

Student & Family Handbook
2026 - 2027

BEDFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
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Bedford, VA 24523

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Bedford Elementary Website:

Bedford Elementary School

Bedford Elementary Facebook Page:

BES Facebook Page

Bedford County Public School's Website:

Bedford County Public Schools

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Dear Bedford Elementary School Families,

It is with great excitement that I welcome you to the 2026–2027 school year! I am honored to be joining the Bedford Elementary School community in my first year as principal, and I look forward to getting to know each of you in the months ahead.

I am especially excited to meet and work alongside our families as we partner together to help our students learn, grow, and thrive. A strong school-home partnership is one of the greatest factors in a child's success, and I believe that when we work together, there is no limit to what our students can achieve.

As I have spent time getting to know Bedford Elementary, one thing has become abundantly clear—we have an incredible team of teachers and staff who truly care about children. They have been working hard to prepare for the new school year and are excited to welcome students back into their classrooms. I am confident that your child will be surrounded by caring, dedicated professionals who are committed to helping every student succeed.

I encourage you to be an active participant in your child's educational journey. Whether it is volunteering at school, attending family events, joining our PTA, or simply staying connected with your child's teacher, your involvement makes a tremendous difference. Together, we can create meaningful experiences that support both academic achievement and personal growth.

One of my highest priorities is creating a school environment where every student feels loved, cared for, and, most importantly, safe. Every child deserves to come to school each day knowing they belong, that they are valued, and that they have adults who believe in them. When students feel safe and supported, they are able to learn, take risks, build friendships, and reach their full potential.

Thank you for your continued support of Bedford Elementary School. It is a privilege to serve this wonderful community, and I am grateful for the opportunity to partner with you throughout the coming year.

I look forward to meeting many of you soon and to an amazing school year filled with learning, growth, and celebration. Together, we will make this a fantastic year for every Bedford Elementary student.

Warmly,

Joel Dechant

Joel Dechant
Principal

ACCREDITATION

Bedford Elementary (BES) is accredited by the State Department of Education. The School Quality Profile for Bedford Elementary School is available on the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) website under *Parent Resources → School Performance & Support Framework*. This information may be accessed using the link on the front cover of the Student Handbook or through the VDOE website, www.doe.virginia.gov/

ATHLETICS

All athletic opportunities are handled through the Bedford County Recreation Department.

ATTENDANCE / ADMISSION

Compulsory Attendance In Virginia, parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that any child between the ages of 5 (by September 30) and 18 receives a full-time education for the same amount of time as the local public schools. This legal requirement can be met by enrolling the child in public, private, or religious schools, which may include home instruction or approved teachers as defined in the Code of Virginia(§ 22.1-254.1).

School attendance is critical for academic and personal achievement as students prepare for adulthood. Each parent/guardian is responsible for ensuring the child's regular and punctual attendance. Under the compulsory attendance law, accreditation standards, and our sincere belief that regular attendance is imperative for development and success, attendance will be monitored and reported as required by state law and policy

Compulsory School Attendance and Alternative Education A student for whom an individual student alternative education plan has been granted and who fails to comply with the conditions of such plan shall be in violation of the compulsory school attendance law, and the division superintendent or attendance officer of the school division in which such student was last enrolled shall seek immediate compliance with the compulsory school attendance law (§ 22.1-254 (E)(d), Code of Virginia).

Absences Because some absences may be unavoidable, Bedford County Public Schools has established procedures for excusing some absences. The parent/guardian and student bear responsibility for informing the school of absences, and the principal makes the final determination regarding absences.

Chronic Absenteeism (Excessive Total Absences): Developing strong attendance habits early on sets the foundation for a student's long-term success. While some absences are unavoidable, students must be in class all day, every day, whenever possible. In Virginia, a student who misses 10% of the school year—roughly 18 days—is classified as "Chronically Absent." Routinely missing school for any reason can lead to academic, behavioral, and social challenges over time, so the state does not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. Schools are rated for their chronic absenteeism as part of Virginia's school accountability measures, and schools begin losing accountability rating points when too many students are classified as "Chronically Absent." We encourage families to limit absences, tardies, and early dismissals to only those times when they are truly necessary.

All absences count toward Chronic Absenteeism. So, when a student demonstrates a pattern of absences - even if they are excused - the school may contact the parent/guardian to conduct an Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) and develop a plan to remedy the problem. This will typically take place after a student has accrued ten or more total absences (excused or unexcused). This plan may include, but is not limited to:

- Requiring official documentation for all absences moving forward (denial of further parent/guardian excused absences)
- Limitations of parent/guardian excused absences in the next school year
- Requiring a student to ride their assigned bus
- Revoking school transfer approval (if applicable)
- Revoking non-resident enrollment approval (if applicable)

Missed Assignments and Make-Up Work: A student who is absent for any reason is expected to make up all missed assignments.

For pre-planned absences, the student or parent/guardian should request assignments to complete during the absence. Schoolwork assigned before the student's absence may be required on the first day the student returns to school. For unplanned absences, it is the student's responsibility to request missed assignments by contacting the teacher/school on the first day of returning to school. For each day absent, the student has one school day to submit missed assignments. Teachers have the discretion to accept missed assignments beyond this date.

Absences

Topic	Details
Notification for Absences	When absences are pre-planned, parents/guardians should provide advanced notice to the school by phone, email, fax, or note before the absence. When absences are not communicated in advance, parents/guardians must notify the school by phone, written note, fax, or email on the first day that the student returns to school. No parent/guardian note will be accepted beyond five days of the student's return to school. Written notification must contain the following: ● Date the note is written ● Student's full legal name ● Reason(s) for the absence(s) ● Date(s) of the absence(s) ● Parent/guardian(s) signature (acceptable by email if address can be verified by the school) Schools may accept phone calls on the day of the absence to document the missed day, as long as they can verify a parent/guardian is making the phone call. For excused absences (explained below), official documentation is required to verify medical, dental, mental health, or court appointments. The principal may require official documentation at any time if absenteeism is or becomes a concern. The principal makes the final determination regarding the validity of any excuses.

Excused Absences	Students shall not be tardy or absent without an acceptable excuse. Absences for the reasons listed below may be considered excused if documentation is received within five days of the student's return to school: ● **Medical (M)** - absences verified through official documentation from a medical, dental, or mental health provider due to illness or injury. This may also include appointments for treatment(s) or procedure(s) that cannot be scheduled outside of school hours. For recurring appointments that could be scheduled outside of school hours, principals may limit the number of excused absences. ● **Parent/Guardian Excused (GE)** - up to **ten** allowable absences per year may be excused when appropriately reported to the school by a parent/guardian (illness without a doctor's note, vacation/family trips, power outage, car trouble, missed the bus, family emergency, etc.). Students classified as chronically absent or truant in the previous school year will be limited to five parent/guardian excused absences. Students with an active court order for attendance are not eligible for parent/guardian excused absences. Absences beyond these limits will be unexcused. ● **Bus Cancelled (B)** - Bus cancellation by BCPS, and the parent does not have transportation to bring the student. ● **Court (C)** - Subpoenaed court appearance or legal obligations ● **Death(D)** - Death and/or funeral of an immediate family member ● **Religious (R**) - Religious observances (if such a holiday is verified and the school is notified in advance) ● Other good and just cause as approved by the principal. ○ Military obligation ○ For middle and high school students, one school day per school year to engage in a civic event ○ A maximum of 2 school days per academic year for participation in a 4-H educational program or activity; no credit will be provided for a student whose participation in a 4-H educational program or activity occurs during scheduled Standards of Learning assessments or during any period of time that the student is suspended or expelled from school; the student's principal or assistant principal may request a representative of 4-H to provide documentation of a student's participation in order for the student's absence to be excused ○ Subject to guidelines established by the Virginia Department of Education, students who are members of a state- or federally-recognized tribal nation that is headquartered in Virginia shall be granted one excused absence per academic year to attend such nation's pow wow gathering, provided that the student's parent provides the student's school with advance notice of the absence in the manner required by the school ○ Other good and just cause as approved by the principal.

Chronic Absenteeism	As previously mentioned, **all absences count** towards Chronic Absenteeism. So, when a student demonstrates a pattern of absences - **even if they are all excused** - the school may contact the parent/guardian to discuss the absences and develop a plan to remedy the problem. This will typically take place after a student has accrued **ten or more total absences (excused or unexcused)**. This may include, but is not limited to: ● Requiring official documentation for all absences moving forward (denial of further parent/guardian excused absences) ● Requiring a student to ride their assigned bus ● Revoking school transfer approval (if applicable) ● Revoking non-resident enrollment approval (if applicable) ● Report to the appropriate child protective services agency
Unexcused Absences	Students should be at school all day, every day. When a student is absent from school without a valid excuse (listed above), the absence will be recorded as: ● **Unexcused (U)** - the parent/guardian provides notification, but it is not considered an acceptable excused absence. Examples include, but are not limited to: missing the bus (not due to a cancellation by BCPS), car trouble, personal business, oversleeping, needed at home, working on a job, or other reasons deemed unacceptable by the principal. ● **Unexcused Truant (UT)** - no notification of absence
Truancy (Excessive Unexcused Absences)	When a student accrues five or more unexcused absences, this is referred to as “truancy,” and the following actions will take place: ● **5th Unexcused Absence (AIM)** ● Letter - the principal sends a notification informing the parent/guardian of the attendance concerns and intention to hold a meeting. ● Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM Meeting) - a required meeting with the principal, parent/guardian, and student to gain an explanation of the student's absences and to develop a plan to resolve the nonattendance. During this meeting, the principal will also explain the consequences of continued nonattendance. ● Only official, verified documentation will be accepted for absences moving forward. No Parent/Guardian Excused absences will be permitted at this point ● **6th+ Unexcused Absence (BEST)**

- Bedford Engagement in Student Truancy (BEST Meeting) - if the student has one more unexcused absence after the previous step, then the principal will inform the parent/guardian of a required meeting at the Bedford County Public School Administration Office that will include the principal, parent/guardian, student, division truancy representative, Department of Social Services, and Court Services.

