

# New Town Elementary School

## Parent Handbook

### 2022-2023



**Principal:**

Kriscine Coston

**Assistant Principals:**

Rebecca Snodderly

Christopher Baker

Shacora Eubanks

**Main Office:** 443-809-1541

**Office Fax:** 443-809-1544

**Office Hours:** 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

**School Address:** 4924 New Town Boulevard, Owings Mills, MD 21117

<http://newtownes.bcps.org/>

[@NTES\\_BCPS](#) 

[@NTES\\_Retrievers](#) 

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# Baltimore County Public Schools

## Vision:

Baltimore County Public Schools will be among the highest performing school systems in the nation as a result of creating, sustaining, and investing in a culture of deliberate excellence for every student, every school, and every community.

## Purpose:

Baltimore County Public Schools will provide for every student the highest quality 21<sup>st</sup> century education in a safe, secure, and positive environment conducive to high levels of teaching, learning, and student engagement, resulting in globally competitive students prepared for their chosen college and/or career path.

## New Town Elementary School

## Vision:

Students at New Town Elementary participate in rigorous and responsive instruction that prepares them to meet the challenges and high expectations of college and career readiness. Our innovative teachers ensure learning through collaboration, critical thinking, communication, and creativity.



## A Message from the Administrative Team:

We believe that in order to realize this vision, the home and school must work as a team. This handbook has been provided especially for you. The purpose of the handbook is to provide important information about our school. When there is a question about a school procedure or program, this handbook provides a great first source of information.

The administration has an open-door policy. Please do not hesitate to call or e-mail us at any time to set up an appointment. Please copy each administrator on emails. We welcome questions and discussions during the year. We look forward to our partnership as we keep the focus on the education of our children.

Mrs. Coston: [kcoston2@bcps.org](mailto:kcoston2@bcps.org)  
Mrs. Snodderly: [rsnodderly@bcps.org](mailto:rsnodderly@bcps.org)  
Mr. Baker: [cbaker4@bcps.org](mailto:cbaker4@bcps.org)  
Mrs. Eubanks: [seubanks@bcps.org](mailto:seubanks@bcps.org)

## Quick Reference

Bus Transportation.....	443-809-4111
Food and Nutrition.....	443-809-7855
General/School Closings.....	443-809-5555
Health Services.....	443-809-6368
Pupil Personnel Worker.....	443-809-6940
Shared Domicile Residency.....	443-809-7580
Special Education.....	443-809-3660
World Language Office.....	443-809-6752

Baltimore County Public Schools Website: [www.bcps.org](http://www.bcps.org)



# ***The School Building and Grounds***

## ***Office and Entrance***

- For the safety of all students and staff, outside doors are locked at all times.

### **Everyone must enter the school through the front door.**

- To gain entry, visitors will first need to push the buzzer located on the right side of the door and wait for instructions. Our instructions will be aligned to the guidelines set forth by BCPS and the Center for Disease Control.
- All visitors must report to the office. A **photo ID is required** to visit within the building. This ID will be scanned and recorded in our security system by office staff. An identification pass with the visitor's name and photo will be obtained and must be clearly displayed at all times.
- If a student forgets something necessary for the school day, the item should be dropped off and school staff will get the item to the student. Students will be allowed to use the school phone to contact a parent for any forgotten items including homework, field trip permission slips, or lunches. Students are not allowed to use their personal cell phones during the school day. Cell phones will be required to be silenced and put away out of sight. **New Town Elementary is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen cell phones.**
- Urgent messages for students can be called in to the front office. Please only leave a message for a student in an emergency.
- Conferences with teachers and parents and/or other authorized individuals are encouraged. Such visits should be arranged through the Principal's Office and/or with the classroom teacher. Generally, we ask that the teacher is notified with a minimum of 24 hours in advance. Please be mindful that conferences cannot interfere with the instructional program. The principal reserves the right to limit or schedule the conference, in such a way, to diminish or avoid disruption to the normal operation of the school.

## ***Parking***

- Parking in the fire lanes and in the bus loop, at any time, is prohibited.
- As posted, parking is not permitted along the curb of the parking lot directly in front of the school at any time. During arrival and dismissal, cars will not be allowed to enter the front bus loop lot.
- When parking for student drop-off or pick-up, please park in the car pool parking lot. For a field trip, or in-school activity, please park across the street in the high school parking lot. Please do not park along the curb on New Town Blvd. This area is clearly marked with no parking signs, and the county police department patrols the street regularly.
- No one should park in the spaces reserved for handicapped parking unless the appropriate tag or hanger is displayed in the vehicle.

