# Ruth M. Schneider Elementary School

# Student Handbook

# 2021-2022



309 North John Street

Farmer City, Illinois 61842

Telephone: 309-928-2611

Fax: 309-928-2195

Website: <http://blueridge18.org/>

Mr. Ryan Peyton, Principal

Mrs. Mary Russell, Secretary

**The provisions of this handbook are not to be considered as irrevocable, contractual commitments between the school and the student. Rather, the provisions reflect the current status of the rules, practices, and procedures as currently practiced and are subject to change.**

**Policies in this handbook apply during school hours and at all school-sponsored and related events.**

**VISION STATEMENT** The VISION of Schneider Elementary School is to lead our students to become independent, responsible, lifelong learners who are able to work cooperatively, live productively, and adapt in our ever-changing world. The MISSION of Schneider Elementary School is to prepare students with necessary skills to feel successful in their abilities to learn.

**ACCELERATION ACT (Public Act 100-0421):**

Blue Ridge Schools offer four types of acceleration: early entrance to Kindergarten, early entrance to 1st grade, single subject acceleration, and full grade acceleration. Participation in accelerated placement is not limited to those children who have been identified as gifted and talented, but rather is open to all children who demonstrate high ability and who may benefit from accelerated placement. Referrals for acceleration may originate from a teacher, parent, family physician, or licensed educational professional. When a child is referred for consideration for any type of acceleration, parents/guardians will be notified and asked to give consent for the school to begin an assessment process that includes multiple valid and reliable indicators regarding the child’s ability, aptitude, and achievement. Following the completion of the assessments, a team, comprised of the building administrator, speech and language pathologist, school counselor, teacher(s), and parents/guardians, will be assembled to discuss additional considerations, resulting in a fair and equitable decision. If the team’s decision includes any type of acceleration, a written plan will be developed. If you are interested in learning more about this process, please contact your building principal. For an acceleration request to be considered for the start of the upcoming school year, please submit your request prior to the end of the third quarter.

**ACCIDENTS** In spite of our caution, accidents sometimes happen at school. All accidents and illnesses which occur at school or at a school function should be reported to the office and recorded. Minor accidents will be handled at school. If they are considered serious, parents will be notified. If the parents cannot be contacted, the person or physician designated on the enrollment form will be notified and the child will be taken either to the physician or the hospital emergency room.

**ADDRESS & PHONE NUMBER CHANGE-** When there is a change in address or work/home phone numbers or emergency numbers, please report this to our school office.  Emergencies do arise and we must be able to make contact with parents or an alternate designated adult.

**ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL** **Town students should *not arrive* before 7:50 a.m.** The cafeteria begins serving breakfast at **7:50** a.m. and our doors open to town students at that time. No adult is on duty to oversee the children before **7:50** a.m. **Parents are urged to cooperate by not sending children before this time.**

Students are expected to be on their way home immediately after dismissal unless they have scheduled practices or work to be done in the classroom. ***Parents are responsible for their children before 7:50 a.m. and at dismissal time.***

**SESSION TIMES**

GRADES K – 3 A.M. ECSE/PreK/Half-Day K P.M. ECSE/PRE-K

8:20 a.m. First Bell 8:20 -10:50 a.m. 12:30-3:00 p.m.

8:25 a.m. Tardy Bell

3:10 p.m. Town Students Dismissal

3:10 p.m. Bellflower-Mansfield Buses Depart

3:30 p.m. Farmer City Buses Depart

***Early Dismissal:***  *2:20 p.m. Farmer City town students, Bellflower and Mansfield shuttle buses depart*

*2:40 p.m. Farmer City rural buses depart.*

**ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN NOTIFICATION** In compliance with the AHERA law and to ensure the safety of students and staff, Blue Ridge School District #18 conducts a comprehensive asbestos inspection every three years as well as visual surveillance of asbestos-containing areas every six months. The most recent three-year inspection was completed March 13, 2019, and the six month surveillance was completed on March 23, 2021.  An asbestos management plan is available in each school's office and in the district office for public review. Should questions arise, feel free to contact the superintendent.

**ATTENDANCE** - Attendance is a key factor in students’ achievement and success in education. Regular student attendance is the responsibility of parents/guardians and students. Regular attendance is essential if students are to make use of the education opportunities the District offers. It develops dependability and responsibility in students and contributes to academic achievement.Excessive absenteeism may result in grade retention, assignment to an alternative educational setting, loss of credit, being dropped from the school roster, or other related consequences.In compliance with the Regional Office of Education truancy program, a letter will be sent home after a child has been absent five days. The Regional Office of Education will be notified after ten days of absence.

**Excused absences** include illness, death in the immediate family, school sponsored field trips, doctor's appointments, court appearances, and religious holidays. All other reasons for absences are considered unexcused. Administrators may require signed medical documentation of medical conditions which result in extended or consistent student absences. Parents may send a note or call the school to excuse their child from school due to illness for up to 10 days during a school year. A doctor’s note is required to excuse any additional absences due to illness.

**Make-up Work** is allowed to be turned in for all excused absences. It is felt that two days for each day missed should be ample time to get the make-up work turned in. If more time is needed, permission of the teacher involved is required. Example: If a student is absent on Monday, all make-up work for Monday is due at the start of class on Thursday.

**Vacations, visiting relatives, etc. are unexcused absences**. The District discourages requests for such absences. However, a student who will be absent with their parents’ awareness for a period of three or more days (maximum of 10 cumulative days per school year) may be granted a pre-planned absence if the parent contacts the principal with a written request for a pre-planned absence at least one calendar week (seven days) in advance of the absence.

All work is due after the same number of days corresponding to the number of days of absence. Parents must contact the classroom teacher to discuss make up work. Students will not be required to take a test, either scheduled for the day of their return or missed during their absence, until the day after their return to school. The responsibility for making up missed work rests with the student.

***According to the school code, students who accumulate unexcused absences for more than 10% of the school year (18 days) will be retained in their current grade level.***

***A parent or guardian is requested to call the school office by 9:00 a.m. (309-928-2611) to report a student’s absence.*** The office opens for calls at 8 a.m. If you fail to call to report the absence, the school is required by state law to call you, where possible, to verify your knowledge of the absence. If a parent or guardian cannot be reached, the absence is considered unexcused. Absence reports can be left on the school answering machine 24 hours a day. Please leave your child’s name, teacher, reason for absence, and name of person calling. ECSE students should also notify the transportation center at 309-928-2150.

It is extremely important for the instruction of all of the students that every student arrives at each class in a prompt and timely manner. The Blue Ridge Schools Behavior and Discipline Code defines “Tardiness” as “Arriving at class/school late without valid cause” and it is considered to be a Level I infraction. ***Students who are tardy must come to the office with a parent to sign them in and receive a pass before proceeding to class.***

**Homebound Instruction:** When a parent/guardian anticipates an absence of two weeks or more due to illness or injury, an inquiry should be made regarding **homebound instruction,** which the district will provide.

**AUTOMOBILE TRAFFIC** Parents who bring their children to school and/or pick them up after school, are asked to drive slowly, obey the Crossing Guard or 4-way stop sign, and use John Street only. **Students must cross the street in the marked crosswalk, obeying the Crossing Guard. *Students must use the sidewalks and not walk down the street along cars. Out of courtesy to the community, please stay out of neighboring yards.***The circle drive between Schneider School and Blue Ridge High School **is for buses only**. Schneider Elementary has a Drop off/Pick up lane. No vehicles are allowed to park in this area during the school day during the posted times. John Street will be one-way heading south from Madison St. to Allen St. from 7:30-9:00 a.m. and 2:30-4:00 p.m.

**BACKPACKS, BOOK BAGS, COATS, AND JACKETS** To help ensure school safety, students may not carry book bags or backpacks in the school building during school hours except as they enter and exit school. Book bags must be deposited in the student's locker as soon as the student enters school at the start of the school day. At the end of the school day or if the student is leaving campus for lunch or an appointment are the only appropriate times for students to access these items once they have been deposited in the locker. Students may access lockers before and after recess to obtain and return articles of clothing needed for outdoor recess.

**BACKPACK FOOD PROGRAM** Students who qualify for free/reduced lunch may choose to participate in the backpack food program. Food packs are discreetly put in student backpacks at the end of the week for use over the weekend. Please contact the Unit Office if you are interested in participating 309.-928-9141.

**BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL SUPERVISION GUIDELINES**

Faculty and staff members provide supervision for students for 20 minutes before and after school to accommodate transportation, drop off, and pick up of students. During these times students should follow the guidelines listed below:

1. Children are encouraged to visit with one another, talk and play approved games.

2. Coloring books, crayons, books, paper and pencil, and paper and pencil game books (word search, crossword, etc.) are allowed and encouraged. You may keep them in your child's backpack.

3. Hand held electronic games are allowed. Students need to have their name on the device and all games must be age/content appropriate.

4. No Pokemon, YU-GI-OH, or trading cards at all. In cases where more than one student claims ownership it is very difficult to determine who is right.

5. No music devices will be allowed as students need to hear necessary instructions.

6. The school is not responsible for lost, broken, or stolen toys and/or other items brought from home.

7. Cell phones are to be turned off and remain in backpacks at all times.

In addition, anyone picking up a child who is in the cafeteria after school must go to the office to request the student. Please do not go directly to the cafeteria or playground to take the child. Since our supervisors take turns, they may not know the designated pick-up person for your child. This procedure helps us maintain student safety.

