

Stewartsville Elementary School

Parent/Student Handbook

School Year 2021-2022



1138 Wildcat Road
Goodview, VA 24095
Mascot - Wildcat

Phone: 540- 890-2174
FAX: 540-890-0955

Office Hours: 7:20 AM - 4:00 PM
School Hours: 7:45-2:15 PM

Denise Gerstler, M.Ed.
Principal



Dear Stewartsville Families:

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year and Stewartsville Elementary! We know that you are as excited as we are to get back to school!! We are looking forward to welcoming back all students from last year and welcoming the new faces joining our school. This handbook has been prepared especially for you in order to make your year run smoothly. Many valuable pieces of information are contained within these pages. You will find answers to questions about the school, its programs, requirements, and policies.

I would like to extend an invitation to all parents and guardians to get involved in your child's education. There is a direct relationship between parental involvement and high achievement. Stay in touch with your child's teacher, attend PTA meetings and school functions, and volunteer at school. Take an active part in the PTA. Each year, our PTA provides much needed materials, equipment, and services to our students and school.

We want to challenge each student to put forth his or her best effort. Set aside time to do homework each day. Read for a few minutes. Get some physical exercise. Participate in a sport or recreational activity. Eat a good breakfast. Follow a reasonable bedtime schedule and get enough rest. View some TV, but balance it with other activities. Attend school regularly and be on time. Establishing patterns such as these helps make you the best student you can be and prepares you for life. Parents can help children establish these valuable skills which will serve them for a lifetime.

We will be participating in a program again this year called *Getting Along Together (GAT)*. The GAT Program has a three-pronged focus: students learn thinking and cognitive skills, emotional management, as well as interpersonal and social skills. Collectively, these skills and strategies create a peaceful school environment where students are empowered to manage their own behavior, decrease conflict, and increase receptivity to learning. Please help us by helping your child understand the importance of rules and treating others with respect. When children feel good about themselves they do better in school and develop more meaningful relationships.

If you have a concern about a classroom situation, work closely with your child's teacher to communicate and resolve your concerns. If those concerns are not able to be resolved, please contact me personally so we can work together toward a solution. If there are school concerns or ideas you would like to share, please contact me. I believe that we are a partnership and together we can enhance your child's educational experiences at school.

Stewartsville Elementary School is a Title I school. Title I is a federally funded program that provides additional support to students, parents, and teachers. Virginia's accountability system supports teaching and learning by setting rigorous academic standards known as the Standards of Learning (SOL).

I look forward to meeting all of our new families and learners, as well as reuniting with all of those returning. The staff and administration are more than willing to help in any way possible, so do not hesitate to ask questions for clarification, no matter how small or unimportant you think the question might be. I believe that it takes a whole community to educate a child and I am excited to join with you to make your child's experience at Stewartsville Elementary School a memorable and successful one.

BEST WISHES FOR AN OUTSTANDING SCHOOL YEAR! GO WILDCATS!

Sincerely,

Denise Gerstler

Principal
540-890-2174
dgerstler@bedford.k12.va.us

History of Stewartsville Elementary School

Stewartsville has maintained a public school since 1850. The one room log building was located on the Mitchell place, and in 1900 the site was moved to the Drewry farm. There, a two-room log schoolhouse was first built. There is no record of the faculty members at that time, but in 1903, James Feather and Miss Alice Reynolds taught in the building.

In 1904, a new site was found, and a two-room, frame house was built. This building was situated on the existing athletic field.

In 1912, a two-story building of four rooms with an auditorium was constructed and provided instruction for grades 1-7 and the first year of high school. At this time, there were three instructors at the school. In 1914, the first class graduated from Stewartsville School. Miss Mary Watson was the principal; and from 1912 to 1930, the school offered one to three years of high school.

In the fall of 1930, Bedford County began consolidating schools and students began to come to Stewartsville from other schools. It was during this time that the fourth year of high school was added. Mr. J. A. Johnson was designated as principal during this year. One teacher for high school was hired as the consolidation of smaller schools took place and bus service was implemented. The 1934 school year saw ten teachers and a principal. The school also became a fully accredited high school by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Enrollment in 1936 was 270 students.

The first full-time librarian, Miss Madeline Willis, was employed in 1940. The first lunch room was operated in 1934 with Miss Joyce Poole, home economics teacher, in charge until 1944.

In 1964 with additional consolidation of schools being completed, the decision was made to the construct Staunton River High School. This left Stewartsville as an elementary school with grades 1-7. The Bedford County School Board added a new addition to Stewartsville at this time consisting of a new library, new cafeteria, and four classrooms.

In 1979, a new classroom addition of eleven rooms was completed because of the ever-increasing enrollment. This year also saw the first special education program for the school.

Staunton River Middle School was completed in 1979. At this time Stewartsville became a K-5 school.

In 1991, the school underwent a major renovation and added a new library and six new classrooms. Included in the renovation was the air-conditioning of all instructional areas.

In 1999, opening of an additional Bedford County elementary school in Goodview, changed the attendance zone and significantly decreased the school membership.

At the opening of the 2016-2017 school year, the enrollment at Stewartsville Elementary was approximately 350 students which it remains close to today.

Bedford County School Board 2021-2022

Note. These are current the members of the Bedford County School Board. These individuals may or may not be on the Board for the entire school year. The most current information regarding School Board members may be found on the Bedford County school website (website noted below).

