



# **Ballentine Elementary School**

## **Student & Parent Handbook 2025-2026**

### **School Hours**

Main Office Hours: 7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Instructional Day: 7:50 a.m. - 2:40 p.m.

Student Drop-off Begins: 7:10 a.m.

Breakfast Served: 7:10 a.m. - 7:40 a.m.

Student Pick-up Begin: 2:40 p.m.

### **Phone Numbers**

Main Number: 803-476-4500

Fax Number: 803-476-4520

Cafeteria: 803-476-4508

Nurse: 803-476-4509

Dutch Fork Transportation: 803-476-4990

Chapin Bus Transportation: 803-575-5856

### **Early Release Days - Dismiss at 11:40**

Thursday, September 18

Thursday, October 23

Thursday, November 13

Thursday, January 29

Thursday, February 26

Thursday, March 26

# At a Glance Info

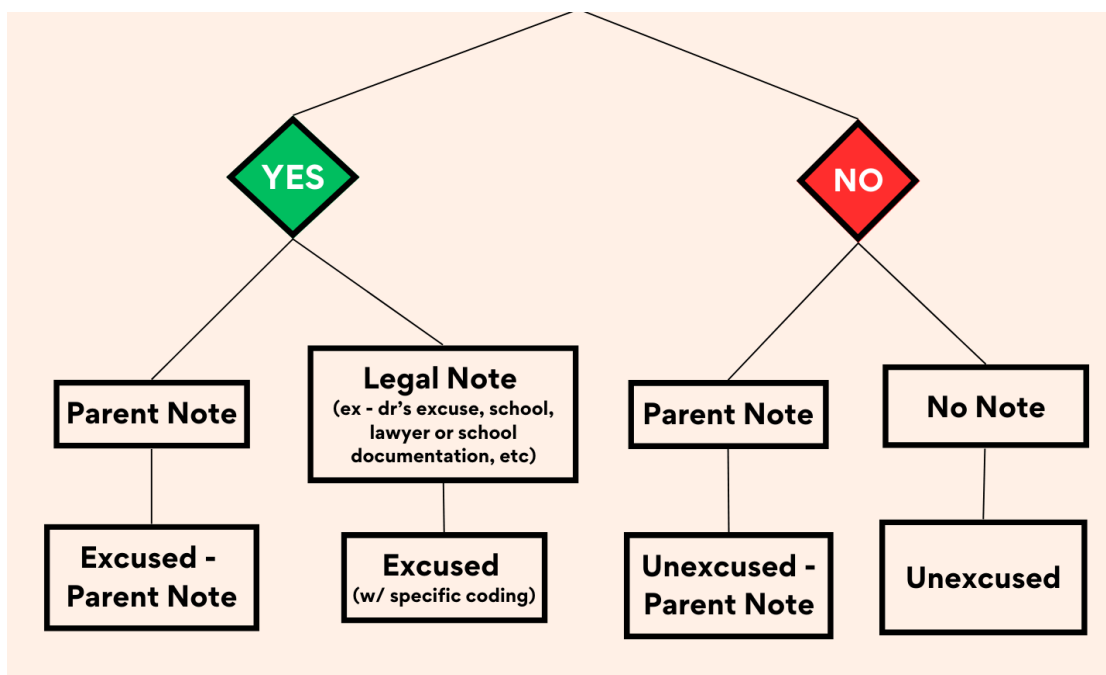
**1. PARENT CONTACT INFORMATION:** The school office must have a telephone number at which parents can be reached during the school day, even if that number is unlisted. This is particularly important when emergencies occur. At least one emergency contact number is also needed. Please notify the office staff when changing address, telephone number, or place of employment.

**2. ABSENCES:** No child can be expected to be successful in school if attendance is irregular. A student should be in school every day that he/she is physically able. Whenever possible, medical, dental and other appointments should be made for non-school hours. Please make every effort to plan family vacations and trips around student holidays and in-service days. \*\*\* A note is required for each absence and should be sent to school no later than the student's third day back. \*\*\*

State law and district policy set specific rules for lawful (excused) and unlawful (unexcused) absences.

## **Lawful (excused) absences include:**

- An office visit with a physician, dentist, or other recognized licensed/certified medical practitioner, or legal officer.
- Serious illness or death in the student's immediate family.
- Observance of recognized religious holidays of the student's faith.
- Participation in school-related activities that have prior approval of the principal or designee.
- Suspension from school.
- Other extenuating circumstances approved by the principal.



- **A student is considered truant when**

- there are three consecutive absences (excused or unexcused) or
- a total of five unexcused absences

The principal or designee will work with the parent to improve student attendance. Students who continue to be absent unlawfully may be referred to Family Court.

- **Excessive Absences:**

Students who are absent more than ten (10) days during the school year must have a written excuse from a licensed/certified health practitioner for those days in excess of ten (10).

In addition, any student who is absent more than twenty (20) days during the school year may not be eligible for promotion.

- **Chronic Absenteeism:**

In accordance with the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), schools are now required to capture the exact amount of instructional time that a student is missing throughout the day.

The OCR deems a student to be defined as "chronically absent" when s/he misses 50 percent or more of the instructional day for any reason for 10% or more of the enrollment period.

All absences contribute to chronic absenteeism (lawful, unlawful, or suspensions)

As a result, all SC schools will track the exact minutes students are on campus. Therefore, it is imperative that students are on time to school and remain at school, when possible, for the entire instructional period.

- **Assignments & Absences:**

If a student is absent for only one or two days, missed assignments will be sent home as homework once the child returns.

If a student is absent for three or more days, parents need to request missed assignments from the teacher. The assignments may be picked up in the office once the work is ready. **When requesting missed assignments, please allow 24 hours before coming by the school to collect student work.**

The assignments sent home will be determined by the teacher and do not necessarily represent every assignment or instruction completed in the classroom during the absence. There may be some make-up work to

complete when the student returns to school, including tests and assignments that need direct teacher instruction.

**3. TARDIES:** Our instructional day begins at 7:50 a.m.

- A student entering the building after 7:50 a.m. is tardy and must be escorted into the office by an adult to sign in and obtain a tardy pass before reporting to class.
- A written excuse explaining the reason for tardiness is required.
- Only valid reasons (ex. doctor appointments) will be marked as excused.
- Oversleeping, rain, or traffic in the car line are not considered an excused tardy.
- Parents will be notified when a child has 15 or more tardies.
- At 20 tardies, an Attendance Improvement Plan will be developed with the parents.
- 30+ unexcused tardies may result in a referral to DSS and/or Family Court.

**4. EARLY DISMISSALS:** Early dismissals cause children to miss valuable instruction, however, if there is a need to remove your child from school during the day for a doctor/dentist appointment or other reason, the parent must come into the main office in order to sign the child out of school. At this time your child will be called to the office for dismissal. Students will not be dismissed from the classroom to a parent waiting in the hallway. **Please plan to pick up children for early dismissal by 2:00 p.m.** as the car line fills up early and the parking lot may not be accessible. Please note that after a child has ten (10) early dismissals, the principal or designee will work with the parent to improve student attendance.

**5. CHANGE OF TRANSPORTATION:** If an occasional emergency should arise and you need to change afternoon transportation for your child, we ask that you do so **before 2:00**. It is preferred that you come by the office in person to make these changes, but if this is not feasible, please call the school office or send in a handwritten note to make this request. **\*\*\*Please do not email or leave a voice message for the teacher in regards to a change of transportation. If there is a substitute, or email is not working, or the teacher doesn't check messages until after school, we would not receive the information in time.** We ask that you try to avoid changing dismissal procedures for your child too frequently, however, as this can be very confusing during dismissal time.

**6. NOTES REQUIRED FROM PARENTS:** The school requires notes from parents for the following:

- all absences (handwritten or submit online through school website)
- requests for early dismissal
- permission for field trips
- anticipated, prolonged absences from school, (trips, hospitalization, etc.)
- change in usual method of transportation home
- authorization to administer any medicine
- specific medical treatment of special health needs

- food allergy or intolerance (doctor's note required for cafeteria)
- permission to go home with another student after school (*Please note - Students may not ride home on a bus for which they are not assigned without prior permission from the District Transportation Office, 476-4990. A written note from a parent will not be accepted.*)

**7. GUESTS & VISITORS:** We welcome visitors and guests to our school! Please enter through the office to sign in and obtain a VISITOR/GUEST sticker before entering the halls or classrooms.

**All visitors seeking access to the building will be screened through the OpenGate device and LobbyGuard.** To facilitate and expedite this process, please limit what you carry on your person and in your pockets. We highly recommend limiting items to car keys and a cell phone. All other items (bags, purses, etc) should be left in your car.

