

MONTVALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
FAMILY HANDBOOK
2026-2027



MONTVALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
home of the patriots

The School Board Policies which appear in this handbook are periodically updated in response to changes in the law and other circumstances; therefore, there may have been changes to the documents in the Handbook since it was originally created during the summer break. You may access all current BCPS School Board policies by visiting:
<https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/bcsbva/Board.nsf/Public>.

MONTVALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Quick Reference

Contact Information

<u>Address:</u>	One Little Patriot Drive, Montvale, Virginia, 24122
<u>Office Phone:</u>	540-947-2241
<u>Office Fax:</u>	540-947-5300
<u>Website:</u>	http://bedfordmves.sharpschool.net/

Office Hours

7:00 a.m.- 3:30 p.m.

Daily School Schedule

School Hours: 7:45 a.m. - 2:15 p.m.

Students may arrive at school starting at 7:20 a.m. The tardy bell rings and classes begin at 7:45 a.m. Students who arrive tardy (after 7:45 a.m.) must have a parent/responsible adult sign them in with a staff member at the front office. Students who eat breakfast at school should be dropped off early enough to finish their meal and clean up before the instructional day begins at 7:45 a.m. Breakfast will be provided for students who are tardy, regardless of when they arrive.

Students are dismissed at 2:15 p.m. each afternoon. For safety and security reasons, all adults must provide a government-issued I.D. card when picking up a child early from school.

Daily Schedule:

7:20..... Students arrive via car rider circle & buses
7:20-7:45..... Breakfast served (grab-and-go)/Clubs on Tuesday/Thursday
7:45..... Instructional day begins with the Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence
10:45-12:30...Lunch served (in cafeteria)
2:15..... Students dismissed

Staff List

<u>Principal</u>	<u>Secretary</u>	<u>Reading Specialists</u>
Kevin Spaulding	Kelsey Wood	Andrea Crawford
		Madison Karnes
<u>Preschool</u>	<u>Bookkeeper</u>	
Jillian Gutierrez	Joani St. Clair	<u>Gifted</u>
		Jennifer Stinnette
<u>Kindergarten</u>	<u>Paraprofessionals</u>	
Shyenne Haynes	Kelly Balderston	<u>Library Media Specialist</u>
Lori Parr	Sherry Cire	Anna Stevens*
	Lisa Coffey	*also testing coordinator
<u>First Grade</u>	Melissa Williamson	<u>P.E.</u>
Christie Dooley	Nicole Wright	Courtney Roberts
Jennifer Yeatts	Cathy Robers	
	Megan Flowers	<u>Art</u>
<u>Second Grade</u>	Cathy Minnix	Laura Frable
Brooke Wheeler	Bethany Goad	
Monica Roth	Taylor Bohon-Holdren	<u>Music</u>
		Monica Chisom
<u>Third Grade</u>	<u>SRO</u>	
Sarah Hankinson	Brandon Long	<u>Speech/Language</u>
Brittany Klein		Gwen Terry
	<u>Custodians</u>	
<u>Fourth Grade</u>	Jan Rakes	<u>School Psychologist</u>
Kelly Beasley	Bill Meyer	Reggie Tyree
JoAnna Whalen		
		<u>Youth/Family Specialist</u>
<u>Fifth Grade</u>	<u>Cafeteria</u>	Simone Garrison
Sandy Overstreet	Cathy Starling, Manager	
Paula Thiel	Patricia Carter	<u>Guidance</u>
<u>Special Education</u>	Kristin Carroll	Susan Blanding
Danielle Thompson		
Elizabeth Brooks	<u>Bus Drivers</u>	<u>Nurse</u>
Teresa McComiskey	26 Cassie Brown	Caitlyn Hawley
	76 Josephine Padillo	
<u>Teacher of Testing</u>	68 TBD	<u>I.T.C.</u>
Leah Wilson	110 Clint Keifer	Kim Larsen
	174 Savina Rice	
<u>Lead Teacher</u>	178 TBD	<u>I.T. Zone Tech</u>
Rachel Parr	179 Debra Rice	Rick Poff
	31 Melissa Waldron	

This *Family Handbook* and the *Bedford County Schools' Code of Student Conduct* should be used together. The Code gives detailed information that is not included here. http://bedford.sharpschool.net/parents_students/code_of_conduct

VISION STATEMENT

Montvale Elementary School, along with the community, will provide a safe learning environment that will nurture each student's emotional, social, physical, and academic potential.

MISSION STATEMENT

Montvale Elementary students will be prepared for success in the twenty-first century by integrating technology, hands-on learning, and active involvement in the learning process. Highly qualified staff will design and implement the educational process addressing individual differences and focusing on the belief that all students are capable learners. Parent and community participation will have an important role in this process. All students will be educated in a safe and secure environment that promotes responsibility, manners, self-esteem, and communication.

ACCREDITATION STATUS

Montvale Elementary School is fully accredited by the Virginia Department of Education as a result of meeting or exceeding the criteria in all areas for "Full Accreditation" status.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Age - A child may enter kindergarten if he/she has reached age five on or before September 30, 2026. Children who are six years old by September 30, 2026 must be enrolled in school.

