

Parent-Student Handbook, 2020-2021

Welcome to Red Cedar Elementary School, established August, 2009. Please review our Parent-Student Handbook. Everything in this handbook is designed to ensure that everyone here is safe, is learning, that everyone and everything is respected, and that we are complying with district, state, and federal rules governing schools. We hope that this answers your questions about life at Red Cedar Elementary School. If not, please feel free to contact your child's teacher first if it is a homeroom issue, a special area or special needs teacher if they can better address it, or one of the administrators if it is a school-wide issue.

We try to be as communicative as possible and hope that you will do the same. We are all here to help your child stay safe, learn at the highest levels possible, and if we are all very lucky, begin the road to finding his/her passion – the thing or things your child feels most competent, happy, and fulfilled in doing over all others.

Things that help us do this are below:

- Students perform better when school personnel and parents work together. Sharing your disagreement with a teacher in front of your child makes it difficult on your child.
- Please be on time. Arriving at least 5 minutes before the start time is highly suggested and requested. This one goes beyond your child, because when your child arrives late, that arrival interrupts instruction, putting everyone, not just your child, behind.
- Have your child in school every day. We only get 180 days each year with children. We do everything to make use of every minute. When children are absent they are obviously not at school learning more in class. Especially for those who are behind, this makes our work and theirs far more difficult.
- Attend parent conferences, programs, Kids' Club, curriculum nights and ESOL nights as often as you can. When you show an interest in school as an important place to be, your child will show more interest as well.
- Please read and sign the agenda book. It is our quickest form of communication.
- Ask questions. We have reasons for what we do, but sometimes there is a mistake, miscommunication or it's not very clear. Point it out, ask the question, and we will explain and fix whatever needs explaining and fixing. If you're doing this in front of your child, please help them learn the respectful way to question and to disagree with someone.
- Please do not pick up your child early unless it is absolutely necessary. Again, this steals time, not only from your child's education, but from the students in his/her class who are interrupted every time someone in

the class is called out of it. Early dismissals and late arrivals are meant only to occur in situations where you cannot get the appointment for **your child** at any other time. If you absolutely must pick up your child early, it needs to occur at least 30 minutes prior to dismissal.

- Ask about what your child is learning. Asking specific questions, like "What exactly did you do in math today? Was it about multiplication? Was it geometry?" That elicits a far more thoughtful answer than the question, "What did you learn today?" It is way too easy to answer that one with, "Nothing." If you *do* get that unfortunate answer call or email the teacher. We will need to straighten that out right away.
- Students perform better in school when they eat breakfast. Arrange for them to have it here or have it at home, but please make sure they have it.
- Help your children understand that it is our job to challenge them. We try very hard to suit the level of challenge to the child. We don't miss often, so when we say, "He can do it," please first support that notion by encouraging your child to rise to the challenge, not buckle under it. When a child knows we are all behind him believing that he can do it if he tries (and we do) it is a very powerful support to help him succeed. Add the most important people in his life to that team (you) and amazing things will happen.

Security

Our building has a state-of-the-art security and entry system. Card readers afford keyless entry to all staff members. The first and second sets of the main doors near the office are unlocked to allow student entry for the 30 minutes between the opening of the building and the start of the day. Outside the first set of doors a camera transmits the visitor's image when he/she presses a doorbell to request access. Entrance is gained when the Administrative Assistant releases the outside doors remotely from her desk. The second set of doors remains locked. The visitor then passes through the reception area after checking in at the desk and, if wishing to gain access to the school for any reason, will show a **valid ID** and discuss his/her business at the school. The valid ID is critical. ID's are scanned through a system that checks it against multiple databases that list individuals whose criminal records are such that you would not want them near your children. The visitor then is issued a sticker indicating that he/she has been cleared through the office. Without a sticker, visitors are asked if they have stopped by the office prior to entry to the hallway. The checking of ID also takes place when you or someone you send on your behalf comes to pick up your child who does not have a car tag. Please insure that anyone who might pick up your child is aware of this fact. This is district policy.

