

2019 - 2020 Student/Parent Handbook



Blossomland Learning Center

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Berrien Regional Education Service Agency

Our Vision: "Today's Purpose, Tomorrow's Promise"
Our Mission: "We support our school community with respect and compassion through quality programs, leadership and dedicated partnerships."

Superintendent . . . Kevin Ivers
Asst. Superintendent . . . Eric Hoppstock

(Revised July 2017)

Blossomland Learning Center Positive Behavior Supports



Safety



Teamwork



Attitude



Respect



= SUCCESS!

INTRODUCTION

Blossomland Learning Center opened in 1978 and provides a positive learning environment for a current enrollment of approximately 230 students. All students are residents of local school districts within the Berrien Regional Education Service Agency (Berrien RESA), and meet the eligibility requirements established by the State of Michigan.

Blossomland Learning Center provides special education programs and related services for cognitive impaired students. Placement is made through the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process, when it is determined by the IEP team that the student's educational needs and related service requirements cannot be adequately provided for within the residential school district.

The school facility includes classroom areas for Pre-Primary, Primary, Intermediate and Teen-Adults. Classrooms are located within three separate areas (A, B & D Pods) of the schools, with each area containing space for large-group activities, kitchen amenities, restrooms, conference rooms, offices and other programmatic areas to address the specific needs of that particular age group of students. Other building features include a multi-sensory room, therapy areas, offices, a central kitchen, storage areas, a 30' by 60' swimming pool and a gymnasium with adjoining shower and dressing rooms. Blossomland Learning Center is located at 711 St. Joseph Avenue, Berrien Springs, MI 49103.

Two off-site programs are located in St. Joseph and Niles. These programs are for student's 18-26 years of age who participate in daily vocational training via Community-Based Instruction (CBI). Students must be recommended for these programs through the IEP process.

An outdoor learning center designed for students with impairments is located at the rear of the building. The outdoor learning center includes specialized and adaptive playground equipment, athletic fields, bike path, picnic and rest areas.

Financial support is provided through the Berrien RESA millage and state and federal dollars.

All teachers have approval in Special Education with appropriate endorsements and meet the Highly Qualified requirements of IDEA and "No Child Left Behind." Staff has been chosen based on their training, interest, skills and ability in working with the cognitive impaired and are committed to the following Mission Statement:

"The mission of Blossomland Learning Center is to provide positive learning environments and experiences that advance the well-being, academic success, and lifelong achievement of our students."

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ACCIDENTS OR EMERGENCY ILLNESS

When a medical emergency arises, every effort will be made to contact parents, guardians, or an emergency contact. The school nurse/support staff will provide first aid and determine the need for emergency medical treatment based on the nature of the event and the student's response. In the event that a call to 911 is placed, an authorized representative from the school will accompany the child and remain with him/her until parents/guardians arrive. Our emergency information form, filled out at the time of enrollment, serves as consent for your child to be transported by ambulance to a local medical facility of your choosing to receive emergency care.

ARMED FORCES RECRUITING

Blossomland Learning Center must provide to official armed forces recruiters at least the same access to the high school campus and student directory information as is provided to other entities offering educational or employment opportunities to those students. "Armed forces" means the armed forces of the United States and their reserve components and United States Coast Guard.

If a student or the parent or legal guardian of a student submits a signed, written request to the Board that indicates that the student or the parent or legal guardian does not want the student's directory information to be accessible to official recruiting representatives then the school officials of the school shall not allow that access to the student's directory information. The Board shall ensure that students and parents and guardians are notified of the provisions of the opportunity to deny release of Directory information. Public notice shall be given regarding right to refuse disclosure to any or all "directory information" including in the armed forces of the United States and the service academies of the armed forces of the United States.

Annually the Board will notify male students age eighteen (18) or older that they are required to register for the selective service.

NOTIFICATION OF ASBESTOS 2019-2020

Asbestos of AHERA Regulation: Asbestos Hazardous Emergency Response Act (AHERA) of 1987

In October of 1987, the U.S. Congress passed the Asbestos Hazardous Emergency Response Act (AHERA) of 1987. In March of 1988, the Administration approved BDN of Portage, Michigan to help the district meet the new federal regulations.

The Berrien Regional Education Service Agency School District has been and is in compliance with all AHERA regulations.

The Berrien RESA School Districts have been inspected and materials tested for asbestos by BDN Consultants in accordance with the new AHERA regulations. In accordance with the above a management plan has been developed and has been sent to the State of Michigan for approval. The management plan for all buildings can be reviewed at the Administration Building, Berrien RESA or individual building management plans can be reviewed in the office of that building.

The Berrien RESA School Districts will begin conducting response actions and abatement actions during the next year. In accordance with AHERA regulations, schools will be conducting six months periodic inspections. The three-year re-inspection of the total school system will be completed in 2022.