- During this meeting, the team will discuss the student's nonattendance and failure to comply with the school-based plan. The team may:
  - Add to the existing attendance plan and continue to monitor the student's attendance.
  - File a complaint with the juvenile and domestic relations district court alleging that the pupil is a child in need of services or a child in need of supervision as defined in § 16.1-228. This is often referred to as a "CHINS."
  - Institute proceedings against the parent pursuant to § 18.2-371 or 22.1-262

- **Additional Unexcused Absences**
  - If the BEST team does not file a complaint with the court or institute proceedings against the parent, then the student's attendance will be closely monitored.
  - Any additional unexcused absences will automatically result in the filing of a complaint with the juvenile and domestic relations district court or institution of proceedings against the parent, as explained above.

- **CHINS, Active Court Orders, Administrative Docket**
  - If the court deems the student as a child in need of services or supervision (CHINS) or institutes proceedings against the parent as defined above, the school will comply with such orders and may limit or restrict absences and/or alternative programs as indicated in the court order.

- **Additional Information**
  - When a student who is under 18 and has 10 or more consecutive unexcused absences, the principal may notify the juvenile and domestic relations court, which may take action to suspend the student's driver's license. (46.2-323(E) of the Code of Virginia and BCPS policy JED).
  - If a court finds that a child of at least 13 years of age has failed to comply with school attendance and meeting requirements as provided in § 22.1-258, the court shall order the denial of the child's driving privileges for a period of not less than 30 days. If such failure to comply involves a child under the age of 16 years and three months, the child's ability to apply for a driver's license shall be delayed for a period of not less than 30 days following the date he reaches the age of 16 and three months.
  - If the court finds a second or subsequent such offense, it may order the denial of a driver's license for a period of one year or until the juvenile reaches the age of 18, whichever is longer, or delay the child's ability to

	apply for a driver's license for a period of one year following the date he reaches the age of 16 and three months, as may be appropriate. ○ Any child who has a driver's license at the time of the offense or at the time of the court's finding as provided in subsection A1 shall be ordered to surrender his driver's license, which shall be held in the physical custody of the court during any period of license denial (§16.1-278.9, Code of Virginia).
Absences due to School-Sanctioned Events	Absences due to school-sanctioned activities do not count toward a student's cumulative number of absences. However, students will be expected to follow the policy for completing missed assignments.
Tardies	Students must arrive at school and each class on time. When students demonstrate a pattern of unexcused tardiness, the school may contact the parent/guardian to discuss the tardiness and develop a plan to remedy the problem.
Early Dismissal	Each school maintains a formal check-out system. Students will be released only upon request and authorization from the parent/guardian. A student will not be released to any person not authorized by the parent/guardian. The burden of proof regarding the authority of the person to receive the student is on the requesting party. Students who establish a pattern of frequent tardies or early dismissals may be required to participate in a meeting to develop a plan aimed at resolving the issue. Repeated concerns may be referred for court intervention.
Notification of Retention or Credit Denial Due to Attendance	Should a student accumulate more than **sixteen (16) absences**, the student may be denied promotion to the next grade level, regardless of whether the absences are excused, unexcused, or unverified. The school will notify parents if their child is being retained or denied credit for a course due to absences. This will be done at a parent meeting and/or by letter. If a student is denied credit or is being retained due to absences and the student has a passing grade, the parent may apply for an attendance waiver. The waiver process will be used if a parent requests that an elementary school student be promoted despite being absent more than sixteen (16) days. The student's parent or guardian will send a written request for a waiver and any supporting information or documentation to the principal. The principal will approve or deny the request for a waiver and notify the parent/guardian.

Required Notices and Legal References

School attendance is critical for academic achievement and the preparation of students for the world of work. Each parent/guardian, having charge of a child within the compulsory attendance age, shall be responsible for the child's regular and punctual attendance at school as required under the provisions of the law. Based upon the state compulsory attendance law, accreditation standards, and the sincere belief of the administration that regular student attendance is imperative for proper adjustment and success in school. Student attendance shall be monitored and reported as required by state law and regulations.

Upon Fifth Unexcused Absence Without Parental Awareness and Support
Whenever any pupil fails to report to school for a total of five scheduled school days for the school year and no indication has been received by school personnel that the pupil's parent is aware of and supports the pupil's absence, and a reasonable effort to notify the parent has failed, the school principal shall make a reasonable effort to ensure that direct contact is made with the parent in person, through telephone conversation, or through the use of other communications devices to obtain an explanation for the pupil's absence and to explain to the parent the consequences of continued nonattendance. The principal, the pupil, and the pupil's parent shall jointly develop a plan to resolve the pupil's nonattendance. Such plan shall include documentation of the reasons for the pupil's nonattendance (§ 22.1-258, Code of Virginia).

After Fifth Unexcused Absence Without Parental Awareness and Support
If the pupil is absent for more than one additional day after direct contact with the pupil's parent, and school personnel have received no indication that the pupil's parent is aware of and supports the pupil's absence, the school principal shall schedule a conference with the pupil, his parent, and school personnel. The conference shall be held no later than 10 school days after the tenth absence of the pupil, regardless of whether the parent approves of the conference. The conference team shall monitor the pupil's attendance and may meet again as necessary to address concerns and plan additional interventions if attendance does not improve.

If the student continues to accumulate absences after the school-based plan has been developed, the family may be recommended to participate in a truancy team meeting with the principal, division truancy representative, the Department of Social Services, and Court Services. If the parent is intentionally noncompliant with compulsory attendance requirements or the pupil is resisting parental efforts to comply with compulsory attendance requirements, the principal shall schedule a conference with the pupil and his parent within 10 school days and may (i) file a complaint with the juvenile and domestic relations district court alleging the pupil is a child in need of services as defined in § 16.1-228 or (ii) institute proceedings against the parent pursuant to § 18.2-371 or 22.1-262. In filing a complaint against the student, the attendance officer shall provide written documentation of the efforts to comply with the provisions of this section. In the event that both parents have been awarded joint physical custody pursuant to § 20-124.2 and the school has received notice of such order, both parents shall be notified at the last known addresses of the parents. (§ 22.1-258, Code of Virginia.

Parental Cooperation in Resolving Excessive Unexcused Absences
Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit in any way the authority of any attendance officer or division superintendent to seek immediate compliance with the compulsory school attendance law (§ 22.1-258, Code of Virginia). Attendance officers, other school personnel, or volunteers organized by the school administration for this purpose shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability in connection with the notice to parents of a pupil's absence or failure to give such notice as required by § 22.1-258, Code of Virginia.

Compulsory School Attendance and Alternative Education Attendance
A student for whom an individual student alternative education plan has been granted and who fails to comply with the conditions of such plan shall be in violation of the compulsory school attendance law, and the division superintendent or attendance officer of the school division in which such student was last enrolled shall seek

immediate compliance with the compulsory school attendance law (§ 22.1-254 (E)(d), Code of Virginia)

BEHAVIOR - CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

While students are required to adhere to the policies and expectations of the Code of Student Conduct at Bedford Elementary, we desire that the school and home join hands in the guidance of the children. Your support in this endeavor is appreciated.

The *Code of Student Conduct* is the handbook available to all families, which includes a list of rules and expectations for students and is reviewed/renewed each year. The purpose of the Bedford County Public Schools *Code of Student Conduct* is to promote fairness and equity through clear, developmentally appropriate, and consistent expectations. Further, the *Code of Student Conduct* is designed to ensure that students learn from their mistakes and minimize inappropriate or disruptive behaviors while keeping all students in school, where they may obtain maximum benefit from the educational opportunities afforded to them.

Reimbursement Notice for Lost, Broken, Destroyed, or Unreturned School Property (Policy JN Student Fees, Fines, and Charges)

Students and their parents are responsible for any school property used by the student in the pursuit of his/her studies that is lost, broken, destroyed, or not returned to the school. For the 2026-2027 school year, the student's parents must reimburse the school for any outstanding bills due to lost, broken, destroyed, or unreturned school property before the student is allowed to participate in graduation ceremonies. Parents and students with financial needs may discuss a payment plan and special needs with the school principal.