<p>Dr. Susan C. Mele (District #1) 117 Seagull Way Goodview, VA 24095 Phone: 540-797-4423</p>	<p>Jason Johnson (District #2) 6735 White House Road Moneta, VA 24121 Home: (540) 875-8151</p>
<p>Dr. John H. Hicks (District # 3) 3579 Evington Road Evington, VA 24550 Home: (434) 525-4320</p>	<p>Mr. Marcus Hill (District # 4) 158 Cedarberry Lane Forest, VA 24551 Phone: 434-525-1518 Email: marcus.hill@bedford.k12.va.us</p>
<p>Mrs. Georgia W. Hairston (District #5) 1164 Toms View Drive Bedford, VA 24523 Phone: 540-586-3519</p>	<p>Susan Falls Kirby (District # 6) 926 Watson Place Bedford, VA 24523 Home: (540) 586-0721</p>
<p>Martin F. Leamy (District # 7) 2523 Sheep Creek Road Bedford, VA 24523 Home: (540) 589-0014</p>	<p>Bedford County Public Schools Website http://bedford.sharpschool.net You will find access to the elementary program of studies on the above site.</p>

Stewartsville Elementary School shared values:

To fulfill our mission, we will...

Challenge the LEARNER to

- foster self-discipline;
- set goals and strive to meet high expectations;
- utilize problem solving techniques;
- improve social, emotional, and physical fitness;
- work cooperatively;
- respect individual differences;
- acquire positive self-esteem;
- practice accountable, responsible citizenship;
- develop a global awareness;
- prepare for an ever-changing, technological world; and
- cultivate an appreciation for the arts.

Promote the SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT to

- ensure a nurturing, caring and accepting environment;
- stimulate academic challenge and excellence;
- encourage teamwork, collaboration and participatory decision making;
- increase shared decision making and cooperative learning;
- foster innovation and creativity in meeting learner needs; and
- promote school improvement through continuous goal setting and utilization of educational research.

Encourage the SCHOOL COMMUNITY to

- maximize the use of school, home and community resources;
- maintain ongoing and open communication; and
- assume accountability and partnership for the success of learners; and increase active parental and community involvement, support and participation.

Mission Statement

Stewartsville Elementary school will empower learners to acquire the knowledge and skills to become life-long learners and productive citizens.

Vision Statement

Stewartsville Elementary school will build strong relationships with our learners, families, and community members. Together, we will engage our learners in high-level thinking skills through student centered instruction as they prepare for their future.

School Mascot



"The Wildcat"

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The academic program at Stewartsville Elementary is highly organized while providing flexibility in its use of materials and personnel. Learners are provided differentiated and remedial instruction to allow for individual differences and varying needs. A learner's progress on standardized tests, teacher-made tests, benchmark tests, daily classroom performance, and teacher observation is the criteria used for differentiated and remedial instruction.

ACCIDENT REPORTS

When a child is injured at school, the teacher and/or nurse will administer basic first aid and make a report to the front office. The school nurse will make a determination about contacting the parent should a child come to the clinic due to an illness or injury. In many cases, the nurse calls the parent; however, for simple health concerns, the nurse may treat the child and send them back to class. Should the occasion arise in which a student does not inform the teacher of an injury, parents should call the school to report the accident.

ADMISSION TO SCHOOL

Every child seeking admission to school for the first time must present: 1) a state birth certificate, 2) a physical examination form filled out by a doctor; including up-to-date immunizations, 3) proof of residency (the only thing accepted will be a copy of **either** a mortgage, lease or real estate tax statement.)

ADMINISTERING MEDICATION POLICY – BEDFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS

To protect the safety of all students from the misuse of medication, the policy of the Bedford County School Board for administering medication is as follows:

- ✓ School personnel shall give medication to students only when prescribed by a physician or dentist and **written parent permission and instructions are supplied** to the school. Parents must deliver the prescribed medication in person to the school in its original container. No medication presented in anything other than the original container will be accepted. The label should include the name of the student, the name of the medication, dosage, name of physician, and time to be given. The pharmacy label along with the Bedford County Medication Administration form, with a physician's signature **MUST** be completed.
- ✓ If over the counter (OTC) medication is required, it must be supplied to the school in the original container by the parent. Written parental permission must be provided with specific directions for administration.
- ✓ All medication must be presented to the front office and a parent must complete a form to be kept on file.
- ✓ Medication must be picked up at the front office at the time it is discontinued.
- ✓ Any medication, whether OTC or prescription, will be destroyed if not picked up by June 1st, 2022.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is important for educational success. In the event of a student's absence, an automated system will call the home or workplace of that parent to notify the parent of

the absence and remind them to call the school. We are tracking unexcused and excused absences and developing plans to address both as needed. **All absences should be followed by a note explaining why the student was not at school within three school days.** If no note is received, the absence is unexcused. At five and six unexcused absences, plans are developed and meetings held and at ten, a CHINS is filed with the court system. We also track excused absences, or absences where notes were sent in, either by parent or doctor. Once a student accumulates 10 absences, they are followed to determine whether or not an attendance plan is needed. Once a plan is initiated, absences that do not follow the plan will be considered unexcused and will revert to the unexcused plan as described above with possible court intervention. Please be reminded that the following reasons, sent in by a note, are excused: 1. Medical, 2. Death in the family, 3. Subpoena to court, 4. Religious holiday (notified in advance), 5. Other-approved by principal. If you go out of town, this absence must be approved by the principal beforehand in order for this to be considered excused. The preapproved absence will only be excused if the student is not on an attendance plan and the number of accumulated absences are low. Otherwise, it will be marked unexcused and counted toward the 5 unexcused absences that have a plan attached to them. Part of our state accreditation tracks how many students we have that are chronically absent. These are students that miss 10% or 18+ days in the year. As such, we are carefully monitoring absences as well. We are here to support you with your child's attendance. Please let us know if you need advice or guidance as the year continues.