We do not allow entrance to the building from any doors other than the main ones (and the pre-k pod for pre-k students). The security measures listed above are rendered useless if we allow access through other doors.

Security cameras cover most of the interior and exterior of the building, including right over the bicycle rack. We still highly recommend bike locks. These cameras are accessible to school personnel at school and remotely. Digital images can be saved and used as necessary to examine the footage of an event of interest that might require further examination.

If your children are part of a restraining order or exclusionary custody arrangement, it is important that the decree be on file with us. We will uphold it as it is stated.

Car Tags and Other Pick Up Issues

Only a parent/guardian listed on the approved pick-up list will be issued one car tag free of charge upon request after providing a valid ID. Any additional tags are \$5 each. The notion of the car tag is to allow the holder to efficiently pick up his/her child without having to show a valid ID each time. (This is why we needed to check ID and your listing in our database with regard to pick up of your child.)

When you obtain your tag you will note that one or more colored dots have been placed on the tag, one for each child. This is part of a system that helps us separate where students will exit the building. (It is important, with as many students as we have being picked up, that we release students safely from multiple points in an organized fashion.) Yellow indicates pre-k, kindergarten, or first grade. Red is for second or third grade, and blue for fourth or fifth. If you have any combination of dots on the tag that includes yellow, you should get in the line closer to the building (if you choose to pick up from your car) and continue around the circle until you get to the pre-k discovery center pod doors (just before the main doors). All of your children should be waiting for you in that pod. Please be aware of the fact that it is much easier for the little people to get to that spot than it is for the older students, who might be walking all the way from the second floor, farthest room at the end of the hall. If you are among the first of the cars in the line and your child is coming from the farthest point in the building, you might be waiting a bit for him to get there.

If your children do not include one younger than second grade, they will be waiting for you in the stairwell halfway down the long hallway. You should pull up as far as you can along that long wing of the building. You are welcomed to use the second lane to get around waiting in that first lane with the parents of the little people. Just make sure to get back into the close-to-the-building lane when you get to your part of the line. When the line gets too long, Mrs. Ball (media assistant and traffic wrangler) will hold you up a bit at the crosswalk to allow the "yellow dot line" cars to exit without

being boxed in behind the other line. It will only be a few minutes before you will be able to move up.

In both cases, a teacher will read the names of your children from the car tag to other waiting teachers on the other end of radios (different frequencies) so that your children can be called to come outside to meet you. The little folks are shepherded to waiting cars. Older students are watched, but not handed off in that manner.

Please do not ever leave your car in the lane, even just for a minute. Unbelievable back-ups occur when we have to begin directing traffic around a now parked car. This also goes for stopping to drop something off during the day. The drive is a fire lane. It is never considered safe or legal to leave a car unattended even if just for a minute.

Please do not try to pick up your child or let someone out of your car from the second lane. It is a safety issue because either your child or the person you release from your car must cross a lane of traffic that moves (even if just a little at a time).

If you are walking up or biking to get your child the process is the same; you still need that tag, and the students are held in the places as described.

For students who walk home unescorted or ride their bikes in the same way, the exit is out the far south doors near the basketball court. They are watched by a teacher. Those heading toward Hidden Lakes walk or ride on the sidewalk near the courts and head west to their neighborhood without the need to cross a street or driveway at school. Those heading toward Bluffton Park are crossed at the driveway at the start of our circle around the parking lot by vigilant assistants. Please help them do their work by being attentive to their instructions. They tend not to stop traffic, but sometimes need to insist upon drivers' attention (cell phones, etc.).

After working through the first few days of pick up to teach everyone our system, the picking up of students concludes at about 3:00 (During the first few days it takes a bit longer.). Many folks arrive well before dismissal (which is fine as long as everyone stays in their cars or stands outside after parking). Arriving after 3:00 is problematic because students who are sent to their dismissal areas must now be brought to the office. We begin calling parents at 3:00 to be certain someone indeed plans to make the pick-up.