Tobacco–Free School

Smoking, chewing, or any other use of any tobacco products by students and adults shall be prohibited on school property as defined in this policy. For purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

"School property" shall mean all property owned, leased, rented, or otherwise used by a school, including but not limited to the following:

- All interior portions of any building or other structure used for instruction, administration, support services, maintenance, or storage.
- All vehicles used by the division for transporting students, staff, visitors, or other persons.
- "Tobacco" shall include cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, vapes, e-cigarettes, and all other kinds and forms of tobacco prepared in such a manner as to be suitable for chewing, smoking, or both. "Tobacco" shall include cloves or any other product packaged for smoking.

* "Use" shall mean lighting, chewing, inhaling, or smoking tobacco products.

Please be aware that the law in Virginia changed as of February 2019, making it illegal for anyone under 21 years old to buy, possess, use, or distribute any tobacco product, including vapes. As such, school administrators will report any

tobacco misuse to the local law enforcement as required by law, which could result in an additional report to the VA Department of Social Services.

Vandalism

No one shall rip, break, draw on, or destroy the school's belongings or someone else's personal things.

Dangerous Objects/Firearms/Explosives/Arson

Carrying, bringing, using, or possessing any firearm, dangerous device, or dangerous or deadly weapon in any school building, on school grounds, in any school vehicle, or at any school-sponsored activity is prohibited and grounds for disciplinary action. (This includes toy guns or look-alike guns)

Disruptive Behavior

Students are not to display disruptive behavior at school or on the bus. Disruptive behavior includes anything that keeps the teacher from teaching or the other students in the classroom from learning. Some examples are cursing, possessing or displaying obscene materials, excessive talking during "quiet" learning time, talking back to or otherwise showing disrespect for any adult at the school, running in the building, and bothering or teasing other students.

Fighting

Fighting is not allowed. Disagreements should be settled peacefully. School staff are available to help if needed.

Integrity

Each student at Bedford Elementary is a unique, special person. We do not cheat, copy the work of others, steal, or tell untruths.

School-wide Expectations

- Always Do Your Best
- Respect Everyone and Everything
- There is No Time to Waste

Students must obey all school, classroom, and bus expectations.

BULLYING

Bullying is defined as any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between the aggressor or aggressors and victim; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. "Bullying" includes cyberbullying. "Bullying" does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, argument, or peer conflict.

Bullying may take many forms, including the following:

1. Physical Bullying – physical acts of aggression including, but not limited to, hitting, kicking, tripping, blocking, or pushing, and physical intimidation by gesture;
2. Verbal/Nonverbal Bullying – threats or gestures of physical aggression, name-calling or insults, mocking behaviors, obscene gestures, or graffiti reflecting bullying behavior on school property;
3. Relational Bullying – spreading rumors with intent to harm, intentional exclusion or isolation, or group actions unified toward threatening or humiliating another;
4. Cyberbullying – bullying by use of information and communication technologies that may include, but is not limited to, spreading information or pictures that would be defined as bullying, impersonation of a virtual identity, or forwarding information intended to be private.
5. Cyber-bullying would fall under the investigation of school staff when it materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of the school; and
6. Sexual Bullying/Harassment – unwanted touching of a sexual nature, obscene gestures or comments made about a person's sexuality or sexual activity.

Bullying is not allowed and should be reported immediately. To report bullying, stakeholders should complete the Bullying Report Form that can be located on the Bedford County Public Schools' webpage, Bedford Elementary School's Webpage, and/or in the Code of Student Conduct. When completed, please submit the form to any school staff member, preferably an administrator.

BUS - Transportation To & From School

School buses are operated for the safe transportation of students traveling to and from school and school activities. As a reminder, the bus is a privilege, which may be revoked when the general conduct of the student is detrimental to the safety and comfort of others on the school bus.

The bus driver will fill out a Transportation Department School Bus Discipline Referral Form when a student violates bus regulations or displays unacceptable bus conduct.

Each student is required to ride his/her assigned bus and get on and off at his/her designated bus stop. A student may be allowed to ride a bus other than the assigned bus and/or get on or off at a stop other than the designated stop if the student has written permission from the parent or guardian, approved in advance by the office personnel. Notes must include:

- Student's full name
- Date(s)
- Bus number
- Location of drop-off
- Name of the person responsible for your child
- Name(s) of other children involved

All bus stops shall be located on state-maintained roads. Students shall not have to walk further than one mile along state-maintained roads to the designated stop. The distance from the student's house to the maintained road is not considered part of the one-mile distance limit. A student shall not be permitted or required to cross a three-lane, four-lane, or divided highway to get on the bus.

Students are under the authority of the Bedford County School Board while riding the school bus and while waiting at the bus stop. Parents are requested to accompany their young children to and from the bus stop. Parents are required to be at the bus stop if the student is in grades K–3. If no one is at the stop, the child will be returned to the school.

BUS LOADING AND UNLOADING

The faculty supervises the loading and unloading of school buses while on school property.

BUS EXPECTATIONS

Every student at Bedford is expected to show proper conduct while on the school bus. The driver is to receive the same respect as the classroom teacher. It is a privilege (not a right) to ride the school bus. In order to have this privilege, students must follow the bus rules while on the bus and at the bus stop. All students must abide by the Student Code of Conduct and will be subject to the prescribed disciplinary actions described therein. Students are expected to comply with the following regulations:

- Remember, the bus driver is in charge of all passengers, has the authority to assign seats, and may make any other arrangements deemed necessary to maintain a safe and orderly environment. You are required to obey the directives of the driver.
- Be respectful and courteous to the bus driver and all passengers.
- Talk quietly and politely.
- Use language appropriate to the school setting.
- Keep the bus neat and clean.
- No food or drink can be consumed on the bus or at the bus stop.
- Remain in your seat and face forward.
- Keep the aisles and exits clear.
- Only bring items onto the bus that can be held in your lap.
- Head, arms, and objects must remain inside the bus at all times.
- Objects must remain on the bus and not be thrown out of the windows.
- You are not to tamper with the emergency door or other bus equipment.
- Student behavior must not distract the driver or cause a safety hazard. This includes any form of misbehavior, rule violation, or loud talking or laughing, or talking to the bus driver while the bus is in motion (except in an emergency).
- Remember that all school rules still apply when you ride the school bus. For example, the use or possession of tobacco, e-cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs is not allowed.

The Supervisor of Transportation receives all copies of letters and conduct reports and is consulted on individual student behavior.

BUS DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES

After a student has demonstrated a pattern of disruptive behavior (loud noise, out of seat, etc.), the bus driver will warn the student verbally. After a verbal warning, the process for dealing with written referrals will be as follows:

A Bedford County School Disciplinary Referral Form will be filled out by the bus driver when a student violates bus regulations or displays unacceptable conduct. Students may receive bus conduct reports for actions witnessed by the driver or filmed by the video camera.

- 2nd - 5th Grades: Students receiving referrals at these grade levels may be subject to the following guidelines as consequences for their inappropriate behavior, as the school administrator sees fit.
- Loss of Riding Privileges, Detention, In-School Suspension, and Out-of-School Suspension may also be used as consequences.
- Some behaviors necessitate immediate suspension, and students will be placed at the appropriate step.

For students with disabilities, administrators should consult special education case managers to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal guidelines.

CAFETERIA

Bedford Elementary operates a school cafeteria, which provides well-balanced and delicious meals for all students.

À la carte items are available daily. Parents may request that children not be allowed to purchase additional food items beyond the regular meal by notifying the cafeteria manager at 540-586-0275. Parents are not allowed to bring food for a whole class that would take the place of lunch.

Families are welcome to join their child for meals at the school. These should be prearranged with the homeroom teacher. The cafeteria is open each day from 7:20 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. for breakfast, and lunches are from 10:50 a.m. to 1:00 p.m..

Students are asked not to share food products. Likewise, parents, guardians, and guests are not permitted to bring food products to share with other students.

The cafeteria register is computerized. Students purchase meals/a la carte by entering their 7-digit student ID number. It is helpful and appreciated if students practice and memorize their code.

Children with Special Dietary Needs

School Nutrition Services may make food substitutions, at its discretion, for students who do not have a disability but who are medically certified as having a special medical or dietary need. Such determinations are made on a case-by-case basis.

Each special dietary request must be supported by a Medical Statement signed by a recognized medical authority. The Medical Statement must include:

• Identification of the medical or other special dietary condition that restricts the student's diet;

• The food or foods to be omitted from the student's diet; and
• The food or choice of foods to be substituted.

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

If we do not receive a medical statement from a recognized medical authority, your child will receive a regular lunch tray. Medical statements completed by parents or guardians will not be accepted.

CAFETERIA - CHARGE POLICY

Students are not allowed to charge extra items such as bottled water or ice cream.

Please be aware that each school cafeteria has what is referred to as an “Angel Fund Account”. Over the years, the School Nutrition Program has been contacted by community organizations, individuals in the community, churches, and even our school division staff, asking to make donations that could be used to help students who may not have the funds to purchase school meals. The Angel Fund Accounts were established for this purpose. Anyone wishing to donate to Bedford Elementary School’s Angel Fund Account can do so by writing a check to the school and indicating “BES Angel Fund Account" in the memo line. Once a check is received in the school cafeteria, the cafeteria manager will deposit it, and the funds will be added to the Angel Fund Account.

If you have any questions regarding the meal charge policy, you may speak with the school cafeteria manager or contact Suzanne Quesenberry, School Nutrition Supervisor at (540) 586-1045 ext. 10224.