** If a student is absent due to extenuated circumstances, please contact the principal to discuss the situation

BEHAVIOR AND BULLYING

It is our expectation that our learners will conduct themselves in a manner which helps to maintain a safe environment in which all children can have the best opportunity to learn. This can best be achieved if parents and school personnel work together. Learners will be expected to treat others with dignity and respect. All learners will be expected to both follow and implement the pillars of the Character Counts program. These pillars are: Respect, Responsibility, Citizenship, Fairness, Caring, and Trustworthiness. There will be a zero tolerance for any type of physical aggression of one student toward another or toward any staff member.

Please speak to your children about bullying. We will continue to address this during the school year; however, helping your child know what to do if they are bullied also helps to provide them with the tools they need to address this kind of behavior. **Please stress to your child that shunning someone else or telling others not to be friends with a child is a form of bullying.**

Bedford County Public Schools defines bullying as any **repeated** negative behaviors intended to frighten or cause harm including verbal or written threats. If a parent knows that their child is being bullied or if your child tells you that they believe they are being bullied, please contact the guidance counselor, your child's teacher, or the principal and immediate action will be taken to rectify the situation. **Some bullying occurs without SES staff being aware that it is happening. Parents, teachers, and staff need to work together to eliminate bullying from our classrooms and schools.**

Bedford County Public Schools has the Code of Student Conduct on the BCPS website under the Families & Student drop down. It is an excellent resource to address the expectation of behavior at school and consequences for undesired behavior. This document lists the level of

consequences for with regard to behavior. Please be sure to share this with your child so they may understand the overall behavioral expectations at Stewartsville.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

If birthday invitations or any other kind of invitations, flyers, or brochures are to be passed out at school, the entire class should receive them so that no child's feelings are hurt. This policy is designed to eliminate the exclusion of any child to special events, activities, gatherings, celebrations, etc. where the notice of such an activity is distributed at school. This policy also includes notes and flyers relating to such activities given to a child from one parent and then passed along to the child of another parent for distribution outside the classroom. We realize that parents may not wish to have parties that include all of your child's classmates and we certainly understand. In such cases, to protect the feelings of our children, we are encouraging parents to handle all invitations for any activities outside the school. For the purpose of this guideline, the phrase "outside the school" shall mean not in or on school property, on school provided transportation, or at any school sponsored activity or gathering. **Teachers/staff will not be permitted at the request of one parent, to call the parents of another student to request that the student's parent contact them regarding obtaining personal information including phone numbers and addresses.**

BIRTHDAY RECOGNITION (AT SCHOOL)

Birthday parties are NOT permitted.

If a parent wants to provide refreshments, they may leave them in the office the afternoon before or the morning of the child's birthday. We are asking that parents send a note to the teacher requesting the number of students and the date refreshments will be sent. The teacher will choose the appropriate time during the school day to share the refreshments with the students in the classroom. These refreshments may supplement the students' regular snack times and, may only be items off the snack list according to the BCPS wellness plan.

BUS RIDERS AND DISMISSALS

Bus transportation is provided as a privilege to all of our students. Each student is required to ride their assigned bus and get on or off the bus at their assigned stop. If the student is to get off at a stop other than their assigned stop, the parent **MUST** provide written permission in advance to the office/teacher. If a child is riding with another child on a different bus, both parents must send a note stating the change in bus stop. There will be no exceptions to this rule for the safety of all students.

While riding the bus or waiting at the bus stop, students are under the authority of the School Board. Students in grades K-3 will not be left at the bus stop unless a parent or guardian is there to receive them.

School buses are operated for the safe transportation of students traveling to and from school and school activities. Riding the bus is a privilege which may be revoked when the general conduct of the student is detrimental to the safe operation of the bus and the comfort of others on the school bus. Safe and inoffensive behavior is expected at the school bus stop as well.

Please review the following regulations regarding school bus behavior.

1. Obey the requests of the bus driver at all times.
2. If you are assigned to a seat, please take your seat and not another one.
3. There should be no eating, drinking, or chewing gum while riding the bus.
4. Glass containers are not permitted on the bus.

5. Heads, hands, and feet are to be kept inside the bus at all times.
6. Any damage done to the bus will be paid for by the person involved or their parent/guardian.
7. The use of vulgar language and bullying is absolutely forbidden.
8. Noise levels must be kept at a reasonable level to ensure the safe operation of the bus.

Should a student fail to follow these guidelines, the bus driver may choose to submit a Bedford County School Conduct report for that student to the principal. Should this occur, the student will mostly likely face a consequence. If a student is referred a second time, the parent may be requested to come to a conference with their child and the principal. Should a third referral occur, the student's bus riding privileges will be revoked for three (3) to five (5) days. Should a fourth referral occur, the student's riding privileges will be revoked for ten (10) days. Any other infractions will result in a referral to the Disciplinary Officer with a recommendation for revoking the student's bus riding privileges for the remainder of the school year.

CAFETERIA PRACTICES:

A free breakfast and lunch program is available to all Stewartsville students. Breakfast is Grab and go from 7:20 AM - 7:45 AM. Please be sure that your child arrives to school no later than 7:45 AM to ensure that they have enough time to eat breakfast and settle in for the day. Students perform and behave better when they start their day on time.