Immunizations - A parent or guardian must present evidence of each child's immunization against communicable diseases for which vaccinations are required by state law. Children must also be vaccinated against varicella or Chicken Pox. Students who are not fully vaccinated will not be allowed to enter school.

Physical Examination - Children entering school for the first time must have a comprehensive physical examination performed within the twelve months prior to enrollment. The parent or guardian shall furnish the school with the physician's report.

ATTENDANCE

Missing 10% of the school year (about 2 days per month) for any reason is considered chronically absent. Missing school for any reason adds up and can affect a child's learning, behavior, and friendships over time. Please save absences, tardies, and early dismissals for truly necessary times.

Reporting Absences

- Notify the school as soon as possible, but no later than 3 days after your child's return to school. Absences are excused when documentation is received on time.
- Official documentation is required to excuse appointments (medical, dental, court, etc.).
- Guardian-excused absences, those without official documentation, are limited to 10 per year. Additional absences will be unexcused. The principal makes the final decision regarding excused absences.

- Students who are chronically absent this school year will be limited to 5 guardian-excused absences next school year.
- Arrange missed assignments with teachers; they are due within a few days of your child's return to school.

Truancy (Unexcused) vs. Chronic Absenteeism (Total)

- Unexcused: Truancy is a pattern of unexcused absences. Virginia law requires schools to intervene, which can ultimately lead to Juvenile Court involvement.
- Total: Chronic absenteeism is a pattern of total absences (excused or unexcused) and may require an Attendance Improvement Meeting/Plan.

Retention Due to Absences

- Elementary/Middle School: More than 16 absences (excused or unexcused) may result in retention (denial of promotion to the next grade).
- Tardies and early dismissals may factor into accumulated absences.
- Families will be notified if their child is at risk of retention or credit denial, including how to request a waiver in some circumstances.

To avoid being tardy, students must be **in the school building** by 7:45 a.m. Students who arrive after 7:45 a.m. must report to the main office with a parent/guardian before going to class. **All students must be signed in on the computer in the main office by the adult accompanying them.** Regular attendance is extremely important to a child's academic progress. Please make sure that your child arrives on time and attends daily unless he/she is ill. Please refer to the *Code of Student Conduct* for additional information concerning attendance policies for Bedford County Schools.

BUSES



Children in preschool through third grade must be accompanied to and from bus stops where the bus driver cannot see the parent from the drop off location. **Students will be returned to school if an approved person is not visible to the driver.**

Written parental requests must be approved in the office in advance if a child is to ride a different bus home than their normal bus. If it is necessary to call the school to request changes due to an emergency situation, these calls should be made before 12:00 p.m. to allow time for the message to reach the student. If a student wishes to ride a bus home with another student, both students must have written parental permission approved in the office. If not, both students will go home by their normal methods of transportation. When a student rides a bus to an unscheduled stop (i.e., not with another student), the note must include the address of the stop. Always send a note when there is a change in your child's normal transportation plans.

Riding BCPS transportation is a privilege that can be revoked by the principal. Bus safety will be reviewed at every grade level. Students are expected to maintain appropriate and safe behavior at all times on the bus and at the bus stop. Specific guidelines and procedures can be found in the *Code of Student Conduct*.

CAFETERIA

The MVES cafeteria provides well-balanced and nutritious breakfast and lunch meals daily. In the event that school opening is delayed, breakfast will be offered to the children as they arrive.

All students will receive free breakfast and lunch for the 2026-2027 school year.

Lunch

Student: \$3.40 Adult: \$5.00

Breakfast

Student: \$2.00 / Adult: \$2.85

Milk

\$0.75

Students may buy extra items when they go through the line. They may not buy items for other students.

Students who pack lunches should not bring anything in glass containers. Nutritious foods and beverages are encouraged. Students may purchase à la carte items.

Students are not allowed to share food brought from home. Store-bought food items such as cupcakes or cookies can be sent in to celebrate a birthday. Ingredients labels must be visible and food items should be dropped off at the main office.

School Nutrition Program – Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Schools

Bedford County Public Schools participates in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), which allows all enrolled students to receive breakfast and lunch at no charge each school day. To receive a meal at no cost, students must select a reimbursable meal. A reimbursable meal is one that meets USDA meal pattern requirements and includes the required food components and serving sizes for the students grade level. School cafeteria staff are available to assist students in making reimbursable meal selections.

While breakfast and lunch meals are provided at no charge, students may purchase additional food items such as ice cream, chips, bottled beverages, or second servings if funds are available in their meal account. Students attending CEP schools are not permitted to charge additional a la carte items to their accounts.

Parents and guardians may add funds to student meal accounts and monitor purchases through LINQ Connect at www.linqconnect.com. This is a secure, third-party vendor. Online payments have a processing fee of 3.95% of the transaction, with a minimum fee of \$2.85 per transaction. Payments may be made at no charge in all school cafeterias by cash or check. There is no charge to maintain your LINQ Connect account, which allows families to view student meal transactions and set spending limits or restrictions.