**BICYCLES** Students who ride bicycles to school shall observe safety rules and procedures for the use of bicycles. Bicycles brought to school must be stored in the bike racks provided by the District. Those students who do not follow safety rules shall be prohibited by the principal from bringing their bicycle to school.

1. Bicycles must not be ridden on school grounds. Bicycles are not to be loaned to, or borrowed by

other students, and must be parked in designated areas.

1. Students who ride bicycles to school should be very careful traveling to and from school, due to

heavy traffic around the school.

**REGISTRATION FEE** Pupils are required to take proper care of textbooks rented to them for their use. Teachers shall examine all books issued to pupils under their charge. Books that are lost or damaged deliberately or by gross carelessness must be paid for. Book rental fees for Grades K-12 are $100.00 per year and include the cost of workbooks and copied materials. ECSE fee is $50.00. Check with the Schneider Office for any questions regarding book rental fees and supply lists. Unpaid fees may be turned over to a collection agency.

**Free and Reduced Book Rental** is available to students who qualify for free or reduced lunches. Applications are available at registration and in the school office. Free or reduced rates begin when the application is approved. All applicants will have until September 15 to submit applications for total school year approval. Thereafter, fees will be prorated according to the portion of the remaining school year.

**BRINGING ITEMS TO SCHOOL** Should pupils find it necessary to call home and ask that something be brought to school, the item is to be left in the school office. If the item is urgently needed, the office personnel will make the delivery to the classroom. We always attempt to avoid disturbing the class.

**BUG PROGRAM, B**ring **U**p **G**rades, is a program designed to provide recognition to students who raise their grades to an acceptable range, and maintain or continue to raise them from one grading period to the next. Baseline data is taken by using the first quarter report cards grades, recognition is given at the end of the 2nd quarter. Students can qualify two different ways:

1. Students exceed in all core subjects on the previous quarter’s report card and continue to exceed

in all core subjects the following quarter.

1. Students maintain all core subject grades (maintaining will be defined as 3 percent higher or

lower), and also raised at least one grade by one percent. Recognition includes being placed on

the school’s BUG Honor Roll; a food-themed party; and presentation of certificates, buttons, and other giveaways.

## **BULLYING**

Blue Ridge Schools believe that every student has the right to enjoy learning, free from intimidation. It is our goal to create a safe and effective learning environment for all students. All forms of bullying can threaten that learning environment. Our school community will not tolerate bullying behavior of any kind. The school district shall respond promptly and appropriately to address **"students who have demonstrated behaviors that put them at risk for aggressive behavior, including without limitation, bullying."1** Bullying is prohibited. A bully shall be defined as a student who teases, frightens, or hurts others. Prohibited behavior may take the form of unkind actions or remarks, verbal taunting, physical aggression, and exclusion from groups.

If a student feels he/she is being bullied, he/she is encouraged to report the problem to a staff member. Students are also encouraged to continue reporting the problems if the issues do not improve. Typically, discipline with regard to bullying is done in a progressive manner, so it is important for students to continue to let staff members know if a situation does not improve. Parents may also contact the school if they believe their child is being bullied.

In the event school officials identify bullying or aggressive behavior occurring at school or when such bullying or aggressive behavior has a legitimate school connection, parents and or legal guardians shall be notified. School officials shall involve and employ such district and community-based resources as in the sole discretion of school officials are deemed appropriate in instances of bullying or aggressive behavior including but not limited to:

1. Notification and involvement of the school counselor, social worker, or other school support service provider;

2. Application of the school district's discipline procedures;

3. Notification and involvement of appropriate law enforcement authorities;

4. When appropriate, evaluation or referral for special education services;

5. Notification and involvement of community-based support organizations or services.

Finally, the term bullying sometimes seems to be assigned to situations where students are feuding with each other and/or one student simply finds another student annoying. While it is still important that students make us aware of these situations if they cannot peacefully resolve these issues on their own, these situations may or may not be regarded as bullying.

More information about bullying is included in our Behavior and Discipline Code.

1 Leg. Ref.: 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14(d) eff. January 1, 2002

**BUS CONDUCT** Riding the school bus is a privilege- which may be revoked when the behavior of a student does not conform to the rules of safe bus riding. Each bus driver will review the rules with students. While waiting for the bus or while loading, students should wait in an orderly manner. PreK-12 students living in Mansfield and Bellflower board the bus at the bus stops in those communities. Only ECSE students are picked up at their homes/licensed-care givers.

**Bus Rules and Regulations** School bus riders, while in transit, are under the authority of the school bus driver. To address discipline matters, the driver will follow the procedures listed below. In the case of serious infractions, some steps may be skipped and more severe action taken.

1. All students will be assigned a seat on the bus.
2. The driver will enforce the rules uniformly and for every infraction.
3. The driver will run the video camera and audio recorder on the bus.
4. Students will be relocated to a seat closer to the driver should misbehavior continue.
5. The Transportation Director will meet on school grounds and speak privately with the student.
6. A letter will be written to the parent/guardian identifying the problem and noting the date.
7. The parent will be informed of the next step should the behavior continue.
8. Bus referrals will be issued through the principal with the original and documentation of the

previous steps taken.

Expectations for Bus Conduct:

1. Be at the designated school bus stop five minutes early.
2. Stay off the road at all times while waiting for the bus.
3. Only approach the bus after the bus has been brought to a complete stop.
4. Do not leave your seat while the bus is in motion.
5. Be alert to a danger signal from the driver.
6. In the event of a road emergency, remain in the bus until instructions are given by the driver.
7. Keep your hands and head inside the bus. Do not throw anything out of the bus windows.
8. Talk quietly and do not make loud or unnecessary noise. Loud talking, laughing, and

unnecessary noise diverts the driver's attention and could result in a serious accident.

1. Be absolutely quiet when approaching a railroad crossing.
2. Carry no animals on the bus.
3. Keep books, coats, and all objects out of the aisles. No hair sprays, perfumes, after shave, and

other chemicals may be brought to school.

1. Leave no books, lunches, or other articles on the bus. Articles left on the bus are not guaranteed

against loss.

1. Help look after the safety and comfort of smaller children.
2. Do not ask the driver to stop at places other than the regular bus stop; he is not permitted to do

this except by proper authorization from a school official.

1. Observe safety precautions at the discharge point. Where it is necessary to cross the road,

proceed to a point at least ten feet in front of the bus on the right shoulder of the road where

traffic may be observed in both directions. Then wait for a signal from the bus driver permitting

you to cross.

1. Observe the same rules and regulations during all trips under school sponsorship. Chaperones

are to be treated with respect and courtesy.

1. No eating or drinking will be allowed on the bus. Assist in keeping the bus safe, clean, and

sanitary at all times.

Not complying with bus conduct expectations will result in a verbal warning, a letter to parents, and bus suspension or other disciplinary actions for further incidence.

Students are expected to follow all school rules when riding the school bus. A student may be suspended from riding the bus for up to 10 consecutive school days for engaging in gross disobedience or misconduct, including but not limited to, the following:

Violating any school rule or school district policy.

Willful injury or threat of injury to a bus driver or to another rider.

Willful and/or repeated defacement of the bus.

Repeated use of profanity.

Repeated willful disobedience of a directive from a bus driver or other supervisor.

Such other behavior as the building principal deems to threaten the safe operation of the bus and/or its occupants.

If a student is suspended from riding the bus for gross disobedience or misconduct on a bus, the School Board may suspend the student from riding the school bus for a period in excess of 10 days for safety reasons.

A student suspended from riding the bus who does not have alternate transportation to school shall have the opportunity to complete or make up work for equivalent academic credit. It shall be the responsibility of the student’s parent or guardian to notify the school that the student does not have alternate transportation.

**BUS PERMITS** Any student who would like to ride a bus that he/she is not normally scheduled to ride must have a bus permit. Permits are issued by the Principal's Office upon written permission from parents. ***Parents should call the Transportation Director at 928-2150 to verify that a seat is available on the desired bus.***

**CHANGES IN BUS PICK UP/DROP OFF** Please notify the Transportation Director and the Schneider Office with any changes in bus pick up or drop off.

**CELLULAR TELEPHONES/CAMERA TELEPHONES/SMART DEVICES Cell phones/Camera phones/Smart Devices** must be kept out of sight, powered off, and not heard from the time the students enter the building in the morning until they leave the building at the end of the regular school day. Students who need to make a call during the day must go to the school office to use the telephone. Students who display phones will receive the following consequences:

1. First and second offense: Telephone will be confiscated and returned only to the student’s

parents. **Other discipline measures may also apply.**

2. Third offense: loss of privilege of having a phone on campus at any time. Subsequent offenses

will result in additional disciplinary consequences. The use of a camera or video recorder from a

cell phone is strictly prohibited during the school day and during school events when a student is

directly involved with a school activity or event. Use of a camera phone will result in loss of

privilege of bringing the phone to school.

**CLASSROOM PARTIES** The children at the elementary school have several classroom parties throughout the year. Please check with your child’s teacher if you wish to attend. No younger siblings please. **All treats that are sent to school on any occasion must follow the snack policy.** In order to avoid confusion and misunderstandings, we observe the following guidelines for all room parties:

**Halloween:** Students who wish to dress up and participate in the Halloween Parade are to dress only as **storybook or non-violent characters. Pretend or real weapons are not permitted as part of costumes.** Our teachers organize classroom parties, and treats are provided by parents shortly before dismissal time.

