

Briar Hills Elementary School

Home of the Buffaloes



2026-2027 School Year

2816 Briarwood Blvd. East Point, Georgia 30344

Office: 470-254-4660

Fax: 470-254-4666

Brandi Nichols, Principal

nicholsb@fultonschools.org

DeShunta Adams, Assistant Principal

adamsd3@fultonschools.org

WELCOME TO THE 2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR

Welcome back to Briar Hills Elementary – Home of the Buffaloes!

As we begin our second year together, I am filled with pride and gratitude as I reflect on all we accomplished during our inaugural year. What started as a brand-new school quickly became a place filled with joy, strong relationships, and a shared commitment to excellence. Together, we didn't just open a building—we began building a community.

Now, as we enter Year 2, our focus shifts from creating to strengthening.

Our theme for this school year is: “Stronger Together: Growing the Buffalo Circle.”

This theme represents our commitment to deepening the connections that make Briar Hills such a special place. We know that the people we surround ourselves with shape who we become. This year, we will be intentional about fostering a culture where every student, staff member, and family feels valued, supported, and empowered.

To guide our work, we will draw inspiration from *The Circles All Around Us* by Brad Montague. This story reminds us that our lives are shaped by the circles we build our relationships, our choices, and the ways we show up for one another. At Briar Hills, we are committed to building circles that are inclusive, uplifting, and rooted in care.

Our dedicated faculty and staff remain committed to ensuring that every child succeeds not only academically, but also as a collaborator, problem solver, and future leader. We will continue to provide engaging, rigorous, and meaningful learning experiences that meet the needs of all learners and support the development of the whole child.

We proudly continue to anchor our work in the values that defined our first year:

- Collaboration – Working together to ensure success for all
- Coachability – Growing through reflection and feedback
- Accountability – Maintaining high expectations for ourselves and one another

This year, we will deepen our commitment to these values as we strengthen what we surround.

We firmly believe that student success is built through strong partnerships between school and home. Your involvement, communication, and support are essential as we work together to ensure a positive and productive school year for every child.

Thank you for continuing this journey with us. The foundation has been laid—now, together, we will grow something even stronger.

With excitement and gratitude,
Brandi D. Nichols
Principal

SCHOOL VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

MISSION STATEMENT

Charging Toward Excellence – Briar Hills Elementary is committed to building a foundation of excellence by supporting the whole child—academically, socially, and emotionally—through inclusive practices, high expectations, and a culture of continuous growth.

SCHOOL VISION

United in Excellence – Briar Hills Elementary envisions a united herd charging forward with strength, unity, and purpose empowering confident, compassionate, and capable leaders of tomorrow.

SCHOOL MOTTO

Briar Hills Buffaloes are CHARGING WITH EXCELLENCE

BHES 2026 - 2027 School Calendar Revised June 11, 2026

** All Lost and Found items will be donated to a local charity organization on the 1st Friday of each month.	
July 27th – 31st	FCS Professional Development/Teacher Workday
July 30th	Pre-Planning/Sneak-a-Peak/Technology Workshop
August 3rd	First Day of School
August 14th	PBIS Townhall/Pep Rally
August 27th	Tea with the Principal, State of the School Address & A Day in the Life of a Buffalo
August 28th	Attendance/SOTM/PBIS Celebration
September 7th <i>No School for Students and Staff</i>	Labor Day Holiday - Schools Closed
September 10th	1 st Semester 4.5 Weeks Progress Report (Visible in Parent Portal)
September 14th-18th	Book Fair/Parent Conference Week
September 15th (Tentative)	Tea with the Principal
September 16th	Grandparents Day
September 17th	Parent Teacher Conference & ESOL Night
September 18th	SOTM/PBIS Celebration
September 21st – 25th	Fall Break Students
September 24th & 25th	Professional Development/Teacher Workday
September 30th	Fall Picture Day
October 1st - 31st	National Principal's Month
October 1st	Family Date Night with Cluster Schools at Paul D. West
October 2nd	PBIS Townhall/School Custodian Appreciation Day
October 5th-9th	Georgia Pre-K Week
October 12th	Indigenous People Day - Holiday
October 12th – 16th	National School Lunch Week
October 15th	Hispanic Heritage Night Celebration
October 16th	1 st Semester 9 Weeks Progress Report (Visible in Parent Portal)
October 19th- 23rd	Parent Conferences w/ Students with Deficiencies
October 19th – 23rd	National Bus Safety Week
October 19th – 23rd	Briar Hills Think Pink Week Breast Cancer Awareness
October 23rd – 30th	Red Ribbon Week
October 29th	Fall Festival
October 30th	Book Character Day/SOTM/PBIS Celebration
November 3rd	Remote Learning Day/Election Day
November 6th	PBIS Townhall
November 12th	Math Night
November 17th & 19th	Thanksgiving Luncheons
November 20th	1 st Semester 13.5 Weeks Progress Report (Visible in Parent Portal)
November 20th	SOTM/PBIS Celebration
November 23rd-27th <i>No School for Students and Staff</i>	Thanksgiving Holidays – Schools Closed
November 30th – December 4th	Parent Conferences w/ Students with Deficiencies
December 4th	PBIS Townhall
December 10th	Winter Holiday Concert
December 11th	Schoolwide Spelling Bee
December 17th and 18th	Holiday Classroom Parties
December 18th	Last Day of 1 st Semester/PBIS Celebration
December 21st -January 1st <i>No School for Students and Staff</i>	Winter Break – Schools Closed
January 4th <i>No School for Students</i>	Teacher Workday – Students Off
January 5th	First Day of 2 nd Semester