ATTENDANCE POLICY / TARDINESS

State law requires attendance in school. Section 380.1561 of the Revised School Code reads, "...the child's parent, guardian, or other person in this state having control and charge of the child shall send that child to a public school during the entire school year from the age of 6 to the child's sixteenth birthday. Except as otherwise provided in this section, for a child who turned age 11 on or after December 1, 2009 or a child who was age 11 before that date and enters grade 6 in 2009 or later, the child's parent, guardian, or other person in this state having control and charge of the child shall send the child to a public school during the entire school year from the age of 6 to the child's eighteenth birthday." Regular school attendance and promptness are marks of a good student and a good citizen. In school, as in other facets of life, regular attendance and punctuality are necessary for success. Erratic attendance, non-attendance or tardiness hampers student progress and holds a student back from making the most of their ability. Accordingly, Blossomland Learning Center's general attendance policy is as follows:

1. Adhere to Michigan law, which mandates that a parent/caregiver send their student to school for an appropriate education.
2. All student absences **must** be excused. The Board considers the following factors to be reasonable excuses for time missed at a district program:
 - a. Required court attendance
 - b. Professional appointments (doctor, dentist, etc.)
 - c. Death in the immediate family
 - d. Observation/celebration of a bona fide religious holiday
 - e. Such other good causes as may be acceptable to the Superintendent
3. Parent/caregiver must notify the school when their child is absent. The Board reserves the right to require written excuses, to verify excuses and to investigate the cause of prolonged absences/excessive tardiness.

4. Unexcused absences/excessive tardiness will be followed up administratively and may be reported to the Truancy Officer. Be aware that being tardy 10 times is equal to one absence.

When your child will be absent, notify the school in writing or by phone at **(269) 473-2600**. Provide the student's **name, reason for absence and expected date of return**. When no excuse is provided, the absence will be unexcused and the student will be considered truant. Our school nurse is available to help with health related questions. Our school social worker is available to help with personal or family difficulties. For students sixteen and over, parents are still responsible and must notify the school if a child is absent. For a student eighteen or over, the school will expect a parent, doctor, or responsible adult to corroborate a student's absence.

BULLYING AND OTHER AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy applies to all activities on school property and to all school sponsored activities whether on or off school property.

Bullying or other aggressive behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, including Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers, is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes written, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, including hazing, gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student, which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety or personal degradation. Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior. This policy applies to all activities in the District, including activities on school property, in a school vehicle, and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business. Misconduct occurring outside of school may also be disciplined if it interferes with the school environment.

Bullying is defined as any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e. internet, telephone or cell phone, or wireless hand held device) that, without regard to its subject matter or motivating animosity, is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly by substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more students; adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school district's educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress; having

an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student's physical or mental health; and/or causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school. Bullying can be physical verbal, psychological, or a combination of all three. Some examples of bullying are: Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling; taking and/or damaging personal belongings or extorting money, blocking or impeding student movement, unwelcome physical contact. Verbal – taunting, malicious teasing, insulting, name calling, making threats.

Psychological – spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation. This may occur in a number of different ways, including but not limited to notes, emails, social media postings, and graffiti.

Bullying and other aggressive behavior through any means, including electronically transmitted methods (e.g., internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), computer or wireless hand held device), may be subject to District disciplinary procedures. Such behavior is considered bullying or other aggressive behavior whether it takes place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle if it is considered to have a negative impact on the school environment.

Any student that believes s/he has been/or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to the teacher, the Principal or Assistant Principal, or may report it directly to Eric Hopstock, Asst. Superintendent at 269-471-7725.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Anytime you make a change of your address, telephone number, or place of work be sure to call the office at Blossomland Learning Center immediately in order to make the necessary changes in our records. This basic information is extremely important for transportation and emergency purposes.

CHILD FIND

Berrien RESA is not a resident district but is a service provider for the resident school districts within Berrien County. Therefore, Child Find would come into play related to the possible change in services or eligibility on a student's IEP. This could arise from staff and/or a parent request. All requests for an evaluation must be in writing. When any person in the district receives a written request, they must submit the request to building administration who will then date stamp the request with the date of receipt. When a request is received, a building level data review meeting will be held within 10 school days to outline the offer of FAPE in regards to the request.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Blossomland is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for the students and employees. Communicable diseases must be reported to the school nurse, who will file the required report with the Berrien County Health Department. Students who have been diagnosed with, or are suspected of having a communicable disease may be excluded from school. The following chart gives examples of some common communicable diseases and return/recovery times. In the event of communicable diseases that are more serious in nature, Board Policy will be followed regarding school attendance/closings. Please inform the nurse if your child has been diagnosed, or is suspected to have any of the conditions listed.

Our nursing staff provides health checks on students that appear to be ill through symptoms and/or behavior. Students who are found to have a fever of 100.4° or greater, vomiting, diarrhea (2x or more), or those too sick to have a meaningful school interaction will be excluded for a minimum of 24 hours. Students found to have colds, sores, or any contagious disease will be removed from the classroom and parents/caregivers will be advised to come and remove them from school. Exclusion and limited contact improves the safety of student and staff. It is important to have a plan of action available to provide alternative care during the school day if the need should arise. **Please do not send your child to school if he/she has a fever, cold, bad cough, frequent draining from nose, eyes, or ears, flu, stomach/intestinal upset, or any contagious disease, or any illness that would prevent them from being able to fully engage in educational activities during the school day.** Upon the discretion of the school nurse, a doctor's permit may be required before a child may return to school.

