



SOUTHWEST
S C H O O L S

Bissonnet Elementary



Parent/Student Handbook
2021-2022

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Who's Who?



Spyros Catechis, Ed. D.
Chief Executive Officer
Founder

Dr. Don Hooper
Interim Superintendent

Rose Norman
Chief Operations Officer

Tracey Urban
Chief Finance Officer

Uyen Nguyen
Associate Academics and Program Officer

Erin Chavez, M.Ed.
Principal

Roshanda Johnson, M.Ed.
Assistant Principal

Wendy Gomez
Administrative Assistant



The Mission of Southwest Schools is to prepare college and career-ready students for postsecondary success.

Southwest Schools is committed to creating an outstanding learning environment resulting in skillful, knowledgeable, well-equipped citizens who will become successful members of society, enabling them to adapt to the cultural, intellectual, and social challenges in a changing world. We aspire to be the leader and integral part of a consortium within our community that meets that goal. To achieve that ambition, we apply our collective energies, resources, and talents to all dimensions of providing high quality education to children and youth in Texas. Along with others, we will advocate for all of our children. We will reach out with a universal embrace to all parts of our community. We will work constantly to learn more about the evolving issue of early childhood education and we will not hesitate to attempt innovative solutions to this challenge.

At Southwest Schools we believe that:

- All students can learn if we meet their needs.
- Innate learning depends on a safe, nurturing, inclusive, and flexible environment.
- All decisions should be based on what is best for the student.
- A learning organization focused on excellence will continually transform through meaningful and relevant work that engages students in profound learning.
- Education is the shared responsibility of the community.
- Genuine transformation requires disruptive innovation.

GENERAL CAMPUS INFORMATION

School Hours

Monday – Friday 7:40 AM – 3:30 PM

Doors open at 7:30 AM. Dismissal begins at 3:15 PM

Every other Wednesday is early dismissal – 7:40 AM – 1:15 PM

Students who arrive after 7:40 AM will be counted tardy.

Meal Services

Breakfast - Served from 7:30 AM – 7:40 AM in the classrooms

Lunch:

GRADE	TIME
Pre-K	10:15 – 10:45
Kinder	10:25 – 10:55
Kinder	10:30 – 11:00
Kinder	10:35 – 11:05
Grade 1	10:40 – 11:10
Grade 1	10:45 – 11:15
Grade 1	10:50 – 11:20
Grade 5	10:55 – 11:25
Grade 5	11:00 – 11:30
Grade 5	11:05 – 11:35
Grade 3	11:10 – 11:40
Grade 3	11:15 – 11:45
Grade 3	11:20 – 11:50
Grade 2	11:25 – 11:55
Grade 2	11:30 – 12:00
Grade 2	11:35 – 12:05
Grade 4	11:40 – 12:10
Grade 4	11:45 – 12:15
Grade 4	11:50 – 12:20

The district offers free breakfast and lunch to ALL students through the Community Eligibility Provision. Free breakfasts will be provided in the classroom every morning at arrival daily. Students will have lunch in the cafeteria daily at their scheduled time.

Students may bring their lunch from home. Lunches must be in the students' backpacks and brought to school with them. No lunches will be accepted through the office for drop-off.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Absences

State law requires that students be in attendance 90% of the school year in order to be promoted at the end of the year, this **includes excused and unexcused absences**. An absence is an absence no matter if it is excused. Each time a student misses a day of school he/she must bring a note that provides:

- 1) The full name of the student
- 2) The date of the absence(s)
- 3) Date the note was written;
- 4) The reason for the absence;
- 5) A daytime contact number for the parent(s)
- 6) The signature of the parent.

If a written note is not received within three (3) school days, the absence remains '**unexcused**' and any classwork missed can be given a grade of '0'. Students are required to complete all assignments that were missed due to an absence(s). If students miss more than three (3) consecutive days, they are required to bring a doctor's note.

Parents will be notified by letter after a student has missed three (3) days of school. After a child misses five (5) days of school, the child is considered truant and the parent/guardian is required to follow a **Student Attendance Behavior Improvement Plan (SABIP)**. Parental involvement will be required (including mandatory scheduled meetings with the truancy team; attending the truancy program afterschool with your son/daughter). Beyond five (5) absences, the truancy prevention measures will escalate to meetings and support from school administration, district truancy tribunal court, and Harris County Justice of The Peace, Precinct 5 Court.

