

Barrow County School System
SY 2023-2024



**Bethlehem Elementary
Student Handbook**

**Mindy Reid, Principal
Stephanie Martin, Assistant Principal**

770-867-2238

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In addition to the following school-specific items, please refer to the Barrow County guidelines, including the Code of Conduct, Rights & Responsibilities, and other pertinent information provided on our school and district websites. You can find the information here:

<https://www.barrow.k12.ga.us/schools/bes/families/student-handbook>

SCHOOL HOURS

7:30 AM - 2:00 PM

Students may enter the school between 7:00-7:30 each morning. Students are counted tardy if they are not in their classrooms by the 7:30 bell. Please be punctual. Afternoon bus and car rider dismissal begins at 2:00 PM. Please note that those arriving after the 7:30 AM bell will need to have a parent/guardian escort them into the building and sign in as tardy.

ATTENDANCE

BES strives to achieve high daily attendance. It is our belief that students who attend school regularly can achieve more. It is our goal to help your child develop good attendance habits as part of a strong work ethic. Our goal is for each student at BES to miss fewer than 10 days of school.

BCSS has approved new attendance protocol guidelines. These guidelines will be followed closely.

1) You will receive attendance notification letters when your student has 5 unexcused absences.

When students miss a total of 10 excused and/or unexcused days a letter will be sent, and the school may request a conference.

BES and Barrow County Schools are required by law to inform parents about the laws for compulsory attendance and truancy in the state. It is a requirement that these letters are sent and that they inform you of the law and of the consequences if your child continues to miss days – particularly unexcused days. These letters inform you of the number of days missed. Letters are also sent for partial days of attendance which lists them as tardies, which includes early dismissals. The goal of these steps is to work together to minimize future absences and help the student return to a pattern of good attendance.

2) Excuses for absences should be furnished to the school by the student's parent or guardian no later than 5 school days after the student returns to school and should state the reason for the absence. Five absences per semester may be excused with a parent note. After that, a doctor's note can be required. Excuses for tardies and early dismissals should be furnished upon check-in or check-out. All excuses will be evaluated by the principal or designee to determine if the absence is excused or unexcused consistent with Barrow County Absences and Excuses Policy JBD.

If corrections are necessary or if you have any questions, you may contact Mary Griner, BES counselor, (mary.griner@barrow.k12.ga.us) for assistance.

We always understand that children will get sick and that emergencies will occur. We also appreciate when clinic policies are upheld so that diseases and infections are not spread. Thank you for understanding that we are responsible for following the guidelines set forth for us. It is our hope that your student wants to be here every day possible to receive all that their teachers are prepared and eager to share with them.

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DRESS CODE

The purpose of this dress code is to assist administrators, teachers, students, and parents in fulfilling the mission of Barrow County Schools to provide all students quality educational opportunities that enable them to become successful, responsible, and contributing citizens. To accomplish this mission, the learning environment must be one that is safe, disciplined, and free of distractions. Therefore, the dress code regulations that follow are not designed to inhibit personal taste but to encourage learning, good behavior, and safety.

1. Any clothing, hairstyle, jewelry, chains, or attire that is distracting or causes a disruption or constitutes a safety issue will not be permitted at school.
2. Shorts, skirts, dresses, and spirit wear must be of reasonable length; e.g., mid-thigh if they are to be worn at school. All shirts, dresses, and blouses should have moderate sleeves.
3. Clothing such as skirts, pants, trousers, etc. must be worn at the waist. Clothing shall not be poorly fitted or oversized or extremely baggy. Clothing that exposes underclothing or impedes walking will not be permitted. Jeans, etc., with holes not permitted.
4. Clothing and/or jewelry, which advertises or displays any insignia of alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco is not permitted.
5. Clothing and/or jewelry with words or symbols which are offensive, insulting, embarrassing, sexually suggestive, obscene, gang-related, or promote violence, terrorism, or abusive behavior will not be permitted at school.
6. Clothing that distracts by exposing or accentuating the body, such as spandex pants, see-through garments, halter or tube tops, backless dresses, muscle shirts, bare midriff outfits, or shirts, blouses, etc., that are tied at or may rise above the waist will not be permitted at school.
7. Sunglasses, caps, hats, and other head-coverings such as bandannas and hoods will not be worn inside the school building.
8. Appropriate shoes must be worn at all times at school.