CAFETERIA - FREE AND REDUCED PRICE LUNCH

Bedford Elementary is a CEP (Community Eligibility School), which means that all students are fed breakfast and lunch at no cost. To receive a meal at no cost, students must select a **reimbursable meal**. A reimbursable meal is one that meets USDA meal pattern requirements and includes the required food components and serving sizes for the student's grade level. School cafeteria staff are available to assist students in making reimbursable meal selections.

2026-2027 Nutrition Price List

CAFETERIA - LINQ Connect

LINQ Connect is an online payment portal giving parents a quick and easy way to manage and add funds to their student’s meal account. Families may deposit funds to student meal accounts with their credit or debit card online at LINQ Connect www.linqconnect.com. This is a secure, third-party vendor. Online payments have a processing fee of 3.95% of the transaction, with a minimum fee of $2.85 per transaction. Payments may be made at **no charge** in all school cafeterias by cash or check. There is no charge to maintain your LINQ Connect account, which allows families to view student meal transactions and set spending limits or restrictions.

CELL PHONES/PERSONAL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE (PECD)

Definitions
"Bell-To-Bell" means from arrival at the start of the school day until the dismissal bell rings at the end of the school academic day. This includes lunch and time between classes.

"Cell Phone" means a personal device capable of making calls, transmitting pictures or video, or sending and receiving messages through electronic means. This is inclusive of a non-smartphone that is limited to making phone calls or sending text messages, a smartphone that encompasses the above features, and other future personal electronic devices with the abovementioned characteristics.

"Personal Electronic Communication Device" (PECD) means any personal device capable of connecting to a smartphone, the internet, a cellular or Wi-Fi network, or directly to another similar device. This may include some wearable devices such as smartwatches, personal headphones, tablets, personal laptops, and other future electronic communication devices.

Restrictions on the Use of Cell Phones or Personal Electronic Communication Devices (PECD) for Students

- **The use of cell phones and/or PECD by students shall be restricted as follows:**
    - For elementary school students (grades PK-5), the use of cell phones and/or PECD is prohibited during the school day and on school buses. Students should not bring any devices to school. If an elementary school student has a cell phone and/or PECD that the parent/guardian believes is needed for before and/or after-school contact with family members, it must be turned off and left in the student's book bag at all times, including on the school bus.

      Student Expectations:

- Elementary students should not bring cell phones or PECDs to school. They cannot use cell phones during the instructional day or on school buses. If a student uses a phone during this time, the principal or designee will follow the disciplinary consequences defined in this regulation. Bus suspension is the consequence in lieu of in-school suspension for bus-related violations
- Parents/guardians should communicate with their child(ren) through the school office during the school day and avoid using their cell phones and/or PECD so that students can remain focused on instruction. BCPS or BCPS staff shall not be responsible for students' damaged, missing, or stolen cell phones and/or PECD

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBERS (HOME AND WORK)

The school must be notified immediately of any change in residency or phone numbers at home or work.

CHECKS

Personal Checks are accepted at Bedford Elementary School. Checks must include Name, Phone number, address, and driver's license ID number. Families are asked to fill out and sign checks in blue/black ink as the bank will not accept them otherwise. Returned checks written to Bedford Elementary are collected through Envision Payment Solutions, along with a returned check fee.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Teachers or other employees of Bedford Elementary School are mandated reporters and must report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to Social Services.

COMPUTER USE COMPLIANCE

Compliance

The Bedford County Public Schools Acceptable Use Policy complies with state and federal telecommunication codes, laws, and regulations.

Purpose of the Acceptable Use of the Computer System Policy

To establish clear guidelines for all students who access the Bedford County Public Schools' ("BCPS") computer system.

Agreements are found in the Student Code of Conduct handbook. These are electronically signed by the parent(s) and each student when InfoSnap is completed during the registration/enrollment process. A hard copy of the agreement can be printed during this registration process or within the *Code of Student Conduct*. An electronic copy can also be accessed on the BCPS homepage under the Technology tab.

Students in grades K-5 must complete a series of 6 modules within the first four days of enrollment and have a signed TUG agreement in place before a device will be allowed to leave campus.

Damaged devices must be reported to the teacher or library media specialist as soon as possible.

COURT / PROTECTIVE ORDERS

If there are any court orders concerning custody or any other procedure that may have implications on day-to-day school functioning, please make sure the school has a copy on file in the office. Additionally, if these orders should change at any time during the school year, please provide the school office with the most recent copy.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION SYSTEM

Bedford County Schools has established a system for releasing classified information on students. Each school will establish Directory Information for its school, which may contain the following information:

- Name of Student Address
- Telephone listing
- Date and place of birth
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Height, weight (if member of athletic team)
- Dates of attendance
- Awards and honors received

The establishment of Directory Information allows the school to release such information for school athletic programs, graduation, news releases, and other such announcements.

Parents/guardians have the right to refuse the school's permission to use any or all such information in the School Directory. Please notify the school in writing 20 days after receiving this handbook, of such objection to any part or all of such information about the child being released without prior consent. Please address the letter to the Principal of Bedford Elementary School.

Discipline-Principals and Practices

Bedford Elementary School encourages self-discipline in our students. The behavior expected from the students is based on common respect, courtesy, and safety considerations. Effective school discipline takes place when the following criteria are met:

1. Instruction is differentiated and of high quality, and students are engaged.
2. Children are given positive reinforcement for good behavior.
3. The school expectations are posted and taught.
4. The school consequences are clearly defined.
5. Teachers and parents work together to improve a child's behavioral skills.
6. The behavior management plan is consistent and fair.

* Classroom expectations will be posted in each classroom.

* Special focus will be given to character education and teaching/modeling appropriate behavior.

Positive behavior reinforcement will be encouraged throughout the school. Responses to poor behavior are intended to change behavior for the future more than simply to administer punishment. Each teacher will compose a classroom behavior plan. Parents and students should also refer to the Bedford County Publication "Code of Student Conduct" as a further reference to how discipline is administered. Bedford Elementary staff and administrators will take a consistent and progressive approach when dealing with undesirable student behaviors.

DISCIPLINE – SCHOOL CONSEQUENCES

1) Missed Recess - Students will lose a portion of their recess time.
2) Lunch Detention – Students will eat lunch in the office area in isolation.
3) After-School Detention – Students will remain after school until 3:30 and will be picked up in the main office by a parent/guardian.
4) ISS – Students will work on assignments in isolation from other students.
5) OSS - Students will not be permitted to attend school for the duration of the suspension.

DRESS CODE STANDARDS

BCPS has created standards for student dress in order to empower learners for future success and foster a safe and dynamic learning environment. BCPS operates in a manner that respects differences based on sex, race, color, national origin, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, ancestry, marital or parental status, and other factors. For these reasons, the School Board and school staff rely on students and parents to exercise good judgment in selecting appropriate clothing that does not disrupt learning or cause a safety concern. Students must wear a shirt and pants, shorts, or a skirt or the equivalent (dress, jumper, etc.) and shoes. Clothing must cover the torso below the armpits as well as the buttocks.

The following types of attire (including clothing, jewelry, or other displayed personal belongings) are prohibited:

1. Attire that has language or images that are offensive, profane, vulgar, discriminatory, or racially/culturally divisive. This would include confederate flags, swastikas, KKK references, or any other images that might reasonably be considered hurtful or intimidating to others.
2. Attire that has language or images that promote illegal conduct, violence, or the use of drugs or alcohol.
3. Attire that causes or is reasonably likely to cause a substantial disruption to the learning environment.
4. Attire that causes or is reasonably likely to cause a safety concern.

Some school or classroom activities and curriculum may require specific dress guidelines (e.g., physical education). Any such requirements will be explained by the school staff and addressed in a course syllabus/parent letter.

Note: Shoes (preferably with rubber soles and laces/Velcro) must be worn at all times

Student Dress Code and Special Circumstances:

- Some classroom activities and curriculum may require specific dress guidelines (e.g., physical education). Any such changes will be explained by school staff and addressed through various forms of school communication.
- Administrators, coaches, and sponsors may suspend portions of the dress code and allow students to wear other appropriate attire at special activities, or other special classroom activities, or curriculum. Any changes will be explained by the school staff through various forms of school communication. Such activities may be related to field days, theme days, field trips, and physical education.

Dispositions:

- Referral to the school administrator
- After-school detention

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Cameras, expensive items, and large sums of money should not be brought to school. The school is not responsible for stolen or broken personal items brought to school. The school administrator may search or permit the search of a student's property when there is reasonable cause to believe the student possesses a dangerous, illegal, or stolen item.

ELEMENTARY PROGRAM OF STUDIES

The Elementary Program of Studies is written to serve as a handy reference about regulating procedures and programs within the thirteen elementary schools of the division. Each school is unique in its curricular implementation and offers a well-rounded program, which prepares students for life, as we know it, and for living and learning in the world of tomorrow. The Elementary Program of Studies can be accessed by visiting the Bedford County Public Schools homepage, clicking on the Families & Students tab, and then clicking on Program of Studies. Students in all grades will need to master the State Standards of Learning objectives outlined in the Elementary Program of Studies.