All students are provided with a 25 minute lunch period each day. We believe that this is a time for students to relax and enjoy some unstructured social interaction with their peers. Students are expected to demonstrate good manners while eating and refrain from any behaviors which may cause other children to be uncomfortable while eating such as mixing foods together.

Children should remember that while in our cafeteria, they should use inside voices in order to maintain an appropriate level of noise during the lunch period.

mySchoolBucks.com

BCPS uses a program called mySchoolBucks.com. Parents can view their students' balances/purchases on mySchoolBucks.com. You will need to create an account on mySchoolBucks.com and add your child to the system. The instructions at the link below will guide you in working with this new website.

<https://www.myschoolbucks.com/ver2/login/getmain?requestAction=home>

A menu is posted on-line at our website and the BCPS.

CAR RIDER INFORMATION

School hours: 7:45 AM - 2:15 PM

Doors Open at: 7:20 AM - buses unload

Car riders may be dropped off immediately after buses unload at approximately 7:25 AM

*****AFTER 7:45 a.m. car riders MUST be walked into the front office*****

To ensure that our students are safe and well supervised, CAR RIDERS are not to be dropped off before 7:25 AM. Car riders must be dropped off in front of the building after buses unload. After 7:45 AM, parents who drive their child to school must park the car and walk the child into the building. Students should try to arrive before 7:45 to allow enough time for students to eat breakfast and/or prepare for the day.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Care of school property extends to the buses as well. If any student damages school property while in school or while riding on a school bus, their parent or guardian will be expected to pay for any damages.

Please remind children that school property includes their textbooks and the use of any electronic equipment.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Staff, Teachers, and Administration of Stewartsville Elementary School are required to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to Social Services.

CLINIC INFORMATION

Our clinic is staffed from 7:15 AM - 2:45 PM daily by a certified nurse. This service is for illnesses or injuries that occur while a student is in school. The nurse is not able to address issues that have occurred while the student was at home. Should a child become ill during the school day, they will be referred to the school nurse. The nurse will complete a medical assessment and make a determination as to whether or not the student should go home. If the nurse believes that the student should be picked up from school, she will notify the parents. Please plan to pick up your child within the hour of the call from the nurse. Please be sure to keep your contact information updated with the school office.

If a student visits the nurse for an issue which does not require the child to leave school, the nurse will use Care Docs to alert the parents that the child visited the nurse during the school day. *Please make sure you have completed your Power school registration to note your email.* Parents are required to pick up children that are feverish, vomiting, or have head lice.

If your child has a fever, please make sure he/she stays at home so that other children do not become infected.

CLOSING OF SCHOOL INFORMATION

Schools may be closed due to extreme weather conditions such as snow, ice, flooding, severe storms, failure of mechanical equipment, epidemics, pandemics, or other emergencies. Should it become necessary to close school during the day, radio and television stations will be notified in addition to posts on social media. Please check and access the Bedford County Public Schools website, FACEBOOK, or the Bedford county school app for up-to-date information on school closings. On occasion, schools may be operated on a delayed schedule. The division superintendent has the authority to open school one or two hours later than the regularly scheduled starting time should events deem it necessary to do so. Every effort will be made to have morning radio and TV announcements of school closings or delayed openings made as soon as possible.

Unfortunately, the school is unable to supervise students before the actual start of the school day and will therefore, be unable to allow students into school early on days when school has been delayed. Parents should make arrangements for their children prior to such events so that students will know what to do and where to go should it be necessary to close schools before the end of the regularly scheduled day or delay the opening of school. If both parents work, please make sure that the school has information about where your child is to go and your most recent business phone number. Should an early dismissal be necessary, it is imperative

that the office have the names of the persons allowed to pick up your child at school in case of an emergency.

NO OTHER PERSONS WILL BE ALLOWED TO TAKE YOUR CHILD UNLESS WE HAVE PRIOR WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM YOU, OR THEY ARE LISTED AS YOUR CHILD'S EMERGENCY CARETAKER.

CONTACT INFORMATION UPDATE/CHANGES OF ADDRESS

It is imperative that the school have the most up-to-date information regarding your child, specifically, current phone numbers and the most current address. If any of this information changes during the year, including custody paperwork, **please update your child's information and share it with the office staff.** Please let your child's teacher know of any changes to personal information.

CONFERENCES

Conferences are an important means of communicating with parents and teachers. They provide an opportunity to get together in person to discuss your child's education. Special days in the school calendar have been designated for this purpose. Before, during, and after school conferences may be scheduled at a mutually convenient time. We encourage parents/teachers to request a conference whenever there is a need. Phone conferences also provide valuable information. Therefore, we encourage parents to contact the teacher, before or after the regular school day should they wish to set up a conference time. Every effort will be made to respond to your request as soon as possible. **Parents are always welcome to ask for a conference at any time during the school year should they wish to discuss the academic, physical, social, or emotional progress of their children. As a staff, we extend an open invitation to each parent regarding conferences and their child's progress.**

CRISIS MANAGEMENT (Emergency Operations Plan)

The school has a crisis management plan called an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) that is reviewed by the staff periodically to maintain familiarity with procedures. This plan is on file in the office. Students will practice all drills listed in the EOP periodically during the school year. Additionally, each student is required to participate in two (2) bus evacuation drills during the year. These drills usually occur at the beginning of each semester and involve a review of procedures should an emergency occur.

COMMUNICATION

We encourage open communication between teachers and parents with the hope of preventing problems or issues of concern regarding students and their academic progress or social/emotional health.

