

# Blackburn Elementary School Student Handbook

This Student-Parent handbook has been prepared to provide essential information to the students and parents of Blackburn Elementary. Please take a few minutes to review the contents.

## Message from the Principal

Welcome to Blackburn Elementary School. The staff and I are committed to providing you the finest educational experience possible. It is our belief that continued, consistent use of this agenda will help your organizational skills. Keeping organized is a very important characteristic that will make you better prepared in class.

This school year will be an incredibly exciting time. Just as you will grow physically, so too should your responsibility, trustworthiness and maturity. Your teachers and administrators at Blackburn are dedicated to helping you reach these new levels of growth. Parents, we encourage you to get involved with your child this year and enjoy the incredible journey we will share. You are always welcome at Blackburn.

This agenda contains very valuable information concerning academics, policies and general operations at Blackburn. Please read this material and become familiar with your school. Understanding these rules and policies will help you this school year.

Your teacher and administrators are here for you. Our goal is to make the 2010-2011 school year a positive and successful one.

## Purpose of the Agenda/Planner

Every student in grades 1-6 has a student planner. The purpose for this book is to help students understand expectations, create timelines, set goals, monitor progress and communicate between home and school. The planner provides students with one place to record assignments in an effort to help them be prepared for class the next day. The bulk of the book is the organizer section. We hope that through the use of this tool, we can all help our students at Blackburn Elementary reach their fullest potential. **Students are expected to bring their planner to school every day and take it home every night.**

Parents will be given the opportunity to donate \$5.00 to cover the cost of the planner. Lost or misplaced books must be paid for.

## Catawba County Schools Mission Statement

Catawba County Schools' mission is to teach, learn, and lead for the future

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## Daily Schedule

- 7:30am - Media Center is open for students who arrive between 7:30 and 7:50.
- 7:45am - Teachers and Teacher Assistants are on duty.
- 7:50am - First Bell – Students may go to their classrooms.
- 8:10am - Tardy Bell – Any student arriving after 8:10 must go by the office **with a parent or guardian** and receive a tardy pass to get into class. Students must be in their classrooms by 8:10 to be considered on time.
- 2:55pm - Bus riders and car riders are dismissed
- 3:15pm - Teachers may leave the building.

### **Early Arrivals**

Staff supervision for students begins at 7:30 a.m. The front entrance of the school will be unlocked at 7:30 a.m. when staff is on duty to supervise students in the media center and in the hallway to the cafeteria. Students arriving prior to 7:30 will need to make arrangements with the Before-school Program which is held in the gym. Any student who arrives before 7:30 a.m. will need to be supervised until the front door is unlocked. **Please do not drop your student off prior to 7:30 a.m.** Students arriving between 7:30-7:50 a.m. should report directly to the media center (K-2) or the hallway to the cafeteria (3-6).

### **Before and After School Care**

Before and After School care is provided for parents by the Community Schools Program. The program hours are from 6:15 am to 7:50 am and from 2:55 pm to 6:00 pm. If you are interested in enrolling your child in either of these programs, please call 704-462-4996 for further information.

### **Tardy**

Students who arrive after 8:10 am will be considered tardy. These students should report with their parent or guardian to the office to receive a tardy slip. Parents are encouraged to have their children at school on time. Be sure to allow enough time for the congested traffic that is often in front of the school in the mornings, as well as the inevitable difference in clocks.

**Parents or Guardians are required to walk students into the building if they arrive after 8:10 am to sign the student in for the school day.** A student who arrives after 8:10 am will not be admitted to class unless an adult signs them in at the front office.

### **Early Dismissal**

Parents who wish to pick a child up before 2:55 are required to come in the office and sign the child out of school. Your child will be called to the office to be dismissed. Parents are required to stay in the office until your child arrives to be dismissed. Please do not go directly to the classroom or wait in the lobby. In order for a child to be picked up by someone other than a parent, permission must be given by sending a note or making some other form of identifiable contact with the office staff. Please do not be offended if we ask to see some form of identification. This is for the safety of our children.