**You will need a driver's license or other state-issued ID each time you sign in at the front office** in order to sign in through our Lobby Guard system.

In order to promote the safety and welfare of students and staff members while they are on school grounds, **video cameras are in use in various locations within the school.**

- **Classroom Visits** - Our open door policy welcomes parents to visit briefly in their children's classrooms as long as their presence does not disrupt instruction.
  - **Classroom visits should be scheduled** with the teacher ahead of time to avoid tests, quizzes, or a modified schedule.
  - **Visits in excess of one hour** must be scheduled with both the teacher and the principal prior to the visit.

You may be asked to sit near the back of the room, away from your child, to maintain the learning environment for all students. Guests/parents should not interrupt instruction to speak with your child, a classmate, or your child's teacher during instructional time. If you need to speak with the teacher, please schedule an alternate time with the teacher. Younger siblings may not be brought to the classroom during instructional time.

- **Lunch with your child** - Due to assigned and limited seating in the cafeteria, guests will need to sit at designated visitor tables. As a reminder, other classmates may not be asked to join the parent/child.
- **Special events and state testing days** - Many special events, such as our Boosterthon Fun Run, grade level activities, and chorus performances, lend themselves to visitors and spectators and we welcome everyone to come and participate!

Occasionally, due to the rotating schedule of activities and the need for more supervision, school wide events such as our Bear Blast only allow parent volunteers to specifically help with supervision and to assist with games/activities.

On state testing days, in order to ensure the best testing environment for all students, we ask that there be no visitors until the testing has been completed for the day.

For events such as 5th Grade Graduation or Kindergarten Celebration during the school day, if a parent wishes for a younger/older sibling to leave his classroom to attend the event, the student must be signed out through the front office.

**8. MONEY:** Whenever possible, payments should be made online for food services, school pictures, fees, PTO purchases, and field trips. There are occasions, however, when students may need to bring cash to school for specific purposes. Parents should place such money in an envelope with the student's name written on it, as well as the purpose of the money. The school will not be held responsible for lost or misplaced money.

**9. PERSONAL POSSESSIONS AT SCHOOL:** Students should not bring toys and personal items not related to the educational program to school. Toys or other electronic devices that are disruptive or become a distraction may be confiscated and only released to the parents. The school will not be held responsible for personal items that are damaged, stolen, or lost.

**10. WATER BOTTLES:** Students may bring water bottles to school provided that they are leak-proof and can be completely closed to avoid spilling. To protect the flooring and books, only water may be brought into the classroom. Water bottles should be carried in an outside backpack pocket to avoid leaking and water damage to books and devices.

**11. CELEBRATIONS & SPECIAL OCCASIONS:**

- Birthday parties are not permitted at school. For special occasions it is preferred that a parent or other special guest come for a read aloud or for lunch.
- Parents must coordinate with the teacher prior to bringing any special snacks to ensure they meet the school district guidelines. (Please note that candy, cakes, cupcakes, and most cookies do not meet the district guidelines.) **\*\*\*To avoid disappointment, and the possibility of special snacks being sent back home, please coordinate special snacks in advance with the teacher to ensure they meet the District guidelines.**
- Deliveries such as balloons, flowers, food (Door Dash), etc. will not be accepted for students.
- *More detailed information is provided in the Celebrations and Parties section of the handbook*

**12. KINDERGARTEN BUS STUDENTS:** Kindergarten students will not be released from the bus if a parent, guardian, or sibling or designated individual is not at the bus stop. If an appropriate authorized individual is not at the bus stop the kindergarten student will be returned to the elementary school and parents/guardian notified.

# Parents - Be in the Know!



**Visit the school!** We have established an open door policy where parents and community members are valued and feel welcome inside the school. See specific details in the handbook for when and how to visit!

**Get involved!** Events such as "Meet Your Teacher" and "BES Preview" at the beginning of each school year provide parents with an opportunity to tour the school, meet the faculty and staff, and learn more about the upcoming year. We encourage parents and community members to become involved in our many school programs, initiatives and volunteer opportunities. Our Parent & Teacher Organization (PTO) also has many easy ways to get involved – even if you have a busy schedule.

**Read all about it!** In addition to weekly classroom and monthly school newsletters, and weekly school updates, the school web page, along with many teacher web pages provide a wealth of information about the school, upcoming events and current topics of study. These newsletters also solicit input from parents regarding the school, curricular programs, etc. News about Ballentine Elementary is often highlighted in the local newspapers, on the district web page, and the school web page itself. The school web page is updated regularly and includes the school newsletter, school information, calendars, menus, handbooks, standards, and many useful links. In addition, all staff members can be contacted through email by accessing our website.

**Call or email us!** We welcome your comments, questions, ideas, concerns, and suggestions! The school's phone number is 476-4500. To email, go to our website, [www.lexrich5.org/BES](http://www.lexrich5.org/BES) select "Staff Directory" from the quick link section on the left of the screen, and find the email address of the person you'd like to contact. It is the quickest, easiest way to reach any of the staff members!

## Connect with Us!

BES Website: [www.lexrich5.org/BES](http://www.lexrich5.org/BES)

BES Facebook: [www.facebook.com/BallentineElementarySchool](http://www.facebook.com/BallentineElementarySchool)

BES Twitter Account: @BallentineElem

BES PTO Site: <https://sites.google.com/lexrich5.org/bes-pt/home>

## ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Students may enter the school building at 7:10 when staff are present for supervision and to assist as needed for unloading of bus and car rider students. **Please do not drop your child off until there are adults outside on duty.** Upon arrival, students should report to their designated area - cafeteria for breakfast, theater, gym for walking club, or early morning room (Kdg only).

- **BUS RIDERS** will unload at 7:10 a.m. and enter through the bus loop doors.
- **CAR RIDERS:** Car riders may be dropped off between 7:10-7:50 a.m. Students in grades 1-5 will enter the building through the doors near the cafeteria and report to their designated area (cafeteria, theater, or gym). Kindergarten students will enter the building through the red hall doorway to report to their morning room. Students entering the building after 7:50 need to be escorted inside by a parent/guardian and signed in. *To avoid heavy car line traffic, we highly recommend dropping your child off between 7:10 - 7:30.*
- **WALKERS:** At this time, the only neighborhood that has safety precautions in place for students to walk to school is Milford Park. Students living in other areas need to use bus or car transportation to get to school.

All Milford Park walkers will use the bus loop entrance during arrival and dismissal. A staff member is on duty at the bus loop from 7:10 until 7:50 for walkers. Students should cross at the path and steps between Milford Park and the bus loop of the school. Students are not allowed to walk through the staff parking lot for safety reasons. Students who will arrive after the tardy bell should not walk to school as the only door remaining unlocked after 7:50 is the main office door. Students entering the building after 7:50 need to be escorted inside by a parent and signed in.

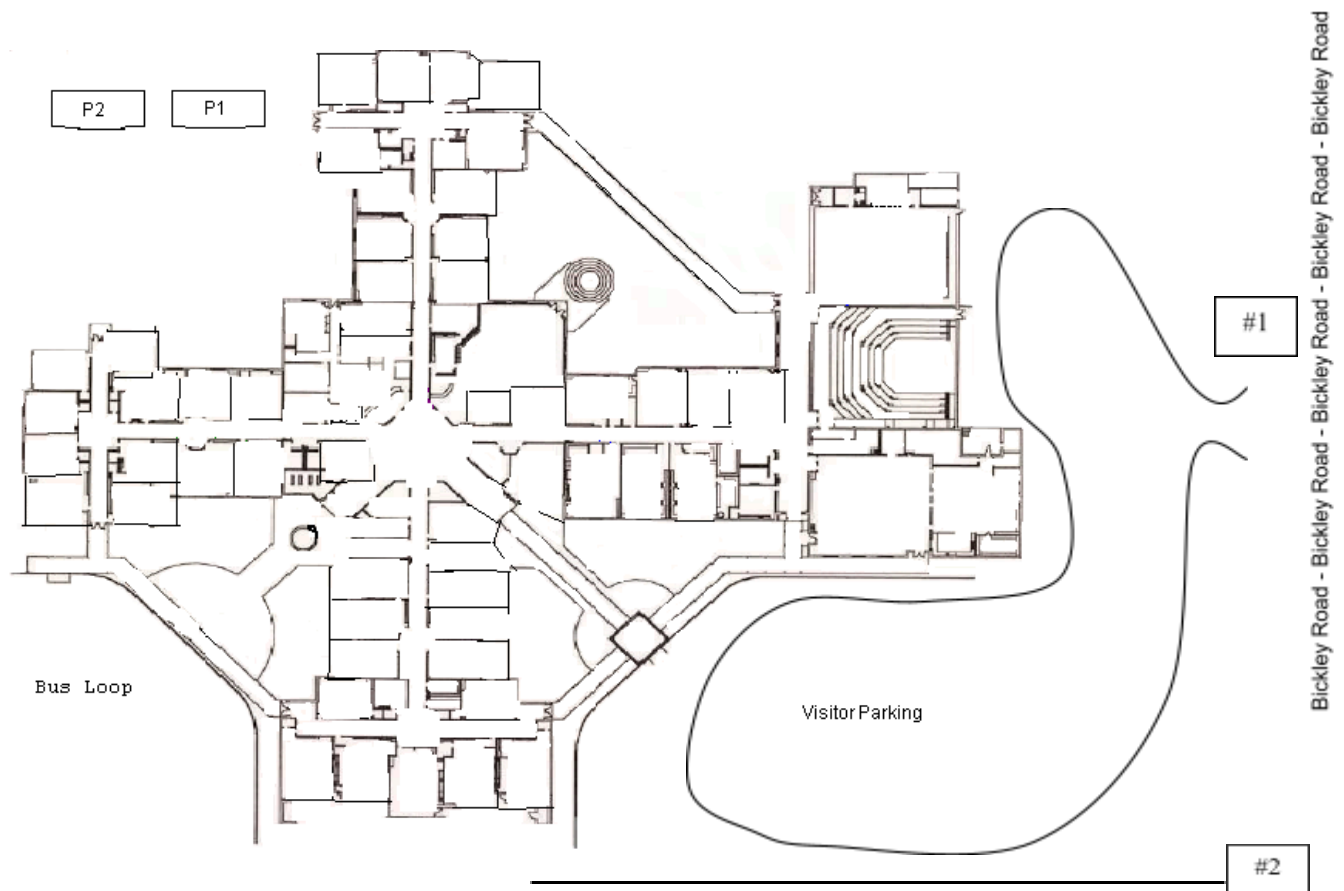
## DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