If you call during the day for a staff member, the office personnel will take the message and the employee will call you at his/her convenience, so as not to interrupt instructional time. If you do not hear from the teacher within 24 hours, please notify the secretary.

CONDUCT CODE

Bedford County website has the Student code of conduct available under the parent resource drop down. It contains specific policies governing student conduct while on school property and school buses. Please go over the rules in this policy with your child. **COOPERATION BETWEEN THE HOME AND THE SCHOOL REGARDING MATTERS OF DISCIPLINE IS VITAL.**

CHROMEBOOK DISTRIBUTION

Chromebooks will be distributed to each student. Teachers will review the proper care of textbooks and chrome books with students and we are asking that parents also review the importance of keeping textbooks in good condition. **Full replacement and fines will be assessed as necessary.**

DRESS CODE

The following types of attire (including clothing, jewelry, or other displayed personal belongings) are prohibited: 1. Attire that has language or images that are offensive, profane, or vulgar. 2. Attire that has language or images that promote illegal conduct, violence, or the use of drugs or alcohol. 3. Attire that causes or is reasonably likely to cause a substantial disruption to the learning environment. 4. Attire that causes or is reasonably likely to cause a safety concern. Inappropriate dress will be called to the student's attention and correction is expected. Failure to follow the basic guidelines listed below will result in parents being called to bring appropriate clothing. All rules apply to males and females.

- Tops must be long enough to cover the stomach. Students should have straps that are wide enough to cover undergarments.
- Shorts and skirts must be no shorter than 5 inches above the kneecap when standing.
- Shoes must be worn at all times. NO FLIP FLOPS. No heeies or shoes with wheels. Please make sure your child wears tennis shoes on P.E. days.
- Attire that has language or images that are offensive, profane, vulgar, discriminatory, or racially/culturally divisive is not allowed. This would include confederate flags, swastikas, KKK references, or any other images that might reasonably be considered hurtful or intimidating to others.
- The school's administration reserves the right to make decisions about proper student dress.
- Please mark your child's clothing and other possessions with his/her name. A lost and found box is located in the breezeway workroom. Items not claimed are donated to the Goodwill, twice a year (at the end of each semester).

EARLY DISMISSALS

The *Code of Virginia* mandates that all students be in school all day, every day for every minute that school is in session. **Students should not be picked up early for anything other than a previously scheduled doctor's visit or extreme family emergency. In this case, the parent is required to provide a note from the doctor indicating that the student had a scheduled appointment.**

For safety reasons, no students will be dismissed early (unless it is an emergency) after 2:00 PM. Additionally, no changes in the manner of transportation will be made for students after 2:00 PM (unless it is an emergency). When parents call after 2:00 PM to change the manner in which their child will return home, it poses a significant issue for office personnel as students are in many different places within the building and getting a message to the teacher in time can be difficult.

If there is a need to change the manner in which your child returns home, please make every effort to notify the office before 2:00 PM to allow enough time for personnel to be notified of the change. We appreciate your help with this matter as we are trying to maintain an extra level of safety with regard to our children.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Electronic devices should not be brought to school. Trading cards and ALL toys should remain at home except if EXPRESSLY designated by the student's teacher for a special event or intervention. Please know that the school will not be responsible for anything that happens to these items if they are brought to school.

Cell phones must remain turned off AND in a book bag or locker if brought to school.

If the student is observed using a cell phone at any time or if the cell phone rings, the phone will be confiscated by the teacher or principal and a parent or guardian will be required to come to school to get the phone. Please know that the school will not be responsible for anything that happens to these items.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION PROCEDURES

IT IS CRUCIAL THAT PARENTS HELP THE SCHOOL BY KEEPING THIS INFORMATION CURRENT. This information can be updated by calling the school or by sending a written note.

Please make sure that the office has the names of the persons allowed to pick-up your child at school in case of an emergency. NO OTHER PERSONS WILL BE ALLOWED TO TAKE YOUR CHILD FOR ANY REASON UNLESS WE HAVE PRIOR WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM YOU OR THE PERSON IS LISTED ON YOUR EMERGENCY CARD.

Should an emergency occur and we are unable to contact either you or those listed on your child's emergency card, the rescue squad will be called. The school will continue to try to contact the parents and someone from the school will remain with your child at all times until a parent or guardian arrives.

EVALUATION (GRADES) AND REPORTING TO PARENTS

The progress of each learner is reported to parents every nine weeks. Learners are evaluated by informal and formal means. Teacher made tests, observations and other criteria, along with standardized tests, are used to measure Learner progress. The Learner's work is sent home on a regular basis. An interim progress report will be sent to parents of learners who have an average of "D" or "F" (for each subject area) during the midpoint of each nine-week grading period. A second report is sent home during the 7th week of the grading period if a student continues to perform below grade level expectations.

Our division uses the following grading symbols on report cards which are sent home at the end of each nine week grading period.

Kindergarten/1st Grade/Second

- 4= Above Proficient
- 3= Proficient
- 2= Below Proficient
- 1= Insufficient evidence of proficiency
- NA =Not assessed this grading period

Grades 3-5

- A = 90-100 Highly Proficient
- B = 80-89 Above Proficient
- C = 70-79 Proficient
- D= 60-69 Below Proficient
- = Not acceptable
- I = Incomplete work

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

Family Life Education curriculum is taught at all grade levels. Parents that have questions about the curriculum can reach out to the school counselor. Should you decide you do not want your child to participate, an opt out form is available upon request.

