

Dr. Casey Cutter
Principal

Mrs. Misty Jenkins
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BLUE GRASS
ELEMENTARY

PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

2024-2025



**A School Of Pure
Imagination**

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Dear Blue Grass Parents,

Mrs. Jenkins and I want to welcome you to the 2024-2025 school year. We truly believe Blue Grass is the best elementary school in Knox County. We are honored to partner with our Blue Grass staff, parents, and community to help our eagles continue to reach extraordinary heights!

We strongly believe that an exceptional school starts with a great culture. To create an exemplary school, we must put relationships with our students, staff, and parents first. We want students to be so excited that they run (not walk) to the school in the morning! When you walk in the building, we hope you feel an air of excitement from students and staff too! We want to work collaboratively and creatively to help meet students' social and emotional needs. Caring for our students, and building strong relationships with them, will allow us to successfully continue to push our students to meet our high academic expectations. We also believe our most important responsibility as elementary educators is to ensure Blue Grass students leave with exceptional literacy skills and a life-long love for reading.

Mrs. Jenkins and I have an open door policy and encourage you to visit the school or call us if you ever have any questions, praises, or concerns. It's going to be an amazing school year and we are excited to continue on our journey with our staff, students, and parents to become THE best elementary school in Tennessee!

Sincerely,

Dr. Cutter & Mrs. Jenkins

2024-2025 Knox County Schools Calendar

- **August 1 (Thursday)** First Day for Teachers - In-service (School-based)
- **August 2 (Friday)** In-service Day (PreK - 12 System-wide)
- **August 5 (Monday)** Administrative Day (Teacher Workday)
- **August 6 (Tuesday)** In-service Day (1/2 day–School-based); Administrative Day (1/2 day–Teacher Workday); Orientation for 6th and 9th graders
- **August 7 (Wednesday)** Administrative Day (Teacher Workday)
- **August 8 (Wednesday)** First Day for Students (1/2 day for students)
- **August 14 (Wednesday)** Early Release Day for Students
- **September 2 (Monday)** Labor Day – Holiday
- **September 9 (Monday)** End 4 1/2 Grading Period
- **September 17 (Tuesday)** Constitution Day- Knox County Schools Open
- **September 18 (Wednesday)** Early Release Day for Students
- **October 4 (Friday)** End First 9-weeks Grading Period
- **October 7-11 (Monday-Friday)** Fall Break
- **November 5 (Tuesday)** In-service Day (PreK-12 System-wide)(Student Holiday)
- **November 13 (Wednesday)** End 4 1/2 Grading Period
- **November 20 (Wednesday)** Early Release Day for students
- **November 27-29 (Wednesday-Friday)** Thanksgiving Holidays
- **December 20 (Friday)** 1/2 day for Students; End Second 9-weeks Grading Period; End First Semester
- **December 23-January 2** Winter Holidays
- **January 3 (Friday)** In-service Day (1/2 day–School-based); Administrative Day (1/2 day–Teacher Workday); (Student Holiday)
- **January 6 (Monday)** First Day for Students after Winter Holidays
- **January 20 (Monday)** Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – Holiday
- **January 22 (Wednesday)** Early Release Day for Students
- **February 5 (Wednesday)** End 4 1/2 Grading Period
- **February 12 (Wednesday)** Early Release Day for Students
- **February 17 (Monday)** In-service Day (Pre-K-12 System-wide)
- **March 10 (Monday)** End Third 9-weeks Grading Period (44 days)
- **March 17-21 (Monday-Friday)** Spring Break
- **March 26 (Wednesday)** Early Release Day for Students
- **April 17 (Friday)** End 4 1/2 Grading Period
- **April 18- (Friday)** Holiday (KCS Closed)
- **April 21 (Monday)** Systemwide In-Service Day (School-based)
- **May 22 (Thursday)** Last Day for Students (1/2 day for students); End Fourth 9-weeks Grading Period ; End Second Semester
- **May 23 (Friday)** Administrative Day (Teacher Workday) – Last Day for Teachers

Blue Grass Staff 2024-2025

Kindergarten Teachers

Tiffany Carpenter

Laura Devaney

Jami Holden

Brittany Kosbab

Macy Mitchell

Christine Waugh

First Grade Teachers

Amy Bodie

Jessica Brady

Michelle Hanks

Laura Morgan

Dawn Sobieralski

Third Grade Teachers

Cobi Genna

Hillary Hudson

Carrie Johnson

Marta McBride

Cheryl Triko

Fourth Grade Teachers

Kate Altshuler

Kelly Baker

Matthew Pickwell

Sydney Russell

Brenna Wilson

Encore Teachers

Elizabeth Cross, PE

Amy Maxwell, Technology

Lori Moss, STEM

Samantha Peters, Art

Emerson Silvestri, Library

Wendy Skinner, Music

Educational Assistants

Mary Beth Boyd, Resource

Jennifer Fischer

Sherri Green

Nicole Key

Geraldine LaBanca, PAC/Sec.

Danyel Ledford, Resource

Terri Lethco

Christie Loveday, Resource

Amanda Mitchell, Resource

Jill Mize, Resource

Susan Snyder

Safety and Security

Sarah Boone, KCS Officer

Todd Jackson, Knox Deputy

Support Staff

Kelly Thompson, School Psych.

Amy Bashford, PT

Emma Newton, OT

Beth Morgenegg, Speech/Lg.

Anthony Reda, Counselor

Lacey Brannon, School Nurse

Office Staff

Pam Carr, Bookkeeper

Casey Cutter, Principal

Liana Gibson, Instr. Coach

Stephanie Hauke, Secretary

Misty Jenkins, AP

Custodians

Jacki Cook

Damien White

Cafeteria Staff

Glorife Malone

Trisha Mendoza, Manager

Dawn Louise San Pedro

Nadia Tahiri

Special Education Teachers

Kelly Kirby

Pier Wallace

Fifth Grade Teachers

Lacy Adorante

Grace Guyer

Katlyn Radcliffe

Jake Sand

Julie Stillwell

Second Grade Teachers

Micaela Dodge

Meghan Frederick

Jessica Roberts

Elyse Wehking

Holly Wells

School Theme 2024-2025



Blue Grass' theme this year is a Willy Wonka Theme with the tagline,
"A School Of Pure Imagination."

Official School Logo



Mission, Vision & Core Values



Blue Grass Elementary

MISSION, *Vision, &* CORE VALUES

Mission

Blue Grass develops and nurtures well-rounded, lifelong learners, who will leave their unique footprints on the world by positively contributing to their community.

Vision

We strive to become a leading school in the nation that develops students into innovative, productive citizens who embrace challenges by using problem-solving and thinking skills in order to achieve success.

Core Values

At Blue Grass We Value:

- Accountability
 - We are responsible for ourselves and how our choices affect ourselves and others
 - We accept that our choices have consequences
 - We will do the right thing even if no one is watching
- Citizenship
 - We will be respectful to ourselves, others, and our surroundings.
- Compassion
 - We will treat others with kindness
 - We will consider the feelings and perspectives of others through our actions and words
- Growth & Grit
 - We will use what we learned yesterday to build a better tomorrow
 - We will persevere through challenges with a growth mindset



School Entrance Requirements

Children must be five years of age by August 15th in order to be eligible for Kindergarten.

Children must have completed a year of accredited Kindergarten, to be eligible for First Grade.

Before any child may enter school in Knox County, the school office must receive an official record of the new TN Certificate of Immunizations (April 2010), including the dates of all required shots, combined with the record of a medical examination by a licensed physician. This information must be recorded on the official form required by the State of Tennessee, and a licensed physician must sign the form.