Tardy Arrivals

If a child arrives at school past 7:40 AM the parent must accompany the student to the front desk and sign the log acknowledging the tardy arrival. Parents may not accompany students to their classroom. The student will be given a 'tardy slip' and will not be allowed in the classroom without it. Frequent late arrivals interrupt classroom instruction and create a difficult transition for the tardy student.

Please Note: If excessive absences and/or tardy arrivals continue, the student will be placed on an attendance contract and may be removed from Southwest Schools.

Students who arrive after 9:50 AM without verification of a doctor's appointment will be marked absent for that day.

Early Departures

Parents may only pick-up their children early from school if there is a family emergency, if the student is ill, or if the student has a medical appointment that could not be scheduled during non-school hours. School must be notified 24 hours in advance if a student needs to be picked up early for medical

appointments. The school must receive a doctor's note upon return. Parents must report to the front office and indicate the reason for requesting their child's early dismissal.

If the request is approved by an administrator, the parent will sign their child out, and wait for a staff person to bring the student to the front. The practice of picking students up early is closely monitored by administration and is counted towards students' absences. Excessive early departures will follow the same procedures as the truancy prevention measures.

Dismissal Due to Illness or Injury

School personnel will contact parents to pick up any student who has suffered a possible serious injury, has an elevated temperature or who is experiencing vomiting or diarrhea. Students will be permitted back to school after all symptoms have cleared for at least twenty-four (24) hours. If parents cannot be contacted, a relative or emergency contact person listed on the enrollment card will be called and asked to pick up the child. Parents are expected to keep all contact information current as well as inform school administrators/faculty/staff of all medical conditions related to their child's health.

Except in an emergency situation, all students **must** have a pass before being sent to the school's office. If the student needs to go home due to sudden illness or injury, the main office staff will contact the parent, guardian or emergency contact person. In the event a student needs more than minor first aid attention, the parent or guardian will be notified and the student may be transported to the nearest hospital.

Bissonnet Elementary School and/or Southwest Schools District is not responsible for costs of treating injuries and cannot assume liability for any other costs associated with an injury (including transportation costs).

Bad Weather/Emergency School Closing Information

Stay tuned to local radio and television stations for information about school closures during inclement weather and other emergency situations. Information on overnight weather closings can be obtained through local news and radio channels. Parents who have provided a current phone number will receive an automatic telephone notification from the district and/or school campus.

DRESS CODE

Students at Southwest Schools are expected to represent their school by dressing in good taste and maintaining a neat and well-organized appearance. All clothing for school should:

- Be suitable for school activities
- Be neat and clean
- Include appropriate underclothing
- Fit properly (not too tight or too loose) for sitting, reaching, bending and physical education activities
- Have hemlines no more than 2" above the knee
- Not have any logos, designs or print except the Southwest Schools logo

Hair:

Must be clean and worn out of the eyes. **Hair coloring and shaved designs in the hair are not allowed.**

Shirts:

Navy blue, red or white polo shirts with collars and sleeves. Tank-style shirts are not acceptable. No other designs or slogans are permitted. Spirit shirts may be worn on Fridays only. **Shirts must be tucked in at all times.**

Pants, skirts, jumpers, Bermuda-length shorts and skorts (culottes):

Must be khaki, black or navy blue in color. Shorts and skirts must be no more than two inches above the knee. **Jeans (without rips or tears) may be worn on Fridays only with a spirit shirt.**

Shoes:

Tennis shoes are preferred. Flip-flops, clogs or slides are dangerous and should not be worn. Socks should be worn at all times.

Jackets:

Students are permitted to wear a sweater or jacket of their choosing (color, style) while in the classroom. Outerwear must not contain inappropriate images or language. Students may be encouraged to remove outerwear during recess or physical education activities based on temperature and for the students safety.

Make-up and Nail Polish:

Should not be worn to school by elementary students.

Jewelry:

Jewelry and other valuables should not be brought to school. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items. For safety and health reasons, dangling earrings are not allowed. Jewelry that becomes distracting to the learning environment will be confiscated until the end of the school day.

Spirit or College Fridays:

Students are permitted to wear blue jeans on Fridays only. The jeans may not be torn, or tight, and must be fitted at the waist. In addition, students may wear a Southwest Schools 'spirit shirt' or a college shirt. Shirts with other slogans or designs will not be allowed. Students may also choose to wear their regular school uniform.