FIELD TRIPS

If applicable: At such time that schools can have field trips again to add to students learning experiences; the teachers will send a specific permission form to be signed by a parent or guardian

for field trips prior to the trip. **Students will not be permitted to attend field trips without official permission slips nor will they be able to call home the day of the trip for permission.**

It is imperative that during school-scheduled field trips students remain safe. We have found that students who follow class rules on a regular basis are more likely to follow rules while away from the school. We encourage parents to continually remind students of appropriate behavior both in school and on field trips.

For those who are unable to cover all the costs of a field, please know that field trip scholarships are available to all students when there is a need. Please notify the guidance counselor know if you need assistance. We believe that the educational experience of a field trip should be available to all students regardless of an ability to pay.

Should you be chosen as a chaperone, you must follow all the BCPS policies and guidelines.

HONOR ROLL

"Honor Roll" status may be achieved in the 3rd, 4th and 5th grades. Requirements to be recognized as an honor roll student are all A's and B's in academic subjects as well as maintaining satisfactory ratings in resource and citizenship areas.

HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

Monday through Thursday homework will likely be assigned at the discretion of the teachers and shall be in accordance with the needs of the class in grades K-5. Every student at Stewartsville Elementary (grades K-5) is provided an agenda notebook. Parents will need to check this agenda daily and initial the daily page. If the agenda is not being brought home on a regular basis, please contact your child's teacher.

In general, homework shall be assigned in such a manner that it:

1. takes into consideration the availability of the student's time, ability and access to resources;
2. is a follow-up to skills or concepts previously introduced;
3. fosters students' personal responsibilities and when appropriate promotes research efforts by the individual student;
4. will contribute to the ongoing work of any specific class in which the work is required or assigned;
5. shall not be used for disciplinary purposes;
6. makes information and purposes of homework assignments clear and specific so that the pupil can complete the assignment;
7. shall not be assigned during holiday breaks or the SOL testing period; and
8. will not count for more than 10% of a student's grade in a nine week period
9. shall be evaluated in some manner by the teacher within a reasonable length of time in order to emphasize the importance of doing the assignment and to recognize the students' efforts.
10. Students and parents should expect that homework will be assigned on days when schools are closed due to inclement weather.
11. No homework will be assigned on holidays and most weekends.
12. Homework should take no longer than an hour, if it exceeds this time limit, please let the teacher know.

As a parent, you can help your child understand the value of and the need for timely homework completion by:

- providing a suitable place for study;
- helping the student develop systematic home-study habits;

- showing an interest in the work being done; and
- providing possible experiences that would add interest to learning.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Your child must be immunized against chicken pox, diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, poliomyelitis, measles, rubella, and mumps. The immunization record must show the month, day, and year your child received the vaccines. The record of immunization must have the signature of a medical professional to be accepted. If your child received the measles, rubella, or mumps vaccine (or combined vaccine MMR) prior to 12 months of age or even one day prior to the first birthday, the Virginia Health Department requires re-immunization. A repeat of MMR is required of all children starting school for the first time.

MASKS

Face masks are required on the bus and indoors in public spaces when social distancing is not possible and at teacher discretion in classrooms. Staff and students should use cloth face coverings when physical distancing cannot be maintained, as is medically and developmentally appropriate

MEDICAL PLANS

For certain students with medical conditions such as asthma, parents should contact the school nurse to discuss the severity of their child's condition. Together, the parent and school nurse will determine if a specific Medical Plan should be developed in order to appropriately manage the medical needs of a student while they are at school.

MONEY AND VALUABLES

Money and valuables should not be left in the school at any time. We also suggest that students carry only the amount of money needed for each day. In addition, cell phones, toys and expensive games should not be brought to school. The school is not responsible for these items if they are lost or stolen.

PARENT VISITATION:

At this time, due to safety guidelines, parent visitation will be limited to the office to check in/out a student or provide needed documentation. Parent visitation to the classrooms or to eat lunch will be determined as conditions and guidelines allow.

PARENT PORTAL

Parents have access to our parent portal which will provide online information regarding grades for students in grades K-5 and attendance for all grades. This site can be accessed from the BCPS webpage @ www.bedford.k12.va.us.

Detailed attendance for the last week and current week are available. Clicking on the total number of absences will provide a detailed description of each absence (excused, unexcused, and which period). By clicking on a current grade you will be connected to any assignments and evaluations that are included in that grade. By clicking on a teacher's name, you are able to email that teacher directly.

PARKING, LOADING & UNLOADING CHILDREN

When visiting our school, please park in the east or west parking lots during loading and unloading times (7:20 AM - 7:45 AM) and (2:15 PM - 2:45 PM). Parents letting students out of cars in the morning should do so at the front doors after buses.

If you have to bring your child into the building before 7:45, you may use the side parking lots or park **below** the bus drop off on the side of the road and walk your child up the front stairs so they can cross safely into the school. Please refrain from parking in the Olde Mill Primitives parking lot.

Additionally, while waiting to drop off a child in the morning or pick up a child in the afternoons, please stay as far to the right as you are able while on Wildcat Road. Police will ticket anyone who impedes the flow of traffic on Wildcat Road.