A certified photocopied birth certificate verifying date of birth must be provided at the time of registration. Student must also provide Social Security numbers and a copy of the Social Security card.

All students must reside within the Blue Grass zone and proof of residence (original utility bill) must be provided at the time of registration. Due to our growing enrollment and facility capacity, it is important that all students reside in the Blue Grass zone.

Emergency Cards

Emergency care cards are urgently needed when a child becomes ill or is injured at school. Please provide the school with accurate emergency information and

report changes promptly. Correct home and work telephone numbers are essential. The main purpose of this card is to help us locate a parent or guardian in the event of illness or emergency involving your child. It is very important that we are able to locate you at any time. Please list phone numbers of neighbors who will know where you are for emergency calls and who may pick up your child when he/she feels ill and you are not at home. In special cases, you may wish to call and give the school secretary a number where you can be reached for the day. Please note any allergies or other serious medical conditions your child has so we can be aware and recognize the symptoms.

After School Care

The YMCA provides after school care beginning at 2:45 PM on site. During in-service days, the YMCA will not provide services at the Blue Grass. For more information contact Blue Grass YMCA at (865) 560-6617. A list of other daycares that pick up at Blue Grass is available in the school office.

Animals

No live animals may be brought to school without prior consent of the teacher and the principal.

Alternate Dismissal Procedures

Any time a student goes home in a different manner than specified on his/her emergency card, the student must have a written note from the parent/guardian. This note will be confirmed by the office staff (i.e. a student going home with another student or riding the bus to a different location).

Arrangements should be made in advance. **Changes in transportation plan or early dismissal request must be made before 2:15 p.m.** as students will be traveling to special areas and in the process of ending their day.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is a major factor in determining the academic success of students. In fact, a student's attendance is one of the greatest predictors of future academic success. Arriving on time and remaining the entire school day, provides students with full academic instruction. Regular attendance for the full school day (7:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.) is essential for a student to have a successful school year. Also, please refrain from scheduling vacations during the school year. Fall Break, Winter Break, & Spring Break are provided to give you and your family the downtime you need. Planning vacations during the school year negatively impacts your students' academic progression in many ways, so we appreciate your cooperation in this area.

Parents have both a legal obligation and a moral responsibility to see that their children are present every day that school is in session. On November 16, 2001 Knox County Juvenile Court Judge Carey E. Garrett issued a court order requiring parents to be notified when their child has been chronically absent. This is in conjunction with T.C.A. Section 49-6-3007 requiring school systems to notify parents of students absent 5 or more **unexcused** days from school. His order stated that **parents will be held directly responsible for the unexcused absences of their children.** His decision requires schools to report to Knox County Schools Central Office all absences as either excused or unexcused.

Blue Grass's chronic absenteeism rate improved immensely last year, but still has room for improvement. Please help us this school year in ensuring that your student has excellent attendance.

When a student is absent, it will be recorded into our computer as an unexcused absence. **It is the parent's responsibility to provide appropriate documentation regarding these absences to the teacher within five days of returning to school.** Remember, even if you call the school office to explain an absence for an illness, a **written note is always required for an excused absence. Telephone calls will not substitute for a written note.** After five unexcused absences, you will receive a letter from Knox County Schools. If the child reaches ten unexcused absences, you may be summoned to appear in court. Please understand that Knox County Schools Central Office will generate all letters from the computer absentee report that each school submits daily. The school does not "turn in" names at the school level. The purpose of the judge's decision is to emphasize the importance of compulsory school attendance and to assure that students and parents comply with the state law.

Knox County Board of Education policy allows student absences to be excused for such reasons as: **personal illness, illness in the family, death in the family, recognized religious holidays of the student's faith, and verifiable family emergencies.** The Knox County Board of Education requires that written excuses indicating the date and reason for an absence, be signed by the parent or guardian of the child, and be given to the teacher within five (5) days of returning to school. Students who have been absent a total of five (5) days

without an adequate excuse must be reported to the attendance and social services department. Any absences not complying with Knox County Schools policy will be considered unexcused.

Although illness is an excused absence, Knox County elementary school guidelines require a statement from a medical provider for illness beyond ten (10) days per school year. Parents can write a note for up to ten absences before requiring a medical statement.

In order for a student to be counted present, a student must be in attendance at least three (3) hours and fifteen (15) minutes per day (Past 11:15 PM). If a student is not present for these minimum times, he or she must be counted absent for the full school day.

Authorization for News Media Contact and Release to Publish

Occasionally we have the opportunity to highlight some of our programs and students through special coverage by news media. We would also like to sometimes include pictures of students on our website or school Twitter/Facebook/Instagram accounts (students' names will never be attached to the pictures on the website/social media). A release/authorization will be sent home the first week of school for your child to participate in any media coverage. Please check the appropriate space, sign the form, date it, and return it to school. Please call the school office if you have any questions. Thank you for your assistance.

Behavior Expectations

We teach our students to follow the school's Blue Grass Behavior Expectations at all times.

 BLUE GRASS ELEMENTARY BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS				
	HALLS	BATHROOM	PLAYGROUND	CAFETERIA
Be Respectful	• Zero voices • Keep hands, feet, & objects to self • Maintain personal space	• Zero voices • Allow for privacy	• Share equipment • Play with everyone • Use kind words to express yourself	• Use inside voices • Use kind words to express yourself • Use good manners
Be Responsible	• Take direct route to destination • Be prepared	• Use water & supplies wisely • Return promptly • Keep restroom clean	• Line up at first signal • Remember your belongings	• Keep cafeteria clean • 1 trip through the line • Raise hand for help
Be Safe	• Walk • Travel on right when possible	• Wash hands with soap & water • Feet on the floor	• Use equipment as intended • Wear appropriate shoes • Stay in approved areas	• Walk • Stay seated • Hands, feet, & food to self

We aim to praise and reward our students for doing the right thing at least 5 times more than we correct them for doing the wrong thing. We believe all students deserve an equal right and opportunity to receive a quality education in a safe and secure environment. Therefore, we expect a school atmosphere that supports teaching and learning. Any behavior that interferes with the teaching and learning of students is not acceptable. Students are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly and courteous manner. Failure to maintain appropriate conduct may result in a referral to the office and/or exclusion from an activity. Any time a student is seen in the office, the parent/guardian will be notified.

Consequences

All students make mistakes and need to be redirected from time to time. Teachers will handle initial violations of classroom or school rules. However, it is sometimes necessary for the principal/assistant principal to provide extra support. If a child is

sent to the office, the principal/assistant principal will decide on the appropriate consequence for the misbehavior. A parent/guardian will be notified by phone, in writing, e-mail, or personal conference.

Consideration will be given to:

- Nature of the misconduct
- Unusual circumstances
- Number of times the child has been sent to the office • Repetition of the misconduct

Consequences may be any, or a combination of, the following:

- Special assignments
- Restricted activities
- PAC (Personal Accountability Class)
- In-school counseling and /or firm reprimand by the principal/assistant principal
- Lowering of conduct grade
- Loss of privileges
- Parent conference with principal/assistant principal
- Time away from their classroom
- In-school restriction
- Parent required to take child home for the rest of the day
- Suspension from school (if a child is suspended more than one time during the year, the period of suspension may be increased by one or more days.

Below is a copy of the Office Discipline Referral (ODR) that will be sent home should a student's behavior be deemed Office Discipline Referral worthy. The

parent and student are to sign the ODR and return it to the office the following day.



