



**EMBASSY CREEK
ELEMENTARY
PARENT HANDBOOK**

2025 - 2026

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

Detailed procedures are outlined in Appendix A, with special protocols during lightning or severe weather for walkers and bikers. Parents must pick up students at designated locations during such events.

ATTENDANCE

Unexcused absences along with tardies and early sign-outs will be counted when determining a student's pattern of non-attendance.

A student will have a "pattern of non-attendance" if he or she accumulates a total of 30 hours (5 days) of unexcused absences in any one marking period or 60 hours (10 days) within 90 days.

All absences must be reported within 3 days using one of the following methods:

- **Call** the Attendance Hotline **754-323-5552**
- **Report an Absence** on our school website by clicking the "**Contact Us**" tab on our school website
- **Email** your child's teacher

A list of acceptable reasons why an absence will be excused may be found in the Code of Student Conduct booklet. Please be advised that family vacations are not considered excused absences.

BACK TO SCHOOL FORMS

All of our online back to school forms will now be completed through the Focus Parent Portal. The back-to-school forms are extremely important to keep your information up to date, so you continue to get information from the district. The back-to-school forms will need to be completed in order to see your student's schedule and all other student information. We recommend doing the Parent Portal Focus registration on a computer instead of a mobile device.

BAKED GOODS

Commercially prepared baked goods may be brought for classroom activities, etc. with prior planning with the teacher. Per State of Florida Health regulations, home-baked goods or home-cooked dishes meant for sharing with the other students in the classroom may NOT be brought into the school for consumption by students.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

With safety and security being our highest priority at our school, birthday celebrations are not permitted on the school campus. Therefore, cookies, doughnuts, etc. are NOT to be brought into the school to distribute to the rest of the class. Save these special treats for an after-school activity where family and friends can enjoy this celebration together with loved ones. If you would like birthday invitations to be distributed, one must be provided for each child in the class. Otherwise, please pass out the invitations outside of school hours.

BTIP (BROWARD TRUANCY INTERVENTION PROGRAM)

If you receive a BTIP notice for your child's "pattern of nonattendance," please call the Guidance department or come in to see the BTIP Coordinator on the assigned day and time to discuss this matter. Further details regarding student attendance, state law, and School Board policies are in the Code of Student Conduct booklet.

CAFETERIA

Universal Free Breakfast is available daily for all BCPS students. Students may purchase a lunch for \$3 or bring their lunch from home. Students are given two (2) main entrée choices including a choice of a salad, in addition to juice and milk.

*Please keep in mind that breakfast is served from 7:30 a.m. to 7:50 a.m. If you wish for your child to take advantage of the free breakfast, please plan to arrive before 7:50 a.m. so that your child will have a chance to eat before the 8:00 a.m. bell.

There are also a la carte items available for purchase in the cafeteria. These a la carte items include cereal, ice cream, chips and crackers, cheese sticks, small water bottles, and extra milk. The cost for these items ranges from \$0.50 to \$1.00 each. You may add funds to your child's account at www.myschoolsbucks.com for the purchase of these items. Students may pay daily in line during lunchtime for purchases. Any unused money is kept as a credit in the child's account and may be used in the future. Ice cream is served on select Wednesdays.

What if my child brings his/her own lunch?

A healthy lunch is encouraged and appreciated. Metal silverware is discouraged and knives of any kind are not permitted per the student handbook. Students should not bring knives of any kind, glass containers or carbonated beverages and should refrain from using metal or aluminum cans. Injuries can occur when opening these items.

Although adults are available to assist, we ask that you send students with items they can open on their own. We are not able to warm up food or store food in the refrigerator. Please be sure that packed up items hold up well at room temperature or include ice packs in the student's lunch box. Meal delivery services (Uber Eats, Door Dash, etc.) will not be accepted. Parents are not allowed to drop off any food items in a fast-food bag (McDonald's, Chick-Fil-A, Wendy's, etc.). Please be sure to write your child's name in their lunchbox so it can be returned to them if found on campus.