PERFORMANCE PROCEDURES/Assembly EXPECTATIONS DURING SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Behavioral expectations and courtesy during performances:

1. Enter and leave the dining area or gym quietly and respectfully.
2. Remain seated, unless it is an emergency.
3. Applaud for each act. (Whistling and booing is not courteous.)
4. Remain quiet and courteous during the performance.
5. Remain until the whole performance is completed.
6. Keep all children with you. (They should not wander about unattended).
7. If small children are disruptive, please take them out quietly.
8. If taking pictures or videos, do so quietly.
9. Children attending performances should be accompanied by an adult.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/MOMENT OF SILENCE

Legislation states that "all students shall be required to learn the Pledge of Allegiance and to demonstrate such knowledge." The legislation further stipulates that each school board shall require the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in each classroom of the school division and shall ensure that the flag of the United States is in place in each classroom. Students are to stand and recite the pledge while facing the flag with their right hand over their heart. No student; however, can be compelled to recite the pledge if he, the parent, or the guardian objects on religious, philosophical, or other grounds to participating. Students that are exempt are to remain quietly standing or sitting at their desks while others recite and are to make no display that disrupts or distracts others.

The *Code of Virginia* also requires daily observation of a moment of silence, not to exceed one minute in every classroom in the public schools of Virginia. The Bedford County School Board recognizes that a moment of silence before each day prepares students and staff for their respective work on school days. Therefore, each teacher shall observe a moment of silence at the beginning of the first class each school day.

The teacher responsible for each class shall make sure that each student 1) remains seated and silent, and 2) does not disturb or distract other students during the moment of silence. Students may engage in any silent activity that does not interfere with other students.

PROMOTION, RETENTION AND REMEDIATION

When retention is a possibility, the following procedures will be followed:

- During the first semester, the teacher will notify the parent(s) in a documented face-to-face conference if the student is having extreme academic difficulties that may lead to retention.
- Following the end of the first semester, the teacher and principal will discuss each case of possible retention.
- Parents shall be notified before the end of the third nine-week period in writing if there is a possibility of retention.
- The retention committee shall meet to review the factors listed for each student. The committee shall make a recommendation. Written documentation of this meeting shall be given to the parent and placed in the student's

cumulative record. Every attempt should be made to include parents in the committee discussion.

- The principal shall have the authority to make the final decision. A list of students to be retained will be forwarded to the Director of Instruction by June 30. Students whose retention status will be determined after summer school attendance shall be noted on the list.
- If parents are not contacted about retention of a student during the school year the student will be promoted to the next grade level.

The School Board develops and implements programs of prevention, intervention, or remediation for students who are educationally at risk, including but not limited to those who fail to achieve a passing score on any Standards of Learning assessment in grades three through eight, or who fail an end-of-course test required for the award of a verified unit of credit. Such programs shall include components that are research based.

PLAYGROUND RULES

Stewartsville Elementary is fortunate to have two playgrounds. After school hours it may be used by the community for recreational purposes. The Stewartsville students are aware of certain rules they must follow. We would like for parents to also be aware of the rules so that the safety of each child is maximized. A small preschool site is also available for preschoolers, ages 2-4.

The playground is designed for children in grades K-5 (approximately 5-10 years old)

- Children must have an adult with them at all times.
- Bike riding, roller skating, scooters, or skate boarding is off limits to both asphalt and equipment areas.
- Proper shoes are required (tennis shoes work well).
- The slides are to have one child at a time going down (sitting up) and never walking from the bottom back up the slide.
- Horseplay is not allowed.
- Wet equipment might be slippery; be careful.
- Use handrails only for hands.
- Only one child at a time is allowed on the horizontal ladders.
- Get off the equipment carefully; jumping off structure is not allowed.
- In order to be safe, be aware of others nearby.
- Do not wear clothing with drawstrings or hanging pieces that can get caught on the equipment and possibly become a choking hazard.
- Five and six year olds should not use the monkey bars without a spotter.

PUBLISHING SCHOOL INFORMATION/WORK ON THE INTERNET

Stewartsville Elementary is fortunate to be completely networked and has one to one chrome books for grades K-5, as well as other technology to enhance learning. All students and parents **MUST** sign and return the Acceptable Use Policy agreement before any student is permitted to access any technology. This policy may be found in its entirety in the *Code of Student Conduct*.

READING ASSESSMENTS

Students in grades K through 5 will be evaluated in reading at least three times per year. Students in grades K - 5 will be evaluated using the Phonological Awareness and Literacy Screening (PALS). You should expect that your child's teacher will report the results of these assessments to

you. The information gained from these assessments helps us to determine a student's developmental reading level and address reading or reading readiness needs appropriately. Further, the information gained from frequent reading assessments helps us to determine the effectiveness of our reading program. Additional assessments may be given more frequently.

RESIDENCY

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

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Stewartsville Elementary School seeks to maintain good school-community relations and deeply appreciates the support and assistance given annually by our community. Many activities are planned to enhance the cooperative efforts, such as observation of American Education Week, National Lunchroom Week, PTA programs, parent groups, school programs, use of facilities by public and recreational groups, conferences, parent volunteer programs, resource speakers, and PTA/school monthly newsletter.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Stewartsville Elementary is fortunate to have a school counselor who offers a broad-based guidance program consisting of 1) planned programs for each grade, and 2) individual and small group activities. Some of the topics included in classroom guidance are self-concept, responsibility, social skills, decision making, test taking, academic progress, and the world of work. The counselor is available to students and parents and will schedule conferences upon request.

The counseling program at Stewartsville Elementary School includes all grade levels and is developmental and preventative in nature. The school counselor provides a variety of support services including individual and group counseling, classroom guidance lessons, and consultative services to parents and staff. Guidance lessons focus on the Character Counts Curriculum, Internet Safety, Bullying, and promoting Socio-Emotional growth.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is a violation of the Bedford County Public School Code of Student Conduct. Sexual harassment is defined by BCPS as unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature, including gender based communication that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. If you or your child believe that they are a victim of sexual harassment, please contact the child's teacher, the guidance counselor, or the principal as soon as possible.