NOTICE TO PARENTS:

1. The purpose of this notice is to inform you of a disciplinary incident involving your student.
2. Please note the action taken by the administration.

Student Name:		Date:	
Referral Made By:		Time of Incident:	
Location:		Did The Teacher Contact The Parent:	
Reason For the Referral:			
Interventions Tried:			
Description of the Event:			

Section for Administration if 4th incident:

Date & Time Administration Notified Parent:

Action Taken By Administration:

Please Sign & Return This Form To School

Administrator : _____

Student Signature: _____ **Parent Signature:** _____

In the event a child has difficulty maintaining appropriate behavior, every effort will be made to work with parents in developing a program for the child. The principal/assistant principal and other specialists (such as the PAC teacher) will meet to discuss possible options.

Restorative Practices

Blue Grass is also a school that utilizes more Restorative Practice techniques. Restorative Practices is a strategy that seeks to repair relationships that have been damaged, including those damaged through bullying. It does this by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the offender and forgiveness by the victim. Once an incident has occurred the staff asks some of the following questions to help learn more about the incident, the person that was harmed and the person that harmed:

To respond to challenging behavior:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking about at the time?
- What have your thoughts been since?
- Who has been affected by what you did?
- In what way have they been affected?
- What do you think you need to do to make things right?

To help those harmed by others actions:

- What did you think when you realized what had happened?
- What have your thoughts been since?
- How has this affected you and others?

- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

Breakfast and Lunch and Visitors

Breakfast and lunch are served daily (except on half days where only breakfast is served). Menus with breakfast and lunch choices are sent home monthly and are posted on the school website.

In the upcoming school year, the cost for meals will be as follows:

Breakfast – \$2.25

Lunch – \$3.25

Adult Visitor Lunch - \$5.00

A-La-Cart and extra breakfast and lunch items will be available for purchase with cash or an account through lingconnect.com. Funds must be available in the student's account to purchase additional breakfast, lunch, or A-La-Cart items. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to ensure that your student has the money to purchase additional items.

Visitors For Lunch

Parents are welcome to join their children for lunch (verified with proper ID), however, seating is limited, **therefore younger siblings are not allowed to attend**. Parents may NOT pull other students (child's friends) to eat with them. Please remember to sign in at the office and wait for your child by the Ocean Hallway. We have a designated area for our special lunch guests (Ocean Hallway).

Bullying Definition, Reporting and Response

Acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited at Blue Grass Elementary and are taken very seriously. Blue Grass follows

Board Policy [J-211](#). Please read the following excerpts from the board policy:

Knox County Schools prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying and cyber-bullying. A safe and courteous environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve. Harassment, intimidation or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate students in a safe and orderly environment; and since students learn by example, administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers should be positive role models in demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation or bullying. All Knox County Schools teachers and administrative personnel are responsible for ensuring this policy is faithfully implemented in all areas under their purview or direct supervision.

"Cyber-bullying" means bullying undertaken through the use of electronic devices.

"Electronic devices" include, but are not limited to, telephones, cellular phones or other wireless telecommunication devices, personal digital assistants (PDAs), computers, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, and web sites.

Bullying Definition

1. Per the Board Policy J-211, “Harassment, intimidation or bullying” means any act that substantially interferes with a student’s educational benefits, opportunities or performance; and:
 - a. If the act takes place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided equipment or transportation or at any official school bus stop, the act has the effect of:
 - i. Physically harming a student or damaging a student’s property;
 - ii. Knowingly placing a student or students in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student’s property;
 - iii. Causing emotional distress to a student or students; or
 - iv. Creating a hostile educational environment; or
 - b. If the act takes place off school property or outside of a school-sponsored activity, it is directed specifically at a student or students and has the effect of creating a hostile educational environment or otherwise creating a substantial disruption to the education environment or learning process.
2. All students are expected to refrain from acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying or cyberbullying in any form and to be aware that such disciplinary measures as are appropriately assigned in Board policy J-191 will be utilized for the unacceptable behavior described above.

Reporting and Response

- Students who feel they are being harassed, bullied or intimidated may report this concern to any teacher or school administrator or the office of the Superintendent using any means of communication with which they feel comfortable. Students may report anonymously, and anonymous reports will be treated with the same level of urgency as all other reports.
- All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the principal or the principal's designee for investigation and appropriate action. Submission of a written incident report to the principal is required by all district employees. Oral reports will also be considered official reports. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
- Once a report is received, the principal or his or her designee must initiate an investigation within forty-eight (48) hours for student well-being unless the need for additional time is appropriately documented. An appropriate intervention must be initiated within twenty (20) calendar days from the receipt of the report unless the need for more time is appropriately documented. Parents of all students must be immediately informed if their student is involved in an act of harassment, intimidation, bullying or cyber-bullying. Restorative practices will be used to the extent practicable in those schools where training has been completed.
- **This is only an excerpt from the district Bullying Policy with pertinent information.** To see the full Board Policy J-211. please visit <https://www.knoxschools.org/> and go to the Board of Education page and click Board Policies on the left hand side.

Bus Transportation

Bus transportation is provided to children who reside in the Blue Grass zone and live at least one (1) mile from school. Bus riders are expected to follow the rules and regulations regarding safety and behavior on the bus and at bus stop locations. Riding a bus is a privilege that can be revoked if a student chooses to break any bus rules or regulations.

In order to ensure the safety of all students, those students being transported by bus are under the authority of their bus driver and must obey his/her requests.

Knox County Board of Education policy states that the school bus is an extension of school activity; therefore, students must understand that the bus is an extension of the school and they must conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with the established standards for safety and classroom behavior. More specifically, students must follow the official Knox County bus rules as listed below:

Bus Rules:

1. Obey the bus driver.
2. Follow the bus driver's first request.
3. The bus driver is authorized to assign seats.
4. No loud, rude, abusive, or profane language.
5. No eating or drinking allowed.
6. Keep the bus clean.
7. Keep hands and head inside the bus.
8. Never throw objects inside or out of the bus windows.

9. Possession and/or use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs are prohibited in any form.
10. Parents will be financially responsible for any act of vandalism.

The administration of the student transported shall be informed by the bus driver of any serious discipline problem and may be called upon to assist if necessary.

A student may be denied the privilege of riding the bus if the principal determines that his/her behavior is such as to cause a disruption on the bus, or if he/she disobeys state or local rules and regulations pertaining to student transportation. The suspension of a student from riding the school bus shall follow the same procedures as for any other school suspension.

Permission to ride a bus other than the one that your child is assigned can only be granted by the principal and approved by the bus driver. The parent must make the request in the form of a written note. The request must be signed by the principal and presented to the bus driver before the student can ride a different bus.

Any time a child goes home in a manner that is different from his/her regular way, a written note is required. A note must be given to the teacher when the child first arrives. The teacher will send the note to the office and the office staff will verify the note by calling the parent. This will help to alleviate any confusion at the end of the day.

Care of School Property

It is the students' responsibility to take care of Blue Grass's facility and equipment. Any student who misuses, damages or destroys school property will be required to replace or repair, if possible, the item. This includes, but is not limited to, textbooks, furniture, computer equipment, school building and grounds. Students not replacing or paying for missing textbooks or library books will not be issued more books or receive report cards until missing books have been returned or paid for.

Civility Code

According to the Board Policy B-230, it is the intent of Blue Grass Elementary to promote mutual respect, civility and orderly conduct among employees, parents and the general public. This policy provides rules of conduct that both permit and encourage participation in school activities and communication between parents, community members and school employees. This policy also identifies those behaviors that are considered inappropriate and disruptive to the operation of a school or other school district facility.