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Southwest Schools' curriculum balances intellectual rigor with exposure to a wide variety of academic and cultural experiences. It is our goal to develop independent thinking, sound learning and reasoning skills so that our students will be prepared to move confidently forward in their academic endeavors.

Based on House Bill 4545, all Bissonnet students K – 5 will receive an additional forty – five (45) minutes of individualized instruction a minimum of four days a week.

Promotion Requirements

Southwest Schools' Promotion Standards policy requires that students meet specific requirements in order to be promoted to the next grade. Those requirements are listed below by grade level.

All Grades

- Students must meet the Texas Compulsory Attendance requirement and be in attendance 90% of the school year. Reminder: All absences rather excused or unexcused are still reported as an absence.

Kindergarten

- Students must make sufficient progress in literacy and mathematics according to standards agreed upon by Southwest Schools.

1st and 2nd Grade

- Students must earn a 70% or above in reading, language arts, mathematics and either science or social studies.
- Students must score at 70% or higher on the High Frequency Word Assessment.

3rd, 4th, and 5th Grades

- Students must earn a 70% or above in reading, language arts, mathematics and either science or social studies.
- Students must earn a passing score on the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) in both Reading and Mathematics. (A passing score will be established by the Texas Education Agency.)

The final decision on grade placement for students rests with the Grade Placement Committee (GPC). The committee will review the records of all students who do not meet the requirements for promotion listed above, considering a number of factors. If the committee determines it to be in the student's best interest to be retained, the student's parents will be notified.

Please Note: Promotion decisions for students in Special Education and 504 programs will be made by the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) or the 504 Committee. The Grade Placement Committee makes promotion decisions for students with limited English proficiency in consultation with a member of the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC)

Grading System

Southwest Schools Bissonnet Elementary grading system is as follows:

Kindergarten:

Kindergarten students may receive one of four (4) possible marks. The following marks are:

GRADES EXPLANATION (<i>Explicación de notas</i>)	
E	Exceeds Expectations (<i>Excede las expectativas</i>)
S	Meets Expectations (<i>Cumple las expectativas</i>)
N	Needs Improvement (<i>Necesita mejorar</i>)
	Not taught in this cycle (<i>No se ha enseñado en este ciclo</i>)

Grades 1 – 5:

Students in grades 1 – 5 may receive one of five (5) possible marks for academic performance and one of four (4) possible marks for conduct. The marks are explained below:

	Academic Subjects		Conduct
A	90 – 100 (Excellent)	E	Excellent
B	80-89 (Good; Above Average)	S	Satisfactory
C	75-79 (Satisfactory; Average)	N	Needs to Improve
D	70-74 (Poor; Below Average)	U	Unsatisfactory
F	0-69 (Failing; Unsatisfactory)		

Core Subject grades are calculated using the following weights:

Test/Assessment	40%
Classwork	50%
Homework	10%

Please refer to the 2021 -2022 School Calendar for the dates that progress reports and report cards will be sent home for parent review. All reports should be signed by parents and returned to the teacher within two days.

If you wish to discuss the progress report, report card or behavior with your child’s teacher, please call the front office and leave a message. The teacher will contact you.

Homework

Homework is assigned to help students practice skills learned during the school year and/or be prepared for the next day’s lessons. Homework also serves to familiarize parents about their child(ren)’s school work and give parents the opportunity to be involved academically. Homework also builds good study habits. Students are encouraged to always complete homework assignments to the very best of their ability. **Students should be able to complete all homework assignments independently.**

Suggested Time Frames for Homework:

- Four (4) nights a week (Monday – Thursday)
- K – 2nd Grades: 15 to 30 minutes each day
- 3rd – 5th Grade: 30 to 60 minutes each day
- K – 5th Grade: Read 20 minutes each day (including weekends)

The times above are estimates. Some assignments may require more or less time.

Students may also spend this time reading their library books, practicing math facts, practicing spelling words or working on projects.

Field Lesson

A field lesson is an educational experience designed to extend and enhance student learning. Field lesson require teacher planning and administrative approval. It is our hope that all students are able to participate. However, we may require a parent to accompany their son/daughter to support the

learning experiences. Teachers send field lesson notices and permission slips home before the experience. Students who fail to return a signed permission slip will not be permitted to participate. Permission cannot be granted via telephone. Students must wear a uniform on the day of the field lesson.

