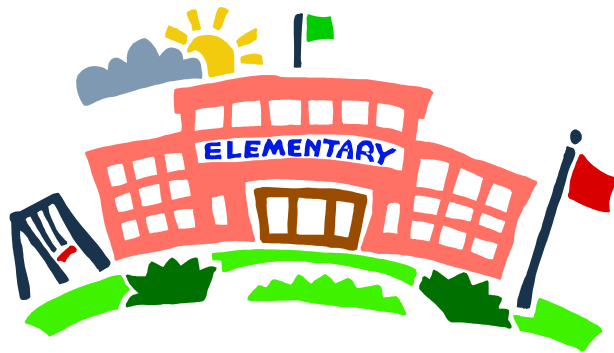


BIG RAPIDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

for

Brookside Elementary
Riverview Elementary



2011-2012

WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOL!!

The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint you with information concerning our school.

The parent handbook is an important source of information about the various operations in place here at our elementary school. We encourage you to read, review, and discuss the handbook with your child.

As educators, we realize the importance and influence we have on your children. Realistically, however, we only see your child for six and one-half hours a day, 174 days per year. This represents just nine percent of his or her life from birth to age 18. Therefore, your child has a much greater chance of achieving their full social and academic potential with your support and active participation. We thank you in advance for helping your child be successful here at Big Rapids Public Schools.

We look forward to meeting all of our families, so please feel free to visit us. We are your school, and we will do everything possible to make you feel welcome.

Tim Buckingham, Principal
Brookside Elementary School
Email - tbucking@brps.org

Renee Kent, Principal
Riverview Elementary
rkent@brps.org

Big Rapids Public Schools 2011-2012 Calendar

September	2-5	Labor Day Recess - No School K-12
September	6	Students First Day (Half day until 11:30AM)
November	9	Full day of school – Elementary Evening Conf.
November	10	Full day of school – Elementary Evening Conf.
November	14	Professional Development - No School K-12
November	15	Safety Day - No School K-12
November	22	End of First Trimester
November	23-25	Thanksgiving Break – No School K-12
November	28	School Resumes
December	21-Jan. 3	Holiday Break – No School K-12
January	4	Professional Development - No School K-12
January	5	School Resumes
February	20	Presidents’ Day - No School K-12
March	16	End of 2 nd Trimester
March	22	Full day of school – Elementary Evening Conf.
March	30	Professional Development - No School K-12
April	2-6	Spring Break – No School K-12
April	9	School Resumes
May	28	Memorial Day – No School K-12
June	7	11:30 dism. for K-12 students Last scheduled day for students*

*To comply with the State requirements for hours, inclement weather days past the first 30 hours will be made up.

2011-2012

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SCHOOL HOURS

Brookside and Riverview

8:00 School begins – students in classrooms

3:15 Dismissal for bus students and “parent pickups”

Please do not drop your child off before 7:45AM. Children cannot enter the building early unless eating breakfast due to the lack of supervision before this time. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather while they are waiting to enter the building. Doors open at 7:55AM. In order to insure the safety of our school and students, we ask all parents to wait until 3:15PM to enter the school building to pick up students. Should you need to take your child sooner, please report to the office.

ABSENCE POLICY

Daily attendance is extremely important for school success. However, children that are ill belong at home. It is very important to us that your child is accounted for at all times. Whenever it is necessary for a student to be absent, it is the parent/guardian’s responsibility to NOTIFY THE SCHOOL OF THE DATE AND REASON FOR THE ABSENCE. Please call the school immediately in the morning on the day of the absence. We discourage children from missing instruction time for music lessons, dentist and doctor appointments, vacations, and extra-curricular activities. If you must take a child from school before the end of the day, please come to the office and we will call your child down. If a child has been or is going to be absent for an extended period of time, parents should contact the teacher for any work that can be done at home.

An excess of absences or tardies will result in written notice from the school. If attendance problems are chronic, the Mecosta-Osceola Intermediate School District Truancy Officer will be notified.