## ***Grounds***

The school grounds are for the use of students during the school day. The grounds provide green space for the students to play in a healthy environment. Please do not litter on the school grounds.

Animals are not permitted in the school or on the grounds at arrival, during the school day, or at dismissal per BCPS policy. In addition, when walking animals on the grounds after school hours, please be responsible by cleaning up after them.

Smoking is not allowed at any time on BCPS property. The Board of Education of Baltimore County is committed to providing a tobacco-free work environment for its students and employees. Due to the evidence concerning the health effects of tobacco use, smoking, and passive smoke, Baltimore County Public Schools prohibits the sale and use of any form of tobacco in any school system property at any time regardless of whether or not students are present.

## ***Contact Information***

The information sheets with emergency information for your child must be returned to the school by the end of the first week of classes. This information is recorded into an electronic database to assist staff in contacting parents for routine procedures, as well as for emergencies. Additionally, New Town Elementary periodically sends important information and updates through Connect Ed emails. Please verify that the front office has your correct email address.

**Whenever contact information changes, parents must notify New Town Elementary.**

Please make an appointment early in the year to meet with the principal or professional school counselor to discuss matters related to custody. *Custody papers and other related legal documents are required to be on file at school.*

## ***Withdrawal from School***

If it is necessary to withdraw a child before the end of the school year, please inform the school several days in advance. It is necessary for the office and the teacher to prepare written information and records in preparation for the transfer of student data from one school to another. The school will need:

- Your new address
- The name and address of the new school

# ***The School Day***

## ***Opening and Closing***

Our doors open at **9:15 a.m.** each day.

**Students who walk or are transported by parents/guardians are not to arrive before 9:15 a.m. Students who are transported on buses will arrive at approximately 9:15 a.m.** Supervision begins at **9:15 a.m.**

Morning announcements begin at 9:31 a.m., and instruction begins at 9:35 a.m. Instruction ends at 4:15 p.m., and dismissal begins at that time.

Baltimore County crossing guards are stationed at the crosswalk along Lakeside Drive and at the top of the bus loop on New Town Boulevard. Walking students will be directed by staff to use a designated crosswalk once they are on school grounds.

We request that parents/guardians do not go beyond the front doors with their child/children. We are working hard to make our students responsible for their own routines and classroom responsibilities. The New Town Elementary staff will assist students in locating their classroom on the first few days of school.

## ***Late Arrivals***

We hope that all students are at their desks by 9:30 a.m. Students arriving late to school (after 9:30 a.m.) should enter by the lobby door and report to the main office to receive a late pass.

## ***Early Dismissal***

If it is necessary for you to pick up your child before the end of the day, please contact the front office and send a note to the classroom teacher. Students leaving school early, must be picked up in the office and signed out. Your child will then be called to the office upon your arrival. Students may not be called to the front office to wait before your arrival. **Students will not be dismissed after 3:30 p.m.**

## ***Non-routine Dismissals***

If your child usually rides the bus and you plan to pick him or her up at the end of the day, please contact the front office and send a note to your child's teacher indicating lobby, crossing guard, or carpool pickup. Your child will meet you at the designated spot at dismissal time. **Without the note, your child will be required to follow his or her normal dismissal procedure.**

## ***Leaving School with Others***

For your child's safety, if you wish your child to leave school with someone other than you (or other adults noted on the student's emergency card), you are required to write a note stating the name(s) of the person(s) who will be picking up your child and sign it. Even if the person is a relative (older sibling, grandparent, aunt, etc.) we cannot release any student without your permission, and the clearest way for us to have that permission is in writing. A note that changes the person picking up your child is valid **for that day only**.

## ***Interruption to the Instructional Program***

All interruptions to the instructional program are discouraged. Visitors and parents/guardians should report directly to the school front office and transact business with the school secretaries. Teachers cannot accept parent/guardian calls during class time. Should it be urgent to talk with a teacher personally during the school day, contact the school secretaries who will ask the teacher to return the call as soon as possible.

## ***Student Materials***

### ***Lockers***

Each student will be assigned a locker outside of the classroom. Please remember there are to be no locks. Lunches can be kept in the locker, but it is not a place to store valuables.