January 8th	PBIS Townhall
January 13th	1st Semester Report Card (Visible in Parent Portal)
January 18th <i>No School for Students and Staff</i>	MLK Holiday – No School
January 20th – 21st	1st Semester Awards Days
January 29th	SOTM/PBIS Celebration
February 1st – 28th	BLACK HISTORY MONTH
February 1st – 5th	National School Counseling Week
February 5th	PBIS Townhall
February 11th	Fall in Love with STEAM Night at Paul D. West
February 13th	2nd Semester 4.5 Weeks Progress Report (Visible in Parent Portal)
February 15th – 19th	Winter Break Students
February 18th - 19th	Professional Development/Teacher Workdays
February 25th	Black History Program
February 22nd – 26th	Parent Conferences w/ Students with Deficiencies
February 22nd – 26th	Black History Spirit Week/Celebration
February 26th	SOTM/PBIS Celebration
March 1st – 5th	National School Social Worker’s Week
March 1st – 5th	Read Across America Week/Exceptional Children’s Week
March 5th	PBIS Townhall
March 11th	Tea with the Principal & Parent Input Meeting
March 15th <i>No School for Students/Staff</i>	Holiday
March 25th	2nd Semester 9 Weeks Progress Report (Visible in Parent Portal)
March 29th – April 2nd	Parent Conferences w/ Students with Deficiencies
March 26th	SOTM/PBIS Celebration
March 29th – April 2nd	Assistant Principal Week
April 1st	Spring Picture Day (Individual and Group – Payment required in advance.
April 2nd	PBIS Townhall
April 5th - 9th	Spring Break
April 16th	PreK & Kindergarten Round Up
April 22nd	Georgia Milestones Lock-In
April 19th – 23rd	Autism Awareness/Acceptance Week
April 24th	National Administrative Professionals’ Day
April 28th	School Bus Appreciation Day
April 28th – May 7th	Georgia Milestones Testing
April 30th	SOTM/PBIS Celebration
April 30th	2nd Semester 13.5 Weeks Progress Report (Visible in Parent Portal)
May 3rd - 7th	Teacher Appreciation Week
May 7th	EOTY Townhall/Pep Rally
May 12th & 13th Tentative	Field Day
May 24th Tentative	5th Grade Moving-On Ceremony/End of Year Celebration
May 17th Tentative	AU Awards Day
May 18th Tentative	PK-KK Awards Day
May 19th Tentative	1st – 2nd Grades Awards Day
May 20th Tentative	3rd-4th Grades Awards Day
May 21st	SOTM/PBIS EOTY Celebration
May 25th	AU, PK – 2nd Grade End of Year Celebrations

May 26th	3rd-4th Grades End of Year Celebrations
May 27th	Last Day of School
May 28th	Professional Development/Teacher Workday
June 1st	Semester 2 Report Cards (Visible in Parent Portal)

ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential for student success. Families are expected to ensure that students attend school daily and arrive on time, ready to learn.

School Hours

- Instructional day: 7:40 AM – 2:20 PM
- Students arriving after 7:40 AM are considered tardy
- Breakfast is served from 7:10 AM – 7:45 AM

To avoid being marked tardy, students should arrive on or before 7:40 AM.

ABSENCES

If a student is absent, written documentation from a parent/guardian or physician must be submitted within 3 school days of returning for the absence to be considered excused.

Excused absences include:

- Personal illness
- Illness or death in the immediate family
- Religious observances
- Hazardous weather conditions

All other absences will be considered unexcused.

Students must be present for at least half of the instructional day (until 11:15 AM) to be counted present.

