

# Leesville Rd. Elementary School..



Student/Parent  
Handbook  
2023 -2024

8402 Pride Way  
Raleigh, NC, 27613

<http://wcpss.net/leesvilleroades>  
919-870-4200

*Ari Cohen - Principal*  
*Jessica Bailey - Assistant Principal*

# The PRIDE Starts Here Leesville!

# Leesville Rd. Elementary School

Dear Leesville Rd. Elementary School Families

It is with a great deal of joy and enthusiasm that we welcome everyone to Leesville Rd. Elementary School for the 2023-2024 school year. With the pandemic more substantially behind us, we are excited to merge what we learned through the last three years with the wonderful programs, processes, and opportunities that we all enjoyed and valued prior to 2020.

While we have had the opportunity to meet a number of our new families joining our LES Community this year, we are so excited to welcome our newest Kindergarten Cubs, as well as our students, who are transitioning to us at the 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade levels from other schools in WCPSS, from other schools in North Carolina, and from schools all across the United States. We are sure that our new-to-Leesville families will quickly feel very welcome and included throughout our pawsome LES community.

After last year's success, we maintain very, very high expectations for this year ahead and hope that you are all as energized and enthusiastic as we are. Please take some time to read and review this 2023-2024 Leesville Rd. Elementary School Parent/Student Handbook so that you are fully informed of the policies and procedures that we employ and value, which make Leesville such an inclusive and successful school environment.

Sincerely,

Ari Cohen, *Principal*

Jessica Bailey, *Assistant Principal*

*The Pride Starts Here Leesville!*

# Leesville Rd. Elementary School

## Vision:

Leesville Elementary School will foster a community of stakeholders who embrace diversity within a rigorous and innovative school environment. LES will champion the 4C's (*Collaboration, Communication, Creativity, and Critical Thinking*) through personalized learning experiences that grow critical thinkers, life-long learners and socially responsible, global citizens.

## Core Beliefs:

At Leesville Elementary School, we believe in:

- Creating an inclusive learning community that celebrates all learners' successes and diversity in all forms.
- Enriching student learning by partnering with families as well as with local and global communities to broaden student opportunity.
- Committing to use data-driven processes to enhance all learning outcomes.
- Fostering new and creative ideas and seeing mistakes as learning opportunities.
- Modeling continuous improvement and lifelong learning.
- Teaching, modeling, and reinforcing the expected behaviors throughout the total school environment (PRIDE... *Perseverance, Respect, Integrity, Determination, Empathy*).
- Empowering students to become critical thinkers as they access a rigorous and relevant curriculum.

## **ACADEMICALLY AND INTELLECTUALLY GIFTED (AIG) SERVICES**

Services in 4th and 5th grade are in math and ELA depending on identification. Students may be invited to participate in small group, pullout lessons or in-class co-teaching opportunities. Students will be working on curriculum that extends their thinking and challenges them to work hard to solve problems or understand their reading or math at a deeper, more thought-provoking level.

3rd Grade students are offered the Explorers program. Our AIG Teacher will provide weekly whole class lessons, which will then lead to other small group lessons, designed to work with students who excel in class, and show higher level thinking skills in the Explorers lessons.

Furthermore, this year, our program will provide Critical Thinking sessions for our 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grades, thereby opening up unique learning experiences to a broader and more diverse pool of Leesville Cubs.

All Wake County 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade students participate in a screening process starting with the administration of the CogAT test. The IOWA and other additional tests are offered on a case by case basis. Students will need a score of 95% or higher on two district approved tests before services begin in the fall of their 4th grade year. Furthermore, K-2, Project Based Learning services are on a consultative basis between the classroom teachers and the AIG specialist.

Any questions regarding our AIG program should be directed to Ms. Kim Guza ([kguza2@wcpss.net](mailto:kguza2@wcpss.net)).

## **ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

The administrative staff is here to support the daily curriculum and extracurricular activities, ensuring a safe and orderly environment for the Leesville community. We are also here to support parents/guardians with their efforts to stay informed and involved in their child's education. **We ask that if you have concerns or questions about your child's education, please address them with your child's teacher *first* as they can best speak to the matters at hand.**

*Principal*

*Ari Cohen ([acohen@wcpss.net](mailto:acohen@wcpss.net))*

*Assistant Principal*

*Jessica Bailey ([jlbailey@wcpss.net](mailto:jlbailey@wcpss.net))*

## **ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES**

The front traffic circle is for quickly dropping off and picking up. Those needing to walk their child to the front entrance in the morning or to pick your child up prior to dismissal will need to use the school parking lot, **reserving Handicap Parking spaces for those with the appropriate permits.**

**Please remember that the bus parking lot is for buses and Special Transportation Vans only.** It is very unsafe to drive through the bus lot unless you are picking up from the After School Care Program after 5:00 pm. Please also keep in mind that NO Before School Care Program drop-off may occur after 8:35 am and NO After School Care Program pick-up may occur before 4:30 pm. Furthermore, **Car riding students must not be dropped off before 8:45 am and should not be picked up prior to 3:45 pm.**

When bringing your child to school after the morning tardy bell at 9:15 am or when picking up your child prior to 2:45 pm, you are required to come to the front entrance of the school to officially sign-in/sign-out your child. When you arrive and ring the front doorbell, a member of the office staff will be happy to assist you in retrieving your child.

On normal days, students are dismissed starting at 3:45 pm. To minimize disruptions at the end of the day, **students will not be called out of the classroom after 3:10 pm without prior and appropriate notice.**

Additionally, no students will be called from their classrooms after 3:30 pm as this is too close to the start of the dismissal processes and will cause disruption to the end of the day classroom closure processes.

