

**BEL AIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PARENT HANDBOOK
2022-2023**



BEL AIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

14151 Ferndale Road
Woodbridge, VA 22193

Antoinette M^cDonald, Principal

School Phone Number: (703) 670-4050
Cafeteria Phone Number: (703) 670-0737
School Fax Number: (703) 670-5593
Office Hours 8:00 am – 4:00 pm

Habari Gani!

Welcome to Bel Air Elementary School. We are looking forward to a wonderful year with your family as we strive to provide the best for the children we serve. Our school theme is 'Thriving Global Leaders.' We are a *Global Leaders School* and have a *Dual Language Spanish Immersion* program in grades K through 3rd.

As a *Global Leaders School*, students can discover and participate in our world. We infuse global learning opportunities across grade levels, subjects, and school-wide activities, students develop the skills needed to lead and thrive in the world community and global marketplace.

Our *Dual Language Spanish Immersion Program* has a significant impact on student achievement, schools, and communities. Our dual language program targets language instruction to build strong foundations in biliteracy development in English and Spanish. Our bilingual educational program is where native English speakers and English Language Learners (native speakers of another language) are integrated for academic instruction.

Many of our educational opportunities rely upon parental involvement. As your child's first teacher, the time you spend reading or being read to by your child, drawing with your child, or simply listening to whatever is important at the time, is an utmost important addition to the formal educational process of school. Share with them their family backgrounds, traditions and cultural contributions.

The following information will acquaint you with programs and procedures at Bel Air. If you have any questions, please give us a call.

We look forward to increasing our cultural understandings across the globe as a Global and Dual Language Immersion School. Best wishes for a wonderful school year.

- The Administration and Faculty of Bel Air Elementary School

BEL AIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
SCHEDULE

2022-2023
Monday – Friday

Breakfast Begins	8:45 a.m.
Students Admitted to Classes	8:45 a.m.
Tardy Bell and Morning Announcements	8:55 a.m.
Instructional Day	9:00 a.m. – 3:25 p.m.
Walkers Dismissed	3:25 p.m.
Bus Riders Dismissed	3:30 p.m.

Vision Statement

Bel Air Panthers are globally-minded citizens and independent thinkers who have a love for learning. They will be resilient, kind and open-minded individuals who have an appreciation for diversity and are contributing members of society.

Mission Statement

Through the intentional interactions of school, family and community our students will be provided a safe and caring learning environment where they can build strong relationships that allows them to take risks and grow as learners. Students will receive a world class inclusive education where they explore and develop an appreciation for different cultures, so they are prepared to live in the 21st Century world.

Dual Language Immersion Mission Statement

The mission of the Bel Air Dual Language Immersion Program is to develop children into bilingual and biliterate students who are prepared for a competitive international global community.

Motto

Every Student. Every Day. Whatever It Takes!
Every Teacher. Every Day. Whatever It Takes!

ADVISORY COUNCIL

This is a very important way to support our school. Your membership would be much appreciated!

The Advisory Council is responsible for the Strategic Plan, the budget, and many other school projects. It is comprised of both staff members and parents. The Advisory Council provides direct input regarding plans and goals for the school. Parents interested in joining the Advisory Council should contact the Principal. The Council meets every month throughout the school year. All parents are invited to Advisory Council meetings. We need you! 😊

ARRIVAL

We ask that students arrive at school **no earlier than 8:45 a.m.** Students that are dropped off before 8:45 a.m. will be unattended, staff supervision will begin at 8:45 a.m. Students will need to be dropped off in the Kiss and Ride lane. Please review our Arrival and Dismissal document for specific details.

We all need to work together to handle the arrival procedures. If you park on the opposite side of the street, please use the crosswalk with our PWC Police Department Crossing Guard. **U-turns are illegal and not permitted on Ferndale Road.** Please watch the flashing lights, adhere to instructions given by crossing guards, and maintain the posted speed.

ATTENDANCE

Virginia law states that all children of compulsory school attendance age must attend school each day that school is in session unless otherwise provided for by School Board policy or Virginia law. It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure their children attend school regularly. Please keep in mind that attendance officers are authorized to enforce attendance requirements and to refer students and/or their parents to the courts for legal action if necessary. ([Regulation 724-1](#)). Please note that elementary students who miss ten or more days out of the school year, excused or unexcused, without making up their schoolwork will be referred to the attendance officer and may be considered for retention (unless an extended absence is certified by a physician).