ATHLETIC EVENTS

The interest and support of younger students and their families for our high school and middle school teams is greatly appreciated. However, to keep these growing events safe and orderly for everyone, parents are encouraged to have adult supervision with their kindergarten through eighth grade children at district athletic events.

BULLYING AND OTHER AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR TOWARD STUDENTS

The Board of Education is committed to providing a safe, positive, productive, and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. The Board encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations between members of the school community.

Aggressive behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes physical, verbal, and psychological abuse such as bullying and hazing. The Board will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety, or personal degradation.

This policy applies to all activities in the District, including activities on school property and those occurring off school property if the student is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control.

Aggressive behavior is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional well-being. This type of behavior is a form of harassment, although it need not be based on any of the legally protected characteristics; such as sex, race, color, national origin, marital status, or disability. It would include, but not be limited to, such behaviors as bullying, hazing, stalking, intimidating, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, and making threats.

Any student who believes s/he has been or is the victim of aggressive behavior including bullying or hazing should immediately report the situation to the building principal. The student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator.

BUS CONDUCT

Transportation service for students is a privilege, not a right. Students are allowed to ride Big Rapids Public School buses as long as they remain a student in good standing. A student in good standing is one who follows the bus rules. The primary role of the driver is to transport the students safely to and from school. While doing so, the driver is in complete charge of his/her bus at all times. Students are responsible for maintaining their own behavior while riding the school bus. Parents should remind their children to follow the bus rules and be a person of responsible character while riding to and from school and on field trips. For more information regarding school transportation, please call our Transportation Supervisor, Steve Hofmann, at 796-5406.

CLC

Big Rapids Public Schools is happy to be able to provide an after school program for all students through 8th grade. CLC is offered at the Middle School every day after school until 5:15PM for a minimal cost to families. This year the program has been updated to include an academic and leadership component. Transportation is available from each of the elementary buildings. Please contact Brenda Clise at the Middle School for more information (796-9965 after 3:30PM).

CHANGE IN STUDENT INFORMATION

We need to be prepared for emergencies. It is *imperative* that the school office is notified immediately of a change of address or of a change in emergency information during the academic school year.

CODE OF CONDUCT

A major component of the education programs at Brookside and Riverview is to prepare students to become responsible workers and citizens by learning how to conduct themselves properly and in accordance with established standards.

Each student shall be expected to: abide by national, State, and local laws as well as the rules of the school; respect the civil rights of others; act courteously to adults and fellow students; be prompt to school and attentive in class; work cooperatively with others when involved in accomplishing a common goal, regardless of the other's ability, gender, race, religion, heights, weight, disability, or ethnic background; complete assigned tasks on time and as directed; help maintain a school environment that is safe, friendly, and productive; and act at all times in a manner that reflects pride in self, family, and in the school.

COURT ORDERS

Please make the office aware, in writing, of any custody orders that affect your child. We cannot restrict a parent from access to records, the teacher or picking up their child unless we have a written court order on record.

DRESS CODE

Your child is expected to dress suitably for school and activities. Clothing should be worn that represents appropriate character. Inappropriate clothing includes but is not limited to: short-shorts, cut-offs, halter tops, ripped off shirts, unduly revealing clothing, hats, head coverings, bandanas, or pajamas. Clothing that advertises alcohol, drugs, tobacco or other activities may not be worn. Shoes covering the entire foot are expected to be worn to school for playground activity and safety to the student. No open toe shoes can be worn onto the playground. Wearing/use of cosmetic makeup is not age appropriate at this level; therefore, will not be allowed.

EARLY DISMISSAL

No student is allowed to leave school prior to dismissal time without a written request signed by the parent or a person whose signature is on file in the school office. No student will be released to a person other than a custodial parent(s) without written permission signed by the custodial parent(s) or guardian.