**Please be aware that any student leaving school before 11:25 AM and not returning to complete a half-day will be counted absent for the day. Any student arriving after 11:25 AM will be counted absent. Please remember that time lost due to tardies and early dismissal can hurt your child's achievement.**

### **Early Check Out**

Parents are reminded that instruction and summative activities continue until the students are dismissed for the day. Please try to schedule appointments so that students will not need to leave school before the end of the day. Please do not be offended if you are invited to a conference due to frequently signing your child out of school early.

### **Afternoon Departure**

Parents will not be allowed to "walk up" to the car rider area to pick up children in the afternoon. Please remain in your car in order to assure safety and timely departures for all students. If a parent "Walks up" to the car rider line they will be required to go to the office to sign their child out of school.

**For the safety of our children, no private vehicle traffic will be allowed in the bus parking lot at any time.**

### **Car Rider, Bus Rider and After School Care**

At the beginning of the school year, your child's teacher will need to be made aware if your child will be a car rider, riding the school bus or will go to after school care on a daily basis. **NOTES MUST BE SENT IF THERE IS TO BE A CHANGE IN THE DAILY PROCEDURE.** Please make sure notes

are sent on a **SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER** and not written in the student planner. The child simply telling the teacher that a change is to be made cannot be accepted. This is for the safety of the child. If your child is to go home with another child at school, whether in a car or on a bus, a note from the parents of BOTH children is required. If the request is to ride another bus and the bus is full, students who are not the regular riders will not be allowed to board. It is requested that parents list an alternative plan on the note in case there is not available seating on the bus. Students without notes will be dismissed according to the normal daily procedure that has been communicated to the teacher.

### **Calls to the Office to Change the Normal Daily Procedure**

Phone calls and parent notes to change what a child is to do after school, are carefully documented in the school office daily. This documentation provides an accurate record of student dismissals. If a change must be made in the normal daily routine for your child, please call the school office before 2:00 in the afternoon. We will make every effort to carry out your wishes provided we have clear, concise and timely information. In the absence of this information, the normal daily procedure that has been communicated to the teacher will be followed.

**Please do not call and leave a message on your teacher's voice mail/email giving instructions for a change in the way your child is to go home.** We cannot guarantee that each teacher will check his/her voice mail/email prior to the children being dismissed for the day.

### **Student Illness at School**

Should a student become ill during the school day, parents will be notified. We will request that you pick up your child. We will make every effort to determine if the child is sick before contacting the parent. Once notified by the school, parents are encouraged to pick your child up as promptly as possible. For this reason, **please make sure that the emergency contact information for your child is accurate and is updated as needed.**

### **Attendance**

Good attendance by students in school is a cornerstone of good academic achievement. The children must be in school if we are to teach them. The state of North Carolina recognizes the following as valid reasons for lawful absences:

- (1) **Illness or injury to the student only**
- (2) **Isolation by the Department of Health (quarantine)**
- (3) **Death in the immediate family**
- (4) **Emergency medical or dental appointment**
- (5) **Subpoena as a witness**
- (6) **Prior approval to attend a religious event- (Request this form from the office)**
- (7) **Prior approval for educational travel- (Request this form from the office)**

All other absences are counted as "unlawful". Absences with no explanation after three school days are automatically coded as "unlawful". A written excuse does not guarantee a student's absence will be coded as "lawful". Some absences cannot be coded "lawful" even with a parent note because they do not meet the criteria stated above. Please note that if your child has a total of **10 absences from school**, we may require parents to produce a doctor's note in order for any other absences to be coded as lawful.

Again, our goal is to have your child in school so they may benefit from the education that is being afforded them. Please help us in this matter.