**Christmas:** \* Homerooms may go on a field trip in lieu of a Christmas Party prior to the start of Winter Break or may celebrate with a small party in their classroom. More information will be distributed prior to the event.

**Valentine's Day:** \* Classroom lists will be sent home for those students wishing to participate in exchanging Valentines. Parents provide the party treats and often organize party games.

**Birthdays:** We do not observe birthday parties at school for children. However, a parent whose child has a birthday may provide a small treat for the child's homeroom if they wish. If you desire to do this, please contact the homeroom teacher so she will know to expect it. See snack policy guidelines on p. 14. ***No flowers or balloons for students will be delivered to the classroom. Students will pick them up in the office at the end of the day.***

**PARTY INVITATIONS:** Party invitations of any type may not be distributed at school unless the entire class is invited. This prevents hurt feelings. Teachers will provide a class list upon request

**CLASS SCHEDULES** Class schedules are available upon request from the homeroom teacher. When appointments are ***necessary and cannot be scheduled after school***, parents should consult teachers to find out what times the child could miss to cause the least harm.

**CLOTHING** Children are to be safely and appropriately dressed for weather conditions and activities. Since recesses are important for children, please be sure your child has suitable clothing and wears it to school. Students should wear closed toe shoes without elevated heels to play on the playground. Students who wear other types of shoes may be limited in their choice of activities or equipment. Snow/Waterproof boots are required to walk/run in snow and snow pants or snowsuits are required to play in the snow. The temperature and wind chill factors will dictate indoor or outdoor recess. If there is outdoor recess, all children are required to go out unless they have a note stating they were absent with an illness, or are instructed by a teacher.

Here is our district dress code policy:

1. **Basic Principle:  Certain body parts must be covered for all students at all times.**
   1. Clothes must be worn in a way such that genitals, buttocks, torso, breasts, and nipples are fully

covered with opaque fabric.  All items listed in the “must wear” and “may wear” sections must follow this basic principle.

1. **Students Must Wear\***, while following the basic principle of section 1 above:
   1. A shirt which covers torso: the front, back, and sides under the arms must have fabric.  The shirt

must also have two sleeves or two straps.

* 1. Pants or the equivalent:  example: skirt, shorts, jeans, dress, casual wear
  2. Shoes
  3. Courses that include attire as part of the curriculum (for example, professionalism, public

speaking, job readiness, or career and technical education) may include assignment-specific dress.  Safety equipment such as safety glasses, closed-toe shoes, or other items may be required for some specific courses.  Physical Education may also have a separate and specific dress code and/or uniform.  Special events such as field trips, programs, and concerts may have additional dress code rules.

1. **Students May Wear**, as long as these items do not violate section 1 above:
   1. Athletic attire
   2. Ripped jeans, as long as section 1 is observed
   3. Fitted pants such as “skinny jeans” and leggings
   4. Hooded sweatshirts as long as the hood is not on the head inside the school building
   5. Religious headwear
   6. Tank tops of any strap width
   7. Shirts/sweaters that expose the shoulders
2. **Students Cannot Wear, on clothing or visible tattoos**:
   1. Violent language or images
   2. Images of language depicting drugs or alcohol (or any illegal item or activity)
   3. Hate speech, profanity, pornography
   4. Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected

class or consistently marginalized groups

* 1. Any clothing that reveals visible undergarments (straps are allowed)
  2. Hats, hoods up
  3. A shirt with neither sleeves nor straps (example: tube top)
  4. Swimsuits, unless required in class or for a field trip
  5. Accessories that could be considered dangerous or could be used as a weapon, such as spikes
  6. Any items that obstruct the face or head
  7. Clothing that exposes the midriff.
  8. Blankets or outerwear such as coats or work bibs

1. **When a violation of the dress code takes place:**
   1. Students should not return to or remain in class if the inappropriate clothing is still being worn.
   2. All efforts to minimize the student’s time out of class should be respected.
   3. Students may use backup clothing or a PE uniform that they may have at school.
   4. Parents can be called to bring students an extra change of clothes.
   5. A limited amount of spare clothing is available to borrow from the office.  Any office clothing

should be returned promptly and clean or the student will be fined.

* 1. Students should not leave the building to obtain appropriate clothing:  If a student leaves the

building for this reason, the absence will be unexcused, even if the parent gives permission for the student to leave.

* 1. We expect that no student should need to be asked more than twice in one year to adjust their

attire to meet the dress code rules.  Having to ask more than twice becomes an issue of disrespect rather than an issue about dress.  After two violations of the dress code, specific discipline and required parent contacts will take place.

Source material:  This dress code was extensively copied from two sources:

* The Oregon NOW Model Student Dress Code:  <http://www.noworegon.org/uploads/1/2/7/5/12754387/or_now_model_student_dress_code_feb_2016__1_.pdf>
* The Evanston, IL Township HS dress code:  <https://www.eths.k12.il.us/site/Default.aspx?PageID=1381>

**CURRICULUM** The curriculum is the basic core of the educational program. One criterion for determining the effectiveness of curricular offerings is the degree to which there is growth, progression, depth, and quality in instructional procedures.

**Reading:** We emphasize a balanced approach to instruction. The rich contemporary content is provided with a sound, classroom-proven instructional program that includes phonics.

**Language Arts/Spelling:** The language program develops grammar, usage, and mechanics with abundant practice, review and evaluation. Daily Oral Language is one of those supplements.

**Mathematics:** Our basic text makes use of hands-on manipulatives to provide a balance of basic skills development, practice, and problem solving, in order to make mathematics both understandable and useful for students of all abilities.

**Science:** Science uses a hands-on approach where students read, discuss, conduct experiments, research, and use higher-level thinking skills.

**Social Studies:** Throughout our program, basic social studies knowledge and skills are stressed. The information students learn today will serve them well and develop citizens who will understand the freedoms and workings of our democratic society.

**Art:** Art is an important part of the elementary educational program. Students work with various media as they explore areas of art.

**Music:** The music program in the primary grades develops basic singing and listening skills and introduces fundamental music concepts.

**Physical Education:** Our program includes experiences that develop skills related to: fundamental movements, rhythms, games, object handling, seasonal sports, and tumbling. Vigorous activities are conducted daily and out-of-doors whenever appropriate and possible.

**Library Skills:** Our program includes both a weekly checkout time and library skill development by our librarian. In addition, the media center houses a computer lab, which is used by classes, groups, or individuals for discovery and practice of basic skills.

**Computer Instruction:** Studentsenhance their technology skills during computer instruction at least two times a week in a computer lab setting.

**Guidance:** Each classroom receives guidance services of 20 minutes every other week that help students develop the social emotional skills that facilitate learning and healthy development. The guidance counselor uses literature, discussion, art and writing to promote individual growth and a positive school environment.

**CUSTODY CONCERNS** The custodial parent must provide the office a copy of any custody agreements and inform the child’s teacher of any information that applies. Students will be released only to the custodial parent unless a signed and dated statement is given to the office by the custodial parent, which includes the names of other adults authorized to pick up the child. Non-custodial parents have a right to a parent conference, a copy of all the child’s records and may request newsletters and other information. The student or information regarding the student cannot be released to step parents or significant others without written permission from the custodial parent.

**DISCIPLINE** See the Blue Ridge CUSD #18 Behavior and Discipline Code, which is an addendum to this handbook.

**Due Process:** The Board will extend to students their full rights as provided by law. It is the Board's desire that the exercise of authority necessary in a school setting be fair and that the students' rights be fully protected. Every effort will be made to secure understanding of the circumstances surrounding a disciplinary matter, and to make decisions in good faith.

**Police and Emergency Service Notification:** Throughout the school year, the police and emergency services personnel provide supportive services to the schools in a variety of ways. In the event that circumstances arise which jeopardize the safety of your student and/or other students, it may not be possible to provide prior parental notification before police or emergency assistance is requested by school personnel.

**EMERGENCY DRILLS** At regular times throughout the year, fire, tornado, intruder and earthquake drills will be held. These drills are necessary for the safety of the students. Should a tornado warning be issued near the end of a school day, Blue Ridge will hold the children until parents sign out children in the school office or until the school receives a directive to dismiss the students.

**ENGLISH LEARNERS** The school offers opportunities for English Learners to develop high levels of academic attainment in English and to meet the same academic content and student academic achievement standards that all children are expected to attain.

Parents/guardians of English Learners will be: (1) given an opportunity to provide input to the program, and (2) provided notification regarding their child’s placement in, and information about, the District’s English Learners programs.

For questions related to this program or to express input in the school’s English Learners program, contact the principal.

**EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES** The District provides equal opportunities to all students regardless of sex and complies with *Section 3.10, Section 2-3.8 and Section 200.90b of the Illinois School Code*. These laws are available at the unit office to anyone who wants additional information and/or to begin a Grievance Procedure.

**FIELD TRIPS** Student field trips which have significant educational and/or social value will be scheduled as opportunity and finances permit. Such trips are planned by the classroom teacher and are coordinated with the school curriculum. Parents will be notified by the teacher about time, date, special clothing needed, lunch arrangements, and if any money will be required for tickets, extra fees, etc. Parents must give permission for these trips in order for the student to participate. The need for chaperones will be determined by classroom teachers. Participating in field trips is a privilege. In some cases, a child's behavior may prevent him/her from participating. Should that happen, parents will be notified prior to the trip.