DISCIPLINE

Prohibited Behavior:

A. Inappropriate/Abusive/Disrespectful Behavior or Language

Consequence:

1st or 2nd Offense: Up to 1 day suspension

3rd Offense: Parent/School Personnel Meeting, up to 2 day suspension

4 or more Offenses: Up to 3 days suspension and behavioral plan

All Offenses include: Writing assignment, verbal apology

B. Insubordination/Failure to Comply

1st or 2nd Offense: Up to 1 day suspension

3rd Offense: Parent/School Personnel Meeting, up to 2 day suspension

4 or more Offenses: Up to 3 days suspension and behavioral plan

All Offenses include: Writing assignment, verbal apology

C. Fighting

Theft (School Liaison Officer contacted)

1st Offense: Up to 3 days Out of School Suspension

2nd Offense: Up to 5 days Out of School Suspension

3rd Offense: School Administrative Plan of Action

All Offenses include: writing assignment, verbal apology, behavioral plan

D. Use of electronic device without permission (ex: IPod, cell phone, computer, Gameboy...)

1st Offense: 24 hour confiscation, parent notified

2nd Offense: Confiscation until parent meeting

These guidelines are for each building and may be addressed differently by school personnel.

*Suspension – Removal from recess, class, or an activity for a designated time period/date due to violation of school rules and regulations. Could be in-school (ISS) or out-of-school (OSS).

ENRICHMENTS

Big Rapids Public Schools is proud to offer a comprehensive selection of curriculum. Students participate in a variety of enrichment classes including art education, physical education, music education, Spanish instruction, and computer technology.

FAMILY ACCESS

Big Rapids Public Schools provides an Internet-based service that allows parents and guardians to log on and obtain information regarding individual students in their family. With a confidential password that is assigned by the District Technology Office, it is possible to see such things as attendance, schedules, amount of money spent through Food Service and what was purchased, the balance of the Food Service account, and academic information of each individual child in the family.

The password will only give access to the information of students in that family. A password can be obtained by logging onto the district's web site: www.brps.org Click on the link labeled Family Access. BRPS is proud to be able to offer up-to-date communication between school and families and we strongly encourage you to apply for a password.

FIRE DRILLS/TORNADO DRILLS/LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Every precaution is taken to ensure the safety of your child during normal school hours. Periodic fire drills, tornado drills and lockdown drills are conducted to make certain students learn proper safety procedures and adhere to all safety guidelines.

FOOD SERVICE

Your child may bring a lunch from home or purchase a lunch at school. BRPS Food Service Department is computerized for your convenience. Each student has a personal food service barcode number. Each family has one account. One check will pay for students in an entire family whatever school they are attending. Payments may be applied to your account on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. For your convenience, you may purchase several meals in advance and use them as desired. Menus will be sent home each month. Daily payments are accepted but not recommended.

CHARGES ARE ALLOWED ONLY WHEN NECESSARY. We will send home an application for free or reduced priced school meals with each student. These forms are also available throughout the school year upon request in the office. Any questions can be directed to the Food Service Department (796-7653).

Breakfast and Hot Lunch Prices (note price increase)

Breakfast - \$1.25 Lunch - \$2.00 Milk - .40

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

All communicable diseases must be reported to the office. The school is required to report this information weekly to the County Health Department.

HEAD LICE

Head lice are a common condition that can be transmitted where any group assembles regularly, especially among children whose hats and jackets hang close together. Itching or scratching may be a sign of lice, but sometimes there are no signs until you look closely. Please check your child's head frequently. Look around the ears and back of the neck. Be sure you have good light; stand near a window or use a lamp. Nits (lice eggs) look like little white spots hanging on a shaft of the hair. Dandruff or scalp flakes move very easily. Nits do not. If there are lice, notify the school and start treatment immediately. Parents will be called for immediate pickup of their child if nits and/or lice are found so the child and family can be treated. A child may not return to class until he/she has been determined to be nit and lice free.

HEALTH/ILLNESS

When a child is ill, being in school can be extremely difficult. Concentration, listening skills, and tolerance of others become all the more challenging when a child is not feeling well. Any child with a fever or other symptoms of illness (vomiting, diarrhea, etc.) should stay at home. If a child becomes ill when in class, the teacher will send him/her down to the office. The staff in the office will contact the parents or designated person on the emergency card to come and pick the student up.

