

# Berkshire Elementary School Family Handbook



**2025-2026**

3900 Berkshire Road  
Bakersfield, California 93313  
(661) 834-9472

SchoolWebsite: [berkshire.pbvusd.ca.us](http://berkshire.pbvusd.ca.us)

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**BERKSHIRE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

3900 Berkshire Road  
Bakersfield, California 93313  
(661) 834-9472

August 2025

Dear Berkshire Family,

I am pleased to welcome you to the 2025-2026 school year officially! My primary goal is to ensure that every student receives the highest quality of education possible in a safe and supportive learning environment. Working with our staff and parents as a team, I am committed to helping each student achieve their best. Every student is valued and worthy of our best effort.

Research shows that parent involvement is high on the list of factors contributing to a student's success in school. We aim to work with you to provide the best educational program for your children.

This booklet is designed to provide you with various information to guide you throughout the year. It contains valuable information regarding school and district policies and procedures.

The staff and I look forward to working with you and your student(s) as we make this the most successful school year for all. Please know my door is open, and I promise always to make decisions that are in the best interest of all the scholars who walk through our doors and in our hallways.

We would appreciate hearing from you if you have any questions or suggestions about this information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy E. Mensing". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping flourish at the end.

Amy E. Mensing  
Principal

## **Berkshire Front Office Staff**

Title	Name Email address	
Principal	Amy Mensing <a href="mailto:amensing@pbvusd.k12.ca.us">amensing@pbvusd.k12.ca.us</a>	Questions and/or concerns about overall operations of the school, staff, safety, community, etc.
Assistant Principal	Chase Tyler Hicks <a href="mailto:chicks@pbvusd.k12.ca.us">chicks@pbvusd.k12.ca.us</a>	General questions and/or concerns regarding student discipline issues, consequences regarding your child, attendance/truancy, etc.
Secretary	Latunja Johnson <a href="mailto:lajohnson@pbvusd.k12.ca.us">lajohnson@pbvusd.k12.ca.us</a>	General questions and/or concerns about enrollment, attendance, students, teachers, staff, school events, health/wellness, etc.
School Clerk	Jennifer Rodriguez Pacheco <a href="mailto:jrodriguezpacheco@pbvusd.k12.ca.us">jrodriguezpacheco@pbvusd.k12.ca.us</a>	General questions and/or concerns about enrollment, attendance, students, teachers, staff, school events, and health/wellness. Spanish Translator
School Clerk	Courtney Belvin <a href="mailto:cbelvin@pbvusd.k12.ca.us">cbelvin@pbvusd.k12.ca.us</a>	General questions and/or concerns about enrollment, attendance, students, teachers, staff, school events, and health/wellness.
Academic Coach	Nicole Ammeraal <a href="mailto:nammeraal@pbvusd.k12.ca.us">nammeraal@pbvusd.k12.ca.us</a>	General questions and/or concerns about academics, testing/assessment, extra support, short-term independent study, etc.
Academic Coach	Miesha Norman <a href="mailto:mnorman@pbvusd.k12.ca.us">mnorman@pbvusd.k12.ca.us</a>	General questions and/or concerns about academics, testing/assessment, extra support, short-term independent study, etc.
School Nurse	Esmeralda Perez <a href="mailto:eperez@pbvusd.k12.ca.us">eperez@pbvusd.k12.ca.us</a>	General questions about available health/wellness support services, support for school attendance, referrals to community-based resources, medical needs, etc.
School Psychologist	Ashley Falke <a href="mailto:afalke@pbvusd.k12.ca.us">afalke@pbvusd.k12.ca.us</a>	General questions about available mental health support services, available school behavior-related interventions and support, referrals to community-based resources, Special Education Services, etc.

**Berkshire Teaching Staff 2025-2026**

<b>Transitional Kindergarten (TK)</b>	<b>Kindergarten</b>	<b>First Grade</b>	<b>Second Grade</b>	<b>Third Grade</b>
Jocelyn Babb	Terri Cline	Lisa Barton	Kate Bickham	Raina Daniels
Ashely Nichols	Michelle Johnson	Cathy Cacopardo	Rocio Rodriguez	Leticia Martinez
	Jorge Gonzalez Perez	Jessenia Pacheco	Cloie Sharp	Daisy Menjivar
	Aracely Valadez	Emiliano Rios	Jessica Woods	Candice Williams
<b>Fourth Grade</b>	<b>Fifth Grade</b>	<b>Fifth/Sixth</b>	<b>Sixth Grade</b>	<b>Impact Teacher</b>
Amanda Carter	Simran Becerra	Christina Book	Emily Bumgarner	Diane Lopez
Ana Cornejo	Ginesha Bivens		Nicole McCullar	
Geri Rivera	Avon Goyeneche		Devon Metzner	
Nicole Thomas	Travis Hauert		Yolanda Orantes	
<b>Special Day and IIC Teachers</b>				
<b>TK/K</b>	<b>First/Second</b>	<b>Third/Fourth</b>	<b>Fifth/Sixth</b>	<b>IIC</b>
Maria Bancini	Lee Ann Bagnall	Jason Conley	Alyssa Pesina	Carlie Wood
				Samantha Johnson

## **DISTRICT'S BELIEFS & VALUES**

The Panama-Buena Vista Union School District learning community provides a safe, supportive environment where all students can ask questions, find answers, reach their full academic potential and become caring, responsible citizens.