**GRADING POLICY** District teachers will use a percentage and coded grading system for reporting to parents on report cards. A student's report should be a reflection of academic achievement on tests and assignments. A student’s effort, participation, and cooperation may be reflected in the assessment of a student’s academic achievement. The following grading scale will be utilized by all teachers in the school:

Grade

K Kindergarten grades are based on a developmental continuum. The continuum ranges from levels 1-6. In the developmental continuum, each student will be assessed three times a year using a portfolio system. The goal for the first grading period is to be at level 2 or 3. The goal for the second grading period is to be at level 3 or 4. The goal for the end of the year is to be at level 5.

Grade Exceeds (E) Meets (M) Does Not Meet (D)

1 95-100% 80-94% 79% and below

2 95-100% 75-94% 74% and below

3 95-100% 70-94% 69% and below

**Progress Reports** are sent home to students in 1st-3rd grades.

**Report Cards** are sent approximately one week after the end of each grading period.

**Incomplete Work** is indicated with "I." Unless required assignments are completed within the standard allotted time set by the teacher, the incomplete will be changed to a letter grade which will reflect missing work.

**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES** It is the policy of this district that all grievances be resolved quickly and at the lowest step possible. However, the grievance procedure for District #18 students is published and available for all regular and special education students. A grievance is a difference of opinion raised by a student or a group of students involving any of the following: the meaning, interpretation or application of established policies; difference of treatment; or application of the legal requirements of civil rights legislation. Laws regarding **Due Process** are available in the unit office to everyone.

**GUIDANCE/COUNSELING** In combination with classroom guidance, the counselor offers small group and individual counseling on a limited basis. Small groups focus on developing a variety of social skills, including leadership, mediation, and awareness of self and others in a group environment. Games, puzzles, and art projects give students opportunities to develop skills of playing and working with peers. Individual counseling is available for brief periods to address concerns that may arise in a child's life.

**GYM SHOES** **Children are required to have a separate pair of gym shoes that are left at school.** We require students to wear "sneakers" or gym shoes for gym class. Neither platform tennis shoes, nor mountain (hiking) shoes with metal eyelets will be allowed in P.E. classes due to safety concerns. Please mark shoes in some way that is distinguishable to you and your child. Permanent marker on the soles of the shoes is often effective.

**HOMELESS STUDENTS** The Blue Ridge School District provides an educational environment that treats all students with dignity and respect. Every homeless student shall have equal access to the same free and appropriate educational opportunities as students who are not homeless. This commitment to the educational rights of homeless children, youth, and youth not living with a parent or guardian, applies to all services, programs, and activities provided or made available, as prescribed in the McKinney – Vento Homeless Assistance Act. In an effort to comply with the McKinney – Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Blue Ridge School District affirms that all Homeless Students will not be denied the benefits of, or be subject to, discrimination under any educational program or activity as students who are not homeless.

**HOMEWORK** Time suggestions for daily homework: Primary (Grades K-3) 15-30 minutes.

Homework serves valid purposes when it:

Provides essential practice in needed skills.

Trains pupils in good work habits.

Affords opportunities for increasing self-direction.

Enriches and extends school experiences.

Helps children learn to budget time.

Brings pupils into contact with out-of-school learning.

Promotes growth in responsibility.

Homework should:

Be within the capabilities of the child.

Be preceded by motivating activities.

Grow out of school experience.

Be adapted to individual needs and capacities.

Extend the child's fund of information.

Be clear as to what is required.

Be completed by pupils without requiring direct assistance of parents or others.

Minimize the temptation to merely copy information.

Be evaluated fairly and used in the daily program.

**Tips for Parents:**

Parents must ask questions about "how it is done in school." If a youngster is uncertain, parents must check with the teacher in order to avoid confusion and conflict which would hinder rather than help the child.

Accepting and understanding the child's strengths and weaknesses is very important. He must be encouraged to do good work for his own sake.

Good work habits are developed in the home as well as the school. The child must be expected to finish jobs, listen attentively, follow directions, respect authority, and care for materials.

Parents should listen when the child talks about school and express an interest in papers and projects which she brings home. She should be praised for her effort and accomplishments and given help when needed, but she must do her own homework.

Parents should call their child’s teacher if they have concerns regarding the amount or type of homework their child is receiving.

**ILLNESS** If a student becomes too ill to remain in class, we will reach you by phone and recommend that you come to school and pick up your child. It is essential that we have an **updated, working telephone number** on our emergency information. We will provide what temporary facilities we have to help comfort the sick child while he/she is waiting. However, transportation cannot be provided for sick children. Also, students who are ill are not to go home where no one is available to care for them. **If your child is ill, please do not send him/her to school.**

**Communicable Diseases** A student that contracts a contagious disease or condition, such as pink eye, chickenpox, ringworm, impetigo, or pediculosis (head lice) will be sent home from school and must remain home until the condition or disease is corrected. The DeWitt County Health Department provides the following guidelines for returning to school:

Chicken Pox – Students may return to school on the 6th day from the first break out. A doctor’s note is required to return.

Strep Throat – Students may return to school once they have been on an antibiotic for 24 hours. A doctor’s note is required to return.

Fever – Students may return to school once they have been fever free without fever reducing medication for 24 hours. A fever is considered anything 100 or above.

Fifth’s Disease Rash - Students may stay at school as long as there are no additional symptoms presents.

Rash/Skin Condition - Students may return to school with a doctor’s note indicating it is not contagious.

Impetigo-Students must be on medication for 24 hours and have a doctor’s note before they may return to school.

Ring worm - Students may return to school with a doctor’s note indicating it is being treated.

Vomiting/Diarrhea - Students may return to school after 24 hours without vomiting/diarrhea.

Pink eye - Students may return to school with a doctor’s note and directions for treatment.

Scarlet Fever - Students may return to school after taking medication for 24 hours and with a doctor’s note(rash may be present).

\*\*COVID-19 - Blue Ridge will continue to follow IDPH Guidance for exclusion and return to school guidelines. If you have any questions, contact the school or your local health department.

***Cases of communicable diseases and contagious infections must be reported to the school.***

The physical education program is modified, as needed, to fit the needs of any student with a temporary medical condition. The physical education teacher may, on an emergency basis, excuse a student from active participation for three days with a parent’s note. For longer periods of time, a medical excuse from a physician is needed **which states the length of time the student is excused**. Medical excuses for physical education must be presented to the Principal's Office. Excuses will then be forwarded to the teacher.

Following an absence due to illness, a student may stay inside for recess for three consecutive days without a doctor’s note when their parent/guardian notifies their homeroom teacher. Students who need to stay inside for recess for more than three days for health reasons must have a doctor’s note.

**Head Lice** Children will be screened if head lice is suspected. This can only be done by parent/teacher referral. If live lice are found:

* Parents will be notified to come pick up their child at school, they will **NOT** be permitted to ride the

bus

* Determine if student has siblings within the district, if so they will be screened as well
* Student will be excused for at least 24 hours or the following day from being sent home, any

absences after this time frame will be marked as an unexcused

* If upon re-examination live lice are found, student will be unexcused
* Prior to student leaving, an appointment must be made with the nurse before returning to school
* Prior to being sent home, students will be asked to take home all personal belongings. Janitors

will then be notified so that the student’s classroom and locker can properly be treated

* Parents will be sent home with education material on how to effectively treat the student’s hair as

well as the household

* The nurse will follow up with the student for the next two weeks to make sure treatment has been

effective

If **NITS** are found:

* Parents will be notified and student will **REMAIN** in class
* Student will be discouraged from close direct contact with others and told not to share any

personal belongings

* Students will be sent home with education material on how to effectively treat the student’s hair

as well as the household

* Prior to the end of the school day, student will be asked to take home all personal belongings.

Janitors will then be notified so that the student’s classroom and locker can properly be treated

* The nurse will follow up with the student for the next two weeks to make sure treatment has been

effective

**EARLY DISMISSALS** Please do not call the office. Early dismissal of school due to inclement weather will be announced on district social media and the district website at <http://www.blueridge18.org/> and on the stations listed below:

RADIO TELEVISION

WWHP 98.3 FM Farmer City WKIO 92.5 FM Champaign WCIA 3 Champaign

WDWS 1400 AM Champaign WICD 15 Champaign

WJBC 1230 AM Bloomington WAND 17 Decatur

WBNQ 101 FM Bloomington

**INSURANCE** The district does not provide any type of health or accident insurance for injuries incurred by students at school. As a service to students and their families, the school district annually designates a company to offer student accident insurance coverage. The Board does not endorse the plan nor recommend that parents/guardians secure the coverage and any contract is between the parents/guardians and the company. Students participating in athletics, cheerleading, or pompons must have school accident insurance unless the parents/guardians state in writing that the student is covered under a family health plan.

**Parents who take school insurance should read the policy carefully to understand clearly what protection it does provide.** Any pupil who has school insurance and who is injured at school, or on the way to and from school, should notify his teacher or the Principal's office immediately. The school insurance covers the pupil while traveling directly to and from the insured's residence and the school. It is assumed that the coverage would not be effective if the pupil is going to a scout meeting, or is loitering or playing somewhere on the way home from school. Only the 24-hour plan would cover these situations. The insurance does not cover injury sustained while fighting or brawling, and does not cover eyeglasses.