CLASS PLACEMENTS

Many factors are considered when placing a student in a class. On occasion, teacher assignments may change to balance class size in each grade level. In the event a parent requests a class change, several factors must take place before such a request is honored. A form is available from the school's guidance counselor highlighting the process necessary to entertain this request. Certainly, every attempt should be made by the classroom teacher, parent, and student to make the placement successful.

CLINIC SERVICE

Children who are ill **will not** be permitted to remain in school. Therefore, if a child becomes ill or seriously injured during the school day, the office staff will attempt to contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) immediately. If we are unable to reach the parent(s)/guardian(s), the designee will call the emergency contact phone numbers. Due to the nature of family situations changing suddenly, it is imperative that you do the following:

1. Keep your child's emergency records accurate and current.
2. Make sure that your child knows the person or persons he/she may be released to during the school day.
3. Advise the adults picking up your child to bring a photo ID and please provide them with the school's telephone number.
4. Notify the office of any changes as soon as possible.

STUDENTS MUST BE FEVER FREE FOR 24 HOURS, WITHOUT MEDICATION, BEFORE BEING ABLE TO RETURN TO SCHOOL.

STUDENTS MUST BE SIGNED OUT IN THE OFFICE BEFORE THEY ARE PICKED UP. YOU OR THE PERSON YOU SEND WILL BE ASKED TO SHOW A FLORIDA DRIVER'S LICENSE OR AN OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT STATE ID. ALL PERSONS PICKING UP STUDENTS MUST BE LISTED ON THE CHILD'S EMERGENCY CONTACT CARD. PLEASE KEEP CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS CURRENT.

If your child appears to be seriously ill or injured, we are obligated to call 911. The medical emergency team will make the decision as to whether the child needs to be transported to a hospital. It is the responsibility of the parents to pay this bill.

DISCIPLINE

We are proud of our Embassy Creek students and expect them to behave appropriately. The school utilizes the discipline matrix created by the School Board of Broward County, in accordance with state statutes, SBBC District policies and procedures. The School Board of Broward County lists specific rules, rights, and responsibilities for all students in the **Code of Student Conduct**. The Code of Student Conduct applies to all activities on and off school grounds, including field trips and bus transportation. All students must have a signed Code of Student Conduct Acknowledgement form on file.

Our school-wide student expectations are:

A – Be Accountable

R – Be Respectful

K – Be Kind

In addition to our school-wide expectations, each teacher has developed his/her own individual classroom or grade level rules.

Students Are Responsible for Their Behavior

When unacceptable/unexpected behaviors occur in the classroom, it will be handled by the classroom teacher using his/her classroom discipline plan. The consequences may include:

1. Warning
2. Time-out in classroom (age appropriate)
3. Time out in another classroom
4. Loss of privileges
5. Note or call home to parent
6. Referral to guidance or administration

Continued or severe disruptions will result in a referral to administration and consequences will be applied using the SBBC Discipline Matrix. These consequences are listed in the Code of Student Conduct.

We are committed to providing each student with a positive learning environment. We depend upon your support. Please help us by reviewing with your child the importance of behaving in school.

EARLY SIGN-OUT

According to School Board Attendance Policy 5.5, no students shall be released within the final 30 minutes of the school day unless the principal/designee determines it is an emergency.

Students who need to leave school prior to 1:30 p.m. must be picked up and signed out through the front office. All persons picking up students for early dismissal must have the proper identification. **YOU MUST HAVE A GOVERNMENT-ISSUED PICTURE I.D. TO SIGN OUT YOUR CHILD.** Teachers are not authorized to dismiss any child from class directly to the parent. Parents must sign out their child in the front office. Students may use office phones in emergency situations only.

If you do not communicate with your child's teacher in advance that you are signing out your child early, this could delay the process.

DISMISSAL

Please refer to APPENDIX A for detailed information regarding arrival and dismissal procedures. Please be advised that in the event of lightning within a 10-mile radius, all dismissal will cease until the lightning is no longer within a 10-mile radius. Parents of walkers/bikers that prefer to pick up their children on torrential rain/lightning days will be able to pick up their children on campus. Parents of east gate walker/bike riders can report to the overhang by the Kindergarten playground. Parents of west side walkers/bikers can report to the overhang by the front office gates. A staff member at these locations will help dismiss these students to their parents. We highly encourage students to keep any necessary rain gear in their backpacks or classroom. Students will be dismissed if it is raining and there is no lightning.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an important part of the school curriculum and require advance planning. Therefore, we are unable to accept late payments for field trips once the collection window has been closed. Please pay close attention to your child's planner and/or school Parentlink to receive timely reminders regarding field trip collection dates. Students may be denied the privilege of participating in field trips and social/extracurricular activities if said student(s) violates the Student Code of Conduct. The teacher shall make the initial determination. Administration makes the final decision.