EMERGENCIES AND / OR EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

Schools may be closed because of extreme weather conditions, such as snow, ice, flooding, failure of mechanical or electrical equipment, epidemics, or other emergencies. Should it become necessary to close schools during the day, radio and television stations will be notified. Closings/Delays are publicized in the following manner:

- Local Radio Stations (K92, Q99, 93.5 Sunny FM)
- Local Television Channels (WDBJ 7, WSLS 10, WSET 13)
- Bedford County Public Schools' Website
- Bedford County Public Schools' Weather Line 540-586-1045 Ext 10333
- Bedford County Public Schools' Facebook Page
- Bedford County Public Schools' Twitter Page
- Bedford County Public School's App ("Bedford CPS" available for iPhone and Android users)

On occasion, schools may be operated on a delayed schedule. The division superintendent has the authority to open the school one or two hours later than the regular starting time. Every effort will be made to have morning radio, TV, and social media announcements of school closings or delays made in a time frame that allows for families to make necessary arrangements.

Parents should communicate with their child(ren) a contingency plan in case school closes early, and they are not home. Also, leave the current inclement weather information at school. If both parents work, make sure the school has your business phone number as well as the names of the persons allowed to pick up your children at school in case of an emergency. **NO OTHER PERSONS WILL BE ALLOWED TO TAKE YOUR CHILD UNLESS WE HAVE WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM YOU, OR THEY ARE LISTED ON YOUR EMERGENCY FORM.**

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES
EARTHQUAKE / TORNADO / FIRE / THREATS

The superintendent's office will be notified as soon as information is received that emergency evacuation is necessary.

A plan for early school dismissal will be put into effect. Schools do not have emergency shelters; therefore, all students will be transported home unless it is impossible. If this is the case, the principal is responsible for taking the students to the nearest emergency shelter or safe place.

School administrators will determine the safest place for students to assemble until buses arrive. School personnel will supervise the loading of buses. The principal will check to be sure that students who do not ride a bus are directed to go straight home, including students who are transported by car.

EMERGENCIES - FIRE DRILLS

In case of fire or other emergencies, the signal to evacuate the building will be a loud, continuous horn. Fire drill practice will be held once a week for the first month of school and once a month thereafter. During the procedure, there will be no talking or running. Fire Drill procedures are outlined in Bedford Elementary School's Emergency Operations Plan.

Weather-related procedures are practiced minimally annually. Lockdown drills are practiced three times each year with the Bedford County Public Schools Safety Coordinator and the Sheriff's Department. These procedures are included in the school's Emergency Operations Plan, which is updated annually and accessible exclusively by Bedford County Public School employees.

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

On December 10, 2015, the *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015* (ESSA) was signed into law. Section 1112(e)(2) of ESSA states that parents of students in Title I schools have a right to know about state or division policies regarding student participation in any assessments mandated by ESSA, including any policy, procedure, or parental right to opt students out of such assessments. If you would like to receive information about this topic, please contact Joel Dechant, Principal, either by phone at 540-586-0275 or in writing at 806 Tiger Trail, Bedford, VA 24523.

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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

- The right to inspect and review the student's scholastic records within 45 days of the day a school in Bedford County Public Schools (BCPS) receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to their child's school principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school principal or principal's designee will arrange for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

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

    - Parents or eligible students who wish to ask a BCPS school to amend their child's or their scholastic record should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the scholastic record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the scholastic record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

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

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

- Upon request, the BCPS schools disclose scholastic records without consent to officials of another school or school division in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled, if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. Whenever a student transfers from BCPS, a copy of the scholastic record, including disciplinary records, will be transferred to the school division the student transfers to upon request from the receiving school division. Disciplinary records include school records related to disciplinary action taken against a student for violating the School Board rules or policies on school property or at school-sponsored events.

- Reference BCPS Policy JO: Student Records for additional exceptions that FERPA authorizes disclosure of personally identifiable information without consent.

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

Student Privacy Policy Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

NOTICE FOR DIRECTORY INFORMATION

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a federal law, requires that Bedford County Public Schools (BCPS), with certain exceptions, obtain written consent from the parents and students who are 18 years of age and older (eligible students) prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's scholastic records. However, BCPS may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless the parent or eligible student has advised BCPS to the contrary in accordance with BCPS procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow BCPS to include this type of information from a student's scholastic records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- school yearbooks;
- graduation, theater, athletic, and music programs;
- video of performances, school activities, and athletic events;
- articles about school activities and events;
- lists of those receiving honors, awards, and scholarships; and
- Team rosters and class lists.

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

Directory information, which is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA), to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three categories of

directory information: names, addresses, and telephone listings. Directory information will be released to institutions of higher education that request this information. Per Code of Virginia § 22.1-287.1, a student's address, telephone listing, and email address will not be released to any other outside organizations unless a parent has given the school written permission to do so. The high schools will provide a form for parents or eligible students to opt out of disclosure to the military and higher education institutions, if requested.

If a parent or eligible student does not want BCPS to disclose directory information from scholastic records without prior written consent, they must notify the school principal in writing by September 18, 2026. BCPS has designated the following information as directory information**:**

- Student's name, including nickname
- Name of parent or guardian with whom the student lives
- Grade level
- Photographs and other images that feature the student
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Height and weight of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems that cannot be used to access education records without a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user.**.**

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents of elementary and secondary students certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, the collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include, but are not limited to, the right to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (protected information survey) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED) –

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parents;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of –

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law; and
3. Activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing, or to sell, or otherwise distribute the information to others. (This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.)

Inspect, upon request, and before administration or use –

1. Protected information surveys of students and surveys created by a third party;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or older (eligible student) or an emancipated minor under state law.

Bedford County Public Schools (BCPS) has adopted Policy JOB: Administration of Surveys and Questionnaires regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. BCPS will notify parents of the policy at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. BCPS will notify parents of the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys if BCPS has identified them at the start of the year. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and will be provided an opportunity to opt their child out. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. The following are covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution;
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED;
- Any nonemergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents, eligible students, or emancipated minors who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Student Privacy Policy Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

Any fundraising activities that involve students in door-to-door solicitation are not permitted. School and PTA-sponsored fundraising will be closely coordinated and monitored so that these do not become a burden on the community.

GIFTED PROGRAM

The program for learners who are academically gifted provides services in compliance with the *Virginia Regulations for Gifted Programs*. Learners are identified in the area of general intellectual ability. The school division supports appropriately differentiated instructional services for learners at all grade levels. Learners are tested in the second grade; however, learners may be referred for gifted testing in K-12 grades. They may be referred by teachers, counselors, parents, or themselves.

In the primary grades, classroom teachers are responsible for providing special learning experiences to enhance the development of children who have extended curricular instructional needs. Children may be able to participate in pull-out programs run by the resource teachers for gifted education. Specialized services usually include an extended academic program and a program to stimulate creativity in thinking and problem solving. In upper elementary grades, the classroom teacher and certified resource teacher may work together to provide instruction that is tailored to the child's interests and abilities.

Bedford Elementary School employs a gifted teacher who works with students who test into this program. Multiple criteria are utilized for the identification of gifted students as prescribed by the Board of Education. The teacher of the gifted gives general direction in the development and evaluation of programs for gifted students, provides appropriate programs for gifted students, and enhances educational opportunities designed for students with exceptional abilities by working collaboratively with teachers and pulling students for more individualized extension opportunities.

GRADING

Assignment and Test Grades

- The teacher will conduct frequent and ongoing evaluations. Teachers will differentiate between *formative* assessment, which is designed to improve student learning during instruction on a topic, and *summative* assessment, which is meant to measure learning after instruction on a topic.
- Because students learn and may demonstrate understanding in different ways, assessments will be varied across a grading period. They may include tests, quizzes, projects, and written papers graded with rubrics, notebook checks, homework, teacher observation checklists of academic skills, performance assessments, and other student-generated ways of demonstrating proficiency.
- Teachers are encouraged to assign cooperative learning tasks/group work for instructional purposes. Students should be graded on the work they do individually, either within or outside the group.
- Teachers determine the weight of test/assignment items and the procedures for scoring tests/assignments appropriate for a specific class or subject area.
- Extra credit assignments should be given cautiously so grades closely reflect actual student learning. Extra credit assignments should be viewed as additional opportunities to meet course standards.
- Teachers may use letters or other symbols (i.e., check mark, plus sign) on daily assignments and in teacher grade books for assignments for which a numerical value is not appropriate.
- Assignments, quizzes, and tests will be evaluated and/or graded, returned promptly, and reviewed with students before the next related assessment is administered. Students shall be allowed to keep or have access to all graded assessments when practical to use as study aids for future assessments.
- Students are expected to complete all assigned work. When they do not complete work by the assigned deadline, they may be required to complete it at another assigned time during or outside the school day. Parents should be notified when work completion becomes a problem, and the teacher should make multiple attempts to have students complete the work. Work not completed within the assigned period may be assigned a penalty after the teacher seeks to determine the cause of a student's failure to complete assigned work. If the student's failure to turn in work is justified, the student's work may be turned in late with an appropriate grade assigned. Partially completed work or work not turned in at all will be graded according to the amount and quality of work completed, and this may include a grade of "zero" if it is not turned in at all within a reasonable time frame.
- A teacher must accept late work if the student has an excused absence and has made arrangements to make up the work according to Policy JED. Work assigned previous to an absence is due the day a student returns to school unless special arrangements have been made in advance. Extenuating circumstances should be considered.