- **Buses and Daycare Vans:** The driveway on the left side of the school is reserved for school buses and daycare vans. For safety reasons, parents should not park, drop off, or pick up students on the left side driveway.
- **Car riders and walkers** are dismissed after the buses leave. In the afternoons, waiting until 2:50 to pick your child up will significantly reduce your car line wait. Our car line ends at 3:00, so please make arrangements to pick your child up by this time. Walkers will be dismissed after the buses depart. School personnel will escort students across the bus drive.

For the safety of our children, we ask that you remain in your car in the carpool line during dismissal. Use parking spaces if you need to assist your child with a seatbelt.

The beginning and end of the day can be hectic times of the day and student supervision and safety is our highest priority. *Unless there is a pre-scheduled meeting, visitors will not be allowed during the first or last 30 minutes of school.* If you need to speak with your child's teacher, make arrangements to meet once dismissal is complete and students are no longer in the building. *Teachers will not be allowed to dismiss children from the classroom or hallways during dismissal time.*

## TRAFFIC FLOW - UNLOADING/LOADING



**#1 entrance/exit for car riders.** Please note that this is a one-lane entrance. If accessing the parking lot, you will need to wait until you are able to fully enter the driveway, then pass with caution. As traffic builds, the car line will double stack, taking turns to merge into one lane for drop off / pick up in front of the school. **During take-in and dismissal, THE EXIT IS RIGHT-TURN ONLY.**

**#2 entrance/exit for buses and daycare vans only.**

This traffic pattern has been developed to assure maximum safety for your child and provide plenty of space for cars to line up while waiting for arrival/dismissal of car riders. Please pull as far forward as possible so that we may load/unload multiple cars at once. Do not stop in front of the cafeteria entrance to unload your child. This disrupts the flow of traffic and slows down the unloading process. Also, to ensure the safety of all, please remain in your car at all times. If you need to get out of your car, please park in a designated parking place. Handicap placards must be clearly displayed when using handicap parking spaces.

**FOR THE SAFETY OF EVERYONE,** please refrain from talking on a cell phone while driving in the car line. This will allow you to pay attention to the staff members directing traffic and allow you to give your child your full attention.

For occasional emergencies, a thirty minute grace period of supervision will be extended by Ballentine Elementary following dismissal of students. Students who are not picked up by 3:10 p.m. will be taken to the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission (ICRC) Afternoon Safari After-school Program at Ballentine Elementary under the Safety Net Agreement. There will be a charge of *\$15.00 for this service and payment is expected at the time of pick-up*. This Safety Net is for **emergency use only** and may be used a maximum of three times per family during a school year. If you wish to enroll your child in the Afternoon Safari program on a regular basis, you must register with the Irmo-Chapin Recreation Center.

## **EARLY DISMISSAL**

Early dismissals cause children to miss valuable instruction, however, if there is a need to remove your child from school during the day, the parent must come into the main office in order to properly sign the child out of school. At this time your child will be called to the office for dismissal. **Students will not be dismissed from the classroom to a parent waiting in the hallway.** Should a parent send another person to pick up his/her child, written authorization from the parent is required and the person authorized by the parent must follow the above mentioned sign out procedures. Since the safety of our students is always our most important concern, this sign out procedure is a policy we strictly observe. Proper I.D. may be requested. **Please plan to pick up children for early dismissal by 2:00 p.m.** as the car line fills up early and the parking lot may not be accessible. Please note that after a child has been dismissed early ten (10) days, the principal or designee will work with the parent to improve student attendance and additional days must be approved by the principal.

## **EMERGENCY CALLING SYSTEM**

The District utilizes an automated system that has the capability to communicate directly with every family in the district in a fast, efficient manner. The system will call hundreds of phone numbers in a matter of moments to notify families of school closings or delays due to inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances. In addition, schools have the capability to use the system to only contact families of students who attend their schools with news such as upcoming teacher/parent conference days, PTO meetings, etc. In order for this system to work efficiently, parents must make sure they notify the school of any change in number(s). Parents are encouraged to provide the school with more than one contact number in case of emergency.

## **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING**

When inclement weather occurs, or a school closure is needed, district administrators make every attempt to provide prompt notification to parents, guardians and the public, in accordance with Board Policy EBCE. These announcements are made using the district's automated telephone system, social media, other electronic media, and local news media outlets.

## **DELAYED OPENING SCHEDULE**

If school opens on a delayed schedule due to inclement weather or other difficulties, buses will run their normal routes two hours later than usually scheduled. School will begin two hours later than the normal starting time. Upon arrival, students should report to their designated area - cafeteria for breakfast, theater, gym for walking club, or early morning room (Kdg only). A slightly modified schedule will be followed for the remainder of the day.

## **CAFETERIA**

Ballentine Elementary offers breakfast and lunch daily.

- Breakfast is served each morning from 7:10-7:35. A student who desires to participate in the breakfast program must arrive at the school cafeteria by 7:30 so that he/she may finish breakfast and report to homeroom by 7:50.
- Lunch is served daily beginning the first day of school or children may bring a meal from home. Soft drinks in bottles or cans are not permitted in the cafeteria.
- Students may also purchase snacks and ice cream daily if they have money in their account.

Parents may deposit any amount of money in their child's account with a check or cash, or use the online system to set up and add money to the account through [LINQConnect.com](http://LINQConnect.com). If you have questions about the amount in your child's account, you can also call the cafeteria at 476-4508 before 10:30 a.m.

Parents and guardians are always welcome to eat with their children.

- To help plan for this, please let your child's homeroom teacher know of your plans to join us for lunch so that the cafeteria is prepared for extra meals.
- Note that adult meal prices are not the same as students, and student accounts may not be used to pay for adult meals. In addition, the cafeteria only accepts cash or check for meals.
- Due to assigned and limited seating in the cafeteria guests will need to sit at designated visitor tables. As a reminder, other classmates may not be asked to join the parent/child.

Students will be issued an ID. This ID and corresponding number will be used throughout the students' enrollment at Ballentine. Your child's ID /PIN # is his/her own personal number and will be used to check out library books, pay for meals, etc.

**FREE/REDUCED MEALS APPLICATION** - This is a wonderful resource for families. The application can be accessed online through Registration Gateway or District Five Student Nutrition website or [LINQConnect.com](http://LINQConnect.com). Applications must be renewed annually.