## ASSESSMENTS - Standardized

Teachers in kindergarten, first and second grades use a portfolio approach based on curricular goals and objectives to keep track of each student's progress throughout the year. Assessments include mClass, formative math assessments including the Number Knowledge Test (NKT), as well as school and district sponsored reading and writing assessments.

In addition to routine and regular formative benchmark assessments throughout the year, to gauge learning and progress in math and reading, students in grades 3-5 will once again be required to take reading fluency/comprehension and mathematics assessments, referred to as the End-of-Grade (EoG) tests, at the end of the school year. Additionally, 5<sup>th</sup> grade is responsible for the Science EoG at the end of May/beginning of June. These multiple-choice formatted tests are important as they serve as the basis for the state's accountability program. The tests are **one** gauge of how well students have learned and retained the curriculum outlined in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study for the particular grade in reading and in math. Students are scored using five levels of proficiency:

- **Level 1** performance means insufficient mastery.
- **Level 2** is inconsistent mastery.
- **Level 3** is consistent proficiency for at grade level, but not deemed on track for college readiness.
- **Level 4** is grade level proficiency and on track for college readiness.
- **Level 5** is grade level mastery and on track for college readiness.

Students in grades 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> are required to score at least a Level 3 on the End of Grade (EOG) Tests to be deemed successfully passing. **Important Note: the school principal makes all final decisions regarding promotion and retention of students.** EOG results are one measure reviewed, but certainly not a sole factor in determining promotion or retention.

## ATTENDANCE

Prompt, regular attendance at school is crucial to your child's success. Our instructional day begins at 9:15 am and ends at 3:45 pm. Students arriving after 9:15 am are required to be signed in as tardy by a parent or guardian before being allowed to their classroom. **It is very important for students to be on time so that they do not miss, nor disrupt, instructional time for themselves or others.** As stated in an earlier section, students arriving in private vehicles **MUST NOT** leave children off at the school before 8:45 am, and should not be picked up prior to 3:45 pm.

### School Board Policy

*Attendance in school is central to educational achievement and school success. School attendance is required by state law for all children between the ages of seven (7) and sixteen (16). Parents must ensure that students attend and remain in school daily.*

- 6000.1      *The principal must assure adherence to attendance rules and regulations and notify parents of their responsibility under the compulsory attendance law. The teacher must monitor and report student absences on a daily and class basis and follow all rules and regulations concerning attendance.*
- 6000.2      *To be counted present a student must be in attendance at least one-half of the student school day. This shall include attendance at official school activities at a place other than school with the approval of the principal. A student shall be in his/her assigned area at the beginning of the school day and the beginning of each class or be recorded as tardy.*
- 6000.3      *An absence is excused if the following conditions exist:*
- A.            *Illness or injury which makes the student physically unable to attend school.*
  - B.            *Isolation ordered by the State Board of Health or the Wake County Health Department.*
  - C.            *Death in family.*
  - D.            *Medical, dental, or other appointment with a health care provider for the student or for a child for whom the student is a custodial parent.*

- E. Court when a student is under subpoena.
- F. Religious observance, as suggested by the religion of the student or the student's parents.
- G. Participation in a valid educational opportunity, such as travel with prior approval, as documented on the "Request for Excused Absence for Educational Reasons."  
**\*Trips and opportunities that are not aligned to your child's current curriculum are less likely to be approved as excused absences.**
- H. A catastrophic event or natural disaster.

- 6000.4 Absences not classified as excused in 6000.3 are unexcused. The student is responsible for submitting a note signed by the parent citing the reason for an absence to the principal's designee within two (2) days of the student's return to school. Failure to comply with the above will result in the absence being unexcused.
- 6000.5 For all absences, the student shall make up all work in a timely manner at the convenience of the teacher. The make-up work may be specific material missed by the student, reinforcement, or enrichment.
- 6000.6 Excessive absences will have serious academic consequences and may result in class or grade-level failure.
- 6000.7 At the elementary level, excused and unexcused absences above thirty (30) are excessive. Students who exceed thirty (30) absences during the year will be referred to an attendance committee that will determine if the student should be retained. The principal shall have the authority to waive the decision of the committee.
- 6000.8 At the secondary level cumulative absences above ten (10) in a block course (twenty (20) in a full-year course) are excessive. After five (5) days of accumulated absences in one or more block courses, (ten (10) in a full-year course) there will be school-determined, expectations-based intervention to help the student improve his or her attendance. The intervention will involve parents. After ten (10) days of accumulated absences in a block course (twenty (20) in a full-year course) and failure to meet previously-determined expectations, the student will be subject to failure, retention, or summer school.
- 6000.9 All schools will develop a plan to improve attendance. As part of this plan, each school will establish procedures to develop and implement interventions disciplinary action for unexcused absences and a process for dealing with students who fail to meet previously-determined expectations.
- 6000.10 The principal shall have the authority to waive the school-based decision after excessive absences as defined in 6000.8.
- 6000.11 Students with documented, chronic health problems will be exempted from the policy if absences are excused.

### **BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT**

Back to School/Orientation Night will be held on **Wednesday, September 20<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 to 7:30 pm**. Beginning at 5:30, we will have a brief, but informative PTA General Assembly Meeting in the school Multi-Purpose Room. Following the PTA GA Meeting, all teachers will have their first session from 6:05 to 6:40 pm, and then repeat this session from 6:50 to 7:25 pm. This should allow most parents to hear about the curriculum being presented for any grade level, where they may have children. In addition to the curriculum content, these sessions will consist of a deeper focus on individual classroom procedures and daily routines. **Attendance by all parents/guardians is strongly encouraged.**

### **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAMS**

The Leesville Elementary Before & After School Programs seek to provide your child with a safe, fun, and engaging environment where students can play, make friends, and try new things! We have a highly qualified staff who love spending their mornings and afternoons with your students. Activities include sports, playground fun, crafts, board games, Legos, computer lab, homework club, and so much more! We pride ourselves in how we run our program and are so grateful that our program has grown so successfully.