### ***Cell Phones***

Students are not allowed to use cell phones during the school day or on school buses. Cell phones are to be turned off and put away. Cell phones are the student's responsibility.

**\* New Town Elementary School is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones. \***

### ***Textbooks***

Students are responsible for the care of textbooks assigned to them and are required to provide covers for the books which will be in their care for the entire school year. The loss of a textbook should be reported to the teacher immediately so that arrangements can be made for reimbursement and replacement.

### ***Library Books***

During the school year, students will visit the library at least once a week. Please encourage your child to read the books and return them the following week. If library books are not returned, parents will be required to pay for them.

### ***Lost and Found***

A lost and found collection is located at the back of the cafeteria. This gives the students an opportunity to check for missing items on a daily basis. Please label all of your child's apparel, school supplies, and lunch bag or box for easy identification and return.



# ***Student Behavior Handbook / Behavior Policy***

## ***BCPS Student Behavior Handbook***

All students have the right to a safe and orderly learning environment. In our efforts to support learning for all students, it is expected that each student behave in ways that will not interfere with his or her learning and/or the learning of others. It is important for students to assume responsibility for their actions and realize the relationship between their behavior and learning.

All students are required to receive a copy of the BCPS Student Behavior Handbook during the first week of school. The Principal and Assistant Principals will meet with each grade level to discuss the contents of the handbook with all students. The handbook is then to be taken home with the student and shared with a parent. Once the parent has reviewed the handbook with the child, the parent and child are required to sign the acknowledgement form located on the last page of the behavior handbook and return it to the classroom teacher. The signed form will then be collected and kept on file throughout the year.

## ***Student Dress Code***

**Rule 5520** of Baltimore County Public Schools states:

- A. Students will wear attire and groom themselves in a manner that supports a healthy and safe learning environment.*
  - B. Students will not wear attire that is disruptive to the school environment, that promotes illegal or harmful activities, or that could endanger the health and safety of the student or other students.*
  - C. The following specific items are not permitted, except in individual cases as approved by the principal of the school:*
    - 1. Bare feet.*
    - 2. Headwear, except as worn for medical reasons or as a legitimate expression of a student's religious practice and faith.*
- 
- New Town Elementary School students are expected to show pride in themselves and their school by wearing appropriate attire for the “business of the classroom.”
  - Student clothing should be comfortable. Clothing advertising drugs/alcohol or containing derogatory or inappropriate language is not allowed. Students will be required to turn clothing of this type inside out.
  - To ensure safety, flip-flops, “croc’s”, and open-toed sandals are discouraged. Tennis shoes must be worn during physical education class and recess. **For safety reasons, students wearing flip-flops or sandals will not be allowed to play at recess, participate in PE class, or use the playground equipment.** Students may keep tennis shoes in their locker to change into during these times.
  - Since temperatures vary in our building, both in winter and in summer, we suggest that students wear layered clothing and keep a sweater or sweatshirt at school.

# ***Volunteer Guidelines/ Fieldtrips***

## **Volunteer Training & Screening Process**

The instructional program at New Town Elementary School is enriched for students due to the volunteer program delivered by our parents and community. We urge you to consider volunteering during the school year. Volunteers are used in both instructional and non-instructional ways.

All volunteers are required to participate in training. This is an opportunity to review school procedures and state law. All volunteers are required to be trained annually in Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect policies and procedures.

In an effort to manage the volunteer training, application, and screening process, there are procedures which need to be followed. If you have not been trained this year and are planning on attending a field trip or volunteering in any way, please follow the directions on the BCPS website. **\* Please keep in mind that each school year the process must be started over again.** \* If you do not have access to a computer, please feel free to contact the Volunteer Coordinator at 443-809-1541.

Please go to the BCPS website to access the volunteer information. You may also visit the direct link at: [https://cos.bcps.org/departments/communications/family\\_and\\_community\\_engagement/b\\_c\\_p\\_s\\_volunteers](https://cos.bcps.org/departments/communications/family_and_community_engagement/b_c_p_s_volunteers)



**STEP 1:** Complete the BCPS Application for Volunteer Services.

**STEP 2:** Complete the online volunteer orientation. You will be provided with a certificate once you successfully complete the training.

