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Dear Parents,

The faculty and staff of Plew Elementary extend a warm and hearty welcome to the home of the Panthers. We are looking forward to a successful year for each student. The consistent high performance of our students depends on a combined effort between home and school. This cooperative effort ensures the best possible learning atmosphere for our students. Over the years this teamwork has resulted in state-wide recognition for our school. You are a part of the “Best of the Best.”

This booklet is intended to answer questions frequently asked about school operations and procedures. We request that you familiarize your child with each relevant topic found in the handbook. Please keep it available as questions arise throughout the year.

We encourage you to contact us at any time you need assistance or wish to offer suggestions or feedback. We are expecting another outstanding year at Plew Elementary. With our combined effort, we will meet the academic needs of every child.

Sincerely,
Carolyn McAllister
Principal
MISSION STATEMENT
James E. Plew Elementary School

VISION STATEMENT: We inspire a lifelong passion for learning.

MISSION: We prepare all students to achieve excellence by providing the highest quality education to empower each to become lifelong learners who positively impact their families, communities, and the world.

PHILOSOPHY: Through the process of education, our children will become lifelong learners with an understanding and a respect for all cultures. Using critical thinking skills, they will become effective decision makers and problem solvers enabling them to adjust to an ever changing environment.

CORE VALUES:
Accountability: We accept responsibility for ensuring student learning, for pursuit of excellence, and for holding high standards for all.
Citizenship: We prepare all students to exercise the duties, rights, and privileges of being a citizen in a local community and global society.
Excellence: We pursue the highest academic, extracurricular, and personal/professional standards through continuous reflection and improvement.
Integrity: We embrace a culture in which individuals adhere to high moral standards and act honorably.
Personal Growth: We promote the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and experience to develop individuals with the aspiration and perseverance to be lifelong learners.
Respect: We show regard and consideration for all through a culture of dignity, diversity, and empathy.

We recite the Plew Honor code daily along with the Pledge of Allegiance “I promise to respect myself and others by being fair and honest in all that I do."

CULTURAL NORMS:
Meet individual needs of students
Provide strong parental support base
Create a positive school environment
Support a strong internal relationships among parents, students, teachers
Use SSS/Common Core based curriculum
Emphasize integration of technology into curriculum areas
Model critical thinking skills
This handbook provides important information for parents and students at Plew Elementary School. Topics are in “alphabetical order.” We hope it will provide answers to some of the questions you may have. If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please call the school office at 833-4100.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL TIME FOR STUDENTS
8:05 A.M. STUDENTS PERMITTED IN CLASSROOMS
8:20 A.M. SCHOOL BEGINS
2:50 P.M. DISMISSAL BEGINS

ATTENDANCE
Success during the elementary years – the time when basic skills and knowledge are being learned – is directly related to good attendance. We strongly encourage your child’s attendance unless he/she is ill or there is an emergency preventing him/her from coming to school.

Regular attendance provides students the opportunity to master required skills at each grade level. Many integral activities, including class discussions, group experiences, field trips, guest speakers, and group instruction, cannot be simulated or replicated with the written work. Therefore, with the goal of promoting student success, Okaloosa County Public Schools has adopted a uniform Attendance Policy. It is our intent to encourage honest, accurate, and consistent adherence to this policy by all students, parents, teachers, and administrators.

1. Attendance Policy
   To fully benefit from the instructional program, students are expected to attend school regularly, be on time for classes, and satisfy all course requirements. Poor attendance or excessive tardiness and/or frequent early check-outs may result in low or failing grades.

2. Reporting an Absence
   When a student accumulates a total of eighteen (18) excused or unexcused absences within a year, the student must have an excuse from the doctor or an official agency for each subsequent absence.

   A. After the ninth (9th), but before the fifteenth (15th) absence (excused or unexcused), the parent will be notified.

   B. After the eighteenth (18th) absence (excused or unexcused), a letter will be sent to the parents notifying them of the necessity for a doctor’s excuse or an excuse from an official agency. In addition, this letter will notify parents of the consequences of any additional absences.

   C. All absences after the eighteenth (18th) must be reviewed by a child study team, i.e. guidance committee, attendance committee etc., for recommendations.

   D. Students will have three (3) school days, including the day they return, to bring in written verification for an excused absence. The absence will be considered unexcused if the school does not receive verification for the absence within that time frame.

3. Absences Defined
   Excused absences are absences resulting from the following:

   A. Death in the family or any other bona fide family emergency.

   B. Illness or injury requiring medical or dental attention (physician statement required.)

   C. Appointments for medical, dental care or with official agencies. (physician statement or statement from official agency required);

   D. Religious holidays: Pupils are permitted to be absent in observation of established religious holidays, but they must be counted absent on all school records. Absences of a religious nature, preceded by prior parent notice, will not require written notification on the student’s return to school. Religious holidays considered excused absences include Good Friday, Yom Kippur, Passover, Rosh Hashanah, and Hanukkah. In addition to these recognized holidays, parents may request in writing, five days prior to the absence for their child to be excused for other religious holidays;
F. Medical and legal documentation of permanent and total disability, as defined by the U.S. Social Security Act. The student is eligible to make up any and all work and documentation must be on file at the school of record;

G. Head lice (pediculosis) or nits up to (3) school days per incident.

Unexcused absences are absences resulting from:
1. Unverified absence (absences other than those defined in 3)
2. Truancy
3. Suspension
4. Expulsion

MAKE UP WORK
For excused absences the student will be expected to make up the work missed during the time of absence. As a general rule all such make-up work must be completed within five (5) school days after the student returns to school. However, the teacher and/or principal may grant additional time for the make-up work if the individual situation warrants.

TARDINESS
Elementary: The parents or legal guardian will be notified when a student accumulates five (5) unexcused early checkouts and/or late arrivals within a semester. When the number of early checkouts and/or late arrivals reaches seven (7) within a semester, the parent will be requested in writing to have a conference with the principal or his/her designee.

It is extremely important for students to be in their classroom and ready to begin the school day at promptly 8:20 A.M. When students are late it causes a delay in beginning classroom instruction for the entire class.

Please see that your child is on time for school each and every day.
- A student who is not in their classroom when the bell rings at 8:20 A.M. is considered tardy.
- Parents must accompany their child into the office to sign them into school when they arrive after 8:20 A.M.
- Please do not drop your student off and allow them to come in unescorted. This is a serious safety issue. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.
- A perfect attendance criterion requires that a student not be tardy to school more than three times.

TRUANCY
If the school determines that a student subject to compulsory school attendance has had at least five (5) unexcused absences within a calendar month or ten (10) unexcused absences or absences for which the reason is unknown within a 90-calendar-day period or has had more than fifteen (15) unexcused absences in a 90-calendar-day period, the superintendent of schools may file a truancy petition.

F.S. 984.03, F.S. 984.151, F.S. 1003.26

After the fifth (5th) unexcused absence in a calendar month, the student’s primary teacher shall report to the school principal or his or her designee that the student may be exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance. If appropriate, the principal shall refer the case to the RtI committee. If the RtI study team finds a pattern of non-attendance is developing, whether the absences are excused or unexcused, a meeting with the parent must be scheduled to identify potential remedies. Also, the school should send out a School Truancy Letter to either inform the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the situation or to schedule a RtI committee meeting with the parent(s) or guardian(s).

A. After the ninth (9th) unexcused absence in a 90-calendar-day period, the student’s primary teacher shall report to the school principal or his or her designee that the student may be exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance. If appropriate, the principal shall refer the case to the RtI committee. If the committee finds that a pattern of nonattendance is developing, whether the absences are unexcused or not, a meeting must be scheduled to identify potential remedies. A letter should be mailed to student’s home or delivered by an attendance officer, informing the parents of the RtI committee meeting and their need to attend.
B. After the fifteenth (15th) unexcused absence in a 90-calendar-day period, if the RtI committee determines that remedial recommendations are not working, a truancy petition may be filed by the Superintendent or his/her designee, or the student may be referred to an appropriate agency.

C. If the parents or legal guardian refuses to attend the RtI committee meeting or participate in the remedial strategies because he or she believes they are unnecessary or inappropriate, the school shall make a recommendation to the Superintendent or his/her designee to file a Truancy Petition (after fifteen (15) unexcused absences).

E. If the parent or guardian refuses to participate in the remedial strategies because he or she believes they are unnecessary or inappropriate, the parent or guardian may appeal to the school board. A hearing officer shall make a recommendation for final action to the board. If the board determines the strategies are appropriate and the parent or guardian still refuses to participate or cooperate, the Superintendent may seek criminal prosecution for noncompliance with compulsory school attendance.