***Hours of operation: Early Arrival 6:30am-8:45am, After School 4:20pm-6:00pm;***

***LES BASC Manager: Kim Latta ([klatta@wcpss.net](mailto:klatta@wcpss.net))***

## **BOARD POLICIES**

Wake County Public Schools are governed by Board Policies. To view them, please go to [www.wcpss.net](http://www.wcpss.net).

### **CELEBRATIONS**

***Birthdays*** – To protect the instructional time of the school day and to limit the students’ consumption of unhealthy snacks and treats, Birthday celebrations will be limited to once per month on a day designated by the classroom teacher. Also, monthly celebrations will occur during recess or other non-instructional/non-lunch periods worked out ahead of time with the classroom teacher.

***Celebrations brought to the school without prior coordination with the Homeroom Teacher WILL be turned away. Additionally, decorations and “party food and favors” MUST be approved between the Teacher and School Administration.***

***Holidays*** – Leesville Elementary School is a public school program and, therefore, must remain secular in its observance of religious holidays. In order to celebrate and respect the wonderful diversity represented throughout our community, ***please remember that holidays and holiday related traditions may be taught in lieu of celebration.***

### **CELL PHONES AND OTHER WIRELESS NETWORKING DEVICES**

As mentioned later under the section titled **DESKS AND CUBBIES - PERSONAL ITEMS**, personal cell phones and other personally owned wireless networking devices (*iPads, Apple Watches or similar devices, etc.*) are strictly forbidden for students at Leesville Rd. Elementary School (this policy extends to the buses and on field trips as well). The school is fully equipped with phones and all students will be assigned a chromebook by WCPSS. Should a child need to contact their parent/guardian, they may do so from the school office with permission from their teacher or school administration. Similarly, if a parent/guardian needs to be in contact with their child, they should call the school’s main line (919-870-4200) and a message will be delivered to your child’s teacher at the earliest opportunity.

If a student is seen with a personal device by any adult at school or the device is taken out while the student is on the school bus, it will be confiscated and delivered to school administration. The first time the device is taken, it will be given back to the student at the convenience of school administration at the end of the day. If a device needs to be taken a second time from a student, it will be delivered to school administration and ONLY returned directly to a parent/guardian when they come to the school to retrieve it. The third time a device is taken from a child, it will be delivered to school administration and ONLY returned to the parent/guardian **AND** not until the final day of the school year. Additional consequences may be assigned depending on the circumstances surrounding the device’s use.

Parents seeking any exemption to this rule must meet personally with LES Principal, Ari Cohen.

### **CHILD NUTRITION and CAFETERIA SERVICES**

Teachers set and reinforce PRIDE (Perseverance, Respect, Integrity, Determination, Empathy) expectations for the cafeteria as well. Each day, students will be rated on a 1 through 4 performance scale to determine their willingness to show PRIDE in the cafeteria. Ratings of a 1 or a 2 in either lining up or while at their table may lead to the teacher being required to eat with the students to help them remember how to rise to the expectations. Classes earning a 3 or 4 rating will be praised for their behaviors and, at each grade level, the highest average performance ratings will be publicly recognized on the coveted **Golden Trays** each week and quarter.

The school cafeteria will once again be charging fees for breakfast and lunch. The fees, school cafeteria menus, and the link to electronically place money in your child’s lunch account (this is the preferred option to sending money to school with your student) may be accessed through this link -

<https://www.wcpss.net/Page/7867>.

Should you be experiencing hardship and wish to apply for free or reduced meal costs, please visit this link to complete and submit the Free and Reduced Lunch Application - <https://www.wcpss.net/Page/7866>



## CLASS PLACEMENT CHANGES

Class placements and assignments are determined with great thought and deliberation. **We ask that parents allow a minimum of a 20-day adjustment period before requesting a meeting to discuss a transfer to another classroom.** Prior to determining that a change is warranted, parents should schedule a meeting with the classroom teacher to discuss concerns and steps to make improvements. If the parent still feels strongly about the change, requests will be considered, taking into account all other factors affecting the change. **As class placement changes are highly discouraged, please note that consideration does not mean approval.** Please keep in mind that class changes are rarely granted and only further considered after all other options have been attempted, exhausted, **and** deemed unsuccessful.

## COUNSELING AND STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The counseling program is designed to support students through their academic, emotional, social and psychological development. The counselors work with individual students, small groups, and classes to help them develop respectful coexistence and a better understanding of themselves and others. The primary aim of the counseling program is to work with boys and girls who are having problems with friends, family, school, and self-awareness.

Leesville Rd. Elementary School embraces a Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) structure to help instill and teach positive character traits referenced at LES as **PRIDE** (**P**erseverance, **R**espect, **I**ntegrity, **D**etermination, **E**mpathy). Students get recognized and rewarded for demonstrating **PRIDE** across the school and throughout their school day. Students may earn Cub Cash which may be exchanged for prize items or saved and traded in for larger and more meaningful opportunities.

Leesville Rd. Elementary School has also embraced a social emotional learning process called **Zones of Regulation** (ZoR). ZoR teaches and guides the students to identify their emotions under four color categories... Red, Yellow, Blue, Green. Students learn how to articulate about their emotions and feelings, identify how those emotions developed, and how to call upon learned strategies and processes to de-escalate their emotions (if they are feeling in the red, yellow or blue). ZoR reduces negativity surrounding an emotion being felt and emphasizes acceptance, tolerance, and empowers the student to work them back to the desired zone.

