

Parent & Student Handbook



RIVER ROAD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

516 Heath Drive · Columbus, GA 31904

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Welcome to River Road Elementary!

We have been preparing for an exciting year as we provide a quality educational program to address the needs of each individual child. Our main goal is to provide a safe and nurturing environment where your children are encouraged to be their best.

This handbook outlines the policies and procedures of River Road Elementary. It is a supplement to the MCSD Behavior Code and Discipline Policy. Please read and discuss the contents of this handbook and the Muscogee County School District Behavior Code and Discipline Policy with your child. Keep this handbook for later reference throughout the year.

PARTNER IN EDUCATION

River Road Elementary School was adopted by **W.C. Bradley Company** in 1988 as part of the Partners in Education Program of the Columbus Chamber of Commerce and the Muscogee County School District.

W.C. Bradley's mission as partner is to add value to the education of our young people through financial support and employee involvement. Financially, W.C. Bradley provides supplemental support in the purchase of instructional supplies, educational programs, field trips. But the greater importance to W.C. Bradley is the involvement of their employees as positive role models for the children through programs such as Bradley Readers, Career Speakers, and judges for academic competitions. In addition, W.C. Bradley supports student achievement by providing awards and special recognitions. W.C. Bradley strives to provide our students with encouragement, inspiration and rewards for growth and achievement.

MISSION

To inspire and equip all students to achieve unlimited potential

VISION

MCSD is a beacon of educational excellence where all are known, valued, and inspired.

VALUES

MCSD fosters a healthy organization where.....

WE embrace equity and diversity

WE hold ourselves and others to the same high standards

WE commit to continuous learning and improvement

WE treat everyone with dignity and respect

WE serve the needs of others

SCHOOL COLORS

Blue & Gold

SCHOOL MASCOT

Eagle

SCHOOL HOURS

8:00 - 2:30

SCHOOL THEME

"Life is Better at the River"



Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS)

As a PBIS school, our goal is to create a positive school climate in which students learn & grow. Our philosophy when working with students to effectively manage their behavior to maximize learning is by setting clear expectations, teaching the expectations, and recognizing the expectations when we see them. At River Road Elementary, we follow The River Road Way!....Respectful, Responsible, Safe.

The River Road Way Behavior Matrix

The RIVER ROAD WAY!



We are...	Hallway	Playground	Cafeteria	Classroom
RESPECTFUL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will keep my hands and feet to myself. • I will speak with a courteous volume. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will take turns and share the equipment. • I will show good sportsmanship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will use table manners. • I will follow all directions given by staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will keep my hands and feet to myself. • I will listen when others are speaking. • I will wait for my turn to speak.
RESPONSIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will only look at student work. • I will stay on the right side of the hall. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will line up when the signal is given. • I will gather all of my belongings before entering the building. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will get all things needed before leaving the lunch line. • I will put trash in trashcans. • I will leave my eating area clean. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will have all supplies needed in class daily. • I will listen and follow all directions given.
SAFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will use walking feet. • I will face forward and stay to the right side of the hallway in a straight line when I am with others. • I will stay on the right side of the hall. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will use the equipment for the intended purpose. • I will stay inside play area. • I will walk to and from the building using designated stopping points. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will eat my food only. • I will stay seated. • I will walk to my seat, trashcan, and class line. • I will ask permission before leaving my area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will keep my area free of bookbags and other items. • I will not throw any items in class.