F. If the parents or legal guardians agree to the remedial interventions, but the meeting does not resolve the problem, the RtI committee shall implement other remedial interventions or recommend to the Superintendent or his/her designee to refer the family to an appropriate agency to be presented to the case staffing committee.

G. The truancy petition must contain the make, age, and address of the student; the name and address of the student’s parents or legal guardian; the school where the student is enrolled; the remedial efforts the school has made to get the student to attend school; the number of out-of-school contacts between the school system and the student’s parents or legal guardian; the number of days and dates of days the student has missed. Phone calls and/or emails should be documented.

H. Remedial efforts may include frequent communication between the teacher and family, changes in the learning environment, placement in different classes, mentoring, student counseling, tutoring, peer tutoring, evaluation for alternative education programs, attendance contracts, referral to other agencies, or other interventions. It should be noted that truancy alone does not warrant a referral to an alternative placement.

I. The RtI committee shall be diligent in conducting parent or legal guardian meetings and in facilitating services and only report the case to the Superintendent or his/her designee when all reasonable efforts to resolve the nonattendance problem are exhausted and the students reaches at least fifteen (15) unexcused absences within a 90-day-calendar period.

BIRTHDAYS/PARTIES

- Because many students have food allergies, please contact your child’s teacher in advance to clarify the types of food items that can be brought to the classroom. These items will be shared with the class during snack time.
- Neither birthday party foods nor other food items may be brought to the cafeteria to share with students.
- After clarification with the child’s teacher, parents who wish to may bring cupcakes, cookies, or individually wrapped items to the school office for their child’s class.
- Invitations to birthday parties or other private parties will only be distributed if they are being given to each student in the class. Please contact your child’s teacher to schedule the distribution of those invitations to include all children in the class.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND/OR TELEPHONE NUMBER

- It is extremely important for emergency and administrative reasons, that the school maintains an up to date address/telephone number for each student who attends Plew Elementary School.
- Please notify the school immediately if you have an address or telephone number change at any time during the school year. You may accomplish this by calling the school office, sending a note with your child, or emailing to berrym1@mail.okaloosa.k12.fl.us or harperj@mail.okaloosa.k12.fl.us.
CHECKING STUDENTS OUT
Instructional time is valuable for your child and the students in your child’s classroom. Following the steps below will facilitate less interruption during the instructional day.

- Only the parent or authorized person is allowed to check out your student.
- Identification will be required.
- If you find it necessary to check your student out early, please send a note to school with your child.
- Please help us with your child’s safety by letting us know if someone should not sign out your child.
- Because it is critical that classroom instruction and procedures not be interrupted, parents may not go to the classroom to pick up a child or to take them lunch money, supplies, etc. Office personnel will be glad to send for the child or deliver lunch money, etc.

CHILD CARE PROGRAM
We operate a childcare program before and after school hours. For further information, check our website or call 833-4299.

COMMUNICATION
Plew Elementary School is committed to keeping you informed on the school’s programs, activities, and most importantly your child’s academic progress. Home/School communication is facilitated through newsletters, the school marquee, phone calls, parent conferences, Facebook, and the school’s webpage.

- **Plew News**
  Plew’s newsletter will be posted on the school’s website and will be sent home electronically. The newsletter contains the most recent news regarding Plew’s students and upcoming events.

- **School Webpage**
  The webpage is updated frequently and contains information on upcoming events. Please check it out at: [www.okaloosa.k12.fl.us/plew](http://www.okaloosa.k12.fl.us/plew)

- **School Marquee**
  The marquee provides current information on school events.

- **Parent/Teacher Conferences**
  Parents may request conferences with the classroom teacher by phone or in writing at any time.

- **Phone Calls**
  Periodically, phone calls made through the school’s Blackboard Connect Ed. System are made to you to provide important information about upcoming events or important announcements. In addition, personal phone calls are made by administration and staff to share positives and concerns regarding your child. We welcome your calls to us regarding your child. It is imperative that the school has accurate phone numbers.

CUSTODY
By law, if parents are legally separated or divorced, each parent has equal rights to the custody of the child/children UNLESS a parent has a court order that indicates which parent has sole custody of the child/children. The school must have a copy of the court order on file.

DISMISSAL

- The school day ends at 2:50 P.M.
- **Bus Riders:** Walk to their bus when their “bus color “is called. There will be designated Plew employees making sure students arrive to their bus safely.
- **Car riders:** KG & 1st Gr. – Enter 27th St. on Pine Ave. 2nd – 5th Gr. – Enter Plew Panther Way onto Pine Ave.
- **Walkers:** ONLY these students will be authorized to cross traffic on 27th St. at the designated crosswalk. Car riders NOT USING THE RAMP may park in a marked parking space at Rosemont Baptist Church on Pine Ave. Students will be released to parent at the playground located at eth end of building 100/200.
- **Parents please cooperate with our dismissal schedule.**
**CHANGES IN TRANSPORTATION FROM SCHOOL**

In order to ensure the safety of your child we ask that the following guidelines be followed.

- If you need to change the way your child goes home, please send a note to school with your child, e-mail (berrym1@mail.okaloosa.k12.fl.us or harperj@mail.okaloosa.k12.fl.us) or send a fax (850-833-4103) to the school office by 1:00 pm. Phone calls will not be accepted for change of transportation as safety is our number one priority.
- It is most important that a parent or any person approved by the parent does not take a student from school or off the bus without having first signed the student out through the office.
- There will be absolutely no student check outs after 2:30 P.M.

**DRESS CODE FOR STUDENTS**

The wearing of garments appropriate for school is expected. Failure of any student to dress simply and appropriately will be brought to the attention of the principal. Extremes in dress, hairstyle, makeup, or jewelry are not in good taste and are discouraged. It is important to review the following guidelines so that clothing purchased for school is acceptable.

It is important for students to share the following guidelines with their parents so that clothing purchased for school is acceptable.

- Clothing should be neat and clean.
- Students will wear socks and lace-up shoes. Shoes must be worn at all times, no slip-ons or flip-flops. These are a safety hazard as well as a health issue with children playing outside at PE and recess.
- Tank tops, halter tops, tops with spaghetti straps, extremely short dresses or shorts are not acceptable.
- No hats are to be worn in the building.
- Students are not permitted to wear clothing advertising alcohol, tobacco products, or having inappropriate language or messages.
- Hairstyle must not interfere with vision.
- Shorts should be mid-thigh length.
- Clothing must cover the mid-section of the body.
- The wearing of “Skate” shoes is not permitted at school.

Students are required to follow the Okaloosa School District Dress Code as adopted by the Okaloosa County School Board. A copy of this policy is available on the district website [http://www.okaloosaschools.com](http://www.okaloosaschools.com)

**EMERGENCY DRILLS / PROCEDURES**

**SEVERE WEATHER AND LOCK DOWN PROCEDURES**

We will be conducting fire drills, severe weather drills as well as lock down drills at various times during the school year.

- If at any time we are involved in an intruder, severe weather lock down or fire drill we will not release any student for any reason, nor will we allow anyone to enter the building. Please be patient with us and know that we are required by law to practice these drills with our students to insure their safety during a real emergency should one arise.

**EXPECTATIONS**

Plew’s school discipline plan has been established to create the best possible safe learning environment for all students at Plew. **The focus of the plan is to encourage positive behaviors – not to punish students.** Students are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly manner. Students should be responsible, cooperative, and respectful. This will foster an environment that creates positive approaches to communicate expectations, teach problem-solving skills, and protect each child’s rights.
Students are expected to be responsible, safe, and respectful. Parents will be alerted of serious infractions via telephone calls from your child’s teacher or the school administrator. Parents, please help us to reinforce positive behavior at school as this directly impacts instruction and learning of all children.

At Plew we demonstrate the following:

**Character Counts**

- Respect – demonstrating regard for the dignity of self, others, and property;
- Honesty – to be truthful and straight forward;
- Integrity – adherence to sound moral and ethical principles;
- Responsibility – accepting accountability for one’s obligations, choices, and actions;
- Citizenship – exercising in a responsible manner the rights, privileges, and duties of a member of society; and
- Self-discipline – directing one to achieve a goal while acting in a manner that is acceptable to the standards of society; practicing self-control.

**CLASSROOM SCHOOL-WIDE EXPECTATIONS**

Expectations are posted in each class and will be orally reviewed frequently with students, after long weekends or breaks, and other times as deemed necessary by the teacher and/or administration. Please reinforce these expectations at home.