**STEP 3:** Submit the application AND the valid training certificate to the school in which you intend to volunteer. Volunteers may provide hard copies, or the documents may be emailed to the school volunteer coordinator. Both documents must be submitted at the same time to be accepted and reviewed by the school staff.

Once the application is reviewed and training has been verified, volunteers may be placed by schools.

## *Field Trips*

In an effort to extend learning experiences, teachers may schedule field trips. When a field trip is scheduled, teachers will send home detailed information, permission slips, requests for payment, and chaperone information. It is imperative that the permission slip be signed by parents/guardians and returned along with any money needed to cover the cost of the trip well in advance. **Written permission from the parent/guardian is required** for a student to participate in any field trip.

If you would like to help chaperone a field trip, please tell your child's teacher. As a requirement, any parent assisting as a chaperone **must complete the online volunteer training**. If you are asked to assist during the field trip, please make every effort to attend since everyone is counting on you. Older siblings cannot serve as a chaperone or substitute for you if you are unable to attend. When you are acting as a chaperone on a field trip, you are assuming the supervisory responsibility for students and their safety.

### **Please remember the following information:**

- The teacher is the trip leader and is responsible for decisions. The teacher oversees students and chaperones.
- When you chaperone, we need your supervisory help. Although we want you to enjoy the trip, remember that your first responsibility is to supervise students.
- Please get the teacher's help for any student whose behavior is inappropriate.
- Never take students off-site without the prior knowledge and approval of the teacher in charge.
- Cell phones should be left in your pocket or purse and only used in an emergency.
- Since this is an educational activity, siblings are not allowed to attend. Younger children can distract our group activities often needing attention that is taken away from the students. If necessary, please make other daycare arrangements before the day of the field trip.
- Remember that you serve as a model for our students. We ask that you dress appropriately and remember that smoking by chaperones is strictly prohibited, as the location of the field trip is an extension of the school boundary and the school day.

## *Extracurricular Activities*

Students have opportunities to be involved in a wide range of extracurricular activities. Although activities can change from year to year depending on student need and interest, the school makes an effort to regularly provide opportunities that support or extend learning opportunities.

## *Holiday Celebrations and Birthday Parties*

Due to a large number of students who have severe food allergies, it is unsafe to have students served additional outside snacks during their lunch period or in the classroom. **Therefore, New Town Elementary will not host any birthday celebrations.** Families wishing to send in an item to celebrate will want to consider pencils, erasers, or other small non-edible treats. Balloons and flowers for students should not be sent to school. Please save these special ways to celebrate for home. School is a very busy place, focused on providing your children with a strong, rigorous, and effective instructional program. Teachers and students are working hard throughout the day. We ask for your understanding that school celebrations will not occur at school.

\*As per **BCPS Superintendent's Rule 5470**, we are promoting non-food items also be sent to class for scheduled celebrations. However, we recognize that there may be a few classroom celebrations that the teachers request parents send in food items. This list is nut, egg, and dairy free and is our effort to stay 7 compliant with our BOE policy during classroom celebrations this year.

## *Safety Patrol*

Fifth grade students who exhibit dependable, responsible, and respectful behavior may apply to be member of the New Town Elementary safety patrol. These students will be supervised by a staff member to train and monitor their assistance with a safe arrival and dismissal of all students.

## *Bus Safety*

Students of all ages should be properly supervised at the bus stop each morning. If students arrive early to the stop or if there is no adult supervision, students may be at risk for potential danger. Parents/guardians should make arrangements so that the students are safe from traffic, strangers, or any possible altercations with each other while waiting for the bus.

When students' behavior is such that it causes the driver to be distracted, it places all students' safety in jeopardy. Students who exhibit inappropriate behavior may be denied the privilege of riding the bus, and parents/guardians will have to arrange other transportation to and from school. The bus and the bus stops are extensions of school grounds and as such, all BCPS rules and regulations apply.

Bus emergency evacuation drills are held twice a year. All students in the school may participate in the drills since many field trips include the use of buses for transportation.

## *Attendance*

To maintain good scholastic performance, students must attend school regularly. The Maryland State Department of Education has set high standards for regular school attendance. The standard is 94% for satisfactory attendance (absent no more than 11 days per school year) and 96% for excellent attendance (absent no more than 7 days per school year.)

**New Town Elementary has consistently met these standards, which contributes to our students' academic success.**

Following an absence, students are required to present a note to their homeroom teacher. The note, signed by the parent/guardian, must include the name of the student, the date(s) of the absence(s), and the reason for the absence. Upon receipt of the absence note, the school will record the absence as excused or unexcused.