Students, faculty, staff, parents, guardians and all other members of the community shall:

1. Treat one another with courtesy and respect at all times.
2. Take responsibility for one's actions.
3. Be cooperative, to the greatest extent possible, toward one another and in solving problems based on what is in the best interest of students.

4. Refrain from behavior that threatens or attempts to disrupt school or school district operations; physically harms someone; intentionally causes damage; employs loud or offensive language, gestures, or profanity; or inappropriately shows a display of temper.

Any individual who: (1) disrupts, threatens, attempts to do, or does physical harm to school personnel, students, others lawfully on school premises; (2) intentionally causes damage to school property; (3) uses loud, vulgar, obscene, or offensive language, or enters a part of the school not open to the public, may be directed to leave the school property by the school administration or designee. If the person refuses to leave the premises as directed, the administration or designee shall seek the assistance of the school security officer and request that he/she take action as necessary. If the offender threatens personal harm, the administration or designee shall contact law enforcement officers. **If any school employee receives written communication, an email, or voice message which is abusive, threatening, or obscene, the employee is not obligated to respond to the written communication, email, or return the telephone call.**

Chaperoning Field Trips or School Events

Field trips are great opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's classroom education. If a field trip requires parent chaperones, please remember it will be your responsibility to help supervise a small group of students, help supervise all students, and/or to assist the teacher in any way he/she needs.

Siblings are not allowed to attend field trips, or any other school function

that requires a chaperone. Any parent wanting to check out their student at the end of a field trip, must sign the teacher's sign out sheet.

Per district policy I-260, chaperones that will have direct contact with students under limited supervision by school staff or will have unsupervised contact with students on or off campus will need to complete a background check through Knox County. Please call the Blue Grass office in order to obtain the KCS background check form.

Class Placement Parent Input

If you would like to share any input in your student's class placement for next school year, please keep a look out for the electronic BGE 25-26 Class Placement Parent Input Form we will send out in April 2025. This optional form will allow parents to share any information they want us to consider about how their child learns. Please know that with over 600 students, WE CAN NOT GRANT TEACHER REQUESTS. Please do not request a specific teacher. This form is more about providing input about your student's learning style and what type of classroom management method is most effective with them.

We will utilize your information and teacher input to formulate the very best matched classes for next year. The form will be open to parents for only one week towards the end of April 2025. Because it becomes increasingly difficult to field the large amount of requests we get all the way up to the start of next school year, we will not be taking any parent input on class placement for next year after the form closes at the end of April 2025. If you have more than one student at BGE, please submit a separate electronic form for each student.

Classroom Concerns

If you have a concern about your child's grade or a situation that has occurred in the classroom, please contact the teacher before going to the principal or assistant principal. The teacher will be the most informed about the situation and be able to inform you to a greater extent. **The principals welcome the opportunity to hear your concern, but in order to facilitate great teacher/parent partnerships, it is only fair that the teacher has an opportunity to listen to and address your concern before bringing the concern to the principal.**

Counselor

The elementary school counseling and guidance program is a part of the total school program and complements learning in the classroom. It is child-centered, preventive, and developmental. The program encourages students' social, emotional, and personal growth at each stage of their development. The purpose of counseling with students, parents, and teachers is to help students maximize their potential. The elementary school counselor also conducts guidance lessons; consults with parents, teachers, and other professionals; and coordinates student services in the school.

Child Abuse

Any teacher, nurse, counselor, administrator or other school professional acting in an official capacity who has reason to believe a child under age 18 has been subjected to or adversely affected by physical, mental or emotional abuse/neglect must report this to the county Department of Social Services or appropriate law enforcement agency.

Dismissal

Car Riders

In the afternoon, odd-numbered car riders are to be picked up at the front of the school, and even-numbered car riders are to be picked up at the rear of the building. Daycare children are also picked up in the back of the building.

For the safety of our child, all car riders will be issued **two car tags per family**. If you need more than two car tags, please come to the office with your ID and we will provide you with additional tags. The car tag will need to be displayed on the rear view mirror, dash or on the side passenger window in order for the name to easily be read during dismissal. **If you or your designee forget the car tag, you will need to park and come to the office with picture identification in order to sign out your child**. This is for the safety of each child at Blue Grass. NO EXCEPTIONS. Thank you in advance for your cooperation! If you ever share a car tag with someone, please make sure they are listed on the student's emergency/profile sheet.

During dismissal, help us keep our students safe by keeping traffic in one single lane in the front or two single lanes in the back. Our car rider number caller will look for your car tag and call your student's number and direct you to the proper colored cone. It is extremely important that you pull all the way up to the correct colored cone in front or back of the school so that we can unload/load five cars in the front or ten cars in the back at one time. Students will dismiss from inside and will be directed to the cone that was called. Do not park in front of the building and get out of your car to come pick up your student, as this creates a backup in the traffic and is a safety concern for the students. Safety patrol students will

motion the cars forward and assist with opening the car doors. During morning and afternoon loading and unloading, you must exit on the Ebenezer Rd. exit. Please do not enter the bus entrance behind the school off of Bluegrass Rd. If your student requires additional assistance with car seats, seat belts, etc., please pull up past the pick up line to assist them so that we can keep the car line moving.

Walkers

ONLY students who live within 1 mile of the Parental Responsibility Zone are permitted to walk to and from school. Student walkers will be dismissed at approx. 2:50 PM each day. For the first few weeks of school, there may be a slight delay in the dismissal time as students acclimate to dismissal procedures. If your child walks home, please send written instructions to your child's teacher regarding exit routes from campus (front or back of the school). Be sure to discuss safety and behavior expectations between home and school with your child. It is the parents' responsibility to get children onto the school campus safely. Please remind your student to only cross streets at designated crosswalks. Patrols are stationed at hazardous intersections for the safety of the children. Walkers are asked to walk on sidewalks (or sidewalk right-of-way), and to cross at intersections at the direction of the crossing guard.

In the interest of safety, never tell your child to wait at a business for pick-up. Children should only be picked up at Blue Grass School.

Dress Code

The standards for elementary school dress reflect common sense and a concern for each child's comfort, safety, cleanliness, and a sense of modesty. There is a strong relationship between neat, appropriate attire and a positive learning environment. To help create the best learning environment for elementary students, the following standards for student dress must be observed in all Knox County Elementary Schools:

1. Pants must not sag below the waist and must be at a safe length.
2. Head apparel, except for religious or medical reasons, must not be worn inside the school building.
3. Footwear is required and must be safe and appropriate for indoor and outdoor physical activity. (Since the students go outside to play each day, it would be helpful if the students wore tennis shoes every day to school.) Flip-flops and shower-type shoes are examples of inappropriate footwear.
4. Clothing or accessories may not display offensive, vulgar language or images and must not advertise products, which students may not legally purchase.
5. "Short shorts", miniskirts, and skin-tight outer materials such as spandex are inappropriate attire.
6. Shirts, blouses, and dresses must completely cover the abdomen, back, and shoulders, and shirts or tops must cover the waistband of pants, shorts, or skirts with no midriff visible.

Per board policy, the school administration reserves the right to determine whether the student's attire and appearance are within acceptable limits. In matters of opinion, the judgment of the principal/designee shall prevail.

Teachers and the principal/assistant principal will administer consequences for dress code policy infractions as follows:

- First Offense –Teacher will send student to clinic/office or will contact parent(s) for a change of clothes. Parent will be notified and infraction will be documented.
- Second Offense – Principal/assistant principal will talk with parent(s) and send copy of the dress policy. Infraction will be documented.
- Third and Future Offenses will be administered by the principal/assistant principal in accordance with the school-wide discipline plan.