- Teaching students acceptable behavior is an integral part of the educational process. “Effective schools” research findings tell us that two of the most important characteristics of an effective school are:
  - The school reflects a safe and orderly climate, and
  - The school contributes to their students’ academic achievement by establishing, communicating, and enforcing fair and consistent discipline policies. The focus of discipline is to change behavior – not to punish students! All faculty members are encouraged to recognize and reward outstanding student behavior.

- Before any child reaches the steps below, the teacher will first:
  - Review school/classroom expectations, procedures, and rules;
  - Teach conflict resolution and problem-solving strategies;
  - Clearly communicate expectations and consequences for behavior to the student and the parents.

- This plan is not to take the place of the teacher’s classroom management of discipline.

- To encourage appropriate behavior in the classroom, teachers follow these guidelines:
  - Set clear rules that are posted, visible, and reviewed;
  - Establish immediate classroom consequences for infractions;
  - Praise and reinforce appropriate behaviors.

- If a student chooses to engage in inappropriate behaviors after the teacher has implemented incentives and interventions for sustaining or maintaining a positive learning environment the result may result in an office behavior referral, School Training Program, and/or the loss of participation in field trips.

**Classroom Management**

Each teacher will develop a classroom management plan reflective of the school-wide expectations that will be sent home and signed by parents at the beginning of the school year and posted in the classroom.

**Classroom Teacher/Administrative Guidelines**

- **Step 1** – Teacher conferences with student and discusses future consequences. Teacher begins interventions with student.
- **Step 2** – A parent contact (telephone or written if unable to reach them) to alert parent of an incident. Teacher continues with interventions in the classroom.
- **Step 3** – Parent conference with written record of actions and/or strategies
- **Step 4** – Student goes to the office with the referral form. Principal will call parent to discuss consequences for the infraction.
**Severe discipline infractions such as the following should result in automatic office referrals:**

1. Aggressive behavior that is a threat to the safety of others
2. Blatant disrespect
3. Stealing or property damage (incidents that cannot be handled by the teacher)
4. Incidents involving weapons, alcohol, tobacco, or drugs
5. Inappropriate language
6. Bullying or harassment

**Bullying**

Please note the attachment at the end of this document concerning Okaloosa County School Board policy on Bullying. Bullying has become a serious problem in our society and schools today. We take this very seriously and have a “0” tolerance policy for bullying. A copy of the bullying policy is available on the school district website or in the school office.

**FIELD TRIP/ CHAPERONES**

Grade level field trips, related to the curriculum being studied, are planned throughout the school year. A field trip letter with specific information regarding the field trip and a parent permission form will be sent home prior to the event. Every student must have a permission slip signed by the parent/guardian. Permission cannot be given over the telephone. All students are permitted to attend field trips, unless there is a history of behavioral concerns, or if there are major infractions to the student code of conduct immediately prior to the field trip. Parents will be notified if their child has not earned the privilege to attend.

**Chaperones**

If you are planning to assist your child’s teacher as a chaperone on a Field Trip during the year, you must attend a Volunteer Training prior to chaperoning. District policy requires that all volunteers attend a Volunteer Orientation and submit a Volunteer Affidavit each year.

- **Please do not wait until the day before or day of a field trip to turn in your volunteer affidavit.**
- **It is also imperative that when a field trip permission slip is sent home, it is returned with any money required for the trip by the date listed on the permission form. We must know ahead of time the students that are participating in this activity as we are required to notify the place we are going of our numbers.**
- **Payment for any cost is also due ahead of the trip so all deadlines must be followed. Your cooperation with this will be greatly appreciated.**
- **Preschool children or children not attending Plew Elementary will not be permitted to accompany classes on school related field trips. Please plan to make other arrangements for younger children.**

**GRADING POLICY**

Okaloosa County School District Elementary Grading Policy

Academic grades shall be based solely on scholastic proficiency in meeting the Florida State Standards as applied to the grade in which the student is enrolled. In no case shall a disciplinary penalty be exacted in terms of a diminished academic grade. The evaluation of behavior/conduct shall be recorded separately from all academic grades.

**Grades shall be based on the following calculation:**

- **Practice:** 15%
  - Graded homework, spelling tests, math facts checks, daily worksheets / assignments
- **Ongoing (formative):** 50%
  - Chapter tests (reading and math), incremental stages of writing, writing reflections/responses
- **Cumulative (summative):** 35%
  - Unit tests (reading) district cold reads, Big Idea math benchmark assessment, math mid-post assessment, multiple mini—benchmark assessments, full writing samples from a writing prompt, social studies/science end-of—quarter exams, high complexity performance tasks w/rubric.
Kindergarten
The Kindergarten Report Card is aligned to the Florida State Standards adopted by the State of Florida. The report card will be shared during the first parent/student conference and sent home at quarterly grading periods throughout the year. A mid-quarter progress report will be sent home to communicate progress of your child up to that point each quarter. A copy of the Parent Guide Kindergarten Report Card will be provided to you and is also available on the Plew and School District website.

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<th>Marking Code</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
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<td>70-89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Needs Improvement</td>
<td>60-69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
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Grades 1-5
The following grading scale is consistent/aligned with Florida’s mandated statewide high school grading policy (F.S. 232.2463).

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<tr>
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<th>Percent</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90 – 100</td>
<td>Outstanding Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80 – 89</td>
<td>Above Average Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 – 79</td>
<td>Average Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 – 69</td>
<td>Lower Acceptable Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 – 59</td>
<td>Failures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Report Cards: Students in grades K– 5 will receive a report card at the end of each nine-week period. Kindergarten students will receive a report card at the end of the first nine weeks. Please feel free to contact the school (833-4100) if you wish to schedule a conference with your child’s teacher.

Grades on Line
Parents may access their students’ grades at anytime through the Okaloosa County School District website by following these steps:
1. www.okaloosaschools.com
2. Skim down the bottom of the page and click on Grades on Line.
3. Click on the Parent Portal symbol.
4. On this new page enter your child’s 10-digit student identification number and password. The password is the last 4 digits of the student’s ID number. Your child’s 10-digit identification number is located on your child’s report card.

5. This will bring up your child’s grades.
6. If you would like to have a grade report notification sent to you, you may initiate this through the Parent Portal homepage. A print copy of this process is available through the school office.
7. If you need assistance in accessing this ID number, please contact the school or follow the instructions on the Parent Portal page.
GUIDANCE

Guidance and counseling services are available to promote and foster the social, emotional, and academic development of the students at Plew. The guidance counselor assists the faculty and administration by helping students develop a positive self-concept, responsibility, and self-discipline. The guidance counselor, who also acts as a resource person, obtains consultants from community agencies, and coordinates guidance-related programs within the school. Parents and students are encouraged to call upon the services of the guidance counselor as necessary.

HEAD LICE

When head lice are found on a child at school, the parents will be notified. The parents are required to pick the child up as soon as possible. The child’s hair must be treated with a shampoo specifically for head lice. This may be prescription or non-prescription. Upon returning to school, the parent needs to send the empty treatment bottle with the receipt of purchase. We also reserve the right to recheck any child to ensure the problem with head lice is resolved.

HEALTH

A child who was ill the night before, nauseated in the morning, or has a fever should not attend school. A current telephone number for parents or authorized person able to pick up child is a must. If the health information on your child changes during the year, please notify us so that we may make the necessary changes to our records. Please send written instructions if your child is to be excluded from any daily school activity.

ILLNESS OR INJURY

Plew has a Health Technician on staff each day. The Health Tech verifies immunization and physicals, screens vision and hearing, and is available to meet with parents who have children with special health needs. You will be notified if your child becomes ill or injured at school. When notified it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to come to the school immediately and pick up their sick child. First aid will be administered by the nurse for serious injury or illness only.

State law requires that any child absent with any communicable disease bring a doctor’s certificate before returning to school.

MEDICATION

In order for medicine to be administered at the school, parent permission and instructions must be obtained. The parent or legal guardian for the child shall file with the school principal’s designee a signed permission form (MIS 5183) authorizing the school to assist in the administration of medication. The medication prescribed for the student must come in the original container.

The school’s designee will record each dosage given on the Individual Medication Administration Log. If your child is on daily medication and you forget to give him/her the early morning dosage, you will need to come to the school and administer the medication and sign a new form giving us permission to give the next dosage at a time later than the time stated on his/her medication form. Parents’ phone calls are not acceptable to change the dosage or time of dosage. Changes in the dosage or the times medication is administered will require a physician’s written permission. The first dosage of any new medication shall not be administered during school hours due to the possibility of an allergic reaction.