Disease	May Return	Approximate Recovery Time
Cold Sores	No exclusion, if drainage can be contained	Varies – 4 – 10 days depending on severity
Cold Symptoms	Reduction of cough & runny nose, no fever	Depending on condition; 1-6 days
Chicken Pox	No new eruptions All pox dry & crusted	Depending on condition or fever, may have old scabs
Diarrhea, non-specific, a) Roto virus and most salmonella b) all other types	a) Excluded when diarrhea cannot be contained or presence of fever b) Permission from Health Dept.	Depends on severity

Fifth Disease (erythema infectiosum)	No exclusion, if no fever	Varies – from 4 days to several weeks
Hand-Foot-Mouth Disease	No exclusion, if lesions are not draining	Generally several weeks
Hepatitis	Doctor note	Several weeks or longer
Impetigo	24 hours of antibiotic treatment, no fever	Varies
Measles (Rubella)	Doctor note	4-8 days
Measles (Rubeola)	Doctor note 7 day hard – red	Minimum of 4 days after appearance of rash
Mononucleosis	Doctor note	Depending on condition
Mumps	Doctor note	When swelling and fever are gone
a) Pediculosis* b) Scabies (Head & Body Lice)	a) 24 hrs. after treatment, no live lice, nurses clearance b) After adequate treatment completed	As soon as adequate treatment is completed
Pertussis (whooping cough)	Doctor note – usually about 5 days after treatment	6-10 weeks average; can last weeks to months.
Pink Eye	Nurse’s clearance. 24 hrs of treatment or symptoms resolved.	Depends on type and severity.
Ringworm, Body	Nurse’s clearance, typically 24 hours after topical anti-fungal treatment has begun.	Varies
Ringworm, Scalp	Requires Doctor note	Varies
Strep infection 1. Scarlet fever 2. Scarletina 3. Strep throat	Doctor note (typically 24 hrs. after treatment has begun and no fever present)	Depends on severity

Tuberculosis	Doctor note	Varies – check with Doctor
Upper respiratory infection	When fever free for 24 hours. May vary.	Usually 4-14 days - varies

*Head lice are a common problem all schools face especially in the spring and fall. For the protection of all the children, students must be completely free of all lice before returning to school. Parent/guardian will bring the student to school the day following treatment for the nurse to inspect the scalp prior to returning to class.

COMMUNITY-BASED INSTRUCTION / FIELD TRIPS

The Board recognizes that community-based instruction and/or field trips, when used for teaching and learning as an integral part of the curriculum, are educationally sound and important ingredients of the instructional program of the school. The Board does not endorse, support or assume liability in any way for any staff member, volunteer, or parent of the District who takes students on trips not approved in accordance with the District's Administrative Guidelines.

CURRICULUM

The overall goals of the curriculum are to help each child become an adequately adjusted person, to assist in reaching his/her maximum potential, and as much as possible prepare each student for transition to his/her local community after leaving Blossomland Learning Center. Blossomland Learning Center utilizes the Michigan's Extended Grade Level Content Expectations or EGLCE's, to align the academic curriculum, as well as Michigan's Essential Elements and the AEUN. Major goals and objectives are determined for each child and are reviewed annually at the students IEPC. Parents are encouraged to assist the staff in developing the most appropriate individual goals for their child.

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

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

1. Post infraction and on the day of the incident, the staff member involved must complete the Behavior Incident Report and submit it to the Principal.
2. The Principal will conduct an investigation to identify the circumstances of the incident.
3. The Principal will review all previous discipline history, special education eligibility, student needs and support.

4. The Principal will communicate with all parties involved as well as with their parent and or guardian regarding the incident.
5. The Principal will determine if Restorative Justice is appropriate. If implemented, all parties as well as their guardians will be informed by the Principal and a meeting will be scheduled by the building Secretary to review behaviors and alternatives to consider.
6. If Restorative Justice is not an option, the Principal will determine the appropriate consequence for the incident. The principal will communicate that to the student and the student's parents. (Please refer to Restorative Justice section on page 25.)
7. The Principal will complete the Administrative Consideration and the Administrative Decision sections of the Behavior Incident Report and submit it to the building Secretary. The Principal will also communicate with staff in regards to the consequence.
8. The building Secretary will enter it into Powerschool and print the appropriate letter to mail home describing the incident and the consequence given.
9. If a student has or will exceed 10 days of suspension, whether on any single disciplinary infraction or cumulatively for the year, this constitutes a change in placement and a Manifestation Determination Review will be scheduled.

DISCIPLINE

The Board requires each student of this District adheres to the Code of Conduct promulgated by the administration and to submit to such disciplinary measures as are appropriately assigned for infraction of those rules. Such rules shall require that students:

- A. conform to reasonable standards of socially-acceptable behavior;
- B. respect the person and property of others;
- C. preserve the degree of order necessary to the educational program in which they are engaged;
- D. respect the rights of others;
- E. obey constituted authority and respond to those who hold that authority.

Managing student behavior has always been part of operating a classroom, and dealing with disruptive students is part of that process. Blossomland Learning Center classrooms have a behavior management component which deals with day-to-day student behaviors. On occasion, a cognitively impaired student may, through his/her inability to reason or understand the consequences of his/her actions, engage in behaviors that may present a danger to him/her or others. The Berrien Regional Education Service Agency has developed procedures for managing these

student behaviors to assist staff in crisis situations. These procedures are based upon the Cornell Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (CTCI) program and require extensive training and ongoing practice by all staff.

The major thrust of the Cornell Therapeutic Crisis Intervention program is to diffuse volatile situations through a series of steps short of physical intervention.