ATTENDANCE MONITORING & SUPPORT

Briar Hills Elementary closely monitors student attendance.

- Families are notified after 3 unexcused absences or tardies
- A formal letter is sent after 5 unexcused absences or tardies
- A referral to the school social worker may be made to provide additional support:
 - After 5 unexcused absences, or
 - After 15 tardies

We encourage families to communicate any unusual or extenuating circumstances in writing to the Principal.

Consistent attendance and punctuality are critical to your child's academic success.

EARLY DISMISSAL

To ensure student safety and minimize disruptions to instruction, families must follow established early dismissal procedures.

- All early dismissals must be processed through the front office
- Students must bring a written note from home if their dismissal plan changes
- Only individuals listed as emergency contacts may check out a student

Important Guidelines:

- Early check-outs should occur before 2:00 PM
- Check-outs after 2:00 PM are not permitted and families will be asked to wait until regular dismissal
- Dismissal procedures begin at 2:20 PM

IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

For student safety:

A valid photo ID is required for all student check-outs

The individual must be listed in the student's records

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

At Briar Hills Elementary, we proudly celebrate student achievement and growth throughout the school year. Student accomplishments are recognized in a variety of ways, including school announcements, classroom celebrations, and recognition by teachers and administrators. Each semester, we host Honors Day celebrations to formally recognize student achievement. First semester ceremonies are held in classrooms and are thoughtfully planned by grade-level teams to ensure meaningful and student-centered recognition experiences. Second semester ceremonies will be held in the cafeteria.

Families will be notified of ceremony dates through the school calendar, teacher communication, and ClassDojo. Invitations will be sent to families of recognized students in advance.

Schoolwide Awards

Students may be recognized for the following achievements:

Principal's List

- Grades K–2: All Exceeding Mastery (EM) marks
- Grades 3–5: All A's and Consistently Demonstrating (C) in all non-academic skill areas

"A" Honor Roll

- Grades K–2: All Exceeding Mastery (EM) marks
- Grades 3–5: All A's

"A/B" Honor Roll

- Grades K–2: Exceeding Mastery (EM) and Mastery (M) marks
- Grades 3–5: All A's and B's

Exceptional Attendance

- Awarded to students with fewer than 5% absences

Perfect Attendance

- Awarded to students with no absences and no more than 3 tardies

Buffalo Citizenship Award

- Recognizes students who consistently demonstrate positive behavior, leadership, and strong character

Most Improved

- Awarded to students demonstrating significant growth in reading, math, or behavior
- Limited to three students per class

Brilliant Buffalo Award

- Awarded to one student per homeroom who exemplifies leadership, academic excellence, and positive behavior
- Briar Hills Bold Buffalo
- Awarded to students in grades 1–5 who successfully complete all grade-level expectations

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

We value the importance of celebrating our students; however, in order to protect instructional time, individual birthday parties are not permitted during the school day.

Students are recognized in meaningful ways through:

- Morning announcements
- Birthday ribbons and/or tokens

Students may celebrate with their class during lunch only with prior teacher approval.

Guidelines for Birthday Treats:

- One small, pre-packaged, store-bought treat (e.g., cupcakes or ice cream cups) is permitted
- Treats must be individually wrapped
- The following items are not permitted:
- Pizza or full meals
- Balloons
- Party favors
- Large cakes or decorations

Families should contact the teacher in advance to coordinate any birthday recognition.

BULLYING PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

The Fulton County School System strictly prohibits bullying in any form at school or during school-related activities.

Bullying behavior may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion. All reports of bullying are taken seriously and

will be promptly investigated. Retaliation against anyone reporting bullying or participating in an investigation is strictly prohibited.

If You Suspect Bullying

1. We encourage families to report concerns as soon as possible. The following steps should be followed:
2. Notify the classroom teacher
3. The teacher will refer the concern to the school counselor
4. The counselor will investigate and meet with students involved
5. School administration will be involved if further action is needed

For additional information, please refer to the Fulton County Schools Student Code of Conduct.

TRANSPORTATION

Fulton County Schools is committed to providing safe, efficient, and reliable transportation for all students. Riding the bus is a privilege, and students are expected to demonstrate safe and respectful behavior at all times.

Students must ride their assigned bus and use their designated bus stop.

Bus Behavior Expectations

For the safety of all students, the following rules must be followed at all times:

- Follow all directions given by the bus driver
- Demonstrate respectful behavior toward peers and the driver
- Remain seated, facing forward, while the bus is in motion
- Keep hands, feet, and belongings out of the aisle and inside the bus
- Sit in assigned seats, if applicable
- No eating or drinking on the bus

The following are not permitted on the bus:

- Glass objects
- Balloons
- Live animals
- Food or drinks
- Large sporting equipment
- Personal electronic devices

Bullying, horseplay, and disruptive behavior are strictly prohibited.