HOMEBOUND AND HOSPITALIZED SERVICES

Big Rapids Public Schools provides homebound and hospitalized services to eligible students in accordance with the Michigan Department of Education requirements. Please contact us for more information if you feel your child will qualify for and require these services.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Students must be current with all immunizations required by law or have an authorized waiver from State immunizations requirements. If a student does not have the necessary shots or waivers, the principal may remove the students in accordance with State law. Any questions about immunizations or waivers should be directed to the principal or school office.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The American's with Disability Act (A.D.A.) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. This protection applies not just to the student, but to all individuals who have access to the District's programs and facilities.

LIBRARY BOOKS

All students routinely go the Media Center in their school and have the opportunity to check out a book. We ask that you enjoy and share in the joy of reading with your child and take the time to teach your child how to respect materials that have been loaned to them. You will receive a notice if a book is overdue.

LOCKERS

Student lockers, desks, and other containers or storage areas assigned for students' use, remain the property of the District and within the control and supervision of District personnel and officials. Lockers, desks, and other containers or storage areas assigned to students are subject to inspection by school personnel or authorities at various times without the prior consent of the student and the student should not expect privacy regarding items placed in them.

MEDICATIONS: Prescription

1. Before any prescription medications or treatments are administered at school, the building must have on file both of the following:
 - a. Written authorization/consent from the parent/guardian including authorization for the student to self-administer if so desired. No student is allowed to possess and/or self-administer prescription medications or treatment (with the exception of inhalers); this includes carrying medication to and from school unless ordered by a doctor.
 - b. Prescription information from the physician, including approval for the student to self-administer if requested by the parent.
2. Only medications in their original containers labeled with the date, student's name, name of the prescription, exact dosage, and doctor's name may be administered by any school personnel. You are responsible for providing the correct dosage of medication. School personnel will not split tablets.
3. School personnel administer medication or treatment only in the presence of another adult.
4. All medications are kept in a locked storage area of the office.

A log of each prescribed medication for each student is maintained which will name the staff person giving the medication, the date, and time of day. This log is kept in the locked storage area along with authorization forms and medications.

Over the Counter:

1. Students are NOT allowed to possess and/or self-administer these medications.
2. Over the counter medications must be kept in the school office and administered by school personnel.
3. Written authorization/consent of the parent/guardian for administering these medications must also be on file in the office and contain the name of the student, the name of the medication, the dosage, and time of day to administer.

New forms are required for each current school year for any changes in medication (i.e. time, dosage). Students needing occasional medications, such as penicillin, etc., for colds, earaches, and sore throats, are to take these medications at home if possible. Medication that is prescribed three (3) times a day can be given before the student comes to school, after school, and again at bedtime. Please ask your doctor to prescribe medication in this way. Medications not picked up at the end of the school year (June) are destroyed. New medications must be provided each year.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Parents/guardians of our students are not only encouraged to become involved in their student's education but the district believes it is an essential ingredient in student success for parents to be involved in the schools. Therefore, the district asks parents to attend all announced parent opportunities and meetings and to call their student's teacher or school principal if they would like to be involved at their school in any way. Please note that all parent volunteers need to have a ***Volunteer Release Form*** on file two weeks prior to an event.

PARTIES

Children will usually have a Halloween, Christmas and Valentine Party or some other type of seasonal celebration. Each classroom has room parents, who work closely with the teacher to coordinate these events. Individual teachers will communicate with you and your family regarding treats and parties. Please do not send invitations or gifts for birthday parties to school for distribution, unless the entire classroom is invited.

PARENT/TEACHER ORGANIZATION

Your P.T.O. is responsible for numerous classroom and school activities. The P.T.O. helps with the cost of field trips, special lunches, as well as class recognitions. Please consider being part of this organization – look for meeting dates in the newsletter that comes home.