Questions regarding school nutrition services may be directed to:

Suzanne Quesenberry

Director of School Nutrition
540-586-1045, Ext. 10224
Special Dietary Accommodations

School Nutrition Services may make food substitutions, at its discretion, for students who do not have a disability but who are medically certified as having a special medical or dietary need. Such determinations are made on a case-by-case basis. Each special dietary request must be supported by a Medical Statement signed by a recognized medical authority. The Medical Statement must include:

- Identification of the medical or other special dietary condition that restricts the students diet;
- The food or foods to be omitted from the students diet; and
- The food or choice of foods to be substituted.

If a completed Medical Statement from a recognized medical authority is not received, the student will be offered the standard school meal. Medical statements completed by parents or guardians cannot be accepted.

CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL

Cancellation of school takes place only during special circumstances such as extreme weather, equipment failure, or crisis situations. The best way to receive alerts about weather-related closings & delays is by activating your ParentPortal and allowing SMS messages. This is the first way cancellations are announced.

The next place the County will post alerts, closings, or delays is on Social Media.

On **Facebook**, “Like” the BCPS page to stay informed:

<https://www.facebook.com/bedfordcountyps/>

There is also a BCPS Instagram and X account you can follow.

Other, less timely, methods about BCPS alerts are **local television** or **radio**.

Schools are not contacted directly in the morning about closings/delays. Our staff must monitor the above listed sources of information to learn about school closings and take action for each situation. Calling the school is not the quickest way to receive the latest information.

CANVAS

All teachers will have an active Canvas page. This is the main page for students and parents to access weekly newsletters, schedules, class syllabi, and assignment reminders. Some classwork will also be completed via Canvas. Parents will be provided with an observer code. Anyone can access a teacher’s biographical page with general information, but an observer code must be used to gain further access. If your observer code expires before you sign up, please contact the teacher directly for a new code.

CAR RIDER POLICY

In order to ensure the safety of all children and MvES staff, we ask that all parents/caregivers who drop off/pick up children before/after school adhere to the following policies:

IN THE MORNING~

- **Students may be dropped off in the car rider circle from 7:20-7:45 a.m.**
- At 7:45 a.m., the car-rider door will be closed and students **MUST BE SIGNED IN AT THE FRONT OFFICE BY A PARENT/GUARDIAN**. If students are eating breakfast at school, they should be dropped off as close to 7:20 as possible in order to get to the cafeteria, go through the line, and finish breakfast in time to be prepared for class at 7:45 a.m.

IN THE AFTERNOON~

- If a child will be an afternoon car rider on a regular basis, parents/guardians must sign up the student at the front office as a car rider and receive a car rider number. The student will get a card with the number on it; parents/guardians will get a sign with the same number on it to display in the car windshield at pick-up time. Please understand that the car rider number indicates a parent's permission for the person to pick up the student in the car rider line. If staff is unfamiliar with the driver, they will be asked to pull around and check the student out from the office and the parent will be notified.
- If your child has an early dismissal due to a medical appointment, etc., you must sign them out in the front office **before 2:00 p.m.** **After 2:00 p.m., please use the car rider line.**

IN THE AFTERNOON CAR RIDER LINE~

- The car rider line is intended to move safely and quickly. Please adhere to the following guidelines:
 - o Park in the car rider circle (two lines of vehicles in the afternoon), pulling forward as far as you can.
 - o Make sure your car rider number is clearly visible through your windshield. The numbers are easier to read if they are flush against the glass or are hung from the rearview mirror; they are difficult to read when they are laid flat on the dashboard. Please leave the number up until you receive your child.
 - o In the circle, **drivers/parents should remain in their vehicles.** Do not leave your car parked in the line to enter the school; do not walk around your car to try to help your child get into the vehicle. MvES staff members will be there to offer assistance to students.
 - o Students should enter the vehicle on the passenger side. Please have any necessary child safety seats accessible from the passenger side.
 - o As soon as vehicles in the line have been loaded, school staff will signal the lead cars to exit the circle.

- o If your child requires your assistance to buckle up (seat belts, booster seats, etc.), please do so quickly; do NOT block the car rider line. You may also move your vehicle to the nearest open parking space to assist your child.
- Students will not be delivered to parents who are parked in the parking lot. Students will only be loaded into vehicles in the car rider line.
- If there is any uncertainty about who is supposed to be picking up the student, the student will be escorted to the main office for pick up. The driver will be required to scan his/her driver's license to sign-out the student on the computer in the office.
- If any driver displays reckless behavior (i.e., passing other vehicles in the car rider line/parking lot, by-passing traffic cones or staff members, etc.) they will be required to meet with school administration.
- Please remember our campus is tobacco-free.
- **It is the responsibility of all parents/guardians to share these guidelines with everyone who drops off/picks up their children from this school.**