**PEANUT BUTTER GUIDELINES FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS:** School District Five strives to address the needs of students with food allergies by working cooperatively

with students, parents, and staff to minimize the risks of accidental exposure to food allergens while at school. Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, the district will no longer serve peanut butter in elementary school cafeterias:

- Elementary schools in School District Five serve WOWBUTTER, a soy-based nut-free alternative. To read more about WOWBUTTER ingredients and nutritional facts, visit the company's website at [www.wowbutter.com](http://www.wowbutter.com).
- While the district will no longer serve peanut butter in elementary schools, students can still bring peanut butter and other nut products to school for their own consumption. Schools have procedures in place to avoid contact between students with allergies to peanut butter and those opting to bring peanut butter to school for their own consumption.
- Parents will notify schools detailing the presence of a food allergy in their student(s) and will provide the necessary medication, working with school nurses on administration of medicines.
- Students should not consume food or drink given to them by other students. In the case of a reaction, students should immediately communicate with teachers, administrators or other appropriate adults at school.
- The district makes every attempt to notify PTO, PTA and other groups about its peanut butter guidelines.
- For more information on food allergies, including how to read food labels, how to educate your students and others on food allergies, and nut-free options for school snacks, visit: FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education): [www.foodallergy.org](http://www.foodallergy.org).

## **CELEBRATIONS & SPECIAL SNACKS**

Birthday parties are not permitted at school and students may not bring or distribute invitations for parties on the bus or at school unless all students in the classroom are invited. For special occasions it is preferred that a parent or other special guest come for a read aloud or for lunch.

Flowers, balloons, and other similar items cannot be brought into the school for students or be accepted by the school for delivery to students.

Policy ADF "School Health Wellness" requires that, during the instructional day, food brought from home to be shared with students must meet the [school wellness policies](#) and guidelines. This action was recommended by the district Health Advisory Council, composed of local physicians, nurses, and other medical professionals and allows staff members to monitor nutritional information and ingredients, providing the greatest health safety for our students.

Foods and special snacks brought to school with the intent of sharing with all the students must be in compliance with the Institute of Medicine (IOM) recommended Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools:

- < 200 calories;
- < 35% of total calories from fat;
- < 10% of calories from saturated fats;
- Zero trans fat (< 0.5 g per serving)
- < 35% of calories from total sugars; and
- < 200 mg sodium

In addition, all snacks/food must come in sealed, store bought packages and labeled to show the ingredients and nutritional information.

**\*\*\*To avoid disappointment and the possibility of special snacks being sent back home, please coordinate well in advance with the teacher to ensure it meets the district guidelines. \*\*\***

## **HEALTH ROOM**

The Health Room is operated daily under the supervision of a registered nurse. The school nurse is responsible for maintaining a health record on all students.

The Health Room is designed to be an emergency station to care for minor illnesses or injuries that occur at school. Injuries or health concerns that occur outside of school should be treated at home or by your healthcare provider. The school nurse cannot diagnose or prescribe treatment as this is the responsibility of your family physician or health care provider.

There are times when a student should remain at home for his/her own welfare and for the protection of others.

- Students with a temperature of 101 or greater must remain home until their temperature has been under 101 for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.
- Students with vomiting or diarrhea must remain at home until they have been symptom free for 24 hours and been able to tolerate a meal.

For other conditions that would require your student to remain at home please see DHEC's "School Exclusion List" for students who are in 1st through 12th grade and DHEC's "Childcare Exclusion List" for students who are in K3, K4, K5, or who are medically fragile. These exclusion lists may be located through the district's website.

If a student develops a communicable disease, the parent should notify the school nurse. This will allow the nurse to alert the teachers to observe other students for

symptoms or to notify appropriate persons if needed. Parents should also notify the school nurse of any special health needs.

In the event that a student becomes ill or injured and needs to go home, the persons listed on the health card will be contacted and expected to come for the child immediately. For this reason, the school should be kept up-to-date on any changes in phone numbers of those persons to be contacted in an emergency.

## **MEDICATIONS**

Medications to be taken during school hours must be brought to school and delivered to the school nurse or designated adult in the ORIGINAL container with all labels intact. Over the counter medications should only be sent to school for a specific condition your child is known to experience. Whenever possible, medications should be given before or after school.

All medications (including over the counter medications) must be accompanied by parental permission and written authorization from the prescribing physician or health care provider. Herbals, food supplements, alternative medicinal products, and other items that do not have FDA approval also require a written order from a prescribing health care provider.

The form giving permission to administer medication is available through the health room. A record of all medications administered at school will be kept for each student. Only those students who have met all of the requirements to self medicate will be allowed to keep medications on their person. All other medications will be kept at school and must be picked up by a responsible adult when the medication is discontinued, expired, or at the end of the school year. Medications are not sent home with students.

**\*\*\*All medications must be picked up from the health room by the last day of school each year. Medications not picked up by the last day of school will be disposed of as we are not able to store them over the summer.\*\*\***

**Field Trip Medications:** If your student will require medication on the field trip that is not currently being given at school you will need to provide the medication, along with the required consent forms, to the school nurse one week prior to the field trip. This allows time for the nurse to verify that there are not any problems with the medication and/or consent forms and to train the teacher to properly assist your student with their medications. Medications must be in the original pharmacy-labeled bottle, preferably with only the dosage(s) needed for the trip along with the consent form signed by the health care provider. The nurse cannot repackage any medications and will need to send the student's medication bottle containing all of their medication on the field trip if a bottle containing only the required dose is not provided. This includes over the counter medications.

# **SERVICES AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS**

Parent Notice (IHPs, 504, IDEA, Homebound):  
Required By S.C. Code Ann. Section 59-63-90 (Supp. 2005)

Many health care services can be provided for students to keep them at school where they can learn and participate with other students. Our goal is to provide information to parents and legal guardians about some of the services and programs available for addressing the health care needs of students during the school day to help students succeed in school. It is important that the necessary health care information is shared with the appropriate people—such as teachers on duty during recess, bus drivers, and cafeteria employees—to make sure that the students' needs are met throughout the school day.

## **Individual Health Care Plans or Individual Health Plans (IHPs)**

Individual health care plans are also called individual health plans or IHPs. School nurses who are registered nurses write IHPs to guide how a student's health care needs will be met while at school. The nurse works with the student, the student's parents or legal guardians, the student's health care provider, and other school staff to write the plan. IHPs are written for students who have special health care needs that must be met by school staff during the school day. IHPs are also written for students who have been approved by the school district to self-medicate or self-monitor. To learn more about IHPs, talk with your child's school nurse.

## **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504)**

Section 504 is a federal law that requires public schools to make adjustments so that students with certain disabilities can learn and participate in settings like other students who do not have disabilities. To be eligible for services under Section 504, a student must have a condition that substantially limits one or more major life activities. A team decides if a student is eligible. The team should include the student's parent or legal guardian, the student (if able), and others who know the student or know about the student's disability, such as a teacher, a guidance counselor, a school nurse, and other school staff. If the student is eligible, the team develops an individual accommodation plan. The individual accommodation plan explains how the student's needs will be met while at school and may include health services for the student during the school day if needed.

## **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**

Students, ages 3 through 21 years, may receive services under the IDEA if the student needs special education and related services to benefit from his or her educational program. A team decides if a student qualifies for services under the IDEA. The team includes the student's parent or legal guardian, teachers, and other school staff. The

team develops an individualized education program (IEP) if the student meets federal and state requirements. The IEP outlines a plan for helping the student receive a free appropriate public education and meet goals set by the team. The IEP may include health services for the student during the school day if needed.

### **Medical Homebound Instruction**

Medical homebound instruction is a service that is available for students who cannot attend school for a medical reason even with the aid of transportation. A physician must certify that the student has such a medical condition but may benefit from instruction, and must fill out the medical homebound form that the school district provides. The school district then decides whether to approve the student for medical homebound services. The school district will consider the severity of the student's illness or injury, the length of time that the student will be out of school, the impact that a long period away from school will have on the student's academic success, and whether the student's health needs can be met at school.

## **CHILD ABUSE**

All school personnel are mandated to report to the Department of Social Services any information received in their professional capacity which gives them reason to believe that a child's physical or mental health, or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect. These guidelines are in accordance with Section 63-7-310 (2008) of the South Carolina Children's Code.

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR - CODE OF CONDUCT**

To be consistent in all schools, District Five has developed a district-wide discipline policy - Code of Conduct that is accessible on district and school websites. (Board Policy JCDA.) It is important that students and their parents become very familiar with these codes. The BES faculty believes that a partnership of teachers, students, and parents is critical to the success of the school. Our responsibility is to provide a safe and caring environment necessary for learning. We believe in teaching students responsibility and fostering self-discipline. The Behavior Code helps define those responsibilities, as well as the possible consequences for not meeting expectations. For easy access we have included the elementary school portion of the D5 Code of Conduct in this parent handbook. The full Code of Conduct can be found on our school website, as well as the district website under Student Services & Planning.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Regular communications between parents and teachers provide an excellent opportunity to discuss many details regarding the child's school experiences that cannot be conveyed on the nine-week report card. Regular contact between the home and school will help your child see that both parents and teachers care about his/her progress.