Parent Conferences

Students or parents who have questions or a concern should first address the problem with the teacher. If the outcome of that discussion is not satisfactory, they can request a conference with the teacher and the Campus Administrator. Parents wishing to set up a conference with a teacher may do so by contacting the school office or through Class DoJo. Teachers are available for conferences and to return phone calls only during their conference periods, before and after school. Parents should report to the office when arriving for any conference.

Please Note: Teachers are not allowed to hold a parent conference during class time, so it is important to schedule ahead. Conference days are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Contact your child's teacher for an appointment during their conference period.

District Policy on Discrimination

Southwest Schools is proud of its history and dedication in educating all students and values the contributions of all students, faculty, staff, and community. Southwest Schools believes that there is no more important work done in our society than that of educating our children, the future of our country. We are committed to the communities that we serve and in providing a safe and nurturing environment for all regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression. We do not condone any discrimination based on any of these factors or any other prohibited by law. Southwest Schools will continue its mission to serve all students. In that, all students, faculty, staff, and community deserve the right to have an educational environment that is free from discrimination, threats, fear, harassment, and retaliation.

Southwest Schools is dedicated to enforcing all of its anti-harassment policies. Southwest Schools works to create an environment of respect for human dignity and value. We ask for and appreciate the support of all of our stakeholders in fostering an environment that will help all of our students reach their full potential.

OTHER STUDENT PROCEDURES

Technology

We will remain a one-to-one technology district. All students will receive a district issued device (iPad or laptop) to utilize for instructional purposes. Parents are required to ensure that technology is cared for and that students bring technology to and from campus, fully charged daily. Southwest Schools will continue to use Schoology and Classlink as the main learning management system. A student will not be able to participate at Bissonnet without the Southwest Schools device. Students are provided with the device and charger.

Device/Accessories	Damaged	Missing
iPad	\$50	\$449
iPad Charger	\$15	\$15
iPad Keyboard/Case	\$99	\$99
Laptop	\$100	Lenovo \$217; HP \$775
Laptop Charger	\$25	\$25
Laptop Sleeve/Case	\$20	\$20

Southwest Schools devices are intended to be used for school applications and use only.

School administration will consider any use not aligned with learning (i.e. inappropriate applications, taking inappropriate pictures of yourself or others, cyber bullying) as a disciplinary infraction. The chatting feature is strictly for responses solicited by teachers only. The chat is not to be used to communicate with peers or to share inappropriate pictures or emojis. Students should not be utilizing any two-way chat features during or after school hours.

Masks

Based on CDC guidelines and TEA, students 12 and under are advised (not required) to wear a mask if they are not fully vaccinated. Teachers and staff members that have been fully vaccinated are also not required to wear mask. We respect parent wishes and will have masks available for students upon request.

Water

The campus water fountains will return to full operation for the 2021 – 2022 school year. If you would prefer that your son/daughter not drink directly from the fountain, parents must provide a sealed tumbler or refillable water bottle for the bottle refill station. Bissonnet Elementary will not provide cups, tumblers or water bottles for student usage.

School Supplies

In order for every student to have a successful school year, each student is asked to bring all items listed on the school supply list. Students should bring all school supplies during the first week of school. Supplies should be given to the child’s teacher.

Some school supplies will need to be replenished during the school year. In December, a replenishment school supply list will go home with students over the holiday break. Students will be expected to bring those supplies to school with them when they return in January.

Toys and Other Valuables

Toys, cameras, portable gaming systems/DVD players, radios, jewelry, and other personal items should not be brought to the school. Students should not bring large sums of money nor wear expensive jewelry to school. The school does not assume any responsibility for personal property that is lost or stolen while at school.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Children will not be called to the school office to receive calls from parents. Emergency messages will be delivered by the school’s secretary or a school administrator. Telephones are reserved for

administrative functions. Children may not use a cell phone or other personal electronic devices (ie. game systems or Nintendo Switch) during school hours, unless authorized by a teacher or administrator. Upon arrival students will place their cellphone into their assigned space/pocket on the classroom door. If a student is found using a cell phone or other electronic device, the item will be confiscated and held in the main office until a parent comes to claim the phone or electronic device. If the offense is repeated, then the parent will pay \$15 to pick up the phone or electronic device.