Our beliefs and values are:

- All children can learn, we teach all children.
- All children deserve a quality education in a safe environment.
- All stakeholders are active listeners and learners.
- Everyone works collaboratively to attain maximum achievement.
- We build relationships on respect for others and self.
- We value our community's diversity and its differences while embracing our commonalities.
- We hold ourselves accountable to achieve high standards through research-based instruction.
- Education is a partnership between the school, family, and our community.

## **BERKSHIRE VISION & MISSION**

*Berkshire Elementary School Vision:* Every member of our school community is treated with respect, dignity, shown grace, and is provided an equitable learning environment in which they can realize their full potential.

*Berkshire Elementary School Mission:* Meet the academic, social, emotional, and cultural needs of the students by:

- Ensuring a safe and nurturing learning environment
- Providing rich and engaging learning experiences
- Analyzing data to plan targeted instruction to meet individual student needs
- Planning meaningful community events
- Working collaboratively to ensure that we are the school of choice

## *General Information*

### **ATTENDANCE**

If your child is going to be absent from school, you must call, in the morning, to report the cause of absence. If you cannot call the office, a note, when the child returns to school, is required in the office. Absences must be cleared within 72 hours. Our telephone number is 834-9472.

*A doctor or dentist's note is required to excuse the following (it is recommended that you obtain a note any time your student visits the doctor or dentist during the school day):*

1. Arriving late or leaving early for a doctor or dentist appointment.
2. Three or more consecutive absences for illness.
3. Ten or more days of absence for illness in any school year.

For permanent accounting purposes, excused absences are as follows:

1. Personal illness.
2. Quarantine under the direction of a city or county health official.
3. Medical, dental, chiropractic, or eye care appointment.
4. Attending the funeral of a member of the immediate family.
5. Exclusion from school due to lack of proper immunizations (specified amount of time).
6. Participation in religious instruction or exercises per district policy.

Absences that may be recorded as "Personal" are listed below. Please note that a parent or guardian must submit a written request to the office before the anticipated date of absence.

1. Appearance in court.
2. Observation of a holiday or ceremony of his/her religion.
3. Attendance at religious retreats. (This can be for up to four hours during a semester.)

All other absences are considered "unexcused."

### **ACCIDENTS AND SAFETY**

In case of a severe accident at school, a child is given first aid. Every effort is made to contact a parent/guardian for additional instructions. For this reason, changes in telephone numbers, addresses, and emergency contacts must be reported to the school office promptly. If a parent cannot be reached, we will call the people you have named on the emergency card to act on your behalf.

We have forbidden children to bring skateboards, bats, balls, and spiked shoes to school for safety reasons.

## **BICYCLES**

Please make sure you sign a bicycle permit for your student. Bicycle permits are available in the front office at your request. To ride a bicycle to school, the following conditions must be met:

1. Parent approval with a signed bicycle permit on file
2. The bicycle is securely locked while on school grounds.
3. Bicycle rules to and from school need to be followed.
4. **A helmet must be worn whenever riding a bicycle to and from school.**

## **CAFETERIA**

California has implemented a statewide Universal Meals Program providing school children breakfast and lunch free of charge.

State law requires children to eat lunch daily at school, whether from home or school lunch.

Wholesome, nutritional breakfasts and lunches are available to the students daily. We encourage every student to eat a hot breakfast and/or lunch in the cafeteria. Milk is included with these meals. For those bringing their lunch from home, milk may be purchased separately for 50 cents.

## **CELL PHONES**

Students will be granted phone use only for emergencies and extraordinary situations. Berkshire adheres to the District guidelines and policies for cell phone use. Please review with your student.

## **CLASS PARTIES**

Class parties are held for winter break, Valentine's Day, spring break, and the end of school. The teacher will determine all treats and/or activities.

Birthday treats must be arranged between parents and teachers at least one day before the event. Suggested items are as follows:

1. Cookies
2. Pre-bagged treats
3. Pencils, erasers, etc.

Please do not bring frosted cupcakes, cakes, or colored beverages. Additionally, we do not allow fruit, flowers, or balloon bouquets to be delivered to students as it is a distraction that could keep children from learning.

## **COLOR DAY**

Every Friday is “Color Day” at Berkshire School. Color Day is an activity designated to build school spirit and pride. Our school colors are NAVY, YELLOW, and SILVER. We ask each student to participate in Color Day by wearing school colors. Your cooperation in helping your child dress for Color Day will aid greatly in the success of building school spirit.

## **DRESS CODE**

The Governing Board's position respecting student dress is to be adhered to by all pupils attending Panama-Buena Vista Union School District schools. The dress code aims to help generate a positive learning situation and guarantee all students' health and safety.