CELEBRATIONS

A limited number of classroom celebration activities before major holidays will be permitted at the discretion of the teacher. **Personal invitations to parties will not be distributed at school or sent home from school unless every student in the class receives an invitation.** Each teacher will maintain a Student Directory that will include the students' names, phone numbers, and addresses from the class. This directory may be used by parents to mail invitations or to ask questions about projects/assignments when they are unable to contact the teacher. **Participation in the Student Directory is optional.** Classroom teachers will provide forms, and it is the responsibility of the parent/student to return the form to be included in the directory. Any student who is not listed in the directory will not be provided any student information. **Student parties will not be held at school.**

CELL PHONES

If a student must have a cell phone at school for before or after school purposes, they must remain off and out of sight during the school day so they do not cause a distraction or disruption. Cell phones should remain off and out of site on school buses. First offense: teacher-issued warning. Second offense: teacher confiscation until the end of the day/parent notified. Third offense: Principal confiscation/device released to a parent.

CHECKS

The Bedford County School Board has contracted with Envision for the electronic collection of checks returned for insufficient funds (NSF). The school will gladly accept your checks; however, in the event your check is returned, your account will be debited electronically for the face amount and fees allowed by the state of Virginia. Please include the following on your check:

- Driver's License number
- Full Name

- Street Address
- Phone numbers

Checks written to the school or to the cafeteria that are returned for insufficient funds are sent directly to Envision for collection and are no longer handled by the school.

COMMUNICATION

Parent/Teacher Communication is an important tool in the academic progress of each child. Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers throughout the year regarding the progress of their child. Each teacher will send work home from the previous week each Monday. This will assist parents in monitoring their child's progress. We also encourage all families to download the Ron Clark Academy Points App as well as use the Canvas observer code to access their child's digital learning platform.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF HIV AND DRUG/ALCOHOL TREATMENT RECORDS

The Bedford County Public Schools shall comply with the confidentiality requirements of sections 32.1-36.1 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, providing for confidentiality of records related to any test for Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). In addition, the school division shall maintain confidentiality of drug and alcohol treatment records as required by federal and state law.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Montvale Elementary School maintains an Emergency Operations Plan to address potential crisis situations. This helps to establish a coordinated response to minimize stress and disruptions to the school community. There are certain security measures that we ask of visitors in the building:

1. **EVERYONE** must check-in on the computer at the front desk by scanning their state-issued identification card/driver's license.
2. All visitors must display a visitor's badge at all times while on school grounds.
3. Visitors must enter the school building through the front entrance.
4. Students will not be dismissed by a teacher unless first notified by the office.

A school crisis team will review situations and drills periodically to prepare for emergencies. Students will be given instructions and perform practice drills for fires, tornadoes, intruders, earthquakes, and bus evacuations.

CUSTODY

If you have custody concerns for your child, be sure that the school has a copy of the most current applicable pages of your custody agreement. Current law mandates that non-custodial parents be allowed to participate in school-related activities (examples: eating lunch with the child, attending parent conferences) unless there is a court order to the contrary. If there is such an order, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to supply the school with a copy.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION NOTICE

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that Bedford County Public Schools (BCPS), with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, BCPS may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the BCPS to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- School yearbooks;
- Graduation, theater, athletic, and music programs;
- Video of performances, school activities, and athletic events;
- Articles about school activities and events;
- Lists of those receiving honors, awards, and scholarships;
- Team rosters and class lists.

BCPS produces and participates in television, video, and audio recordings, websites, and still photograph productions that may use your child's name, likeness, or voice. Your child may be photographed or video recorded by BCPS staff members or by vendors working for BCPS for use within BCPS for BCPS education-related activities, for example, student identification pictures or video recordings of classroom activity used for teacher training or student evaluation purposes. In addition to these internal uses, BCPS may disclose photographs of your child to the public as directory information for such uses as school yearbooks. BCPS also may disclose your child's image, name, or voice in BCPS photographic productions or other BCPS sponsored publicity.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories - names, addresses and telephone listings. Directory information will be released to institutions of higher education that request this information. The high schools will provide a form to parents/students 18 years and older to opt out of disclosure to military and higher institutions if requested.

If you do not want Bedford County Public Schools to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify your child's school principal in writing by September 23, 2026. Bedford County Public Schools has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name, including nickname
- Name of parent or guardian with whom student lives
- Address
- Telephone listing

- Grade level
- E-mail address
- Photographs and other images that feature the student
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Height and weight of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Most recent educational agency of institution attended
- Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems that cannot be used to access education records without a PIN, password, etc. (A student's SSN, in whole or in part, cannot be used for this purpose.)

DISCIPLINE

Montvale Elementary encourages self-discipline for every student. Respectful and safe behavior is expected from all students. Expectations are taught and reviewed frequently with students, and expectations are posted throughout the building (e.g. hallways, classrooms, bathrooms, cafeteria).

Students will earn points for their House when they exhibit positive behavior. They may receive marks on their PRIDE behavior sheet when they misbehave. If they receive excess marks on their behavior sheet they might lose the privilege of attending “fun” school celebrations. Similarly, if they receive any office referrals throughout the quarter they may lose the privilege of attending such events (e.g. House Celebrations).