Bus Discipline

Students who violate bus expectations may face disciplinary consequences, including:

- Verbal warning
- Assigned seating
- Temporary suspension from the bus
- Loss of bus privileges

Behavior concerns will be addressed by the bus driver and referred to school administration when necessary.

Transportation Changes

- All transportation changes must be submitted in writing by 12:00 PM
- Families should not remove students from dismissal lines or buses
- The front office will assist with all approved transportation changes

Student safety during dismissal is our top priority. We appreciate your cooperation and patience as we ensure every student arrives home safely.

BUS ASSIGNMENTS

Bus assignments are based on the student's home address and may not be changed for convenience.

- Students must ride their assigned bus only
- Non-bus riders are not permitted to ride the bus

Emergency Changes:

- Must be approved through the South Fulton Transportation Office

- Phone: 470-254-6060
- Only emergency childcare situations will be considered through the school

CAR RIDERS

Families who transport students by car must follow all procedures to ensure a safe and efficient arrival and dismissal process.

Morning Drop-Off

- Students may not be dropped off before 7:10 AM (no supervision available)
- Students should not wait outside or in the cafeteria before 7:10 AM
- The car rider line closes promptly at 7:40 AM
- If arrival is after 7:40 AM:
- Parents must park, escort the student inside, and sign them in at the front office
- The student will receive a tardy pass

Car Rider Procedures

- Use the designated front car rider loop only
- Follow all staff directions and posted traffic patterns
- Remain in a single-file line—do not pass other vehicles
- Students must enter and exit vehicles on the curbside only
- Have students ready with belongings for quick exit
- Important Safety Expectations:
- Do not use the bus lane for drop-off or pick-up
- Students may not walk through the parking lot without an adult
- If assistance is needed, park and walk your child into the building

Afternoon Dismissal

- Dismissal begins at 2:20 PM
- All students should be picked up by 2:45 PM
- Parents must display the official car rider tag/number

During dismissal:

- Remain in your vehicle
- Staff will escort students to cars

Late Pick-Up:

- Families will be contacted if students are consistently picked up late
- Ongoing concerns may result in support from the school social worker

DAY CARE / VAN RIDERS

Students transported by daycare or van services will be dismissed from the designated gym area.

To ensure a safe and efficient dismissal process, the following expectations must be followed:

- Parents must notify the school of the approved daycare provider responsible for student pick-up
- Parents must inform the school if their child will not be riding daycare transportation on a given day
- Changes in transportation must follow school procedures and timelines

Late Pick-Up Guidelines:

- Late daycare pick-ups will be handled in the same manner as all student late pick-ups
- Parents will be notified of repeated late pick-ups by a provider
- Continued late pick-ups may result in the school discontinuing on-site daycare pick-up services

CAFETERIA SERVICES

Our school cafeteria provides a variety of nutritious, well-balanced meal options for students each day, including hot meals and fresh salad choices.

Breakfast Service:

- Served daily from 7:10 AM – 7:35 AM

Meal Prices

- Student Breakfast: \$1.70
- Student Lunch: \$3.10
- Adult Breakfast: \$3.25
- Adult Lunch: \$5.25

For more information about the Fulton County Schools Nutrition Program, please visit:

Visitor Lunch Guidelines:

Families are welcome to join their child for lunch during their scheduled lunch time.

- All visitors must check in at the front office and obtain a visitor's pass
- Adult lunch purchases are available for \$5.25

Parents/guardians may bring lunch for their own child. However:

- Outside restaurant packaging is not permitted in the cafeteria
- Food must be transferred to a separate container
- Alternatively, families may eat in a designated area outside the cafeteria

For student safety and allergy awareness:

- Food and snacks may not be shared with other students
- Outside food may not be distributed to any students other than your own child

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR CONTACT INFORMATION

It is critical that the school has accurate and up-to-date contact information for all families.

Families must ensure that the following information is current at all times:

- Home address
- Phone numbers (home, work, and mobile)
- Emergency contacts and authorized individuals for student pick-up

In the event you are unavailable (e.g., travel or extended absence), you must notify both the teacher and front office in writing of the individual responsible for your child during that time.

If the school is unable to reach a parent or guardian during an emergency, additional support, including involvement from the school social worker, may be necessary.

CLASSROOM PLACEMENT & REQUESTS

At Briar Hills Elementary, we are committed to ensuring that all students receive high-quality instruction from every member of our teaching staff. For this reason, specific teacher requests are not accepted.

