

Parent/Student Handbook 2016-2017



Appomattox Primary School

Ms. T. Michele West, Principal
Mrs. Allison Maxwell, Assistant Principal

From the Principal's Desk

August, 2016

Dear Parents,

I am thrilled to welcome both returning and new families to Appomattox Primary School. I hope your summer was enjoyable and you and your children are ready to begin another busy school year.

We hope that you will become our partner in helping us accomplish our theme of ***“APS Sets Sail for Success”***. Our teachers and staff are outstanding, but we cannot accomplish anything without your help, and most of all, your support. We encourage your participation in the classroom, programs, and PTO activities and expect that you will volunteer at APS.

Please take some time to go over our APS Parent/Student Handbook as a family. With your support, we will provide all students with a safe and positive learning environment where they are challenged and engaged in becoming higher level thinkers.

We know that it's going to be a great year, as we work side by side with one goal in common-to help each and every child at Appomattox Primary School.

Yours truly,

Michele West, Principal

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Appomattox Primary School is committed to providing the highest quality education for all children and beginning the process of developing the children of Appomattox into educated, responsible, independent citizens. We are dedicated to creating a climate where all students' physical, emotional, social, and cognitive growth is fostered in a nurturing and productive learning environment. We are proud of being instrumental in motivating students in becoming passionate about education and ones who embrace the philosophy of the ACPS theme of, "Striving for Excellence." A school system with a passion for excellence promotes quality instruction, maximizes the potential for all learners and provides a safe learning environment.

Each student will gain an experience of learning through hands-on activities, interactive engagement, participation, and collaboration.

We further believe the success of students at APS is a responsibility shared by dedicated staff, students, families, and members of the community. APS recognizes and nourishes the unique gifts and talents that each individual brings to our APS family. We recognize parents as primary educators and with our combined efforts we will help children reach their fullest potential, "mind, body and soul." Our goal is to support and achieve academic excellence.

ASSEMBLIES

A variety of educational assemblies have been planned for students. Assemblies serve to enrich the educational experiences of the children. Special attention to etiquette and good citizenship is expected of all students.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

To receive the maximum benefit from classroom and instructional participation, it is important that a child reports to school each day. Regular attendance in school is extremely important in a child's learning and development; however, when a student must be absent from school, parents should notify the school on the day the student is absent. When the child returns, parents must send a note stating the reason for the absence. Absences will be considered excused due to the following conditions:

- Medical/dental appointment (note from doctor required)
- Death in the family
- Religious holidays
- Subpoenaed court appearance
- Prearranged absence – The principal or designee will designate these absences as excused or unexcused. Requests for prearranged absences should be submitted to the principal in writing. If the principal or designee determines the absences to be excused, the parent/student should then make arrangements with the teacher to secure/complete assignments.

Absences will be considered unexcused due to the following conditions:

- Absence is not related to conditions listed as “excused” reasons

The principal or designee may determine the validity of an excuse. He/she may deem the absence excused or unexcused.

State Senate Bill 596 requires that parents be notified when a student is absent. To assist with the attendance policy, parents should call the school after 8:00 a.m. at 352-5766 and notify the office whenever it is essential that their child be out of school. If calling after 9:00 a.m., notify the school clinic at 352-8937. Parents are asked to call in order to minimize interruptions at their place of employment.

TRUANCY PROCEDURES

1. If the student is not in attendance, the school will contact the parent and keep a log of such contacts.
2. The school will determine if the absence is excused or unexcused.
3. The teacher must communicate with the parent if poor attendance is affecting the student's progress. The teacher will keep a log using interim reports, phone calls, and/or notes home.
4. If poor attendance is affecting student progress, the school will invite the parent for a conference. Conferences may be requested by utilizing request on report card, scheduled conference days, and/or special appointment at the request of the parent or teacher.
5. When the student has five (5) unexcused absences (scheduled school days) for the school year, the school's attendance officer, the student, and the student's parent shall be notified of a meeting to jointly develop a plan to resolve the student's nonattendance. (Complete the Attendance Improvement Plan form.)
6. If the student is absent one (1) additional day (unexcused) after "direct contact" with the student's parent, an additional conference is scheduled within ten (10) school days, to be held within fifteen (15) school days after the sixth absence.
7. All parents will be notified when their children have been absent from school (excused or unexcused) for a total of ten (10) days during the school year.
8. The attendance officer will enforce the provisions of the law through the court system.