If you walk from the parking lot to the main doors, please use the crosswalk. It's the safest way to go. Mrs. Ball will assist you by stopping the cars.

Buses and Daycares

You will find the rules for riding the bus and consequences for violating the rules as part of the Beaufort County Code of Conduct. They are just what you would expect them to be – be reasonably quiet, always sit down on the bus; in effect, students should do their part to make the bus trip as safe as possible. If they cannot or will not do so, they are at risk of losing the privilege to ride the bus anywhere from a day to permanently. That last situation is very rare, but has happened. Safety is of the greatest importance on the bus, and bus rules are enforced. Suspensions are rare, but when they do happen, school administrators suspend students from the bus, not the bus driver. Parents will be contacted when bus suspensions occur.

Those who are picked up by daycare vans are supervised until all of the students traveling to that facility are present and the caretaker is ready to proceed to that facility's van.

Because changes in transportation of students present opportunities to make mistakes, the only way we can make such changes is if the request is in writing. Further, we have no way of authenticating your voice on the phone. Notes, faxes, Agenda Book messages, or emails are needed to make the changes you request in your child's transportation arrangements. Further, please make these changes prior to 1:45pm. After 1:45pm the chances of locating the teacher and the class, not interrupting the class, and making the rest of the arrangements (teachers and assistants share responsibilities for the movement of students to buses, daycares, walkers, car riders, etc. and would have to coordinate that with whom they share such duties) get to be slimmer. We do not want to make a mistake. Please help us with that. Please be sure to clearly identify the date and time for the change.

Morning Drop Off

Drop off of students may begin at 7:15. Even if you are not sure of the time, you will have clues in the form of fellow parents. There is always a line of about eight or ten cars waiting for it to be 7:15. Those folks wouldn't be waiting if it was time to release students. Further, Mrs. Ball will appear at 7:15 on the dot. **Do not drop off students prior to 7:15 at any time. It is not safe.** We can only supervise students beginning at 7:15. **Please do not drop your children off in the parking lot and allow them to cross the lanes of traffic by themselves.** Either park in a designated space and walk your children across, or pull up in the lane closest to the building to let them exit your car. The biggest traffic back-up occurs from about 7:35 to about 7:45. If you want to beat the rush, drop off around 7:25 for the smoothest sailing.

Class begins at 7:45. **Students are counted tardy after 7:45.** (We need every minute we can get.)

Please do not expect to have a word with a teacher at 7:30 or after, because that is "student time." We discourage walking students to class for this reason and for their independence. (Pre-k students walking with mom or dad or big brother is fine, but please use the outside pre-kindergarten pod doors where the pre-k assistants are waiting to receive the students.) Little people begin to become independent risk takers who welcome new learning adventures when they are not tied to their parents to move down a safe, supervised hallway.

Absences, Tardies, and Leaving Early

When students are taken out of school for less than once-in-a-lifetime events, they start to get the message that their parents do not value school. Even if this happens at the very youngest ages, it is noted by children and is very hard to undo at a later date.

Vacations during school time are considered "unlawful absences" by the state of South Carolina. More than ten days of absences – **excused or unexcused** - can result in retention, as specified by the state of South Carolina. Students have been, and will continue to be, retained due to excessive absences coupled with below grade level academic performance.

When students are removed from school for anything other than illness or a death in the family, make up work is not prepared by teachers. Requests for this work cannot be honored because the absences are unlawful and cannot be encouraged. If you must be gone during school time, please have your child keep a journal to share upon return. Students will be permitted to make up the work missed upon return.

Student attendance is an individual family issue as well as a school issue and a state issue. A student's absence affects academic performance as well as their overall performance on state academic measures. Our South Carolina School Report Card ratings are determined in part by student attendance. Students who accrue more than three consecutive days or five total days of unlawful absences (including vacations, family reunions – anything that is not an illness or death in the family) will be required to develop, with administration and the social worker, an attendance plan to remediate the problem. While some families do not regard absences from school an issue, our school, our school district, and the South Carolina Department of Education all do regard unlawful absences as a concern.