**COMMUNICATION FOLDERS:** Communication folders will be sent home weekly with students with a wealth of information (progress reports, assignments, upcoming events, periodic notes and much more). It is important that you read and review this information carefully. Folders should be returned to the classroom teacher the following day.

**CALLS, MESSAGES, & CONFERENCES:** Teachers can be contacted by sending a note, email, or calling the school office. You may also leave a message requesting a return phone call. Teachers typically return phone calls within 24 hours during the work week either before and after school and during their planning period. Working hours for teachers are from 7:40 a.m. until 3:10 p.m. each day. Tuesday afternoons are reserved for school / district meetings and professional development. Messages and emails received after hours or during the weekend will be returned the following work day.

Conferences will be offered for all students during the year. In addition, parents may request to meet with teachers whenever there is a concern. These conferences may be scheduled by calling or emailing the appropriate teacher(s). A time will be selected which will not conflict with teachers' instructional responsibilities. Before any classroom related concern is brought to the principal, it should be discussed with the student and teacher first. If the situation is not resolved, then by all means call the principal or assistant principal.

#### **Quick Tips for Success in Parent Conferences**

- Always schedule an appointment with the teacher. This way she is prepared with current data on your child and will be prepared to answer any questions you may have.
- Write down your questions in advance.
- Don't hesitate to ask questions.
- Stay focused on the needs of your child.
- Take notes.
- Share information freely.
- Relax! We are in this TOGETHER!

**BES PREVIEW / CURRICULUM NIGHT:** Specific information regarding the curriculum and instruction within a particular grade level is presented during our BES Preview / Curriculum Night. The information shared provides a good foundation for the year and all parents and guardians are strongly encouraged to attend.

**NEWSLETTERS:** Parents are strongly encouraged to read the Bear Bulletin, our weekly digital school newsletter, and the monthly PTO Paw Print. These newsletters have current information, school business and activities, information on upcoming events and deadlines, and PTO and SIC updates. Both newsletters will be posted on the school website: [www.bes.lexrich5.org](http://www.bes.lexrich5.org) and sent via email to parents.

**PARENT PORTAL:** Lexington District Five's online student information system, PowerSchool Parent Portal, will provide parents with real-time information to access student schedules, attendance, grades, and much more. Before you can log into PowerSchool Parent Portal, you will need a PowerSchool username and password. Parents may receive a username and password from the school registrar by showing a valid ID. If you have previously received a password and username, it will remain the same. A username and password for new students will be made available at the beginning of the year.

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER:** The school office must have a telephone number at which parents can be reached during the school day, even if that number is unlisted. This is particularly important when emergencies occur. Please notify the office staff when changing address, telephone number, or place of employment.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**

The South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC) is charged with encouraging continuous improvement in SC public schools, approving academic content standards and assessments, and establishing the state's educational accountability system. The EOC has created family-friendly standards to support families with an understanding of what your children will be learning during the school year. The following points explain the importance for parents to have a solid understanding of current state standards by subject and grade level:

*There are six key reasons why parents should be familiar with South Carolina's academic standards:*

- 1. Standards set clear, high expectations for student achievement. Standards tell what students need to do in order to progress through school on grade level.*
- 2. Standards guide efforts to measure student achievement. Results of tests on grade-level academic standards show if students have learned and teachers have taught for mastery.*
- 3. Standards promote educational equity for all. Instruction in every school in the state is based on the same academic standards.*
- 4. Standards inform parents about the academic expectations for their child. Standards give parents more specific information for helping their child at home.*
- 5. Standards enable parents to participate more actively in parent/teacher conferences. Knowledge of the academic standards helps parents understand more about what their child is learning and what they can do at each grade level.*
- 6. Standards help parents see how the current grade level expectations are related to successive years' expectations.*

To view the standards for every subject area, please visit <https://eoc.sc.gov/families>

**SUCCESS CRITERIA BY QUARTER:** In addition to the [Family Friendly Standards](#) that are distributed to all BES families during the BES Preview Nights, D5 has created a document that has the SC State Standards for every grade level along with the timeline of when it is taught. We hope that parents will appreciate the "Success Criteria" and the "I Can" statements that explain what students should be able to do by the end of each quarter based on the grade level standards. These are located in the weekly Bear Bulletin (school newsletter), and on the BES website. They will be a great resource as we partner together to ensure your child's success!

## **HOMework**

The amount and frequency of homework assigned vary among grade levels and subjects taught. Homework, when given, should serve to reinforce skills and provide additional practice. Weekly folders are provided to all students and sent home with important papers for parents to review. At the beginning of the year, teachers will explain their homework policies. If you have questions, please contact the teacher by calling the school office, using email, or by sending a note. Parents are encouraged to monitor grades on Parent Portal. (See the School Registrar for your password.) Grades are entered within 5 school days for minor assignments and 10 school days for major or extended assignments.

Approximate minutes of daily homework are as follows:

Kindergarten .....	10-15 minutes
Grade 1 .....	15-30 minutes
Grade 2 .....	15-45 minutes
Grade 3 .....	15-45 minutes
Grade 4 .....	30-60 minutes
Grade 5 .....	30-60 minutes

## **REPORT CARDS AND GRADES**

District Five Grading Philosophy: To ensure we function as a system, where a group of units operates in unison, School District Five of Lexington & Richland Counties has created this grading philosophy. Grades in School District Five reflect evidence of student proficiency in the learning progression of content standards and skills over time. Behavior and effort are evaluated and reported separately from the academic grade. Grades should identify for teachers, students, and families clarity, gaps, and deficiencies in learning and consistently and objectively inform teachers of areas where students need remediation or acceleration. We collectively implement these practices as we aim to meet the needs of the Whole Child.

**Student progress in grades kindergarten through second** is reported for Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Art, Music, Physical Education, and World

Language through a standards-based progress report using the following key:

- M** = Meets the grade level expectations at this time (independent achievement consistently meets grade level expectations/standards at this time).
- P** = Progressing satisfactorily towards grade level expectations at this time (independent achievement shows inconsistent application of skills but is making progress at this time).
- U** = Unable to meet grade level expectations at this time (little or no evidence of meeting grade level expectations/standards at this time).
- \*** = Not assessed at this time.

**Student progress in third, fourth, and fifth grade** will be reported using the following marking system:

- A** = 90-100
- B** = 80-89
- C** = 70-79
- D** = 60-69
- F** = Below 60
- I** = Incomplete

In order to ensure parents are aware of their child's current academic progress, grades for academic assignments will be posted by teachers to PowerSchool and updated weekly. Teachers will post minor assignment grades within 5 school days and major or extended assignment grades within 10 school days. Minor assignments (such as classwork and quizzes) are assignments that count once in the gradebook and major assignments (such as tests and projects) are assignments that count twice. As a reminder, please see the Registrar in the front office to get your child's login information for Parent Portal.

## **HOURS OF OPERATION**

During the school year, the front office is open daily, Monday - Friday, from 7am - 4pm. After hours, on holidays, and weekends, messages may be left on our voicemail system and will be returned the next school day. Summer office hours are Monday - Thursday, 7:00 - 4:00pm, with phones answered until 5:00pm. All calls will be returned within 24 hours during the work week. Calls/emails received during the weekend or over holidays will be returned the following business day.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Clothing and property should be labeled with your child's name. Students and parents should check the lost and found area located near the cafeteria when items are misplaced. Small items such as keys and glasses can be claimed from the office receptionist. **Items not claimed by the end of each semester will be donated to local charities.**

## **LIBRARY**

The Ballentine Elementary library is open from 7:30 am to 3:00 p.m. on school days. The mission of the media center is to ensure that students are effective users of ideas and information, enthusiastic readers, skillful researchers, and productive users of technology. Students are encouraged to be good listeners, kind to books and respectful of others in the media center.

Classes visit the library at designated times. Instruction may include library skills, storytime, book suggestions, and inquiry lessons. All students are encouraged to check out books to help them grow as readers. Books that are considered overdue may be renewed. If a book is lost or damaged, a notice with the cost of the book to be replaced will be sent home for payment.

## **MEDIA CONSENT**

Throughout the year, School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties receive requests from newspapers, television, and radio stations for stories concerning school-related activities. Often such requests include permission for students' names and/or pictures to be used as a part of a news account or a feature story. In addition, schools and the District may like to include students' names and/or their pictures in various school newsletters, brochures, videos, websites, social media, or other publications.