TARDINESS

The student who is late to school loses valuable instructional time and causes an undesirable disruption in the classroom. If a child must unavoidably get to school after 8:25 a.m., the parent must escort the student to the office and sign him/her in to have their name removed from the absentee list. The principal or guidance counselor may confer with parents to improve tardies. Three unexcused tardies and/or early dismissals will result in one unexcused absence being recorded.

Tardy students must be escorted into the office. Please do not drop them off at the door. A student is considered tardy if they are not in their classroom by 8:25 a.m.

ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

Should your child become ill at school, it is important that we have your telephone number at home and at work. If you do not have a telephone, provide the names of two other persons to contact in case of an emergency. Needed also are the name, address, and telephone number of your sitter should he/she not keep the child in your home. Student medications must be brought to school in the original container by a parent.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Buses begin arriving at 8:00 a.m. A child will be considered tardy if not in their classroom when the 8:25 a.m. bell rings. Assigned staff members are on bus/car duty from 8:00 a.m. – 8:25 a.m. Students who do not ride the school bus should not arrive earlier than 8:00 a.m. because we have no supervision for them before that time.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

***** Right Turn Only Sign*****

Due to the volume of traffic during school arrival (7:45-8:30) And departure times (2:45 – 3:30), you can ONLY turn Right on Ferguson Street.

ADDRESS and PHONE NUMBER CHANGES

A Residency Validation form and reasonable proof of residing in our school district are required anytime there is a move or change of address. It is very important, for emergency and administrative reasons, that every student maintains an up-to-date address and contact record at the school office. Please notify the school in writing whenever you have a change of address or phone number during the school year.

NOTE: NO BUS CHANGES WILL BE MADE OVER THE PHONE FOR SECURITY REASONS

Note sent with students concerning bus changes must include:

1. Name of child and teacher
2. Name and 911 address of person and place they are going
3. Signature of parent or legal guardian
4. Phone number of person to be contacted if more information is needed on change.
5. All notes should be written only by a parent/legal guardian

The student should give this note to his/her teacher upon arrival at school.

BUILDING INDEPENDENCE IN YOUR CHILD

After the first couple of weeks of school when all of the children have gotten more comfortable with their routines, please allow your child to walk him/herself to the classroom. If you choose to walk your child to class it is best to say “Goodbye and have a Great day!” at the classroom door. This will help your child know that you have put your trust in the teacher and the school to take good care of him/her, while also bringing about a feeling of self-confidence.

CAR RIDERS AND WALKERS – A.M.

Parents who transport students daily should do so between 8:00 a.m. – 8:25 a.m.

A.M. WALKERS:

If you wish to park and walk your child in, please park in the main visitor parking lot, or the designated 15-minute parking spaces located in the faculty/ staff parking lot. Parents who walk their child in are requested to do so between 8:00 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. using the main entrance of the building. Any parent walking their student into the building after 8:15 a.m. will need to check in at the main office as a visitor.

A.M. CAR RIDERS:

Parents who wish to drop their students off at the car rider canopy in the mornings, should proceed around the car rider loop and wait for instructions from the school personnel on duty. Parents should not let their students out of the vehicle until asked to do so by a staff member. For safety reasons never leave students unattended before doors open at 8 a.m.

CAR RIDERS AND WALKERS – P.M.

P.M. GYM PICK UP:

If you wish to pick your child up as a GYM pick up, please indicate this through a GYM pick up note. Anyone picking their child up as a GYM pickup should enter the gym through the gym door at the back of the building beginning at 2:50. Students with a gym pick up note (every day or as needed) will be dismissed with the car riders at 2:55 and will be brought to the gym by a staff member to meet parent/guardians. A staff member will be on duty each day to supervise students and see that each student is paired with their parent/ guardian. Once you have your student, you will exist the gym through the back door.