Non-prescription medication must be brought to school in an original, unopened container and shall be labeled with the student’s name. A permission form for the administration of medication must be completed, signed, dated, and kept on file. Each administration will be recorded on the Individual Medication Administration Log whenever given. No medication, including cough drops, will be administered without permission.

NO MEDICATION CAN BE FURNISHED BY THE CLINIC.

Under no circumstances are children to have any kind of medication in their possession while at school or on the school bus. If however, it is necessary for students to keep medication with them at all times (for example: inhalers, enzymes, etc.) a physician’s written order must be obtained and kept with the Administration of Medication Permission Form for each student.
PROCEDURES FOR ADMINISTERING PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION
Okaloosa County School District personnel shall be authorized to assist students in the administration of oral prescription medication or over-the-counter medication only when the following conditions are met:
1. Written statement from parent/guardian that establishes:
   a. Permission is granted for principal or his designee to assist students in the administration of medication.
   b. Necessity for the medication during the school day, including when the student is away from school property on official business.
2. Prescribed medication is received and stored in ORIGINAL containers with proper labeling. Parents must bring the medication to school.
3. Over-the-counter medication also requires the permission form.
4. Completed and signed forms are given to the principal or designee by parents.

HEALTH SCREENINGS
The Okaloosa County Health Department will be providing health screenings to Kg, 1st and 3rd graders and to those students new to Okaloosa County schools. Florida Statute 402.32 of the School Health Act requires these screenings. Information on this screening will be sent home at a later date.

HOMEWORK
Students should receive homework that reviews and reinforces what has already been taught in school. The student should be capable of independently completing the work. Students should know what to do and how to do it.

MEDIA CENTER
The Plew Elementary School Media Center is designed to serve the needs of students, teachers, and the community. Its resources are available for research or loan to students and parents. The same general circulation policies apply to all borrowers. Books are circulated for a one-week period. The parents/guardians of a student must pay for any book that is lost or damaged. Computers are available for parent use during regular school hours and other designated times to access your child’s grades.

LOST AND FOUND
All articles found are to be placed in the Lost and Found area located in the cafeteria. **Students’ possessions and coats should be labeled to help in identification.** Items not claimed after a reasonable length of time will be given to a worthy charity.

LOST/DAMAGED TEXT BOOKS
Any textbook that is lost or damaged must be paid for by the student to whom the book is checked out. **FS 1006.28(3)(b)**
(b) Money collected for lost or damaged books; enforcement.--The school principal shall collect from each student or the student's parent the purchase price of any instructional material the student has lost, destroyed, or unnecessarily damaged and to report and transmit the money collected to the district school superintendent. The failure to collect such sum upon reasonable effort by the school principal may result in the suspension of the student from participation in extracurricular activities or satisfaction of the debt by the student through community service activities at the school site as determined by the school principal, pursuant to policies adopted by district school board rule.
MEAL PROGRAM
We ask parents to encourage their child to eat in the lunchroom and try a variety of foods. Our school maintains an excellent lunchroom under the supervision of trained personnel.

Breakfast is served between 8:00 A.M. and 8:15 A.M. Extra milk can be purchased for 25¢ per carton. Reduced and free lunches are provided for those who apply and qualify. Applications are available in the office or on www.okaloosaschools.com. Select “Departments” from the menu at the bottom, then select “Food Services” from the menu on the right and then click on

APPLY FREE OR REDUCED Meals OnLine

2015-2016 School Year Meal Prices
Student Breakfast $1.80
Student Lunch $2.55

2015-2016 Reduced Meal Prices
Student Breakfast $0.30
Student Lunch $0.40

Parents, it is important that you discuss buying extra food at lunch with your child. Some children are charging extra food without parental consent. Please let the cafeteria manager know if you do not want your child to charge any lunches or to purchase extra at lunch. This will help us and you to know where your child is spending his/her lunch money.

Please feel free to call our cafeteria manager at 833-4100 with questions or concerns you may have concerning our lunch system.

Breakfast/Lunch Payments
The lunchroom maintains an account for each student. You may put as much money as you would like in their account at any time. We encourage parents to pay for lunches with a check or on-line, however, cash is acceptable.

Student PIN Numbers
Each student has an individual PIN number for their breakfast/lunch account. This system links your student to their account balance and other important information such as food allergies or special instructions you have provided about your child. Your child will be given their PIN number on the first day of school or at the time of enrollment.

Pay on Line
Lunches and breakfast may be paid on line by following these directions:
1. Go to www.schoolpaymentsolutions.com
2. You will be able to set up your online account, manage your child account balance, see what your child is eating, and receive account balance alerts.
3. Sign up today!!

Pay School Meals ONLINE!
Breakfast/Lunch Charges

Florida Statute does not allow students to charge lunch. However, Okaloosa County School Board does allow some latitude for elementary students. The lunch charge must be paid back to the school on the next day.

Free/Reduced Meal Application Process

It is imperative that you fill out the appropriate paperwork for free/reduced lunch. You have 30 days in which your child will remain on the status he/she was on from the previous year. If your child qualified for the free/reduced program in the past, and you do not fill out and turn in the free/reduced form for the new school year, you will be charged the full price for lunch. Please turn that form in immediately so as to not incur unnecessary charges. If you do not qualify for the free/reduced program please insure that there is money in your child’s account at all times so that you do not accrue any charges.

Please note the following insert from the district Food Service Department explaining the process used in Okaloosa County.

The School District’s Food Service operations are governed by the USDA. The primary purpose of the program is to provide the students with a nutritious meal in a self-sufficient manner. In order to comply with these regulations it is imperative that each student pays their respective balance due in a timely manner.

Every effort will be made, via notification to the student, phone calls to the home and letters; to notify each of you when your child’s account is in arrears. However, there will be occasions when the notification process will not be successful. If any parent should have a question regarding their child’s account, we encourage them to contact the school’s cafeteria manager.

If the School District is unable to make arrangements for the balance in arrears to be cleared; then it reserves the right to address the situation in accordance with USDA regulations, including but not limited to limiting the choices offered to the student.

The prior school year eligibility (free/reduced) status is valid for 30 days in the new school year. If a new free/reduced application has not been approved prior to the expiration of the 30 day period, the student’s eligibility is automatically changed to full pay. Any charges incurred as a result of this change in benefits is the sole responsibility of the applicable student. At the beginning of each school year each student is provided with a free/reduced application. We encourage all of our families to complete the application in order to ensure that they receive all of the benefits for which they are entitled to. Approval of this application can provide the school with additional educational funds.

PERFECT ATTENDANCE

Being at school every day is very important for you to be successful and make good grades. Any student who attends school every day of the school year (180 days) and who has not been tardy more than three (3) or checked out early more than three (3) times will receive a Perfect Attendance recognition at the end of the year.

PERFORMING ARTS- MUSIC

Plew is fortunate to have a full time music teacher to provide fine art experiences for all our KG-5th grade students. Students participate in music class each week. The class provides students with experiences in music that are aligned with the State Standards for Music in the areas of movement, pitch, rhythm, knowledge of instruments, type of music, reading music, performance, etc. for enjoyment and personal growth and interest. Musical selections are introduced that are age appropriate as well as linked to core academics: reading, science, math, and social studies. Throughout the school year students have the opportunity to perform at grade level and school wide events on campus and in the community.
PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM
Physical education is required of all students. The Legislature is requiring 150 minutes of physical education per week be provided each child in elementary school. We are already in compliance with this as we have 45 minutes each day. With this new requirement, permanent exemption from P.E. cannot be made. If a child is unable to participate in the day’s activities, please send a note of explanation to the teacher at the beginning of the school day. The teacher will communicate with the P.E. teacher.

Exemption from Regular Physical Education Program
A student who is unable to participate in the more vigorous forms of activity in physical education will be assigned to modified activity until the attending physician notifies us that the student may return to regular physical education.

Excused in Physical Education
A student returning to school from absence due to severe illness or injury will be admitted as a convalescent and should stay in the modified program until the physician who attended the patient states that the student is ready to participate in the regular program. A note from the parent will excuse the child temporarily from physical education after absence due to brief illness.

SAFE-CHECK SERVICES
Your personal check is welcome with proper identification. Checks must include the name, address, and phone number(s) of the individual writing/signing the check and include what the check is for in the memo section. A minimum $25 service fee is added to returned checks. Returned checks are subject to electronic redeposit without further notice. Recovery fees are assessed and may be debited from your checking account.

SAFETY
Information is included in this section to promote safety for all of our students.