Our teachers collaborate regularly through:

- Weekly and monthly planning
- Professional learning opportunities
- Support from the Curriculum Support Teacher and district teams

This ensures consistency and excellence in instruction across all grade levels.

Extenuating Circumstances:

- Requests for placement changes will be considered only in exceptional situations
- Requests must be submitted in writing via email to the Principal
- A review team will evaluate the request
- A decision will be communicated in writing within 5 school days

Class assignments are shared during Open House. Requests will not be accepted prior to August 3, 2026.

Advanced / Acceleration Testing

- New students to Fulton County Schools may be assessed for placement upon enrollment
- Current students who meet district criteria will be assessed at the end of the school year for the following year

CLINIC SERVICES

The health and well-being of our students is a top priority. The school clinic provides care for minor illnesses and injuries during the school day.

When Students Become Ill

Students should remain at home if they are sick.

- Students must be fever-free for 24 hours without medication before returning to school
- Parents/guardians will be contacted if a student:
 - Has a fever
 - Vomits
 - Has diarrhea
 - Is unable to remain in class

If a parent or guardian cannot be reached and additional medical care is required, emergency services may be contacted. A staff member will remain with the student until a parent arrives.

Medical Information & Medication

Families must inform the school of:

- Allergies
- Chronic health conditions
- Any medical concerns requiring special care

For students requiring medication during the school day:

- Written authorization is required
- Medication must be provided in original packaging
- All required medical forms must be submitted to the clinic

Medication will be administered only by authorized school personnel in accordance with district guidelines.

COMMUNICATION: HOME TO SCHOOL

Clear and timely communication is essential.

- Written notes are the preferred method for sending messages to teachers or the school office
- Students should deliver notes directly to their teacher
- Staff will respond as soon as possible

Money sent to school must be:

- Placed in a sealed envelope
- Clearly labeled with the student's name, teacher's name, and purpose

COMMUNICATION: SCHOOL TO HOME

Briar Hills Elementary provides regular updates to keep families informed.

- A weekly electronic newsletter is sent every Friday by 4:00 PM
- The newsletter includes:
 - School updates
 - Upcoming events
 - Academic tips for families

Families should ensure their contact information is current in Infinite Campus or through their child's teacher.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS FOR PARENTS, GUARDIANS, & VISITORS

Briar Hills Elementary is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all students, staff, and families.

We ask all parents, guardians, and visitors to:

- Treat all students and staff with respect
- Follow all school and district policies
- Model appropriate behavior at all times

Prohibited Behaviors

The following actions are not permitted:

- Disrespectful or inappropriate communication toward staff
- Entering school buses or intervening in student discipline
- Confrontations at bus stops or on school property
- Smoking or consuming alcohol on or near school grounds
- Addressing or disciplining students other than your own

All concerns should be addressed through appropriate school channels.

Visitor Expectations

- Appropriate attire is required when visiting the school
- All visitors must follow school procedures while on campus

Legal Notice

In accordance with Georgia Code O.C.G.A. 20-1-1181, it is unlawful to knowingly, intentionally, or recklessly disrupt or interfere with the operation of a public school, school bus, or designated bus stop.

Violations may result in legal consequences.

CONFERENCES & FAMILY COMMUNICATION

Planned parent-teacher conferences are held during both the fall and spring semesters. These conferences provide an opportunity to discuss student progress and strengthen the home-school partnership.

Additional conferences may be scheduled at any time during the school year by request. To protect instructional time, conferences are not conducted during classroom instruction and must be scheduled in advance.

Staying Connected

Families are encouraged to stay actively informed through the following communication tools:

- The Herd News (Weekly Newsletter) - Sent electronically every Friday with school updates, events, and important information
- School Website - Visit the Briar Hills Elementary website for schoolwide updates and resources
- Phone Communication - Teachers are unable to take calls during instructional time. Messages may be left with the front office, and calls will be returned within 48 hours
- Email - Families may email teachers to request communication or schedule a conference
- ClassDojo - Used by teachers to share classroom updates and communicate student progress and behavior
- Written Notes - Notes should be sent with students and clearly communicated to teachers
 - Transportation changes must be signed by a parent/guardian and approved by the office
- Progress Reports - Distributed every 4½ weeks
 - Report cards are issued each semester
 - Parents may request to review formal assessments at school

COUNSELING SUPPORT

The school counselor provides support for students' academic, social, and emotional development.

- Referrals may be initiated by parents, students, or staff
- School counselors provide short-term support and guidance
- They do not provide long-term therapy

If ongoing support is needed, referrals to outside providers may be facilitated by the school counselor or social worker.

HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDANCE

Fulton County Schools prioritizes the health and well-being of all students and staff. The district follows guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Georgia Department of Public Health (GDPH), and local health agencies.

Health protocols and updates will be communicated to families as needed to ensure a safe learning environment.

STUDENT RIGHTS & CONCERNS

If a parent/guardian believes a student is being denied participation in an educational activity or subjected to an inappropriate rule or practice:

1. Schedule a conference with the teacher and/or principal
2. If concerns remain unresolved, contact the Fulton County Elementary Administrative Office

We are committed to addressing all concerns fairly and promptly.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Briar Hills Elementary is committed to maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment where all students have the right to learn. Students are expected to demonstrate respectful behavior and appropriate decision-making. Staff work to support student growth through guidance, problem-solving, and restorative practices.

Personal Items

Students should not bring non-instructional items to school, including but not limited to:

- Toys, dolls, or stuffed animals
- Trading cards
- Personal electronic devices (unless authorized)

Items that disrupt learning may be:

- Confiscated and returned to a parent/guardian
- Held until retrieved by a parent

Unclaimed items may be donated at the end of the semester.

Technology Use

- Personal devices are not permitted unless approved for instructional use
- Families will be notified if devices are required for classroom use

EARLY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

To ensure safety and minimize disruption:

- All early dismissals must be completed through the front office
- Parents may not go directly to classrooms to retrieve students
- Students must be checked out by an authorized adult with valid ID

Important Guidelines

- Early check-out should occur before 2:00 PM
- Early dismissals are not permitted after 2:00 PM
- After 2:00 PM, families must wait until regular dismissal

This policy protects:

- Instructional time
- School-wide dismissal procedures
- Student safety

Dismissal Safety Reminders

- Parents must follow established dismissal procedures
- Car rider tags must be displayed during pick-up
- Students will only be released to authorized individuals

Consistent late pick-up concerns may result in additional follow-up and support.

GRADING & REPORTING

Teachers use a variety of developmentally appropriate methods to assess student learning, including:

- Tests and quizzes
- Projects and reports
- Classwork and homework
- Rubrics and participation

Grades reflect each student's mastery of the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) and, when applicable, align with Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Grades are not determined by comparison to other students (no bell curve). Academic grades reflect performance and understanding of standards and are not reduced for behavior, except in cases such as academic dishonesty.

Grading Practices

- All assignments and assessments contribute to a student's overall grade
- Teachers use professional judgment when determining final grades, especially when patterns of growth or decline are evident
- A single poor grade will not determine a student's overall success; similarly, one high score does not outweigh consistent academic struggles

Progress Monitoring

- Progress reports are issued every 4½ weeks
- Report cards are issued at the end of each semester
- Families are encouraged to monitor student progress through the Infinite Campus Parent Portal

Teachers will communicate with families if a student:

- Is at risk of earning a NYM (Not Yet Mastery) or F
- Shows a significant decline in academic performance

Grading Scale

Kindergarten – 2nd Grade

- EM – Exceeding Mastery
- M – Mastering
- AM – Approaching Mastery
- NYM – Not Yet Demonstrating Mastery
- NG – No Grade

Note: Numerical grades are not displayed on report cards but may be used in teacher gradebooks.

Grades 3 – 5

- A = 90–100
- B = 80–89
- C = 70–79
- F = 69 and below
- NG – No Grade

No Grade (NG)

A grade of NG may be assigned when:

- A student has been enrolled for fewer than 20 school days in the grading period, or
- There is insufficient data from a previous school

Redo/Retake Opportunities

Students are provided opportunities to demonstrate growth and learning.

- Students may complete one redo or retake per grading period for a major assignment or assessment
- Eligibility applies to scores of 79 or below

Guidelines:

- The maximum replacement grade is 79
- Redo/retake must be completed:
 - Before the next major assessment, or
 - At least 5 school days before the end of the grading period
- Exceptions may be made for students with excused absences

Promotion & Retention

Promotion and retention decisions are made using a comprehensive review of:

- Academic progress
- Social-emotional development
- Overall readiness for the next grade level

Families are essential partners in this process and will be informed and involved throughout.

For additional details, please refer to district guidelines on retention timelines and procedures.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

Schools may close due to inclement weather, power outages, or other emergency conditions. Decisions regarding school closures are made as early as possible and communicated to families through official channels.

- Announcements will be made via WSB Radio (AM 750) and local television stations
- Notifications typically occur between 5:00 AM and 7:00 AM

If conditions change during the school day, families should monitor local media for updates regarding dismissal or closure.