Absences not supported by a note will be considered unexcused. Absences that are considered excused include illness of the student, death in the immediate family, quarantine, court summons, violent storms, work or activity approved or sponsored by the school or school system, observance of a religious holiday, and a state of emergency.

Students are expected to take the responsibility for their learning. Teachers will assist students in making up missed assignments for excused absences whenever possible. The best procedure to obtain homework for absentees is to have a buddy system. If necessary, arrangements can be made by a phone call to the school secretary or by notifying the teacher in writing or by e-mail. Parents/guardians are also welcome to pick up work at the end of the school day.

## *Lateness*

It is very important that your child arrives to school on time every day. The school system expects the attendance committee of each school to monitor lateness. Students who are regularly tardy will be reviewed. If

the number of late arrivals significantly exceeds expected standards, the committee will notify parents/guardians and offer support and guidance.

### *Attendance Committee*

Chronic absenteeism is of special concern. **If a student misses 20% of class time within a grading period, he or she could be subject to a failing grade in the class or classes missed.** In addition, the school system requires each school, regardless of its attendance rate, to maintain an attendance committee, which is charged with monitoring individual student absences as well as late arrivals. The principal, or a designee, and the Pupil Personnel Worker will address absences and lateness. A letter will be sent home when absences and lateness exceed standards.

### *Vacations and Make-Up Work*

Sometimes families have opportunities to take vacations during the school year. Although these vacations are discouraged and are considered unexcused absences, there may be times when they cannot be avoided. Please understand that because these are unexcused absences, teachers are not required or expected to provide, in advance, materials or assignments that might be covered during that time period. Teachers will hold papers and assignments that the student misses during the vacation and will have them available to be completed upon the student's return. The student will have as many days to complete missed assignments as days absent during the vacation.

## *Inclement Weather Procedures*

### *Late Opening and Early Dismissal*

If it is necessary to open schools late or to close schools early due to inclement weather, the radio or television is an easy way to find out information. Possible school system and media sources include the following:

- [www.bcps.org](http://www.bcps.org)
- 443-809-5555
- [www.schoolsout.com](http://www.schoolsout.com)
- WBAL radio 1090
- Local television stations

If no announcement is made, it may be assumed that school will be open or remain open as normally scheduled. For a one-hour delay, school opens at 10:15 a.m. and for a two-hour delay, school opens at 11:15 a.m. For a one-hour early dismissal, school closes at 3:30 p.m., a two-hour early dismissal at 2:30 p.m., and for a three-hour dismissal, school closes at 1:30 p.m.

### *BCPS School Closure*

In the event of bad weather or hazardous road conditions, schools may be closed for the day. The following message will be given to television and radio stations:

***All Baltimore County Public Schools will be closed for the day.***

In the cases of all day or early school closing due to inclement weather, all planned use of the school facilities for that day or for the time after the early dismissal are automatically cancelled. In addition you may hear reference to the Hereford Zone of Baltimore County. New Town Elementary School is **not** in that zone. There are times when the schools in the Hereford Zone are closed and New Town Elementary School is in session.

## *New Town Elementary Closure*

In the event that only New Town Elementary School must close early due to unexpected circumstances affecting our school or the surrounding community such as a power failure, water main break, lack of heat, etc., closure information will be given to local television and radio stations. A Connect-Ed announcement will be used to alert parents. Our students will be dismissed following the normal systemwide early dismissal procedures. Please be sure your child knows your family's emergency plan.

## *Pick-Up Authorization*

In the event that New Town Elementary School must conduct an unscheduled early closing, it is also important that the school knows who has the parents/guardian's permission to pick the student up from school. The emergency form includes space to list names of those designated persons. With this form, school personnel do not need further authorization to release a student to people listed there.

In the interest of safety, we request that our families regularly review emergency procedures and discuss emergency plans with their child or children.

**Please remember to update the school office throughout the school year if any of your contact information changes.**

## *Student Nutrition/ Food Policy*

### *School Breakfast and Lunch*

All students will have the opportunity to receive a free breakfast. During the 2022- 2023 school year, students will need to apply for free lunch on the BCPS Office of Food and Nutrition website, bring a lunch from home, or purchase a lunch from the school Cafeteria for \$2.90. Lunch from outside providers such as Uber Eats, and Door Dash is highly discouraged. Students may choose to bring their own lunch from home. Students should not bring glass containers, carbonated beverages, and/or sharp utensils such as knives to school.