- Items such as knives, sharp pointed objects, slingshots, and any type of explosives are forbidden on school buses and school premises.
  Students who walk to school where sidewalks are not provided should walk on the left side of the street facing traffic, and not in the street.
- Students who ride a school bus are expected to board the bus at their assigned stops and in an orderly manner, be seated and remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop. Please see “SCHOOL BUS RULES” section of this handbook and go over the rules with your child. These rules are very important to ensure safety of all students on the buses.
- Students are not permitted to ride or bring skateboards to school or wear tennis shoes with rollers attached to bottom.

Safety in the Parking Lot
When transporting students by automobile, please exercise extreme caution. Never leave your car unattended if it is in a line of traffic or if your car is blocking traffic flow. We also request that you remain in your car. Please caution your child not to run across the parking lot. School personnel will assist the children to and from their cars. Vehicles are never to be left parked in the driveways.

SCHOOL BUS RULES
It is a privilege to ride the school bus to and from school. In order to provide safe transportation for every child each day it is imperative that students follow the rules at the bus stop and on the bus.

Each student is expected to follow these school bus rules:
1. Stand off the road when you are waiting for the bus.
2. Be on time; the bus will not wait for you if you are late.
3. You may only get on your bus and off your bus at your regular bus stop location. If you must cross the street, wait for the driver to signal before you do so. Also, walk in front of the bus so that you can see the driver. That way, he can also see you!
4. Sit in your assigned seat, if the driver has assigned one.
5. Remember that the bus driver is in charge. Students must obey the bus driver to remain safe.
6. Stay in your seat at all times.
7. Keep your arms and head inside the bus. Don’t throw anything from the bus.
8. School Rules apply to the school bus too!
9. No fighting, pushing, or tripping while boarding, riding, and leaving the bus.
10. You may not use abusive or profane language to other students or the bus driver.
11. You may not eat or drink on the bus.
12. It is important not to talk to the bus driver when the bus is moving.
13. No animals (dead or alive), glass containers, sharp objects, or baseball bats will be allowed on the bus without prior permission of the bus driver.

- Riding the bus is a privilege. If you are involved in serious or repeated misconduct 3 write up’s from the bus driver will result in limited bus suspension.
- A student being disruptive on the bus shall be dealt with in the following manner:
  - First Offense: The student’s parents will be contacted to inform them of the infraction.
  - Second Offense: Student’s parent will be contacted and the severity of the infraction will determine the consequences.

SCHOOL INSURANCE
School Accident insurance will be available for a nominal cost. Forms are available in the office and are sent home during the first week of school.

STANDARDIZED TESTS
Standardized tests have been used to measure student achievement and ability for many years. Over the past few years, these tests have become more important than ever. The state of Florida has defined what students should know and be able to do, grade by grade. Schools use standardized tests to measure how well students achieve these goals.

Why do students have to take all these tests?
Schools have always needed to know how students are doing. Whether it’s a three-question quiz or a major unit exam, teachers have used tests to measure how well students have learned what they were taught. Standardized tests are designed to give a common measure of how well students are doing.

Florida uses its own standardized tests as one way to make sure all students know and are able to do the things that will help them succeed. Tests are one important tool to help you and the school measure how well your child is learning. That’s why it’s important for you as a parent to know all you can about standardized testing.

What do I need to know about state tests?
What should students know and be able to do? Florida State standards are designed to spell out what is expected of students. These standards cover reading, math, writing and science. Content standards cover what the students are to learn in various subject areas, such as mathematics and science. Performance standards specify what levels of ability are expected (how good is good enough). These standards are usually set by the state board of education, although others may also play a part. If you want to see the standards for your child’s grade level, contact the school.

Florida uses standardized tests to measure whether students are meeting the standards. Our state tests are “high stakes” tests. The results of these tests are very important for individual students. The results play a role in promotion/retention decisions, and later on, graduation from high school.
Types of Tests

Standardized Test – A test that has the same set of questions, the same test directions and the same scoring no matter where the test is given. There are two kinds of standardized tests – criterion referenced and norm-referenced.

Criterion-referenced Test – A standard test that measures students against criteria that are spelled out in advance. A test on the multiplication tables would be one example. The criteria might be that the students must know how to multiply numbers through five. Ex. - FACT SSS and classroom tests.

Norm-Referenced Test – A standardized test that compares one student’s score to a group of other students used as the “norm.” These tests are given to a group of students first. Their scores become the standard, and other students’ scores are then measured against that standard. Tests like the SAT and the ACT are norm-referenced tests.

State laws change frequently. For up-to-date information on the testing program in Florida, visit our state department of education web site.

STUDENT WELFARE
We are pleased to have parents visit our school during the time students are present. However, arrangements for such visitations should be made at least one day in advance with the teacher or administration. All visitors must check in at the office to obtain a Visitor’s Pass.

- Student visitors and small children are not permitted to attend classes with a student.
- Students are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly and respectful manner. Parents will be asked to come to the school for a conference if their child has a persistent discipline problem.
- If a student is not to ride the bus home in the afternoon, he is required to have a signed note from parents or the parents must have faxed or emailed a letter to the school office before 1:00 P.M. The child will be dismissed the traditional way unless the school is notified as stated above.
- School busses are loaded to capacity. Please do not request that your child ride a bus that he or she is not regularly assigned except in emergency situations.
- Clothing that may be removed at school, such as coats, jackets, sweaters, and raincoats should be labeled with the child’s name.
- If parents come to eat lunch with their child please sit at the table provided for parents. Often times when parents eat at the table with their child’s class, it becomes disruptive as many of the children want to talk with the parent of the child eating lunch. We encourage you to come and have lunch with your child and would like to make this a special time for you and your student. However, visitors are not permitted to join a child for lunch until after Labor Day.
- Do not bring food items to share with children other than your own child.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS
The following numbers are provided for your convenience. Please feel free to call us if you have any questions.

- Main Office/Administration 833-4100
- FAX Number 833-4103

TEXTBOOKS
Textbooks are very expensive. We are fortunate that books are provided by the State of Florida and the school district at no cost to the student. These books must be accounted for both by the student and the school. For this reason, any textbook that is lost or damaged must be paid for by the student to whom the book is checked out. The replacement cost of text books is full price.

TOBACCO FREE CAMPUS
11-20 TOBACCO PRODUCTS ON SCHOOL BOARD PROPERTY
(A) The Board recognizes that the use of tobacco and tobacco products presents a health hazard which can have serious consequences both for the user and the nonuser and is, therefore, of concern to the District. This policy implements the requirements of the Florida Clean Indoor Air Act.
(B) For the purposes of this policy, “tobacco” is defined to include products that include tobacco and are intended or expected for human use or consumption, including but not limited to, any lighted or unlighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, bidi cigarette, clove cigarette, and any other smoking product, and spit tobacco, also known as smokeless, dip, chew and snuff, in any form.

(C) In order to ensure compliance with the Florida Clean Indoor Air Act, to set a positive example for students, and to promote good health for students and employees, the Board prohibits the smoking or use of tobacco by any District employee, student, or other person in any facilities or on any real or personal property owned by or under the control of the Okaloosa County School Board. No person shall be permitted to use tobacco products while at a school-sponsored event or on a school trip. Additionally, smoking is prohibited in all Okaloosa County School District elevators, school buses, and other vehicles transporting students and personnel.

(D) The use of all tobacco and tobacco products falls under the guidelines of this policy.

(E) The Superintendent shall cause signs to be posted in or on all District owned facilities that smoking or use of tobacco products is prohibited in the facility or on the property.

(F) A violation of this policy by any District student or employee shall constitute grounds for appropriate disciplinary action.

Statutory Authority: Sections 386.209, 1001.32, 1001.41 and 1001.42, Florida Statutes
Law Implemented: Section 386.201 - 386.219 and 1001.43, Florida Statutes
Adopted: 9/27/99
Revised: 3/26/12

TOYS, GAME BOYS, WALKMANS, CD PLAYERS, AND OTHER VALUABLES

- Students are reminded to leave all toys, electronic games, including Game Boys, CD players, and “walkmans” at home. All toys/games are to remain at home as well.

- We also suggest that valuable jewelry items stay at home. There is no way to secure these or other valuable items against loss or damage. If these items are brought to school, they will be collected by the teacher and sent to the office for your parent to pick up.

VISITORS
We encourage you to participate in your child’s education through participation in school day events, however; please assist us by adhering to the following guidelines:

- All visitors, including parents, must report in at the OFFICE ENTRANCE to “sign in.”

- A VISITOR’S PASS must be worn at all times during the time you visit our campus.

- Visitors may only go in areas of the building designated at their sign-in/Visitor’s Pass.

- ALL visitors must check out when leaving campus.