P.M. CAR RIDERS:

If you wish to drive through the car rider loop and have your student placed in your car, please indicate this through a car rider note. Beginning around 2:55 p.m., students will be dismissed to the car rider loop – staff members will begin loading students into vehicles at 3:00 p.m. While this process takes longer the first week or two of school, generally all car riders have been loaded into their vehicles within 15 minutes of dismissal time. The personnel on duty will direct students to designated pickup zones. Please do not call for your student to come to your car, but watch for direction from the personnel on duty. Students will load and unload from the passenger side of the vehicle ONLY – students will not be allowed to walk between cars to load/ unload. Parents should remain in vehicles, allow school personnel to load their student(s), and should not pass any vehicle loading or unloading children unless directed by a staff member.

PLEASE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING “NO-NO’S”

- **Do not** enter the Bus Loop (located at the front of the building) between 7:50 a.m. and 4 p.m. This is the school bus loading/unloading zone.
- **Do not** drop off your child(ren) on Ferguson Street.
- **Do not** Drop off your child(ren) in the parking lot.
- **Do not** get out and leave your child(ren) at the office door before 8 a.m.

We know mornings and afternoons can be stressful trying to get everyone where they need to be on time, so please help us to keep everyone safe by following these safety guidelines.



EARLY DISMISSALS

When students are needed for early dismissals, parents are requested to sign the student out in the office. The office will then notify the teacher. Parents will need to wait in the main office for their child(ren). This practice will minimize the number of instructional interruptions. Three unexcused early dismissals and/or tardies will result in one unexcused absence being recorded.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL FORMS

Emergency medical forms must be filled out in InfoSnap. No medications will be administered to a student without parent permission. Phone numbers, addresses and emergency contact information must be kept up to date in the case an emergency were to arise.

DAILY SCHEDULE

8:00 – 8:25 Student Arrival/Breakfast
8:25 Tardy Bell Rings & Instruction Begin
3:00 Dismissal

DISCIPLINE

It is the policy of Appomattox County School Board to maintain a learning environment for all its students which provides for fair and equitable treatment, including freedom from racial and sexual harassment.

Realizing that self-discipline is the best, we wish to help students understand what kind of behavior patterns are the most desirable. Each student will learn to take responsibility for his/her own actions.

Guidelines the teacher will follow include:

1. Establish rules of behavior consistent with the school philosophy and a corresponding set of consequences based on relevance to the student's age level. Students will:
 - a. Be respectful for the rights of other people.
 - b. Stay on task.
 - c. Follow directions.
 - d. Be prepared for class.
 - e. Keep arms, hands, feet, and objects to himself/herself.
 - f. Refrain from swearing, crude gestures, threats, and cruel teasing.
2. Conference with the student to teach the acceptance of the responsibility for his/her disruptive actions.
3. Contact parents if the student continues to present undesirable behavior.
4. Schedule and hold a conference with parent and child.
5. The last step in the plan will involve the principal, teacher, parents, and child, making a decision regarding the procedure to follow to assure conformance with the behavior standards established by Appomattox County School Board.
6. Fighting or repeated infractions of school rule; may result in suspension.
 - a. In-School Suspension - student is assigned to another classroom for the day. Privileges are restricted.
 - b. Out-School Suspension – student is unable to attend school for a given period of time.
7. Other acts leading to suspension include the following:
 - a. A student shall not use or have in his/her possession or on his/her person any pistol, shotgun, rifle, dirk, bowie knife, switchblade, knife, razor, slingshot, brass or metal knuckles, blackjacks, explosives, other dangerous articles, **or any look-alike weapons**. Any weapon possessed in violation of this policy shall be forfeited to the Commonwealth. The provisions of this section shall not apply to persons who carry such a weapon as part of the curriculum or other programs sponsored by the school or any organization permitted by the school to use its premises.

