



## ***Holly Ridge Elementary School***

### ***2023-2024 Parent/Student Handbook***

*900 Holly Springs Rd.  
Holly Springs, NC 27540  
Phone: (919) 577-1300  
<http://hollyridgees.wcpss.net>*

### **WELCOME TO HOLLY RIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Dear Parents,

We have put together a handbook to provide answers to questions about Holly Ridge Elementary and to establish common procedures for all of us to use. Although we have tried to include as much information as possible, if you have additional questions, please contact your child's teacher or our office. We hope this information will be helpful. Please keep it available for reference throughout the school year.

#### **VISION STATEMENT**

Holly Ridge Elementary School is a welcoming and safe learning community that recognizes the uniqueness of students and empowers them to become creative and critical thinkers, problem solvers, and 21st century learners who can communicate and collaborate with others.

#### **OFFICE STAFF:**

Principal: Joy Gorman  
Assistant Principal: Kristy Smith  
Secretary/Bookkeeper: Gracia Gartland  
Student Info. Data Manager: Teresa Gomez  
Receptionist: Stacy Waldron  
Phone Number: (919) 577-1300  
Fax Number: (919) 670-4361

#### **SCHOOL HOURS**

The school day starts at 9:15 and ends at 3:45. Students may go to their classrooms or breakfast at 8:45. Students arriving before 8:45 **must** be enrolled in the Before Care Program. We will begin unloading buses and cars in the carpool line at 8:45. No student may enter the building before 8:45 unless they are enrolled in the Before Care Program. **If a child cannot get to class by the 9:15 bell, the student must be signed in the office by a parent.** In the afternoon, students who ride buses are dismissed when their bus has been called. Students who carpool and walk home (carpool and walker tags can be obtained from the office) will be dismissed at 3:45. Carpool students should be picked up no later than 4:00.

**Parents may not park in the Middle School parking lot to pick up their children. Students may not be signed out after 3:15. For the safety of the students and supervisory issues, these policies will be strictly enforced.**

## **VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION**

Wake County Board Policy requires all new volunteer applicants for the current school year to register and have an approved criminal record check prior to engaging in volunteer work. The volunteer system will be open daily for registration beginning July 1st. **All continuing volunteers**, approved for the previous school year, **MUST** reactivate as a volunteer **no later than Oct. 31 of the current school year.**

If you plan to chaperone on a field trip, you **MUST** have volunteer clearance. Make sure to choose **Holly Ridge Elementary** as one of the schools you wish to be approved for volunteer clearance.

## **TOBACCO FREE**

Wake County Public School has made the school system 100 percent tobacco free- this includes e-cigs and vaping. The policy prohibits the use or display of any tobacco product by any person in the following settings: in school buildings, in school facilities, on school campuses, and any other school property owned, operated, or contracted for by the school system. This prohibits persons from smoking in their cars on school system property (e.g. carpool lines, after school events).

## **LOST AND FOUND, VALUABLES AT SCHOOL**

The lost and found for clothing and lunch boxes is located in the main hallway and outside on the pre-K fence. Clothing and personal items should have **identification on the inside**. Money and eyeglasses will be kept in the office. **Unclaimed items will be donated to a local charity monthly**. Please do not allow students to bring large sums of money, valuable items (i.e. cell phones), toys, games, cards etc. to school. For security reasons, valuable items will be held in the office until parents can collect them. The school is not responsible for items that are misplaced, missing, or stolen.

## **CARE AND USE OF LIBRARY BOOKS, TEXTBOOKS, and CHROMEBOOKS**

Care should be taken with calculators, Chromebooks, library and text books so that all students benefit from their use. In the event that a calculator, Chromebook, library or textbook is lost or damaged, the student will be charged a fee for the replacement of the materials.