- Please honor the instructional day by refraining from “dropping by” a classroom to visit while you are here on other business. If you need to speak with a teacher, please schedule a time or leave a message for the teacher to call you with the front office staff.

- We welcome parents wishing to observe in their child’s classroom. Requests must be made at least 24 hours in advance and the Classroom Visit Request Form must be complete and returned to front office.
**VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

Plew loves volunteers! During the first month of school, an orientation is held to explain the program to prospective volunteers. Plan to attend this important orientation.

- ALL volunteers are required to complete a Volunteer Affidavit each year.
- Any parent/guardian planning to accompany a class on a Field Trip during the school year must attend a Volunteer Orientation. District policy requires that all volunteers participate in the orientation program each year. Please make plans to attend the scheduled orientation.
- We ask that you keep in mind young children may not accompany a parent volunteer to the classroom or on field trips. This rule is a district policy by which we must abide.
- Please feel free to contact the Volunteer Coordinator at 833-4100 if you have questions concerning our Volunteer Program. Consider being a part of this worthwhile program at Plew.

**WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

**Updates to Wireless Communications Devices**

(A) In accordance with the provisions of Florida law, a student may be in possession of wireless communications devices while he or she is on school property or in attendance at a school function. For the purposes of this policy, wireless communications devices include beepers, electronic telephone pagers, cellular telephones, electronic tablets, e-readers or other similar wireless communications devices.

(B) Any student possessing a wireless communications device while he or she is on school property or in attendance at a school function must insure that the device must not be visible and must be turned off during school hours except as expressly authorized by this policy.

(C) The acceptable use of wireless communications devices by students will be determined by the school principal. If a student obtains prior approval from the school principal or his/her designee, the requirement that wireless communication devices must be powered completely off will not apply when the student is using the wireless communications devices for an educational or instructional purpose with the teacher’s permission and supervision.

(D) Students are prohibited from using wireless communications devices to capture, record or transmit the words (i.e. audio) and/or images (i.e., pictures/video) of any student, staff member or other person in the school or while attending a school related activity during the school day, without express prior notice and explicit consent from the school principal or his/her designee for the capture, recording or transmission of such words or images. Using a wireless communications device to take or transmit audio and/or pictures/video of an individual without his/her consent is considered an invasion of privacy and is not permitted.

(E) Students are prohibited from using wireless communications devices in any way that might reasonably create in the mind of another person an impression of being threatened, humiliated, harassed, embarrassed or intimidated.

(F) Students are prohibited from using wireless communications devices to capture and/or transmit test information or any other information in a manner constituting fraud, theft, cheating, or academic dishonesty. Likewise, students are prohibited from using wireless communications devices to receive such information.
(G) No expectation of confidentiality will exist in the use of wireless communications devices on school district property or in attendance at school function.

(H) Any violation of the conditions and requirements of this policy will result in confiscation of the wireless communications device by school officials, and may result in other disciplinary actions depending upon severity of the violation and whether or not the violation is of a repeated nature by the same student. The confiscated wireless communications device will be returned to the student at the end of the regular school day after a first violation and in the event of subsequent violations by the same student, the wireless communications device will be returned to the student’s parents/guardian only.

(I) Any student who chooses to bring a wireless communications device to school shall do so at his or her own risk. Neither the School Board nor school officials shall be responsible for the loss, damage or theft of wireless communications devices brought onto school property or to school functions.

Statutory Authority: Section 1001.41, Florida Statutes  Laws Implemented: Section 1006.07, Florida Statutes  Adopted: August 9, 2004  Revised: June 13, 2011

WITHDRAWAL of STUDENTS
If it becomes necessary to withdraw a student from school, the parent is requested to notify the school via a note or a telephone call. Please notify the office at least one (1) week before the student’s withdrawal. Your child’s complete record will be prepared and in most case you will be able to hand carry the student’s records. The school will do transfer of records to another school in the county.

ZONING WAIVERS
Zoning waivers are approved annually. These are approved based on class size and availability.
ANNUAL PUBLIC NOTIFICATION OF STUDENT AND FAMILY RIGHTS

Dear Parent:

The revised Family Rights and Privacy Act became a Federal law in November of 1974. The intent of this law is to protect the accuracy and privacy of student education records. These records include files, documents, and other materials containing information directly related to your child. Without your prior consent, only you and authorized individuals having legitimate educational interest will have access to your child’s education records.

The Principal has the responsibility for all education records. The Student Education Record of each student shall be kept at the current school of attendance and the custodian of such record shall be the Principal or designee of that school. The school principal or designee shall be responsible for the privacy and security of all student or adult student education record maintained in the school. Copies of psychological examinations and evaluations are secured by the Principal in the Student Education Record and are also secured by the Superintendent at 120 Lowery Place, S.E., Fort Walton Beach, Florida. Records of disciplinary actions are secured in the Principal’s office and in the Superintendent’s office at 120 Lowery Place, S.E., Fort Walton Beach, Florida.

The Principal of each school and the Superintendent shall be responsible to protect and secure from scrutiny all student education records without written, signed permission of the eligible/adult student or parent, except by school officials, such as, teachers, counselors, assistant principals, principals or County staff personnel who are directly providing for the education of the student, teacher aides, school nurses, and clerical personnel who are designees of the Principal or Superintendent.

Annual notification to parents and eligible students shall be in the language of the parent or eligible student unless it is unfeasible to do so. If necessary, an interpreter will be provided by the school. Parent, student, and eligible/adult student right of access, right of waiver of access, right to challenge and hearing and right of privacy shall not be denied. Requests to inspect and review records shall be complied within reasonable time, but in no case more than thirty (30) days after it has been made. This office will periodically review these records for the purpose of correcting or deleting any inaccurate, misleading, or inappropriate information. You may have an appointment to inspect and review your child’s records.

The appointment may be made in person at Plew Elementary, 220 Pine Ave., Niceville, FL 32578 or by telephoning the school at (850)833-4100.

Upon review of the records, if you have any reason to believe that any information contained therein is inaccurate, misleading, or inappropriate, you have the right to request an amendment to that information. If there is agreement, the necessary steps to expunge or correct the information contained in the record will be taken. If agreement is not reached, an informal hearing will be scheduled. The hearing will provide you with the opportunity to present your views and reasons for the challenge. You may bring with you any individual who is knowledgeable of the factual information to support your contention relative to the record. Following the hearing, should there be a failure to reach an agreement, you have the right to appeal the decision to the appropriate school district official.

School board policy implementing the Family Rights and Privacy Act is set forth in Chapter XVI of the policy of the School board of Okaloosa County. A copy of this policy may be obtained from the office of the Deputy Superintendent at 120 Lowery Place, S.E., Fort Walton Beach, Florida. You may review school board policies at the principal’s office.

The rights pertaining to inspect, review, and challenge described in the School Board policy are transferred to your child upon the attainment of his/her eighteenth birthday or admission to an institution of postsecondary education.

Personally identifiable information which is disclosed to an institution, agency, or organization may be used by its officers, employees, and agents, but only for the purpose for which the disclosure was made. All copies of the disclosure shall be destroyed when no longer required by the persons to whom the information was appropriately disclosed.

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A record shall be maintained of all access or disclosure of education records. Reasonable time, but in no case more than fifteen (15) days shall be given the parent, guardian, or eligible student to inform the school or School District in writing what personally identifiable information is not to be designated directory information.

Category B Records shall include a written agreement of correction, deletions, or expunctions as a result of meetings or hearings to amend education records. The written agreement shall be signed by the parent, guardian, or eligible student and by the principal of the school after the completion of a formal hearing.

Copies of education records are available to the parent or eligible student and are reproduced at a cost of 15 cents per page. However, two copies of a transcript to a postsecondary institution or scholarship granting agency shall be provided for the student without charge.

Directory information which includes name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, dates of attendance, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height (if a member of an athletic team), degrees and awards received, name of parents, name of school currently attending, current grade level, photograph of the student, and most recent previous education agency or institution attended may be released unless you make a request in writing to the contrary. This information will be released only in accordance with the guidelines established by the Okaloosa County Public Schools.

When a student transfers to another school district, you will be asked to hand carry a sealed copy of his/her records. If records are not hand carried, we will furnish a copy of your student’s records to the new school upon their request.

The Okaloosa School District actively seeks to locate exceptional students and maintains information on those students screened and identified as exceptional. The term “exceptional student” includes the following: the mentally retarded, the blind and partially sighted, the physically handicapped, the emotionally handicapped, and those with specific learning disabilities, and the gifted.

Information gathered may include the student’s social, emotional, physical, psychological, academic, and communication behaviors and abilities.