Pupils attending the schools of the Panama-Buena Vista Union School District schools are expected to wear clothing appropriate to promote an effective educational program. It is not the District's intent to oppose students' rights regarding dress but rather to ensure that the rights of all students are considered and upheld. It is the school's responsibility to provide an atmosphere where all children will be able to learn, and it is the responsibility of the students and their parents to help create and maintain this atmosphere.

Conditions of dress and appearance are:

Excessively large trousers, pants, and overalls may not be worn. All trousers and pants must be worn at the waist. Belt ends may not hang down.

Excessively oversized shirts. Including T-shirts, worn outside pants are not allowed. Shirt length cannot exceed the tips of fingers when a student stands with arms hanging down. Overalls must be worn with straps on the shoulders, not hanging loose.

All clothing must be neat in appearance. Commercial lettering or printing will be allowed on shirts and sweatshirts as long as it is acceptable for school attire. No clothing may be personalized other than a given name. Jackets, backpacks, binders, etc. may bear the owner's name in printed block letters. All other writing on clothing, backpacks, binder, etc., is unacceptable, as is writing on the hands or other parts of the body. Clothing full of holes or frayed because of being cut off is unacceptable.

Clothing that is excessively revealing is unacceptable. “Excessively Revealing” includes

- i. Clothing that is extremely tight-fitting
- ii. Backless halter tops or dresses; tube tops; tank tops; razorbacks; or muscle shirts cut low at the armpits or neckline
- iii. Clothing that shows bare midriffs
- iv. Shorts, the length of which is shorter than halfway between the mid-thigh and knee
- v. Clothing that is transparent or ripped/torn in a revealing manner

vi. Underwear being worn as an outer garment

Suggestive clothing or objects that are libelous, obscene, or depict illegal activity may not be worn. This includes buttons, armbands, shirts, insignias, etc. Bandanas of any color or type are not to be worn. Clothing with crude or vulgar printing or pictures depicting tobacco, drugs, alcoholic beverages, or clothing that is sexually suggestive or disruptive is unacceptable.

Clothing that indicates the student's membership on community teams not affiliated with the school may not be worn. This is added to preclude the wearing of jerseys, uniforms, etc., of teams not associated with the school programs. Shoes must be worn at all times. Sandals must have heel straps. Thongs or backless shoes, or sandals are not acceptable. Cosmetics to the face and hair that distract from the educational process, such as spray-painted hair, extreme face painting, glitter in the hair, etc., are unacceptable.

The Board and administration reserve the right to declare any mode of dress that, in their estimation, inhibits the educational process or threatens the safety and protection of all students is unacceptable. If students are dressed unacceptably, parents will be notified, and corrective measures must be taken before the student will be allowed to return to class. (Administrative Procedure- AP 5132 (b) 5136)

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Children are asked to turn over to a teacher or the office anything of value found on campus. Please put your child's name on any clothing that might be taken off at school- such as sweaters and jackets. Lunch boxes, water bottles, and sack lunches should also be labeled with your child's name. A "Lost and Found" cabinet containing unclaimed jackets, sweatshirts, lunch pails, etc., is located on the playground.

The lost and found will be cleaned out before winter break, spring break, and the last week of school. Items that appear to be jewelry and eyeglasses will be kept in the office until the end of the year. All other unclaimed items will be donated to the appropriate agencies.

### **MEDICATION**

The law requires schools to record all students who continue medication for a non-episodic condition. If your child is taking medication regularly, you are asked to notify the office and to fill out a "Health Collection" form. Children who need to be medicated at school must have the proper physician's medical release on file in the office. The medication must always be in the original container and kept in the office. Please arrange to pick up any such medications before the last day of school. All unclaimed medication will be properly disposed of at the end of the school year. **DO NOT SEND ANY MEDICATION TO SCHOOL UNTIL THE PROPER PAPERWORK HAS BEEN FILLED OUT IN THE OFFICE!**

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Parents are welcome at Berkshire Elementary. The staff at Berkshire works to provide a supportive learning environment and a challenging curriculum for all students. We believe that a successful educational experience results from parents, students, and staff working together to benefit each child. This section includes several ways for parents to be involved at school. \*Also see Visiting During School Hours

All visitors must sign in through the office and wear a visitor's RAPTOR badge for the entire duration while on campus. All visitors on campus are expected to model appropriate dress, language, and behavior for our students.

### **Parent Volunteers:**

Parents are encouraged to be frequent visitors in the classroom, and teachers actively seek parent participation and assistance. Berkshire invites parents to attend assemblies, Parent night activities, watch programs, and participate in field trips.

Teachers use parents in various ways, such as reading stories to the class or in small groups, working on projects with students, going on field trips, and sharing information about their profession. Regular classroom volunteers must attend the Volunteer Training in the Fall or Spring.

Special programs, notes, ParentSquare, telephone calls, parent/teacher conferences, bulletins, and monthly newsletters form the basis of communication between the school and parents. Parents are encouraged to present suggestions individually or by written communication at meetings.