# ***School Nurse/ Medication Policy***

## ***Student Health***

Our full-time nurse provides first aid to sick and injured students or adults, provides health screening, and implements health-related laws. To ensure and maintain your child's good health and safety, **please keep all home, work, and emergency phone numbers at school up-to-date.**

When there is a medical emergency, it is essential that we have current phone numbers. Please keep the nurse informed of your child's daily medication, allergies, diet or physical restrictions, and vision or hearing impairments, as well as, any changes that may occur during the year. By communicating your child's special health and safety needs to us, we can ensure a safer, healthier school year.



## **Daily Health Screening for Students & Staff**

Every student and staff member must undergo a daily health screening for COVID-19 symptoms before coming to school. If the answer is 'Yes' to ANY of the questions below, please stay home and seek medical attention:

- **Do you feel sick today? COVID-19 symptoms include:**
  - Fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit (37.8 Celsius) or higher
  - Sore throat, congestion or runny nose
  - New onset or worsening of cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - New loss of taste and or smell
  - Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
  - Muscle pain, chills or extreme tiredness
  - New or severe headache
- **Are you waiting for a COVID-19 test result?**
- **Have you tested positive for COVID-19 or had recent close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19?**

## ***Immunization Policy***

All students attending a public school in Maryland are required by law to have their immunizations up-to-date. A schedule of time lines is available from the school nurse.

## ***Prescription Medicines***

We discourage administration of medication in school; however, if your child's doctor decides medication is necessary during the school day, the doctor must provide the approval and specific directions to the school.

Parents must bring the medication to the school in the original box or bottle with the current prescription label on the container. All medications require a **written** physician's order. Students are not to have medications in their possession or in their locker at any time.

### *Discretionary Medications*

Baltimore County Public Schools has a program that allows the school nurse to administer discretionary medications in accordance with established protocols. These medications are Tylenol, Benadryl, Tums, cough drops, and throat lozenges. These discretionary medications are intended for occasional use only. This service is available to alleviate your child's minor discomforts to avoid early dismissal whenever possible.

Parents/guardians must give consent in writing before any discretionary medications can be given.

### *Deciding when to keep your child home*

The following guidelines are provided to help parents make decisions as to whether a student should be sent to school. A responsible decision on the part of the parent will reduce the number of ill students at school and prevent the spread of germs. In addition, frequent hand washing is a primary way to prevent the spread of these germs.

#### **Students should not attend school when they have:**

- Vomiting more than once in the previous 24 hours
- Uncontrolled diarrhea
- Fever above 100° - need to be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school
- Pinkeye with white or yellow discharge – need to be on medication for 24 hours
- Strep infections until 24 hours after treatment – notify the school if your child does have strep
- Uncontrolled coughing – if your child has an asthma attack during the night or before school and is still experiencing wheezing or coughing, is symptomatic and has medication in school, call the school nurse and she will monitor the student during the day
- Extreme fatigue with no appetite accompanied by behavior change

**When in doubt, call the school nurse or stop by at arrival.**

### *Deciding whether to send your child to school:*

School attendance is required by law. Being late is better than being absent. Take your child's temperature – if there is no fever, send the child to school. **Note: The Centers for Disease Control recommend a throat culture for any sore throat lasting three days or more.**

## **Communication**

### *Calendars and Messages*

The Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) distributes a countywide calendar and information booklet at the beginning of the school year that outlines the academic year. BCPS calendars and events are also posted on the system's Web site [www.bcps.org](http://www.bcps.org)

BCPS uses Blackboard Connect to reach parents and guardians by telephone. Periodically you will receive specific messages from New Town Elementary School about upcoming events. Systemwide messages will also be sent regarding current issues. It is important that phone numbers are current.

### *Student Agenda*

Every student in grades four and five will be issued a planner at the beginning of the school year. Please review daily assignments and any notes written in this book with your child. Speak with your child's teacher for



specific expectations regarding where to sign your name; so, there is an indication to your child's teacher that you have seen the assignments and are aware of all notes written to you.

### *Newsletter*

The school newsletter is published once a month and is sent to the parent/guardian email on file. These publications are the primary source of up-to-date information about the school community and upcoming activities and events.