Additionally, **Second Step** is our social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum. Its programs combine discussions with fun activities and family resources. The programs help children learn social-emotional skills such as responsible decision-making, working together to solve problems, managing strong emotions, and getting along with others. These skills can help children succeed academically and socially. Check out the link for more information about this SEL curriculum resource... <https://www.secondstep.org/families>.

Another important part of the elementary school counseling is to help students avoid developmental problems by exploring what happens during the time of growing up: feelings, body changes, and the happiness and unhappiness which are a natural part of the childhood years.

Our Counselors, Ms. Amy Downer (primarily Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade) and Ms. Melissa Rosenberger (primarily 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade) are available to any student, parent, or teacher who has a concern or problem, and may be contacted at the school (919-870-4200) or via email ([adowner@wcpss.net](mailto:adowner@wcpss.net) and [mrosenberger@wcpss.net](mailto:mrosenberger@wcpss.net)).

Additionally, our counselors function as members of the Student Support Services Team, which also includes our School Psychologist, Ms. Sarah Hamel ([shamel@wcpss.net](mailto:shamel@wcpss.net)), and our School Social Worker, Ms. Peyton Wannall ([ewannall@wcpss.net](mailto:ewannall@wcpss.net)).

## CUSTODY ISSUES

We comply with legal documentation **only**. If we do not have legal documentation of custodial rights, we may NOT comply with parent/guardian directives or requests.

## DESKS AND CUBBIES - PERSONAL ITEMS

All students will have either a desk or a cubby in their classroom to place their personal items. **Please mark ALL personal items, particularly garments such as sweaters, coats and other winter accessories with your child's name.** Lost and found items will be kept in our breezeway near the cafeteria for you to check when something gets lost or turned in. **Personal items such as gaming devices, trading cards, toys, and**



cell phones are **NOT** to be brought to school without administrative consent, and will be confiscated and returned only to a parent/guardian. **Additionally, some items, such as toy guns or toy knives of any kind or size may result in an immediate suspension from school.**

Leesville Elementary will **not** take responsibility for locating these types of personal items if they go missing, as they should not have been brought to school in the first place.

### **DRILLS AND STUDENT SAFETY**

Leesville Rd. Elementary School keeps all school building doors locked and secured throughout the day. Guests to the school must ring the front doorbell and present identification before being welcomed into the school. Additionally, we are equipped with digital cameras that provide visual access to 90% of the school campus (*excluding inside of classrooms and restrooms*). Finally, at LES, in order to further ensure that our school community remains safe, we practice a series of drills to prepare for emergencies and crisis situations.

**Fire Drills:** Fire drills are conducted one time per month and mostly at random, unannounced times to ensure that all students and staff know what to do in the event of a fire in the school.

**Inclement Weather Drills:** As North Carolina is prone to various harsh weather systems, we conduct these drills to prepare our students and staff with procedures to follow in the event of hurricanes, tornado warnings, and other severe weather.

**Code Red/Code Yellow Drills:** Our students and staff need to be prepared for the possibility that there is an immediate risk to their safety inside of the school building or in the vicinity of the school campus. We will do a minimum of three Code Red drills... the first is fully announced to the school community, the second is given a general timeframe, and all following drills will be fully unannounced and spontaneous to support preparation at all times and in all locations around the school. Parents/Guardians will receive a school communication following these drills to provide talking points and information about the practice.

### **DRESS CODE**

In order to maintain the proper feel of an educational learning environment, appropriate student attire is required. Please adhere to the following district determined recommendations.

**Don't wear:**

- *exposed undergarments*
- *sagging pants*
- *see-through or excessively short, tight or revealing clothes*
- *bare midriff or strapless shirts*
- *clothing with lewd, indecent or vulgar messages or illustrations*
- *clothing that advertises products or services illegal to minors*
- *hats or other secular head coverings*
- *chains, spikes or other accessories that could be perceived as or used as a weapon*
- *clothing that violates the school system's policies against gang and gang-related activities*
- *In the school building/classrooms, hoodie shirts and sweatshirts may not be worn with the hood up.*

Principals may use their discretion in implementing the dress code, including making reasonable accommodations on the basis of your student's religious beliefs or medical conditions. To help keep our students focused on learning without distractions, we expect each one to dress appropriately. Our code of student conduct prohibits disruptive, provocative, revealing, profane, vulgar, offensive, obscene or unsafe clothing or bodily appearances. ***For more information, see Board Policy 4309: Code of Student Conduct.***

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

Early dismissal from school must always be cleared first in the main school office. **Parents/guardians are asked to inform the front office of the early dismissal PRIOR TO 2:45 pm so that we will be able to communicate the early departure to the classroom teachers in a timely and unintrusive manner.** Upon arrival, parents will ring the front entrance bell and sign students out so the school may maintain records of his/her whereabouts. We will then call your student to the office for dismissal. Parents will be required to wait outside of the front entrance until their child arrives.

Please keep in mind that when a student is called from his/her class earlier than the 3:45 pm dismissal time, it is a disruptive interruption to the other students and causes the student being picked up early to miss out on valuable instruction and closure to their day.

We encourage you to schedule regular medical and dental appointments either prior to school hours or after school dismissal.

If you need to make alternate pick-up arrangements for your child, please call the office prior to 2:45 p.m. to make sure that teachers are notified in time.