We ask that you inform the school office, at (703) 670-4050, before 9:15 a.m. when your child will be absent. An answering machine is in operation during non-school hours. Be sure to leave your child's name, teacher's name, and the reason for the absence. A note may be sent in when the child returns to school. If we don't receive a phone call or note, the absence will be marked unexcused. Please avoid **tardies** and **early releases** as much as possible, they're interruptions to the instructional program. Students are responsible for making up work when they are absent.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

To celebrate our students and ensure we are allergy friendly, BAES encourages non-food options, such as an extra recess opportunity, reading a book to the class, or purchasing cookies from our cafeteria to share with your student's class! They are delicious and cost \$3.50 a dozen. Please contact our cafeteria manager Katie Taylor: taylorlk@pwcs.edu at (703) 670-0737 to order.

BREAKFAST

Breakfast is offered to every student, in a 'Grab N' Go' format, free of charge.

BUSES

Bus drivers always maintain safety and positive behavior and will communicate student Code of Behavior transgressions to administrators to ensure our students maintain our standards of behavior while riding in PWCS vehicles. Riding the school bus as a general education student is a **privilege**. Bus stop information can be found in ParentVUE. For questions regarding bus transportation, please call Central Transportation Center at 571-402-3940.

CARE OF COMPUTERS/LAPTOPS, TEXTBOOKS, LIBRARY BOOKS, ETC.

Students are responsible for all technical devices (computer/laptop), textbooks, library books issued to them during the school year. Payment is required for all lost or damaged books. All monies collected are recorded by the school bookkeeper and paid to the proper fund for replacement purposes. If a lost book is found, money paid will be refunded.

CODE OF BEHAVIOR

Please carefully read the [PWCS Code of Behavior](#) available online. These are reviewed with all students during the first quarter. It is the family's responsibility to follow all county policies that are outlined in these documents. Please remind your children that any look-alike weapons (as described in the Code of Behavior) brought to school will result in disciplinary action. Please also speak with your child about making verbal or physical threats to other students or staff. Such actions create serious situations and consequences.

COMMUNICATION: All our upcoming events and important information can be found on our web site, Facebook page and Twitter accounts:

<https://belaires.pwcs.edu/home>

https://twitter.com/Bel_Air_ES

<https://www.facebook.com/BelAirElementarySchool/>

COUNSELORS

Our school counselors provide support to students, parents, teachers, and staff that involve counseling, consulting, and coordinating classroom guidance lessons. They support and instruct students using a guidance curriculum to support SEL instruction: Ms. Marshall and Mrs. Anderson are here to assist.

DELAYED OPENING AND EARLY CLOSING PROCEDURES

When the schools close for the entire day or when the opening is delayed, information is given to local radio and television stations to broadcast. Parents may also call (703) 791-2776 for a recorded message about late school openings and closings. In addition, parents can check the Prince William County School website at www.pwcs.edu. In the event of an early school release, we will use an emergency auto-dialer message to notify parents. **In order for you to receive the emergency auto-dialer message it is necessary for you to provide the school with up-to-date contact information at all times.** Parents should prepare a backup plan and explain this plan to their child in the event an emergency arises, and the parent or emergency contact person is not at home or cannot be contacted. The school will be closed to all students and staff. A little advanced planning will be most helpful and appreciated.

DISMISSAL

Dismissal time is very busy! Please respect this time of day and do not request an early release after 3:10 PM. If your student is going home a different way than usual, please contact their teacher AND the front office as soon as possible. Kindergartners need to be picked up at their bus stops with an ID and this person **must** be listed on the [Kindergartner's Authorization form](#).

DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION

The Spanish-English Dual Language Immersion Program is designed to develop bilingual and biliterate students in both English and Spanish. Students enrolled in the Dual Language Immersion Program will learn Spanish while receiving the same high-quality Virginia SOL Curriculum as students throughout the school and division. The goals of our program are for the students to:

- Develop language proficiency (reading, writing, speaking and listening) in Spanish and English;
- Develop an increase in cultural sensitivity, enhanced cognitive skills and improved self-esteem.