The above procedures will routinely be followed unless the nature of the infraction requires an exception.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

In order to promote an orderly and safe learning environment while preparing students for success in the world of work, dress guidelines have been established. Parents and students are responsible for appropriate school dress. This means that a student's dress, grooming, and appearance, including hairstyle, jewelry, and makeup shall be safe, appropriate, and shall not disrupt or interfere with the educational process. Dress that is disruptive, distracting, revealing, or interferes with the educational process will not be acceptable. Administrators will have the final authority to determine if a student's clothing is appropriate for school, is safe, or whether it will create a climate that is distracting to learning and instruction. Principals, faculty, and staff members will enforce the following dress code:

The Appomattox County Public Schools Dress Code prohibits the wearing of any of the following:

- Bedroom slippers, pajamas, or sleepwear
- Clothing or accessories that advertise, glorify, or symbolize any illegal substance, alcohol, drugs, tobacco, cigarettes, vaping, e-cigarettes, or illegal acts
- Clothing or accessories that contain vulgar, derogatory, violent, or suggestive diagrams, pictures, words or slogans
- Clothing or accessories with gang insignia or symbols
- Dresses, skirts, shorts, and skorts shorter than five inches for grades PK-5 (the length of a 3" x 5" index card) and three inches for grades 6-12 above the knee cap when standing
- Exposed undergarments
- Fishhooks
- Picks, combs, or brushes in hair
- Hats, bandanas, head covers, sweatbands, sun visors, and sunglasses (unless prior arrangements are made with the principal for medical or religious reasons)
- Heavy chains worn as jewelry or belts and free swinging chains
- Heelies or footwear with wheels
- Leggings/Jeggings without a dress, skirt or shorts that meets dress code length
- Oversized clothing that results in sagging garments
- Pants, skirts, shorts, or skorts worn low on the hips so that undergarments or bare skin is exposed
- Necklines three or more inches from the lower part of the collarbone (the width of a 3" x 5" index card)
- Sheer or transparent clothing
- Slits, splits, cuts, frays, and holes in clothing so that undergarments or bare skin is exposed that are five inches above knees for grades PK-5 and three inches above knees for grades 6-12
- Spiked jewelry, clothing, and accessories

- Halter tops, strapless tops or any top with shoulder straps less than three inches (the width of a 3" x 5" index card) (students in grade PK-5 may wear tops with straps less than three inches, but may not wear spaghetti straps)
- Tops that are cut so short that bare skin in the midsection area is exposed at any time, including when arms are raised
- Tops with large arm holes such as tank tops, basketball jerseys, muscle shirts, mesh shirts, athletic undershirts, and cut out shirts (these types of shirts may be worn over a shirt with sleeves)
- Trench coats
- Wallet chains exceeding six inches
- Shoe heels which interfere with walking or climbing steps
- Note: Shoes must be worn at all times

Teachers are required to check student dress during first block (grades 6-12) and during the first hour (grades PK-5). Students not dressed in accordance with the ACPS Dress Code will be sent to the appropriate administrator when a violation cannot be corrected in a timely manner.

Student Dress Code and Special Circumstances:

- Some classroom activities and curriculum may require specific dress guidelines (e.g., physical education). Any such changes will be explained by the teacher and addressed in the course syllabus/parent letter.
- Administrators, coaches, and sponsors may suspend portions of the dress code and allow students to wear other appropriate attire at special activities. Such activities may be related to field days, theme days, field trips, physical education, cheerleading, athletics, and band.

Consequences (One or More May Apply)

- Option to alter the inappropriate dress to meet the ACPS Dress Code with alternate attire or calling parents to bring appropriate attire
- Student conference
- Parent contact
- Referral to school counselor
- Referral to school administrator
- In-School Suspension (ISS)

Repeated willful ACPS Dress Code violations may be subject to further disciplinary action, at the administrator's discretion.

Adopted: May 24, 2007
 Revised: April 29, 2010
 Revised: April 26, 2012
 Revised: May 26, 2018

APPOMATTOX COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS

Teachers are always interested in talking to you about your child's progress or about any concern and/or issues you may wish to share. However, teachers must be with their students for the time they open the door in the morning until all children leave in the afternoon. So what should you do if you need to talk to the teacher?

1. You may call the school and leave a message with the secretary for the teacher to call you. The Teacher will return your call when they are not with their students.
2. You may write the teacher a note or send an email if you wish to share any information, ask a question or request a conference.

Also, teachers will send home weekly newsletters via backpacks and/or email. Please be vigilant about reading what your child is bringing home from school so you will know what is going on in the classroom and at the school. *It is a good idea to go through your child's backpack –Daily!!*

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

APS Office	352-5766	APS Cafeteria	352-7476 (x4418)
APS Clinic	352-8937 (x4406)	APS Guidance	352-0831 (x4407)
APS Fax	352-8074		

NEWSLETTERS

A monthly newsletter is sent home each month to inform you of events occurring at APS. Also, the newsletter will be posted on our APS website.