## **SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### ***When your child needs to miss school...***

Please send a note with your child on the day s/he returns explaining the reason for the absence. An absence may be excused **in advance** for educational reasons. The parent must complete form #1710, Request for Excused Absence for Educational Reasons. By signing the form, the parent assures the school that the absence **meets the requirements of the law for an excused absence.**

### ***Late to school...***

Each minute of the school day is important to the learning process. Help us get your child off to a good start by being on time. However, **if a student arrives to class after 9:15 a.m. they are considered late.** A parent or guardian must come with the student to the office to sign them in. If a student arrives to class after **12:30 p.m.** they are considered absent for the day. If a student is in class and is checked out **before 12:30 p.m.**, they are considered absent for the day.

## **DISMISSAL**

School is dismissed at 3:45. Carefully planned safety procedures have been established for dismissal. **For security reasons, students are not dismissed from the classroom. Scan the QR code, fill out the form, show your ID, and the office staff will call your child to the office for dismissal. Due to the hectic nature of the end of the day, WE WILL NOT DISMISS STUDENTS BETWEEN 3:15 AND 3:45.** This is valuable instructional time the teacher uses to give student's directions for homework and/or other important information. If you need to check out your child early, do so before 3:15.

There are only four ways a student arrives home: by bus, car, bike, or walking. If you drive to school to pick up your child, you must go through the carpool line. Our policy does not support parents parking and coming into the office to pick up a child. Parents may not park in the Middle School parking lot and walk over to the Elementary Campus to pick up their children. For safety and security reasons, this procedure will be strictly enforced by Holly Ridge Elementary and Holly Ridge Middle Schools. Only those students who live in the "walk only zone" may be dismissed as a front or back walker. Addresses will be verified. Parents need to complete registration forms for students, who arrive by car, bicycle, or who walk so that we may be assured the students leave with an approved adult.

## **PARENT VOLUNTEERS/CUSTODY AGREEMENTS/GUEST SPEAKERS**

All visitors to the school must enter the front doors of the school and check in at the office before going into other parts of the building. You will be given a badge to wear on campus for identification. Please remember to sign out before departure. It is important that we know who is on campus. Staff members are directed to stop anyone not wearing identification and ask them to return to the office for a visitor badge. The back door to the building is to be used by Wake County Employees only. This is a safety precaution and we would appreciate your cooperation.

If you wish to volunteer in your child's classroom, please make arrangements with the teacher prior to your visit and have pre-approved Wake County Volunteer Clearance. Please understand that volunteering in the classroom is not the time for a teacher conference. Keep in mind that unannounced visits during the school day take instructional time from your child and others. Teachers who do not have a parent appointment scheduled, will not meet with parents during the instructional day. If you have an urgent situation, please come to the office and we will assist you.

Legal orders regarding custody and visitation are kept on file in the school office. ***However, it is not the responsibility of the school staff to enforce visitation agreements.*** The family member who has visitation rights for a given weekend or period of time needs to make the necessary arrangements for that visit without school personnel involvement.

If a teacher wishes to invite a guest speaker, other than one from the WCPSS approved community resource list, the teacher must complete and submit the Guest Speaker Request Form. In addition, teachers and guest speakers must review and sign the Agreement and Guidelines for Guest Speakers. Some of the conditions are as follows: a legitimate and reasonable connection between the adopted curriculum and the guest's presentation must be documented; materials & presentations must not denigrate any culture, race, gender, national origin, or religion. Proselytizing is not permitted.

## **GUIDELINES FOR RELEASE OF STUDENTS**

Students may only be released to parents and to those persons who have been approved by the parents and have signed the locator card that is kept in the office. ***If there is no court order or separation agreement concerning custody of the child filed at the school, either parent (or legal guardian) has the same right to see the child at school or have the child released to him/her at the end of the school day.*** If you need to take your child out of school during the school day, you must sign them out from the office. We cannot permit students to leave school during the day unless a parent or a parent's official designee accompanies them. If you plan to have someone else pick up your child, please send a note. For security reasons, we will be checking identification of all individuals checking out children.

## **BEFORE / AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

The Kraft Family YMCA offers before and after school programs on-site at Holly Ridge Elementary School. For more information about the program visit [ymcatriangle.org/locations/kraft-family-YMCA](http://ymcatriangle.org/locations/kraft-family-YMCA).