SMOKING/TOBACCO USE ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

State law prohibits smoking and use of tobacco products in the buildings or on the grounds of public schools of the Commonwealth of Virginia during regular school hours and school sponsored activities. Each school has posted signs indicating that smoking on school grounds is no longer permitted even if it is outside the building. The use of tobacco products in or on the grounds is expressly prohibited.

STANDARDS OF LEARNING (SOL)

Achieving a standard of excellence with regard to the Virginia Standards of Learning requires the partnership of both parents and teachers. Parents may help to reinforce learning and SOL objectives taught by going over tests, helping their child be prepared for tests, checking educational websites, working closely with your child's teacher, and following up on any issues related to overall student progress with your child's teacher.

The SOL testing is currently conducted in late April and early May for grades 3-5. Grade 3 testing includes the areas of math and reading. Grade 4 testing includes the areas of reading, math, and Virginia Studies. Grade 5 testing includes math, science, and reading.

TARDY ARRIVALS TO SCHOOL

Students arriving after 7:45 a.m. must come to the front office **with an adult** to sign in and receive a tardy slip before going to class. Please note that tardy arrivals will be addressed according to the Bedford County Public Schools Student Conduct Code. Students who are removed from school early are also considered tardy.

TUESDAY FOLDERS

In an effort to keep parents well informed about their child's progress as well as school and community activities, a parent's Tuesday Folder will be sent home each Tuesday of the school year. It is the parent's responsibility to review all the papers in the folder with their child. Praise your child for work well done, and please read any information from the school and respond as needed. Finally, please sign the folder and send it back to school with your child on Wednesday. If you do not receive a Tuesday folder home, please contact your child's teacher immediately.

VACATIONS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

Bedford County Schools does not support students taking vacations during the school year. Vacations taken during the school year should be discouraged as this causes the student to miss valuable instruction which cannot be made-up simply by completing written assignments. Absence from school causes a hardship for the student when making up missed work and valuable classroom instruction is lost.

VIOLENCE AND DANGEROUS INSTRUMENTS

A student shall not knowingly possess, handle, or transmit any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon or a dangerous instrument on school property or at any school activity. Should this occur the principal will notify the parent, confiscate the weapon, and take action according to the BCPS student code of conduct. Virginia law states students **COULD** be expelled for bringing guns or dangerous weapons to school. **This includes any object that resembles a dangerous weapon. Under no circumstances should students bring knives to school for their lunch or a recreational pocket knife. These violations could result in suspension.**

WELLNESS INITIATIVE

The state mandated a wellness program in all public schools in 2007. We are encouraging good nutrition, proper rest, exercise, and healthy attitudes. Encourage your children to stay active. When bringing food into a classroom, **please refer to the healthy snack list. Only items on the healthy snack food list will be acceptable.** Fruit, cheese, low-fat food items, and whole grains are especially good food choices. Additionally, parents may not bring food items to school to share with other classmates unless they have notified the teacher at least one week in advance. The teacher will send home a permission note for parents to sign and give permission for their child to have the food item.

Policy now requires that teachers notify parents of any food item being given to their child. A letter will go home at the beginning of the year from each grade level notifying parents of all possible food items that may be used or given to students during the school year. If you do not wish your child to have any of the items listed, please notify your child's homeroom teacher as soon as possible. **If you do not receive this list, please notify your child's teacher as soon as possible.**

RIGHT TO REQUEST INFORMATION

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

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

If you would like to receive any of this information, please contact Denise Gerstler, Principal either by phone at 540-890-2174, or in writing at 1138 Wildcat Rd. Goodview, VA 24095.

VIRGINIA SCHOOL REPORT CARD

The Commonwealth of Virginia is committed to providing quality education for all students. This commitment includes keeping parents and the public informed through the Virginia School Report Card. The report card includes progress of our schools in raising student achievement and enhancing the learning environment. The ratings for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and school accreditation for a specific school year are based on the achievement of students on tests taken during the previous academic year. To view the Virginia Report Card for your child's school, please visit the following web site:

<http://schoolquality.virginia.gov/schools/stewartsville-elementary>

A link to Stewartsville Elementary Schools Report Card can also be found on our school's website at:

<http://bedfordses.sharpschool.net/>

RETURNED CHECKS

Envision Payment Solutions™ is pleased to have been selected by Test Projects as its check service provider.

Please be aware that if your check is returned, it may be re-presented electronically. Also, in presenting a check for payment, you authorize service charges and processing fees to be debited from the same account should the check be dishonored. These fees, as permitted by state law, may be debited as a paper draft or an electronic funds transfer, at our option. Each dishonored item is subject to the applicable state returned check fees.

Specifically, per *Virginia Code Annotated § 8.01-27.1*, the service fee for returned checks is as follows:

\$50, plus legal interest from the date of the check and the bad check return fee charged to the holder by its bank.

(Note that the fee structure will change according to any amendments made to VA law during a school year.)

If you wish to inquire about a returned check written to Test Projects, please contact Envision Payment Solutions™ directly at the information listed below.

Thank you. We wish you and your children all the best for this year and beyond.

Customers (check writers) with returned check inquiries should contact:

Envision Payment Solutions™

Tel 877.290.5460, or 770.709.3100

Fax 770.709.3007

P.O. Box 157

Suwanee, GA 30024-0157

customerservice@envisionpayments.com