Positive reinforcement is used throughout our school. Students who exhibit unacceptable behavior may be administered a logical consequence. Examples of consequences include in-school suspension, after-school detention, and silent lunch. Refer to the *Code of Student Conduct* for specific policies concerning minimum expectations and responsibilities of all students enrolled in Bedford County Public Schools.

DRESS

In order to promote an orderly and safe learning environment while preparing students for success in the world of work, dress guidelines have been established. Students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school. This means that a student's dress, grooming, and appearance (including hairstyle, jewelry, and makeup) shall be safe, appropriate, and not disruptive or interfere with the educational process. Administrators will determine the appropriateness of student dress. Dress that is disruptive, distracting, revealing, or interferes with the students' education will not be acceptable. See the Bedford County *Code of Student Conduct* for specific guidelines.

Since every MvES student is scheduled to have physical education class and/or recess every day, we encourage all students to wear athletic shoes to school. Athletic shoes are required for PE, and extra sneakers are available should a student forget to wear their own. Flip-flops and backless shoes are not allowed to be worn by elementary school students.

EARLY DISMISSALS

Whenever it is necessary for a child to leave school early, the child must have a note signed by the parent or guardian. The note should state the student's first and last name, time leaving, reason, and the name of the person who will pick up the child. **The student must be signed out through the main office computer by the approved adult using their driver's license or government-issued I.D.** Teachers will be notified by intercom or a note from the office that a child has been signed out before the teacher dismisses a student. These procedures help us to ensure student safety.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Schools must have emergency information on file for each child with up-to-date telephone numbers for parents and other adults that may be called in the event of an emergency or illness. This information is supplied by the parent or guardian at the beginning of the year on Infosnap, our online registration program. ***It is crucial that parents help the school keep this information current throughout the school year!*** Call or send a note if this information changes during the school year.

FIELD TRIPS & SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Teachers have permission to plan field trips that directly support Standards of Learning for the subject(s) they teach. Students are expected to follow the same rules while on a field trip as they are in the school as outlined in the BCPS Code of Student Handbook.

Parents may be invited by the classroom teacher to attend field trips, but may be asked to travel in their own vehicle due to bus capacity limitations. You must notify the school in writing **prior** to the field trip if you plan on dismissing your child directly from the field trip.

All chaperones must sign a BCPS volunteer agreement.

FIRE DRILLS/EVACUATION PLANS

In case of fire or other emergency, an evacuation alarm will sound. Fire drills are held once a week for the first month of school and once a month throughout the remainder of the school year. Montvale Elementary School maintains an evacuation plan in case it is necessary to evacuate students and employees to another location.

FUNDRAISING

At various times during the school year the PTA, SCA, or other school-affiliated organizations may have a fundraiser. At no time shall there be unsupervised door-to-door solicitation by elementary students.

We ask that students not bring outside fundraising materials to the school during the school day. It is not advisable for the children to have large amounts of money with them at school.

GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Gifted Education Program provides academic services for students in kindergarten through grade twelve. It follows the guidelines found in the *Virginia Plan for the Education of the Gifted* and the *Virginia Standards of Quality*. It is designed to address individual learning styles, needs, and interests that encourage each student to develop to his or her greatest potential.

GRADES AND STUDENT PROGRESS

Grades are a reflection of a student's progress in school based on class work, homework, tests, effort, mastery of material, skill development, participation, and teacher observation. Grades are reported to parents quarterly (every nine weeks period). An interim report will be issued after the fourth week of the grading period. Students who are performing below a "C" (or below a "3" in grades K-2) will receive a second interim after the seventh week of the grading period.

Bedford County Schools utilize an electronic gradebook for grades K-12. In grades 3-12, parents will be able to access their child's grades through the PowerSchool ParentPortal, as well as through quarterly report cards sent home.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAM

The elementary school counselor has four main areas of responsibility: counseling, classroom guidance, coordinating, and consulting. Bedford County School guidance programs are designed to be both developmental and preventative, assisting children with the normal issues of growing up while also dealing with the concerns they face. The guidance counselor achieves these goals by teaching classroom lessons, seeing children individually and in small groups. A referral can be made by a parent, teacher, or the student. An "Opt-Out Form" is available should a parent desire that their child not participate in the guidance program. Parents are encouraged to call the counselor as needed.

HOMEWORK

Parents are asked to help their child develop good study habits by setting aside a time and place for completing homework and by checking to see that homework is always completed by the child. Daily homework will be assigned at the discretion of the teacher and within county policy. It is an extension and enrichment of the material taught in the classroom and is a valuable aid in developing independent study habits. Please take the time necessary to help your child develop good homework habits.

Because reading is so important to all aspects of a child's development, we ask that all children read each night, either independently or with a family member.

HONOR ROLL

Academic recognition may be given to students in grades 3-5 each quarter through the Honor Roll. Eligibility for this recognition is based on the student receiving grades of "A, B, or S". No overall grades of "U" or "N" are acceptable on the Honor Roll. Students who have been suspended out of school during the grading period are not eligible for Honor Roll recognition, regardless of academic grades. Attendance and handwriting are not considered in awarding Honor Roll.