Please do not call the school office for closure information, as phone lines must remain available for emergency communication.

In the event of an emergency evacuation, students will be safely transported to a designated alternate site. Families will be notified with additional information as needed.

HEALTH & WELLNESS: FOOD GUIDELINES

To support student health and safety:

- Nut-containing foods are not permitted due to student allergies
- All food items sent to school must be store-bought and pre-packaged

These guidelines help minimize health risks and ensure a safe environment for all students.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Students participate in regular Physical Education (PE) and recess each week.

To support safe participation:

- Students should wear appropriate footwear for physical activity
- Flip-flops, slides, and open-toe shoes are not permitted

We encourage all students to stay active and engaged during physical activity opportunities.

ILLNESS

Student health is essential to both individual success and the well-being of the school community.

- Students should remain at home when they are ill
- Students must be fever-free (below 100°F) for at least 24 hours without medication before returning to school

If your child is ill, please consult your child's healthcare provider for guidance and care instructions.

HOMEWORK

Homework is designed to reinforce classroom learning, build responsibility, and encourage family engagement.

Expectations

- Homework is typically assigned Monday through Thursday
- Occasional assignments may be given on Fridays
- Assignments are aligned to classroom instruction and learning standards

Students are responsible for:

- Recording assignments
- Completing work on time
- Returning completed assignments

Families should contact the teacher with any questions or concerns.

Suggested Time Guidelines

Homework time may vary based on individual needs; however, general guidelines are:

- Kindergarten & 1st Grade: 10–20 minutes
- 2nd Grade: 20–30 minutes
- 3rd Grade: 30–40 minutes
- 4th Grade: 40–50 minutes
- 5th Grade: 50–60 minutes

Additional Guidelines

- Students may not use school phones to call home for forgotten items
- If a student is absent:
 - Homework requests must be submitted by 9:00 AM
 - Work may be picked up at the end of the day or sent home with another student

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM & CURRICULUM

The curriculum at Briar Hills Elementary is designed to provide engaging, meaningful learning experiences that support the development of the whole child.

Instruction aligns with:

- Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE)
- District and national educational expectations

Students are provided with opportunities to:

- Develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- Engage in hands-on, interactive learning experiences
- Apply knowledge across subject areas
- Learn through differentiated instruction that meets diverse learning needs

Instructional Focus

Our instructional program emphasizes:

- Skill development across all content areas
- Use of assessment data to guide instruction
- Integration of technology into learning
- Exploration of global and multicultural perspectives

Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum

Pre-K instruction is based on the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS), which:

- Support development from birth to age five
- Recognize individual learning styles and developmental rates
- Promote foundational skills and concepts for early learners

LOST AND FOUND

Lost items are placed in the school's designated Lost and Found area.

- Students are encouraged to check regularly for missing items

- Students should also turn in any items they find

To help prevent lost items:

- Label all belongings with your child's name

Unclaimed items will be donated to a charitable organization on a monthly basis.

INFINITE CAMPUS

Fulton County Schools uses Infinite Campus as its student information system.

The Campus Parent and Campus Student portals provide real-time access to:

- Grades and assignments
- Attendance
- School announcements

Families are encouraged to create and regularly access their accounts to stay informed and engaged in their child's learning.

Infinite Campus is designed to be user-friendly and accessible via both desktop and mobile app platforms.

MEDICATION

Students requiring medication during the school day must follow all district procedures.

Requirements:

- A completed medication authorization packet must be submitted to the clinic
- Medication must be provided in the original prescription container

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

- Provide written certification from a licensed physician indicating:
 - The need for medication during school hours
 - Dosage, duration, and potential side effects
- Sign required release forms

All medication will be stored securely and administered by authorized school personnel.

PARENT RESOURCE CENTER

The Briar Hills Parent Resource Center provides families with materials and tools to support student learning at home.

Available resources include:

- Instructional materials
- Computer access

For more information, contact our Parent Liaisons:

- Ms. Christine Taylor – taylorc7@fultonschools.org
- Ms. Adilene Arroyo – arroyoa@fultonschools.org

REQUESTS TO PROHIBIT VISITATION

Parents/guardians must notify the school in writing if there are individuals who are not permitted to:

- Visit the student
- Check out the student

If custody or legal documents exist, they must be submitted to the school. The school will follow the most recent legal documentation on file.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

The School Governance Council (SGC) is a decision-making body representing both the school and the community.

The SGC is responsible for:

- Approving the school's strategic plan
- Approving the annual budget and resource allocations
- Participating in decision-making processes, including flexibility requests
- Supporting leadership processes, including principal selection when applicable

SCHOOL RECORDS

Parents/guardians have the right to review their child's educational records.