RECESS AND PLAYGROUND

Outdoor play is a critical part of every child's development and adults are always present to supervise. Please make sure that your child is dressed appropriately and safely for recess. During inclement weather (rain, heavy snow, wind chill below zero), recess will be held inside. Each elementary building has a separate set of guidelines/procedures to follow. Please inquire about these at each building.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS (WEATHER AND EMERGENCY)

If it is necessary to cancel school or delay the opening because of inclement weather or other conditions, you can check the following television stations: TV 13, TV 8, TV 9&10, TV 7&4 or the following radio stations: WYBR 102.3 and WBRN 100.9. The district's web site (www.brps.k12.mi.us) also posts information about school closings. Parents and students are responsible for knowing about emergency closings and delays.

In the event that it is necessary to close school before the regular school day is over, any child who is going somewhere OTHER than home during such an emergency should be given instructions at the beginning of the school year and the school should be notified of such instructions.

SCHOOL VISITORS

Parents and visitors are to check in at our office before going to any other part of the building. Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit the school and their child's classroom at any time, but the safety of all students must come first. If you wish to conference with the teacher or spend a longer time in your child's classroom, it is helpful to both the parent and school staff to know ahead of time. Please make an appointment with the office when possible.

Pre-school and school-age visitors are not allowed unattended in the classrooms. ***All school volunteers are required to complete a Volunteer Release Form before volunteering.***

SERVICES

BRPS provides a variety of programs and services to students who qualify for special education services including teacher consultant support and resource classrooms. In conjunction with the MOISD (Mecosta-Osceola Intermediate School District), we provide speech and language, social work, occupational therapy, or physical therapy as determined by an individual educational plan. Should you have any questions or concerns or believe your child to be eligible for any of these services, please contact the school principal for further consultation.

SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS PROCESS

A suspension of more than one (1) school day but not more than ten (10) school days may be appealed in writing to the Principal within one (1) school days of the parents' receipt of the written suspension notice. The written appeal must contain the reason(s) that the suspension is being appealed.

The student shall be reinstated during the appeal process unless it is determined that the student's attendance would jeopardize the safety of the student or of others. Upon review, the principal may uphold the suspension, establish an alternative suspension of lesser severity, or reverse the suspension in its entirety. The review may include, but not be limited to, a meeting with the parents if, in the principal's opinion, this is appropriate. The principal will reach the decision and inform the parents in writing within ten (10) school days after the receipt of the written request.

The decision of the principal may be appealed in writing to the Superintendent within one (1) school days of the parents' receipt of the decision. The Superintendent will reach a decision and inform the parents in writing within ten (10) school days after the receipt of the written request. The Superintendent's decision shall be considered final. The parents may appeal to the Board of Education only in cases of alleged violation of due process by the Superintendent. In such cases, the appeal shall be made in writing to the Board President within two (2) school days after the parents' receipt of the decision and shall include a statement of the alleged violation of the policy. The Board shall notify the parents of its decision and shall include a statement of the alleged violation of the policy. The Board shall notify the parents of its decision within ten (10) school days of receipt of the written request.

TELEPHONE USE AND NOTES

School telephones are often very busy. We are happy to deliver important telephone messages. Due to the abundance of messages at the end of the day, no messages will be taken after 2:30PM to ensure all messages get delivered to the respective students. Children are more successful in school when they have a consistent daily schedule. We understand that changes are sometimes necessary. Therefore, we need a parent note if your child has a change of plans at the end of the school day. Students without written permission for a change of plans will go home via their usual transportation.

TOYS/PERSONAL POSSESSIONS

The school strongly discourages students from bringing toys, personal possessions or electronic devices to school. The exception to this request would be for the child's "Show and Tell" time. However, items of special value should be left at home (i.e. electronic games, iPod's, handheld devices). When a child brings personal items to school, the school is not responsible or liable when items are lost, stolen, traded, damaged, or broken. Cell phones are not permitted at school. *PLEASE MAKE SURE TO IDENTIFY ALL YOUR CHILD'S BELONGINGS.*

TRANSFERRING OUT OF DISTRICT

Parents must notify the principal about plans to transfer their child to another school. School officials, when transferring student records, are required to transmit disciplinary records including suspension and expulsion actions against the student.