### **Medication at School**

North Carolina General Statutes and Catawba County School Policy are very specific regarding the administering of medications to students at school. No medication can be given to a student at school by a school employee, except under the following conditions:

- (1) Students who need to take medication during the school day must provide an “Authorization for Medication” signed by the prescribing physician and the parent. Prescribed medication must be in the bottle with the pharmacist’s label designating the patient’s name, instructions, name of the drug and the name of the physician. (Many pharmacists will give an additional bottle that you can leave at school.)
  - (2) A record must be kept of all children receiving any medication.
- In addition, the school cannot administer any non-prescription medications such as aspirin, upset stomach medicine, cough syrup, etc., for use during the school day without a doctor’s authorization.

### **Immunizations**

North Carolina State Law requires the following minimum doses:

1. 5 DTP, DtaP , or DT doses ( if the 4<sup>th</sup> dose is after 4<sup>th</sup> birthday, 5<sup>th</sup> dose is not required; DT requires medical exemption)
2. 4 Polio Vaccine doses (if the 3<sup>rd</sup> dose is after the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday, 4<sup>th</sup> dose is not required)
3. 1-4 Hib doses (series is complete if at least 1 dose is given on/after 15 months and before 5 years of age; not required after 5 years of age)
4. 3 Hep B doses (children born on or after July 1, 1994 are required to have 3 doses)
5. 2 Measles doses (at least 30 days apart; 1<sup>st</sup> dose must be on/after 12 months of age)
6. 1 Mumps dose (on/after 12 months of age)
7. 1 Rubella dose (on/after 12 months of age)
8. 1 Varicella dose (prior to entering kindergarten)
9. 1 T-daP dose (prior to entering sixth grade)

**PARENTS HAVE THIRTY CALENDAR DAYS FROM THE FIRST DAY OF STUDENT ATTENDANCE TO OBTAIN THE REQUIRED IMMUNIZATIONS. FAILURE TO DO SO WILL RESULT IN SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL IN ACCORDANCE WITH NORTH CAROLINA STATE LAW.**

### **Visitors**

Parents are invited to visit the school as their schedule permits. However, please be aware that ALL VISITORS ARE REQUIRED TO CHECK IN THROUGH THE OFFICE *PRIOR* TO VISITING ANY OTHER AREA OF THE SCHOOL *OR* BEFORE PICKING YOUR CHILD UP FROM SCHOOL. All visitors should enter and exit through the front doors only. This is for the security of our campus and the safety of your child.

### **Escorting Students to Class**

Parents are encouraged to allow children to develop independence by letting them walk un-escorted to class in the mornings. If a parent needs to speak with a teacher, please leave a message at the office, and we will have the teacher call you. Mornings are very busy times for the teachers and their time to speak to you is very limited. Please understand that this is not a good time for any type of conference or chat. If you would like to conference with your child’s teacher, we ask that you make an appointment.

### **Smoking Policy**

Please be aware that Blackburn Elementary is a smoke-free campus.

### **Field Trips**

Parents may be invited to chaperone field trips for their child’s class, **as needed**. We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity if asked. While on the trip please keep the following things in mind:

- 1) We ask that all parent chaperones realize that they are on the trip to care for all the children assigned to them and not simply their own child.

- 2) We ask that parent chaperones remember that while on the trip, the entire group is representative of Blackburn Elementary.
- 3) When parking your vehicle on campus, do not park in the bus lot at any time. (Refer to the Afternoon Departure section stated earlier in the handbook)
- 4) Report all incidences to the teacher immediately.
- 5) Chaperones are not allowed to bring other siblings on the trip. Fieldtrips are meant to be an extension of the curriculum rather than a family outing.
- 6) If you are not selected as an official chaperone for a particular fieldtrip, please understand that you cannot be considered part of the Blackburn School group.

Also, please keep in mind that all deadlines for submitting field trip money and field trip permission forms will be enforced. **If your child does not have the needed permission form signed and/or trip money returned by the stated deadline, including time of day, he/she cannot be allowed on the trip.** He/she will be cared for in another classroom for the day. Thanks for your understanding and helping us with this.