### **Parent Committees and Councils**

Parents are strongly encouraged to participate in the Berkshire Parent Club, English Learner Advisory Council (ELAC), School Site Council (SSC), African American Parent Advisory Council (AAPAC), and monthly Chat a Lattes. The Parent Club is an active volunteer group of parents who support our educational program and help with activities to enrich our school program. The Parent Club meetings alternate between day and evening meetings. Notices will be sent home and posted on ParentSquare stating times and dates. The SSC and ELAC are elected groups of parents and staff that work together to guide the budgeting, operation, and evaluation of any specially-funded or categorical program. Monthly Chat a Latte provides the parents to hear and learn about current programs at school, ask questions, and receive training.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher conferences are essential to each child's education. Grade TK through 6th has scheduled parent conferences after the first report card period and in the Spring (after the 3rd Quarter by request). Please contact your child's teacher at any time throughout the year. The school must have family support to make a difference in the child's life.

## **TOYS/ SPORTS EQUIPMENT**

Children often bring toys and sports equipment to school. Because of the danger of loss, theft, and breakage, as well as the distraction from school work, toys, and sports equipment needs to be left at home. Kindergarten may have special days when children bring a toy “to share.”

### *Behavior Expectations*

## **CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY - BOOKS AND CHROMEBOOKS**

Books and Chromebooks are expensive. They should receive reasonable care to last as long as possible. Students are responsible for books issued and should not abuse or mark them. Books taken home regularly should always be covered with a paper or plastic cover. Youngsters who lose, abuse, or destroy books will be asked to pay for them. The same is true of any other school property issued to them.

## **CLASSROOM STANDARDS**

1. Students shall enter the classroom in an orderly manner.
2. They shall be seated, quiet, and ready to work when the bell rings.
3. They shall bring any necessary materials.
4. Rules of courtesy to teachers and classmates shall all be followed at all times.
5. Students shall meet each teacher’s standards concerning class procedures. Ie. sharpening pencils, getting needed materials, staying in seats, etc.
6. Every student shall be responsible for keeping the classroom neat and seeing that things are picked up from the floor.
7. Any personal grooming shall be done outside of the classroom.
8. The teacher will dismiss the classes, not the passing bell.
9. Students shall leave the room in an orderly manner.
10. Students shall not chew gum or eat in the classroom. No gum is allowed at any time. Since gum cannot be chewed at school, it should not be brought to school.

## **PERSONAL CONDUCT OF STUDENTS**

1. Language shall be clean and free of profanity and vulgarity.
2. Students shall be held responsible for their conduct to and from school.
3. Students are expected to be appropriately attired at all times.
4. Students shall respect all physical properties of the school and care for the buildings, furniture, Chromebooks, books, restrooms, and other equipment.

## **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION SYSTEM (PBIS )**

Schools are successful when they help children grow academically, socially, and emotionally. For this to happen, we must have a **safe environment** that is supportive and conducive to growth. By setting clear social and behavioral expectations and directly teaching students about those expectations, our goal is to continue having a **positive atmosphere for optimal learning**.

Berkshire Elementary School participates in **Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**. PBIS is a system for improving student behavior. It is used with all students across all environments in school (classroom, lunchroom, restroom, playground, library, MPR, and hallways) to help create a safe and effective learning environment. We are committed to teaching, reinforcing, and acknowledging appropriate student behaviors at Berkshire. Staff and students are expected to:

### **Be Accountable, Give Respect, Listen, Encourage, and Use Self-Control**

Children need positive reinforcement frequently. We do this individually by utilizing our Regal Eagle Ticket system, which reinforces following the expectations. We reward classes by handing out coins when the class follows an expectation. The class collects coins to earn a reward (i.e., extra recess, popcorn, STEM, or Art Lesson). One of the ways we like to reinforce outstanding students is by having the “Regal Eagle of the Month” in each class.

Each Regal Eagle will receive a special recognition package, and his/her photograph will be prominently displayed in the classroom in honor of this special achievement. Students will be recognized at our morning monthly achievement awards assembly. Each month, five students are selected by their teachers to be honored in their classrooms for citizenship, work habits, reading, math, and writing.

***Please see the Eagle Expectation Matrix and Behavior Flow Chart at the end of the handbook. We encourage you to review these with your students and use the Eagle Expectations at home.***

## **SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING**

In addition to instruction in positive behavior and traditional academic content area (i.e. English-Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, etc.), Berkshire makes efforts to equip students with the skills and tools they need to achieve both academic and life success. This

includes Social Emotional Learning, often referred to as SEL. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process of developing the self-awareness, self-control, and relationship skills that are essential for school, work, and life success. Beginning the 2025-2026 school year, Berkshire will participate in Character Strong, a program designed to empower students to build positive relationships and become the best version of themselves.

## **SAFE SCHOOLS STATE SUSPENSION POLICY**

To maintain safe and orderly schools, the state of California authorized school districts to suspend or expel students for the commission of serious offenses. Suspension is exclusion from school and all school activities for one to five days. Expulsion is defined as removing the students from all schools in the Panama-Buena Vista Union School District for an extended period. In some instances, the period of expulsion may cover one school year. Students considered for expulsion are brought before the District's Administrative Hearing Panel, where the facts of the cases are presented. The District's Board of Trustees reviews the Panel's findings and determines whether or not to issue an expulsion order.