CONFERENCES

Parents are encouraged to contact the child's teacher or call the school to schedule a conference. A parent/teacher conference is an extremely valuable method of monitoring students' progress, discussing strengths, and areas that need additional attention. The principal is available for conferences by appointment after contact and/or a conference with the teacher.

GUIDANCE PROGRAM

Appomattox County offers a comprehensive guidance and counseling program to all students in grades K-12. The curriculum focuses on skill development in the areas of academic guidance, career guidance, personal/social counseling and bullying prevention. Curriculum and instructional materials are available for review by parents in each school. After reviewing the program, parents may request that their child be removed from all or part of the personal/social portion by notifying the principal in writing, annually.

REPORT CARDS

Student report cards will be sent home every nine weeks. Students' report card envelopes should be signed by the parent or guardian and returned the following day. Report cards for the 4th nine weeks will be mailed home to the most recent address on file in the office.

STUDENT FEES

Instructional Fees

All students will be charged \$20.00 for instructional fees. There will be no rental fee for books.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

Appomattox Primary School has a history of an active, supportive, and involved PTO. The PTO makes valuable contributions to the total school program. They have shown support by purchasing equipment, providing instructional materials, and sponsoring cultural performances. Please join the PTO! Together we can make a difference.

PTO OFFICERS

PTO officers for the 2016-2017 school year include:

President: Ashley Williams	Vice President:
Secretary: Destiny Kidd	Treasurer: Joanne Jones
Fundraising: Ashley Wilt	Hospitality: LeeAnn Rasey, Kelly Chavis
Adopt A Book: Emily Hamilton	Faculty Representative:

PTO Dates

Monday, September 19, 2016

Monday, November 14, 2016

Monday, March 20, 2017

Monday, May 02, 2017

SAFETY MEASURES

Preventing emergency or crisis situations is a top priority at APS. In cases of emergencies, plans are in place to mobilize the school staff and community resources to respond quickly and effectively. Preventive and response steps include the following:

- All school doors except the front door are locked at all times during the day.
- Visitors are welcome at APS, and they are required to check in at the office, scan driver's license, print a badge, and wear it while at school. Visitors without a visible badge will be asked to visit the office to obtain one.
- Substitute teachers are given a summary of the Crisis Plan to use in case of emergency.
- An active school crisis team updates plans regularly to respond to medical and other emergencies.

VISITORS

***** APS staff is dedicated to keeping all students safe. To ensure safety, all visitors must scan a driver's license when entering the building. *****

All visitors (parents, patrons, volunteers, etc.) must sign in at the school office and obtain a visitor's pass. Parents are to schedule conferences in advance at times convenient for both teachers and parents. Conferences will be scheduled at such times that they do not interrupt or interfere with student's instructional time.

MEALS/SNACK

Breakfast will be available to all students free of charge. If, however, schools open late due to inclement weather, etc., no breakfast will be served. Lunches are provided at the school each day or your child may choose to bring a lunch from home. Milk can be bought at school. Ice cream will be available at lunch time each Wednesday at a cost of \$0.60.

For daily snacks, we prefer you send a conservative and nutritional item, e.g. fruit or raw vegetables.

The computerized cafeteria system provides parents the option of establishing an account whereby daily lunch costs can be deducted. Parents may choose to have money placed in their child's account weekly, monthly, or yearly. Checks should be made payable to Appomattox Primary School.

Lunch (milk included)	\$1.80	Milk (daily)	\$0.30
Weekly Lunch Amount	\$9.00	Ice Cream (Wed. Only)	\$0.60
Breakfast (Daily)	\$1.00	100% Fruit Juice (daily)	\$0.30
Weekly Breakfast Amount	\$1.00		

The menu is published in local newspapers and sent home on the first day of each month.

