

**Barron
Elementary School
2024-2025**



**Student-Parent
Handbook**



Parents,

Welcome to Ruth Barron Elementary School. Our staff is committed to providing each of our students with a quality education. We recognize that a successful school results from an active partnership with parents. To promote this partnership, this Student-Parent Handbook describes guidelines and procedures that affect your child and your family. This handbook is not a contract; it is intended to serve as a guide to our school's practices and procedures, as well as parent and student responsibilities. This Handbook should be used in conjunction with the Pflugerville Independent School District (PFISD) Student Information Packet, Student Code of Conduct, and the policies of the PFISD Board of Education and the Texas Education Agency.

As with any organization striving to improve, we often examine and refine our procedures. As the school year progresses, any significant changes in procedures will be communicated. We are very excited about this school year and look forward to working with you to ensure your child's success. If at any time you have questions or suggestions regarding information in this Handbook, or anything at Barron, please feel free to contact me. Your input is welcome.

Sincerely,

Gerardo Ortiz
Principal

Key Information

Mission Statement

The mission of Ruth Barron Elementary is to cultivate a culture of high expectations through a rigorous curriculum, relevant learning experiences, embracing our diversity, and creating strong relationships with our learning community that will result in the success of every child. Simply put, "lo que se dice, se hace." This translates to "that which you say, you do."

Administration

Principal:	Gerardo Ortiz
Assistant Principal:	Felicia Foster
Counselor:	Danyette Davis
Instructional Coach	Emily Flatt
Nurse:	Lily Sanchez

Contact Information

Address:	14850 Harris Ridge Blvd Pflugerville, TX 78660
Main Office Phone:	512-594-4300
Main Office Fax:	512-594-4305

History

The school is named for Ruth Smith Barron, born in Pflugerville, Texas in 1901. She graduated from Pflugerville High School before attending the University of Mary-Hardin Baylor in Belton. Ruth Barron began teaching first grade in Pflugerville ISD while she finished her bachelor's degree. From 1922 to 1934, she taught at schools across Central Texas. While teaching at the Koppe Farm School, she met Tom Joe Barron, a widower with seven children, whom she married in 1939. After her husband's death in 1953, Ruth and her family moved back to Travis County to live with her mother and sister in the historic farmhouse, which had been in their family since 1869. In 1954, Ruth took a position teaching first grade in Pflugerville ISD. She retired from that position in 1963. The name Ruth Barron Elementary was nominated by her daughters Carolyn Barron and Ruth May Barron Mulenex, who live in the family's historic farmhouse today.

General School Schedule

7:05 a.m.	Front doors & main office opens, breakfast served in the cafeteria until 7:30
7:20 a.m.	Classrooms opened
7:35 a.m.	Tardy bell rings
7:35 a.m.	School Begins
2:50 p.m.	All students dismissed by this time
3:50 p.m.	Teacher duty day ends
3:30 p.m.	Main office closes

*Specific classroom schedules will be supplied by the homeroom teacher.

Morning Announcements

Senate Bill 83, passed in 2003, requires students to recite the pledge of allegiance to the United States flag and the pledge of allegiance to the Texas flag each day. If you do not want your child to participate in one or both of these pledges, please let us know in writing and we will honor your wishes. Senate Bill 83 also requires students to observe a moment of silence following the recitation of the pledges of allegiance. During this moment of silence, students may reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity that is not likely to interfere with or distract another student.

Security

General Guidelines (GKC Legal)

We encourage parents and others to visit Barron and participate in their children's learning. We value parent engagement and always want visitors to feel welcome. In order to protect the security of District students and staff, the learning environment, and student's privacy rights, the following guidelines are in place to keep students and staff safe, as well as to minimize interruptions to instruction time.