**LEAVING THE BUILDING** Any student must present a written note to his/her teacher to leave the building while school is in session. **Any student leaving the building *must* be picked up in the office and signed out by a parent or an adult directed by the parent.**  The school reserves the right to ask for identification, such as a driver’s license, before a student is released. Any student leaving without permission from the office will be subject to disciplinary action.

**LIBRARY CHECK-OUT** All students have a weekly check-out time in the library. It is up to the teacher how many Accelerated Reader books and how many regular books the students may check out. If a child is delinquent on returning books, a note will be sent home. We will ask parents to help the child search for the missing book. At the end of the school year, all books not returned are billed to the parent and payment made to the school office.

**LOCKERS** Students are assigned a locker for storage of books and clothing.  It is important to note that these lockers remain the property of the school and may be opened by school personnel at any time to insure the lockers are being used for the purpose intended by the school.

Unauthorized items may be removed from a student's locker and the student may be subject to disciplinary action.  The school is not responsible for replacement of items which are lost or stolen.

**LOST AND FOUND** All items which are found in the school building or on the playground should be turned in to the office. All lost articles will be kept for a period of time until the size of the accumulation necessitates discarding unclaimed articles. Articles are displayed in the entry to Schneider.

**LUNCH/BREAKFAST** Grade A hot lunches are available daily in our cafeteria for students in Grades K-3 and breakfast for all morning students Prekindergarten/ECSE through Grade 3. Breakfast and lunch money can be sent to the Schneider office or paid online using the Skyward system. Follow directions as indicated in **Money**. Extra milk, "seconds," and milk for those who bring their lunch to school is available in the lunch line. Lunches/Breakfast and milk cannot be charged.

**Lunch Accounts:** Blue Ridge School District uses individual student accounts for lunch accounts. Parents may make payments via Skyward or at individual buildings. Notices for negative amounts will be sent home daily by paper and/or by email. We will also be sending low positive lunch balance notices and/or emails for accounts with less than $10. Low balance notices will be sent out weekly.

**Free and Reduced Lunch/Breakfast** applications are available at registration and in the school office. *These free or reduced rates begin when the application is approved.* All applicants will have until September 15 to submit applications for total school year approval. After September 15, students will receive free or reduced meals from the day of approval.

**Breakfast Procedures:** Farmer City town students who plan to eat breakfast should be here at 8:00 a.m. so they will finish in time to be in the classroom before the tardy bell. **Bellflower and Mansfield students are given time to eat breakfast after they arrive on the bus.**

**Lunch Procedures**: Students will be asked to give their lunch choice in the classroom during morning attendance. These choices are “hot lunch”, “other” or “sack”. The “other” choices are turkey sandwich, yogurt and cheese, or chef salad. Please encourage your son or daughter to be correctly counted for lunch.

Students are expected to be polite and courteous to cooks and cafeteria staff. Students are to observe appropriate table manners, enter and exit the cafeteria in an orderly manner and speak within appropriate noise levels.

Students are encouraged to bring healthy food items for lunch. Nutritious drinks such as fruit juice or milk instead of pop are good choices. Students who bring a sack lunch may purchase milk on a daily basis.

**MAKE-UP WORK** If a student’s absence is excused or if a student is suspended from school, he/she will be permitted to make up all missed work, including homework and tests, for equivalent academic credit. Students who are unexcused from school will not be allowed to make up missed work.

**MEDICAID ONE YEAR NOTICE** If your child receives special education services and is also Medicaid eligible, Blue Ridge CUSD #18 and Tri-County Special Education Association can seek partial reimbursement from Medicaid for health services documented in your child’s Individualized Education Program (IEP). Medicaid reimbursement is a source of federal funds approved by Congress to help school districts maintain and improve diagnostic and therapeutic services for students.

The reimbursement process requires the school district to provide Medicaid with your child’s name, birth date and Medicaid number. Federal law requires annual notification of our intent to pursue this reimbursement opportunity. If you approve of the release of information to Medicaid, do nothing. If you object to the release of information to Medicaid, now or at any time in the future, please state your objection in writing and forward it to:

Blue Ridge CUSD #18 Unit Office

411 North John St.

Farmer City, IL 61842

Regardless of your decision, the district must continue to provide, at no cost to you, the services listed in your child’s IEP. **This program has no impact on your child’s or your family’s current or future Medicaid benefits.** Under federal law, participation in this program CANNOT:

1. Decrease lifetime coverage or any other public insurance benefit
2. Result in the family paying for services that would otherwise be covered by Medicaid,
3. Increase your premiums or lead to discontinuation of benefits or insurance, or
4. Result in the loss of eligibility for home and community-based waivers.

Your continued consent allows the district to recover a portion of the costs associated with providing health services to your child.

**MEDICATION** Students recovering from temporary illness or students on permanent medication who require medication during the school day may bring medication to school following these guidelines:

1. All medications, including non-prescription drugs (e.g. Ibuprofen, Tylenol. etc.) given at school

must be prescribed by a physician. A “School Medication Authorization Form” must be carefully completed each school year. THE PHYSICIAN AND A PARENT OR GUARDIAN MUST SIGN THE FORM.

1. A separate form is required for each medication.
2. Students are not allowed to carry any medication on their person. Exceptions will be made for

students requiring asthma medication and/or epinephrine auto-injector providing the appropriate documentation from parent/legal guardian and physician has been received.

1. If the student is found with medication in their possession without written permission of

parents/guardian and licensed prescriber or if the student is found distributing medication to other students the student shall be subject to disciplinary measures based upon the Behavior and Discipline Code Handbook.

1. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may administer over-the-counter medications to their child during school

hours for relief of a temporary illness.

1. Cough drops may be self-administered by the student with a written permission slip from the

parents(s)/guardian(s) and handed into the student’s teacher.

1. Any change in medication dosage or administration shall have written authorization form the

prescriber.

1. All prescription medications that have to be taken during the school day must be brought into the

office by a parent/guardian and will be stored in a locked cabinet. Prescription medication must be labeled by the pharmacy showing: student’s name, name of medication, dosage, schedule of administration, date and the prescriber’s name. Non-prescription medication must be in the original labeled container with the student’s name on the container along with the prescribed dose from the physician.

1. It is the parent’s responsibility to pick up all unused medication before the last day of school. Any

medication left at school will be disposed of by the nurse. We cannot send medication home with the students(s).

1. No medication will be given at school unless the above guidelines are met.

**MILK** Kindergarten, PreK, and ECSE students are eligible for extra milk during their session of attendance. If a student is allergic to milk or unable to drink milk due to a medical condition, upon receipt of a doctor’s note, nutritionally equivalent substitute will be given in place of milk. Milk is available to students in half-day programs of Pre-K and ECSE during snack time. A fee is charged for kindergarten milk, and is paid by the semester only. Send money to the school office. Milk is not covered under the free and reduced program.

**MONEY** Please send any monies (lunch, milk, field trip, book orders) to school in an envelope with the student's name, teacher's name, date, amount enclosed, and purpose. ***Do not send lunch/milk money on a daily basis. Lunch can also be purchased through the Skyward System.***

**SNACK POLICY** Schneider Elementary wants to work together with parents to make sure that we provide a safe environment for each and every student. Students at Schneider have a variety of food allergies, our priority remains to make sure all students have a safe learning environment. As a result, **we will only allow pre-packaged snacks that are accompanied by the food label.** Prepackaged snacks that are accompanied by a label also help diabetic students who must keep track of their carbohydrates.

**OFFICE/SCHOOL HOURS** Office hours 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on school days. The office is closed during all official school holidays, snow days, and some institute days. Telephone messages may be left on the office answering machine. The school day begins for students at 8:20 a.m. and ends at 3:10 p.m. for town students and for Mansfield and Bellflower shuttle bus students. Farmer City bus students are dismissed at 3:30 p.m.

**PARENT BULLETINS/NEWSLETTERS** School and classroom newsletters and bulletins are brought home by your child to you. Some teachers may choose to post their newsletter and important information on their class website. Non-custodial parents who are out-of-district may receive these by mail by requesting these at the school office and providing self-addressed stamped envelopes. Many of these resources may be posted on the district/school website.

**PARENT CONFERENCES** Individual private conferences between teachers and parents are scheduled for all students in the fall. We encourage students to participate in the conference.  Student-led conferences help studentstake responsibility of their own learning, reflect on what they have learned, and set goals for themselves. Other conferences will be scheduled in those cases where the teacher feels a need, or at the request of the parent. Frank, informal conferences between parents and teachers are encouraged. Teachers are requested to contact the home whenever they find a student with a problem, be it academic, physical, social, or emotional. Parents are urged to contact the teacher any time they have a question regarding the school. To arrange a special conference with your child's teacher, simply call the school office with your request.

**PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION** Blue Ridge Partners in Education (P.I.E.), the teacher, parent and community organization, actively supports the school program through fund-raising, as volunteers, and by sponsoring special events. All parents and community members are invited and encouraged to join P.I.E.

**PERSONAL BELONGINGS** Please **mark all coats, caps, lunch boxes, and other personal items with your child's name on the inside of the item.** This helps in returning items when lost or misplaced. No item should be brought to school that is of such monetary or sentimental value that if lost or broken, a family hardship will be caused. At no time will students be permitted to bring dangerous items to school. No animal may be brought to school unless special permission is requested and granted. Students are not to bring make-up, cologne, or after shave to school.