Physical restraint is always the last response in handling crisis situations. When physical restraint is required and necessary to prevent physical injury to other students, staff, or self, a team approach is used to minimize the potential of injury or harm. Parents are notified of all such incidents, which are documented and recorded. This record of unusual behavior incidents may become the basis for developing a specific, "Behavioral Intervention Plan" for the student.

The Behavioral Intervention Plan will concentrate on developing strategies and alternatives to promote positive change in the student's attitudes and behavior with the overall goal of eliminating future crisis situations and will be established with parent input, participation and approval prior to the plans implementation.

A copy of all Incident Reports, the Functional Behavior Analysis and Behavioral Intervention Plan will be provided to the parents/guardians/caregivers. The Procedures manual for managing student behavior is available at the Berrien Regional Education Service Agency and Blossomland Learning Center offices. Corporal punishment is prohibited in all behavioral management programs and educational settings operated by the Berrien Regional Education Service Agency.

The following mitigating factors will be considered as part of any disciplinary proceedings:

- pupil's age;
- disciplinary history;
- whether the pupil has a disability;
- the seriousness of the violation;
- whether the violation threatened the safety of any pupil or staff member;
- whether Restorative Practices will be used to address the violation; and
- whether a lesser intervention would properly address the behavior

DISCIPLINE LEVEL SYSTEM

Level & Definition	Level 1 Misbehaviors	Corrective/ Consequences/ Responses that staff may impose	Techniques to reduce behaviors / encourage behaviors
<p>Level 1 (mild) Infractions: Minor misbehaviors that can be adequately corrected at the time and in the setting in which they occur.</p> <p>**Does not require formal documentation; however record the behavior on your class behavior chart.</p> <p>**Any staff observing this behavior can and should correct it in the setting.</p>	<p><u>Level 1 Misbehaviors:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not completing class work • Talking back/disrespectful • Running in school • Tattling • Horseplay • Failure to obey staff/employer • Hiding in classroom • Sleeping in class • Inappropriate/profane gestures • Profanity or vulgarity towards staff or peers • Name calling • Inappropriate drawings/writings • Off task • Teasing (isolated) • Disrespectful gestures (ie: eye rolling) • Crawling/rolling on floor • Pencil tapping • Throwing objects (no safety concern) • Cheating • Cussing (isolated) • Disruptive noise making • Excessive talking/noises • Spitting • Leaving area in room • Not keeping hands/feet to self • Spreading rumors/gossip • Inappropriate sexual behavior/harassment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologizing • Gentle verbal reprimand • Use distractors • Proximity correction • Keep a record of behavior (if repeated) • Contact parents • Use planned ignoring, when appropriate • Consequences owed through teacher behavior system • Student does not earn preferred activity • Re-assign to alternate location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model and reinforce correct behavior • Teach/re-teach expectations in particular setting • Teach peers to ignore attention-seeking behavior • Actively engage the student • Utilize LSI • Remember 3:1 ratio of positive to negative interactions (ie: make 3 positive comments for every corrective comment: greet students, specific praise, smile) • Group rewards • Reflect on your relationship with the student, how you can make a connection.

****NOTE:** These guidelines were developed as guidance to the protocol when dealing with behavior. Severity of the disability will require modifications to the above plan. Baseline behavior should be taken into consideration as well.

DISCIPLINE LEVEL SYSTEM

Level & Definition	Level 2 Misbehaviors	Corrective/Consequences/Responses that staff may impose	Techniques to reduce behaviors / encourage behaviors
<p><u>Level 2 (moderate) Infractions:</u> Does not require immediate administrative involvement</p> <p>**Does require staff documentation that witnessed incident, using Behavior Incident Report to be sent to the office the same day.</p> <p>**Caseload Teacher to contact parent. Reporting staff must share information regarding incident with Caseload Teacher.</p> <p>**FBA may be required at this time based on potential for repeat behavior.</p>	<p><u>Level 2 Misbehaviors:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated Level 1 infractions <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical assault • Stealing • Damaging property • Bullying • Inappropriate sexual behavior • Inappropriate sexual/racial comments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologizing • Call or send letter to parents • Continue Level 1 consequences that have not yet been implemented • Additional Behavior Incident Report Form, administration will return copy to caseload teacher informing him/her of administrative response to situation • For students with Individual Behavior Plans, follow their plan • Administration and special education teachers to collaborate for consequences • Community service • Restoring emotional or material loss • Counseling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue positive reinforcement strategies from Level 1 • Consider behavior improvement plan/behavior contract with student • Consider collaboration with support staff to determine if additional strategies can be implemented

****NOTE:** These guidelines were developed as guidance to the protocol when dealing with behavior. Severity of the disability will require modifications to the above plan.