Information is collected through screening programs, check lists, teacher observations, standardized tests, and from such individuals as parents, teachers, psychologists, audiologists, social workers, physicians, other professional personnel, and the child himself.

Information is used to assist in the development of appropriate educational programs for exceptional students and for reports to state and federal agencies.

Students are screened periodically for vision, hearing, speech, and academic achievement as the initial step in the process of identifying those students with suspected exceptionalities. If your child is selected for further testing, you will be notified of the content of the evaluation and the procedural safeguards available to you.

When education records of exceptional students are no longer needed for educational services, but may be needed by the parent, or student in the future to certify for Social Security or other benefits, the parent or eligible/adult student shall have the right to take possession of such records; however, the principal or Superintendent shall keep a duplicate copy of Category B records for five (5) years after the graduation date of the student and a duplicate copy off Category A records permanently; provided that, if requested by a parent or an eligible/adult student, parts of the records in Category B will be destroyed prior to the five (5) year retention provisions.

If you have any further questions, please contact our Guidance Counselor.

Sincerely,
Carolyn McAllister, Principal
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OKALOOSA COUNTY
ADHERES TO POLICY WHICH PROHIBITS DISCRIMINATION & HARASSMENT IN THE EDUCATION OR WORK ENVIRONMENT

ADULTS – (6-28) EQUITY POLICY:
Harassment concerning an individual’s race, color, sex, age, religious beliefs, national or ethnic origin, marital status, or disability is a form of misconduct which undermines the integrity of the employment relationship. Sexual harassment by an employee or volunteer or person with whom the district contracts for services toward another individual while under the jurisdiction of the district is strictly prohibited.

STUDENTS – (4-34) EQUITY POLICY:
It is the policy of the School Board of Okaloosa County to offer students the opportunity to participate in appropriate programs, services and activities without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, parenthood, pregnancy, disability, sexual orientation, or social and family background.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES:
If an adult needs to report an alleged violation of these policies, an informal Equity Complaint should be made to a principal or department director. If the situation cannot be resolved informally, a Formal Equity Grievance (MIS 5139, Rev. 10/00), in compliance with School Board Policy 6-29, should be directed to the Superintendent’s designee listed below. Employees have the option of filing a grievance through appropriate Master Contract procedures in lieu of the Formal Equity Grievance. Students should promptly report complaints pertaining to the Okaloosa School District’s Equity Policy to a teacher, the principal, or to the principal’s administrative designee in charge of the school’s disciplinary office. The District’s Equity Coordinator will be immediately notified by the school’s administrative staff when a complaint is filed.

SUPERINTENDENT’S DESIGNEES:
Arden E. Farley or Steve Chatman Equity (Equal Opportunity) 689-7108
Melody Sommer 504 – Rehabilitation Act – 1973 833-3164
Andy Johnson Athletics/Safe Schools Representative 689-7198

THIS POLICY IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FLORIDA EDUCATIONAL EQUITY ACT OF 1973 AND OTHER APPLICABLE LAW AND RULES

4-43 PROHIBITION OF BULLYING AND HARASSMENT
The Okaloosa County School District is committed to encouraging and assisting each student in developing his/her individual talents. In order to accomplish these purposes, it is necessary that the school climate be free of disruptions that interfere with teaching and learning activities. All students and employees are entitled to a safe, secure, and equitable environment free from harassment and bullying of any kind. Bullying or harassment will not be tolerated and shall be just cause for disciplinary action. This policy shall be interpreted and applied consistently with all applicable State and Federal laws and the Board’s collective bargaining agreements. Conduct that constitutes bullying or harassment, as defined herein or in applicable State and Federal laws, is prohibited.

To achieve this goal, it is essential that a curriculum be in place at each school to provide a foundation of prevention to build a culture of health, wellness, respect, safety and excellence. The standards of this policy constitute a specific, focused, coordinated, integrated, culturally sensitive system of supports for all students, staff, families, and community agencies that will improve relations within each school. It is designed to ensure that every school has staff that have been trained and are supported in their school’s efforts to provide awareness, intervention training, and/or instructional strategies on prevention, including violence prevention, to each staff, parent, and student in the district and to direct follow up when incidents are reported and/or occur.
(A) Definitions.

(1) Bullying means systemically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by a student or adult, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual’s school performance or participation; and may involve but is not limited to:

(a) Unwanted teasing
(b) Social exclusion
(c) Threat
(d) Intimidation
(e) Stalking
(f) Physical violence
(g) Theft
(h) Sexual, religious, or racial harassment
(i) Public or private humiliation
(j) Destruction of property
(k) Cyberstalking
(l) Cyberbullying

(2) Harassment means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data, technology or computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:

(a) Places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property;
(b) Has the effect of substantially interfering with or limiting a student’s educational performance, opportunities, or benefits;
(c) Has the effect of substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

(3) Cyberstalking, as defined in Florida Statute 784.048(d), means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at or about a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.

(4) Cyberbullying is defined as the willful and repeated harassment and intimidation of a person through the use of digital technologies, or electronic communications, including, but not limited to, emails, facsimilies, blogs, social websites (e.g. My Space, Facebook), chat rooms, instant messaging, texting (written, picture, video) or other internet communications or through the use or creation of webpage.

(a) Places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property;
(b) Has the effect of substantially interfering with or limiting a student’s educational performance, opportunities, or benefits;
(c) Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

(5) Bullying and harassment also encompasses:

(a) Retaliation against a student or school employee by another student or school employee for asserting or alleging an act of bullying or harassment. Reporting an act of bullying or harassment that is not made in good faith is considered retaliation.
The School District prohibits the bullying of any student or school employee by:

1. Incitement or coercion;
2. Accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the district school system;
3. Acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying or harassment.

Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, and discrimination (hereinafter referred to as bullying, as defined in Section A, for the purpose of this policy) also encompass, but are not limited to, unwanted harm towards a student or employee in regard to their real or perceived: sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability (physical, mental, or educational), marital status, socio-economic background, ancestry, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, linguistic preference, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or social/family background or being viewed as different in its education programs or admissions to education programs and therefore prohibits bullying of any student or employee by any board member, district employee, consultant, contractor, agent, visitor, volunteer, student, or other person in the school or outside the school at school-sponsored events, on school buses, and at training facilities or training programs sponsored by the district.

Expectations. The Okaloosa County School District expects students and employees to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment. The School District prohibits the bullying of any student or school employee:

5. During any educational program or activity conducted by Okaloosa County School District;
6. During any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity or on an Okaloosa County school bus;
7. Through the use of any electronic device or data while on school grounds or on an Okaloosa County school bus, computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the Okaloosa County School District (“within the scope of the Okaloosa County School District” means, regardless of ownership, any computer, computer system, or computer network that is physically located on school property or at a school-related or school sponsored program or activity.). The physical location or time of access of a computer-related incident cannot be raised as a defense in any disciplinary action initiated under this section;
8. Through the use of data or computer software that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the Okaloosa County School District or one of its schools. This paragraph does not require a school to staff or monitor any non-school related activity, function, or program;
9. Through threats using the above to be carried out on school grounds. This includes threats made outside of school hours, which are intended to be carried out during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity, or on an Okaloosa County school bus.
Disciplinary sanctions (consequences) and due processes for a person who commits an act of bullying under this policy.

Concluding whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all of the facts and surrounding circumstances, followed by the determination of the disciplinary sanctions appropriate to the perpetrator’s position within the district.

1. Consequences and appropriate interventions for students who commit acts of bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct, School Board Policy 4-32 and this policy.

2. Consequences and appropriate interventions for a school/district employee found to have committed an act of bullying will be instituted in accordance with district policies, procedures, and collective bargaining agreements. (School Board Policy Chapter 6-27 and Chapter 6-28). Additionally, egregious acts of bullying by certified educators may result in a sanction against an educator’s state issued certificate (Rule 6B-1.006 F.A.C.).

3. Consequences and appropriate intervention for a visitor or volunteer, found to have committed an act of bullying, shall be determined by the school administrator after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, and may include reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.

4. These same actions will apply to persons, whether they are students, school employees, or visitors/volunteers/independent contractors, who are found to have made wrongful and intentional accusations of another as a means of bullying.

Consequences for a student or employee who is found to have wrongfully and intentionally accused another of an act of bullying or harassment.

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a student found to have wrongfully and intentionally accused another as a means of bullying or harassment range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee found to have wrongfully and intentionally accused another as a means of bullying or harassment may be disciplined in accordance with district policies, procedures, and collective bargaining agreements (School Board Policy Chapter 6-29).