HOUSE SYSTEM

The Montvale House System is a school-wide positive behavior support initiative inspired by the Ron Clark Academy model. It is designed to foster academic success, social development, and emotional well-being for our PK–5 students. This inclusive program enhances school culture by building strong connections, promoting student leadership, and preparing future-ready citizens. Our five core goals are:

Building Belonging - The House System connects every member of the Montvale community—students, teachers, support staff, and administration—by creating cross-grade, cross-role relationships. Each House serves as a smaller family within the larger school, giving students a sense of identity and belonging beyond their classrooms. This structure allows for meaningful interaction and stronger support systems throughout the school.

Friendly Competition - Montvale's House System fosters a spirit of healthy competition that is modeled and guided by staff. Teachers will award House points to students daily when they are showing good character. Throughout the year, students participate in a variety of challenges and events that teach the value of sportsmanship. Whether winning or losing, students learn to show respect, encourage peers, and build resilience.

Instilling Integrity - Rooted in our Patriot PRIDE values, the House System helps students internalize the character traits essential for success both in school and in life. These lessons support the development of intrinsically motivated, empathetic, and responsible individuals who will become positive forces in their communities.

Leading Through Communication - Leadership opportunities are embedded within the House System to help students build strong communication skills. Heads of House are chosen through a competitive process and take on the responsibility of leading chants, coordinating with staff, and informing their House peers of upcoming events. These experiences help students become confident leaders and clear communicators.

Growing Together - Through House activities and events, students collaborate with peers across classrooms and grade levels. These experiences encourage teamwork, strategic thinking, and problem-solving in a fun, engaging environment. The House System makes space for all students to contribute and succeed together.

Students will be sorted into Houses on the first day of school. The House in which they are assigned will remain their House for the duration of their time at Montvale Elementary. No requests for switching House assignments will be honored.

There will be quarterly and other celebrations related to the House System and House points. The principal reserves the right to enroll students in a Restorative Academy instead of a celebration based on student behavior. For instance, if students have excessive marks on their PRIDE behavior sheet or have any office referrals for the quarter they will not participate in the quarterly celebration.

ILLNESS/MEDICATION

In case of illness or injury, the school nurse or a member of the school staff will care for a child temporarily. We have a nurse on staff during school hours each day. School personnel will render first aid treatment only. If emergency medical treatment is necessary, the parents will be contacted. If parents are not available, the child will be taken to the emergency room at the hospital. **Remember: emergency contact information with the phone number where parents/guardians can be reached and the name of the student's family doctor must be on file at the school!** The school will make every effort to assist parents with administering prescription medication to children when **absolutely necessary**. We appreciate our parents understanding that the school needs to limit the administration of medication to only those children in real need.

Please refer to the procedure governing medication below:

1. Medications prescribed by a doctor for three doses must be given at home (morning, after school, and at night.)
2. The school will dispense prescription medications that must be given during school hours as determined by the doctor. A physician's authorization is required for all prescription medicine.
3. Over the counter medications will be administered as instructed on the box, unless accompanied with a physician's order instructing to do differently. The parent must complete the *Physician/Parent Authorization to Administer Medication* form.
4. All medications must be in the original container with specific directions for administration.
5. You may obtain a copy of *Physician/Parent Authorization to Administer Medication* from the school nurse.

Please **do not** send any medication to school by your child. Students are not to possess any type of medication (including over-the-counter drugs) while under the supervision of the school. Possession of any medication will result in disciplinary action.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

No student may be enrolled in school without documented proof that the student has been adequately immunized against communicable diseases as outlined in public law 22.1-271.2, *Code of Virginia*. Forms to be taken to the doctor are available in the school office.

LIBRARY

Each class will have an opportunity each week to check out books from our school library. Books can be checked out for a week, and then renewed if there are no holds on the item. The number of books allowed for a checkout will be set by the library media specialist and may vary by grade-level. There are no fines for overdue items; however, students are expected to pay the cost to replace any lost or damaged books.

LOCKER POLICIES

Some students in upper grades may be issued a locker. Lockers are for school materials only and appropriate personal belongings (i.e. a jacket). Lockers are the property of the school and the privilege to use a locker can be suspended or revoked at any time by the principal. The principal has the right to search a student's locker for any reason.

LOST AND FOUND

The best guarantee of finding lost items is to have everything labeled with students' names (lunch boxes, jackets, hats, gloves, etc.). All items are delivered to the Lost and Found area of the school. Periodically throughout the year, all unclaimed items are donated to charity. Please check early and frequently when something is missing. To avoid an item being lost or stolen, please have your child refrain from bringing valuable property to school.

MOMENT OF SILENCE/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The 2000 session of the General Assembly amended Section 22.1-203 of the *Code of Virginia* to require daily observation of a moment of silence, not to exceed one minute, in every Virginia classroom. Students are to remain seated and silent and make no distracting displays during this time. They may engage in any silent activity that does not interfere with other students. According to your family's beliefs, parents may want to discuss with their own children the best way to utilize this time.