## **INFORMATION CHANGES FOR STUDENTS**

In case of emergency we must have current addresses, telephone numbers, and emergency contacts for all students during the year. Any changes should be sent to the office. If you change your residence, we will need for you to bring a current proof of residence (gas bill, electric bill, water bill, purchase/lease agreement) to the office. A phone bill is not considered proof of residence.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES**

### ***Becoming sick at school...***

If your child becomes sick at school, we will take his/her temperature and contact you. Wake County School's policy requires that a child with a fever of 100.4 degrees or more must go home. Before returning to school, the child must be fever free, without the aid of medicines, for a full 24 hours. If a child has vomited, the parent will automatically be called to pick up the child from school. If a child is suspected of having ringworm, head lice, or an undiagnosed rash, the parent must pick up the child immediately. Students must have a doctor's note and/or proof of treatment in order to return to school.

### ***About medications...***

All medications must be in the original container with the pharmacy label. Medication is dispensed and recorded in the office. All medications require Form 1702 (available at the school and doctor's offices) to be completed and appropriately signed. No over-the-counter medications (cough drops, aspirin, etc...) may be given without a physician's order. Also, office staff may not put anything (antiseptics, alcohol, etc...) on scrapes or cuts. ***Parents, not children, should transport medication to and from school. All medication must be delivered to the office and signed in by the parent.***

### ***If your child is injured...***

If your child is injured at school, we will administer first aid and will contact you concerning an injury more serious than a minor abrasion. If, in our judgment, an injury requires immediate medical attention, we will call 911 for emergency assistance and then will immediately contact a parent at home or work. If your child needs to be transported to a hospital, an adult staff member will accompany him/her if you have not yet arrived at school.

**PLEASE BE CERTAIN THAT YOUR CHILD HAS SEVERAL LOCAL EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS ON FILE WITH THE OFFICE.**

## **WHAT'S COOKING IN THE HOLLY RIDGE CAFETERIA**

	<u>One Day</u>	<u>Five Days</u>	<u>Twenty Days</u>
Student Breakfast*			
Reduced price	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 0.00
Full Price	\$1.50	\$7.50	\$30.00
Student Lunch**			
Reduced Price	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 0.00
Full Price	\$3.25	\$16.25	\$65.00
Adult Breakfast	A la carte		
Adult Lunch	A la carte		

\*includes milk & fruit or juice

\*\*includes milk

With a MySchoolBucks account paying for school meals is easy. Go to [www.MySchoolBucks.com](http://www.MySchoolBucks.com) or call 855-832-5226 to enroll. You will need your child's NCWISE ID number to enroll. Once your account is established, you may: securely deposit funds in your child's account, check balances, and set spending limits. Parents are always welcome to join their children for lunch. If you wish to eat with your child on the outside picnic table, please notify a cafeteria supervisor. **You may not take other students with you to the outside table or guest table.** Please keep in mind that your child should be able to open the food containers and they should not require heating.

**Per Wake County nutrition guidelines, if a child does not have lunch money, he/she will be provided fruits, vegetables, and water for the day.** As a reminder, your child will be notified that additional money is needed for his/her lunch account.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### ***Buses...***

Safety for all students is our utmost concern. If your child is to go home a different way than he/she normally does, a note must be sent to the teacher stating the change. Without written permission, we will send your child home the normal way. Changes in bus transportation cannot be arranged to accommodate after school play dates. For more bus transportation information visit [www.wcpss.net/parents/transportation](http://www.wcpss.net/parents/transportation) or call 919/805-3030. If your child misses their bus a designated adult must pick them up as soon as possible.