During the registration process, parents have the option as to whether or not they wish to grant permission for the release of their child's name and/or picture for the purposes stated above. **Please be aware that by indicating that you do NOT grant permission for your child's name and/or picture to be used for such purposes stated above, that he/she will also not be included in the yearbook or in class pictures.**

## **GUIDANCE PROGRAM**

Ballentine Elementary has a guidance counselor to assist all students. The school counselor teaches monthly class lessons, conducts small groups, and meets with students individually. Students may request to visit the guidance counselor by asking their teacher and/or writing a short note. Parents wishing to contact the school counselor should call 803-476-4500.

## **SPECIAL SERVICES**

District Five provides educational opportunities for all students, including those with physical, mental and emotional handicaps. Each elementary school offers a combination resource program taught by teachers certified in learning disabilities. These programs provide special services to students who spend most of their school day in regular

classrooms. Students needing more than three hours per day of special instruction or those needing programs for specific disabilities are served at certain schools. The district provides transportation when students must participate in classes outside of their regular attendance area.

## **ACADEMICALLY GIFTED PROGRAMS**

The academically gifted program (AGP) is designed to maximize the potential of gifted and talented students by providing programs and services that match the unique characteristics and needs of these students in grades three through twelve.

Gifted and talented students may be found within any racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group; within any nationality; within both genders; and within populations with disabilities. Identification is a multi-step process, which consists of referral, screening, and assessment of eligibility by a district evaluation and placement team. The State of South Carolina has established three dimensions of giftedness as criteria for placement in the academically gifted program. *In order to qualify for placement in gifted/talented programs, a student must meet the eligibility criteria in two of the following three dimensions:*

### **Dimension A – Reasoning**

Students must score at or above the 93<sup>rd</sup> national percentile on a nationally normed aptitude test. Students may be eligible for placement on the basis of aptitude scores alone if they score at or above the 96<sup>th</sup> percentile on the composite score of a nationally normed aptitude test.

### **Dimension B – Achievement**

Students must score at or above the 94<sup>th</sup> national percentile on approved subtests (reading and/or math) on a nationally normed achievement test or score at the *Advanced* level for English/language arts and/or math on the spring standardized assessment.

### **Dimension C**

For placement in grades 3-4, a student must achieve a performance standard of 4 (on a 5-point scale) on verbal or non-verbal performance tasks. Beginning in grade 5, a 3.5 grade point average in the academic disciplines is used in lieu of the performance tasks.

All students are screened automatically for AGP at the end of grades 2-5. The accelerated and enriched curriculum is differentiated in level of abstraction, complexity, pace, breadth, and depth. Interdisciplinary units of study focus on an infusion of technological skills, along with research, creative, and critical thinking skills. An organization for parents, Parents Active in Gifted Education in District Five (PAGE-FIVE), involves parents in the Academically Gifted Program in all of our schools.

## **MULTI-TIER SYSTEM OF SUPPORT (MTSS)**

In our continuing effort to improve the academic performance of all students, our school implements a program called Multi-Tier System of Support. MTSS is a model designed to provide effective instructional support to meet the needs of students using scientific, peer-reviewed, research-based interventions. Our MTSS program focuses on supporting the whole student. This MTSS model identifies student needs and provides a continuum of increasingly intensive support, based on specific individual needs. The student's progress is directly and frequently monitored.

The MTSS Team includes a school psychologist, administrator, special education teachers, school counselor, school social worker, and the classroom teacher. The role of this team is to provide immediate support to teachers in dealing with individual student's social, emotional, and academic concerns. As required by law, this team functions as an intermediate step between the recognition of a problem by the classroom teacher and a formal referral for testing.

## **SC READ TO SUCCEED ACT**

Reading is the core of the school day for young children because students need strong reading skills to learn in all other school subjects, such as science, social studies, writing, and math. By the end of third grade, students are expected to be able to read independently and comprehend a variety of grade-level texts based upon South Carolina College- and Career-Ready (SCCCR) Standards.

South Carolina law states, "Beginning with the 2017-18 school year, a student must be retained in the third grade if the student fails to demonstrate reading proficiency at the end of the third grade as indicated by scoring at the lowest achievement level on the state summative reading assessment [SC READY Reading]."

Students with learning disabilities who have an IEP, students with limited English proficiency, and those who have been previously retained may receive a "good cause exemption" and be promoted to the fourth grade even if they are not reading at the required level.

## **ANIMALS AT SCHOOL**

For the safety and protection of the children, we urgently request that family pets such as dogs and cats not be free to follow children to school. Every attempt will be made to call the owner of animals found on the school grounds, but we will be compelled to ask the county to pick up such animals if they continue to stay on the school campus. Approval from the principal must be obtained before an animal is allowed in the building. Many children have pet allergies or are very fearful of certain animals.

## **CELL PHONE & SMART WATCH POLICY**

According to D5 School Board Policy JIC-J, students may possess wireless communication devices in school, on school property, during after school activities (e.g. extra-curricular activities) and at school-related functions. However, students may not use wireless devices such as cell phones, smart watches, or any other communication devices while on school property during school hours (7:10-2:40). Cellular phones or other Wireless Communication Devices (WCD's), including cellular or "smart" watches, that are used during school hours, or that ring or vibrate during school hours will be considered "in use"; therefore, phones and cellular/"smart" watches should be turned **OFF** during school hours to avoid being confiscated by teachers or administration. We strongly recommend that cell phones and other electronic devices not be brought to school.

This policy has been developed in compliance with the General Appropriations Bill, H. 5100 of 2024, Proviso 1.103 and is applicable to grades kindergarten through twelve.

Students are personally and solely responsible for the care and security of their cell phone and other wireless communication devices. The school assumes no responsibility for theft, loss, damages, or vandalism to WCDs brought onto its property, or unauthorized use of such devices. If an emergency parent contact needs to be made, they should make a request to their teacher or administrator who will make arrangements for them to use the phone.

Consequences for using wireless devices during school hours:

- First Offense: Warning / Return to Parent
- Second Offense: School Consequence / Return to Parent
- Third Offense: School Consequence / Return to Parent
- Fourth Offense: Wireless device confiscated through end of the semester

## **BES PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO) AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL (SIC)**

The Ballentine Elementary Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is an active organization that supports every aspect of the school. From volunteering in the classroom, to coordinating special school-wide events, these parents play an integral role in the success of our school. If you have an hour a year or an hour a week, we have a place for you! It is a great way to meet other BES families and to get involved with the school.

The dates/times of activities and events vary so that all families have the opportunity to participate, but the meetings are typically the first Friday of each month at 7:45am. Specific dates and times will be advertised in the Bear Bulletin (the school newsletter) and the PTO Paw Print (the monthly PTO newsletter.)

The BES School Improvement Council was established as a result of the South Carolina Education Finance Act of 1977 and the Educational Improvement Act of 1984. The School Improvement Council includes elected parents, teachers, and community members which helps create an important link between the home, school, and community.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers play a vital role in supporting our school community, and we are incredibly grateful for the time, energy, and talents they share with our students and staff. Whether assisting in the classroom, helping with events, or chaperoning field trips, volunteers enrich the educational experience for all. To ensure the safety of our students, all volunteers—including field trip chaperones—must complete the District Volunteer Packet and receive approval before participating in any school activities. These packets are provided to all parents at the beginning of the school year, and once approved, the clearance is valid for three years. We deeply appreciate your involvement and support in making our school a safe and welcoming place for every child.

## **BUSINESS-EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS**

Business and public schools in South Carolina are joining forces to improve both education and the State's economy. Joint efforts of educational and business partnerships are aimed at a wide range of needs. Ballentine Elementary School is interested in this kind of community teamwork. If you would like more information regarding how you may participate and/or help with this support of our school, please call one of the BES administrators at 476-4500.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

As stated in School Board Policy JR, student records will be handled in a manner consistent with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), as amended.

If a student transfers and enrolls in a school other than Ballentine Elementary, his/her educational records will be transferred to that school or school system upon request by the school/school system. The parent/eligible student has the right to request a copy of the record that was disclosed. Parents also have a right to request an amendment of educational records if they believe the record contains information that is inaccurate or misleading.

## **DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

According to school board policy JRA, Public Use of School Records, directory information regarding students will be handled in a manner consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), as amended.

Information that the District has designated as "directory information" regarding a student may be released to outside organizations upon request and without prior written consent from the parent/eligible student. The District defines directory information as a student's name, address, telephone number, photograph, grade level, school to which he/she is assigned, years of attendance at that school, awards received, participation in officially recognized activities and sports. Outside organizations requesting directory information include, but are not limited to, companies that publish yearbooks.

If you do not wish Ballentine Elementary School to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the School in writing no later than 30 calendar days after the first day of school.