Appointments, especially recurring appointments, should occur at times other than during school. This is especially important for students who have IEP's. It is very important that students attend school whenever they are not ill. Though it might be challenging to obtain non-school hour appointments for therapies, doctors, and dentists, our parents

who are persistent about it always seem to get those appointments, thereby allowing our teachers to teach our students without having to catch students up who miss school.

As mentioned previously, please make every effort to handle appointments outside of school time. If that is impossible and you must schedule an appointment during schools hours, we ask the following: please **send a note to alert the teacher of the appointment**; please be aware that **we do not release students for any reason between the hours of 2:15 and 2:45pm. (It is disruptive, invites more students' leaving early, and can cause confusion when multiplied by many students. Please do not expect to check out your child between 2:15 and 2:45 at any time.)**

In regards to attendance, your child must be present in school for at least 50% of the day to be considered present for the day. Anything less than 50%, the child will be counted absent for the day.

Students with any absences, tardies, early dismissals or in/out/ins, **excused or unexcused**, will Not be eligible for Perfect Attendance.

Rules for School Choice Students

School Choice students are expected to not accumulate ten (10) or more unexcused absences, tardies, or early sign outs. They must consistently demonstrate appropriate behavior. They must pass seventy-five (75%) of their courses in a given year. In the event that any of these expectations are not met, you will be notified in writing with a warning that your child's school choice status is in jeopardy to be withdrawn. If the attendance/behavior issue does not improve after the warning, your child will be returned to his/her residential school. Any future request for a second choice transfer to a school shall be denied. If you move out of the district, your child's status may be subject to change.

Lunch and Such

There are six lunch periods. That means that some students have lunch in the morning and some have it in the afternoon. Those in the morning will have a snack in the afternoon; those who eat lunch in the afternoon will have a snack in the morning. Please provide a healthy snack for your child, which they (more likely than not) will eat while working in class. Please avoid sugary juices or foods that stick to tables, papers, and the floor and draw ants.

Full price lunch is \$1.75. Breakfast remains at \$1.00. Please look for updated changes in our Newsletter. You are welcome to use the convenient, www.paypams.com to put money in your child's account.

When sending in food for your child, please keep in mind that

the District has mandated **only** healthy food may be brought in. Please do not send sodas or fast food.

If your child is celebrating a birthday and you would like to send in a treat for the class, sending it at morning drop off is the best time to do that. There are no restrictions on what you may bring but we do ask that it is something that can be finished during the students' lunch period (a cookie, cupcake, fruit snack or freezer pop are just a few suggestions).

We are suggesting that all students bring a water bottle to school to ensure that they stay hydrated. Please put your child's name on their water bottle. Also, please be sure to have your child bring it home each week to keep it nice and clean!

Things to Leave At Home

While we all know that school is a place for learning, there is a wide variety of items that students like to bring to school that detract from learning. Regardless of the promises made, such as, "Honest Mom, I won't take it out of my book bag until recess," toys and other items find their way into the classroom during class time and cause disruptions. Further, when items are lost at school, students' attitudes about the loss of the items frequently shut down our educational process until they are found. The following is an incomplete list of items we do not wish to see at school and will take from the child, holding them until parents can claim them: toys, electronic games, mp3 players, other electronics, (unless part of a class project approved by the teacher), trading cards, matches, tobacco, guns (including **toy guns** or water guns of any type) knives, anything that is considered a weapon or can become a weapon, fireworks, inappropriate books, magazines, or internet downloads, anything else that would cause a disruption through its use or its loss at school.

Sometimes a fad takes over life as we know it at school. If learning and the fad can get along well, we're fine. If the fad becomes so distracting that we can't teach, we take action. We don't know the nature of the next fad, but we will handle it in the same way when it happens. When something becomes a disruption by its wearing, sales, theft, or general preoccupation to the point that we can't "do school" when the item arrives here, expect it to be banned. The banning might be by a single teacher, a grade level, or for the whole school. Communication on this will be very clear should it happen. It's something new every year, so it is hard to list everything that might fall into this category here.