**PEST MANAGEMENT NOTIFICATION** In 1999 the Illinois General Assembly passed laws requiring that public schools notify parents/guardians and school employees at least forty-eight hours prior to any pesticide applications on school property. The term "pesticide" includes insecticides, herbicides, rodenticides, and fungicides. The notification requirement extends to both indoor and outdoor pesticide applications. Excluded from the notification requirement are antimicrobial agents (such as disinfectants, sanitizers or deodorizers), insecticide baits, and rodenticide baits.

Therefore, Blue Ridge CUSD #18 has established a notification registry for each school of all people who want to be notified. To be included in this registry, please contact the unit office at 928-9141 and submit the following information: name, address, telephone number, and school(s) your children attend within Blue Ridge CUSD #18. If you have any other questions regarding District #18's integrated pest management practices, you may contact the Operations and Maintenance Supervisor at 928-9141.

**POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES NOTIFICATION** Throughout the school year, the police and emergency services personnel provide supportive services to the schools in a variety of ways. In the event that circumstances arise which jeopardize the safety of your student and/or other students, it may not be possible to provide prior parental notification before police or emergency assistance is requested by school personnel.

**PROMOTION POLICY GUIDELINES** Students in grades 1-8 who **meet** the following criteria at the end of each grading period will **not** be at risk of grade retention:

1-2 Meeting or exceeding Benchmark Standardsand classroom instructional expectations inthree of

the four areas of core academic assessment: reading, spelling, English, and math.

3 Meeting or exceeding Benchmark Standards and classroom instructional expectations in four of the five areas of core academic assessment: language arts, reading, math, science, and social studies.

4-8 Grade averages of 60% or above in four of the five areas of core academic assessment: language arts, reading, math, science, and social studies.

Students in grades 1-8 whose academic progress is described by the following criteria at the end of each grading period will be **at risk of grade retention**:

1-2 Not meeting Benchmark Standards and classroom instructional expectations in two or more areas of core academic assessment: reading, spelling, English, and math.

3 Not meeting Benchmark Standards and classroom instructional expectations in two or more areas of core academic assessment: language arts, reading, math, science, social studies.

4-8 Grade averages of less than 60% in two or more areas of core academic assessment: language arts, reading, math, science, social studies.

**Note:** Teachers of grades 1-3 will report student progress in terms of exceeding, meeting, or not meeting instructional standards. In computing student progress, teachers will use the following percentiles. The scale reflects increasing expectations as students move between grade levels.

Grade Level Does Not Meet Meets Exceeds

1 0 - 79% 80 - 94% 95% and above

2 0 - 74% 75 - 94% 95% and above

3 0 - 69% 70 - 94% 95% and above

Students in grades 1-2 who have grade averages in the Does Not Meet category in two or more of the core academic areas will not be eligible for promotion without attending and successfully completing summer school, if available. Students in grades 3 who have grade averages in the Does Not Meet category in three or more of the core academic areas will not be eligible for promotion without attending and successfully completing summer school, if available.

**Students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP)**

For all students with an IEP, the IEP shall indicate appropriate individualized expectations for promotion criteria: attendance, and curriculum indicators.For kindergarten-third grade students, the IEP shall indicate appropriate percentages for the above categories; for fourth through eighth grade students, the IEP will indicate appropriate percentiles of passing performance in classes.

The administration may, in unique circumstances, waive the provisions listed above and place a student in the next grade level. Examples of unique circumstances may include, but are not limited to: students who move in during the school year with poor grades, but show significant improvement; students impacted part of the year by disruptive personal situations; and students who demonstrate success and improvement after the implementation of academic interventions. Placement determinations in these situations will be made by a committee which will include the principal and teachers with input from the student’s parents or guardian.

A Case Study Evaluation and Eligibility Determination Conference (EDC) must be completed for a student who fails to meet the criteria for promotion to the next grade level a second time, unless a Case Study has been conducted within the prior two years, before a promotion-retention decision is implemented. The recommendation for promotion or retention shall be determined by the participants in the EDC.

**Providing Summer School Toward Possible Promotion.** The school district may offer students who do not meet promotion requirements during the regular school year, with another opportunity to earn their promotion through the successful completion of summer school. Due to financial concerns the school district does not guarantee that a summer school program will be offered.

***Summer School Promotion Criteria***

A. The student’s summer school attendance must be at or above the 80% level. For example, if summer school meets for 90 hours, the student must have attended a minimum of 72 hours to be

considered for possible promotion.

B. During summer school, the student must demonstrate mastery of the Benchmark Standards

appropriate to the student’s grade level as designated by the Common Core Standards.

C. Students whose summer school attendance is 80% or above and who demonstrate mastery at

the Benchmark Level of the Learning Standards established by the State Board of Education for

the student’s grade level will be promoted to the next higher grade. Students who do not meet

those criteria will remain at their current grade level.

The administration may, in unique circumstances, waive the provisions listed above and place a student in the next grade level. Examples of unique circumstances may include, but are not limited to: students who move in during the school year with poor grades, but show significant improvement; students impacted part of the year by disruptive personal situations; and students who demonstrate success and improvement after the implementation of academic interventions, such as summer school. Placement determinations in these situations will be made by a committee which will include the principal and teachers with input from the student’s parents or guardian.

**STUDENT CONDUCT** A wholesome learning situation cannot exist unless there is good student discipline. Our teachers are requested to expect and maintain a high type of student behavior. Students are expected to follow rules at the bus stop, while riding the bus and at school. Every effort is made to link consequences to the behavior (for example, misbehavior on the playground may result in loss of recess). Our school’s expectations are based on the Four Respect Rules: Respect Yourself, Respect Others, Respect Property and Respect Authority. Following are a few simple rules which we expect our pupils to follow:

1. Students are not to play on the school driveways or in parking areas.
2. Profanity, or any form of vulgarity, will not be tolerated.
3. Students are not to bring knives, guns, matches, skateboards, roller blades, skates,

heelies/spinners, or scooters to school.

1. Caps or hats are not to be worn inside the building.
2. There is to be absolutely no running in the halls of the school building.
3. No fighting, pushing, shoving, wrestling, gun playing or bullying.
4. Students should cross the streets only at corners. At school, students should cross only when

the Crossing Guard so indicates.

1. STUDENTS SHOULD SHOW RESPECT TOWARD TEACHERS, OTHER ADULTS, AND

FELLOW STUDENTS.

**RECESS RULES** These are the rules that students are expected to follow during recess:

1. No student may go back to lockers for coats, books, or equipment after leaving the lunchroom.
2. Please use school equipment only and do not bring equipment from home unless instructed to do

so.

1. Students should wear closed toe shoes without elevated heels to play on the playground.

Students who wear other types of shoes may be limited in their choice of activities or equipment.

1. Follow rules for specific equipment - **Swings:** Take turns in lines for swings; stand a safe

distance in front of the swing you want and count to 100; only one person in a swing at a time; each person swings separately; don’t jump out, flip out of the seat, twist chains, swing side to side, kick sandals/shoes off. **Slide:** use one person at a time, go up one step at a time, hold on to the rail with both hands, slide on your bottom, and move away after reaching the bottom; do not climb up the slide end, climb on the side of the ladder, come down the ladder, stay at the top, slide on your stomach or knees, or hang over the side. **Teeter-Totter:** One person on each end, hold on with both hands, keep feet down, get on and off carefully, take turns/use 100 count rule; don’t stand or sit on the support bars, stick hands up in the air, put feet up on the support bars, jump off, “bump”. **Eagle’s Nest:** You can climb, hang upside down, and sit on top. Do not grab or touch others, jump off of the top, or play tag inside. **Jungle Gym/Monkey Bars:** You may climb, do flips on the bars, slide down the poles, swing on the bars, and drop from the bars. Do not grab or touch others, have head above the monkey bars, shake the “chain ladder” or jump off the top bars. Never stand on monkey bars, slides and swings.

1. Do not throw objects such as rocks, sticks, etc.
2. Students should use the restroom before going to lunch. In an emergency, students should ask

permission before going to the restroom. Use restroom by the gym door.

1. When the whistle/siren blows to end recess, students should “freeze”, stop playing immediately

and listen for instructions to re-enter the building.

1. Keep hands and feet to yourself.
2. Be kind, courteous and respectful at all times.
3. Go no farther than the boundary markers.
4. Stay away from the creek at all times. If a ball goes in the creek, tell the teacher on duty.
5. No kicking balls against any school wall.
6. If grass is wet, the teacher on duty will announce, "Blacktop only!"
7. If snow is on the ground, the following rules apply:

a. If you have no boots, stay on cleared blacktop.

b. If boots, you can walk or play in the snow standing up.

1. If you have snowsuits or snow pants, you can play, roll, slide, etc.
2. No kicking or throwing snow at someone.
3. No food or gum on the playground.

K-3 students go outside on most occasions if the wind chill is 11 degrees or higher. Please dress children accordingly.

**REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS** Students new to Blue Ridge must have a current physical on the most recently approved Illinois form, an immunization record with month, day, and year for each required immunization, certified birth certificate, transcript of previous school records, and, in appropriate cases, present official papers of custody and be able to prove in-district residency. Students transferring to our school from a school in another state are given 30 days in which to comply with the physical and immunization requirements. In addition, a child must be five years old on or before September 1st of the school year he or she enters kindergarten.