DISCIPLINE LEVEL SYSTEM

Level & Definition	Level 3 Misbehaviors	Corrective/Consequences/ Responses that staff may impose	Techniques to reduce behaviors / encourage behaviors
<p><u>Level 3 (Severe) Infractions:</u> Serious safety violations that require immediate administrative involvement. Student brought to office with complete Behavior Incident Report Form.</p> <p>**Caseload Teacher contact parent/guardian. Reporting to review incident with Caseload Teacher.</p> <p>**Written documentation required, using Behavior Incident Report Form.</p>	<p><u>Level 2 Misbehaviors:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of weapons or dangerous instruments • Inappropriate sexual behavior (severe) • Threat of harm to self or others • Physical aggression • Bullying (severe) • Leaving building/campus (out of restricted area) • Fighting involving immediate injury • Illegal drugs/alcohol/ Possession/Use • Student is MAJOR disruption in the learning environment (ie: another adult intervention and redirection prolonged/ severe disruption continues) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologizing • Complete Behavior Incident Report Form and escort student to the office • Call administration/ office if student refuses to go, or if immediate assistance is needed in maintaining safety of students and staff • Call Cornell 1 or 2 when safety of self or others is imminent • Behavior Team meeting may be necessary • Administration will implement aforementioned consequences or others, including but not limited to suspension. • Suspension of student will result in a Manifestation Determination meeting. • Copies of Behavior Incident Report will be distributed to appropriate staff after incident. • Require restitution (ie: restoring; repairing damage done) • Police report for purposeful assault to staff/student. • Community service • Restoring emotional or material loss • Counseling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of behavior support plan may be necessary. • On-going consultation with support staff and administration. • Mental health services may also be considered.

****NOTE:** These guidelines were developed as guidance to the protocol when dealing with behavior. Severity of the disability will require modifications to the above plan.

DRUG, INHALANTS, TOBACCO, AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

A student shall not sell, possess, use, purchase, deliver or be under the influence of any drug, inhalant, alcohol, tobacco or other controlled substance defined in the Controlled Substances Act of 1971, being MCL 335.301 et seq. and as defined in other Michigan or Federal Statutes, while on school grounds, or off school grounds at a school activity, function or event. Depending upon the age of the student and seriousness of the offense, any or all of the following options will be administered: Parent contact, parent conference, police contact, referral to health department, recommendation to attend health department counseling sessions, involve family with Berrien Substance Abuse Agency, referrals to other agencies as appropriate and possible reconsideration of program placement and discipline up to and including expulsion.

ENROLLMENT

All students entering Blossomland Learning Center must meet the requirements of Michigan Special Education Rules. An Individualized Education Planning Committee (IEPC) meeting is held to determine eligibility, students' needs, appropriate program, and placement alternatives. Committee members include the parents, Blossomland Learning Center administrator, local district representative, MET representative, teacher(s), and ancillary staff/therapist/parent representatives as needed. If Blossomland is determined to be the appropriate placement alternative, the parents/guardians complete a tour, then complete a series of building enrollment forms including basic student data, transportation form, application for school lunch, etc. In addition, the school will need the student's health appraisal, copy of a birth certificate, immunization records, various permissions, verification of residency, and a release of records request. The office staff is available to assist parents/guardians through this enrollment process.

EXIT OUTCOMES/LEARNER GOALS

Physical: Demonstrate skills necessary to develop and maintain optimal health and physical wellbeing.

Cognitive: Demonstrate functional skills in the areas of problem solving, perception, and academics.

Social/emotional: Demonstrate socially acceptable behavior to allow participation in a variety of settings, which will promote positive self-esteem.

Daily Living Skills: Demonstrate skills, which promote optimal independence in domestic and personal care.

Vocational: Have experience in a variety of work environments and demonstrate skills and behaviors conducive to acquiring and maintaining meaningful work.

Community: Will participate in a variety of community services and utilize its resources.

Communication: Express and share personal needs, ideas and interests, which will promote self-advocacy and interpersonal relationships.

Leisure/recreation: Able to recognize leisure time and engage in age-appropriate activities in group, individual and community settings.

All learner outcomes are monitored on a continuing basis and are adjusted to meet individual student's needs. Parents are informed of their child's progress through regularly scheduled parent conferences, teacher contacts, annual reviews, and specific conferences established by parent or teacher request.

EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR

Extended School year (ESY) must be considered for every student with a disability at each IEP meeting. ESY services must be provided if the IEP team determines that such services are necessary for the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). During the IEP, the team must answer the following question:

Is there one or more annual goals where significant concerns exist regarding skill maintenance during a break in service?

If no, ESY is not needed for a FAPE. If yes, further discussion must be held for each goal area of concern. The determination of ESY must be based on data. ESY services can be provided in a variety of ways. Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for ESY services are not identical to LRE requirements for the normal school year. It is only provided for those annual goals identified as an area of concern which are determined to require ESY services. New annual goals are not developed for ESY services. Excessive absences can affect data results and can impact the recommendation of ESY services for a student.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that requires the school district, with certain exceptions, to obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's educational records. Each year the District will provide public notice to students and their parents of its intent to make available, upon request, certain information known as "directory information".

The Board designates as students "directory information" () a student's name; () address; () telephone number; () date and place of birth; () major field of study; () participation of officially-recognized activities and sports; () height and weight, if a member of an athletic team; () dates of attendance; () date of graduation; () awards received; () honor rolls; () scholarships; () telephone numbers only for inclusion in school or PTO directories; () school-assigned email addresses only to register for online educational service providers, including mobile apps, as utilized by the

student for educational purposes. [This option should be selected by districts that elected the applicable option in Policy 7540.03.] The Board will make the above information available upon a legitimate request unless a parent, guardian, or adult student has opted-out of provision of this information in some or all circumstances by filling out, signing and returning the Opt-Out Form (8330 F17) within 30 days from the start of the current school year that s/he will not permit distribution of any or all such information. Directory information will not be provided to any organization for any profit-making purposes.

Two federal laws require school districts that receive assistance under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three Directory Information categories – names, addresses, and telephone listings – unless parents have notified the district that they do not want their child’s information disclosed without their prior written consent. If you do not want the district to disclose Directory Information about your child without your prior written consent, you must complete the “Opt-Out Form” located at the back of this handbook.