### *Peek at Your Seat*

The week before the students come back to school, "Peek at Your Seat" is held when students and parents/guardians can visit the school and meet the teachers. This is an opportunity for students to feel comfortable about their teachers and locate their classrooms. It also gives them the chance to introduce themselves to their teacher and meet other classmates.

### *Back-to-School Night*

Back-to-School Night is an evening is scheduled for parents/guardians of students to visit their child's teacher in order to learn about the curriculum for that grade level. This meeting is intended for that purpose, and not to talk specifically about an individual student at that time. Sessions are scheduled so that those parents/guardians who have more than one child are given the opportunity to visit more than one classroom during the evening. Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students and parents participate in an orientation program during the first days of school. Back-to-School Night will occur on August 25, 2023. More information will be forthcoming.

### *American Education Week*

In November, during National American Education Week, all parents/guardians and extended family members are invited to the school to observe students at work. A schedule of open house dates, for each grade level, is communicated through the school newsletter. All parents/guardians are encouraged to complete the school survey during their visit.

## ***BCPS Grading & Reporting Procedures***

### **Our Purpose**

Baltimore County Public Schools commits to all stakeholders to provide **equitable, accurate, specific, and timely** information regarding your student's progress towards common course expectations/standards, as well as, feedback for next steps and growth. Grades will communicate what students know and can do.

### **Our Guiding Practices**

The primary role of every educator is to promote learning; therefore, all grading practices will be established to support student motivation to learn. The following practices will guide our teaching and learning:

1. Grading practices must be supportive of student learning.
2. Marking - period grades will be based solely on achievement of course or grade-level standards.
3. Students will have multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency.
4. Grades will be based on a body of evidence aligned to standards.
5. A consistent grading scale will be used to score assignments and assessments in BCPS One.
6. Accommodations and modifications will be provided for exceptional learners.

Work ethics, participation and behaviors will not be reflected in achievement grades. Classroom conduct, work completion, and the ability to work with others will be reported in a separate section of the report card, using the *BCPS Skills and Conduct Rubric*.

## Body of Evidence

To ensure that all grades assigned are equitable, accurate, and meaningful, all marking period grades and scores assigned, will be defensible, through a collected body of evidence aligned to course standards. A body of evidence, is a collection of aligned instructional tasks, such as assignments, assessments, presentations, products, and observations, used to determine if a student has met all identified standards, expectations, or learning goals. **Multiple opportunities of learning will be given within the unit, but end of unit assessments, in all content areas, may only be given once.** Schoology, our Learning Management System, will be updated bi-weekly and will include grades and feedback. Please contact the classroom teacher if clarification is needed.

## Report Cards

Report cards are sent home four times a year for Grades 1-5. Parents of students in 1st through 5th grade, are required to attend a conference at the end of the first marking period to discuss your student's level of performance, related to the standards, work ethics, and behaviors. Kindergarten students will receive progress reports twice a year, one at the end of each semester. Based on the Maryland State Department of Education guidelines, progress reports are designed to show growth or progress in a number of academic and social/emotional areas. The reports are shared with parents/guardians at formal conferences.

**\*Interim reports are available at the midpoint of each grading period if a student shows a marked decline in achievement (decrease two or more letter grades or a failing grade).**

Report Cards summarize evidence of student achievement collected throughout the marking period and will include the following:

- Student achievement grades
- Attendance consistent with BCPS' Policy and Rule 5120
- Skills and Conduct
- Feedback/Comments

The instructional code used on report cards varies with the grade level of your child.

**For Grades 1-3**, achievement codes, rather than letter grades will be used:

**CD – Consistently Demonstrating:** Student demonstrates a strong command of knowledge, skills, and practices embodied in grade-level standards

**P – Progressing:** Student is developing their command of knowledge, skills, and practices embodied in grade-level standards

**N – Needs Development:** Student demonstrates a beginning command of knowledge, skills, and practices embodied in grade-level standards. Additional practice is needed.

**NA - Not Applicable:** The knowledge, skills, and practices embodied in grade-level standards, were neither taught nor evaluated this marking period. The box will appear gray.

**NG – No Grade:** Student is a Level 1 or Level 2 English Learner and will not receive a grade this marking period.

**For Grades 4-12**, achievement grades are determined by considering the overall evidence of student performance:

**A – Outstanding:** Demonstrates distinguished and strong command of knowledge, skills, and practices embodied by grade level standards.