Following Education Code 48900, school districts are granted the authority to suspend or expel students who have committed the following acts:

- a. Fighting/Assault
- b. Vandalism
- c. Tobacco, possession or use of
- d. Drugs, possession or use of
- e. Alcohol, possession, or use of
- f. Theft
- g. Weapons, possession, or assault
- h. Habitual profanity or vulgarity
- i. Disrespect to school personnel
- j. Defiance of school authority
- k. Disruption of school activities
- l. Sexual Harassment
- m. Hate violence
- n. Harassment, threats, or intimidation

The Panama-Buena Vista Union School District maintains that any knife, regardless of length or any weapon is strictly prohibited at school or at any school-sponsored activity. Students found to have a knife or weapon will be subject to expulsion. State and Federal law requires the Superintendent of the designee to immediately suspend and recommend for expulsion any student who brings a firearm to school.

We ask that all parents take time to review this important policy with their students so that we can work together to maintain safe and orderly school campuses.

## *Academic & Student Awards*

### **PRINCIPAL LIST AND HONOR ROLL**

- Outstanding fourth, fifth, and sixth-grade students are recognized on an Honor Roll at the end of each grading period.
- Those achieving an "A" average will be placed on the "Principal's List".
- A "B" average in the academic subjects taught daily (English, math, reading, spelling, social studies, and science-health) qualifies students for the Honor Roll. Conduct is also considered.
- Students must be working on grade level and may not be receiving a modified program in order to qualify for the Honor Roll. (Exceptions stated in Board Grading Policy.)
- Any grade below a "C" in any subject disqualifies the student.
- Principal and Honor Roll students will also be recognized at a quarterly awards assembly.

### **STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS**

The Panama-Buena Vista Union School District recognizes student achievement and strives to promote participation in all school activities. Each school awards 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6th-grade students who are active and successful in pursuing excellence by awarding block letters and stars.

BLOCK LETTER	250 Points
STAR	500 Points
EACH ADDITIONAL STAR	250 Points

Fifth-grade students transferring from another district will automatically receive 50 points to be placed in the fifth-grade cumulative total box. Sixth-grade students transferring from another district will automatically receive 100 points to be placed in the sixth-grade cumulative total box. All points are cumulative, beginning in the fourth grade.

#### Scholarship

Honor Roll* (per quarter)	30 Points
All 4 Quarters (extra)	30 Points
Principal's List* (per quarter)	40 Points
All 4 Quarters (extra)	40 Points

\*Note: Students may qualify for one or the other, not both.

#### Citizenship

Grade of A or A-	15 Points
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#### Student Government

Student Body President	100 Points
Student Body Officer	75 Points
Candidate for Student Body Officer	25 Points
Campaign Manager	10 Points
Convention Chairman	25 Points

Classroom Representative	25 Points
Election Board Member	10 Points

### Student Service

Office, library, valet parking, Peer Tutors, Technology Team, Peace Patrol, or other services to be determined by individual schools (per quarter maximum) 25 Points

### Athletics

After School Sports Team Participant	25 Points
1 <sup>st</sup> Place After School Sports Team Member or Participant in District Track Meet	40 Points
Participant In School Track Meet Only	10 Points
1 <sup>st</sup> Place, But Not Qualifying for District Meet	15 Points

### Music

Chorus (per quarter maximum)	25 Points
Band (per quarter maximum)	25 Points
Orchestra (per quarter maximum)	25 points

### Academic Competition (Oral Language, Science Fair, etc.)

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	50 Points
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	35 Points
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	20 Points
Contestant/Participant	15 Points

## *Extracurricular Activities*

### **ATHLETIC PROGRAM**

At Berkshire School, we have an after-school sports program. We have after-school competitions in football, basketball, and track & field for boys and volleyball, basketball, and track & field for girls.

### **MUSIC**

**Classroom Music** – Primary children receive instruction from their classroom teacher. Intermediate children receive instruction from a music specialist. Activities include singing, dancing, rhythm instrument experiences, the development of listening skills, and music appreciation. Fifth and sixth graders have the opportunity to sing in a grade-level chorus. These groups are primarily concerned with performances.

**Instrumental Music** - Class instruction on the standard instruments of the band and orchestra is offered to all qualified fifth and sixth-grade students on a "pull-out" basis. The school band and orchestra rehearse each week. All 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> students who attend Berkshire School, who can play the music, may audition to join.

We welcome all parents who would like to assist in the music program, activities, and enrichment experiences.

## **ART**

- Every student for TK-6th grade receives Art Instruction every other week from our Art Specialist

## **STUDENT GOVERNMENT**

- The Berkshire School Student Council comprises fourth, fifth, and sixth-grade students representing all grades.
- Participants will learn the basics of democratic procedures in discussing and solving their everyday problems of group living.
- Elected officers will be the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Director of Safety, Superintendent of the Grounds, and Director of Activities.
- Election dates and further information concerning student government will be announced in early September.