FIRE / TORNADO / LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES

Michigan law dictates that public schools conduct emergency drills during the school year and the summer school/extended school year. Accordingly fire, tornado, and lockdown drills are held periodically throughout the year so that our staff and students are prepared in case of an emergency. Every precaution is taken to ensure the safety of the students.

Should a tornado be sighted, the school is notified by the Office of Emergency Preparedness from the Berrien County Sheriff’s Department and proper action is taken for the safety of the students and personnel. Students will not be released from school until we are notified that it is safe. It is important that we keep our lines clear to receive incoming messages. **PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL FOR INFORMATION DURING A TORNADO THREAT.**

In the event an emergency evacuation should occur, the Blossomland Learning Center nurse station prepares a one (1) day supply of medications that are maintained in an emergency kit. These kits will be kept up-to-date with any changes throughout the school year.

FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

Berrien RESA Food Service Department is dedicated to providing healthy meals to all students according to the federal guidelines. Parents are expected to prepay for their student meals through their food service account and this “bank account” is decreased when meals and food are purchased. Parents can put limits or stipulations on their student’s account if they wish. This is a “prepay” system and therefore

students/parents should not expect to charge meals and then pay later. The food service staff believes that all students need to be nourished in order to do well in school and daily life, and therefore no complete meals will be denied to any student if they owe money. Reminder notes, phone calls, and low balance emails will be made frequently to remind parents that their child owes money. Once a full pay student reaches \$10 in charges, and reduced student \$3.00 without payment, the administration office will be notified and asked to help collect this debt. Per federal guidelines all debt must be paid by the end of the school year and can't be carried over to the next year. Positive student balances will be carried over to the next year for all students and adults.

Breakfast and lunch are available for all children. The meal is planned to meet the requirements of nutrition and quality established by the Federal Government. Milk is included with all meals. If you choose to pack a lunch for your child, milk can be purchased. Children who are on free or reduced lunch and choose to bring a sack lunch from home **will not** receive free milk. The milk is to be paid for that day. Prices are listed separately each year due to price fluctuation.

In the event of a 2-hour delay, breakfast will not be served. Lunch will be served at the regularly scheduled time.

Any account left unpaid beyond five (5) days and without an approved payment plan arrangement, are considered delinquent and the student will be required to bring his/her own meals until the account is paid in full.

Please send lunch money in a sealed envelope marked with your child's name and the amount of money enclosed. Younger children may have their money given to the bus driver to deliver to staff. Payments can also be submitted online at www.sendmoneytoschool.com. If you have any questions about payment/cost or the menu contact Christine Anderson, 269-473-2600 ext. 1214.

Application for school's Free and Reduced-Priced Meal program are distributed to all students. If a student does not receive one and you believe s/he is eligible, contact the school office. Should your financial situation change at any time, you can fill out a new form. Applications can also be completed and submitted online at www.lunchapp.com.

****If your child is allergic to certain foods or other substances, please have your physician complete the "Request for Special Dietary Needs Accommodation" form in the enrollment packet or request it from the office.**

FOOD SERVICE PAYMENT CHART

Elementary & High School/Adult: Full Pay

Number of Days	Breakfast	Lunch	Both
1	\$1.80	\$2.80	\$4.60
2	\$3.60	\$5.60	\$9.20
3	\$5.40	\$8.40	\$13.80
4	\$7.20	\$11.20	\$18.40
5	\$9.00	\$14.00	\$23.00

Elementary & High School/Adult: Reduced Pay

Number of Days	Breakfast	Lunch	Both
1	\$.30	\$.40	\$.70
2	\$.60	\$.80	\$1.40
3	\$.90	\$1.20	\$2.10
4	\$1.20	\$1.60	\$2.80
5	\$1.50	\$2.00	\$3.50

Milk Only \$0.55

Adult Lunch \$3.60 (incl. milk)

The computerized cash registers operate on a “prepayment debit” system, not on a “charging” system. Students/parents should deposit a lump sum into their account to purchase breakfasts, lunches, or ala carte items. On-line credit/debit card and checking account deposits can be made at www.sendmoneytoschool.com. Payments can be paid by cash or check made payable to Berrien RESA. An email reminder will be sent when reduced student’s balance reaches \$3.00 and a full pay student’s balance reaches \$5.00.

If you have any questions, please call Peggy Ferguson at 269-473-2600 X1214.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

Introduction

As a public body under the Freedom of Information Act, the District has developed procedures and guidelines to implement and assure compliance with FOIA. The District has also created the following written public summary of the specific procedures and guidelines explaining how to submit written requests to the District and how to understand the District’s written responses, deposit requirements, fee calculations, and avenues for challenge and appeal.

How to Submit Written Requests

FOIA requests must be submitted in writing to the District. The request can be sent by email or mail to:

Email: kevin.ivers@berrienresa.org

Berrien RESA
Attn: FOIA Coordinator
P.O. Box 364
Berrien Springs, MI 49103

Requests must sufficiently describe a public record so as to enable the District to find it. Requests should also include a contact telephone number to allow a District employee to make contact to resolve issues, clarify the scope of a request or help identify a specific document containing the information sought.