Nine-Week, Semester, and Final Grades

Because the purpose of grading student work is to communicate and foster student achievement, the following practices are called for:

- Formative assessments, including quizzes, checklists, teacher observations, "quick checks," and other brief assessments, will be administered on average at

least one assignment per week, with a minimum of 8 formative assessments per grading period. Collectively, they may be weighted at no more than 40% of the overall grade. Within this category, daily homework that is considered a formative assessment may count for no more than 10% of the overall grade.

- Summative assessments must be varied in format within a grading period (for example, tests, projects, writing assignments, performance assessments, and other student-generated ways of demonstrating proficiency) and will be weighted at least 60% of the overall grade. A minimum of 4 summative assessments is required per grading period.
- A single test/assignment cannot account for more than 15% of the nine-week grade, and an exam cannot account for more than 10% of the semester grade.
- Teachers are expected to use grading practices that limit the impact of "outlier" grades on quarter averages and that recognize student learning over time.

Teachers should give specific comments about student learning and behavior (if necessary) on report cards.

Elementary Schools (Grades K-5)

- Report cards will be issued at nine-week intervals on the 5th day following the last day of the previous nine-week period. Final report cards will be issued to students on the last day of school. All school division report cards will be distributed electronically through the PowerSchool Parent Portal and confidentially via School Messenger, with a division-wide reminder call to be sent when they are available. Requests from families for a printed copy to be sent home will be honored.
- Students will be issued interims digitally only at the fourth and seventh weeks of the grading period. Families will use the Parent Portal application to view their student's progress. BCPS will send notice to families that grades are updated and ready to view at the fourth and seventh weeks of the grading period.
- At least once per week, teachers will communicate students' academic progress with parents/guardians by sending home graded work. Written feedback should be graded according to "mastery, sufficient progress, or insufficient progress" or with a letter grade and should give feedback to the student about why the grade was assigned.
- Students will not receive letter grades for handwriting, social growth and citizenship, physical education, music, technology, and art. Students will receive non-point grades in these programs (M = Mastered Skill, S = Sufficient Progress, I = Insufficient Progress, N = Not Introduced). Social growth and citizenship will also be addressed in specific teacher comments. Teacher comments will focus on student self-awareness, self-management, social interaction skills, relationship skills, responsible decision-making, and other feedback the teacher believes is appropriate.
- Nine-week grades in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade will be assigned as follows. These grades will be based on specific learning standards. No final or semester grades will be assigned in these grades.

M-Mastered skill

S-Sufficient progress

I-Insufficient progress

N-Not introduced this grading period

- Nine-week grades in grades 3-5 will be assigned as follows. Quarter grades within a half-point will be rounded up to the nearest whole number when averaged.

A	90-100	Highly Proficient
B	80-89	Above Proficient
C	70-79	Proficient
D	60-69	Below Proficient
F	Below 60	Insufficient Evidence of Proficiency
I		Incomplete work

Interim reports

An interim report is not a report card, and because they are issued halfway through a grading period, they give students a chance to bring their grades up before report cards are issued and keeps parents informed of students' progress. At BES, interim reports are available electronically to parents in the 4th week of each quarter. They are sent again on the 7th week of the quarter if a student's performance falls below a C or if grades have dropped two letter grades since the 4-week report was made available.

Parent Portal

ParentPortal is the parents' access point to the teacher's online gradebook, allowing parents to monitor their child's progress and performance. Parents can obtain a Login and Username in the BES office by showing a driver's license. Parents will log on to http://powerschool.bedford.k12.va.us/public or by clicking on the ParentPortal link on the Bedford County Public Schools' website http://www.bedford.k12.va.us under the "Quick Links" option.

GUIDANCE PROGRAM

The school counseling and guidance program at Bedford Elementary School is developmentally appropriate to the needs of the child and includes all grade levels. Services provided consist of individual and group counseling offered on a child, parent, or teacher referral basis.

The program also includes classroom guidance lessons focusing on the academic, personal/social, and career development of students to align with the American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) standards for a comprehensive program. Lesson topics may include self-concept, friendship, organizational and time management skills, decision-making skills, coping skills, and others based on student and school needs. Personal/social counseling assists a student to develop an understanding of themselves, the rights and needs of others, how to resolve conflict, and to define individual goals, reflecting their interests, abilities, and aptitudes. Information and records of personal/social counseling will be kept confidential and separate from a student's

educational records and not disclosed to third parties without prior parental consent or as otherwise provided by law. Parents may elect, by notifying their child's school in writing, to have their child not participate in personal/social counseling.

As the old saying goes, "It takes a village to raise a child." The counselor is a part of the village and will do his/her part to help students be successful inside and outside of the classroom. Individual guidance regularly requires parental permission. The counselor is also available to parents to discuss their child's progress and special concerns they may have. During regular school hours or after school by appointment, counselors may be contacted by email or by calling the school at 540-586-0275.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF STUDENTS

At the beginning of the school year, please remember to update your child's health record with all pertinent information. This is extremely helpful as we plan to care for your child throughout the year. List medical conditions, dietary restrictions, and medications taken at home. Please update the clinic if there are changes during the year.

Any medication that needs to be administered to a child during school hours must be in the **ORIGINAL CONTAINER**. Parents will have to complete a "Permission to Dispense Medication" form **IN ADVANCE** from the school office to administer the medication. **Parents must bring ALL medication into school**. Medication cannot be sent in or home with your child. **WE WILL NOT** administer any medication without proper forms on file. Any prescription medication will require the signature of a physician.

A school nurse is in the clinic every school day between 7:15 a.m. and 2:45 p.m. If, during the school day, a child becomes ill (temperature, throwing up, other illnesses), the parent will be phoned and asked to pick up the child from school. **It is our policy also to contact parents concerning any significant injuries that students may receive at school.** A call may also be placed **at the discretion of the nurse for less severe concerns.**

In the fall and upon request throughout the school year, state guidelines are followed in screening our students in 2nd, and 5th grades, as well as any student new to BCPS. Screenings include: vision, hearing, and speech/language. Parents have the opportunity to decline this service in advance. Those electing to participate will receive documentation of screening results only if a problem is identified and needs follow-up action. However, results are readily available upon request.

Parents are asked to please bring all inhalers, EpiPens, and other medications and care plans to the clinic. Please, **DO NOT SEND ANY MEDICATIONS TO SCHOOL WITH STUDENTS.**

Immunization Requirements for School Entry

> Before entering a public school, every parent must provide documentation that the child has been immunized against communicable diseases or has begun receiving the first series of all such vaccinations as required by the Code of Virginia, unless the child is exempt or is a homeless child or youth (as defined in the Code of Virginia). Any parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of a child being home-instructed or exempted or excused from school attendance shall comply with state immunization requirements.

Acceptable evidence of required immunizations must include the month, day, and year each dosage was administered on forms developed by or approved by the Virginia Department of Health and must include a signature from the person completing the form. All students for whom dates cannot be provided (month, day, and year) must be referred to the local health department or their private health care provider to update their records before entering school.

The following immunizations are required:

- Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus (DTP)
  - Minimum of 4 doses
  - 1 of the 4 must be given on or after the fourth birthday.
- Polio Vaccine (OPV)
  - Minimum of 4 doses
  - 1 must be given on or after the fourth birthday.
- MMR (Measles, Mumps, and Rubella)
  - 2 doses
- Hepatitis B
  - 3 doses required before entering school.
- Varicella (Chickenpox)
  - 2 doses unless documentation from a physician verifying the child has had the disease.
  - Number of doses is age-dependent.
- Tdap Booster
  - 1 dose required before entering 7th grade.

A comprehensive physical is required upon entry to public school and must be completed by a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant within 12 months of the date of entry. Any questions about immunizations may be directed to the school nurse by calling 540-586-0275.

BCPS will abide by CDC, VDOH, and the Governor's orders regarding Health and Safety mandates.

HOMEWORK

Homework can provide an essential communication link between the school and the home. In addition, homework should be an important tool in developing independent thought, self-direction, and self-discipline. It can assist the student in developing good work habits and in the wise use of time.

Guidelines for homework include:

- Homework should be assigned after an introduction and a thorough explanation of the skills necessary to complete the assignment.
- Homework should be assigned in such a manner that it will be clearly understood by all students.
- Homework should serve a valid purpose and be closely related to classroom activities.
- A student's access to resource materials should be considered when making assignments.
- Students should receive timely feedback on their homework.

- Teachers should seek to determine the causes if a student regularly fails to complete assigned work. Teachers should not avoid giving homework because they believe students will not do the work.
- Excessive homework, like the absence of homework, should be avoided. To avoid excessive homework, general guidelines for homework are:
    - Elementary teachers instructing the same students shall communicate with each other to ensure that those in grades 1-3 have no more than about one hour of homework and those in grades 4 and 5 have no more than about one and a half hours of homework.
    - It is understood that a variance in homework completion time may result from students' differing skill levels.
- Homework should not be used for disciplinary purposes.
- Teachers and administrators should take appropriate steps to communicate with parents regarding the division's homework policy and to solicit their support.