## *Alternative Schedules*

## **EVACUATION PLAN**

If the students of Berkshire School have to be evacuated from the school site, the following procedures will be used:

1. The principal will notify the district office. The district office will put into effect, at once, The Berkshire Evacuation Plan. If the district office receives initial notification, they will notify the buses and the principal. The plan draws buses from all over the district to proceed immediately and directly to Berkshire School and evacuate all students according to a plan drawn up by the principal and reviewed with the teachers.
2. If a bus driver is delivering or picking up students at another school other than Berkshire and hears the call, they are to drop any children they have off their bus at the nearest school or park and proceed directly to Berkshire.
3. As soon as buses arrive, students will be put aboard, starting with the lowest grade first, and taken from the Berkshire site to Loudon School, 4000 Loudon Street. Loudon School is 1.5 miles from Berkshire in a northerly direction. It is a large site with a large cafeteria that can easily handle the Berkshire student body.
4. Students from Berkshire will remain at Loudon until
  - The fire department declares that the area is safe and we can return to Berkshire.

- Parents arrive at Loudon to pick up the children. Teachers will work on a buddy system, two to a grade. One teacher will be available to help parents locate their children.
- If school dismissal time comes before the emergency is declared over, all Berkshire students will remain at Loudon until their parents pick them up or the buses are allowed to take them home.

Berkshire School could be evacuated due to a chemical spill, earthquake, or other natural disaster. In the event of a chemical spill, all students will remain in the classrooms with all windows, doors, and vents closed. In an earthquake, the head custodian and/or his designee will be prepared to shut off all power, electricity, and gas to the plant. Students will assemble outside in their designated areas when it is safe. When buses arrive, the students will board the buses safely but expediently.

## **FOG DELAY**

During the winter, heavy fog may occasionally delay or close some Kern County schools. If there is fog and you think the school may be delayed or closed - PLEASE LISTEN TO YOUR RADIO. Information is made available on virtually all local stations.

Our procedure calls for our schools to be open at the normal time, even though we may delay bus transportation for two (2) hours. Students who normally walk or are transported to school by their parents can attend at the normal time. I want to stress that we are not encouraging parents to send their students out in unsafe conditions, nor are we asking them to transport their children when they feel unsafe. Many parents must make provisions by taking their children somewhere. In many cases, while extremely heavy in one area, the fog conditions may be spotty and permissible for students to walk in another.

Our district policy

1. When fog delays are called, school bus schedules will run two (2) hours later than the regular time.
2. Schools will be open regularly to receive students who normally walk or are transported by their parents. Once again, parents are urged to consider the conditions on any given morning a delay is called before sending or bringing their child to school.
3. Decisions to call fog delays must be made by 6:15 a.m. each morning. Occasionally, fog will come in after the buses have departed, and it is too late to get on the fog delays tape. When this happens, or at any time in your judgment, you feel it is unsafe or dangerous for your child to board the bus or to walk to school, we encourage you to keep your child at home. He or she will have the opportunity to make-up any missed work. As has been the practice, all fog delays will be announced on local radio and television stations. Do not call the Highway Patrol or school office.
4. School Closure - In the event of extremely hazardous fog conditions over a major part of the valley, the decision to close all schools will be made by a committee composed of representatives from districts in the central areas. If such an event should occur, a general

announcement will be made of the complete closing of school the day before or the evening before the closing of schools.

5. Bus Transportation Cancellation - In the event of a two (2) hour bus transportation delay and should conditions remain so severe that it would be deemed unsafe to send the buses on a delayed schedule, parents would be notified by radio and television at least one-half (1/2) hour before the bus pick up time. Therefore, it is important to stay tuned to your radio or television station for the latest information. If bus transportation is completely canceled for the day, those students who have been transported by parents or have walked to school will be released at their normal time to either walk or be picked up. Parents should discuss this situation with their children.

## **MINIMUM DAYS**

There will be three two-hour minimum days during the school year that will affect grades TK -6.

- Friday, November 21st (the day before the Thanksgiving holiday)
- Friday, December 19th (the day before the beginning of winter recess)
- Friday, March 27th (the day before the beginning of spring recess)

Wednesday will be a 90-minute early release staff development day for grades TK-6.

We will also participate in one-hour minimum days before special events, i.e., Back to School Night, Family Math & Literacy Night, Parent Conference Week, and Open House.

The last day of school, May 29th is a three-hour minimum day

Information will be sent home and posted on Parent Square before each of these days.

# DISTRICT CALENDAR

BELL SCHEDULE

	<p style="text-align: center;">Berkshire Elementary Bell Schedule 2025-2026</p>
8:05	Gate Opens
8:05	Teachers Report
8:10	Bus Drop Off/ Morning Duty
8:28	Instruction Begins
9:15-9:30	TK/KN Recess
9:40-9:55	1st/2nd Recess
10:00-10:15	3rd/4th Recess
10:20-10:35	5th/6th Recess
10:35-11:20	TK/K Lunch
11:10-11:55	1st/2nd Grade Lunch
11:45-12:30	3rd/4th Lunch
12:20-1:05	5th Lunch
12:35-1:20	6th Lunch
2:50 (Wed 1:20)	Primary Dismissal (TK-3rd)
3:00 (Wed 1:30)	Intermediate Dismissal (4th-6th)