In the event of inclement weather, radio and television stations will broadcast closings in addition to school messenger calls conveying further information. Please make sure your child knows what to do and where to go if school closes early. If the child is not going to follow standard dismissal/bus procedures, please contact the main office with specific instructions as to what your student is to do when Inclement Weather occurs. **Remember that the Leesville Rd. Elementary After-School program does not operate if school dismisses early or cancels due to inclement weather (or other factors with a possible impact on student health or well-being).**

### **ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)**

ESL, English as a Second Language, is a program designed to assist students whose first language is not English. The focus of ESL is to help students become proficient in English for both social and academic situations. Students entering the ESL program take an oral, written, reading and hearing assessment to assess their level of proficiency in English. In order to exit this program, students must pass all four parts of the test with a level of fluent English. For further information or questions, please contact our ESL Teacher, Ms. Danielle Perry ([dperry@wcpss.net](mailto:dperry@wcpss.net)).

### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR, SCHOOL SPONSORED ACTIVITIES**

Leesville Elementary School offers an array of extra-curricular activities and programs, which are available to any students within the grades participating. However, each student's participation is contingent on their effort and behavior during the regular school day and program.

Past programs have included, but not been limited to, Science Olympiad, Girls on the Run, Dungeons and Dragons, Battle of the Books, Art Club, student-led after-school book clubs, First in Fitness, and many more. As students become older, more club opportunities are made available to them.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Teachers may plan field trips during the school year to support their instructional program. Parents will be notified about these trips in advance. All children must have written permission and an updated medical form submitted by the communicated date for each trip. Students without signed permission by the required date will be denied participation.

Transportation for field trips will be provided by school buses or chartered buses. Private cars are not used for transporting students. Chaperones must be cleared volunteers and may not ride school buses.

**Fees for fieldtrips, once paid, will not be refunded beyond the designated/communicated date. This includes any student who is absent on the day of the trip, arrives after the fieldtrip departure time, and any student who has lost the privilege to participate due to excessively inappropriate behaviors** (Administration may choose to hold students back from a fieldtrip if their demonstrated and documented behaviors pose a safety risk to themselves or others).

The no refund rule is necessary as the school will be obligated to pay for tickets, transportation, etc., once the planning is complete. We also require students to ride to and from these trips with their class, as this time is part of the experience for the children.

**No student will be held back from a trip due to financial burdens. If you will need financial assistance for your child to attend the field trip, please be sure to speak with your child's teacher, or our School Social Worker, Ms. Wannall, immediately upon receiving information about the upcoming experience.**

## FLYERS

Leesville Elementary selects to NOT distribute flyers from any vendors not endorsed by Wake County Public Schools. ***Please refer to WCPSS Board Policy Code # 5210 (Distribution and Display of Non-School Material) for more specific guidelines.***

## FRIDAY FOLDERS

Friday Folders are one of our major means of communication from the classrooms to the parents/guardians. They will contain completed assignments and assessments, and other information needed for open and two-way communication between the home and school.

Whether teachers opt to send their folders home on Fridays or Mondays, they will come home on a weekly basis regardless of grade level. **Please be sure to check and sign them weekly to verify that you have received all important announcements and information.**

## GIVING CAMPAIGNS

Per WCPSS policy, Leesville Rd. Elementary School is not permitted to facilitate fundraiser events or efforts. Therefore, all fundraising efforts are organized and run by our Leesville Rd. Elementary School PTA, who will communicate with families about upcoming giving campaigns and fundraising efforts that will contribute to the resources and programming for the students at Leesville Elementary.

## HEALTH ROOM AND EMERGENCY INFORMATION

It is vital that we have accurate information on how to reach all parents/guardians, plus at least two or three other people who will accept responsibility for your child if he/she is injured at school. ***Please help us by giving complete information with all accurate, up to date information and contact numbers on the data sheet and emergency locator cards.***

The health room is located in the front office area. The purpose of the health room is to provide a place where your child may go when he/she has been injured or is not feeling well. Once there, the child will tell the Front Office Reception Staff what seems to be his/her problem. If it is minor, basic first aid will be administered before the child is sent back to class. The child's parent/guardian will be called to pick up the child if there is a serious injury or illness. If the child's parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency phone number on his/her locator card will be called and/or 911 if necessary.

Students are not permitted to bring their own medicines or medicinal products and no medication can be administered by the school without all necessary and specific medical documentation submitted and cleared, but your child will be made as comfortable as possible while he/she is in the health room. Please do not ask the school to give your child an aspirin or any nonprescription medication; we are not permitted to do so.

If your child requires prescription medicine during the school day, please obtain the proper forms from the school office to be filled out by the physician. All prescription medication must be in the original pill container with proper labeling from the pharmacy.

Ring worm, head lice, chicken pox or "pink eye" are very contagious. If you discover that your child has developed these conditions, please seek immediate medical attention before sending the child to school. A staff member will call you to pick up your child if these conditions are discovered at school. A letter with information about treatment will be sent home if head lice are found in your child's classroom.

## HOMEWORK AND GRADING

Another priority at Leesville Rd. Elementary School is to make sure that our students are developing the necessary academic proficiencies and growth. In lieu of traditional grading, WCPSS elementary students are graded on a standards-based grading scale as follows:

Scale	Scale Explanation
4 - Exemplary	<i>Student consistently demonstrates an in-depth understanding of targeted standards and exceeds grade-level expectations.</i>
3 – Proficient	<i>Student consistently demonstrates an understanding of the targeted standards and meets grade-level expectations.</i>
2 – Approaching	<i>Student is approaching an understanding of the targeted standards but is not yet on grade level.</i>
1 – Not Yet Proficient	<i>Student does not demonstrate an understanding of the targeted concepts and is not on grade level.</i>

The decision to assign homework is determined by the individual grade levels and for the following purposes: **1. To reinforce, maintain, enrich, and extend skills and concepts taught in class; 2. To inspire self-directed learning and academic achievement; 3. To establish good study habits; and 4. To develop responsibility in each student.** Parents may request homework and other assignments for a child with at least 2 consecutive days of excused absences.