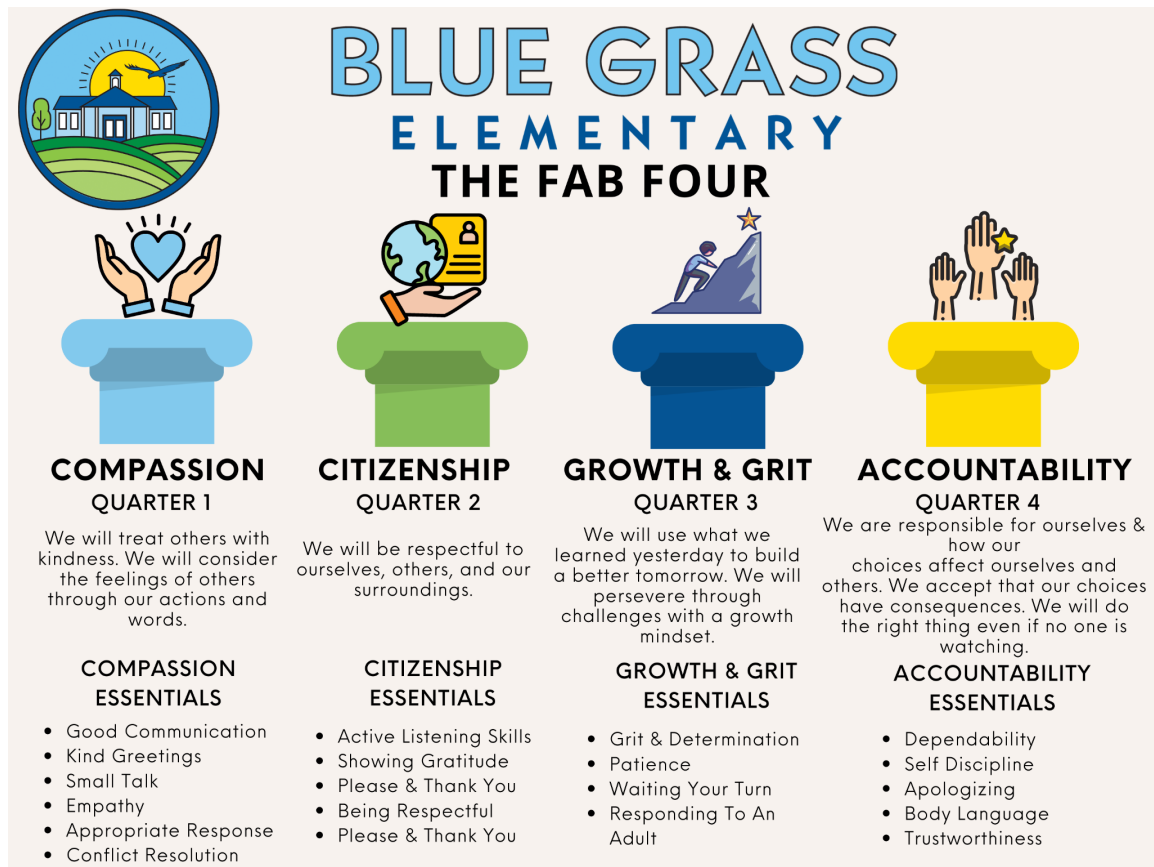
The principal may allow exceptions for school-wide programs or special classroom activities.

The teachers and the principal will administer appropriate consequences for policy infractions.

We respectfully request that all students wear tennis shoes to school every day. They have physical education class weekly and generally go outside to play for a short time every day. Tennis shoes are the safest shoes for all school functions.

Eagle Essentials & The Fab 4

The Eagle Essentials are the twenty Character Traits and Etiquette Areas that we want our Eagles to exemplify each and every day. We believe that teaching our students great character and etiquette is just as important as teaching them academically. These twenty Character Traits and Etiquette Areas Fall under our “Fab 4” Core Values of Compassion, Citizenship, Growth & Grit, and Accountability.



We will focus on these “Fab 4” and 20 Eagle Essentials each quarter as a school and in our Eagles Nests meetings.

Eagles Nests

During the 2024-2025 School Year, we started Eagles Nests in order to connect our students to other students and staff members outside of their grade level. Each Eagles Nest has nineteen to twenty total students, with 2-3 students per grade level in their Nest. In addition, each Eagles Nest has one to two adults who lead the Nest. There are 35 total Eagles Nests at Blue Grass and our Nests meet monthly October through April to connect, learn, and practice the BGE Fab 4 and 20 Eagle Essentials. Each year our Eagles Nests welcome their new Kindergarteners to their Nest during our September Eagles Nest Meeting.

Emergency Drills

The safety of your child is our greatest concern. The school holds regular safety drills to teach students to respond calmly in the event of an emergency. Detailed evacuation plans are posted inside the door of each classroom. Each classroom has an escape route to an outside area and away from the building. Please know if you are visiting our school during any of these drills, you are responsible for following protocol for that particular drill. You will not be allowed to leave the building until the drill is over.

An emergency drill is a sequence of actions that the staff practices several times throughout the year with students so that everyone will know what to do in the event of a real emergency at our school. Here is a list of the drills that occur at BGE:

- Fire drills occur monthly throughout the school year.

- Tornado and earthquake drills are conducted during the school year. At the beginning of school, a tornado location is identified and students are given instructions in safety procedures to follow in the event of a tornado.
- Lockdown drills are also conducted at least twice a school year. Students practice procedures for a secure lockdown in the building/classroom. This is to protect students from any possible danger/threat near or inside the building.

Encore

Art Instruction

Blue Grass has one art teacher who provides art instruction to all students.

Students have the opportunity to work with a variety of mediums, which include clay, paints, drawing materials, and paper. All classes are aligned to the specific grade level's curriculum.

General Music

Blue Grass has one music teacher who provides music instruction to all students.

Children sing, listen, improvise, move to music, and play instruments.

Technology

A technology teacher provides site-based instructional technology training and models for technology integration. The students use software programs to integrate technology in to all areas of the curriculum. While each classroom has student access to the Internet, security measures have been taken to prevent inappropriate exposure to material or content not approved by Knox County Schools for use in an elementary classroom.

Physical Education

A physical education (P.E.) teacher serves our school and instructs students in grades K-5. Appropriate dress for P.E. includes tennis shoes, socks and pants or shorts. (Girls who wear a dress or skirt on days they have P.E. classes should also wear shorts under the dress.)

STEM Lab

We are fortunate to have a STEM teacher that provides instruction allowing our students the opportunity to create, invent, solve, and make inquiries about their learning. Students will solve real-world problems and collaborate to develop an understanding of the science fields. Volunteers are needed.

Library

We are lucky to have a full time librarian at BGE! Classes are scheduled to visit the library on a six-day rotation schedule. Open Access is also available for students to check out books on days their class does not visit the library. If you are interested in volunteering in our library, please let your child's teacher know.

Enrollment Requirements

Every student who enters the Knox County School System for the first time or who is re-entering after being in another school system must provide the school with the following information before being enrolled:

- 1.** An up-to-date immunization record completed by a physician on a Tennessee Child Health Record
- 2.** A completed physical examination completed by a physician on a Tennessee Child Health Record
- 3.** Birth Certificate

4. Social Security Card

5. Proof of Residency.

Students will not be enrolled without these items.