***Health examination and Immunization requirement:*** Students must comply with the health examination or immunization requirement before entering school. Students who do not comply with the requirements either through examination and immunization or presentation of a religious or medical exemption, by the first day of school, will be excluded from school.

***Dental examination requirement:*** Dental exams are required for students entering Kindergarten, 2nd grade, 6th grade, or those who have moved into the district from out of state. Dental forms are due by May 15th.

***Vision examination requirement:*** Vision exams are required for all students entering Kindergarten or those who have moved into the district from out of state. Vision forms are due by October 15th.

**RELATED EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

**Title I Reading** teachers are employed to provide specialized instruction to those students who experience sustained difficulties in reading. Teachers work with small groups in and outside of the classroom during the school day.

**Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)** is available to children ages 3-5 who meet eligibility requirements for the program. Students are identified through the preschool screening and a case study evaluation is conducted to determine if a child qualifies. An individualized education plan (IEP) is written for each child in the program. The ECSE teacher works individually and in small groups to help children meet individual goals and remediate any areas of need as stated in the IEP. We offer a blended ECSE and PreK program.

**Gifted/Enrichment:**  Gifted programming is dependent on state funding. The program for students identified as gifted/enrichment will be a combination of consultation with the classroom teacher, inclusion and pull-out services. Individual attention will be given to students whose needs cannot be met in the regular classroom with an emphasis on higher order thinking skills and problem-solving skills. Students may be identified through checklists, teacher recommendation, achievement testing, and specialized tests as appropriate. This process will utilize the Iowa Acceleration Scale as a framework to determine eligibility for enrichment. This policy is revised as necessary to meet the needs of our students.

**Student Support Team (SST):**  The **SST** is comprised of representative regular and special education teachers, Tri-County representative, and principal. The **SST** considers the social, academic and physical needs of individual children who are experiencing difficulty at school. The team, along with the classroom teacher and support staff, develop strategies to help the child become more successful. Parents are invited and encouraged to participate in the process. Parents should contact their child’s teacher if they would like their child to be referred to the **SST**.

**Pre-Kindergarten** serves at-risk children who are three or four years old on or before September 1st, and helps them prepare for school. This is a voluntary program. Children are identified through the Pre-School Screening each spring and must meet district criteria. The Pre-K program has several goals which include: increasing fine and gross motor skills, improving receptive and expressive language and listening skills, encouraging growth in pre-academic and cognitive skills, and developing positive self-concept, emotional well-being, and appropriate social skills. We offer a blended ECSE and PreK program.

**Special Education** is available for elementary aged children in resource or self-contained instructional programs and for Early Childhood Education classes for children ages 3-5 who meet eligibility requirements for special education services. Our procedure is to refer students to the **SST** at an early date in order to identify and remediate students’ needs before the needs become so great as to require special education services. Students who are experiencing learning and/or behavioral difficulties are referred for testing to specialists from the Tri-County Special Education Association. Referrals for a case study evaluation to determine eligibility for special education are usually initiated by a classroom teacher with parent consent. Parents may also initiate a case study evaluation by contacting their building principal for a conference and signing the appropriate consent forms. The student is tested or data collected in the specified area(s). Specialists compile results, and meet with parents and staff to make recommendations for helping the student achieve more success in school. If testing and a consensus of the participants of a Multiple Disciplinary Conference indicate the student qualifies for special education services, an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) is made, and the special services teacher provides assistance and instruction according to the IEP. Each year the IEP team will meet to review student present levels, goals, placement, and services. The building administrator will ensure that all department heads and related service providers are notified of any changes made to the IEP.

**Speech/Language Therapy** services are available to students who meet speech-language criteria. Speech and language services are considered special education. All special education rules and regulations are followed in the identification, evaluation, and remediation of speech and language disorders. Articulation (incorrect pronunciation of speech sounds), fluency (stuttering), voice, and language are all areas that may be included in a speech/language referral.

**Tier 2/Tier 3 Services:** Students are screened in math and English Language Arts three times a year (fall, winter and spring) using a screening instrument called AimswebPlus. Students who do not meet the expected benchmarks or students who are recommended by their teachers may receive additional supports which are considered Tier 2 and Tier 3 Interventions. Students who qualify for Tier 2 support meet daily. Students who qualify for Tier 3 meet in addition to classroom and Tier 2 instruction each day. These instructional times focus on individual skill sets which need improvement.

Progress monitoring data is reviewed approximately every six weeks, students may move in or out of these interventions based on the results of the progress monitoring data.

**REPORT CARDS** The purpose of the report card is to report to the parents the student's progress in academic growth and effort. Report cards are issued by the classroom teacher at the end of each nine week grading period in grades 1-3 and three times a year in Kindergarten. Report cards can also be accessed by parents via Skyward (see Skyward section). After reviewing the report card carefully, parents should contact the homeroom teacher if there are questions or concerns. The report card form does not need to be returned to school. In addition, progress reports are sent home at mid-point in the grading period for students who are experiencing extreme difficulties.

**REQUESTS FOR EXCLUSION/NON-PARTICIPATION** Occasionally, parents request that their student not participate in certain school instruction or activities. The basis for such requests may include, but are limited to, religious, educational, or personal beliefs. Examples of occasions when parents may request that their student be excluded include such instruction/activities as Halloween celebrations, Christmas parties, human growth and development classes, AIDS education, sex education, printing of student names, addresses, and phone numbers in a student directory, or including a student’s picture and/or name on Blue Ridge School District Web pages.

Requests for exclusion/non-participation relative to any of the above instances must be made annually by the parent or legal guardian and submitted to the principal of the school their student attends. The request must be in writing and parent signatures must be confirmed. The school district will provide a standard form which parents are encouraged to use if requesting exclusion from instruction, activities, or identification in printed or otherwise published materials.

**SCHOOL EQUIPMENT/PROPERTY** Each student is expected to assume responsibility for the care of all school property. Students who damage/lose property accidentally are responsible for paying for the damages. Laws of the State of Illinois provide that parents are responsible for property damage caused by their children.

**SCHOOL PICTURES** School pictures are taken in the fall of each year. An announcement concerning the cost and exact date will be given to the students and parents in advance. Money for pictures is collected prior to the day pictures will be taken. Parents are under no obligation to buy the package. A retake date will be scheduled for pictures that were ruined because of photographer error or for a student who was absent when pictures were taken.

School yearbooks are available in the spring that includes Pre-K through Grade 8. Orders and money are collected in advance.

**SCHOOL COMMUNICATION SYSTEM** “Apptegy” is a communication system which allows district personnel to contact parents via telephone and/or e-mail. The system is used to disseminate information regarding emergencies, school closings, event cancellations, rumor abatement, and other important topics. Parents/Guardians should provide the school with up-to-date contact telephone and e-mail information to facilitate the communication process.

**SEARCH AND SEIZURE** With reasonable suspicion, school administrators may search student lockers, desks, and computer files for materials which may be illegal, stolen, unsafe, or inappropriate for school. Confiscated materials in violation of school rules or the law will, as deemed appropriate by the administrator, be submitted to the police. Schneider school will take necessary steps to ensure that illegal substances are not on school property. If deemed necessary police K-9’s may be used to find these substances by means of search in accordance with the Illinois School Code 34-18.12.

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT** Any student threatened in the area of sexual harassment, misconduct, or molestation should immediately report such an incident or conduct to the proper personnel authority in the respective building, i.e., teacher, administrator, or guidance counselor. Said personnel shall then follow the guidelines as set forth in the Blue Ridge CUSD #18 board policies. Sexual harassment is defined in the Illinois Human Rights Act, IL Rev. Stat., Ch. 68, Para 2-102 (D). Please refer to policy 7:20 on the district webpage. The district policy is also available to all in the unit office or call 309-928-9141.

**SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY** Parents may access information regarding registered sex offenders that is available to the public. The Illinois Sex Offender Registry (I-SOR) is available through a link on the Illinois State Police Website at http://www.isp.state.il.us. Individuals may search the database by name, zip code or county. Access is free.

**SKYWARD FAMILY ACCESS** Skyward Family Access is currently available for all students. This allows parents to view their child’s grades, attendance, and book fees online. If you would like to sign up for Family Access go to the Blue Ridge website at www.blueridge18.org. On the left hand side at the top there is a Skyward Family Access link that will let you download the sign-up sheet and a frequently asked question link.

**SOCIAL MEDIA** School officials may conduct an investigation or require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student’s account on a social media website that violates a school disciplinary rule or policy. In the course of an investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order to allow school officials to make a factual determination.

Staff members are not allowed to communicate with parents about students via personal social media platforms.

Proper student/staff communication channels: Staff and student communication should be limited to district technology. Communication through social media is against Board Policy 5:125 Personal Technology and Social Media: Usage and Conduct

**SUICIDE AND DEPRESSION AWARENESS AND PREVENTION** Youth suicide impacts the safety of the school environment. It also affects the school community, diminishing the ability of surviving students to learn and the school’s ability to educate. Suicide and depression awareness and prevention are important goals of the school district.

The school district maintains student and parent resources on suicide and depression awareness and prevention. Much of this information, including a copy of school district’s policy, is posted on the school district website. Information can also be obtained from the school office.

**STUDENT RECORDS** Students and parents have the right to access and review educational records as prescribed by the **Family Rights and Privacy Act**. Copies of this act are available upon request in the unit office.