If you send birthday party invitations to school with the expectation that they are to be distributed by the teacher or by the child under the supervision of the teacher, the only way we can do that is if you plan to invite everyone in the class. The downside to inviting some students and not others, as you might imagine, is it's very difficult for the "have nots" to accept, therefore very difficult for the teacher to

finesse. Please do not attempt to put the teacher in such a situation.

At Red Cedar, we encourage students to leave cell phones* at home. In the case that a family chooses to send a cell phone to school with a student, a Cell Phone Consent Form must be on file. A parent must come into the school to request the Cell Phone Consent Form. Even with the consent form on file, the phone must be off and in the backpack at all times until the student has been dismissed (car riders) or completed transportation home (bus riders). If a cell phone is found in any other place other than the owner's backpack or if a phone is found to be left on, that phone will be confiscated and can only be returned to a parent. Please also note that Red Cedar nor its employees are liable for any damage or loss of cell phones.

*Cell Phone is defined as any cellular device whether it be a smart phone, flip phone or phone worn on the wrist.

It should be noted that we are not encouraging the use of cell phones in general. In fact below is some information on ways to think about making the decision to give your child a cell phone.

www.waituntil8th.org

www.nationwidechildrens.org/family-resources-education/700childrens/2018/10/children-and-cell-phones

RESPECT – Our School Wide Behavior Expectation Program

The first activity in which we participated together: parents, students, and staff, was the evening we spent together at the end of May, 2008 determining what attributes we wanted most to see exhibited in our children. The result of that meeting (very well-attended by parents, thank you) is the listing below. What follows after them is a collection of descriptors so that we can all share the same understandings about the attributes.

***R*esponsibility**

- I take care of myself, the school, property, and my learning.
- I wear the correct uniform with the shirt tucked in.
- I arrive on time.
- I arrive with the tools I need.
- I help keep the school looking new.
- I add to (not distract from) the teacher's lesson.
- I use materials appropriately.

***E*mpathy**

- I care for others' feelings and circumstances.
- I accept others' differences.
- I lend a hand.
- I don't make fun when someone is hurt or sad.

***S*elf-discipline**

- I make good choices independently.
- I follow directions the first time I'm told.
- I stay in my personal space.
- I show self-control in my words and actions.

***P*ositive**

- I maintain a good attitude about myself, others, school and learning.
- I expect the best.
- I don't give back-talk.
- I say things that make people feel good.

***E*ffort**

- I always do my best.
- I complete my work thoughtfully and thoroughly.
- I turn in my work on time.
- I work diligently and use my time wisely.

***C*ooperation**

- I work well with others (adults and peers)
- I do what I'm asked without complaint.
- I use words to solve disagreements.
- I talk when it is my turn.

***T*rustworthy**

- I am honest and dependable.
- I tell the truth.
- I do my own work.
- I do what I say I'm going to do.

RESPECT with Exceptional Effort

At Red Cedar Elementary we value effort above all other characteristics in our students. We feel effort and hard work are critical characteristics of success. Therefore, Red Cedar Elementary will be recognizing students who show exceptional effort in all areas of the curriculum with the

exceptional effort in all areas of the curriculum with the RESPECT with Exceptional Effort Award. Students who earn the award will meet the following criteria: Students will earn RESPECT with Exceptional Effort when they receive at least 6 "Excellents" and no other effort grades lower than "Good."

The purpose of this award is to:

1. Recognize students who consistently show exceptional effort.
2. Provide models of exceptional effort.
3. Facilitate instruction of skills needed to be successful in school and in life.