EAGLE EXPECTATION MATRIX

# Berkshire Eagle Expectations



Eagles	Are Accountable	Give Respect	Listen	Encourage	Self Control
Cafeteria	-Get three food items -Use eating time wisely -Clean up after yourself	-Use your manners -Follow directions the first time	-Voice level: 2 -Wait for dismissal	-Try new foods -Model good behavior	-Raise your hand -Stay seated -Hands & feet to yourself
Walkway	-Walk at all times -Keep walkways clean and clear -Stay to the right	-Share the walkway -Be mindful of working classes	-Voice level: 0 -Stay alert	-Model good behavior -Greet people positively -Straight and quiet lines	-Hands & feet to yourself -Hand behind your back
Bathroom	-Go, flush, wash, exit	-Respect each other's privacy -Keep the restroom clean	-Voice level: 1	-Model good behavior -Report problems to an adult	-Hands & feet to yourself -Use restroom supplies appropriately
Playground	-Follow game rules -Use equipment and material appropriately	-Use kind, appropriate language -Return equipment to appropriate location	-Voice level: 4 -Listen for directions (including whistles and bells)	-Model good behavior -Include others in games	-Hands & feet to yourself -Walk to line up quickly and quietly when bell rings
Office	-Enter only if you have a pass -Answer politely when you are asked a question	-Stand quietly on the Eagle -Wait to be helped by an adult	-Voice level: 0 -Listen for directions and speak clearly	-Show others how to behave when in the office	-Hands to yourself -Do not play with the blinds -Sit still in the chairs when waiting
Library	-Keep books clean -No writing or tearing pages in the books	-Use shelf spacers when choosing books -Put books away properly	-Voice level: 1 -Listen for instructions	-Take your time when choosing books -Try a different series or author	-Enter the library quietly -Sit in chairs properly -Stand while waiting to check out books, do not lay on the counter

**Panama-Buena Vista Union School District**  
**Berkshire Elementary School**  
**CLASSROOM VISITATION PROCEDURES**  
**(Observation of Instructional Program by Parents)**  
**From Adopted District Administrative Procedures**

Who May Visit: The right to observe a child's instructional program during classroom time resides solely with a child's parent, legal guardian, or foster parent and does not extend to grandparents, other interested close relatives, or caregivers as defined in Family Code Sections 6550-6552. A grandparent, close relative, or caregiver may schedule a classroom visit if a parent has provided written permission and the classroom teacher consents. Visits by grandparents, close relatives, or caregivers must be scheduled through the Principal rather than the classroom teacher.

Scheduling: Visits shall be scheduled by the classroom teacher for a time and date convenient to both the parent and the teacher. The parental observation date shall be within a reasonable time frame following the initial request. A request for a specific date must be made no less than 48 hours in advance.

Frequency and Duration: To minimize interruptions and distractions during valuable classroom time, parental classroom observations are limited to two visits per month per related student with a maximum duration of one hour per visit. If there is a need for more parental observation, additional visits may be scheduled through the Principal.

Parental Conduct During Classroom Visitation: Parents may enter and exit the classroom only once during each visit. Parents shall remain in the back of the classroom and may not interact with students or the teacher unless the interaction is initiated by the classroom teacher. Unnecessary noise and/or movement must be kept to a minimum.

The classroom teacher may direct a parent to leave the room if the parent's presence or conduct unduly interferes with the instructional program, and the parent must leave the classroom if directed to do so. Any concerns or complaints may be addressed directly to the classroom teacher after regular school hours or to the Principal.

Violation of Classroom Visitation Rules: A violation of the classroom visitation rules may be resolved by the classroom teacher through counseling the offending parent privately. If this form of correction is not effective, the Principal may, as necessary, temporarily preclude a parent from visiting his/her child's classroom during regular school hours for a period of time not to exceed 14 continuous days.

When a parent has been precluded by the Principal from visiting his/her child's classroom, the parent may appeal the decision to the District's Assistant Superintendent in charge of Educational Services who will investigate and consider the matter in a timely fashion.

Notification of Classroom Visitation Procedures: Parents shall receive notification of classroom visitation procedures. The notification used should be substantially as follows:

“Parents are encouraged to visit their child's classroom and observe the instructional program. Visits must be scheduled directly with the classroom teacher and, generally, at least 48 hours in advance.

“Distractions and interruptions seriously impair the educational process. To minimize distractions during valuable classroom time, parental visits are limited to twice per month for a maximum of one hour per visit. Additional visits may be scheduled through the Principal if more observation time is needed.

“While visiting, parents are generally required to remain quiet and in the back of the room in order to minimize the classroom interruption which a visitor's presence typically causes.

“Copies of the school's classroom observation procedures are available upon request.”