### **KINDERGARTEN**

Kindergarten Staggered Entry runs from August 28<sup>th</sup> through August 31<sup>st</sup> and will include small groups of Kindergarten students each day to become familiarized and acclimated with the school, and to participate in light and informal formative assessments. They will move through their standard day and meet the school staff with whom they will engage. Our Kindergarten Meet the Teacher event will be hosted on Thursday evening, August 31<sup>st</sup> from 5:00 to 6:00 pm. Kindergarten will be in full session beginning on Tuesday, September 5<sup>th</sup>.

### **LEESVILLE LIBRARY**

Our goal for the library is to maintain this space as the centerpiece of the school, to motivate a life-long love of reading, and to ensure that students and staff are independent and effective users of ideas and information. It is also our mission to provide media and information-related services that are fully integrated with the instructional program.

Please share the joy of reading with your child and help them to learn responsibility by taking good care of the books they check out of our school library. If a book is lost or damaged, or for any other School Library topics, please contact Ms. Marissa Ascencio, Leesville Library Coordinator, for replacement information ([mkascencio@wcpss.net](mailto:mkascencio@wcpss.net)).

### **MAIN OFFICE**

The office at Leesville Elementary is a very busy area. Students are required to get specific permission from their teacher before they come to the office. If they have a problem, which needs to be discussed with an administrator, they can leave their name with the secretary in the morning or ask their teacher to send it in to the office and someone will see them during the day. The telephone in the office is to be used by students for emergencies only and only with staff permission.

Questions regarding Leesville Elementary Main Office Operations may be directed to our lead receptionist, Ms. Sweet Kluge ([skluge@wcpss.net](mailto:skluge@wcpss.net)).

### **MASTER CALENDAR**

A large master calendar will be maintained by the school administration and their designees. All school events must be cleared by administration prior to being added to the calendar. The PTA will also use this calendar so it will be a complete "master calendar" for the school year.

Events involving the Leesville Community will be communicated via our mass phone messaging system, school/class newsletters, Twitter, and on the school Website (<http://www.wcpss.net/leesvilleroades>).

### **NEWSLETTERS**

Teachers post a weekly newsletter on their class webpages (*accessible through the school website*) to keep parents informed about what is happening in the classroom. Please read these weekly communications as they are a key source of information about school related news and updates.

Likewise, a school's Twitter feed will be linked to the school website.

### **PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)**

The Leesville Elementary School PTA takes a whole-child approach to elementary education. Teachers, administrators, counselors, and support staff work together with our parents/guardians to meet the intellectual, social, behavioral, and emotional needs of each child we serve. To learn more about our amazing PTA officers, participants, programs, membership, and opportunities to get involved, I strongly urge you to visit the PTA Hosted website which may be accessed through a link on the Leesville Elementary School website or directly at <http://www.lespta.com/>. You may also contact our PTA President, Sandra Soderstrom ([president@lespta.com](mailto:president@lespta.com)), for any other questions.

## PICTURES

Strawbridge Studios will take individual school pictures in the fall, full body portraits in the winter and class pictures in the spring. Order forms and information will be distributed via your child's Friday Folder.

## PLAYGROUND

Time on the playground will be somewhat less structured, but fully supervised by Teachers and/or Instructional Assistants. **All of the students are expected to complete a full lap around our playground track prior to engaging in other recess activities. They are further expected to participate and to respond to directions on the playground in the same manner as in the classroom.**

All recess times will be 30 minutes and will provide each grade level with time on the school playgrounds with only their like age peers.

## SPECIAL AREA CLASSES

### 2023-2024 Specials Schedule

All students receive special instruction in Art, Music, Physical Education, and Library. Other Specials included in our rotation are Health and Fitness, Social Emotional Learning, and even unique enrichment clubs for select grade levels. Specials are considered important parts of our curriculum and all students are expected

<i>Kindergarten</i>	<i>1<sup>st</sup> Grade</i>	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Grade</i>	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Grade</i>	<i>4<sup>th</sup> Grade</i>	<i>5<sup>th</sup> Grade</i>
<i>2:00 to 2:45</i>	<i>2:50 to 3:35</i>	<i>1:10 to 1:55</i>	<i>11:00 to 11:45</i>	<i>10:10 to 10:55</i>	<i>11:55 to 12:40</i>

to fully participate.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

A referral to the Special Education Program (SpEd) may be initiated by a parent or staff member through the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) process. The MTSS committee provides a team framework for evaluating data and strategies used for recommending the most appropriate next steps. If the team feels that a SpEd referral is the most appropriate next step, then a review will be requested. The SpEd team is responsible for receiving referrals, obtaining parental permission for assessment, initiating evaluation procedures, evaluating information, and seeing that an individualized education plan (IEP) is developed and reevaluated annually, if a placement is made. Special Education programs available at Leesville Elementary include Speech/Language Therapy, Learning Disability resources, Autism Spectrum resources, Educable Mentally Disabled resources, Hearing Impaired, and Occupational and Physical Therapy. Leesville Elementary also houses self-contained Extended Content Standards classes for K-2 and 3-5 grade levels.

Our Special Education Program Team Leader is Ms. Samantha Ayscue-Sharrow, who may be reached via email at [sayscuesharrow@wcpss.net](mailto:sayscuesharrow@wcpss.net).

## STAFF DIRECTORY

A staff email directory can be found on the Leesville Elementary website: [www.wcpss.net/leesvilleroades](http://www.wcpss.net/leesvilleroades)

## STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Everyone wants a safe and orderly school - an environment where teachers can teach and students can learn. Parents want it; teachers want it; and students want it too. Schools, which have been identified by research as effective schools, have structure, order, and high expectations for student behavior and academic performance.