FOCUS

BCPS is continuing to use FOCUS Student Information System for the 2025/26 school year. This system provides easy access to school information, student schedules, attendance, grades and more. All students, teachers, and staff will have accounts automatically created. Parents/guardians will need to create a Parent Portal by visiting <https://www.browardschools.com/focus>. Virtual Counselor is no longer accessible.

HOMEWORK

The School Board recognizes the importance of assigning meaningful and quality homework to students. Research indicates that schools in which homework is routinely assigned and assessed tend to have higher achieving students. Homework fosters student achievement, independence, and responsibility and serves as a vital link between school and home. Therefore, it is the policy of Broward County Schools that meaningful and quality homework is required at all grade levels in all schools. Time limits are given on the amount of homework assigned to students. The following is a guideline followed at Embassy Creek Elementary: Kindergarten is 10 minutes, first grade is 20 minutes, second grade is 30 minutes, third grade is 40 minutes, fourth grade is 50 minutes, and fifth grade is 60 minutes. Please understand that these times include silent reading, weekly projects, studying, daily skill development worksheets, etc.

MAKE-UP WORK

Make-up work is provided to students absent after they return to school. The student will be allowed three (3) days to do make-up work.

MEDICATION

Broward County School Board Policy 6305 expressly forbids the dispensing of medication to students by employees of the school system without a completed Authorization for Medication form. This form must be filled out, dated, and signed by your child's physician yearly. The medication form may be obtained in

the front office or on the school or district website. Also, please be reminded that cough drops, aspirin, eye, ear or nose drops, allergy pills, etc., all come under the restrictions dealing with the administering and dispensing of medicine in school and cannot be brought to school by children. We cannot give these to your child without the proper Authorization for Medication form signed by your doctor. However, you may come in to school and administer the medication or treatment in the school clinic.

Students may not keep any medications in their possession. ALL MEDICATION MUST BE KEPT IN ITS ORIGINAL CONTAINER. Over the Counter medication will not be accepted if opened or partially used.

If you need to speak to the school nurse, please call during their work hours, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

NATIONAL ALERT ** EMERGENCY EVACUATION**

All schools are mandated to have a plan in place in case of an emergency evacuation off campus. Embassy Creek Elementary has worked with the local authorities (BSO and Fire Departments) to devise an emergency evacuation plan. If an emergency off-site evacuation is required, our students will evacuate to the **Embassy Lakes Shopping Center** on the south side of Southeast Lake Blvd., where our local authorities will be in charge. A Command Post will be set up off school grounds. Parentlinks will be sent by the school to keep parents informed of the status of the emergency and provide updated dismissal procedures.

OTHER SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONS (SAC & SAF)

The School Advisory Council (SAC) consists of an elected group representing all the main stakeholders in the school. Their primary responsibility is to develop and monitor the progress of the goals outlined in the School Improvement Plan. This group, headed by an elected chairperson, meets monthly at the school. The School Advisory Forum (SAF), mainly a parent group, helps identify the educational needs and priorities of the school. It coordinates community resources and secures community support for the school. Parents are encouraged to join the Forum. In addition to monthly meetings at school, the SAF chairperson meets monthly with district representatives and SAF Chairs from other schools.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Embassy Creek PTA actively supports the school's instructional programs and enhances school-community relations. All parents are encouraged to join and actively support our PTA. A membership drive is conducted in August. You will be informed of regularly scheduled general meetings, board meetings and upcoming events via flyers. Please visit their website **ece.givebacks.com** for important information and upcoming events. Each membership helps our school earn additional votes at PTA conventions.