### **Student Insurance**

In order that students are adequately covered for accidents which may occur while at school, each child should be covered by some type of insurance. If the student is not covered by a family policy, an optional school policy is offered. A student insurance agency approved by the Catawba County School Board will provide insurance for interested families. The premium information is sent home at the beginning of the school year. Parents have two weeks to enroll. All students are required to report accidents to their teachers immediately, regardless of how slight the accident may seem.

### **Student Progress**

Evaluations are made periodically through teacher-made tests and observations, basic reading and mathematics tests, county assessments, and Standardized Achievement Tests. Teachers try to keep parents informed of student progress through parent notes, student planners and mid-quarter progress reports. Report cards are sent home each nine weeks. (Kindergarten will receive their first report card at the end of the second nine weeks). No grade will be changed once placed on permanent records unless an error has been made. The principal will determine from the facts available whether an error has been made.

### **Catawba County Schools Promotion Standards**

A promotion committee in each grade level will evaluate each student whose promotion to the next grade is in question. They will consider a number of at-risk factors including, but not limited to, those listed below:

- Age, size and/or maturity.
- Developmental readiness
- Lack of academic growth
- Excessive absences or tardies
- Poor work habits and failure to complete assignments
- Below grade level performance on class work or EOG tests

The Catawba County Schools Summer IDEAS Academy may be required for some students if offered by the district. Students in the third and fifth grades are required to meet statewide Student Accountability Standards. They will be required to meet local promotion standards, score at Level III or above on end-of-grade tests in reading and math. Intervention and assistance will be given to develop their skills.

## Homework Policy

Homework is meant to be a natural extension of the learning that begins in the classroom. It may be assigned to reinforce a new concept that might otherwise be forgotten overnight. Also, homework can be used as preparatory work, as is the case when studying for a test. Work that is not completed during the allotted class time may be assigned as homework. We do not advocate the assigning of homework for punishment or to “keep the students busy.” Any homework that is assigned will be grounded in the concepts that have been taught in the classroom.

If a child is sick and you would like to pick up his/her work at school, simply contact the school office and make arrangements with the teacher. Assignments and materials will be placed in the office for parents to pick up. Please, do not go to the classroom to pick up assignments. This disrupts the classroom and takes instructional time away from the students.

## Library Policies

Students in grades K-1 are allowed to check out one book at a time. Students in grades 2-6 may have 2 books checked out. Students have daily access to the Media Center for returning and checking out books.

## School Lunches

Our cafeteria manager uses a computer program to keep track of lunch accounts. Parents may send a check or cash to be deposited into their child’s account or enroll in [www.lunchprepay.com](http://www.lunchprepay.com) to view student lunch charges and make convenient online payments. The money/check should be in an envelope with the amount, child’s name, lunch number and teacher’s name on the front.

You may complete a permission form that will allow your child to purchase “extras” with money in the account. If you deny such privileges, your child may pay cash for such items at the time of the purchase. If students’ parents have denied them the right to have extra items then it is a students’ responsibility not to take extra items.

If a student picks up any item they will be charged for the item. Once an item is touched it can no longer be placed back in the cafeteria line for purchase.

Children who forget their money will have their lunch charged. Money should be paid the next day. **The cafeteria has a \$5.00 charge limit.** Once this limit has been reached, the following procedure will be implemented:

- no more charges can be added;
- parents will be called to make arrangements for the child’s lunch.
- Supplemental items such as cookies, ice cream, etc. cannot be charged.

Also, please understand that if your child gets two bowls of the same item (i.e.: French fries), the second bowl is considered an extra and will be charged at the ala carte price.