HONOR ROLL

Students in grades 3-12 earn a place on the A Honor Roll or the A/B Honor Roll by meeting the following criteria based on nine-week grades:

- A Honor Roll: A student earns only As in each course for which a grade is assigned. Elementary resource class grades must be at the S level (no N or U grades).
- A/B Honor Roll: A student earns only As or Bs in each course for which a grade is assigned. Elementary resource class grades must be at the S level (no N or U grades).

Students who have been suspended from school during the grading period are not eligible for Honor Roll recognition, regardless of academic grades. Attendance and handwriting are not considered in awarding the Honor Roll.

LIBRARY POLICIES

The primary function of a school's library media center (LMC) is to implement, enrich, and support the educational program of the school. The LMC provides a wide range of materials at various levels of sophistication, with a diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view. As such, the LMC serves as the instructional materials center for the school. It supports and enhances every facet of the school's curriculum. Each class in grades 2nd-5th has a weekly library period. During this time, students will participate in oral reading, storytelling, library skills instruction, and special presentations, as well as book selection and/or return of books. The library is open at other times for research, book selection, and return of library materials. Parents are asked to encourage their children to be responsible for the library books checked out. Books are due one week from the day checked out. If a book is lost or damaged, the student is expected to pay its replacement cost. Parents/caretakers can elect to be notified of the books their child is checking out from the library.

LOITERING / TRESPASSING

Students are not allowed on school property before or after school hours (7:25 – 3:00) unless they are participating in a school-related event or events sponsored by the Recreation Department. Students must be supervised at all times while on school property. No Trespassing signs are posted and enforced between the hours of 6 p.m. and 6 a.m.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found articles are kept for a period of time in storage in the cafeteria area or another designated location. After an extended period of time, items not claimed are often donated to those in need.

MASTER SCHEDULE

Visit the school's website to view this year's master schedule.

NEWS RELEASES

Photographs are routinely taken of children and staff participating in activities occurring at school. These photos may be released to local media outlets (i.e., newspapers). Parents may object to children's photos being shared with the news media by notifying their child's teacher. Also, parents may indicate the same message during student registration while completing the online agreements.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTAL RIGHTS

Non-custodial parents do not give up their parental rights by virtue of divorce. The General Assembly added 22.1 1-279.4 to the Code of Virginia, which specifically allows non-custodial parents to participate in school-related activities. The law states that unless there is a court order to the contrary, non-custodial parents cannot be denied the opportunity to participate in school activities such as lunch breaks, parent-teacher conferences, and extracurricular activities. The law states that non-custodial parents should be allowed to participate in any activity that is supported or encouraged by the school. If there is a court order denying access, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide a copy of that order to the school. (8VAC 20-150-370 10). As court orders change, the school should be provided a copy of the most recent document(s). The paperwork with the most current date provided to school staff will be what is enforced.

Parental Rights (BCPS Board Policy KP)

Unless there is a court order to the contrary, both parents have the right to:

- View the child's school records (under BCPS Policy JO).
- receive school progress reports, the school calendar, and notices of major school events;
- Visit the school (under Policy KK);

- participate in parent-teacher conferences, in the case of the noncustodial parent, after a timely request is made;
- Receive all notifications under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
- Receive notice of the student's extended absence (as defined in and according to Policy JED) if both parents have joint physical custody.

Parent Responsibilities (BCPS Board Policy KP)

The custodial parent has the responsibility to:

- Keep the school office informed as to the address of residence and how he or she may be contacted at all times.
- On the Bedford County Schools registration form, list the current address and phone number of the noncustodial parent, unless such address is unknown and the parent signs a statement to that effect, or unless a court order restricts the educational or contact rights of the parent; and
- Provide a copy of any legal document that restricts the educational and/or contact rights of the noncustodial parent.

The noncustodial parent:

- Has the responsibility to keep the school office apprised of changes in his or her current phone number and address.
- May make timely requests to participate in parent-teacher conferences.
- May request to be included as an emergency contact for the student's activities unless a court order has been issued to the contrary.

OFFICE / BUSINESS HOURS

The school office hours are 7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Our secretaries are Mrs. Maribeth Jewell, and Mrs. Cathy Stegall. These ladies are happy to assist families in any way possible.

Visitors and volunteers are welcome. The school opens for student arrivals at 7:20 AM for bus and car riders. Children can not be dropped off before these times due to a lack of supervision available. Likewise, because teachers leave at 2:55 PM each day, all students must be picked up unless prior arrangements have been made with staff (i.e., tutoring, special event, after-school detention, etc.).

PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

All families are encouraged to become an active part of the PTA. Parental energy, enthusiasm, and ideas are beneficial to all TIGERS. Membership is an excellent way to demonstrate care and concern for the school community to children. If you are interested in serving in the PTA, please contact the school office.

PTA Officers

President,	Vice President,	Secretary,	Treasurer
Liz Heck	Candice Culpepper	TBD	TBD

PARENT VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Bedford Elementary School appreciates all volunteer services. Volunteers are placed in a tiered status based on duties and responsibilities and may be asked to complete a criminal background check if the volunteer position requires anything other than direct supervision by a teacher, coach, and/or administrator at all times. TIER 1 Volunteers would serve sporadically, not on a regular basis. TIER 2 Volunteers are those who may supervise or monitor students under the general supervision of the teacher, head coach, and/or administrator.

PARKING, LOADING, AND UNLOADING CHILDREN

When visiting the school or bringing children to and from school, parents, guardians, and visitors should park in the front parking lot facing the school. All visitors are asked not to park along the car rider loop in front of the school. Parents letting students out of cars in the morning should do so at the car rider line so they can enter through the front door. Car riders will be picked up at that same location in the afternoon, starting at 2:20 p.m.

Due to safety concerns, students will not be called from class after 2:00 p.m. for dismissal except in extreme emergencies. Because cars and buses are lining up, dismissing students to parents would result in the need to walk among moving vehicles, unable to see or be seen. It is a safety hazard.

PETS AT SCHOOL

The safety of the students is of utmost importance. Because some students may have significant allergic reactions, no pets should be brought to school. Classroom teachers may arrange for a special pet day where all parents are aware of the animals in the room that day.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Tennis shoes are required to take part in the Physical Education program as well as recess. If, for some reason, a child is unable to participate in physical education to the full extent of the activity, parents are asked to send a note by the child to Mrs. Isner, the P.E. teacher, explaining the circumstances. If a child has a physical condition that may cause harm to them, be sure to let your child's teachers and the school nurse know.

All students in grades 4 and 5 are required to take the State Board of Education Physical Fitness Test in the fall and the spring. Students should be encouraged to participate fully in the exercise program at school and to exercise and play at home after school.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

The 2000 session of the General Assembly amended Section 22.1-203 of the Code of Virginia to require daily observation of a moment of silence, not to exceed one minute, in every classroom in the public schools of Virginia. The teacher is to ensure that all pupils remain seated and silent and make no distracting displays during this time. Students may engage in any silent activity that does not interfere with other students.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Current legislation [Section 22.1-202] states, “all students shall be required to learn the Pledge of Allegiance and to demonstrate such knowledge”. The legislation further stipulates that each school “shall require the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in each classroom of the school division and shall ensure that the flag of the United States is in place in each classroom”. Students are to stand and recite the pledge while facing the flag with their right hand over their heart. No student, however, can be compelled to recite the pledge if he, the parent, or the guardian objects on religious, philosophical, or other grounds to participating. Exempt students are to remain quietly standing or sitting at their desks while others recite and are to make no display that disrupts or distracts others. The pledge will be presented each day as part of the morning announcements.

POLICY AND LEGAL UPDATES

Please be advised that the School Board may revise existing policies or adopt new policies during the school year relating to the rights and responsibilities set forth in this handbook. In that event, the new or revised policy will be put on the school system's website and will supersede any conflicting provision in this handbook.

RIGHT TO REQUEST INFORMATION

On December 10, 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law. Section 1112(e)(1)(A) states that as a parent of a student in Bedford Elementary School, receiving Title I funds, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers instructing your child. Federal law requires the school division to provide you with this information in a timely manner if you request it. Specifically, you have the right to request the following information about each of your child’s classroom teachers:

- Whether the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status because of special circumstances.
- Whether the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification or degree he/she received
- Whether paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if so, their qualifications.

If you would like to receive any of this information, please contact Joel Dechant, Principal, either by phone at 540-586-0275 or in writing at 806 Tiger Trail, Bedford, VA 24523.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

Bedford Elementary does have a full-time Resource Officer on the school grounds daily. Other members of the Bedford County Sheriff’s Office also work closely with the Bedford Elementary administration and staff and are readily accessible and welcome at any time. Bedford staff recognize and appreciate their service and dedication to our students and community.

RESTROOM PROCEDURES AND HALLWAY ETIQUETTE

The classroom teachers and/or specialists will teach and review procedures and expectations for restroom/hallway access and decorum. The learning environment is critical to student progress, and all disruptions, therefore, must be minimized.

RETENTION, PROMOTION, AND REMEDIATION

Retention

During the first semester, the teacher will notify the parent(s) in a documented conference (face-to-face is preferable) if the student is having extreme academic difficulties that may lead to retention.

Following the end of the first semester, the teacher shall compile a list of students who may be retained. The teacher and administrative team will discuss each concern.