How to Understand the District's Written Responses to FOIA Requests

The District must respond to a FOIA request within five business days. In some cases, the District may extend the time period by 10 business days to fulfill a request completely. A response does not necessarily mean the records are provided within five days.

The District can grant the FOIA request, deny the request, or grant it in part and deny it in part. Fees are calculated according to the District's FOIA procedures and guidelines and documented in a detailed fee itemization form. The fee must be paid before a public record is made available. And, in some cases, the District will require a good-faith deposit before it processes a public records request.

If the request is denied, the District will provide the basis for its denial in a written notice. The District will also provide notice of an individual's rights to appeal the denial to the Board of Education and/or to file a lawsuit against the District in circuit court.

Deposit Requirements

The District will require a good faith deposit from a requestor before processing a public records request if the entire fee estimate or charge exceeds \$50, based on a good-faith calculation of the total fee. The deposit will not exceed one-half of the total estimated fee as identified in a detailed fee itemization. The District's response shall also include a best efforts and good-faith nonbinding estimate regarding the time frame it will take the District to comply with FOIA in providing the public records to the requestor. If the total amount charged in a previous records request has not been paid in full, the District may require a deposit of up to 100 percent of the estimated fee before processing a subsequent public records request.

Fee Calculations

The District may charge a fee for a public records search, for the necessary copying of a public records for inspection or for providing a copy of a public records under the District's procedures and guidelines. The fee shall be limited to actual mailing costs, and to the actual incremental cost of duplication or publication including labor, the cost of search, examination, review, and the deletion and separation of exempt from nonexempt information. Labor costs shall be estimated and charged in increments of 15 minutes in most cases, with all partial time increments rounded down. The District shall not charge for the cost of search, examination, review, and the deletion and separation of exempt from nonexempt information unless the failure to charge a fee would result in unreasonably high cost to the District because of the nature of the requests in the particular instance. Under such circumstances, the District shall specifically identify the nature of the unreasonably high costs. The first \$20 of a fee will be waived if a requestor submits an affidavit of indigence. The requestor must include a statement that the request is not being made in conjunction with outside parties in exchange for payment or other remuneration.

Avenues for Challenge and Appeal

If the District charges a fee that an individual thinks is too high, denies all or part of a public records request, the requestor may submit to the District Board of Education a written appeal that specifically states the word "appeal" and identifies the basis for which the fee should be reduced or the nondisclosure determination should be reversed. Written appeals may be sent to the email or mailing address listed above and will be forwarded to the Board of Education or the Superintendent for scheduling on the agenda of the next Board meeting. Additionally, the requestor may pursue a fee reduction or appeal the denial by commencing a civil action in circuit court.

More Information

This is only a summary of the FOIA procedures and guidelines. For more details and information, copies of the District's FOIA Procedures and Guidelines are available at no charge at the District's central office and on the District's website: www.berrienresa.org.

GRADING PERIODS/PROGRESS REPORTS

Student shall receive a progress report at the end of each nine (9) week period indicating their progress for each Individualized Education Program goal/objective for that portion of the academic term. The purpose of this progress reporting is to indicate the extent to which the student has acquired the necessary learning goals outlined for one (1) year at their Individualized Education Planning Committee.

HARASSMENT

Harassment is “Any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of technology, or written verbal or physical conduct directed against a student that:

- Is based on race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and transgender identity), disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status ancestry, or genetic information (collectively, “Protected Classes”) that are protected by Federal civil rights laws (hereinafter referred to as unlawful harassment)
- Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property;
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s educational performance, opportunities, or benefits; or
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school?

Unlawful Harassment has to be based on a “Protected Class” and laws against “harassment” or creating a “hostile environment” are not meant to be a general civility code. Conduct found not to be unlawful harassment:

- Simple teasing.
- Isolated or offhand comments.
- Isolated incidents that do not rise to a level of seriousness (hostile environment) or are not based on a protected category.

Some student misconduct that falls under a school’s anti-bullying policy also may trigger responsibilities under one or more of the federal antidiscrimination laws enforced by the Department’s Office for Civil Rights (OCR).

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

Parents should contact the school administration regarding procedures for homebound instruction due to a medical condition. The District will provide homebound instruction only for those confinements expected to last at least five (5) days.

Homebound instruction requires notification be made by a physician licensed to practice in this state. A physician must: certify the nature and existence of a medical condition; state the probable duration of the confinement; request such instruction; present evidence of the student’s ability to participate in an educational program.

HOMEWORK

The assignment of homework can be expected for many of our students. Homework is also part of the student’s education and reinforces the skills they are working to achieve. Homework will not generally be used for disciplinary reasons but only to enhance the student’s learning.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Michigan law requires all students to submit a signed statement by a physician that they have been properly immunized. When you receive the letter requesting the most current immunization record, please send it to school as soon as possible. This proof of immunization may be a signed document from your private physician or Health Department Clinic, which includes vaccine name and month/year of each dose. Your child must be as far along as possible toward completing immunization series.

LOCKER/STORAGE CUBICLES

There are no privacy expectations in school lockers/cubicles or its contents. The principal or designee may search lockers/cubicles or contents. Law enforcement agencies may assist.

LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found area is in the Blossomland Learning Center office. Students who have lost items should check there and may retrieve their items if they give a proper description. Unclaimed items will be given to charity at the close of the school year.

MEDICATION

Please keep us informed of any health problems (new or changing), and let the school know if your child is taking **any medication**.