## **FEES**

All D5 students must pay a \$20.00 Technology Fee. This fee is collected to support technology resources that are directly used by students. The specific purpose of the funds is as follows:

- repair and/or replacement of student-issued devices
- parts and accessories (cases for example) for district-issued student devices
- licensing and support of instructional management software for teacher use with district-issued student devices
- licensing and support for Google accounts for students with district-issued or personally owned devices
- address unforeseen issues that may arise.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Educational field trips are planned to provide experiences correlated with subjects studied in the classroom. Students are required to have written permission from a parent or guardian prior to participating in field studies, whether on campus or off campus. All trips are chaperoned by school personnel and may be assisted by parent volunteers. All chaperones must complete the District Volunteer packet and be approved prior to being confirmed as a chaperone. These packets are distributed to all parents at the start of the school year and once approved, are valid for three years.

It is often necessary to limit the number of chaperones. Teachers will designate specific people as chaperones. These will be the only chaperones for a specific trip and these chaperones must ride the bus. There should be no other chaperones following in separate vehicles unless otherwise requested by the school. All students, teachers and chaperones are expected to ride the bus to and from the specific destination. Specific information about departure and arrival times, destinations, clothing, food, and pocket money will be provided prior to the field trip. If a bus is used for transportation, a fee will be charged to cover the expense.

## **ERIN'S LAW**

The South Carolina Code of Law, Section 59-32-30(G) was amended "beginning with the 2015–2016 school year, districts annually shall provide age-appropriate instruction in sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention to all students in four-year-old kindergarten, where offered, through twelfth grade. This instruction must be based on the units developed by the board (SC Board of Education), through the department (SC Department of Education), pursuant to Section 59-32-20(B)."

The purpose of the law is to help students understand how to stay safe from sexual assault and how to report any incidents. It is important to provide students with a voice for deciding who and what touches should be allowed.

At the elementary level, instruction includes topics such as being unique, understanding feelings, being a friend, bathing suits cover private parts, good touch/bad touch, stranger danger, getting adult help, general safety rules for home and school, technology safety, and understanding peer pressure and media influences. These topics are aligned with the *South Carolina Health and Safety Education Standards* and the *Erin's Law Resource Guide* provided by the SC Department of Education. Topics are covered in many parts of our curriculum such as through the comprehensive school counseling program, academic classes, PE and health classes, and school-wide programs.

At the secondary level, Erin's Law instruction is part of the comprehensive health curriculum delivered during the second quarter by biology teachers. Students are expected to be able to explain Erin's law and understand and discuss the following indicators from the *South Carolina Standards for Health and Safety Education 2017*: I-HS.1.3, G-HS.2.7, G-HS.3.2, G-HS.3.3, G-HS.4.3, G-HS.5.1. School counselors, social workers, and psychologists may also provide programs of instruction or counseling.

## **GAVIN'S LAW**

Beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, per the requirements of Gavin's Law, Act 54 of 2023, "local school districts shall collaborate with the State Department of Education, the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, and the Attorney General's office, as appropriate, to implement a policy to educate and notify students of the provisions of Gavin's Law. This includes adequate notice to students, parents or guardians, the public, and school personnel of the change in law."

Board Policy JICFB Gavin's Law Implementation was adopted 11/13/23 and states: "Gavin's Law (S.C. Code Ann. Section 16-15-430) is legislation that makes sexual extortion, the act of blackmailing someone using sexually explicit images or videos, a

felony offense and an aggravated felony if the victim is a minor, vulnerable adult, or if the victim suffers great bodily injury or death directly related to the crime.

Gavin's Law requires the District to collaborate with the State Department of Education, the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, and the Attorney General's office, as appropriate, to implement a policy to educate and notify students of the provisions of this law, which includes adequate notice to students, parents or guardians, the public, and school personnel.

In accordance with Gavin's Law, the District shall notify students of the provisions of this act through providing age-appropriate instruction on the dangers and consequences of sexual extortion. Additionally, notification shall be provided to parents/guardians, the public, and school personnel regarding the law.

Any student who engages in sexual extortion will be subject to disciplinary action consistent with the District's Student Code of Conduct. Any employee who engages in sexual extortion will be subject to disciplinary action consistent with the District's policies governing staff conduct. School administrators shall notify law enforcement immediately of any allegations of such conduct, as required by State law and District policy."

## **BUS INFORMATION**

### **Safe & Secure School Bus Transportation**

The safety and security of all students, staff, and schools is the first priority for the Transportation Department of School District Five. In an effort to ensure a safe bus ride for all students, the school district has made the following provisions:

The school bus is an extension of school activity. Therefore, students must conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with the established standards for safety and classroom behavior. The bus driver has the responsibility for supervision of students on the bus. From the time a school bus arrives at a bus stop in the morning, until the bus returns to that bus stop after school, students who ride the bus are, by law, under the control of school officials. While on a school bus, the bus driver is considered the individual responsible for the safety of the students. The bus driver is authorized to give directions, assign seats, and to prohibit any action on the bus that may threaten the safety or welfare of any person. When necessary a student may be removed from the school bus in order to prevent inappropriate behavior. **Students and staff members are subject to video and audio monitoring while they are on school buses.**

- Parents must request for their student to ride a different bus or get off the bus at a different stop or to have a friend ride the bus to the Area Transportation Office.

Requests must be made at least 24 hours in advance and will be approved based on space available.

- Students may not load or unload at a school other than their assigned school unless prior approval is given to the parent or guardian and the school administrator.
- The Transportation Supervisor (or designee) has the authority to remove a student from the bus if the student or bus becomes uncontrollable. The student may not board the bus again until given permission by the Transportation Supervisor.
- Situations may arise in the operation of the school bus that are a concern to parents or other community members. These concerns should be resolved at the lowest possible level of decision making by the individual's closest to the concern; therefore, are best dealt with through communication with the appropriate Transportation Supervisor.
- Students and parents should not attempt to discuss bus rule violations or suspension matters with the bus driver at a bus stop. Anyone who attempts to board the bus while suspended or who interferes with the operation of the bus may be prosecuted under applicable South Carolina law.
- No disciplinary action shall be taken without due process being afforded to students and their parents; however, it may be necessary to remove a student(s) from the bus in order to maintain good order and discipline. This includes suspending a student for up to three days while an investigation is being conducted. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken for incidents which involve severe offenses, such as: fighting, possession of weapons, drugs or alcohol, use of tobacco products, any action which endangers the safety of the driver and other students, or damage to the bus. Such action could involve a longer suspension from the bus or other consequences.
- The parents or guardians of a child being transported on a school bus are responsible for the safety and conduct of the child prior to the arrival of the school bus at the child's designated school bus stop for pick up and transport to school, and after the school bus drops off the child and departs the child's designated school bus stop.

### **TO AND FROM THE BUS**

- Parents or guardians are responsible for the safety and conduct of children traveling between their home and school bus stop.
- If a student has to walk along the highway when approaching the bus stop, he/she should always walk on the shoulder.
- Students should walk, not run, when crossing the highway. Students should wait on their side of the roadway and await the signal to cross from the driver.
- Students should not run alongside the bus when the bus is moving. They should wait until the bus stops and then walk to the door. Waiting for the Bus
- Students should leave home and be at the stop at least 5 minutes before the bus arrives.

- Students are allowed to only ride their assigned bus.
- While waiting, the student must respect the property of others and wait in a quiet and orderly manner. Stay out of the street!
- Line up in an orderly fashion when the bus arrives and refrain from pushing or charging the bus.

## **LOADING PROCEDURES**

- Be at the bus stop at least 5 minutes before scheduled arrival.
- Never run to catch the bus.
- Stay 6 to 8 giant steps (10 feet) away from the road while waiting for the bus.
- Move toward the bus only when the driver signals it is safe to do so.
- When crossing the road to board a bus, remain on the left side of the road until the driver signals that it is safe to cross.
- Check traffic.
- Walk straight across the road 10 feet in front of the bus.
- Go directly to your seat upon boarding.

## **WHEN RIDING THE SCHOOL BUS**

- No glass containers on the bus.
- No spitting, eating, or drinking on the bus.
- No profanity, verbal abuse, harassment of any kind, obscene or sexual gestures.
- No standing while the bus is in motion.
- No hanging any part(s) of your body out a window.
- No throwing or shooting any type of object.
- No play-fighting or horse playing.
- Keep your feet, body, and bags out of the aisle – it serves as an emergency exit.
- Band instruments, projects, and other objects cannot take up seating space or block the aisle.
- Students may only ride the bus they are assigned to without permission from the Transportation Department. Do not ride any bus during a suspension of bus privileges.
- Do not vandalize the bus or ignite any flammable object.
- Do not hold onto the bus from the outside or pass objects through the window.
- Do not possess weapons, explosives, laser pens, or laser pointers.
- Do not tamper with any bus equipment or controls.
- Do not make excessive noise or engage in disruptive behavior.
- Students must obey and respect the directions of the driver.
- Students must not exhibit behavior that could disturb the other students or the driver.
- Students may talk quietly, but avoid loud, boisterous behavior, including singing, clapping, stomping, yelling or anything that could distract the driver.
- Students must never tamper with the emergency exits or any other part of the bus equipment, including fire extinguishers and first aid equipment unless there are reasonable grounds to believe that an actual emergency situation exists.
- Students may only board and exit the bus at their designated stop.
- Students must be at the bus stop 5 minutes prior to their scheduled pick-up time.