PETS

Due to safety and serious health concerns of some of our students, pets are not to be brought on to school property for any reason. Parents must fill out and submit their request to the Director of Equal Educational Opportunities/ ADA Compliance Department for students that require a service animal. Animals must be "individually trained" to do something that qualifies as work or a task. Pets or support animals are not considered service animals.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Please know that the Safety and Security of our students will be our top priority once again at Embassy Creek and across the district. The following safety and security related "non-negotiables" will be implemented beginning on the first day of school. We need your help and patience in implementing these expectations.

- All students and staff members must always wear their IDs on school grounds. Returning students will receive these IDs on their first day in attendance at ECE. The student IDs are left at the school and worn throughout the day.
- Once the school day begins, ALL perimeter gates will be secured, and all visitors will have to enter through our main parking gate on the southwest side of the school. A driver's license or government issued photo ID must be shown to the campus monitor before entering.
- The front doors to the main office can only be opened for visitors, parents and guests if proper identification is shown utilizing the A-phone security system located outside the main office doors. Visitors moving throughout the building must sign in through the office RAPTOR system to receive a temporary visitor badge.
- Parents are only permitted to park on campus if they have business in the front office or are volunteering. The campus monitor will ask for a driver's license and notify the office that you have business in the front office. If you are parking at an off-site location to walk your child to the entrance gates on SE Lake Boulevard, please follow all pedestrian expectations and use the crossing guards as required by law.
- Embassy will be conducting monthly drills (fire drills, lockdown and tornado drills). Appropriate parent notification will be provided after drills have been completed.

TARDINESS

School begins at 8:00 a.m. Students are late unless they are in their classroom at the 8:00 a.m. bell. Tardiness is disruptive to the learning environment and can have a negative impact on student achievement. Students arriving after the 8:00 a.m. bell may walk to their class; they will be marked tardy. Students arriving after 8:05 a.m. must be signed in, in the office, by a parent. Before coming to campus all parents/visitors must present a driver's license or government issued picture ID. All tardies will be recorded on the report card.

TRANSPORTATION

Bus transportation is provided for those students living two miles or more from our school. Parents should use the district's website at browardschools.com/register2ride to request a bus seat.

SUNSHINE AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

Sunshine Afterschool Child Care, our on-site after-care provider, is accepting registrations. Once a parent completes the registration, they will be notified by Sunshine Childcare staff if space is available and when their child may begin. To access the site, go to <https://www.sunshinefl.com>. Don't delay if this service is needed.

VOLUNTEERS

In order to be a chaperone on a field trip or volunteer in a classroom/schoolwide activity, you must be an approved volunteer. Volunteers may not bring infants or toddlers with them. All classroom volunteers must arrange with the teacher before volunteering. Remember that it takes time to receive your approval, particularly at the start of the school year. Registration is required early at www.browardschools.com/community/volunteer To help ensure a successful volunteer experience, a

Volunteer Orientation will be scheduled yearly for parents to explain all the guidelines and procedures. Teachers will not begin utilizing approved classroom volunteers until after this important meeting.

VISITORS

ALL VISITORS MUST HAVE GOVERNMENT ISSUED PICTURE IDENTIFICATION. All visitors must enter our campus and check-in at the front office. This way, we can ensure the safety of our children and minimize classroom interruptions. Please be prepared to show us a picture ID whenever you enter the school for any reason.

WITHDRAWAL

The parents of a child transferring to another school should advise the teacher and the front office of this transfer as soon as possible. All textbooks and library books must be returned. Records will be mailed upon receipt of a request from the new school.

APPENDIX A:
Embassy Creek Elementary School
Arrival & Dismissal Procedures
2025-2026

Arrival: The east gate will open for car riders ONLY, beginning at 7:15 a.m. Students must remain in their cars until approximately 7:20 a.m. when the car line process begins. East/west school perimeter gates for walkers/bike riders will not open until 7:30 a.m. All parents with scheduled conferences, business in the front office, etc. must park in the front office lot and report to the main office to check in. Identification is needed to proceed anywhere on the school's campus and all parents are required to use the RAPTOR Sign-in System. Please note that we do not offer morning care for students.