The Dual Language Immersion Program is a 50/50 model which means that students receive instruction in English one school day and receive instruction in Spanish the next day. Students develop language and literacy skills in both English and Spanish. They learn to make connections between what they know in each language, leading to a higher level of cognitive development and meta-linguistic awareness (thinking about

and analyzing language). Students enter in Kindergarten and/or 1st Grades and are expected to continue throughout their elementary career.

EMERGENCY CARDS

Update all emergency information via [ParentVue](#). Parents should continually update contact information in the event of an emergency. **Please be sure to inform the school office of any changes in address, telephone, or babysitting arrangements.** It is necessary to have an emergency contact person listed on the card in case you cannot be reached. **No student will be released to any adult whose name does not appear on the child's emergency card.** Anyone wishing to pick up a child must have a valid picture ID.

GLOBAL LEADERS

The teachers and staff at Bel Air are committed, as we always have been, to providing our students with an education that prepares them to be **lifelong, global citizens**. We provide opportunities for students to cultivate 10 global competencies that enable them to lead and thrive in their future careers. Our service projects are centered around the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals.



GRADING FOR GROWTH

Grading for Growth: Students will receive a report card at the end of each quarter in [ParentVUE](#). Please check [ParentVUE](#) regularly for updates daily on your child's current progress. Please contact your child's teacher if you have concerns or would like a conference to review your child's progress. For questions regarding PWCS grading, please refer to the [Grading Regulation 661-1](#) on the PWCS homepage. Parents are encouraged to access [ParentVUE](#) to review their child's grades.

HOMEWORK

The purpose of homework is to provide drill or practice of an objective already taught by a teacher. Homework may consist of activities or projects which enrich, enhance, and extend a school experience, provide real-life application of a subject being studied, and/or develop an appreciation of a community resource. Please refer to [Regulation 663-1](#) for further clarity.

Guidelines:

1. Homework, when assigned, will be incorporated as a meaningful part of the instructional program.
2. Homework assignments will be based on an honest appraisal of the student's abilities and needs.
3. Homework policies will be communicated the beginning of the school year.
4. All students are required to read for a minimum of 20 minutes nightly.
5. Time allotments for homework are suggested below:
6. Homework will not be assigned over Thanksgiving Break, Winter and Spring Break.

<u>GRADE</u>	<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>TOTAL DAILY AMOUNT</u>
K	Mon - Thurs	10 -20 minutes
1 - 2	Mon - Thurs	10 – 20 minutes
3 - 5	Mon - Thurs	30 – 50 minutes

ILLNESS AND INJURY

If your child becomes ill or has an injury at school, we will contact you immediately. If we cannot reach you, we will call the emergency contact person listed on your child's emergency card. Please remember, we cannot keep seriously ill children at school or administer medication without parental consent and necessary paperwork.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

As a Global School our students continue to learn without limits. We are preparing students, through Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science, to be successful in an increasingly global society. Students also receive instruction in art, music, physical education, guidance, library and technology. Grade five students may elect to take Strings*. ESOL, Reading and Math programs, Special Education, and Gifted Education services are also available. *Students who take Strings will also receive instruction in General Music.

KINDERGARTEN ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

As dictated by county policy, kindergarten students must be accompanied to and from bus stops by a parent, guardian, or other designated individual. Those authorized to take custody of kindergarten students must be listed on the Emergency Card maintained at the school and they must have identification available when receiving a student at the bus stop. An older sibling who is at least 12 years old may take custody of a kindergarten student at the bus stop. No change of custody is required if an older sibling is riding the bus with a kindergartener unless the parent has indicated otherwise. **Kindergarten students who do not have an adult or older sibling waiting for them at the bus stop will be driven back to school. It is then the responsibility of the parent to pick the child up from school in a timely manner.**

Kindergarten students who are considered car riders / walkers will be dismissed at the Kindergarten door by their teachers and instructional assistants. These students will be physically handed off to an adult or older sibling to ensure their safety.

LOST AND FOUND

Articles lost by students are kept in the front stairwell where they can be claimed by students or parents. Periodically, articles will be displayed for identification purposes. Articles not claimed after a reasonable length of time will be donated to a charitable organization. Parents are requested to label all articles with their child's name.

LUNCH PROGRAM

It is important that students eat a wholesome meal at lunch. Nutritious lunches are available every day in the Bel Air cafeteria. Lunch is offered to every student, free of charge.