Playground RESPECT

Since the way in which students deal with each other on the playground sometimes presents special challenges, we have developed guidelines for playground behavior. They are as follows:

"Playground Respect"

1. Walking feet Only on the sidewalks, blacktop and artificial turf playground area.
2. Running should happen in grassy areas only; except the garden area outside the Music room.
3. Do keep your hands and feet to yourself.
4. No jumping on or off the web/slide apparatus.
5. Stairs are used to go up or down.
6. Slides are to be used only for going down, on your bottom feet first.
7. Climbing wall is to be used to go up only, not down.
8. It is unsafe to play under the web and bridge.
9. Balls, hula hoops, bean bags and such should be used in the grassy areas and hard surfaces but never in the artificial turf playground area.
10. Tag is NOT allowed.
11. Every time the whistle blows, freeze immediately and wait for instructions.
12. Stomp your feet before walking back inside the building.
13. **Do share, take turns, play fair and HAVE FUN!!**

If students violate these rules, assistants or teachers who observe it happening more than once with the same issue will report it to the student's classroom teacher, who will talk with parents about eliminating the problem. When students show that they cannot or will not be safe on the playground, we are compelled to make other arrangements for them.

Special area teachers have developed a parent notification system that is based upon the RESPECT expectations, but is tailored to their circumstances.

The recognition side of the program is a quarterly celebration

of those who demonstrate RESPECT. Students who have demonstrated the attributes (in an age-appropriate way; fewer expectations at pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade) will be recognized at end-of-quarter assemblies. Second through fifth graders receive an award **and** third through fifth who perform above grade level in math and language arts will receive their award with Honors. This is our Honor Roll. (See the listing of special events for the schedule for these celebrations.)

Parents are invited to attend these assemblies, and are encouraged to do so whether their children will be honored at them or not. Some of the most powerful statements are made by parents who attend knowing that their children's performance did not warrant the award that quarter, but chose to attend to send a message to their child that they expect the outcome to be different the next time.

More serious behavior issues must be handled through the Beaufort County Schools Code of Conduct. You can access it via the district website at

Library Books and Textbooks

Students and parents are responsible for books that belong to the school. When books are lost or damaged, parents are responsible for reimbursing the school to replace them. Whatever books are checked out to a student should be returned by that student. Please help your child understand the need to treat books, like other items, with respect. Some library books were damaged by water, crayons, and ink within the first week they were distributed to students though we took great pains to teach appropriate care of books.

Lost and Found Items

Students frequently misplace items of clothing and lunchboxes at school. When parents and students **label** these items, we can easily return the item to them. Lost and Found items are featured on our daily news program. They are housed across from the media center. After three or four months on display and lots of reminders, we give the items to Bluffton Self Help.

Medication and Other Medical Information

Our nurse is happy to administer **prescription** medications delivered to us by an **adult** in the original container with a signed medication form giving us permission to administer it. **No** over-the-counter medications without a doctor's prescription. District policy prohibits us from using any other method. Children cannot have any medication whatsoever in their possession. You will need to give written permission to the nurse for over-the-counter medications that she has on hand that can be dispensed to your child with your permission.

From time to time, children arrive at school with lice in their hair. While this is an unpleasant issue, it is one with which we need to deal promptly and thoroughly. Because of the contagious nature of the condition, children who have live lice in their hair must be sent home from school and treated before they return. The nurse will then check any children returning to school to clear them to return to class. This is where most lice-related issues get to be frustrating for parents and school personnel. Treating lice completely is sometimes fairly involved. The child may return to class after being checked by the nurse if there are no longer live nits present. We do everything at school to prevent the spread of lice. We do everything we can to work with families who experience it.

We do screenings on health related issues at school, such as height and weight with body mass indicators for third and fifth graders, hearing and vision for all pre-kindergarteners thru fifth graders. The Ronald McDonald Care Mobile will be at RCES for 1 week for eligible students.