**TEACHER/PARAPROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS** Parents have the right to request the professional qualifications of any teacher that is instructing your child. The following information may be requested: whether or not the teacher has met state certification requirements; whether or not the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional status; the bachelor’s degree major of the teacher, any other certification or degrees held by the teacher and the subject areas of the certification or degrees; and whether your child is provided services by teacher aides/paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

**TELEPHONE USAGE** The school's telephone number is 309-928-2611. Students may use the telephone ONLY in an emergency. All after school plans need to be arranged prior to coming to school. If emergencies arise, however, messages may be left at the office.

**TESTING** Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) is given to students starting in 3rd grade. Performance and fixed choice assessments are given periodically by the classroom teachers.

**TRANSFERRING FROM BLUE RIDGE** If you will be moving, please notify the office as soon as possible so that the teachers may make the necessary preparations. It is the parent's responsibility to see that the following are taken care of:

1. Textbooks have been returned to the teacher.
2. All fees should be paid up, such as lost library books, book rental, and lunches.
3. If there are any refunds such as book fees or lunches, it will be refunded after all accounts are

paid in full.

The school records will be requested by the new school principal and then will be mailed by our school.

**TRANSPORTATION** The District provides buses to transport students. See **BUS CONDUCT** and **BUS PERMITS** for more information. Routes vary from year to year. Pick-up times, driver, and route information is available at registration. Routes may need to be slightly altered to accommodate new students who were not pre-registered.

**TRANSPORTATION REIMBURSEMENT** (Public & Non-Public Age Children). Parents transporting their children to school less than 1 1/2 miles because of hazardous conditions may apply for reimbursement up to $100 for the current school year as a result of PA 24-126. Applications must be obtained through the Regional Superintendent’s office on or before January 1. Claims must be filed with the Regional Superintendent no later than February 1. Contact the administrative office at (309) 928-9141 for any additional information.

**TRUANCY** Successful students strive for perfect attendance. According to the Illinois School Code, students between the ages of 6 (on or before September 1) and 17 years who are enrolled in a public school, shall attend school the entire time it is in session during the school year. It places the responsibility of the student's attendance upon the parents/guardians of the student. Truancy is a serious problem and requires disciplinary action. Chronic truancy (student absent 10% of school year) will be dealt with through appropriate legal channels. See also **ATTENDANCE**.

**VALUABLES** Students are asked not to bring money, other than requested, or items of value to school. If brought to school, it is at the student's risk. The school will not be responsible for items brought to school.

**VIDEO CAMERAS** Video cameras are used on school buses to protect the safety and welfare of passengers, the driver, and school property. This service extends to school activities and grounds.

**VISION/HEARING SCREENING NOTIFICATION** Vision and hearing screenings are conducted by the school nurse throughout the school year. Parents will be sent home a report stating how the child has done in the screenings and whether a repeat screening will need to be done or referral will need to be made. Your child is not required to undergo the vision and hearing screenings if there is a completed and signed form indicating an exam has been completed within the last 12 months.

**VISITORS** Parents are welcomed and encouraged to visit their child's classroom, volunteer in the school, and participate in their child’s education. To ensure that we use volunteer time most effectively, and as a courtesy to the teachers, we ask that you give advance notice of classroom visits. Please contact your child's teacher so a convenient time can be arranged. Brothers and sisters may not visit the classrooms during the school day. ***All volunteers and visitors are required to sign in at the Schneider Office and put on a badge before going to classrooms or other areas in the school.***

**VISITORS TO AND CONDUCT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY -**The following definitions apply to this policy:

**School property** - District and school buildings, grounds, and parking areas; vehicles used for school purposes; and any location used for a School Board meeting, school athletic event, or other school-sponsored event.

**Visitor** - Any person other than an enrolled student or District employee.

All visitors to school property are required to report to the Building Principal's office and receive permission to remain on school property. All visitors must sign a visitors' log, show identification, and wear a visitor's badge. When leaving the school, visitors must return their badge. On those occasions when large groups of parents and friends are invited onto school property, visitors are not required to sign in but must follow school officials' instructions. Persons on school property without permission will be directed to leave and may be subject to criminal prosecution.

Conferences with teachers are held outside school hours or during the teacher's conference/preparation period.

Requests to access a school building, facility, and/or educational program, or to interview personnel or a student for purposes of assessing the student's special education needs, should be made at the appropriate building. Access shall be facilitated according to guidelines from the Superintendent or designee.

The School District expects mutual respect, civility, and orderly conduct among all people on school property or at a school event. No person on school property or at a school event (including visitors, students, and employees) shall perform any of the following acts:

1. Strike, injure, threaten, harass, or intimidate a staff member, a Board member, sports official or coach, or any other person.
2. Behave in an unsportsmanlike manner, or use vulgar or obscene language.
3. Unless specifically permitted by State law, possess a weapon, any object that can reasonably be

considered a weapon or looks like a weapon, or any dangerous device. An individual licensed to carry a concealed firearm under the Illinois Firearm Concealed Carry Act is permitted to: (a) carry a concealed firearm within a vehicle into a parking area controlled by a school or the District and may store a firearm or ammunition concealed in a case within a locked vehicle or locked container out of plain view within the vehicle in the parking area, and/or (b) carry a concealed firearm in the immediate area surrounding his or her vehicle in a parking area controlled by a school or the District for the limited purpose of storing or retrieving a firearm within the vehicle's trunk.

1. Damage or threaten to damage another's property.
2. Damage or deface School District property.
3. Violate any Illinois law, or town or county ordinance.
4. Smoke or otherwise use tobacco products.
5. Distribute, consume, use, possess, or be under the influence of an alcoholic beverage or illegal

drug; be present when the person's alcohol or illegal drug consumption is detectible, regardless

of when and/ or where the use occurred.

1. Use or possess medical cannabis.
2. Impede, delay, disrupt, or otherwise interfere with any school activity or function (including using

cellular phones in a disruptive manner).

1. Enter upon any portion of school premises at any time for purposes other than those that are

lawful and authorized by the School Board.

1. Operate a motor vehicle: (a) in a risky manner, (b) in excess of 20 miles per hour, or (c) in

violation of an authorized District employee's directive.

1. Engage in any risky behavior, including roller-blading, roller-skating, or skateboarding.
2. Violate other District policies or regulations, or a directive from an authorized security officer or

District employee or host school employee.

1. Engage in any conduct that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the District or a School

function.

1. Repeated violations of the Sportsmanship Code of Conduct.

Exclusive Bargaining Representative Agent

Authorized agents of an exclusive bargaining representative, upon notifying the Building Principal's office, may meet with a school employee (or group of employees) in the school building during duty-free times of such employees.

Convicted Child Sex Offender

State law prohibits a child sex offender from being present on school property or loitering within 500 feet of school property when persons under the age of 18 are present, unless the offender meets either of the following two exceptions:

1. The offender is a parent/guardian of a student attending the school and has notified the Building Principal of his or her presence at the school for the purpose of: (i) attending a conference with school personnel to discuss the progress of his or her child academically or socially, (ii) participating in child review conferences in which evaluation and placement decisions may be made with respect to his or her child regarding special education services, or (iii) attending conferences to discuss other student issues concerning his or her child such as retention and promotion; or
2. The offender received permission to be present from the Board, Superintendent, or Superintendent's designee. If permission is granted, the Superintendent or Board President shall provide the details of the offender's upcoming visit to the Building Principal.

In all cases, the Superintendent, or designee who is a certified employee, shall supervise a child sex offender whenever the offender is in a child's vicinity.

Enforcement

Any staff member may request identification from any person on school grounds or in any school building; refusal to provide such information is a criminal act. The Building Principal or designee shall seek the immediate removal of any person who refuses to provide requested identification.

Any person who engages in conduct prohibited by this policy may be ejected from school property. The person is also subject to being denied admission to school events or meetings for up to one calendar year.

Procedures to Deny Future Admission to School Events or Meetings

An individual who is ejected from an interscholastic contest at home or away (including visitors, students, and employees) shall be denied admission to the next interscholastic contest at that level, and all other interscholastic contests for the district at any level in the interim. This applies to ejections occurring prior to, during, and following an interscholastic contest. This penalty is not subject to the appeal process.

It is understood that any inappropriate action which endangers students, spectators, coaches and/or officials, or significantly damages the reputation of the Blue Ridge Schools may result in additional consequences to those listed above. Except for the events described in the preceding paragraph, before any person may be denied admission to school events or meetings as provided in this policy, the person has a right to a hearing before the Board. The Superintendent may refuse the person admission pending such hearing. The Superintendent or designee must provide the person with a hearing notice, delivered or sent by certified mail with return receipt requested, at least 10 days before the Board hearing date. The hearing notice must contain:

1. The date, time, and place of the Board hearing,
2. A description of the prohibited conduct,
3. The proposed time period that admission to school events will be denied, and
4. Instructions on how to waive a hearing.

The Board reserves the right to assess penalties that are more or less severe than those recommended by school personnel.

ADOPTED: **May 16, 2018**

**VOLUNTEERS** Volunteers make a valuable contribution to all areas of our school. Please notify the school office if you would like to volunteer. As a safety precaution, regular and frequent volunteers are required to fill out district paperwork, including a criminal background check and fingerprinting. Regular and frequent volunteers are defined as anyone who visits the classroom more than one time. **Volunteers are not allowed to start until contact has been made by the Unit Office notifying the volunteer that they are clear to begin.**