School Uniforms

MONDAY-THURSDAY

- **SHIRTS**

- Shirts are to be solid color. They may be **white, light blue, navy blue, or light yellow**. Shirts **MUST** have a collar.
 - Short or long sleeved
 - No graphics allowed
 - It is preferred that shirts be tucked in, but this is not a requirement; however, the school reserves the right to ask a student to tuck in a shirt
- **Not permitted:**
 - No tank tops, spaghetti straps, tube tops or see-through shirts are allowed.
 - No midriffs should be exposed (including when arms are raised)

- **BOTTOMS (shorts, pants, skirts, dresses, skorts)**

- Students may wear khaki or navy blue shorts, pants, capris, skirts, skorts, or jumpers
- Shorts and skirts must be no higher than 3" above the knees
- No holes in pants

FRIDAY (SPIRIT DAY)

- **SHIRTS**

- ONLY River Road T-shirts may be worn.
- Normal uniform shirts must be worn if student does not have a River Road t-shirt

- **BOTTOMS (shorts, pants, skirts, dresses, skorts)**

- Students may wear blue jeans, blue jean shorts, denim skirts, or denim skorts
- No black or other colored jeans or shorts is acceptable
- Students may wear jeans without a River Road t-shirt but must have normal uniform top

EVERYDAY

- **SHOES**

- All shoes (boys and girls) need to be rubber--soled with enclosed toes and heels
 - Tennis shoes preferred
- **Not permitted:**
 - Flip flops, crocs, sandals and high heels

- **COATS/ LIGHT JACKETS**

- Color of your choice
- Coats are not to be worn in the building
- Lightweight jackets or sweaters may be worn in the building; however, they must be solid school colors

MISCELLANEOUS

- Hats, gloves, caps may not be worn in the building
- Accessories such as large jewelry, chains, dangling earrings, loop earrings, etc. are not permitted
- Fake or colored hair is discouraged as it creates a distraction

CHROMEBOOKS

Per MCSD: All students have been issued a Chromebook (to include Case and Charger) to use during the school day. Students must be responsible for their Chromebook/Case/Charger at all times. In an effort to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars, students must be responsible for the care of their Chromebook and not damage it in any way. Chromebooks are to be carried in a case at all times when not in use. Students who damage Chromebooks and/or accessories can be assessed a replacement fee as per Board (see MCSD Board Policy JS: Student Fees, Fines, and Charges)

CARE AND USE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY - CHROMEBOOKS, TEXTBOOKS, AND MEDIA CENTER CHECKOUTS:

Students will be held responsible for the proper care of all books, supplies, Chromebooks, and accessories or equipment furnished to them by the school. A student who defaces, damages, or loses school property shall be required to pay for the damage or loss(see MCSD Board Policy JS: Student Fees, Fines, and Charges).

A Parent/Student must pay all fees and fines owed to the school in a timely fashion. Parent/Student must clear all fines or fees during the year the fines are assessed. Fines must be paid/cleared where they were assessed and before moving to the next level in school.

ATTENDANCE/ABSENCES

Regular attendance is vital for a successful school experience. A student must be in school each day unless illness or a family emergency occurs. A written excuse from the parents must be sent **within 3 days** of the student's return. Regular school attendance is required by law for all children between the ages of seven and sixteen.

We solicit your cooperation in planning appointments that do not interrupt school hours. A school calendar with marked holidays is available to assist you in vacation planning.

TARDIES

Children arriving after 8:00 are tardy and must be signed in at the office by a parent. If a student has 10 or more tardies, a referral will be sent to the school social worker. Tardies cost precious instructional time for your student and interrupts the daily routine and learning of other students.

TRANSPORTATION

ALL transportation changes MUST be submitted in writing to the student's teacher.

Students who attend River Road Elementary school may be dropped off and picked up by parents in lieu of riding the school bus or walking to school. Children who ride buses are to ride **ONLY** the bus to which they have been assigned and must board and depart at their assigned stop. In order for a student to ride another bus (in the event of an emergency or other reasons), parents **MUST** send written notification of this change to the school. The principal or designee must approve the change.

