Bikes should be parked upright in the bike racks. Scooters should be folded and put into lockers. If a scooter does not fit in a locker, it must be left at the bike rack.

Students who cross Main Street are encouraged to use the intersection at Church/Cherry Street so that they may use the stop light to cross the street safely. Once students leave school property the school will no longer be held accountable for their adherence to traffic rules.

## **TRANSPORTATION AND CONDUCT**

Students riding to school by car are to be dropped off/picked up in front of the school. The best time for dropping off is after 8:00 a.m. and picking up for dismissal at 3:00 p.m. Students should get into and out of cars/trucks from the curb side of the vehicle, not into the traffic lane. Students should not be dropped off in mid-street to walk between cars or buses. They should go to the nearest corner and cross when it is safe. Students will be dismissed at 3:00 p.m. Students that ride a bus will be dismissed at 3:05 p.m.

The safety and welfare of each child riding a bus is of utmost importance. Therefore, bus drivers are responsible for discipline on their buses and will be supported by the administration when student behavior is deemed to be inappropriate. Students who

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refuse to conduct themselves properly may lose the privilege of school transportation for up to one school year.

In order to ensure maximum safety in the operation of the school transportation system, the following regulations have been adopted as administrative guidelines. Parents of bussed students are asked to review and discuss the following regulations with their children:

1. Students shall arrive at the bus stop before the bus is scheduled to arrive.
2. Students must wait in a location clear of traffic and away from the bus stop.
3. Students at school bus stops must not threaten individuals or property of any individual.
4. Students must go directly to an available or assigned seat.
5. Students must remain seated, keeping aisles and exits clear.
6. Students must use classroom conduct, obeying the driver promptly and respectfully.
7. Students must not use profane language.
8. Students must refrain from eating, drinking or chewing gum on the bus.
9. Students must not use tobacco on the bus.
10. Students must not have alcohol or drugs in their possession on the bus, except for prescription medication required for the student.
11. Students must not throw or pass objects on, from, or into the bus.
12. Students must not open containers such as make-up, nail polish and glue while on the bus.
13. Students may carry on the bus only objects that can be held in their laps.
14. Students must not put any body parts out of the bus windows.
15. Students must not have matches, lighters, any flammable material or any objects that may interfere with the safe operation of a vehicle on the bus.
16. Students must not text message or use cell phones on the bus.

Bussed students are not to change buses to go home with another student, to a babysitter, etc. unless the change has been pre-arranged with the transportation supervisor. Because of insurance, students who walk to school may not use the school bus to get a ride to a friend's house.

No transportation changes will be made after 2:00 p.m. for that day. Written notes by parent/s must be turned in to the office by 9:00 a.m. for same day changes.

Information about busing or late busses, call the transportation supervisor, Mr. Josh Kauffman,  
(Middle School Principal) at 419-358-7961.

#### **IV. Academics - Student Achievement**

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Kindergarten will use a non-graded system for all areas. Grades 1-5 will receive U (Unsatisfactory), S (Satisfactory), or O (Outstanding) in art, music and physical education. Grades 1-5 use the following grading scale for all other subjects:

A+ = 100+	C = 77-80
A = 96-99	C- = 74-76
A- = 93-95	D+ = 71-73
B+ = 90-92	D = 68-70
B = 87-89	D- = 65-67
B- = 84-86	F = 0-64
C+ = 81-83	

### **GRADE CARDS**

Grade cards are issued, on paper, four times a year. These reports provide the parents with a record of their child's progress and achievement. Parents are asked to sign and return these cards. Signing the card does not mean that the parent is in agreement with the marks given, but it does indicate that the parent had the opportunity to see the report card. If there is a need for clarification or consultation relative to a child's progress, parents should contact the teacher for a conference. A student on an IEP will receive a progress report from the IEP teacher along with the homeroom grade card. Parents of students 1-12, are encouraged to monitor their child's progress weekly using the online program, Progressbook, to stay up to date with your child's grades. Please reach out to Mrs. Marquart, by email [marquartt@blufftonschools.org](mailto:marquartt@blufftonschools.org), at the school office to receive your login information. The program is located on the Bluffton Exempted Village Schools website <http://www.blufftonschools.org/>. Please contact the elementary office if you have any questions.