Discretionary Statement: The Principals/Site Administrators have the authority to interpret the dress code and make a case-by-case determination for appropriateness of dress and appearance, which is or is not covered in these dress code standards. Principals/Site Administrators may make occasional, school-wide exceptions to these standards for such events as "hat days" or "spirit days." Normally scheduled "Spirit Wear Days" may be scheduled on Thursday and Friday of each week for the entire school.

VISITORS

All parents and other visitors who come into the school are to use the intercom system by pushing the intercom button, waiting for a response from a BES staff member, and showing a photo ID. A staff member will buzz in approved visitors. Once buzzed into the building, all visitors are to report to the main office, show/scan their photo ID, and sign in to receive a visitor's pass. Any staff member who sees a person without a visitor's badge has been directed to question the person and direct them to the office. Parents/guardians are asked to schedule visits with a teacher prior to coming to school. This will ensure optimal instruction time without interruptions. Please note that we do not allow family members/visitors to walk students to class upon arrival.

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LUNCH VISITORS

- ★ We welcome approved guests/visitors to eat lunch with their child. **Visitors must present a valid ID and be listed in the student's record in Infinite Campus to attend lunch with students.** Please arrive a few minutes before your student's lunch time to check in at the front office. Visitors must wear their visitor's sticker in a visible location and must check out in the front office immediately following your child's lunch period.
- ★ Please mind the time and be prepared to leave when the class's lunchtime is up. We ask that you say your goodbyes while in the cafeteria and then return to the office to sign out before leaving. Family members may not walk students back to class.
- ★ Students and visitors will sit at the designated visitor table in the cafeteria or outside at the picnic tables in the courtyard.
 - Students may not have classmates/friends join them.
 - Students must remain at the visitor's table with their guests for the entire lunch period.
- ★ **No outside food from restaurants:** The Barrow County School System does not allow any outside food items to be brought into the cafeteria. Food from restaurants is not allowed. Visitors and guests are welcome to purchase an adult lunch from the cafeteria or bring a packed lunch from home.
- ★ For confidentiality purposes, please do not take pictures or videos that may contain the faces of other students.
- ★ If younger siblings attend, it is the adult visitor's responsibility to supervise them.
- ★ We ask visitors to adhere to cafeteria procedures, including being good role models and being silent when the signal is given by a school employee. This helps us ensure that our students are eating and helps our monitors manage the cafeteria more effectively.
- ★ Visitors who violate any of the expectations outlined above may have their visiting privileges revoked.

BREAKFAST

Breakfast is offered to ALL students at no cost. It is our privilege to provide low-cost nutritious lunch meals to all students and staff of the Barrow County Schools. Nutrition is a very important part of the education process since a hungry child cannot learn. Barrow County School Nutrition meals adhere to the USDA dietary guidelines and requirements. Our menus offered are analyzed to reduce calories from fat while ensuring proper amounts of nutrients and total calorie intake for different age groups. Monthly menus are available on the Barrow County Schools Homepage on the Internet at <https://www.barrow.k12.ga.us/departments/school-nutrition/index> for both breakfast and lunch menus.

Children with health issues or allergies (including lactose intolerance) must have a letter signed by a physician stating such on file with the cafeteria manager. These letters must be updated annually.

EARLY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Parents are encouraged to schedule outside appointments for their child before/after school hours. However, early dismissals will be granted for the same reasons as excused absences. Students who do need to leave early must have a parent/guardian sign them out in the front office. If parents know that a student will be picked up during the day, please send a handwritten note or email to the teacher indicating the time the student will be leaving. There will be no early check-outs from 1:30-2:00 except for extreme emergencies. Please be aware of this policy when making appointments or arrangements for your child to leave early. This procedure is for the safety of all students.

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TRANSPORTATION:

Car riders may begin entering the building at 7:00 AM each day. Students should wait in their cars until a BES employee opens the front doors of the school. The tardy bell rings at 7:30. If students arrive after 7:30, an adult must accompany the student into the school and check him/her in as tardy.

Students are dismissed beginning at 2:00. If your child is to be a car rider, the office will assign you a car rider tag to hang on your mirror. You will get in the car rider line in front of the building to pick up your child. We ask that you not arrive to wait in line until 1:30 as this blocks our parking lot. Mrs. Duke or another BES employee will be directing traffic and will assist you in lining up in the proper order for dismissal.

All transportation changes are to be done in writing. Please send a note or with your child or email your child's teacher indicating the change. Any child who does not have a written transportation change will be expected to follow their regularly scheduled transportation routine, whether that is by car or by bus. We cannot accept transportation changes over the phone. This is for the safety and well-being of our students. We must receive the transportation change request by 1:30 PM for same-day transportation changes. If sending an email, please call the front office to alert them and get directions for who to email the information to.