Charges - Coming to school unprepared for lunch can be an unhappy experience for a young child. Should a child need lunch or lunch money, the parent will be contacted for assistance. **Only in extreme emergencies will a lunch be charged.**

UNIVERSAL FREE BREAKFAST PROGRAM

Recently, APS received a grant where every student in grades PreK -2 will be offered **FREE** breakfast at school. The Grant allows all students enrolled at APS to be automatically eligible to receive **FREE** breakfast. Families **do not** need to submit a free/reduced meal application to be eligible.

Research shows that children who eat a well-balanced breakfast perform better in school.

If a parent/guardian has questions, please contact the principal/assistant principal at 434-352-5766.

SCHOOL FOOD SERVICES

To ensure your child's safety while at school, snacks which are provided for the class must be unopened and commercially prepared. These include birthday and special holiday snacks. Thank you in advance for assisting with this safety issue.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Daily physical education instruction is provided for all students. Participation is mandatory except for health reasons. A dated, written note from a physician explaining the nature of the illness or injury should be presented to the classroom teacher and state specifically the length of time before normal participation can be resumed. Every day school dress is acceptable for participation; however, for safety reasons, each child must wear rubber-soled, tennis/sneaker type shoes during physical education. If a student's footwear is deemed unsafe by the physical education teacher and/or a school administrator, he/she may not be allowed to participate in P.E. that day.

VOLUNTEERS

We Love Volunteers! There are all kinds of ways for you to volunteer. If you wish to volunteer in your child's classroom, tell your child's teacher. He or she will be happy to put you to work. Most teachers prefer to have volunteers follow a schedule so that there will be some consistency. Please remember that you will need to check in at the office before you go to your child's classroom. There are also other volunteering opportunities throughout the school. Please let Mrs. Maxwell, Assistant Principal and/or Mrs. Allen, Guidance Counselor know that you are interested in volunteering in other places around the school. Thank you so much for all that you do for our school.

OTHER INFORMATION

In accordance with the Standard for Accrediting Schools in Virginia, fundraising activities that involve primary age students in door-to-door solicitation are prohibited.

Plans for emergency situations are printed in the Appomattox Primary School Teacher Handbook and reviewed with students during the first week of school.

A copy of the Appomattox County School Board Policy Manual is available online at the ACPS Website for your review.

In compliance with the Code of Virginia, Appomattox County students' cumulative records, including academic records and discipline reports, accompany students when:

1. The student progresses from one school to another, within a given division or
2. The student transfers to another school division.

SCHOOL COLORS AND MASCOT

Appomattox Primary School has established navy blue and gray as our school colors and “Spot the Dog” as our mascot.

STANDARDS OF LEARNING

The Department of Education for the Commonwealth of Virginia requires evaluation documentation for the Standards of Learning Objectives in language arts, mathematics, science, and history and the social sciences. Each child should obtain these minimum skills before advancing to the next level. Parents shall be informed through conferences, written communications, telephone calls, etc., as soon as a teacher observes that a student is having difficulty in an area, and suggestions shall be made to assist in eliminating the difficulty. Parents shall be notified in writing beginning second semester if there is any chance their child will not successfully master the guidelines for promotion to the next grade level. For your convenience, the objectives for these academic areas have been included in the pockets of this folder, along with A.P.S. language arts and math benchmarks.

PARTIES

Due to confidentiality, we are unable to give out names/address for party invitations. It is at the discretion of the individual teacher whether or not party invitations can be dispensed during non-instructional times of the day.

PLACEMENT REQUESTS

Parents are invited to discuss concerns (by May of current year) before classes are developed for the next year. Consideration of all educational factors, academic and social, are the primary determinants in placement decisions. Students are placed according to academic needs. Due to the aforementioned, specific teacher requests will not be possible.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips will be planned by the various teachers to supplement the instructional program. Written parental permission is required for all students prior to participation in field trips. Students should remember that while they are on field trips they represent not only themselves but also the student body of Appomattox Primary School. All rules of conduct applicable at school shall apply to all students on field trips. Requests are submitted by teachers and are subject to approval of the school administration and School Board. Certain behaviors by students may deem it necessary for parents to accompany students on field trips or cause students not to participate. Parent Chaperones may be determined by the grade level. Chaperones are expected to adhere to all Appomattox County Public Schools practices and policies while acting as a chaperone.

Fire Drills/Tornado Drills/ Lockdown Drills

Every precaution is taken to insure the safety of your child during school hours.