**B – Above Average:** Demonstrates a moderate command of knowledge, skills, and practices embodied by grade level standards.

**C – Average:** Demonstrates a developing command of knowledge, skills, and practices embodied by grade level standards.

**D – Below Average:** Demonstrates a beginning command of knowledge, skills, and practices embodied by grade level standards.

**E – Failing:** No evidence of knowledge, skills, and practices embodied by grade level standards.

The end of each marking period and distribution dates are published in the system's calendar and in the school newsletter. Please be aware of the dates listed below:

- September 29, 2022 – Marking Period 1 Interims Available on Schoology
- November 4, 2022 – End of Marking Period 1
- **November 14, 2022** – Report Cards Published in FOCUS
- November 23, 2022 – Conference Day
- December 8, 2022 – Marking Period 2 Interims Available on Schoology
- January 17, 2023 – End of Marking Period 2
- **January 25, 2023** – Report Cards Published in FOCUS
- February 23, 2023 – Marking Period 3 Interims Available on Schoology
- March 24, 2023 – End of Marking Period 3
- **April 12, 2023** – Report Cards Published in FOCUS
- May 11, 2023 - Marking Period 4 Interims Available on Schoology
- **June 16, 2023** – Marking Period 4 report cards will be Published in FOCUS the last day of school

## Role of Homework

Homework is an important part of teaching, learning, and parent involvement. The goal is to provide quality assignments that enrich students' experiences. Homework assignments will be meaningful and aligned to learning standards. Students should have a clear understanding of the purpose of their homework and be able to see a clear and direct connection between their homework, the standards, and the end-of-unit assessments. Assignments will not be graded, but will allow additional opportunities to practice, prepare for instruction, and show evidence of skill or understanding after instruction. **No grades for homework will be entered into Schoology, but reported separately on the report card using the *BCPS Skills and Conduct Indicators*.**

## Homework Guidelines

<b>Grades 1 – 3</b>	An average of 30 minutes per day for all subjects combined 3 to 4 times per week. No weekends or holidays.
<b>Grades 4 – 5</b>	An average of 60 minutes per day for all subjects combined 4 to 5 times per week. No homework assigned over holidays. Possible long-term assignments.

## Conferences

### *Parent-Teacher Conferences:*

Communication between parents and teachers is critical, and parent-teacher conferences are an important component of that communication. A parent-teacher conference provides parents and teachers an opportunity to strengthen the cooperative relationship between them. In addition, information is exchanged allowing teachers to work more effectively with the student in school and to assist parents in helping their child at home.

The Baltimore County Public Schools calendar schedules one full day when school is closed to students (typically at the end of the first marking period) for all parents/guardians to meet with teachers. **Conference Day will be held on Wednesday, November 23, 2022.** In order to provide sufficient time for all conferences, New Town Elementary teachers may expand the number of days used for conferences by meeting before or after school hours. The teachers will contact all parents/guardians prior to the conference date to facilitate scheduling.

In addition, parents may request a conference at any time to discuss the academic or social/emotional progress of their children by calling, sending in a note, or e-mailing the homeroom teacher or grade level team. A teacher may also request a conference during the year.

**The following briefly answers some of the questions parents frequently have about parent-teacher conferences:**

#### *Why did the teacher request a conference?*

Teachers schedule conferences to discuss student progress, student behavior, and/or an area of concern with the parent/guardian. When the conference is scheduled, the teacher will share (with the parent/guardian) the reason for the meeting.

#### *How do I prepare for the parent-teacher conference?*

Parents/guardians should take some time to think about and/or write down any information that may help the teacher have a better understanding of their child.

#### *Will I be able to ask the teacher questions?*

Teachers are aware that parent/guardians will have questions about their child's progress. Unanswered questions can be shared at the end of the conference.

#### *How do I schedule a conference with my child's teacher?*

Parents/guardians should contact their child's teacher to set up a mutually convenient time to meet. It is helpful for the teacher to know the reason for the meeting so that he or she may have the necessary information needed.

#### *What do you do after the conference?*

Parents should check in with their child's teacher to monitor academic progress, student behavior, or any concern discussed at the conference.

*The teachers at New Town Elementary School appreciate your involvement and interest and look forward to meeting you at a parent-teacher conference.*