Guidelines for Appropriate Exclusion from Childcare Settings to Prevent Communicable Disease Spread- State Law 1976 code Sections 44-1-110, 11-1-140 and 44-29-10

THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS REQUIRE THE CHILD NOT BE ALLOWED TO ATTEND SCHOOL:

- Flu - must be out for 5 days and be fever free
- Fever of 100 or greater
- Uncontrolled Diarrhea or stools with blood or mucus
- E-coli, Shigella, Typhoid fever- stool infections – until negative cultures
- Rash with fever – until physician has determined safe
- Purulent Conjunctivitis –pink or red eyes with white or yellow discharge, until 24 hours after the first treatment
- Tuberculosis – until Health Dept. clears
- Strep Throat – until after 24 hours of antibiotic treatment
- Head Lice – until treated, and checked by staff
- Scabies – until the first treatment
- Chickenpox – until all lesions have dried (about 6 days)
- Pertussis – until 5 days of antibiotic treatment
- Mumps – until 9 days after gland swelling
- Measles – until 4 days after start of rash
- Rubella (hard measles) – until 7 days after start of rash
- Hepatitis A – until 1 week after onset of illness or jaundice

In addition – these conditions are listed by Beaufort County Schools for exclusion:

- Impetigo – until treated and nurse consulted
- Ringworm – until treated and nurse consulted
- Other issues-

If you are concerned with the state of your child's health in the morning and are encouraging the child to attend school with the thought that the child will improve – please call the nurse and advise to evaluate. Please do NOT tell your child that you'll likely or possibly pick him/her up. It plants the notion that today is a sick day whether the child needs it or not.

Some students are considered “frequent flyers” to the health office without chronic conditions (attention-seeking, avoiding a class the student does not like, etc.) Some parents adequately extinguish this behavior by setting and enforcing the family rule that if a child visits the nurse's office for anything other than a bandage for a cut, the child will automatically stay inside to rest after school. When presented in this way, students tend to be more serious about “being ill”. Extra visits to the nurse's office for no apparent reason take her away from children who really need her. Please work with your child to avoid this happening.

Asthma – each child with an asthma condition must have access to the same prescription medication here in school that is available at home.

Phone numbers – work and home numbers may change frequently – please ask yourself each day –“if my child needed me, does the school have the phone number in the computer?” Send a note with your child or an email directly to Michaela.sykes@beaufort.k12.sc.us. Change of address requires a proof thereof.

Short Term medication schedule – if your child is to receive medication 3 x a day – please do so before school – just after school and at bedtime at home. If the physician is requesting specific times or 4 or more times a day – please provide the school with a labeled container that may stay at school with correct dosage. It is a safety and compliance issue if the medication must travel back and forth.

Photographs and Videos

From time to time our students are photographed and filmed for school productions, student teaching, National Board Certification projects, and more. Those photographs sometimes appear in local newspapers, on our website, and are used for school board presentations. **If you have an objection to your child's image being recorded in this way, please make us aware of it in writing.** Your note will be kept on file and shared with the staff so that your child will not be photographed in this way in either still or moving shots.

Homework

We are striving for quality, not quantity with regard to homework assignments. Expect to see meaningful homework that is age appropriate for your child. Homework

is meant to be practice of what has been taught in class. If you get the sense that your child does not understand the homework, it is likely a case of his teacher believing that he does (because it seemed like he did at the time) or he forgot. In any of those cases, it is important that you and the teacher discuss any disconnect between the assignment of homework and what was taught during the lesson.

Conferences

In the fall, generally in October, parent-teacher conferences are scheduled. Each and every family is expected to attend a conference. Our teachers are flexible with the scheduling in order to accommodate parent/guardian work schedules. We need you to meet with teachers to discuss your student's school-life and academic achievement. In some circumstances, when communication breaks down between the school and home, we may schedule home visits in order to hold the conference.

Please note that a parent/guardian may request a conference with a teacher during any non-instructional time.

It should also be noted that for any student with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a 504, a meeting may be requested at any time during the year.

Communication

We produce a newsletter each week for all of our parents in English and Spanish. It is posted to our Facebook page. We would like to email it to as many families as possible so we attach it to our weekly Robo call/email. In addition, teachers send home weekly newsletters.

Our best form of communication has been agenda books. Teachers and parents are expected to communicate in this way each day.

Our second best form of communication has become the School Messenger service (also known as "robo" or automated calling service). It is an important resource that we have used a number of times to inform parents of meetings and other events. Please make sure we have your correct phone numbers so that you will be included in our calls. Email Mrs. Sykes if you have changed any numbers (michaela.sykes@beaufort.k12.sc.us).