If the transportation change involves your child going to another child's home for an event such as a play date or sleepover, we must have written communication from both students' parents. This is to ensure both families are aware of the situation so that all of our students are safe. If we do not have written communication from both parties, the students will follow their regularly scheduled transportation.

SHINING STARS BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAM (Weekly Paid Program)

The Bethlehem Shining Stars Before/After School Program is a program available for BES students to enroll in. We offer care from Monday through Friday from 6:30-7:00 AM and 2:00-6:00 PM. We have a limited number of available spots each year. Information about the program, including registration forms, can be found on our school website.

STUDENT BIRTHDAYS

We understand that parents may wish to celebrate their child's birthday by sending in pre-packaged treats for his/her class. Please communicate with your child's teacher to make arrangements for dropping off the pre-packaged items in the front office. (These items are not allowed in the cafeteria during lunch hours.)

NO CELL PHONES, SMART WATCHES, OR OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Our school has greatly increased the number of devices available for student use. Cell phones are not needed to support instruction. At the elementary level, cell phones serve as a distraction to students and negatively impact our ability to provide a safe and productive learning environment both on the bus and in the building. As such, phones, smart watches, and other student-owned electronic devices will not be permitted for use at school or on the bus, and we would prefer they not even be sent to school with students. If there is no way to avoid this, the phone/watch/device must be left turned completely off (not silenced or on vibrate) and in the backpack at all times. Students who violate this protocol may be subject to having their phone placed in the front office, and the student's parent/guardian will be required to come to the school to pick it up. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen electronic devices.

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CLINIC INFORMATION

When should your child stay home from school?

- If he/she is running a fever. Temperature must be below 100.4 for 24 **hours** without Tylenol or Motrin before a student may return to school.
- If he/she is vomiting. No vomiting for a full 24 hours before returning to school.
- If he/she is having diarrhea. No diarrhea for a full 24 hours before returning to school.
- If you have questions, please call the school and ask for the nurse or clinic worker.

What if my child becomes sick or is injured while at school?

- In case of an emergency illness or accident involving students on the school grounds or in the school building, the school will immediately notify the parents. In order to do this, the school must have current phone numbers for parents and emergency contacts. Please help us by keeping this information up to date and send information to school in writing. You may also visit www.barrow.k12.ga.us and update your information on Infinite Campus.
- Only the school nurse or front office will authorize a student's dismissal from school due to sickness or injury. Teachers and students are not allowed to make phone calls regarding this.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

We are required to conduct one fire drill per month, one tornado/weather drill per semester, and one lockdown/intruder drill per quarter. These drills are done in order to prepare all students and staff for what to do should we have an emergency.

HOMEWORK

All students at BES are encouraged to read independently or with a parent for 20 minutes each evening as part of our school-wide homework initiative. In addition to this homework, individual teachers may give assignments to reinforce what is being learned in the classroom. Any specific questions regarding homework should be directed to the assigning teacher.

COMMUNICATION

All BES students will have a "Friday Folder" in which teachers are required to send home a weekly newsletter to inform families of what is being learned, upcoming events, and other important information. Graded work, informational flyers, and other important documents will travel to and from home in these folders.

We also use the Remind app and regularly update our school Facebook page, Instagram page, and our school Website. We encourage all parents to call or email their child's teacher with any questions. Teachers will do their best to respond to your call or email within 24 hours.

REPORT CARDS AND PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Report cards are issued quarterly. Report cards will be available through the Infinite Campus Parent Portal, and hard copies will be sent home for quarters 1-3. There will be 2 parent-teacher conferences for our families to attend; one in the fall and one in the spring. We seek 100% parent/guardian attendance for these 2 important meetings. Additional conferences may be requested by teacher, parent/guardian, or administrator as needed.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found items are collected. At the end of each grading period, any items that are not claimed will be placed on a table in the atrium. They will remain there for one week. After one week, any remaining articles will be donated to a local charity. Please encourage your child to keep track of his/her items and label all jackets, lunchboxes, etc. with his/her name.

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SCHOOL MATERIALS AND FINES

Textbooks, library/media materials, and equipment are the property of the Barrow County Board of Education and are issued to students free of charge. The return of these materials to the school shall be the sole responsibility of the students and their parents/guardians. Students who lose or damage materials and equipment shall reimburse the Barrow County Board of Education for the cost of replacement/repairs.