Procedure for reporting an act of bullying or harassment.

1. At each school, the principal or the principal’s designee is responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations of this policy. All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the principal or the principal’s designee. All other members of the school community, including students, parents/legal guardians, volunteers, and visitors are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy anonymously or in-person to the principal or principal’s designee.

2. The principal of each school in the district shall establish and prominently publicize to students, staff, volunteers, and parents/legal guardians, how a report of bullying or harassment may be filed either in-person or anonymously and how this report will be acted upon. The victim of bullying or harassment, anyone who witnessed the bullying or harassment, and anyone who has credible information that an act of bullying or harassment has taken place may file a report of bullying or harassment. A school employee, school volunteer, student, parent/legal guardian or other persons who promptly reports in good faith an act of bullying or harassment to the appropriate school official and who makes this report in compliance with the procedure set
forth in the district policy is immune from a cause of action for damages arising out of the
reporting itself or any failure to remedy the reported incident. Submission of a good faith
complaint or report of bullying or harassment will not affect the complainant or reporter’s
future employment, grade, learning or working environment, or work assignments.

(3) Written or oral reporting of an act of bullying or harassment shall be considered an official
means of reporting such act(s). Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary
action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

(F) Procedure for the prompt investigation of a report of bullying or harassment and the persons
responsible for the investigation. The investigation of a reported act of bullying or harassment is
deemed to be a school-related activity and begins with a report of such an act.
Computers without web-filtering software or computers with web-filtering software that is disabled
shall be used when complaints of cyberbullying are investigated.
At each school in the district, the procedures for investigating bullying and/or harassment include:

(1) The principal or designee selects an individual, employed by the school, trained in
investigative procedures to initiate the investigation. This individual may not be the
accused perpetrator (harasser or bully) or victim.

(2) Documented interviews of the victim, alleged perpetrator, and witnesses are conducted privately and
separately. Each individual (victim, alleged perpetrator, and witnesses) will be interviewed separately
and at no time will the alleged perpetrator and victim be interviewed together.

(3) The investigator shall collect and evaluate the facts including, but not limited to:

(a) Description of incident(s) including nature of the behavior; context in which the
alleged incident(s) occurred, etc.;

(b) How often the conduct occurred;

(c) Whether there were past incidents or past continuing patterns of behavior;

(d) The relationship between the parties involved;

(e) The characteristics of parties involved (i.e, grade, age, etc.);

(f) The identity and number of individuals who participated in bullying or harassing
behavior;

(g) Where the alleged incident(s) occurred;

(h) Whether the conduct adversely affected the student’s education or educational
environment;
(i) Whether the alleged victim felt or perceived an imbalance of power as a result of the reported
incident; and
(j) The date, time, and method in which the parents/legal guardians of all parties involved were
contacted.

(4) Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a
determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances and includes:
(a) Recommended remedial steps necessary to stop the bullying and/or harassing behavior; and
(b) A written final report to the principal.
The maximum of 10 school days shall be the limit for the initial filing of incidents and completion of the investigative procedural steps. The highest level of confidentiality possible will be upheld regarding the submission of a complaint or a report of bullying and/or harassment, and the investigative procedures that follow.

The principal or designee will provide a report on results of investigation with recommendations to make a determination of whether an act of bullying or harassment is within the scope of the school district.

(a) If it is within the scope of the school district, move to procedures for investigating bullying and/or harassment.

(b) If it is outside the scope of the school district, and determined to be a criminal act, refer to appropriate law enforcement.

(c) If it is outside the scope of the school district, and determined not to be a criminal act, inform parents/legal guardians of all students involved.

Procedure for providing immediate notification to the parents/legal guardians.

1. The principal or designee shall promptly report via telephone, personal conference, and/or in writing, the occurrence of any incident of bullying or harassment as defined by policy to the parent or legal guardian of all students involved on the same day that this investigation of the incident(s) has been initiated. Notification must be consistent with the student privacy rights under the applicable provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

2. If the bullying incident results in the perpetrator being charged with a crime, the principal, or designee, shall by telephone or in writing by first class mail, inform parents/legal guardian of the victim(s) involved in the bullying incident about the Unsafe School Choice Option (No Child Left Behind, Title IX, Part E, Subpart 2, Section 9532) that states “...a student who becomes a victim of a violent criminal offense, as determined by state law, while in or on the ground of a public elementary school or secondary school that the student attends, be allowed to attend a safe public elementary school or secondary school within the local educational agency, including a public charter school.”

3. Once the investigation has been completed and it has been determined that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, all appropriate local law enforcement agencies will be notified by telephone and/or in writing.

Referral for victims, and perpetrators of bullying or harassment for counseling.

1. Each school will have a process in place by which the teacher or parent/legal guardian may request informal consultation with school staff (e.g., school counselor, school psychologist, etc.) to determine the severity of concern and appropriate steps to address the concern (the involved students’ parents or legal guardian may be included).

2. Each school will have a process in place to provide referrals, as needed, for victims and/or perpetrators to receive access to counseling services either through the school base or outside agencies.

Incident reporting requirements.

1. The procedure for including incidents of bullying in the school’s report of safety and discipline data is required under Florida Statute 1006.09. The report must include each incident of bullying and the resulting consequences, including discipline, interventions and referrals. In a separate section, the report must include each reported incident of bullying or harassment that does not meet the criteria of a prohibited act under this policy, with recommendations regarding said incident.
(2) The school district will utilize Florida’s School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting (SESIR) Statewide Report on School Safety and Discipline Data, which includes bullying/harassment in its codes.

(3) Discipline, referral data, investigations, interventions, and actions of discipline shall be recorded on the specified data system, as with other infractions from the Code of Student Conduct.

(J) Procedure for providing instruction to students, parents/legal guardians, teachers, school administrators, counseling staff, and school volunteers on identifying, preventing, and responding to bullying or harassment.

(1) The district ensures that schools sustain healthy, positive, and safe learning environments of all students. It is important to change the social climate of the school and the social norms with regards to bullying. This requires the efforts of everyone in the school environment – teachers, administrators, counselors, school nurses, other non-teaching staff (such as bus drivers, custodians, cafeteria workers, and/or school librarians), parents/legal guardians, and students.

(2) Students, parents/legal guardians, teachers, school administrators, counseling staff, and school volunteers shall be given instruction at a minimum on an annual basis on the district’s policy and regulations against bullying and harassment. The instruction shall include evidence-based methods of preventing bullying and harassment, as well as how to effectively identify and respond to bullying in schools.

(3) An educational component addressing bullying prevention has been added to the existing Safe and Drug Free Schools curricula.

(K) Procedure for regularly reporting to a victim’s parents/legal guardians the actions taken to protect the victim.

The principal or designee shall by telephone and/or in writing report the occurrence of any incident of bullying as defined by this policy to the parent or legal guardian of all students involved on the same day an investigation of the incident has been initiated. According to the level of infraction, parents/legal guardians will be notified by telephone and/or writing of actions being taken to protect the child; the frequency of notification will depend on the seriousness of the bullying or harassment incident. Notification must be consistent with the student privacy rights under the applicable provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Acts of 1974 (FERPA).

(L) Procedure for publicizing the policy which must include its publication in the Code of Student Conduct required under Florida Statute 1006.07(2) and in all employee handbooks.

At the beginning of each school year, the Superintendent or designee shall, in writing inform school staff, parents/legal guardians, or other persons responsible for the welfare of a student of the district’s student safety and violence prevention policy.

The Okaloosa County School District shall provide notice to students and staff of this policy through appropriate references in the Code of Student Conduct and employee handbooks, and/or through other reasonable means. The Superintendent shall also make all contractors contracting with the district aware of this policy.

Each school principal shall develop an annual process for discussing the school district policy on bullying and harassment with students in a student assembly or other reasonable format. Reminders of the policy and bullying prevention messages such as posters and signs will be displayed around each school and on the district school buses.

Statutory Authority: Section 1004.41 and Section 1006.147, Florida Statutes
Laws Implemented: Section 1006.147, Florida Statutes
Adopted: November, 2008
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<th>Event</th>
<th>Day(s)</th>
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<td>Pre-School Planning</td>
<td>Monday-Friday</td>
<td>August 10-14, 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Day of School for Students</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>August 17, 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Labor Day Holiday</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>September 7, 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>End: 1st Grading Period</td>
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<td>September 7, 2015</td>
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<td>Teacher Work Day/Student Holiday</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>Veterans Day Holiday</td>
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<td>Teacher Work Day/Student Holiday</td>
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<td>Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday</td>
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<td>Last Day for Teachers</td>
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