Upon arrival on campus, all students are to wait outside their teacher's classroom in an orderly line in the hallway. Please note that students are not permitted to roam the campus. Staff members will monitor hallways for student safety while waiting to enter the classroom. There are a few classes that follow different procedures upon entering the school during arrival. These classes include:

- **Kindergarten:** All kindergarten students will report to the cafeteria and take a seat at their assigned table. This process will continue for the first 2 weeks of school. During this time, the KG teachers will meet their classes in the cafeteria and escort them to class. Beginning the 3rd week of school, KG students will transition to sitting in their respective hallways, outside their classroom. At car drop-off, safety patrols are available to walk kindergartners to the cafeteria or classrooms as needed. Staff will supervise these children until the 7:55 a.m. bell rings and they go into their teacher's classroom.
- **Outside Breezeway Classes:** Students in Ms. Lozano's class (room 323), Mrs. Liotta's class (room 324), Ms. Blakeman (room 305), and Mrs. Gaines (room 304) will line up in the hallway inside building 3. Students in Mrs. Aaron's class (rooms 218), Mrs. Arbelaez's class (room 219), Mrs. Hoyt's class (room 201), and Mrs. Castro's class (room 202) will line up in the hallway inside building 2. These classroom teachers will escort students to their classrooms each morning.

Breakfast: Breakfast is served from 7:30 a.m. – 7:55 a.m. and available to all students free of charge. To ensure all students make it to class before the 8:00 a.m. bell, there will be no breakfast served after 7:55 a.m. (except late arriving BCPS bus riders). Students planning to eat breakfast at school should arrange to arrive early to avoid being marked late for class.

Dismissal: The school bell rings at 2:00 p.m. for all students. The school's perimeter gates for walkers and bikers open at 2:00 p.m. to begin the dismissal procedures. Parents are not permitted campus to pick up their child. Students will meet their parents at either the east or west exit gates on SE Lake Boulevard.



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- **Bus Riders** –The west side of the school is designated for **BCPS buses** and **private after care buses**. Kindergarten and first grade bus students will be walked to their locations at dismissal. Bus riders in grades 2 - 5 are dismissed by the classroom teacher.
- **Sunshine Aftercare Students** – Registered students in Kindergarten and First grade will be escorted to an assigned area designated for Sunshine After Care. Students in grades 2 – 5 are dismissed by their classroom teacher.

- **Walkers and Bicycle Riders** - These students will be dismissed at 2:00 p.m. They must leave class immediately after the school bell rings. All K and 1st grade walkers and bike riders will be escorted to either the east or west gates on SE Lake Boulevard at dismissal by a staff member. Siblings (Grades 2 – 5) should plan on meeting at the perimeter gates. Walkers and bikers, crossing SE Lake Blvd./Robert Becker Blvd. are reminded to use the crosswalks.



- **Car Pickup** – All students, regardless of how they go home, will receive a Curbsmart car tag at Meet and Greet to use throughout the year. Display your car tag on the rearview mirror of your car upon entering the car rider gates. The east carline gate will open for dismissal beginning at 1:45 p.m. for **ALL** students in grades K-5. All Kindergarten car rider students and their siblings will be in the cafeteria awaiting their Curbsmart number to be announced.
- **Parking:** Parking is limited. Parents are encouraged to use the car drop off and pick up procedures in place.
- During arrival and dismissal times, the west side of the school is solely designed for visitors who have scheduled conferences or business in the front office. The east side of the school has been designated for faculty and volunteer parking. Upon arrival, volunteers are asked to walk to the front office using the south side walkway adjacent to the school building. Parents are “not” permitted to enter the white gates designated for our students.
- Parents are “not” permitted to park in either the east or west visitor parking spaces to drop off or pick up children during arrival or dismissal.
- Understand that any double-parked cars, vehicles left unattended, parking in faculty parking spaces, blocked traffic on SE Lake Boulevard, or failure to follow the school’s arrival and dismissal procedures will result in a citation by our school’s BSO (Broward Sheriff s Office) Resource Officer.

Parents are asked to follow the school’s procedures for arrival and dismissal. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in an unsafe environment for our students and staff members. Please remember that “No” cell phones are permitted in the car drop off, pick-up or school campus as per Broward County School Board Policy.

Thank you in advance for helping us keep Embassy Creek Elementary a safe place for everyone!