MEDICATION

It is the intent of the Prince William County School System to assist parent(s)/guardian(s) when they are unable to come to school to administer medication, by giving needed medication to students so that the student may maintain school attendance. It is the parent(s)/guardian(s) responsibility to provide the necessary information/forms for prescription or non-prescription medication. Please contact our school nurse, Nurse Kristen, if you have additional questions.

PARKING

Parking is very limited during special events and especially during dismissal. If you need to park and come into the building, please do not park along the yellow "No Parking Zone" curbs. Also, personal vehicles should never drive in our bus loop during bus arrival and dismissal. Car riders should stay in the car rider lane only and exit from curb or passenger side only. During arrival and dismissal, please park on Ferndale Road prior to the Kiss and Rise lane. The parking lot is for handicapped vehicles and staff. Parking in Handicap spots is not permitted unless your car is equipped with a handicap tag/license plate.

PEP

Bel Air provides The Parents as Educational Partners (PEP) program. PEP is offered free to all LEP parents in all ESOL schools as part of the ESOL Program parent outreach. PEP classes are provided in English and Spanish and other languages as possible and include information to newcomer parents about county school procedures, expectations, rules, consequences, and parental rights and responsibilities. Some school vocabulary is also taught in English during the PEP classes in order to help new immigrant families feel less anxious about being in an American school, to understand what is expected of them, and to learn how to

become involved in school activities and support their child's learning at home.
Please contact our Parent Liaison, Mr. Perez, for details about our PEP program.

REPORT CARDS

Parents are encouraged to meet with teachers to discuss their child's progress or special needs. Students will be assessed using Standards Based Grading which means that grades will be focused on mastery of an objective and not include student behavior. Learning targets and assessments will be clearly communicated by the teacher and understood by the student.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

To help ensure the safety and security of our students and staff, these procedures will be followed:

1. Students use the "buddy system" when moving from one part of the school to another.
2. **All parents and visitors should report to the school office directly upon entering the school. The Prince William County School System requires that all visitors sign in and leave valid photo identification. Visitors will then be issued a visitor's lanyard.**
3. **Signing out a student? Be sure to have valid photo identification.**
4. **Parents and visitors who wish to enter the school for an event, without valid photo identification, will be unable to enter.**
5. **Keep your child's emergency information up to date with valid phone numbers, emergency contact persons, and persons designated to pick up your child from school.**
6. Train your children not to become involved with strangers or accept rides, etc., and to report such occurrences to a responsible adult.
7. Parents, please notify the school immediately of any potentially serious or unusual situations involving friends or relatives who may try to contact your child at school. Our only interest in knowing this very private type of information is for the protection of our students and staff.
8. Do not allow your older children in middle or high school to "drop in" for an unannounced visit. We do not issue visitor

privileges to older students during regular school hours or even after school unless proper arrangements are made through the office.

9. Parents, please make appointments for conferring with your child's teacher. "Drop in" conferences will not be accommodated.
10. We have developed additional security plans and procedures in case of emergencies.
11. Front office staff cannot give out information over the phone pertaining to individual students.
12. Front office staff will NOT accept changes to student pick-up and/or dismissal arrangements verbally over the phone. Any requests for changes must be made in writing. This policy is in place to protect students since we cannot identify the caller requesting the change.

SCHEDULING APPOINTMENTS/EARLY DISMISSAL

We urge you to schedule medical and other appointments so that they do not conflict with class time. If it is necessary to pick up your child before the regular dismissal time, send a written note to the teacher indicating your intentions. Students must be signed out in the office before leaving and will not be released to anyone other than those listed on the emergency cards without written authorization. If the student returns to school following an appointment or arrives late, he/she must be signed in before going to class. Parents need to come to the office with their child. **Students will not be released for early dismissal after 3:10 p.m. unless the school is contacted in advance.**

VISITORS

Parents are welcome to visit the school. Parents must report to the office, leave a valid picture identification, and receive a lanyard prior to leaving the office. Parents should return to the office to sign out and receive their identification. Classroom visits require prior coordination with the teacher and/or administrative approval.

WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENTS

If you are moving and withdrawing your child from school, please call or come by the school a few days prior to the withdrawal date. This will give ample time to complete the necessary paperwork, etc. Please be sure that any outstanding library books are returned and that all outstanding financial obligations have been fulfilled, such as lunch fees.