Bus transportation is a privilege, the purpose of which is to safely transport students to and from school. The focus of the driver should be the road, not student behavior. The first misconduct offense will result in a one day bus

suspension. After a student is written up for misconduct on the bus two times, a one week bus suspension will follow. Subsequent offenses can result in the loss of the privilege of riding the bus. **Because of the severity of the consequences to all students riding the bus, misconduct on the bus will not be tolerated.**

Students walking home will be released from the front of the school. A bicycle rack is available at the front of the school for those students riding a bike to school. Pre-K and kindergarten students cannot walk home. Students **may not** bring skateboards to school.

PRE-K CLASSES

For attendance questions for Pre-K students, please refer to the Attendance/Absences section on this page and the Early Success Centers Parent Handbook.

ARRIVAL TO SCHOOL

Dropping off students in the parking lot is not allowed. This is not safe for our students as many cars are entering and exiting the parking lot during our arrival time. Parents dropping their children off **MUST** use the one-way drive next to the building.

- Students may arrive to school at 7:15 AM (**DO NOT** drop students off before this time)
- Students will enter their classroom at 7:30 AM.
- Breakfast will be served from 7:30-7:50 AM in the classroom.
 - Breakfast closes @ 7:55
- Parents **are not** allowed to walk their student to their classroom. Staff members are posted throughout the hallways ensuring student safety to their classroom.

CHECKING OUT OF SCHOOL DURING THE DAY

Regular attendance is a vital part of the teaching-learning process. To maximize instructional time, students leaving school early will be called to the office when you arrive to check them out. Parents must sign the student out, giving time and reason for early departure. **There are no student check-outs after 2:00pm.** For student check-out between 2:00 and 2:30, an appointment card from physician or dentist must be presented. Please make a note that students who leave school prior to 11:30am (and do not return) will be marked absent for the day.

Only those persons listed on a student's record as having permission to check out a child may do so, and only with proper identification. The people you list on your child's "permission to check out" list can check your child out of school at any time. Excessive early check outs cost valuable instructional time and will result in a referral to the school social worker to assist the family in developing a plan to minimize early check outs.

All adults checking students out must have a picture ID.

MONEY

All money sent to school should be placed in a labeled envelope with the student's name, teacher's name, amount, and purpose of the money.

PERSONAL ITEMS

Students are not to bring any personal toys, electronic devices, trading cards, other novelties, or pets, etc. to school unless given permission by a member of the staff. Any item brought to school without permission of a staff member is considered a toy. It will be confiscated and returned only to a parent in order to protect instructional time.

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

For the safety of students, all exterior doors will be locked during the school day. All visitors & volunteers must report to the office immediately upon arrival to sign-in and receive a badge to visit any part of the school. Due to Covid-19,

visitors & volunteers will be limited from entering the school building. Visitors & volunteers will have temperature checks and must wear a face mask to enter the building. **No visitors/volunteers are allowed beyond the lobby area without a badge & face mask.**

TELEPHONE MESSAGES

Please be sure your child has all the instructions, including transportation arrangements and necessary materials for the day prior to leaving for school. Students are not permitted to use the office telephone except when given permission by a staff member and only for emergencies.

COMMUNICATION

Parents who wish to talk to a teacher are encouraged to arrange for a conference before or after school 24 hours in advance.

- Teachers are not available to talk with you during instructional hours.
- Teachers support home-school communication by sending home papers/student work/notification of academic progress each week.
 - Canvas, Class Dojo, Remind, Infinite Campus, and E-mail are some of the popular tools teachers may use throughout the school year for communication.
- **Please keep your contact information current. It is very important that we have working phone numbers at all times.**

CELL PHONES & OTHER DEVICES

Per Muscogee County School District, elementary school children are not allowed to have phones at school. We do understand that there are many reasons why parents may want their child to have a phone, but we ask that if students bring a cell phone to school that they are turned off and kept in their book bag. Smart watches are not permitted to be worn at school. Phones and smart watches will be taken up if they are out of book bags. We cannot be responsible for lost or stolen technology devices.