If your child is to have a lunch visitor, please send a note to his/her teacher. This policy is to ensure the safety of all our students as well as to help plan for seating, etc. All lunch visitors must sign in at the office. Your child will be called to escort or join you in the cafeteria. **PARENTS ARE ASKED NOT TO BRING FAST FOOD MEALS TO THE SCHOOL CAFETERIA.**

## School Board Policy on Buses

The safety of students during their transportation to and from school is a responsibility, which they and their parents share with bus drivers and school officials. The school board wants each student to know what is expected of him/her when he/she waits for, and rides on a school bus. Therefore, the rules of student conduct are presented to both students and parents each year. **Please understand that riding a school bus in the state of North Carolina is a privilege and not a right. If conditions warrant, and after due process, that privilege can, and will, be taken away.**

Students who fail to observe these rules will be subject to immediate disciplinary action, since their failure to do so may affect the safety of others. The administration of the school will determine if the offense warrants parent notification.

Parents of a student who has been approved by the Board of Education to attend a school outside his/her district must provide transportation. Exceptions may include some exceptional children and day care services.

Blackburn is fortunate to have very skillful, caring bus drivers. They use their many years of experience to make going to and from school both pleasant and safe. **They need 100% cooperation from EVERY BUS RIDER AND THEIR PARENTS.**

### **Bus Riding Conduct**

The following conduct is specifically prohibited and may result in temporary or permanent suspension from school transportation services:

1. Delaying the bus schedule
2. Fighting, smoking, using profanity or refusing to obey the driver's instructions
3. Tampering with or willfully damaging the bus
4. Possessing or using unauthorized drugs or intoxicating beverages
5. Getting on or off at an unauthorized stop
6. Distracting the driver's attention by participating in disruptive behavior
7. Possession of obscene literature or material
8. Failing to observe established safety rules and regulations
9. Willfully trespassing on the bus
10. Violating any other rule of the Code of Student Conduct while on the bus
11. Possession of a weapon, or any object that could be used as a weapon.

All parents are requested to give their full support in aiding all bus drivers, administrators, and others in seeing that rules and regulations to promote safety, efficiency and economy are carried out by their children.

**Please be aware that it is a violation of North Carolina Public School Law for a parent to board a school bus or harass a bus driver.** Should there be a situation that needs to be addressed, please do so by contacting the school office.

### **School Rules**

P-Prepare Yourself

A-Act Appropriately

W-Work Hard

S-Safety First

\*School Rules based on Positive Behavior Intervention and Support Plan

### **School Wide Discipline Policy**

The following behaviors will be handled by the classroom teacher

1. Lack of Supplies

2. Non-participation in class activities
3. Minor Peer Conflict
4. Mild Disrespect of staff and students
5. Horse Play
6. No Homework
7. Cell Phones

The following behaviors will be handled by a school administrator

1. Habitual/repetitive offenders
2. Fighting: this includes physical confrontation between two or more students causing INTENTIONAL bodily harm through pinching, biting, punching, kicking, gouging, pulling or utilizing any object as a weapon to cause injury.
3. Causing blood shed
4. Cursing faculty/students
5. Weapons
6. Tobacco
7. Destruction of School Property
8. Bullying

### **Student Grievance Procedure**

It is required by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) that each local education agency have a policy and procedure that enables a student and/or parent to file a grievance in the event they feel they have been discriminated against. In the Catawba County School System this has been addressed by Policy 10.350 STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE. The school counselor is the designated school grievance officer.

### **School Dress**

To maintain an orderly environment for education, clothing of any type that distracts from learning should not be worn. Examples are: sagging pants, bandannas/hats, items advertising drugs/alcohol, items with gang or drug symbols, crop tops, spaghetti straps, shorts/dresses/skirts that do not reach the fingertips, "heelies"/wheeled shoes, see-through items, or items with profane language. **For safety reasons, no flip flop sandals will be allowed.** It is highly recommended that students wear athletic shoes to school each day rather than any type of sandal or high-heeled shoe due to safety concerns. Students with inappropriate clothing will be asked to change. The decision as to whether or not an item is appropriate will rest with the school. The Catawba County School System has addressed the school dress code in Policy 4.3600 CODE OF CONDUCT.