Section 22.1-202 passed in 2001 states that "all students shall be required to learn the Pledge of Allegiance and to demonstrate such knowledge.... schools shall require the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in each classroom of the school division." If the student or parent objects on religious, philosophical, or other grounds to participating, then the student may be exempt from the requirement. Exempted students are to remain quietly standing or sitting at their desks while others recite and are to make no display that

disrupts or distracts others. The national motto, “In God We Trust” is displayed in a conspicuous spot in every Virginia public school.

MORNING CLUBS

Morning clubs will be offered on certain days of the week. Students will have the opportunity to sign up for one or two clubs each quarter. A sign up sheet or digital sign up process will be used and students will be assigned to clubs on a first-come, first-serve basis based on the sign up process. Morning clubs are a privilege and student behavior during morning clubs, during the school day, and on the school bus may result in suspension of club participation. The principal reserves the right to assign and/or remove a student from a club.

MUSIC/P.E./ART/LIBRARY

Students in all grade levels participate in music, art, library, and physical education activities each week. Students need to wear comfortable clothing appropriate for physical education and regular athletic shoes. A student may not be able to participate in all P.E. activities if proper attire is not worn. If a child has an existing health condition that affects participation in P.E., please notify the school.

NOTIFICATION OF ASSESSMENT OPT OUT POLICIES UNDER SECTION 1112(e)(2) OF THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT OF 2015 (ESSA)

On December 10, 2015, the *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015* (ESSA) was signed into law. Section 1112(e)(2) of ESSA states that parents of students in Title I schools have a right to know about state or division policies regarding student participation in any assessments mandated by ESSA, including any policy, procedure, or parental right to opt students out of such assessments. If you would like to receive information about this topic, please contact Kevin Spaulding, Principal, either by phone at 540-947-2241, or in writing at KSpaulding@bedford.k12.va.us

PICTURES/YEARBOOK

School pictures are taken at Montvale Elementary as a service to parents and students. School pictures also provide a fundraising opportunity for our school. All students will have their pictures taken, but purchasing the pictures is optional. Individual pictures will be taken in the fall; individual and whole-class pictures will be taken in the spring. Yearbooks are also provided as a service. Yearbooks will be ordered for students who choose to purchase one.

PTA

Please contact MontvaleelementaryPTA@gmail.com if you are interested in joining the PTA. There will be opportunities to sign up at various school events, including Back to School Night.

PROPERTY (PERSONAL)

Large sums of money, electronic/mechanical equipment, toys, cards, or other personal items not relating to classroom activities should not be brought on the bus or to school. Cell phone usage is not permitted during the instructional day. Students who possess cell phones must place them in their locker or book bag with the phone turned off during the school day. There will be no trading or selling of items between students. Toys should only be brought when requested by the teacher for special events. Toy weapons of any kind **SHOULD NOT** be brought to school. If necessary, school personnel will retrieve any item they deem necessary and submit the item to the office for parent pickup. The school assumes no liability for lost, damaged, or stolen items.

MONTVALE RECREATION ASSOCIATION

The Montvale Recreation Association was formed to provide after-school recreational activities for the Montvale community. The school provides the site and supports (but does not sponsor) the activities. The school has no responsibility for any actions of the recreation association. Volunteers and coaches are always welcome to work with the association. Students are not allowed on school grounds without adult supervision at all times, including students who are not participating in a recreational sport but who come to watch them.

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

Proof of residency is required for initial student enrollment. Virginia law permits only students who are residents of Bedford County to enroll and attend on a tuition-free basis. A parent or guardian can be charged with a Class 4 misdemeanor for knowingly making a false statement concerning the residency of a child. All students attending BCPS must live with a parent or legal guardian residing in Bedford County or must reside with a parent or legal guardian who owns property in the county. (*Section 22.1-264.1 Code of Virginia*)

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

Students have a responsibility:

- to respect the rights of their fellow students and to follow the regulations and policies established by school authorities.
- to treat teachers and other school employees with respect and to obey their directives.
- to join with other members of the school community to establish a climate for learning that will permit every student to achieve his/her maximum potential.

RIGHT TO REQUEST INFORMATION:

On December 10, 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law. Section 1112(e)(1)(A) states that as a parent of a student in Montvale Elementary School, receiving Title I funds, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers instructing your child. Federal law requires the school division to provide you with this information in a timely manner if you request it. Specifically, you have the right to request the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers: • Whether the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction. • Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status because of special circumstances. • Whether the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification or degree he/she received • Whether paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if so, their qualifications. If you would like to receive any of this information, please contact Kevin Spaulding, Principal, either by phone at 540-947-2241, or in writing at kspaulding@bedford.k12.va.us

RIGHTS OF STUDENTS

Each student shall be entitled to participate in educational opportunities and school activities for which the student is qualified without discrimination because of sex, race, color, national origin, or religion. Students have a right to be treated as individuals and to expect consistent and just decisions from school employees.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

We are proud of our school! We ask that all students, staff, and visitors help us maintain a safe and clean building and grounds at all times.