Class Celebrations

Class celebrations will be permitted for only a limited number of events each year. This procedure is mandated in order to minimize the intake of foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV). This type of food item will be permitted during: 1) winter classroom celebrations, 2) end of the year celebrations. Specific guidelines will be issued prior to each activity. These policies are developed by the Texas Department of Agriculture and strictly enforced by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Refer to the school's wellness policy (<https://www.swschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Southwest-Schools-Wellness-Policy.pdf>) to understand what foods are considered to be of minimal nutritional value.

Birthday Celebrations

Store-bought cupcakes or cookies may be served in the cafeteria during the last 10 minutes of your child's lunch period to celebrate his/her birthday. Do not bring a cake or other items that need to be cut and served since the teachers will be unavailable to assist at this time. Provide sufficient servings to accommodate all children in the class. Items cannot be brought to campus throughout the day. Parents must drop off party items during arrival to the main office.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS/CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

The goal of Southwest Schools is to provide opportunities for students to graduate career or college ready. To achieve that goal, we aspire to provide an educational environment that is safe for all students and supports learning. However, we need your help to accomplish this objective. We encourage positive behavior of all students both in and out of the classroom. Negative student behavior interferes with our ability to operate a safe and orderly school. Therefore, there must be consequences for unacceptable behavior. Below you will find an example of infractions and possible consequences. However, the Code of Student Conduct is extensive and outlines our school policies and procedures for student discipline (available on the website or a copy can be requested). <https://www.swschools.org/parents-and-students/codeofconduct/>

Excerpt of Infractions and Consequences

Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV
<p>Violation of classroom rules:</p> <p>~Failure to participate in classroom activities</p> <p>~Disruptive behavior in class</p> <p>~Eating in class</p> <p>~Violating campus dress code</p>	<p>More serious in nature (repeat of Level I):</p> <p>~Repeated violation of Level I infractions</p> <p>~Use of profanity or obscene gestures</p> <p>~Leaving assigned area without permission</p> <p>~Use of personal devices (cellphones, gaming systems, smart watches) during school day</p>	<p>Offenses that seriously disrupt learning environment (class and/or school):</p> <p>~Persistent Level II infractions</p> <p>~Fighting (Mutual)</p> <p>~Failure to comply with reasonable requests of school personnel</p> <p>~Bullying or Cyberbullying</p>	<p>Criminal/Serious Offenses:</p> <p>~Arson</p> <p>~Possession of any drugs (no matter the amount)</p> <p>~Possession of a firearm or knife (real or fake)</p> <p>~Engaging in assault that involves bodily injury</p>
Consequences			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral Correction • Redirection • Student – Teacher Conference • Contact parent • Detention (held by teacher) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of privileges • Parental contact • Required conference w/administrator, student, and parent • Behavior contracts • Exclusion from activities such as field trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counseling • Individualized behavior and intervention plan • Suspension up to 3 days • Restitution (restore school property that was vandalized) • Removal of privileges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify police • Referral to juvenile court for legal action • Exclusion from activities • Restitution or restoration • Expulsion

Appeals Process: Parents and students have the right to challenge a disciplinary consequence. The full appeals process may be found for parents on page 38 of the Student Code of Conduct.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Special Diets/Allergies

Parents/Guardians of students who require special diets for medical reasons (allergies, etc.) must report any special dietary requirement to school personnel. ***Special diet requests must be provided in writing and must provide verification from a doctor.***

First Aid

Southwest Schools Bissonnet Elementary provides minor health care for students who become ill or injured while at school. The school does not employ a nurse at this time. Any special health needs should be discussed with the campus administrator. A student who is ill should be kept at home until

the student is without fever or other symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhea, cough, etc. **without the use of medications**, for a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours. If a student has been hospitalized, a note from the student's physician stating the date the student is allowed to return to school will be required.

Medication at School

The school **DOES NOT** furnish medication. **Prescription medication** can only be administered by an administrator or his/her designee. The 'Medication Administration Form' must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian **AND** the physician. State law forbids school personnel from administering medication to a student unless the medication is in its original container. A form filled out by the physician is required for **any** medication change.

Over the counter medications should be administered by the parent/guardian before and/or after school. School personnel will be allowed to administer over the counter (OTC) medications **only** if a medical physician has completed and signed the required form. Please see the school's administrative assistant for the appropriate forms and additional medication guidelines and procedures.

Head Lice

The appearance of head lice is unfortunately a common event in almost all elementary schools. We recommend that parents periodically check student's head for lice. When live lice or nits are discovered at school the parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up and treat their student as soon as possible. Students will be allowed to return to school after one (1) treatment **if** there is no sign of live lice or nits. One (1) day of absence will be excused to allow for treatment. When returning to school the administrative assistant or other school personnel will inspect the student before they are allowed to return to class.