REFERENCES:

Education Code Sections 32212, 35160, 49091.10, 51101  
PBVUSD Board Policy 1250

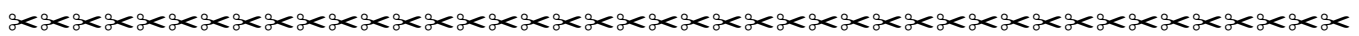
# **CELLULAR PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC SIGNALING DEVICES**

Students will have limited use of electronic signaling devices, including, but not limited to, cell phones, pagers, and beepers. To avoid disruption of the instructional process, students shall not display, use, activate, or permit electronic signaling devices to be activated during the school day. For purposes of this policy and procedure, the “school day” is defined as the moment a student enters the school grounds until the student exits the school grounds following the final dismissal bell. The “school day” also includes, but is not limited to, study hall, lunch break, class changes and any other structured or non-structured instructional activity occurring during the normal school day.

It is the student’s responsibility to ensure his/her electronic signaling communication devices are turned off and secured at all times. Students who violate the rules and regulations concerning electronic signaling communication devices are subject to having the device confiscated and to disciplinary action. (Board Policy 5131)

In accordance with the Board’s policy and administrative procedure on search and seizure, a school official may search a student’s mobile communications device, including, but not limited to, reviewing messages or viewing pictures.

The district is not responsible for the retrieval, replacement, or any charges incurred as a result of lost, stolen, or damaged electronic communication devices. No student shall be prohibited from possessing or using an electronic signaling device determined by a licensed physician or surgeon to be essential for the student’s health and the use of which is limited to a health-related purpose. (E.C. §48901.5) If a student wishes to use an electronic communication device at an unauthorized time for medical purposes, his/her parent or guardian must submit a written request for permission to the school principal or his/her designee to determine the validity of the request.



## Authorization for Student Cell Phone/Electronic Signaling Device Use

By signing below, you acknowledge you have read and have a clear understanding of the policy and procedure relating to cellular phones and other electronic signaling devices stated above. Your signature further authorizes your child to possess a cell phone or other electronic signaling device at school.

Please return this to your child’s school principal.

Child’s Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent’s Signature \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

# **Berkshire School Arrival/Dismissal Procedures**

## **Student Drop Off and Pick Up**

Keep our community safe.

Drop off and pick up will only occur in the bus loop on Berkshire Rd (east of the office).

Please have your child prepared to exit the car quickly. There will be no parking in the loop.

Drivers should pull forward as far as possible when dropping off and picking up students so that we can accommodate as many cars as possible.

Please do not pass other vehicles in the car rider line; wait your turn to pull forward; it will only take a couple of minutes.

Children must never grab the car door handle while the car is in motion at any time.

Exiting the loop, you must make a right turn only.

Do not double-park in the driveway or street. Observe all traffic and safety laws.

Insist that your children use the crosswalk when crossing the street.

Students may not cross the parking lot. They must use the sidewalk to get to the street or you.

Students should be picked up at dismissal time and may not wait unsupervised for siblings who are dismissed later.

If you are going to pick up your student, you will wait behind the line near the Main Gate

Model appropriate behavior for your child. Following the procedures ensures a safe and peaceful arrival and departure.

<b><u>Arrival</u></b>	<b><u>Dismissal</u></b>
<p><b>Arrival: 8:05-8:28 – Supervision of the children by support staff begins at 8:05 AM. Children should not arrive at school before 8:05 AM.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Be prepared for delays.</li> <li>● Arrive a few minutes early to avoid traffic.</li> <li>● Select alternative drop-off areas.</li> <li>● No double-parking</li> <li>● Use the crosswalk when crossing the street</li> <li>● Students should not cross the parking lot</li> <li>● Front Parking Lot is for busses only</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Drive safely.</li> <li>● Be prepared for delays.</li> <li>● No double-parking</li> <li>● Meet your child in the designated pick-up area.</li> <li>● Use the crosswalk when crossing the street</li> <li>● Students should not cross the parking lot</li> <li>● Do not back into the Valet Loop</li> <li>● Please don't call your child to your car.</li> <li>● At the end of the school day, students must follow their routine dismissal procedure.</li> <li>● Parents who wish to speak with their child's teacher are asked to send a note or go to the office via the main entrance doors.</li> </ul>

**Walker:** Any child who walks off school grounds to either:

- Go home
- To meet a parent parked off school grounds.
- **WALKERS CANNOT BE PICKED UP FROM THE STAFF PARKING LOT**

**Buser** – Any child who takes the bus home is considered a buser.

- If your child is assigned to a bus, please have them use this mode of transportation.

**Parent Pick Up** – For your child to be considered parent pickup, you must walk on school grounds, wait in the pickup line in front of the Main Gate.

- For a faster and more efficient pick-up please use the Parent Pick-up Card.
- Remember: If you wait off school grounds for your child, he/she is a walker, not a parent pickup.

If you want your child to be a walker and haven't filled out the Walker form yet- the forms are on ParentSquare in the "Link" section.



Family Handbook  
Acknowledgement and Signature Page  
2025-2026

**Please tear off and return this signature page to your child's teacher.**

I have read and agree to support the rules and expectations outlined in the  
Berkshire Elementary Family Handbook.

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Parent/Family Member Signature

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Date

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Print First and Last Name/Relationship to the student

---

Student's Name (Please Print First and Last Name)

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Teacher

---

Grade