WEAPONS

All school buildings are by State law a "Weapons Free Zone" and no weapons may be carried in the school by any student or adult. No adult (event those with permits) may carry weapons in the school with the exception of law enforcement personnel. If a dangerous weapon is found in the possession of a pupil at school, at a school activity, or while the student is in route to or from school on a bus, the school will report it to the parents, the local police, and that student is subject to expulsion.

ANNUAL NOTICES

REVIEW OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES

Parents have the right to review any instructional materials being used in the school. They also may observe instruction in any class, particularly those dealing with the instruction in health and sex education. Any parent who wishes to review materials or observe instruction **must** contact the principal prior to coming to the school. Parents' rights to review teaching materials and instructional activities are subject to reasonable restrictions and limits.

NOTICE OF NON DISCRIMINATION

Big Rapids Public Schools is committed to a policy of non-discrimination in relation to race, religion, sex, age, national origin and handicap in all programs.

EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

It is the policy of this District to provide an equal education opportunity for all students. Any person who believes that s/he has been discriminated against on the basis of his/her race, color, disability, religion, gender, or national origin while at school or a school activity should immediate contact the Superintendent at (231)796-2627. Any student making a complaint or participating in a school investigation will be protected from any threat or retaliation. The Superintendent's Office can provide additional information concerning equal access to educational opportunity.

ANNUAL EDUCATION REPORT

The District and Building Annual Education Reports can be found on the District website: www.brps.org (look for the Michigan Department of Education Annual Education Report link). A copy is also available in the school office for your review.

Getting Your Child Off to a Good Start

One way to maintain the excitement of the first days of school is to help your child prepare for the challenges of school. There are many things that you as a parent can do to ensure that your child is prepared for school each day.

1. *Teach your children to be organized*
School is their “job”. Help them develop a system to assume the responsibilities of making sure homework assignments are complete and to have the supplies that are needed each day.
2. *Children need a good night's sleep*
It is very important that your child come to school rested each day. Establish an evening bedtime schedule for your child and stick to it.
3. *Develop a calm morning routine*
Allow enough time for a healthy breakfast and a timely school arrival.
4. *Share your child's day*
Your own reactions and attitudes will go a long way towards determining how your child feels about school, the teacher, and other students.
5. *Read to and with children every day*
Kids who “practice” their reading do better than those who don't.
6. *Build a “can do” attitude in your child*
When she/he tries something hard, praise the effort. Help break a big project down into smaller tasks. Then praise him/her as each step is completed.
7. *Join your school's parent organization*
Sign up to help in some way. When parents are involved, kids learn more...and their schools are better too!

Board of Education

President – Diana Byrne
Vice President – Kathy Bouwman
Treasurer – John Thomas
Secretary – Mike Wyman
Trustees – Sue Hosking, Pete Kent, Dave Murray

Board meetings are held at 6:30PM the second Monday of each month in the High School Media Center.

Central Administration – 796-2627

Superintendent – Tim Haist
Curriculum/Human Resource Director – Deb Tyson
Finance Director - Nick Scheible

BRHS

Principal, Ron Pincumbe
Assistant Principal, Josh Easler
Athletic Director, Nick Scheible
21175 15 Mile Road
796-7651

BROOKSIDE

Principal, Tim Buckingham
210 Escott
796-8323

RIVERVIEW

Principal, Renee Kent
509 Willow
796-2550

NEW DIRECTIONS

Coordinator, Josh Easler
14980 215th Ave.
796-3489

BRMS

Principal, Lenore Weaver
Dean of Students, Marty Aldrich
500 N. Warren
796-9965

FOOD SERVICE

Director, Bob King
796-7653

FACILITIES

Supervisor, William Fogel
592-0631

BUS GARAGE

Supervisor, Steve Hofmann
796-5406

TECHNOLOGY

Director, Joe Bouman
592-8503