- All exterior doors will be locked during the school day. Visitors will only enter through the front door.
- **Visitors will also be asked to provide a valid government-issued driver's license or ID in order to be admitted into the school. All visitors will be screened by the Raptor system per district policy.**
- Once in the building, visitors should report to the main office to obtain a **photo ID badge** that should be worn during the entire visit to the campus.
- Staff members are instructed to approach any visitor who doesn't have an identifying badge and ask them to return to the office to get one.
- Exterior doors should never be propped open.
- If approached from the outside of a locked door, staff, students, and parents should direct all visitors to the main office.
- **Office staff will stop giving out visitor passes at 7:30 am.**
- **Parents are not allowed in the classroom hallways after the first day of school**

In specific circumstances involving special, campus-wide, or grade-level events, when the campus administration determines that an exception to the verification requirement is necessary to expedite visitor check-in, visitors may be allowed to report to the main office, receive a generic visitor badge and proceed directly to the location of the event. Visitors shall not be permitted to go to any other portion of the building without school personnel supervision or the appropriate identifying badge.

Volunteering

All volunteers who wish to participate in classroom activities or field trips must complete a volunteer application on the district's website (<http://www.pfisd.net>). Pflugerville ISD requires all volunteers to complete a background check. Section 22.083 of the Education Code authorizes a school district to conduct a background check to inquire about individuals' criminal history record information from any law enforcement or criminal justice agency on applications, employees, or volunteers of the District. Volunteers must **apply two to four weeks before** the anticipated event to ensure participation in student activities and field trips. **A new application must be submitted yearly.**

Having Lunch

If meeting your child for lunch, please get a visitor's badge and wait by the cafeteria area at their designated lunchtime. Students with parents must eat in the designated area outside the cafeteria. **Those approved by parents may eat with their children;** other students will not be permitted to leave the cafeteria.

Early Dismissal

If picking up your child early, office staff will attempt to contact the student to have the student meet you in the office. **Please make sure that you bring a photo ID.** Please plan accordingly and arrive a few minutes early when checking a student out before the regular dismissal time. No one under 18 years of age will be allowed to take a child out of school without parental approval. **Because several of our grade levels start dismissal at 2:30, the office will not be able to call down students for parents after that time, so early pick-ups must be done before 2:30 pm.** Students will be counted tardy if checked out before 2:50. Students with more than 3 tardies will be ineligible for perfect attendance.

Communications

Parent-School Communications

Barron provides several means of communication to help you stay informed about your child's life at school. In addition to written communications, parents have numerous opportunities to gather information and meet with the faculty and staff on a formal and informal basis. We welcome and encourage parents to volunteer in classrooms and assist teachers by appointment, and participate in activities and events. Please do not hesitate to approach your child's teacher with questions or concerns, in person, by email, or by phone. We appreciate your sensitivity to and consideration of instructional time and teacher schedules when visiting classrooms or making requests for conferences. If, after discussing the issue with your child's teacher, you still have concerns, we urge you to consult an administrator. The staff at Barron welcomes the opportunity to work together with parents to resolve issues for each child's benefit.

Thursday Folder

The weekly Friday Folder is one of the communication instruments between school and home. This system is designed to improve home/school communication by packaging take-home information together and sending it home on a predictable day. (Occasional notices or reminders may be sent home separately on different days, as needed.) It may contain student work, a teacher newsletter, a cafeteria menu, and bulletins and announcements from the PTO and PFISD. Please read the information in the Friday Folder carefully, and sign and return the folder with your child the following Monday. If you do not receive a Friday Folder, be sure to ask your child where it is. We are striving to decrease the amount of paper information that comes home and will make great efforts to continue to limit hard-copy items sent.

Administrator/Parent Coffee

Each month during the school year, the principal holds “Coffee Talks” to meet with parents on an informal basis. The Coffee Talk is an excellent way to stay current on school concerns and to ask questions you may have about school policies and events. If you have ideas for topics to discuss, please contact Ms. Balboa at 512-594-4326.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Communication between parents and teachers is essential for each student’s progress. Formal parent/teacher conferences are held each fall. Your child’s teacher will schedule these conferences with you. At conferences, teachers and parents discuss a child’s strengths and areas of need; and teachers review work portfolios, school-based assessments, and teacher observations. Together, parents and teachers develop action plans for the child. In the event that a parent is unable to attend a conference, the parent may request a telephone conference at a mutually agreeable time. If walking your child to their classroom during morning arrival, please be aware that this is not the best time to discuss serious questions or concerns. An agreed upon conference time should be scheduled during the teachers’ designated planning period.