LOCAL SCHOOL COUNCIL

River Road Elementary School has a local school council. As defined by the "A+ Education Reform Act," the local school council will work in an advisory capacity with the school. This elected council consists of the principal, at least two teachers, two business people, and two parents. The term of office is two years. Agenda and minutes are available from the principal.

EAGLE AWARDS

Eagle of the Quarter:

- Each teacher will select two students per quarter
- Given to students who show good character and conduct

End of Year Awards:

- While River Road encourages all students to do their best, our end of year awards are done to recognize those students who have made special accomplishments.
- Invitations will be sent to parents of students receiving awards.

LUNCHES

All students are expected to eat either a school prepared lunch or a lunch from home each day. Students who do not eat lunch must have written parental permission.

- Unfortunately, due to Covid-19, parent/guardians cannot eat with their child in the cafeteria or classroom. All class celebrations are held after lunchtime to ensure that your child is offered a nutritional lunch.

For special dietary needs & other cafeteria information, please refer to the School Nutrition Program policy on the following page for more information.

School Nutrition Program (SNP)

Mission Statement of the Muscogee County School Nutrition Program is to provide a nutrition program that will maintain and improve the health of school children and the educational community and encourage the development of sound nutritional habits that will foster academic success.

USDA has regulations that the School Nutrition Program (SNP) has to meet to be in compliance with their guidelines. Caloric and nutrient requirements are based on age and grade. Also, MCSD Board Approved Wellness Program (EEE and EE-R) encourages and promotes healthy guidelines to be followed including, but not limited to, elimination of the consumption of fried foods, foods containing > 35 % sugar by weight, and FDA standards for portion sizes. School lunches also offer a variety of foods, whole grains, and fat free and low fat milk choices. Muscogee County School District shall abide by nutrient standards of the School Nutrition Program for all foods sold and served on campus during the school day. The sale of foods or beverages to students on school premises other than through SNP is prohibited from 12:01 a.m. until 30 minutes after the end of the school day. Food shall not be used as a reward or punishment and shall prohibit the use of candy and other food rewards for academic performance or good behavior. **Fundraising efforts** shall be supportive of healthy eating, encouraging the sale of non-food items or nutrient dense foods. USDA regulations ban the sale of foods of minimal nutritional value.

School Nutrition Program provides a healthy breakfast and lunch choice for students every day. Students may bring their own lunches from home. **Restaurant containers are not allowed in the cafeteria.** Parents are encouraged to have lunch with their children and a school lunch may be purchased to eat in the cafeteria with the students.

School meals are captured using palm scanners for identification, capturing only the image of the veins in their hand. If the parent opts out on their children being scanned, the meal will be rung up under the name.

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) was established by Congress through the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, which reauthorized the Child Nutrition Programs. CEP aims to increase access to the School Meal Programs by offering breakfast and lunch at no charge to all students, without the need to process or collect individual free and reduced meal applications. 41 of our schools are CEP schools. **Please contact your student's school office or call the School Nutrition Office at (706) 748-2386 to see if your student's school is a CEP school.**

Food Purchases

Only students purchasing a reimbursable meal may also purchase extra foods from the menu. Students bringing a lunch from home may purchase milk, juice, water, or ice cream.

Menus

Monthly menus can be found on the MCSD website. Menus may change on a very short notice due to market conditions, deliveries, or special school activities.

Special Dietary Needs

MCSD School Nutrition will make modifications and substitutions to the regular school meals for a student **with a disability that restricts their diet.** The Special Dietary Needs Prescription Form **must be** completed and signed by a licensed physician or an active 504 Plan for a student with a disability before the school cafeteria can provide any modifications or substitutions. The completed form must be provided to the school cafeteria Manager, the clinic worker, and the special needs dietitian. A form and instructions can be found on the School Nutrition page of the MCSD web site, or at the school clinic or cafeteria. Nutrition analysis chart for menu items is available on the website.