Field Trips

Educational field trips are planned to provide experiences correlated with subjects studied in the classroom. Students must demonstrate appropriate behavior while away from the school building during these learning experiences. They must demonstrate self-discipline, good character and act in a safe manner while away from school. If a student's behavior indicates that he/she is unable to follow the teacher's directions and act in a safe manner during the nine-week period that the field trip occurs, the student may not be allowed to take part in the field trip opportunity. It is my desire that all students be a part of these learning opportunities, so please encourage your child to demonstrate appropriate behavior at school.

When an out of school field trip is taken, your child will bring home a permission form giving the destination and date of the field trip. The form will require your signature and must be returned to school. Failure to return the permission slip will prohibit your child from attending the scheduled trip. **No verbal permissions will be granted by phone calls to allow attendance of a field trip.**

Friday Folders

Important notes, newsletters, weekly grades, and student work will be sent home on Friday. Please remember to look for these important papers every Friday.

Please check your child's backpack each day for newsletters, behavior calendars/cards, homework, etc.

Hours

The school day begins promptly at 7:45 a.m. and ends at 2:45 p.m. for all students in grades kindergarten through five. The school building will be open each morning at **7:10 a.m.** for students to enter the building. **Supervision of students is not possible before 7:10 a.m. so please make sure that students are never dropped off before this time.** Breakfast will be served from 7:15 a.m. to 7:40 a.m. Students who are not eating breakfast will wait in the halls until 7:40 a.m.

Invitations

We respectfully ask that when planning a birthday party outside of school, students do not distribute birthday invitations at school unless every child in the classroom is invited. Passing invitations out to only a few students in the class can create hurt feelings that may become a class issue. It also creates a disruption to teaching. The school is also not allowed to give students' or parents' addresses in order to mail invitations to certain students. Thank you for cooperating with these procedures.

Knox County Grading Scale

<u>Kindergarten Grading Scale</u>	<u>1st - 5th Grading Scale</u>
EE – Exceeds Expectations	A – Exceptional (93-100)
ME – Meets Expectations	B – Above Average (85-92)
AE – Approaching Expectations	C – Average (75-84)
NS – Needs Support	D – Below Average (70-74)
	U – Unsatisfactory (Below 70)
E – Excellent	E,S,N – Behavior for 1st & 2nd grades
S – Satisfactory	E,S,N – Work Habits for 3rd, 4th, & 5th grades
N – Needs to Improve	

Knox County School's Home Page

The home page address for Knox County Schools is: <http://knoxschools.org>.

Blue Grass Elementary School's home page address is:

<https://www.knoxschools.org/bluegrass>

Medication Policy/Clinic

If it becomes necessary for a student to take any form of medication at school, **the medicine and a medical form signed by a doctor must be presented to the nurse.** The parent or guardian must fill out the form along with the physician that is prescribing the medication. All medication will be kept in and dispensed through the Clinic. Medical forms are available in the school office and clinic.

Prescriptions or over-the-counter medicines should never be sent to school with a student. Knox County Board Policy forbids students to be in possession of any form of medication. The medication must be brought to school by a parent in the container and/or box received from the pharmacy. We are not allowed to dispense any medication unless the guidelines are followed correctly.

Here are a few clinic reminders:

- Children cannot be at school with fever, vomiting, diarrhea, severe cough or rashes.
- A child should be free of fever (without the use of fever reducing medication), vomiting, and diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school after an illness. *Refer to KCS Health Services Guidelines Form [AD-H 354B](#)
- You will be notified if your child becomes ill. Children must be picked up when you are called. If we cannot reach you, the emergency contact provided by you on the emergency card will be called.
- Children with a temperature of 100.6 are required to be picked up by a parent or emergency contact.

- Any child diagnosed as having a contagious or communicable medical problem cannot, by law, be permitted to remain at school.
- Please notify your child's teacher if your child has been diagnosed as having significant medical problems, such as diabetes or epilepsy, so that appropriate arrangements can be made if events warrant.

Money at School

When making checks out to the school, cafeteria, PTO, etc., please include your child's name somewhere on the check. Please do not combine fees, lunch money or other items when writing a check. This makes it difficult for the teacher and also for bookkeeping purposes.

Sometimes students wish to bring cash to school for specific purposes. All students should place their money in an envelope with their name, teacher's name, the amount enclosed and its purpose. Neither the teacher nor the school can be responsible for lost or misplaced money.

Whenever possible, payments should be made online or by check for food services, school pictures, insurance, PTO purchases, etc.

Notes Required By Parents

The school requires notes from parents explaining the following:

- Absences
- Requests for early dismissal
- Permission for field trips

- Permission to ride bus with another student after school
- Permission to go home with another student
- Changes in usual method of transportation home
- Allergic reactions (insect, milk, food)

Nurse

A school nurse is at our school on a full-time basis. Her name is Lacey Brannon, and if you need to contact her, please call the school office at 865-539-7864.

Parent Portal

Students and parents can access students' grades, schedules and other information through the Aspen parent portal, an online student information system at <https://aspen.knoxschools.org/aspen/logon.do> . Parents that do not have a Aspen Parent Portal account should have received an email in the past with a security code for access to this service. Parent accounts for newly enrolled students will have a Parent Portal security code emailed within one week of registration.

Once you have received your security code, you should be able to follow the simple instructions attached to the email to create your Parent Portal account.

After your account is created:

- Visit <https://aspen.knoxschools.org/aspen/logon.do>
- Log in using your username and the password that you created.

Helpful hints if you have forgotten or misplaced your Parent/Family Portal login:

- If you have forgotten your PASSWORD, you may click on the Link for “I forgot my password”.
- You will need your LOGIN ID and the email address that you have given the school in your contact information.
- Both the LOGIN ID and PASSWORD field are case sensitive. Most email addresses were originally entered in UPPERCASE.
- For additional support go to <https://www.knoxschools.org/aspeninfo>

Once you have logged in successfully, click on the PAGES top tab and look for the “PUBLISHED REPORTS” section. There will be a .pdf report with a schedule for each student in your family.

If you *cannot find* your LOGIN ID that was issued to you by the school (in previous years), you may do one of the following.

- Email helpdesk@knoxschools.org. Please be patient and do not email more than once. Emails are being answered in the order received and sending the same request multiple times is only making the wait time longer.
- You may also contact your child’s school to obtain your LOGIN ID.

You will need to provide the following to verify your identity when calling the school:

Student Name

Student Date of Birth

Parent email address

If parents have questions or need further explanation, please contact the Knox County Schools' Help Desk at 865-594-1830. To join multiple students to a parent account, please email this request to the Help Desk at helpdesk@knoxschools.org. Email should include:

- Parent name
- Names and birthdates of students to be joined together

Parking

Parking is available for visitors with “ten-minute” parking spaces available in the front of the building and long-term parking in the lot adjacent to the blue playground. Please exercise caution and consideration when parking. Parking at the rear of the building is reserved for faculty and staff during the school day. During evening activities, such as PTO meetings, parents are welcome to use these spaces. Please observe reserved signs, and do not block the school driveways, or park in areas designated as fire lanes, or for the handicapped.

Parent Communication at BGE

Quarterly Newsletter

Our quarterly, electronic parent newsletter is [The Regal Eagle](#). This should be the first place parents go to look for upcoming events and other important Blue Grass news. We will be sending *at least* one [Regal Eagle](#) parent newsletter per quarter to keep you updated.