Volunteering in the Classroom

Teachers welcome parents into the classroom to read to students, assist the teacher with clerical chores, or offer expertise relating to a specific area of study. Contact your child’s teacher to find out about volunteer opportunities in the classroom. All volunteers who work directly with children are asked to complete the PFISD volunteer background check.

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

Arrival at School

Students who arrive earlier than 7:20 am should go to the cafeteria for breakfast or to the designated area in the main hallway. Classroom doors open at 7:20 am. In the morning (before 7:35 am), parents will be allowed to walk students to the main hallway without signing in; but, they will not be able to walk into the classroom hallways without a visitor’s pass.

Dismissal from School

All students will be dismissed at 2:50. Elementary school children need the security of knowing exactly what to do when the school day is over and should be reminded regularly as to how they will go home. Please make sure your child understands his or her dismissal plans, especially if there is a change in daily routine. Be sure to communicate any change in plans directly to the teacher early in the day. In case of an emergency, office staff can also relay messages to your child. If your child misses his ride, tell him to speak with the staff member or crossing guard on duty and to go to the school office for help in case he or she misses a bus or carpool ride. Students who are not picked up by 3:00pm will be escorted by a staff member to the office to contact parents.

Traffic & Safety Procedures

The safety of students is our top priority. The school's rules for walkers, bicycle riders, and drivers are of primary importance in maintaining an accident-free environment for all of our students. Everyone driving children to and from school is responsible for understanding and following all safety rules, including parents, relatives, babysitters, friends, and others.

Drop Off & Pick Up Locations

Drop Off- All doors are opened at 7:05 am- Please do NOT drop off students earlier

Buses: students are dropped off in front of the school (north entrance) in the circular drive;

Walkers and car drop-offs: enter the doors at the back of the school (south entrance).

Pick Up Locations

Car pick up: in the car loop at the back of the building

Walk-up pick up: Wait outside the doors by basketball court in a line

Walkers: exit by the basketball court

Rules for Walkers

- Always follow a planned, direct route to your destination.
- Walk on sidewalks.
- Cross streets only at corners, after making sure conditions are safe.
- Do not talk to strangers or accept rides from strangers.
- All students (even those accompanied by adults) must cross streets near the school only with the safety patrol or crossing guard. Wait until the crossing guard has stopped traffic and calls you before you begin crossing.
- Do not walk on the lawns of the homes in the neighborhood.

Rules for Bike Riders

- All bicycle riders must wear helmets.
- Obey all traffic signs as well as the directions of crossing guards.
- Use both hands to steer. Put all your things in a backpack so your hands are free.
- Always make eye contact with drivers when crossing traffic.
- Bicycles must be walked while on campus sidewalks.
- Bicycles must be parked and locked each day in the school bicycle racks.

Rules for Drivers

- **Please do not use cell phones in school zones**
- Please do not leave your car unattended during drop-off or pick-up times.
- No parking in the circular drive in front of the school from 7:00 am-8:00 am or 2:00 pm-3:00 pm
- No parking in the Fire Lane at any time.
- No parking in slots designated for handicapped parking unless you have a handicapped placard.
- Please stay in line and do not form lines in the parking area.

Bus Transportation

Students who live within the Barron attendance zone, more than two miles away from the school, are eligible for bus service. Student guests are permitted to ride home with eligible bus riders as long as they have a permission slip signed by the parent.

Rules for Riding the Bus

Students riding the bus must abide by the following rules:

- Stay in your seat.
- Keep head, hands, and feet inside the bus.
- Do not throw objects inside the bus or out the window.
- Do not eat or drink on the bus.
- Keep the bus clean.
- Do not engage in destructive behavior.
- Be courteous.
- Cooperate with the bus driver.