We continue to develop and encourage our Positive Behavior Support Model to which students will have guidelines to adhere, but also receive incentives for being positive. This model serves to instill positive and intrinsic values and character, and to redirect negative behavior. We will continue to promote an ideology that is aligned to the evolving direction of our school's emphasis and priorities. Students will be expected to show their Leesville Rd. Elementary School **PRIDE** (**P**erseverance, **R**espect, **I**ntegrity, **D**etermination, **E**mpathy) in all areas within and away from the school.

Students struggling to adhere to the expectations of the classrooms or the school will be taken through a series of interventions that **may** include in/out of class time-outs, reflection sheets, meeting with a member of

the Student Support Services team, home contact, and, in some circumstances, time in the office with the school administration.

We want your child to be successful. If he/she is having problems, our goal is to work as a team to solve them. We want to support your role and certainly, we solicit your support as well.

### **STUDENT RECORDS**

The school maintains a cumulative education record on each of its students. This record contains important information such as personal data, health records, attendance reports, standardized test results, and subject area grades and performance indicators. It is useful for many reasons: in case of an emergency, to comply with the Compulsory Attendance Law, for course placement, to meet graduation requirements, etc. Your child's education record is confidential and only available to you and to school officials or other agencies with legitimate educational interests.

The school is not allowed to disseminate data personally identifying your child without your consent. When officials of another school or school system in which your child intends to enroll request a record transfer, the school must make a reasonable attempt to notify you of the records transfer request.

The school must honor your request to review your child's record within a reasonable time period, but in no case more than 45 workdays. If you believe the information in your child's record is inaccurate or misleading, you may request it to be reviewed for amendment. The school's refusal to amend the record entitles you to a hearing. If the school system agrees with you as a result of the hearing, the school must amend the record accordingly and notify you in writing. However, if the school continues to disagree with you after the hearing, you may place a statement of disagreement in the education record.

All questions regarding your child's records and cumulative file may be directed to our school Data Manager, Ms. Katie Finan ([kfinan@wcpss.net](mailto:kfinan@wcpss.net)).

### **TECHNOLOGY**

In addition to Promethean Panels, Chromebook Carts, and desktop computer clusters in the classrooms, Leesville Elementary School has a computer lab which is attached to our school Library. The lab will function on a mostly flexible schedule, and is facilitated by Ms. Saarah Cantu, our Media/Technology Instructional Assistant. Teachers may sign up for use of sections of the Library, including the computer lab, to work on any unit or course of study.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

At Leesville Elementary, there are several methods of transportation that can be used to get children to and from school each day: school bus, carpool, walking, or special transportation vehicle. After reading the following information, please direct all transportation related questions to our Assistant Principal, Jessica Bailey ([jlbaily@wcpss.net](mailto:jlbaily@wcpss.net)).

**BUS TRANSPORTATION:** The WCPSS Transportation department will make bus assignments for all students who are **eligible** to ride a Wake County School bus. Bus assignments are created based on the student's address on record with Wake County Schools. **Please note- children are not allowed to ride a bus other than the bus to which they are assigned.** This is a Wake County expectation and we will not be able to grant permission for any reason.

Families of students who are ineligible to ride will be able to request riding privileges through the transportation website starting on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Please note that this is a request and may/may not be granted depending on location, number of students riding the bus, and other factors determined by the WCPSS transportation department. Families requesting alternate stops (*after October 9<sup>th</sup>*) for purposes of joint custody, before/after school care, etc. should contact our Assistant Principal, Ms. Jessica Bailey, for assistance.

The Wake County School System does use a "bus tagging" system for student safety. All students riding the bus must have a "bus tag" attached to their book bag in order to ride both AM and PM bus routes. Tagging will be required for all students (Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade) for the entire school year. In the afternoon, kindergarten and first grade students will be released **ONLY** to a responsible adult or, with permission from the parent/guardian, to a responsible older sibling in grade 2 or above. If no one is present to receive the child, the student will be transported back to the school and parents will be called to come and pick



up the child. If your child loses their bus tag, please contact his/her teacher or Mrs. Bailey and a new tag will be given.

Wake County Schools expectation that your child be present at the bus stop 10 minutes before the scheduled arrival time for the bus every day. For safety reasons, we highly recommend that an attentive adult is present at the bus stop while students are waiting. WCPSS Transportation provides bus rider families with a free bus tracking system called "Here Comes the Bus." Parents of traditional calendar students can add students to the Mobil App anytime after August 28, 2023. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Mrs. Bailey.

Our first and priority concern with student transportation is safety. In order for students to be transported safely to and from school, behavior must be appropriate at all times. The following rules should be helpful as you discuss the importance of bus safety with your child:

1. **Students must listen to and follow the directions given by the driver. The driver is the adult on the bus and is the person in charge and responsible for student safety.**
2. **Students must keep their hands, feet and other objects to themselves at all times. Any disruption on the bus becomes a distraction to the driver, which creates an unsafe ride.**
3. **Students must use kind words and actions at all times. We want to minimize drama on the bus so that the driver can focus on driving, which creates a safe environment for all riders.**
4. **Eating or chewing gum on the bus is NOT permitted.**

If a student displays difficulty following the bus rules after being warned by the driver, a disciplinary referral may be sent to the school office, which may result in bus suspension. **Please remember that Parents/Guardians are NOT, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, permitted to board the school bus. Please also remember that riding the bus is a privilege, which must be respected throughout the entire school year.**

**CARPOOL:** Families of students riding carpool will need a carpool tag/number. Carpool tags are free of charge and families can register for a tag during Meet the Teacher events, Back to School Night, or after the first day of school in the main office. Carpool tags are to hang on the rearview mirror of the car during drop off and pick up. Please make sure tags are clearly visible to our staff on carpool duty, this allows the process to move quickly and efficiently. If your child is a carpool rider, you will need to make sure he/she memorizes the carpool number. In addition, please make sure you communicate this number to the teacher. Children will be dropped off in the carpool circle in the morning and called by number to the carpool circle at the front of the school at the end of the day.