### **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent-teacher conferences can occur at any time, but there is an official conference time set aside each year in the fall for grades K-5. Parents will be able to schedule their own conference times online using the website [PTCFast.com](http://PTCFast.com). Conferences will only be scheduled with homeroom teachers, any additional staff that needs to be present will be in attendance as needed. Conferences will be held on Monday and Tuesday prior to Thanksgiving Break each year. Parents wishing to schedule a conference at other times during the school year should contact the teacher directly to arrange an appointment.

### **CLASS PLACEMENTS**

Class placements are determined by the previous year's teaching team and approved by the principal based on several factors. In priority, these are:

1. Academic Level – Attempts will be made to maintain a range of academic levels across homerooms.
2. The number of boys and girls in each classroom will be similar among all homerooms.
3. Special education needs may require a placement with a specific teacher after consultation with the IEP team.

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Additional consideration will be made in a placement if a sibling or other relative is in the same grade level and the parent requests a separation. See the principal by June 1st if one needs to share information that may affect placements. Once class lists are posted in August there will be no changes.

### **THIRD GRADE READING GUARANTEE**

Bluffton Elementary School annually evaluates the reading skills of each K-3 student by September 30th and identifies students who are reading below their grade level. A diagnostic assessment tool (approved by the Ohio Department of Education) is used to measure proficiency that is appropriate for each grade level. Written notification will be given to parents or guardians of students who are reading below their grade level. Intensive reading instruction is provided to students immediately after they are identified as having a reading deficiency. A reading improvement and monitoring plan is developed and shared with parents within 60 days of receiving the student's diagnostic results. Students are no longer required to be retained for not meeting a minimum overall or reading subscore as in year's past. If teachers, parents, and administration ALL AGREE that it is in the students best interest to be retained that may occur, but in most cases students will be promoted and interventions will be provided to help the student show growth!

## **V. HEALTH & SAFETY SERVICES & PRACTICES**

### **SCHOOL NURSE**

The school nurse's office is in the elementary building but the nurse serves all three buildings, with hours Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. If a parent desires a consultation with the nurse, the parent should contact the elementary school office and the nurse will be notified and will return the call as soon as she is available. The nurse works closely with physicians and health authorities and assists in carrying out the health policies of Bluffton Schools. Individual health records are maintained and notations are made for each visit to the nurse by a child.

In order for any medications (prescriptions or non-prescription) to be distributed by the nurse, it is necessary for the students to have prior written permission and directions for the doctor. No medication will be given unless sent in the original bottle with the proper form. Aspirin is not available in the school and teachers are not authorized to dispense medications (prescription or non-prescription).

### **FIRE, TORNADO, AND SAFETY DRILLS**

Fire drills are conducted once a month for all students. Tornado practice is held monthly in March, April, and May. School safety "Lock Down" drills are held at least once per school year. There are annual inspections by the state Fire Marshall and Health Inspector and an annual Fire Safety week is held to promote safety at school and at home.

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## **EMERGENCY EVACUATION**

If there should be a need to evacuate students, the elementary students will go with their teachers to Founders Hall at Bluffton University or another location permitted by administration. It will be announced through the alert system and parents may pick up their students. Parents must initial the student rosters kept by the teacher for each of their children before taking them from Founders Hall.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

In order to ensure the safety and well being of all students, teachers, school employees and guests, it is the policy of this school district to authorize its administrators to search the clothing and personal effects of students where such a search is reasonably necessary under all the surrounding circumstances. In order to conduct such a search, it is not necessary that the administrator have probable cause to believe that a crime or violation of a school rule has occurred. It is necessary only for the administrator to have reasonable suspicion to believe that a search will produce evidence that a student has violated or is violating a law or school rule. If such reasonable suspicion exists, an administrator may conduct a search of a student's person or personal effects including vehicles. The search shall be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the possible infraction that may have or may be occurring. Dog searches using K-9 units from law enforcement agencies may be used to search the school building, parking lot and grounds.