Red Cedar has a website. The URL is: <http://rces.beaufortschools.net>. You will find updated information there like never before – links to sites like Exact Path, Everyday Math and more.

Red Cedar has a Facebook Page. It is "Red Cedar Elementary Foxes". This is the place to find the most up to

date information and pictures, it is updated daily and sometimes multiple times a day. If you "Like" us you will see our posts right on your news feed.

Uniforms

The Board of Education for Beaufort County Schools enacted a uniform policy that began in 2009-2010 in all elementary and middle schools and was implemented in all high schools in 2010-2011. The elementary schools in Bluffton have been "uniform schools" for some years. However, there are some notable differences in the board's rulings with regard to uniforms. The four most notable differences are these: Shirts are to be tucked in at all times, any shirt worn under the uniform is to be white, regardless of the length of the sleeve, and anything worn over the uniform needs to be the school uniform top colors; a plain sweater or sweatshirt or spirit sweatshirt. For those in 2nd through 5th grades, a belt must be worn if the attire has belt loops. Jackets are to be hung up upon entering the building; no jackets are to be worn in school.

Our school colors are red, yellow, and white. When translated to uniform shirts, the yellow is really gold, not yellow. (Some families have purchased pale yellow shirts. We have asked that they not return them, but to not purchase more of them in that color; to purchase, rather, red, gold, or white instead in the future.) The bottom of the uniform color is navy blue. Pants, capris, shorts, skorts, skirts, and jumpers are all fine. Plain, one-piece dresses are not part of the uniform. The stitching on the uniform bottoms should only be navy blue. Uniform bottoms, like tops, should have no additional decoration on them (extra stitching, etc.). Uniform bottoms cannot be of nylon or knit; cotton, cotton blend, etc. (typical sturdy, uniform material) have been specified. There is no distinction about the color of socks, the color of shoes, or the color of belts. There is no distinction about the color of tights or leggings, however, we do not allow anything resembling jeans. We ask that shoes be rubber soled, completely covering the foot (**not boots, not sandals, not Crocs**)

The biggest issue last year with uniforms was forgetting to wear a belt. Please be sure that your child wears a belt to school every day. In the past, students have cut belt loops off to avoid wearing a belt. This is no longer allowed here at Red Cedar. One idea that has worked for some is to keep a spare belt in their backpack.

Students should be well groomed in both their hygiene and their physical appearance. One thing that is not allowed: extreme/brightly colored hair.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and School Improvement Council (SIC)

The meetings occur on the third Tuesday of the month at alternating times, 6:00pm. The PTO engages in fund raising for the school and attempts to meet the needs of students and teachers beyond regular district funding. All are welcomed to attend these meetings.

SIC meets monthly: The jobs of the SIC center around the development of the five-year school improvement plan, the spending of funds, writing the annual report to parents about progress made in meeting the goals of the plan, and writing and reviewing the school's vision and mission. All are welcomed to attend these meetings. A translator will be available for most meetings. Please call Rosana Hellstrom at 843-707-0613 to check on availability or to request.

Report Cards/Progress Reports

Report cards for kindergarten through fifth grade are issued quarterly on the following dates: October 18, January 10, March 20 and June 2.

Parent Portal (PSPP) (1st - 5th Grades)

The PowerSchool Parent Portal is the "doorway" into the district's record keeping system giving parents access to information about their children. The Parent Portal gives parents and students access to real-time information that may include attendance, grades, comments from teachers and links to teacher email addresses.

If you are new to Beaufort County School District or to PowerSchool Parent Portal, you will need access information from our Data Specialist, Michaela Sykes. We will also hold a PSPP night early in the school year.

If despite having ongoing access through the PowerSchool Parent Portal, you still require a paper interim, please request one in writing to your child's teacher.

Read To Succeed

South Carolina law states beginning with the 2017-2018 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 that equates to Not Met 1 on the SC Ready assessment. Some students may be granted a "good cause exemption" in order to be promoted to the fourth grade under the law.