SCHOOL QUALITY PROFILE

The Virginia Department of Education publishes a School Quality Profile for every public school in the Commonwealth. This profile provides families and the community with important information about a school, including academic performance, student growth, graduation rates, attendance, and other indicators of school quality. School Quality Profiles are updated annually and are available on the Virginia Department of Education website. [Here is a direct link to our School Quality Profile.](#)

SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY INFORMATION

Pursuant to Virginia Code §[22.1-79.3](#), notice is given that information regarding sex offenders is available in the Sex Offender and Crimes Against Minors Registry and may be accessed on the Internet at <http://sex-offender.vsp.virginia.gov/sor/>.

STATE TESTING PROGRAMS

Students in grades 3 through 5 will participate in Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) tests for that grade. **These tests are very important in determining the success of school programs and individual student progress.** Test results become a part of the student's permanent record and are used as a consideration in promotion or retention of the student and in asking the student to attend extra instruction after school or during the summer. Parents should work closely with the teachers in order to ascertain that their child is mastering grade level SOL. Parents may refer to the Virginia Department of Education website for additional information about the Standards of Learning.

The Virginia Language and Literacy Screening System (VALLSS) is administered to students in kindergarten through third grade, as required by the Virginia Department of Education. This assessment screens students' early language and literacy skills to help identify strengths and areas where additional instructional support may be needed.

Second graders will take the Stanford assessment in the spring. This is an achievement test based on national norms that compares our students to those across the country. Second graders also take the OLSAT (a test of cognitive ability) in the spring.

STUDENT RECORDS

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (eligible students) certain rights with respect to the student's scholastic records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's scholastic records within 45 days of the day the school division receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal or his/her designee a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will arrange for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's scholastic records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy under FERPA.

§ Parents or eligible students may ask Bedford County Public Schools to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) contained in the student's education record, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

§ FERPA permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school division as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official includes a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

§ Upon request, the school will disclose scholastic records without consent of the parent/guardian or other person having control or charge of the student, to officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. Whenever a student transfers from Bedford County Public Schools, a copy of the scholastic record, including disciplinary records will be transferred to the school division the students transfers to upon request from the receiving school division. Disciplinary records include school records related to disciplinary action taken against a student for violating School Board rules or policies on school property or at school-sponsored events.

§ Reference Bedford County Public Schools Policy JO – Student Records for additional exceptions that FERPA authorizes disclosure of personally identifiable information without consent.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U. S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school division to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U. S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, SW

Washington, D. C. 20202

TEACHER REQUESTS

Class placements are primarily based on the academic needs of the students. A great deal of thought and time is devoted to making appropriate class placements. Parent requests for specific teachers will be given consideration. The principal reserves the right to make the final decision based on the benefit of the child and the school. Special information such as if a child needs to be separated from another student or if a child is related to a teacher may be submitted to the principal in writing *by the last day of school*.

TELEPHONE

The office telephone is for school business. Students are allowed to use it **only** when absolutely necessary and with a written note from their teacher or approval from the principal.

TEXTBOOKS

The school supplies hard copies and/or electronic copies of textbooks for students at no charge to the parents. Students may also bring home novels, trade books, and CDs that are the property of the school. If an item is damaged or lost, we will charge the student the replacement cost. Many of the small individual books used in lower grades can only be purchased in sets. They are costly to replace, so please stress responsibility to your child in taking care of these items. We appreciate your help in maintaining appropriate care of all school materials.

VISITORS

Visitors must sign-in on the computer in the main office by scanning their state-issued identification card/driver's license. They must wear a visitor's badge at all times while on the premises. This is necessary for the security and safety of our students. Visitors should enter the building through the front entrance. Visitors may park in any of the parking lots. **Please do not park in the bus loop at the front of the school at any time during the day.**

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are a wonderful asset to the school and can make a great impact on the quality of education for children. Parents, grandparents, and other community members are invited to help with special school activities as well as day-to-day activities based on teacher needs. Parents that work during the school day may volunteer to make instructional materials, help teachers with parties, help with PTA, etc. Volunteers should arrange with teachers or school staff to volunteer at a designated time and date. We would like to encourage all parents to volunteer in some manner. All volunteers will need to sign a BCPS Volunteer Agreement. Volunteers who will be working directly with students without teacher supervision will need to go through processing procedures, including a background check, through the Human Resource Department.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

Bedford County Public Schools
310 South Bridge Street
PO Box 748
Bedford, VA 24523

Phone# 540-586-1045
Fax# 540-586-7703

Montvale Elementary School Board Member:

Dr. Kurt Hubach

Phone: 540-613-2547

Email: kurt.hubach@bedford.k12.va.us

Bedford County Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in its programs, activities, or employment practices, as required by Title VI, Title IX and Section 504.

The person responsible for the coordination of the school division efforts to meet its obligations under Section 504 and Title IX and their implementing regulations is:

Mr. Toby Ackerman
540-586-1045 ex. 10273