If, for any reason, a carpool participant is feeling frustration with another carpool participant, please reach out to the School Administration. Carpool participants are not to demonstrate their frustration with another participant directly to that person as it creates a hostile and unsafe environment for the school community. Doing so may result in the involvement of law enforcement and even a trespass order forbidding further presence on the campus.

***Please note that Carpool works because there is a common and mutual respect among the participants. The morning arrival AND the afternoon dismissal line up from the Leesville Rd. Elementary School driveway along Pride Way and up Country Trail in the direction of Leesville Rd.*** Carpool participants will not be permitted to make a left turn into or out of the LES driveway.

**WALKING:** Some families live within walking distance of the school and take advantage of the location by getting a little bit of exercise. If your child will be a "walker", please notify the main office as parents will be required to document this decision. All children, who are considered "walkers," will be released from the side door of the school closest to the parking lot of the school alongside Country Trail. Staff will be on duty to release children to their parents/ guardians at the end of the day. To allow for the traffic around the school to settle down prior to the Walker dismissal and to help our families plan accordingly, Please be informed that walkers will not be called until 4:05 pm

**Parking in the Leesville Elementary, Leesville Middle and Leesville High School parking lots is NOT permitted during dismissal and parking along the alternate side of Country Trail is illegal and may result in a parking ticket/fine.**

**SPECIAL TRANSIT:** Students who require special transportation at Leesville Elementary may ride in a vehicle assigned through a WCPSS contract with a privately owned transportation company.

Students receiving transportation accommodations based on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 Plan may require special transportation as a related service. These services must be requested by an IEP/504 team and are assigned by the WCPSS Special Education Department. Please contact our Special Education Department Chair, Samantha Ayscue-Sharrow ([sayscuesharrow@wcpss.net](mailto:sayscuesharrow@wcpss.net)) or our Assistant Principal, Jessica Bailey if you have questions about this program.

Families of children who are in transitional housing may be eligible for special transportation through the McKinney-Vento program if their living situation is in transition. Please contact our school social worker, Ms. Peyton Wannall if you have questions about this program.

### **VISITS**

North Carolina Public Schools operate under a law that stipulates that schools maintain an instructional day of six and one-half hours. Please help us with the intent of this legislation by practicing the following:

1. *Check with the classroom teacher for the most appropriate times to visit.*
2. ***Younger children (children, who are not yet elementary school age) may not accompany you during classroom visitation.***
3. *Upon arrival at the school office, sign in through the Visitor system and pick up a visitor pass. Wear the visitor sticker at all times during visitation. Since campus security is important, we ask parents to please observe this practice. This record of your visit will also furnish data for annual state reports.*
4. *Please respect the teacher's need to instruct and supervise his/her class.*
5. *Teachers will try to make themselves available for conferences during their planning time and before and after school.*
6. *Parents are welcome to have lunch with their child; however, students will always be given priority for seating. Additionally, unless scheduled in advance, lunchtime is not an appropriate time for a parent-teacher conference.*
7. *Please keep in mind that visitors to a classroom during instructional time may be a distraction to young children. Every effort should be made to prevent/minimize interruptions to the instructional program.*
8. *Please observe the following courtesies: a) avoid talking with your child, the instructional assistant, or teacher while instruction is in progress, and b) respect the privacy of children's work and teacher's materials.*
9. *If you wish to talk to any member of the faculty or staff at Leesville Elementary, please ask the front office reception staff to assist you to make an appointment with the proper person.*
10. ***Taking pictures or filming videos within the classroom, which include children other than your own, is forbidden without the expressed written permission from those children's parents as well as pre-approval from the school administration.***

The administration, faculty, and staff at Leesville Elementary appreciate your interest in our school and your desire to visit your child's classroom.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

**Volunteer Signup Now Permitted Off-Site-** Wake County has modified their process to enable all volunteers to sign up from any location, instead of being required to sign up at a school or WCPSS facility.

***Step 1: They will go to either our LES or WCPSS website and look for the Volunteer Application Tab (unfortunately I cannot direct where as they removed it).***

***Step 2: They will then complete a short Google Doc. form.***

***Step 3: Within 48 hours they will receive an email from Castle Branch requesting their permission to do a background check. If they do not receive this email it means something was incomplete when they initially registered, and they will need to re-register as without receiving the Castle Branch email, a background check cannot be done.***

***Step 4: They will need to allow for a minimum of 21 days at the start of the school year as there will be thousands registering.***

***Step 5: They may check their clearance status with me on a weekly basis as the lists will be updated only once a week.***

If an applicant needs to know their clearance status prior to the weekly list, or if they are not on the list, they **must provide the last 4 digits of their social security #**, email address and complete name to Sweetie Kluge ([skluge@wcpss.net](mailto:skluge@wcpss.net)), who will then email the information to WCPSS Human Resources District Coordinator to thoroughly verify an applicant's status.

**\*Privacy and Confidentiality-** Applicants are STRONGLY DISCOURAGED from sending in their criminal records check as a way to demonstrate that have been "*cleared*". Applicants are not officially approved until their name appears on our WCPSS list of cleared volunteers.