Parent Square

Administration and teachers will also be communicating important daily/weekly reminders and dates via Parent Square this school year. **With the busy schedules of our parents, we have found frequent shorter Parent Square texts to be the most effective way to communicate with our parents.**

Every parent is automatically enrolled in Parent Square by completing student registration. The program communicates primarily through email, text, and app notifications. Here are some great things you can do with ParentSquare:

- Choose to receive information as it comes, or all at once, with a daily digest at 6pm
- Communicate in your preferred language
- Comment on school postings to engage with your school community
- Direct message teachers, staff, and other parents
- Participate in group messages
- Sign up for parent-teacher conferences
- Send/sign forms & permission slips, sign-up to volunteer and more, all from your desktop or mobile device

You can use ParentSquare on any device. You can download the free mobile [app for iOS](#) or [Android](#) or use the desktop version at parentsquare.com.

Social Media

Another great way to follow all of the great things that are happening at Blue Grass is by following our social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram, & Twitter:

- Facebook - facebook.com/BGEEagles/

- Instagram - [@bluegrasseagles](#)
- Twitter - [@BlueGrass_K5](#)

Our PTO has a wonderful Social Media account, so we highly encourage you to follow their Facebook account as well to keep up with school events:

- PTO Facebook - facebook.com/BlueGrassElementary

Parties

School parties are planned for students, with the approval of the teacher and principal, by the parents. Classrooms are allowed two parties per semester. Birthday parties are not permitted. Current nutrition guidelines approved by the Knox County School Board must be followed.

Personal Property

Personal belongings should be clearly marked with the student's name. Lost and found items may be brought to the office by students and we will make every effort to find the owner. If parents will call and let us know when items are lost, we will try to find the items. Anything not needed for class should be left at home.

Cameras, radios, candy, gum, electronic games, and toys of any kind should not be brought to school unless the teacher gives permission for these to be brought to class. Please be sure to also have your child's teacher approve the use of any "fidget" devices before you send them to school.

Fireworks, firearms, knives, tobacco of all types, alcohol and illegal drugs are illegal on school property and possession will result in serious consequences.

KCS Board Policy PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES (PCDs) [J-240](#)

Use by students in grades Pre-K-5

Students may possess PCDs while on school property. However, the **PCD must be in the off mode and must be kept in a backpack, purse or similar personal carry-all** and may not be used unless the principal or the principal's designee grants a student permission to do so. **This includes smart watches that have a calling feature.** The principal or the principal's designee may specifically grant permission for a student to use a PCD during class time for a specific academic purpose or at other times for other purposes that the principal deems appropriate.

PTO

The Blue Grass School Parent Teacher Organization is a very important part of our school program. Our PTO has worked very hard to provide computer equipment, playground structures, software subscriptions and much more for our students. We encourage all parents to become PTO Champions and to actively participate in **our PTO**. It is crucial that teachers and parents work together for all students to have a successful educational experience.

	PTO CHAMPION \$30	EAGLE FRIEND \$75	EAGLE'S NEST \$125	TALON \$250	EAGLE \$500	SOARING EAGLE \$750	BRONZE EAGLE \$1000	SILVER EAGLE \$1500	GOLDEN EAGLE \$2500
PTO Champion	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Local Business Coupons worth \$30	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
1 FREE Unlimited Carnival Wristband		★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
FREE Tickets to Pancake Breakfast, BBQ Darts & Blue Grass (for immediate family)			★	★	★	★	★	★	★
1 FREE Spirit Wear choice in fall pre-order				★	★	★	★	★	★
FREE Unlimited Carnival Wristbands (for immediate family)					★	★	★	★	★
2 Reserved Seats in Auditorium for Awards Day						★	★	★	★
2 Reserved Seats in Auditorium for Open Assemblies							★	★	★
1 Reserved Parking Spot in Front of School for Assemblies								★	★
Front of Car Pick up Line 2024-25 School Year (Spots are first come, first serve, MAJ-4)									★
ADD ON: Birthday Marquee Message	\$30 Per Message								

Public Notice - Title IX

The Knox County School System affirms that it will comply with Title IX of the Educational Amendment of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008, Title IV and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Age Discrimination Act in Employment Act of 1967.

What is Title IX?

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 prohibits any person in the United States from being discriminated against on the basis of sex in seeking access to any educational program or activity receiving federal financial

assistance. The U.S. Department of Education, which enforces Title IX, has long defined the meaning of Title IX's prohibition on sex discrimination broadly to include various forms of sexual harassment and sexual violence that interfere with a student's ability to equally access our educational programs and opportunities. While Title IX covers all forms of sex discrimination, the term "Title IX" is often used as a short-hand to describe the sub-set of policies, procedures, or programs that specifically address sexual misconduct.

What is sex discrimination?

Sex Discrimination is discrimination on the basis of sex or gender. It includes sexual harassment, sexual violence (including rape and sexual assault), stalking, domestic violence, dating violence, and any other gender-based discrimination.

Who is protected by Title IX?

Title IX protects all persons participating or attempting to participate in an educational program and/or activity within Knox County Schools, including students, faculty, and staff, regardless of gender or gender identity.

» [KCS Policy C-260 Sexual Harassment](#)

Who will determine if the conduct falls under the jurisdiction of the sexual harassment or sex-based discrimination policy?

The Title IX Coordinator will determine if the alleged offense falls under the Sexual Harassment and Sex-Based Discrimination Policy for Faculty, Staff, and Students.

How do I report sex-based discrimination involving myself or another person?

You should report any sexual misconduct or discrimination to Checovoia Foster-Bruce, Knox County Schools' Title IX Coordinator. File an online report or contact Mrs. Foster-Bruce directly.

Contact Information for the Title IX Coordinator:

Checovoia Foster-Bruce, J.D.

400 W. Summitt Hill Drive

Knoxville, Tennessee 37902

titleIX@knoxschools.org

Phone(865) 594-1261

Quiet Hours

In order to help our teachers' keep a healthy work/life balance and to help them to be at their very best, here are my expectations when it comes to teacher and parent communication.

Current Parent Communication Expectations:

- I always ask for teachers to do their very best to respond to emails, Parent Square messages, and phone calls within 24 hours
- If an email is longer than a paragraph or an email response is going to be longer than a paragraph, then I encourage teachers to call the parent if possible
- Parents, please try and limit the amount of times you email teachers in a day, as teachers have 20 plus other parents and students to tend to

- I ask that teachers never respond to emails and parent communications during their instructional time
- This means that parents cannot expect a response during the school day, unless it is during the teacher's planning period or after school. If it is an urgent issue then you need to communicate with the teacher, please call the front office.

Quiet Hours At Blue Grass:

- One of my biggest priorities as a principal is protecting the well being of my teachers, so they can be at their very best for our students.
- So our teachers can spend more time with their families and recharge on the weekends. We have some times during the week and weekends, where parents should limit teacher communication.
- Parents should not expect to receive a response from their child's teachers during these hours called Quiet Hours.

Teacher Quiet Hours At Blue Grass When Parents Should Not Expect A Response:

- Weekdays: 5:30 PM to 7:30 AM the next day
- Weekends: All Hours

Thank you for continuing to respect these guidelines in order to help protect our teacher's time with their families and so they can provide the very best love, care, and instruction for your students.

Recess/Brain Breaks

Students will have recess for 40 minutes daily. BlueGrass students are taught playground safety rules and expectations during the first weeks of school. Due to safety concerns, students are prohibited from playing: games involving tackling, play fighting, keep away, or any other game deemed unsafe by teachers. In addition to recess, each class embeds "brain breaks" during the school day to give students other opportunities for physical engagement to keep their minds sharp.