Please note that the bus driver is authorized to assign seats. The bus driver waits and watches to see that all students dropped off in the morning are inside the building before leaving.

Consequences of Rule Violations

If a student violates one or more rules for riding the bus, the bus driver will report the violation(s) to the school staff. The student will then have a conference with the school staff and the student's parents will be notified. For a second offense, the student may be suspended from the bus, the student's parents will be notified, and the school staff will issue a written warning of the consequences of future violations. For a third offense, the student will be suspended from the bus for up to three days. For a fourth offense, the student will be suspended from the bus until an agreement is reached between the student, parent, principal, and bus driver. A major rule violation may result in a student being suspended from the bus on the first offense.

Safety Patrol

Safety Patrol is a community service provided by 5th-grade student volunteers. Safety patrol members are stationed in hallways and sidewalks to help children enter or leave the building and grounds safely. They do not stand in crosswalks. Safety patrol is a valuable service and its participants are to be treated with respect by all students and parents.

Attendance Guidelines

The academic success of every student is very important to us. To maximize education and engage in the presentation of information and activities that occur well beyond textbook assignments, daily attendance and arrival on time are critical, and should be the goal of every parent/guardian and child. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to monitor the child's attendance and require him/her to arrive on time and attend school every day.

Each student should maintain at least 90% attendance. This means they should have no more than 18 unexcused absences or tardy for the entire school year.

Policy

The Texas Compulsory Attendance Law states that PFISD can file a complaint against the parent/guardian of a student who has three or more unexcused *days or parts of days* within a four-week period and must file a complaint if the student has ten or more *days or parts of days* within a six-month period. For elementary campuses, “unexcused days or parts of days” are coded UNX (unexcused absence) or UT (unexcused tardy).

Excused vs. Unexcused

Students who are not at school at 9:30 am are counted absent. Students who arrive late or leave early are counted as tardy (tardy also means “absent part of the day”). The following reasons will be accepted as excused:

- Illness – if your child runs a fever, please keep him/her home until fever-free for 24 hours
- Holy days of obligation
- Extenuating circumstances – i.e. funeral or family emergency as approved by the principal

Students who have been out of school will need to provide documentation for their absence. If a student was out due to an illness, please submit a doctor’s note or a written parent note **within 3 days of returning to school**. If the student is out for any other reason such as family vacations it will count as a parent note unexcused. Excused and unexcused absences will still count toward the 90% attendance rule.

The following are common reasons for unexcused absences and tardies:

- Failure to provide documentation when the student is out ill, or failure to list correct dates on the note
- Being signed in or out during the day for a medical appointment without providing a note from the physician
- Travel
- Family event
- Oversleeping
- Car trouble or traffic

Perfect Attendance Award

Student tardies are calculated in the student’s attendance. For every 3 tardies, they will count as 1 absence. Students will need to have zero absences and only 2 tardies to be eligible for perfect attendance.

Homework

Homework is assigned on a regular basis in grades K-5. The purpose of homework is to give students additional practice using skills learned in the classroom. Research indicates that homework can make a positive difference in student achievement. Increasing amounts of homework are assigned each year, as is developmentally appropriate. In addition, some teachers ask that students keep a reading log.

Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their children's homework without doing it for them. Homework provides an opportunity to observe first-hand the concepts and skills your child is learning. Please contact the classroom teacher if your child consistently experiences difficulty with his or her assignments. The classroom teacher will contact a child's parents if the child is not submitting his or her homework or class work.

The following homework guidelines may be helpful for your child:

- Have a regular schedule for your child's homework, play, and chores. At least 30 minutes to 1.5 hours should be allotted to homework. You may want to allow your child a break between the school day and homework.
- Provide a good work area with adequate lighting, a desk or surface upon which to work, necessary supplies, and a quiet, calm atmosphere.
- Let your child do the homework. Stay nearby to answer questions or offer guidance.
- Review completed homework with your child.
- Designate a special spot for your child's homework to be placed to prevent last-minute searches in the morning.
- If your child does not seem to understand the assignment, write a note on your child's paper in order to enable the teacher to re-teach your child. **Please do not complete homework assignments for your child.**
- Be sure your child returns homework to school on time.
- The teacher will communicate any consequences for homework not completed.