Parents shall be notified before the end of the third nine-week period in writing if there is a possibility of retention.

The retention committee shall meet to review the factors listed for each student. The committee shall make a recommendation. Written documentation of this meeting shall be given to the parent and placed in the student's cumulative record. Every attempt will be made to include parents in this discussion.

The principal shall have the authority to make the final decision.
A list of students to be retained shall be forwarded to the Chief Learning Officer by June 30th of each academic year. Students whose retention status will be determined after summer school attendance, it shall be noted on the list.

Students not recommended for retention will be promoted to the next grade level.

SALES BY STUDENTS ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

Students are not allowed to sell any items related to fundraisers, personal items, etc., on school grounds. School staff is not responsible for any fundraising paperwork or collections brought to school.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

School activities, including field trips and assemblies, will occur at various times throughout the school year. Field trips are arranged by the grade level chairpersons.

SCHOOL SAFETY AUDIT

Every three years, the school conducts a school safety audit that involves students, parents, Sheriff Department Representatives, Central Office Staff, and Administrators.

SCHOOL CONSULTATION TEAM

The School Consultation Team (SCT), sometimes referred to as "Child Study," functions as a problem-solving group. The primary purpose is to discuss children who are having difficulties being successful in instructional programs.

The committee may consist of a coordinator, classroom teacher(s), specialist, the referring teacher, administrator, and other professional staff as needed.

Teachers, administrators, and parents may make a referral to the School Consultation Team at any time. For more information or to make a referral, contact the school at 540-586-0275 and ask to speak with the School Consultation Team Coordinator.

SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY INFORMATION

According to Virginia Code §22.1-79.3, notice is given that information regarding sex offenders is available in the Sex Offender and Crimes Against Minors Registry and may be accessed on the Internet at http://sex-offender.vsp.virginia.gov/sor/. Registry information shall only be used for the administration of law enforcement, screening current or prospective school division employees or volunteers, and for the protection of school division students and employees. Registry information shall not be used to intimidate or harass others.

Bedford Elementary School faculty and staff will strictly adhere to BCPS policy KN – Sex Offender Registration Notification and KNA – Violent Sex Offenders on School Property. Both of these policies can be read in their entirety by visiting the following link https://www.boarddocs.com/vsba/bcsbva/Board.nsf/Public and selecting the "Policies" tab.

STATEMENT OF RESIDENCY

A parent or guardian can be charged with a Class 4 misdemeanor for knowingly making a false statement concerning the residency of a child. All students attending Bedford County Public Schools must live with a parent or legal guardian residing in Bedford County or must reside with a parent or legal guardian who owns property in Bedford County. (Section 22.1-264.1 Code of Virginia)

STATEMENT OF RESIDENCY: NON-RESIDENT TUITION

All Non-Resident (living outside of Bedford County) students must apply annually. The deadline for the 2026-2027 school year is July 1, 2026. Forms can be found by clicking on the following links on the BCPS website, IN ORDER:

1. Bedford County Public Schools
2. Departments
3. Assessment and Planning
4. Transfers
5. Transfer Forms

Tuition rates, if applicable, are set annually by the Bedford County Public School Board. Call the office for current year rates.

STUDENTS GOING HOME WITH A FRIEND

When one student is going home with another, a note is required from **the parents of both students.** Without a note from both parents, the students will be sent to their regular destination in the afternoon. Attempts to call both parents will be made.

STUDENT WELLNESS

The Bedford County School Board revised the "Student Wellness Policy" in June 2022. To see the complete policy, go to the Bedford County School System Website. Bedford County Public Schools has provided a suggested Healthy Snack Foods List, which is available upon request to school staff. The following Nutrition Guidelines are to promote student health and safety, and reduce childhood obesity:

- The school administration and teaching staff have the right to limit food items at school celebrations and events.

- Students are prohibited from sharing food or drinks during the school day. Students are allowed to carry a water bottle to school. This privilege can be removed by the school administration or limited to certain areas of the school.

- Energy drinks or other energy products (gum/candy) are not allowed during the school day. Energy drinks are defined as any product sold as an "energy boost" and are usually carbonated beverages that contain caffeine and other stimulants, along with herbal ingredients that end in (ine) or when the purpose is to increase energy and mental alertness. Some examples are Red Bull, Monster, Vault, AMP, 5-Hour, Full Throttle, etc.

- Parents should communicate with the school nurse, teachers, and the cafeteria manager regarding any medical concerns that involve food that could potentially be life-threatening.

- Classroom celebrations with food are limited to no more than three per school year. **Please note that these celebrations do not include student birthdays.** The teacher will coordinate these activities, including approval of any food brought to the school. Parental involvement is encouraged for special events. Parents are encouraged to purchase items from the school cafeteria or store-bought items that contain the ingredients and nutritional information on the packaging. This will allow the teacher to review the food for health or dietary needs and concerns. Parents must communicate with teachers in advance when requesting to bring food for other events, to allow time for the teacher to review individual student allergies and health care plans.

- **Invitations to private parties may not be passed out at school** unless they are provided to every student in the class.

- **Birthday celebrations, including food (e.g., cupcakes, cookies, etc.) and non-food items (pencils, stickers, etc.), will follow the procedures and protocols below:**

- Parents/caretakers must provide at least a 24-hour notice to their child's homeroom teacher.

- Distribution of food and non-food items is reserved for the child's homeroom class, unless there are enough for the entire grade level. Students in different grades shall not receive a birthday celebration item during school hours.

- Parents/caretakers must check in at the office.

- Birthday celebrations will be held based on the teacher's preference, choosing one of the following options:

    - Food items will be distributed by the teacher and parent/caretaker (if desired) during the student's lunch.

    - A set time in which the teacher and parent/caretaker (if desired) distribute treats to the students in class.

Please note that parents/caretakers are not permitted to distribute birthday items to students without direct knowledge and involvement from your child's teacher. This ensures that the appropriate students receive the birthday item, and if it is food-based, allergies are considered by those privy to this information.

STUDENTS WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL

If/When it becomes necessary to withdraw from BES, families are asked to notify the school in advance of the child's last day. The teacher can gather the students' items to be ready for their last day. Once the child(ren) is(are enrolled in their new school, you will sign a Release of Records form. The new school will fax this form to Bedford and, upon receipt, the records will be photocopied and forwarded to the new school promptly.

SOLs - THE STATE'S TESTING PROGRAM

SOL Assessments

In the spring, students in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades will take a test on their acquisition of skills listed in the State Standards of Learning (SOL) for that grade and the grades prior.

These tests are very important in determining the success of school programs and individual progress. Test results become a part of the student's permanent record and are used as a consideration in the promotion or retention of the student. Parents should work closely with teachers in order to ascertain that their child is mastering grade-level SOLs. The following list indicates areas 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades will be tested:

3rd Grade	**4th grade**	**5th Grade**
English	English	English
Mathematics	Math	Mathematics
	History (VA Studies)	Science
		Integrated Reading Writing

TAKING PICTURES OF STUDENTS

Photographers come to the school in the fall and again in the spring to take pictures. Parents have the right to opt their child(ren) out of group or individual photos. Please note, however, that those who do not participate in Fall pictures will NOT have their photos in the BES Yearbook. Parents who choose not to participate in this activity/product should notify school administration or their child's teacher by September 3rd.

Additionally, when attending school events, families are asked to **only** take pictures of their son or daughter. This request is made due to the Photo Release Policy that Bedford County Schools has in place.

TEXTBOOKS

All students will be issued textbooks, as appropriate, at the beginning of the school year. It will be the students'/parents' responsibility to pay for any damaged or lost textbooks at the end of the school year.

VISITORS

Our goal at Bedford Elementary School is to provide a safe and enjoyable learning experience for all school community members. For us to accomplish this goal, we must ask that ALL **VISITORS PLEASE REGISTER AT THE SCHOOL OFFICE UPON ENTERING THE BUILDING** and will need to **have their driver's license with them** to sign in as a guest. We are always pleased to have visitors in our school. Please note that all visitors must abide by the most current health guidelines to enter the building.

VIRGINIA SCHOOL QUALITY PROFILES

The Commonwealth of Virginia is committed to providing quality education for all students. This commitment includes keeping parents and the public informed through the Virginia School Report Card. The report card includes the progress of our schools in raising student achievement and enhancing the learning environment. The ratings for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and school accreditation for a specific school year are based on the achievement of students on tests taken during the previous academic year. To view the School Quality Profile for your child's school, please visit the following website: https://schoolquality.virginia.gov/schools/bedford-elementary. A link to Bedford Elementary School's Report Card can also be found on our school's website at: https://bedfordes.sharpschool.net/

TUESDAY FOLDERS

To keep parents well informed about their child's progress as well as school and community activities, Tuesday Folders will be sent home each week of the school year. The Tuesday folder belongs to the parent; the child is the courier, taking it to and from school each Tuesday.

It is the parent's responsibility to review all the papers in the folder with his/her child. Parents are asked to read all information from the school and respond as soon as possible when a response is requested. Parents/Guardians should be sure to sign the Tuesday Folder and send it back to school each Wednesday. It is an excellent way to maintain communication between the school and home.

BEDFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BCPS 2026-2027 School Calendar

Bedford Elementary School Traffic Plan