Health Excuses for Physical Education

Physical Education (P.E.) is a required activity and all students are expected to participate. If a child's parents/guardians believe he/she should be excused from P.E. activities, the request must be in writing. If the student is to be excused for more than three (3) days, the note must be from a doctor. Repeated requests to be excused from P.E. will not be honored without a note from a doctor. On the days that a child does not participate in P.E. activities, he/she will also not participate in recess.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Authorization for Student Pick-Up

Parents/Guardians are required to complete a form authorizing specific individuals to pick the student up after school. Only those persons listed on the authorization will be allowed to pick up a student from our campus (if they do not have a placard). **No others will be allowed to take the student.** Individuals under the age of 18 are not allowed to pickup students (no minors or siblings under 18). If a parent chooses to provide the placard to a sibling that is under 18, the parent assumes responsibility once the student is released to the sibling in possession of the placard.

During dismissal the adult responsible for picking up the student must display the **placard** throughout the year. These placards will be provided to each student at the "Parent Academy" event. Each family will be provided one placard. There is a fee of \$2 for each additional tag or replacement tags. If a person (including a parent/guardian) who is requesting to pick up a student is not listed on the authorization for student pick up form and does not have the **placard**, the school:

- reserves the right to deny the release of the student;
- reserves the right to request a photo I.D. from any adult picking up a student from our campus including a parent/guardian;
- reserves the right to contact the student’s parent to conduct a telephone interview to receive verbal permission to release the student to a person not listed on the form;
- reserves the right to contact a person from the emergency contact form to pick up the student.

Changes in Transportation

During the first week of school parents will be asked to determine the manner in which their children will regularly get home from school. The student may not authorize a change in his/her transportation plans without written approval from a parent or a phone call to the front desk. All changes in transportation should be made no later than 2:00 p.m. in order for messages to be relayed to students and faculty prior to the end of the day.

Release of Students

A student will only be released to an adult that is in possession of the dismissal placard. If there is a question of whether a child should be released to the birth mother/father, the school will refer to the child’s birth certificate unless notarized court documents are filed in the student’s permanent record indicating the sole custody of only one parent/guardian. If in doubt, the school Site Administrator or his/her designee reserves the right to detain the parent/guardian and contact the appropriate authorities to resolve the conflict.

Late Pick-up

If a student has not been picked by 3:35 pm, not enrolled in the Afterschool Program, and if we are unable to contact the parent or other emergency numbers, the school will contact Child Protective Services to pick the student up. **Parents must be certain that the school has working phone numbers at all times. Send any changes to both the teacher and the front office.**

Parents are required to come to the front office to sign their child out. A late fee of \$5 will be charged at 3:35 pm. It will be a \$1 per minute thereafter. If you are not able to pick up your child at 3:15 pm, consider enrolling them in our Afterschool Program.

Emergency Contact Information

Due to unforeseen situations and circumstances it is imperative for each student to have current emergency contact information on file in the front office. Telephone numbers, addresses and emails do change and anytime a change of address, phone or email is made it is the **PARENTS’ RESPONSIBILITY** to inform the front office at 713-988-5839 about those changes. The school expects all of our parents to maintain accurate records.

Closed Campus

The campus of Southwest Schools Bissonnet Elementary is closed and no student, following his/her arrival shall leave the campus except in emergencies approved by the office. No student is allowed to leave for lunch. Students may not bring visitors to school to attend class or to have lunch. Refer to the Bissonnet calendar for family events.

Visitors

Visitors are welcome to Bissonnet Elementary. Due to the importance of student safety and learning, an appointment is preferred. Unannounced visits may be declined and scheduled for a future date and time.

All visitors to the campus will be required to provide a State issued ID which will be subject to criminal screening using the Raptor system. A person with a clear screening will be issued a visitor pass. Visitors/volunteers discovered to not be in possession of an appropriate visitor pass will be asked to return to the front office to receive one before being allowed to continue to move about the school grounds.

School Speed Zones

We respectfully request that parents follow all safety school zones. No appointment or deadline is more important than a child's safety. While driving through our school parking lots, please keep your speed limited to 5 to 10 mph. Please remember to watch for small children in and around the parking lot areas. It is also important for parents to refrain from using cell phones when they are delivering their children to or from school. School administrators or designee will call or speak to parents about unsafe behavior in the school zone if necessary. Please help us keep our children safe.