**The school cannot be responsible for notifying children of changes in transportation home; therefore, make afternoon arrangements in the morning, inform your child, and send in a note with the requested change.** Students who carpool and are riding home with someone else should bring a note to the teacher and/or office stating with whom they are riding. Students who are walking home with another child will need a note. *The other child should also bring a note confirming the change. Basically, if a student is going home in any way that is different from the norm, a note is necessary and must be approved by an administrator.*

### ***Carpool...***

Please remember to use precautions in the carpool lane. The speed limit is 10 MPH and we discourage the use of cell phones while driving through the carpool line. Families who plan to drive their child at anytime during the year must register in the office for a carpool tag. This tag must be displayed when the car comes through the carpool line. The tag helps staff identify students and is a security precaution. **We ask that you always drop children off and pick them up in the supervised carpool lane.** It is dangerous to have children cross the parking lot during carpool; therefore, drop off the child first in carpool, then park your car if you are coming into the building for meetings or to volunteer. Our staff will make sure that your child enters the building and you can meet him/her in the lobby or classroom. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE, WILL WE ALLOW PARENTS TO ENTER THE BUILDING DURING CARPOOL TO SIGN OUT STUDENTS AT DISMISSAL TIME.** You will be instructed to remain in your vehicle with the carpool tag displayed and we will bring your child to the vehicle. This is an important component to our safety policy and procedure.

The Middle School has requested that parents NOT park in their parking lot and walk over to the elementary school to pick up their students at dismissal. This will be enforced by both administrations, as well as Wake County Security.

## **BUS DISCIPLINE**

Parents are requested to remind children of appropriate bus behavior. Students should understand that riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. The following are examples of behavior which will result in a discipline report to an administrator: eating or drinking on the bus, placing a body part out of a window, not remaining seated, pushing or crowding when entering the bus, playing, throwing objects, failure to observe safety rules and regulations, using profane or abusive language, smoking, possessing alcoholic beverages, bringing weapons on the bus, and vandalizing or tampering with bus equipment. Repeated offenses could result in your child being suspended from the bus for the remainder of the school year. Contact the assistant principal with concerns regarding bus safety issues.

## **STUDENT PARTIES/BIRTHDAY PARTIES**

Wake County Policy states: "All school employees shall discourage and decline the giving of parties by anyone during school hours for students." Goody bags, balloons, and flowers are not permitted at school. Teachers cannot send birthday invitations home in students' backpacks. Plan to mail birthday invitations.

## **FOOD FOR LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

HRES complies with Wake County Board Policy regarding the nutrition guidelines for all food and beverages available on school campuses during the school day. Teachers often plan learning experiences that involve food and families are occasionally asked to send in items that support these classroom efforts. Our policy regarding food brought in for consumption by students or their families is that the food must meet the "high nutritional guidelines" mandated by the Wake County School Board. In addition, **all food brought into the school must be purchased fully cooked from a retail store with a commercial cooking license (i.e. grocery store, restaurant). Our county guidelines prohibit us from accepting homemade goods.**

## **PARENT COMMUNICATION**

A student folder containing some student work will be sent home weekly. Parents should review the weekly progress of the child, keep the contents, then sign, if required by the teacher, and return the folder so teachers will know the parent is aware of their child's progress. PTA information and classroom newsletters will also be sent through weekly folders.

Appropriate communication between the school and home is essential for the success of all our children. Teachers will schedule a minimum of two conferences per year: However, parents may request a conference at any time. Virtual conferences are also appropriate as well as home visits when transportation is a problem.

## **WEAPONS AND DANGEROUS INSTRUMENTS**

Occasionally at the elementary level, we have students bring items that are not appropriate for show and tell. **Help us by checking your child's book bag to make sure the items are appropriate for school.** Below is Wake County Board Policy listing dangerous instruments or weapons:

"No student, pre-kindergarten-12, shall possess, handle, or transmit any weapon or facsimile of a weapon, dangerous instrument/substance or other object that can reasonably be considered or used as a weapon or dangerous instrument/substance. This does not apply to any student who finds a weapon or dangerous instrument/substance on school property or receives it from another person on school property and who immediately reports the weapon or dangerous instrument/substance to school or law enforcement authorities.". Definitions include but are not limited to: any firearm, BB gun, stun gun, sling shot, mace/pepper spray, air rifle, air pistol, fireworks, sharp-pointed or edged instrument, unaltered nail files and clips.