- Authorized school staff may access records as needed to support student learning
- Records will not be shared with third parties without written parental consent

Record Requests:

- Must be submitted to the school office
- Records and transcripts are mailed directly to the receiving institution

SCHOOL UNIFORM & DRESS CODE

At Briar Hills Elementary, we dress for success. Students are expected to maintain a neat, clean, and appropriate appearance that supports a positive learning environment.

Student Expectations

Clothing should not:

- Disrupt the learning environment
- Present safety concerns

The following are not permitted:

- Extremely short skirts, dresses, or shorts (must pass fingertip length)
- Spaghetti straps or strapless tops
- Tight or revealing clothing
- Leggings without appropriate-length tops
- Clothing with inappropriate language or images
- Pants worn below the waist
- Flip-flops or unsecured footwear
- Clothing exposing the midriff
- See-through clothing or items associated with gangs or disruptive groups

Reasonable accommodations will be made for religious or medical needs.

Adult/Visitor Expectations

Parents and visitors are expected to model appropriate dress:

- No sleepwear or pajamas
- No revealing attire
- No clothing with inappropriate language or images

SPECIAL SERVICES & ACTIVITIES

Students at Briar Hills have access to a variety of programs and enrichment opportunities, including:

- After-school clubs
- Chorus
- Counseling services
- Special education services
- Media center services
- Mentoring programs
- Behavior support and incentives
- Family engagement events
- Physical education
- YMCA After-School Program
- Student Safety Patrol
- Talented and Gifted (TAG) Program

Additional opportunities may be offered throughout the year based on student interest.

TECHNOLOGY USE

Cell Phone Policy

Personal devices, including cell phones, are not permitted for use during the school day.

- Devices that are visible or in use will be confiscated
- Confiscated devices will be held in the front office for parent retrieval

All device use must align with the Fulton County Student Code of Conduct (Procedure JD).

Digital Citizenship

Families are encouraged to promote responsible technology use at home. Helpful resources include:

- Fulton County Digital Resources
- Scholastic Parent Guides
- WebMD Technology Tips

(Links available on the school website)

TARDIES & LATE PICK-UP

Students are expected to be seated and ready to learn by 7:41 AM.

Morning Tardies

- Students arriving after 7:40 AM are tardy
- Students must check in at the front office and receive a tardy slip
- Students without a tardy slip will be sent back to the office

Late Pick-Up

- Students must be picked up by 2:45 PM
- After 2:45 PM, parents must sign out students from the office

Repeated Late Pick-Up:

- 1st occurrence: Warning notice
- After 3 occurrences: Referral to the school social worker

TELEPHONE USE

- Students may not make or receive phone calls during the school day except in emergencies
- Students may not call home for forgotten items
- The office does not deliver non-emergency messages to students

Emergency calls may be directed through school administration.

TESTING & SCREENING

Fulton County Schools uses a variety of assessments to monitor student progress, including:

- Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS)
- Georgia Milestones Assessment System (GMAS)
- i-Ready Diagnostic (Reading and Math)
- District and school-based assessments

These assessments help guide instruction and support student achievement.

TEXTBOOKS & INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Textbooks and instructional materials are provided at no cost.

- Students are responsible for maintaining materials in good condition
- Fees will be assessed for lost or damaged items

Parents will be notified if replacement or payment is required.

VISITORS & VOLUNTEERS

To ensure student safety:

- All visitors must report to the front office, present ID, and sign in
- Visitors must wear a visitor badge at all times

Building Access

- Doors open at 7:10 AM and close at 7:40 AM
- Entry is controlled via intercom and security system

Volunteering

Parents are encouraged to volunteer.

Requirements:

- Complete the Fulton County Volunteer Screening Process
- Complete required Child Abuse Training
- Schedule visits in advance

Volunteer Expectations

- Sign in and wear a badge
- Remain in assigned areas
- Dress appropriately
- Do not bring additional children

Volunteers may not:

- Administer medication
- Discipline students
- Grade assignments
- Access confidential information

WITHDRAWALS

Parents planning to withdraw a student should notify the school in advance.

- Allow 24–48 hours for processing
- Provide the name and address of the new school

All materials, devices, and fees must be returned/paid before withdrawal is complete.

SCHOOL ZONE INFORMATION

Briar Hills Elementary is part of Fulton County Zone 2.

Zone Office: 4025 Flat Shoals Road

Union City, GA 30291

Phone: 470-254-0930

Zone Superintendent: Jason Stamper