Walking To and From School

Students and families who walk to and from school are advised to heed the following recommendations:

- Do not talk to or accept rides from strangers.
- Walk on sidewalks at all times.
- Cross streets at corners, and always follow the planned, direct route to your destination.
- Safety in numbers; consider the age and distance the child will have to walk and buddy up or accompany your son/daughter to and from school.

Unattended Children in Parked Vehicles

No parent/guardian/shuttle driver is allowed to leave a child unattended in a parked vehicle in the visitor parking lot. Parents/guardians/shuttle drivers observed leaving a child unattended in the parking lot will be reported to authorities. This is a very serious violation as outlined by Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services and committing this type of violation (neglect) is dealt with seriously on our campus. Parents/Guardians who utilize van/shuttle services must explain this policy to van/shuttle drivers responsible for dropping off and/or picking up your child.

I.D. Badges for Faculty, Staff, and Visitors

- **Faculty/Staff**
All personnel are required to wear an I.D. badge during school hours. Badges should be visible at all times.
- **Students**
All students are required to wear a name tag or badge during all off-campus activities such as field trips. Student tags or badges will not contain a photo or the student's name. Badges will provide school information (school name, school telephone number and what to do in the event a student is lost).

- **Parent/Guardian/Visitors/Volunteers**

All visitors to the campus are required to check-in at the school office and be issued a visitor's badge. Visitor badges must be worn and visible at all times. Faculty/Staff who observed visitors on our campus who are not displaying a badge are required to direct visitors to the front office to sign-in and receive a visitor or volunteer badge.

Student Photographs

Students will be given two (2) opportunities to have their photograph taken. All students will be required to take a picture for reasons of safety (the school must have a current photo of each student enrolled at the school on file). Parents/Guardians will be notified via flyer regarding dates and times pictures will be taken. The purchase of any pictures is strictly optional.

Criminal Background Checks for Volunteers

To ensure student safety, parents/guardians or volunteers must complete a criminal background check in order to serve as a volunteer, in the capacity of a chaperone, Room Parent (RP), Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS), committee or advisory board member, school tutor or in any other capacity the school deems necessary for a background check to be performed.

TRANSPORTATION

Arrival Drop-Off/Pick-Up

Drop-Off Procedures:

Doors to the building will open at 7:30am. Parents must get out of the car and wait in line with students. Students in Kindergarten – Fifth Grade will line up at the cafeteria door. The line will form along the curb in front of the building. Prekindergarten students will line up in front of the PK Wing (formerly Young Learners). There WILL BE NO supervision of students before 7:30 am. We strongly advise parents not to leave students unattended. Administrators reserve the right to contact parents who drop students off early. We care about all of our students and want them to be safe.

Pick-Up Procedures:

All students will be dismissed from the classrooms. PK students will be dismissed from the PK wing. Parents will line up at that end of the building. Students in grades K – 5 will be leave from the cafeteria door. Parents will form a line in the direction of the playground to pick up your students. Parents will line up at designated doors with pick up tags. Students will then be dismissed and connected to parent(guardian). We will start calling names of children for dismissal at 3:15 pm. All students must be picked up by 3:30.

Students that ride a bus/daycare van will be escorted to the bus/van through the main office doors. Walkers will also be escorted through the front doors. Walkers will sign out and must immediately proceed to their homes off campus. Parents must provide a written document granting your son/daughter permission to walk home alone without an adult. **NO student will be labeled as a walker without the written documentation. Parent request by phone will not be granted under any circumstances.** We care about each one of our students. Parents assume all responsibility for students that walk alone once a child leaves campus for the day.

Parents are to follow these rules:

1. Morning arrival begins at 7:30 AM and ends at 7:40 AM
2. Afternoon dismissal begins at 3:15 PM and ends at 3:30 PM
3. Students will not be released to go home after 2:30 PM, so we can prepare for dismissal.
4. Placards, backpacks and personal items may not be left unattended to hold a spot in line.
5. Please watch for children and adults.
6. Please watch for additional traffic.
7. Please park in the parking lot and walk to the designated area, bringing the **placard**. Hold up the placard so that the name and grade is showing. School staff will call for your child to meet you at the designated area (cafeteria or PK Wing)
8. Teacher conferences should be scheduled before school, after school or during the teachers scheduled planning period, not at arrival or dismissal times. If a teacher conference has been scheduled, please park car in parking lot.