General School Policies

PFISD Code of Conduct

The PFISD Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct are located on the District website for easy parent access. At the beginning of each school year, parents have the option to receive a copy of the "Pflugerville Independent School District Student Code of Conduct" if they do not have internet access. "The PFISD Student Code of Conduct" sets forth the rules for student behavior and the consequences for rule violations. You are asked to sign and return a receipt that acknowledges that you have received and reviewed the Student Code of Conduct.

Discipline Guidelines and Procedures

A positive atmosphere is essential to high levels of student achievement. One key component of this atmosphere is the absence of disruptions. Students are expected to exhibit a high level of responsibility in their behavior. Students are expected to:

- Be Safe, Be Responsible, Be Respectful
- Follow teacher's directions the first time.
- Walk quietly in the halls.
- Be responsible for learning and behavior.
- Leave unnecessary personal belongings at home.

We believe in Restorative Practices and Building Relationships. We believe that the consequences of a student's behavior should be meaningful and consistent with his or her social and emotional development and with the PFISD Student Code of Conduct. We conduct periodic assemblies to reinforce school rules and expectations for behavior. In addition, teachers may

have their own classroom behavior rules. For individual guidance, behavior contracts setting forth acceptable behavior may be entered into between teacher and student or among teacher, student, and administrator. Any time a child is sent to the principal's office for a serious behavior problem, the child's parents will be notified. Parents and students should refer to the PFISD Student Code of Conduct for more information on unacceptable behaviors and the consequences of such behaviors.

Bullying

The term "bullying" includes aggressive behavior or intentional harm-doing which can be physical, verbal, or emotional and is carried out repeatedly over time, and occurs among students in which the student who bullies has more power than the target. Bullying is not tolerated at school or school-sponsored events. Students who believe they are bullied are encouraged to report such incidents to a teacher or administrator so that appropriate action can be taken.

Dress Code

PFISD's student dress code is designed to maintain a safe, respectful, and positive learning environment and to model good citizenship. All clothing should be appropriate to the student's age, the school setting, and weather conditions. Clothing may not advertise, condone, depict, or promote the use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs; also prohibited is clothing with vulgar or obscene language, or with images or writings that promote disruption of the educational setting. Specifically, the following clothing items are no longer allowed by PFISD. No hoodies are on during school.

Textbook & Library Book Policy

All textbooks and library books are the property of the state of Texas and are loaned to students free of charge. However, students are responsible for lost or damaged books and will be expected to pay for them. Students are urged to take good care of books to avoid an assessment at the end of the year.

Toys and Electronic Devices

Toys, electronic games, game cards, spinners, etc., are not appropriate for school and should be left at home unless approved by your child's teacher for a school activity. Students are allowed to possess cell phones on campus, but they may not be activated during the instructional day. Other electronic devices, including MP3 players, iPods, Gameboys, Nintendo DS, and PSPs may be within a student's possession, but they must remain off and out of sight during the school day. If cell phones or other electronic devices interrupt or disturb instruction, the teacher may confiscate the device and turn it in to the office. Barron is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen cell phones and electronic devices.

Lost and Found

- All items such as clothing, lunch boxes/bags, notebooks, etc. **should be clearly marked with the student's first and last name.**
- All items found will be taken to the lost and found area in front of the gym.
- Lost and Found items will be displayed in the hall during program nights.
- The unclaimed items will be donated to local charities during the week before the winter holiday, spring break, and the end of school.

Parties/Celebrations

Student birthdays can be celebrated right before dismissal. Parents may bring cupcakes and drinks for the celebration. Please **do not bring/send balloons or other items** that will be distracting to students. If they are brought to school, they will be kept in the office until dismissal.

Parent Signature _____