## **UNLOADING PROCEDURES**

- Stay in your seat until the bus comes to a complete stop.

- Before stepping off the bottom step of the bus, look to the rear of the bus to make sure no vehicle is trying to pass on the right side.
- Once you are off the bus, move at least 10 feet from the bus immediately.
- Students planning to cross the road should walk forward 10 feet toward the front side of the bus.
- Wait for the bus driver's signal to cross the road. When the driver signals, walk forward and stop again in front of the bus where the driver can see you, but near enough to the road that you can see in both directions.
- Wait for the bus driver's signal again.
- Walk, never run, across the road and always watch for traffic.
- Never walk behind the bus or get closer than 10 feet to any side of the bus.
- Never try to pick up something you have dropped on the outside of the bus.
- After unloading from the bus, go home immediately, staying clear of traffic.

### **KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS**

Kindergarten students will not be released from the bus if a parent, appropriate guardian, sibling or designated individual is not at the bus stop. If an appropriate authorized individual is not at the bus stop the kindergarten student will be returned to the elementary school and parents/guardian notified. Parents must arrange for the student to be picked up at the school. Forms for registering designated individuals are available through the schools or Area Transportation Office.

### **D5 PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY**

District Five encourages, supports, and values the participation and involvement of parents and families in the educational experiences of their children. The District recognizes each parent as their child's first teacher and acknowledges the powerful influence of parents on their child's life. The District, therefore, is committed to developing family-friendly schools, offices, and programs to welcome and serve parents and families in positive and supportive environments.

Parents are involved in the development of the LEA (Lead Education Agency) plan and the process of school review and improvement by being part of a planning team that develops an overall Parent Involvement Policy. In addition, all parents are surveyed. This plan is distributed to all parents with children participating in Title I schools and to the community at large. An annual evaluation of the effectiveness of parent involvement will be conducted.

District Office staff provides technical assistance, coordination, and support to participating Title I schools. To assist these schools, District Office staff will be available to assist in the writing of the Title I grant, assist in procurement, attend school improvement/renewal team meetings, assist the schools in implementing effective parent involvement activities and Parent-Teacher organization meetings. Additional responsibilities will be to provide assistance in any area requested to bring about school improvement and increase parental involvement. The District will assist

each school in the development of a school-level Parent Involvement Policy. District Office staff will also see that state and federal guidelines are followed.

The schools and parents will build the capacity for strong parental involvement by entering into School-Parent-Student Compacts with staff and families of students attending Title I schools. Compacts are signed by the Principal, Teacher, Parent, and Student. Efforts to increase parent involvement will also include annual conferences to accommodate varied family schedules. In addition, an annual meeting for parents/families of students served in Title I schools will be held to provide information on Title I legislation, instructional programs and the desired outcomes for students of Title I Targeted Assistance schools. Parents will impact policy-making via opportunities to serve on School Improvement Councils, completion of parent surveys, preview of Title I plans in each school Media Center and/or serving as mentors or through other volunteer efforts. Schools will provide a number of Parenting activities during the year such as Technology, Literacy, Math/Science, Fine Arts, Testing, Cultural Celebration, Academic Information, and other student performance/academic presentations.

The Parenting Program served through Title I will coordinate and join together with other programs by inviting parents to attend parenting classes, Adult Ed classes, workshops and seminars offered by the District and/or state. Additional efforts will be made to work with other community programs to provide information and assistance regarding Title I Targeted Assistance programs.

Regarding funding, the District will reserve not less than one percent (1%) of the total Title I allocation to carry out parental involvement to include family literacy and parenting skills. In addition, each school will reserve at least 5% of their Title I allocation for funding Parent activities.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE**

School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, or handicap in admission to, or access to, or treatment for employment in its programs or activities. Inquiries should be directed to the Human Resource Officer, Title IX and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator, at 476-8000; and Special Services and 504 Coordinator, at 476-8000; and at 1020 Dutch Fork Road, Irmo SC 29063. Individuals with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate in a program or activity sponsored by the school district should call 476-8000 at least 48 hours prior to the program or activity. Individuals with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate in a program or activity sponsored by Ballentine Elementary School are asked to contact the principal at least 48 hours prior to the program or activity.

# School and Community Contact Information

	<b>Department</b>	<b>Contact Person</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
<b>School District Contact Information</b>	Superintendent	Dr. Akil Ross	476-8116
	Public Information Office	Amanda Taylor	476-8118
	Human Resources	Dr. Tamara Turner	476-8198
	Coordinator of Gifted and Talented	Ms. Jenna Locklair	476-8167
	Parenting and Family Services	Jennifer Felkel	476-8238
	Transportation Director	Harold Williams	732-8015
	Transportation Supervisor – DF Cluster	Rhonda Watson	732-8045
	Special Services	Jini Friend	476-8223
<b>District 5 Schools</b>	CrossRoads Intermediate	Dr. Erin Doty, Principal	476-8300
	Irmo Middle	Mansa Joseph, Principal	476-3600
	Irmo High	Kaaren Hampton, Principal	476-3000
	Chapin Intermediate	Brent Davis, Principal	575-5700
	Chapin Middle	Stephanie Huckabee, Principal	575-5500
	Chapin High	Ed Davis, Principal	575-5400
	Dutch Fork Middle	Vernon Sava, Principal	476-4800
	Dutch Fork High	Mr. Reed Gunter Principal	476-3300
Spring Hill High	Dr. Michael Lofton, Principal	476-8700	
<b>Ballentine Elementary Contact Information</b>	Principal	Robin Bright	476-4500
	Secretary	Dina Fradenburg	476-4511
	Receptionist	Joelle McGlohorn	476-4500 (FAX 476-4520)
	Registrar	Tracy Tomlin	476-4500
	Nurse	Melissa Harrison	476-4509
	School Counselor	April Siders	476-4505
	Cafeteria Manager	Del Williams	476-4508
	Media Center	Wendy Price	476-4518
<b>Community Information</b>	Poison Control Center		1-800-222-1222

	Irmo Police Department		785-2521
	Lexington County Sherriff		785-8230
	Richland County Sherriff		576-3000
	SC Electric & Gas	power outages or establishing service	1-888-333-4465 803-799-9000
	Mid-Carolina Electric Coop	power outages or establishing service	803-749-6400
	Voter Registration – Lexington County	605 West Main Street, Lexington	803-785-8361
	Voter Registration – Richland County	2020 Hampton Street, Columbia	803-576-2240
	SC Dept of Motor Vehicles	Ballentine/Irmo location	749-9041
<b>Other Community Services</b>	Mental Health Services	Columbia Area Mental Health	898-4777
	Substance Abuse Counselor	LRADAC	733-1376
	Richland County Public Library	St Andrews Branch	772-6675
	Lexington County Public Library	Irmo Branch	798-7880
	Recycling Information	Irmo Area	781-7050
	Irmo Chamber of Commerce		749-9355
<b>Hospitals with 24-hour Emergency Rooms</b>	Palmetto Health Baptist	Taylor at Marion St. Columbia	296-5010
	Palmetto Health Richland	5 Richland Medical Park Dr, Columbia	434-7000
	Lexington Medical Center, Main Campus	2720 Sunset Blvd, W. Columbia	791-2000
	Palmetto Health Parkridge	Palmetto Health Parkway	407-4940
	Providence Hospital – North West	120 Gateway Corporate Blvd, Columbia	865-4500
<b>Pharmacies open 24-hours</b>	CVS	Lake Murray Blvd, Irmo	749-3843
	Kroger	Lake Murray Blvd, Irmo	732-0426

# **D5 Code of Conduct**

## **Elementary / Intermediate Grades Kdg - 5th**

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*Included are excerpts from the D5 Code of Conduct. The full Code of Conduct can be found on the D5 Student Services and Planning site or through [this link](#). The following pages apply to elementary / intermediate schools only.*

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### **Sections Included:**

- Elementary - Intermediate (Kdg - 5th gr) Code of Conduct
- Appendix C - Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying
- Appendix D - Secret Societies / Gang Activity
- Appendix E - Student Dress
- Appendix F - Cell Phones / Communication Devices