Please be aware that there are factors that may affect a product's actual nutritional value and/or ingredient composition at any given time: Manufacturers' formulations may change without notice. USDA donated products may become available

at any time during the year and may replace a purchased item. Product brands may change during the year as new bids are approved. Schools may be using inventory from a previous bid or manufacturer. Our recipes may change during the school year. A la carte snack items vary from school to school so check with the Nutrition Manager at your student's school for specific information.

Seamless Summer Option

SNP provides breakfast and lunch at various schools throughout the district during the summer. Please check the web site or call 706-748-2386 for locations. All children up to 18 years of age receive a free meal. Adults may purchase a lunch.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

MEDICATION AND SICK STUDENTS

MCSD policy prohibits students with contagious illnesses from remaining at school without a doctor's note.

- Parents of students with a fever of 100°F, vomiting, or too ill to remain in the classroom will be asked to pick their children up.
- If the child is to take medicine during the school day (this includes cough drops), parents must complete the PARENT REQUEST FOR ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION form in the office. The medication must be in the original bottle with the prescription label or student's name, dosage, and administration times clearly identified on the outside.

Due to Covid-19, our clinic will follow guidelines set forth by the MCSD & the CDC.

PEDICULOSIS (HEAD LICE)

Effective control of pediculosis is dependent upon school personnel and families that support a plan that includes:

1. Education of school personnel, families, and students
2. Screening of students by families and school personnel
3. Prompt treatment of those infested by killing the lice, removing the nits, and cleaning the environment

Please talk with your students about the importance of not wearing other students' hats or headbands and not sharing combs and hairbrushes.

When it is discovered that a student has pediculosis, the principal or clinic worker will immediately notify the parent/guardian and make arrangements for the student to be picked up and treatment initiated. The student will be isolated from other students until the parent/guardian arrives. The principal or clinic worker will provide instructions for treatment and nit removal.

Upon return, the parent/guardian must accompany the student to school and provide proof of treatment, i.e., empty bottle or box of lice treatment product or a letter from the health department or physician. The principal or clinic worker will inspect the student's head for presence of nits or active lice. The child **will not** be readmitted if either one is present. The principal or clinic worker may require additional documentation of treatment from a health care provider or the health department in cases he/she considers to be problematic.

TINEA CORPORIS (RINGWORM) AND CONJUNCTIVITIS (PINK EYE)

When it is discovered that a student has ringworm or pink eye, the principal or school clinic worker will immediately notify the home and request that arrangements be made for the child to be picked up and treatment initiated. Both conditions must be verified by the doctor and treated before the child may return to school.

STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE

The Muscogee County School District offers student accident insurance to all students in the Muscogee County School District. This insurance is available to you at a nominal fee. If you are interested, please contact the office of Student Services for more information. If you do not wish to take out Student Accident insurance, your child's health insurance is your responsibility.

The Muscogee County School District does not carry health coverage on students.

School Counseling Services

The School Counselor works collaboratively with students, parents, teachers and administrators to intentionally nurture and provide a safe learning environment. The Counseling Program is student focused, comprehensive, and developmentally age appropriate. It will inspire and equip all students to achieve unlimited potential promoting academic achievement, career awareness, and social/emotional growth.

The School Counselor at River Road believes...

- No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship
- Each student can learn in a safe school climate
- All students must be heard and respected
- All students have the right to participate in the school counseling program

The School Counseling Core Curriculum is provided through core curriculum counseling lessons, small groups, school-wide events and individual counseling. Individual counseling is scheduled after a referral/request is made. Parents/guardians, administration, or teachers can make referrals. Students are also able to self-refer.

The School Counseling Office hours are 7:45 – 3:00 pm. The school counselor can be reached at 706-748-3072.

Child Lures

Think First & Stay Safe is the original child victimization prevention program – adopted by thousands of schools and school districts across America and around the world. The program offers a balanced perspective that preserves as much of the innocence and optimism of childhood as possible, while helping children and teens stay safe from sexual abuse, molestation, harassment, luring, abduction, drugs and bullying/cyberbullying.