1. **Fire Drill:** Each school holds a fire drill twice during the first 20 days of each session. Each school holds at least two (2) additional fire drills during the remainder of the school session. No fire drills are conducted during periods of mandatory testing required by the Board of Education. All students and adults must exit the building and proceed to their designated areas. Students and adults will return to the building following a signal from the principal or designee.
2. **Tornado:** At least twice during the year a Tornado drill will be conducted. All students and adults proceed to designated hallways, bathrooms, and interior rooms. Students and adults should assume the duck and cover position until the All clear is given by the principal or designee.
3. **Lock Down:** Each school has a lock-down drill at least twice during the first 20 days of each school session. Each school holds at least two (2) additional lock-down drills during the remainder of the school session. All students and adults will remain quietly within locked rooms until it is determined that the campus has been secured, after which time there will be an All clear announcement from the school office. Lock-down plans and drills are in compliance with the **Statewide Fire Prevention Code, VA Code §27-94 et seq.**

PROJECTS

Please do not send any projects for "Show and Tell" in glass containers. Toys and animals are to be brought to school only upon the written request of the teacher.

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

FLE objectives are integrated in the current health, safety, or science units at each respective grade level. Curriculum and instructional materials are available for your preview. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the FLE program, or wish to request that your child not participate in the various Family Life Education activities, please notify the principal in writing.

PROMOTION/ RETENTION

It is our desire and mission that each student be successful now and in the future. Not every student learns in the same way or at the same rate. Some students may need additional time to master certain skills before being promoted to the next grade level. While it is never an easy decision to retain a student, it is an appropriate decision if the student has not met the grade level requirements for promotion. Appomattox County School Board Policy indicates that many factors should be considered at the elementary level (K-5) including; but not limited to the following:

- A. *Standards of Learning Assessment scores*
- B. *Progress on grade level subject matter with an emphasis on Reading and Mathematics*
- C. *Academic progress as measured by school assessments*
- D. *Attendance*

E. Age

F. Maturity

G. Prior retention

H. Other factors specific to the student

Reference: Appomattox County School Board Policy: IKEC-R

As indicated above, grade level subject matter progress is considered when making retention decisions. Those expectations are described both in the Virginia Standards of Learning (a copy was sent home in the orange folder handbook and can be found at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/>).

If a student is considered for retention, you will be notified by the teacher in January of the current school year. In addition, you will receive a letter from the principal in late January or February. The letter does not mean your child will be retained, but it does mean that retention is a possibility. The teacher(s) will conference with you, if requested, to discuss strategies to help your child meet grade level requirements. If necessary grade level requirements are not achieved by the end of the school year, you will be notified following May assessments. The teacher will inform you through a conference, phone call, and/or written correspondence. Additionally, you will receive a letter from the principal indicating your child will be retained in the current grade level for the next school year.

Please note the following excerpt from Appomattox County Public School Board Policy in regards to final student placement/retention decisions:

File: IKEC PROMOTION/RETENTION

Each student should learn the relevant grade level subject matter before promotion to the next grade.

Decisions regarding promotion and retention shall be made by the principal in consultation with the parent or guardian, teachers, and other school personnel. Although final authority for assignment of the student must rest with the principal, it is preferable that an agreement is reached with the parent or guardian that retention is in the best interest of the student.

Performance on the Standards of Learning Assessments shall be used as part of a multiple set of criteria for determining the promotion or retention of students in grades 3, 5, and 8. Specific criteria for promotion/retention shall be set forth in regulations developed by the superintendent.

Adopted: August 21, 1998

Legal Refs: 8 VAC, Section 20-131-30, 20-131-40, 22.1-253.13.4

APPOMATTOX COUNTY

GRADING

We believe grades should be an accurate reflection of a student's achievement toward specific learning goals. We know that effective teachers use other incentives and motivators to provide feedback to students unmotivated by grades and to provide analysis of student progress in the interim of grading periods. We believe that the most fundamental purpose for grades and all forms of feedback to students is to encourage student learning and improve individual and collective student achievement.

Expectations

Teachers are to communicate clear learning goals as they:

- a) Follow approved pacing guides that are fully aligned with the Virginia SOL curriculum or other division approved curriculum.
- b) Develop and follow lesson plans that include clear learning objectives, anticipatory set and closure.
- c) State and/or display the learning objective each day.