VOLUNTEERS AND MENTORS

All volunteers will be subject to undergoing a criminal background check before being allowed to work with/around our students. This includes chaperoning field trips (Level 2 Volunteer). If you are interested in volunteering at school or chaperoning a field trip, please visit the following website to learn how you can be approved.

<https://www.barrow.k12.ga.us/community/volunteers>

Our school counselors, Ms. Griner and Ms. Layton, coordinate our school mentor program. We enjoy having mentors from our community come in and spend time with our students. Please contact her if you are interested in making a difference in the life of a child.

Mary.griner@barrow.k12.ga.us cora.layton@barrow.k12.ga.us

DISCIPLINE

We expect all students to follow our school expectations: Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Safe. While we make every effort to prevent discipline referrals, we also have a duty to provide a safe and productive learning environment for everyone. Should your child receive a discipline referral and is sent to the office, an administrator will contact you. Each office referral is a unique situation and will be handled based on the child and the level of incident. We follow the Barrow County Schools Code of Conduct, which can be found here:

<https://www.barrow.k12.ga.us/schools/bes/families/student-handbook>

Our goal is to use discipline referrals as teaching opportunities and provide consequences that are fair and aligned to the behavior. Parents/guardians may be asked to come to the school for a meeting regarding their child's behavior. We will work together as a team to help your child be successful!

WITHDRAWING YOUR CHILD

If you are moving and your child will be transferring to another school, a student withdrawal form must be completed. Copies of all records will be mailed to the student's new school when a written request is received. Only the individual who registered the student can withdraw the student.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act, the Barrow County School System would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student's teacher(s) and/or paraprofessional(s). The following information may be requested:

- Whether the student's teacher(s) –
 - has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade level and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
 - is teaching under an emergency or provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and

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- is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
- Whether your child is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher's and/or paraprofessional's qualifications, please contact Mindy Reid, Principal at 770-867-2238 or Meggan McNally, Barrow County School System Director of Planning and Personnel at 770-867-4527.

CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Each year, BES offers a variety of student clubs, pending the availability of club sponsors. The clubs and organizations that are available are announced periodically during the school year as sponsors have their clubs approved. All clubs require parent permission to participate.

PLEASE SEE NEXT PAGE FOR IMPORTANT REQUIREMENT

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STUDENT/PARENT POLICY UNDERSTANDING ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Each school is required to document that every parent and student has been given access to the Student Code of Conduct along with other required information, including notification of possible consequences and penalties for truancy, and has been given a chance to ask questions about anything he or she does not understand.

Parents/Guardians and students age ten years or older by September 1st are required to sign this acknowledgement form in the space below. Please return this form to your child's teacher as soon as possible. You may also complete the form electronically here:

<https://www.barrow.k12.ga.us/families/students/policy-understanding-form>

Students who are unable to read or fully understand this information are not required to initial or sign this document. However, parents are expected to explain the information to their children in terms that they can understand. Failure to sign and return this form will not excuse a student from the requirements of the policies. To complete this form, students and parents should each initial each item that you have read and understand and then sign the form in the space provided.

Parent Student

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | 1. Student Code of Conduct and School Bus Behavior Guidelines |
| _____ | _____ | 2. School Attendance and Georgia's Compulsory Education Law |
| _____ | _____ | 3. Cafeteria Charge Board Policy (EE) |
| _____ | _____ | 4. Medication Policy |
| _____ | _____ | 5. Parent's Right to Request a Teacher's and/or a Paraprofessional's Qualifications |
| _____ | _____ | 6. Barrow County School System Internet Safety, Technology Responsibility, and Acceptable Use Policy |

I have read and understand the 2022-2023 **Bethlehem Elementary** Student Handbook & the BCSS Student Handbook information found here: <https://www.barrow.k12.ga.us/families/students/student-handbook>

I understand that I am responsible for following the guidelines set forth in this document.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

I have reviewed the student handbook with my child:

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

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SCHOOL CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

2023-2024

All clubs at BES will be announced and will include permission to participate forms as clubs are scheduled. If you do **NOT** want your child to participate in a particular club or organization at school, please complete the information requested below and return to your child's school. You also have an electronic option if you'd prefer:

<https://www.barrow.k12.ga.us/families/students/clubs-and-student-organizations-form>

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

My child, identified above, **may not** participate in the club or organization listed below:

By completing this form, I am declining permission for my child to participate in the club or organization listed above.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____