This is accomplished through:

- Emphasizing every child's right to live free of abuse
- Promoting healthy social relationships
- Nurturing mutual kindness and respect
- Setting personal and digital boundaries
- Teaching age-appropriate Child Lures and practicing proven prevention strategies
- Identifying trusted adults
- Upholding a zero tolerance environment in which harassment and abuse are openly discussed and disclosed

Free Parent Training Modules are available at:

<https://childluresprevention.com/parent-training-modules>

Password: 4par3nts

National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-442-4453

<https://childluresprevention.com/resources/hotlinks>

- **Tips for SafeGuarding your Child (next page)**

Tips for Safeguarding Your Child

Dear Family,

Our school is using the *Think First & Stay Safe*™ child personal safety program. Home reinforcement can help ensure your child's personal safety. These tips are provided to help you and your child:

- ⇒ Teach your child their full name, address and phone number (including area code.)
- ⇒ Teach your child how to dial 911.
-
- ⇒ Discuss body safety as a family on a regular basis, especially for holidays & school breaks.
- ⇒ Let your child know they can always talk to you about body safety, and you will help them.
-
- ⇒ Remind your child to be kind to others in words and actions, and to expect the same in return.
- ⇒ Teach your child to ask for permission before touching others or their belongings.
-
- ⇒ At home, help ensure all family members have privacy during dressing, bathing, toilet time, sleeping and other personal activities.
- ⇒ Teach your child that their body belongs to them. ----
-
- ⇒ Establish an understanding of private body parts using anatomically-correct names.*
- ⇒ Make family members, caretakers and babysitters aware that you teach your child body safety.
-
- ⇒ Let children express affection on their own terms. Don't force tickles, hugs, kisses or other touches.
- ⇒ By respecting children's choices about their own bodies, we show respect for their boundaries.

- ⇒ Stress that all secrets can be told, especially secrets that make kids feel confused or scared.
-
- ⇒ Help your child name two Trusted Adults in their life; preferably one at home and one at school.
- ⇒ Explain the importance of telling a Trusted Adult about being hurt or abused.
-
- ⇒ Trust your instincts about people and situations.
- ⇒ Teach your child to tell you right away about any funny feelings they get about a person or situation. Instincts are rarely wrong.
-
- ⇒ Closely supervise children, especially during multi-family and/or multi-age gatherings.
(30% of child sexual abuse is by other kids.)
- ⇒ Sleepovers provide opportunities for child sexual abuse by peers or adults. If you choose to allow sleepovers, inquire about supervision and ensure your child can reach you at all times.
-
- ⇒ Assure children that being abused is never a child's fault.
- ⇒ Children who have thoughts about hitting or harming others can ask a grown-up for help.
-
- ⇒ Reassure your child that most people are kind and caring - and help children stay safe.

*The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends parents use anatomically-correct names for private body parts, starting at birth.

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Bullying



Philip Bush
Principal

Dr. Jan Thomas
Assistant Principal

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome back!

We are looking forward to an exciting school year. As we prepare for the year, we can agree that bullying is hurtful and causes harm. In order for us to work together to ensure the safety of our children, we have to be on the same page about bullying. River Road will use the bullying definition below.

“Bullying is a pattern of **repeated** mean behaviors **intended** to cause harm physically, emotionally, socially, an imbalance of power. Bullying can be directed toward an individual or a group of people.”

- The person bullying- exhibits bullying behavior
- The person being bullied- the target
- The persons witnessing bullying- bystander(s)

Please read carefully and review with your child/children. Encourage your child/children, if bullying happens to report it immediately to the teacher or any adult in the building.

To make sure we have communicated well, please sign the bullying definition in the registration pack.

Again, welcome back! We look forward to an exciting school year.

Lois Holmes Ancrum, EdS, NCC
Professional School Counselor