"Any student in grades K-12 shall be suspended for 365 calendar days for bringing a firearm or destructive device onto school property or to a school-sponsored event off school property, or for possessing a firearm or destructive device on school property or at a school-sponsored event off school property. School property includes any property owned, used or leased by the Board of Education, including school buses, other vehicles and school bus stops. Principals are required to refer to the law enforcement system any student who brings a firearm or weapon to school."

## **DRESS CODE**

Students are expected to adhere to standards of dress and appearance that are compatible with an effective learning environment. Presenting a bodily appearance or wearing clothing which is disruptive, provocative, revealing, profane, vulgar, offensive or obscene, or which endangers the health and safety of the student or others is prohibited.

To promote these goals, students may not wear or carry clothing, jewelry, book bags, or other personal articles that:

- Depict profanity, vulgarity, obscenity, or violence;
- Promote the use or abuse of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs;
- Are prohibited under Policy 4309 III-2 (Gang and Gang Related Activity) or any other provision of the Code of Student Conduct;
- Threaten the health or safety of staff or students; or
- Are reasonably likely to create a substantial disruption of the educational process or operations of the school.

## **THREATS/HAZING**

**Threat/False Threat** - No student shall make any threat through written or verbal language, sign, or act which conveys a serious expression of intent to cause harm or violence. **Hazing** - Hazing is prohibited. No group or individual shall require a student to wear abnormal dress, play abusive or ridiculous tricks on him/her, frighten, scold, beat, harass, or subject him/her to personal indignity.

## **HARASSMENT/BULLYING**

The Wake County Board of Education prohibits harassing or bullying behavior. Harassment and bullying include, but are not limited to, behavior described above that is reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic or motivated by an individual's association with a person who has or is perceived to have a differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, academic status, level of engagement or isolation, transgender or gender identity, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability. Examples of behavior that may constitute bullying or harassment include, but are not limited to, verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, epithets, derogatory comments or slurs, lewd propositions, extortion of money or possessions, implied or stated threats, assault, impeding or blocking movement, offensive touching, and visual insults such as derogatory posters or cartoons. A student's discomfort with classroom topics, classroom discussion, or classroom management is not, by itself, harassment or bullying. is any repeated, systematic pattern of gestures or written, electronic, or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication on school property; at any school function; on a school bus; or as otherwise stated in Board Policy 1710/4021/7230. Student Code of conduct, and that places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property or creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a students' educational performance, opportunities, or benefits. A hostile environment means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

## **SCHOOL CONDUCT**

Students at Holly Ridge Elementary are expected to conduct themselves in a manner which allows learning to take place and protects the physical safety of everyone. All students are expected to demonstrate acceptable, age appropriate behavior patterns.

Positive Behavior Support (PBIS) is a Wake County initiative that Holly Ridge Elementary is implementing across all areas of the school through the LABS approach:

- L Listen and Follow Directions**
- A Act Respectfully**
- B Behave Responsibly**
- S Succeed**

LABS support the Holly Ridge animal mascot while representing the behavior model that the school will apply consistently at all grade levels. The purpose is to empower teachers and other adults with the skills needed to improve overall classroom and school climate in a positive way by:

- Teaching and modeling positive behavior
- Building quality relationships with students
- Creating an effective and productive learning environment

At Holly Ridge we believe that most inappropriate behavior can be avoided by establishing a strong rapport, providing a need-fulfilling environment, and modeling expectations. Each classroom establishes classroom expectations/rules at the beginning of the year. When behavior is exhibited that violates these expectations, intervention strategies that focus on the behavior are used. Logical consequences are established prior to the misbehavior as part of the classroom expectations.

It is also possible, even at an elementary level, for some behaviors to result in an out of school suspension. These behaviors and possible actions are outlined in the "Code of Student Conduct" which is located in the Wake County Public School System Parent Handbook. Parents/guardians and students should thoroughly familiarize themselves with this document.