Students are to be provided accurate information about their achievement. This is achieved when teachers:

- a) Design assessments that authentically measure the learning goal(s) of the lesson
- b) Clearly define the specific expectations for mastery on each assignment/activity.
- c) Provide prompt and regular feedback on works- in- progress and completed work.
- d) Provide models for display from student-created work

The classroom environment should support learning by being positive and supportive. This is evidenced when teachers:

- a) Use active learning opportunities that positively engage the students.
- b) Use positive incentives that encourage student learning and progress towards a goal.
- c) Allow students to have input on their individual achievement/learning goals.
- d) Use grading practices that are not punitive or related to compliance or behavioral expectations.
- e) Provide opportunities for revision and retesting.

HOMEWORK

We believe:

Homework should be an extension of the classroom learning experience. Homework should be given to:

- a) Practice a skill that is being learned in class to increase speed or accuracy with that skill.
- b) Explore background knowledge or increased information related to a concept or skill.
- c) Extend the learning process beyond the expected learning goal (extra credit)
- d) Individualize learning based on student learning needs, choices or interests.

Expectations:

Homework should be an assignment that can be completed independently by the student.

- a) Parental assistance should not be required or expected on homework assignments. Parents should be informed of assignments and encouraged to support their student's completion of homework.

Communication about homework assignments and expectations for students and parents is important. Newsletters, weekly folders, student planners, assignment sheets, homework folders are some examples of how communication might take place.

- b) Teacher should consider all students' access to materials such as poster board, markers, computers, and internet services and may arrange to have those materials available. Teachers should also consider all students' access to assistance on homework assignments.
- c) While research indicates that students should always receive feedback* on homework assignments, teachers must use caution when applying traditional grading practices to a homework assignment. Grading is inappropriate when assistance has been provided, or if the skill has not yet been mastered. (Feedback might include individual or team points, participation points or grades, individual, small group, partner or large group discussion of homework tasks, etc)

Homework assignments should respect the age and cognitive abilities of the student.

- a) Guidelines for the amount of homework and the coordination of assignments should be specific to the school, grade level, department or course. Best practice research suggests **NO MORE** than 10 minutes times the grade level for a **TOTAL** amount of homework assigned. (ie: a 6th grader would have no more than 60 minutes of homework – all subjects combined) Assignments that require extensive time will be coordinated with other subjects and team members to the best of the teacher's ability.
- b) Guidelines for how homework affects a student's achievement in a curriculum should be consistent with the district and school's grading philosophy, policies and practices as deemed appropriate by the school leadership and administration. In ACPS, homework will not count more than 10% of a student's total grade.
- c) Guidelines for make- up work should consistent among teachers, grade level, department and/or team. These guidelines should be fair and communicated at the beginning of the course. Furthermore, consequences for failure to complete work should also be consistent with other teachers, fair, and communicated at the beginning of the course. The amount of homework will vary based on the performance level of the students. Most teachers send home a list of homework assignments each Monday. Questions regarding homework should be directed to classroom teacher. APS encourages parents to engage in a minimum of 20 minutes each night in reading activities with their child.

TRANSPORTATION

Bus bells begin dismissing at 3:07. **We are unable to “hold” students until you arrive.** If you've not sent a change in writing, your child will be transported based on the last note we have on file and/or his/her regular bus. We ask that you send in changes via the student or fax (352-8074) us a note by 12:00 p.m. If you choose to fax a note, please follow up with a phone call to ensure our receipt of the fax. We cannot guarantee receipt of changes if after 12:00 p.m. and/or not followed up with a phone call.

A Final Note From: The Principal and Assistant Principal

Please feel free to call us at 434-352-5766 or email us at: TMWest@acpsweb.com or AEMaxwell@acpsweb.com if you have any issues to discuss. If you have a concern regarding the classroom, the first question we will ask you is, “Have you discussed this matter with your child’s teacher?”

That is always the first step! Once you have done that, if you still feel a need to discuss the situation with us, we can all work together to find a solution to your problem.

Our Division Wide goal is to create a learning community that empower and engage students in “Striving for Excellence”.