Daycare Vans and Private Bus Drivers

Van/shuttle services must adhere to the same drop-off/pick-up procedures as outlined for parents/guardians. Parents are responsible for making shuttle services aware of the school schedule. Van/shuttle services are expected to be fully responsible for the appropriate supervision of each student utilizing their services. Van/shuttle services that fail to adhere to school policies and procedures will be reported to parents/guardians and/or Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (TDPRS) if their practices are deemed harmful and/or negligent towards children.

RIGHTS OF PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. 20 U.S.C. Sec 1232g

Federal and state laws safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use, and provide parents and “eligible” students certain rights. An “eligible” student is a student who is 18 or older OR who is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows the procedures for requesting the information unless the parent or guardian objects to the release of the directory information about the student. **If you do not want Southwest District to disclose directory information from your child’s education records without prior written consent, you must notify the district in writing by, Friday, August 27, 2021.** Southwest District has designated the following information as directory information: student’s name, address, date of enrollment, telephone listing, electronic mail address, photograph, degrees, honors and awards received, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, grade level, most recent educational institutional attended, and participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and the weight and height of members of athletic teams.

Parental Rights

Parents have the following rights:

- To inspect all instructional materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids used in your child’s classroom
- To have access to all written records of a school district concerning your child
- To request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child’s teachers

- To inspect a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to your child
- To grant or deny any written request from the district to make a videotape or voice recording of their child. State law, however, permits the school to make a videotape or voice recording or a photograph without parental permission when it is used for school safety, relates to classroom instruction or a co-curricular or extracurricular activity, or when it relates to media coverage.
- To request that your child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the state flag. The request must be submitted in writing. The State law does not allow your child to be excused from participation in the required moment of silence or silent activity that follows the pledge.

Student Confidentiality

Southwest Schools District complies with federal and state regulations related to the right of students, parents or adult students, i.e. those students who are 18 years of age or older, to access, inspect, and review the confidential school records of the student. Southwest School complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, {34 CFR part 99}, and other related statutes, 34 CFR 300 127; 34 CFR 300 560-300 575; TEC 26.004; 19 TAC 89.1050, which protect the confidentiality of students' records at their collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction stages.

Student Religious Expression in Classroom Assignments

Students may express their beliefs about religion in their school assignments to the same extent that non-religious expression is allowed. Assignments will be judged by ordinary academic standards of substance and relevance, and against other legitimate pedagogical criteria identified by the school.

Student Right to Pray

The school recognizes a student's right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt the instructional or other activities of the school. The school will not require, encourage, or coerce a student to engage in or to refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

OPTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS WHO HAVE LEARNING DIFFICULTIES OR WHO NEED OR MAY NEED SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the person listed below to learn about the district's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students including a process based on Response to Intervention (RTI). The implementation of Response to Intervention has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of school districts to meet the needs of all struggling students.

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If the evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide informed written consent for the evaluation. The

district must complete the evaluation and the report within 60 calendar days of the date the district receives the written consent. The district must give a copy of the evaluation report to the parent.

If the District determines that the evaluation is not needed, the District will provide the parent with prior written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parents of their rights, if they disagree with the District. The District is required to give parents the Notice of Procedural Safeguards—Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities. Additional information regarding the IDEA is available from the school in a companion document A Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process. The following websites provide information to those who are seeking information and resources specific to students with disabilities and their families:

- Texas Project First
- Partners Resource Network

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education is Phillip Hill, Director of Special Education, at 713-784-6345.



RECEIPT OF PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

This handbook has been written to help the student and parent/guardian have a good understanding of school procedures. It is important for the student and parent/guardian to read and discuss the contents of the handbook.

Each student is expected to follow the rules and regulations outlined in the handbook. Student and parent/guardian cooperation should help the student be more successful at school.

Your signature acknowledges that you have access to an electronic copy of the 2021-2022 handbook and have read and discussed its contents. Your signature also acknowledges your participation in the required Parent Academy.

Please mark the appropriate box, and sign next to the statement.

I have read and understand the rules and regulations outlined by the school, and I commit to ensure my child exhibits appropriate behaviors aligned with the school's expectations.

Parent name: _____

Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

I have read with my parents the rules and regulations outlined by the school, and I commit to be compliant with the school norms.

Student name: _____

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

*****Please sign and return to school*****