Report Cards and Home/School Communication

Report cards are sent home every nine weeks within two weeks of the end of the grading period. Interim reports will be sent out within one week of the end of the 4-½ week point in the grading period. Interim reports and report cards should be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school promptly.

Parent conferences are scheduled during the first nine weeks of school and at any other time the teacher or parent deems necessary. Parent conferences are encouraged and can be arranged at any time during the school year by sending a note to the teacher or calling the school office.

Please look for information (school-wide notices, graded papers, report cards, etc.) that will be sent home with your child. Teachers will send home newsletters and other ways to communicate in order to keep parents informed of the curriculum and various activities.

School Closing Due to Inclement Weather

Decisions to close school because of inclement weather or a disaster are made by the Superintendent of the Knox County School System. **Please do not call the school to find out if school is to be closed or dismissed early due to snow, ice, or other disasters.** Parents will be officially notified of any closings or early dismissals through Knox County's Parent Square Communication System. **Our staff will follow instructions on the "EARLY SCHOOL DISMISSAL" form that parents are asked to complete at the beginning of the year.** Students may NOT leave school with anyone who is NOT listed on the emergency card. If school is delayed one hour, we **will not** have a teacher on duty at the regular time. The school will open one hour later and we will have someone at that time to monitor the students. All extracurricular activities, interscholastic contests, field trips, day cares, and non-school activities in school buildings will be canceled when schools are closed.

School Fees

A twenty-five dollar fee for classroom supplies, art supplies, manipulatives, worksheets, special projects, science materials, computer software, and consumable goods will be requested at the beginning of the year. You may send a check for fees payable to Blue Grass School, or fees made be paid online at www.schoolcashionline.com. Contact the bookkeeper if you would like to make other arrangements (865) 539-7864.



Special Education Services

Sometimes parents are unaware that Knox County Schools offer Special Education Services. We would like to encourage you to contact the school about any special needs your child might have.

Speech, Hearing and Vision Testing

Tests for speech, hearing and vision are conducted annually in Kindergarten, Second, and Fourth grades by professional district personnel, according to guidelines prescribed by the Tennessee Department of Education.

Student Information

It is imperative that the school office be notified immediately of a change of address, cell phone, home or office telephone number, or emergency information. In order to change information on an emergency card, such as who is able to pick up your child, you must come into the office. We cannot change any information on the card over the phone.

Tardiness and Early Dismissal

A student arriving later than 7:45 a.m. is considered tardy and must sign in at the office to receive a tardy note. A parent must accompany the child to check in when arriving late. You will need to enter the school by coming to the main entrance of the school. If no reason is given for the late arrival, the tardy will automatically be designated unexcused. The student will receive a tardy slip, which he/she must have when entering the classroom. **Students will not be admitted to class late without the tardy note.** Tardiness and “early check-outs,” before 11:15 AM, will also affect students’ attendance records.

****No Early Dismissals After 2:15****

Children should be in school every day until normal dismissal time. When a child leaves class early, this disruption affects both the student and the entire classroom. Due to the hectic time in the front office, we cannot allow parents to check out their child in the front office after 2:15. This is a common rule across Knox County elementary schools and has been put in place in order to increase student safety and reduce some of the logistical problems that occur when students are picked up this close to normal dismissal time. If you wish to pick up your student after 2:15, you will need to line up in the car rider line and wait until school ends at 2:45 to pick up your child.

If it is absolutely necessary for a child to leave before the end of the school day, the parent or legal guardian must come to the office to document the time and the reason the child is leaving and present a picture ID. If someone other than the parent will be picking up the student, the parent/guardian must send a note.

Make sure that other adults who may pick up your child are on the emergency cards and will have a picture ID. **We will not allow anyone not listed on the emergency card to pick up your child.** This is for your child's safety.

When possible, try to schedule medical or personal appointments after school hours. Late arrivals and early dismissal times are recorded and reported to the state.

Tobacco Policy

Public Law 103-227 states that there can no longer be designated smoking areas in any public school building. Smoking is not allowed on campus. This includes the car rider line. Please refrain from smoking while on our campus. Adults are role models for children, and all of us need to set a good example for them.

Telephone

The office telephone should not be used for personal calls. Please try to make arrangements with your child regarding any dismissal or transportation changes before he/she leaves home. School office telephone number is 865-539-7864. Our FAX number is 865-531-2164.

Textbooks

The first copy of consumable textbooks are free of charge to all students. Students are expected to pay for lost books that need to be replaced during the school year. According to Knox County Board Policy, transcripts and grade cards may be withheld until restitution is made.

Unsafe School Choice Policy

Under the Tennessee State board of Education's Unsafe School Choice Policy, any public school student who is the victim of a violent crime as defined under Tennessee Code Annotated 40-38-11(g), or the attempt to commit one of these offenses as defined under Tennessee Code Annotated 39-12-101, shall be provided an opportunity to transfer to another grade-level appropriate school within the district. Additional information regarding this option may be obtained by contacting Brian Hartsell at 594-1502.

Visitors

Parents and visitors are always welcome at Blue Grass. For the safety and welfare of the students, all visitors **must sign in** at the school office and receive a visitor badge.

Conferences should always be scheduled in advance with the teacher. We cannot allow parents to visit in the mornings, during the school day, or in the afternoons to meet with a teacher without an appointment. Classroom instructional time is important and interruptions diminish the quality of the lesson. Please contact your child's teacher to schedule classroom visits and/or to volunteer. We welcome your presence and support.

Volunteers

We need your help! There are many opportunities for parents to volunteer at Blue Grass Elementary School. Please watch for information in school and PTO

newsletters throughout the year for ways to become involved. In accordance with the [Knox County Policy I-260](#), School Volunteers in Knox County Schools are expected to sign a Volunteer Confidentiality Form at the Front Office before they can volunteer in the school. A signed copy of this form will be kept in the front office so parents only have to sign it once.

Depending on the type of volunteer activity proposed, volunteers may be required to submit to a background check. These are managed by the Knox County Schools Public Affairs Office at no cost. If you have additional questions, please consult the office staff or ask for a background check request form. Once approved, the background check is valid for 6 years.

***In order to volunteer in the Knox County Schools, an individual must:**

- Sign a confidentiality agreement to protect the rights of students and parents
- Sign in and out each time they visit a school
- Appear clean, neat, and appropriately attired
- Wear an identification tag at all times while on school grounds
- Work with students in areas designated by school staff
- Only provide food or drink to a student if authorized by the student's teacher or principal

Per [district policy I-260](#), any volunteer that will have direct contact with students under limited supervision by school staff or will have unsupervised contact with students on or off campus will need to complete a background check through Knox County. Please call the Blue Grass office in order to obtain the KCS background check form.

Withdrawing a Student

When withdrawing a student from school, please notify the school office several days in advance. This will enable teachers to complete all records prior to the student's last day in school. A student's records will only be forwarded to the new school when all textbooks and library books are returned and all outstanding fees are paid. Please contact the cafeteria manager to close out your child's lunch account. If the student is transferring to another Knox County school, the account can be transferred to that particular school.

BGE Parent & Student Handbook Receipt Google Form

Dear Parents,

Thank you for taking the time to review the 2024-2025 Blue Grass Parent and Student Handbook. I ask that you please complete the [BGE Parent & Student Handbook Receipt Google Form](#) to let us know that you have read and reviewed the handbook as a family. **If you have multiple students at BGE, you only need to submit the form below for one of your students**

We are beyond excited for the 2024-2025 school year and encourage you to let us know if you have any questions. We look forward to partnering with you again this school year!

Sincerely,

Dr. Casey Cutter