Please note: All medication administered through Berrien RESA programs must be approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This includes dietary supplements, vitamins, minerals, herbs, and essential oils. Should your student need to receive medication (prescription or over the counter) during school hours, the following procedure will be followed:

1. Your child's physician must provide written orders when medicine should be administered, and telephone number where the physician can be contacted.
2. The parent/guardian must provide written authorization for the school to administer medicine and a phone number for contact in case of an emergency. All students that require the use of physician prescribed emergency medications, devices, and durable medical equipment for chronic conditions, such as seizures, must complete the appropriate medication administration forms (signed by parent and physician). The school nurse, who will create a care plan to ensure the child's safety during transport and while at school, will review these forms. The student will remain with staff members trained in the use of these devices at all times. To ensure that medical emergencies can be managed properly in the school setting students are required to have the items listed as necessities in

their care plans at all times. If changes in the student's condition require changes to be made to the care plan, please notify the school nurse immediately so that updates are implemented prior to the student's return to school. Students will not be permitted to be transported without the correct emergency medical devices in their possession.

3. The parent must bring the medication to school in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician, or in factory packaging. It is acceptable for a parent or guardian to give medication to transportation staff who is directed to deliver it to the school nurse. All medication should be clearly identified on the outside of the container and will be stored in the nurse's office. No student should have it in their backpack or carry medication to and from school, unless it is emergency medication or at physician direction.
4. The school nurse will communicate regularly with parents and physicians about any problems or effects of administering medication to students during school hours.
5. A log (MAR) for each prescribed medication shall be maintained which will note the personnel giving the medication, the date, and the time of day. This log will be maintained along with the physician's written request and the parent's written release.
6. Prescription medication bottles should not be older than six (6) months.

The nurse will also work closely with the physician so your child's health care plan can be modified as changes in his/her physical condition warrant it.

NON-ACADEMIC EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students attending Blossomland Learning Center may attend activities in their local school district of residence or charter school. Please contact the appropriate school office or check their web page for activities and events for your child. The student may also participate on athletic teams, but eligibility requirements established by the local district must be followed.

NONDISCRIMINATION

The Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry, genetic information or any other legally protected category, (collectively, "Protected Classes"), in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities.

NURSING

We believe it is in the best interest of each student to have the nurse's full attention and to minimize the number of individuals entering the nurse's

office at any given time. In order to protect the privacy of each of our students, we have implemented the following procedures:

1. Parent/Guardians/Visitors need to check in at the office before seeing a nurse.
2. The nurse's office will be informed and one of the nurses will come and escort the individual to a private office.
3. If you choose to have your child present, we would be happy to make arrangements to have him/her brought in.

You are encouraged to meet with the nurses to share information or discuss your child's condition. We appreciate your cooperation and open communication for your child's medical needs.

OFFSITE PROGRAMS

Blossomland Learning Center operates two offsite programs throughout the county. In general, the information in this handbook applies to the offsite program. There may be some minor differences in starting/ending times, lunch times, etc., to accommodate integration in regular school buildings and community site location schedules.

STUDENT DIRECTORY “Opt Out Form”

The primary use for Directory Information by the district is to include this type of information in certain school publications. It is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. Examples of school publications are:

- a playbill or program, showing your child’s roles in a drama or music production
- the annual yearbook
- honor roll or other recognition lists published at school or in newspapers
- graduation programs
- sports statistics listed in programs, such as football which may include height and weight of team members
- school or district website

Directory information can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent’s prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to:

- other schools the student is seeking to attend (transcripts, etc.)
- class ring manufacturers
- state or federal authorities auditing, evaluating programs or enforcing state or federal laws
- a court by order of a subpoena

The school district has designated the following as Directory Information: student name, address, telephone number, email address, degrees, honors, and awards received, most recent educational agency or institution attended, participation in school sponsored activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, major field of study, dates of attendance, photograph, date and place of birth, and grade level.

I, _____, have chosen to “Opt Out” of releasing all
Parent/Guardian Name

Student Directory information for my student, _____.
Student Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parent Conferences are scheduled in the Fall and Spring of each school year. Please consult your school calendar for the exact dates. In addition to the regularly scheduled parent conferences, annual IEP's are also convened for each student to review goals, progress, programs, services, and any necessary revisions. Further, Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team meetings are convened for any student who is due for the mandated three year reevaluation. Every effort is made to combine these conferences/meetings, as they are extremely important to the progress your child makes in school.

Parents and teachers are urged to request a conference anytime during the year as questions, concerns, or special situations arise. We strongly believe that student progress can be maximized and problems minimized with parents and teachers working closely together.

PESTICIDE ADVISORY 2019-2020

Berrien RESA has adopted an Integrated Pest Management program. Inherent with this are the Berrien RESA's efforts to reduce pesticide use as much as possible. While it may occasionally be necessary to apply a pesticide, this program **does not** rely on routine pesticide applications to resolve problems. We use various techniques such as habitat alteration, sanitation, mechanical means, exclusion, etc. to prevent pest from becoming a problem.

As required by Michigan law, you will receive advanced notice of non-emergency application of a pesticide (insecticide, fungicide, or herbicide), other than bait or gel formulation, which is made to the school, school grounds, or buildings. This advance notice of a pesticide application will be given 48 hours before the application by the following two methods:

1. Posting at the primary entrances to your child's school. The entrances that will be posted are the main entrance and those that have a sidewalk that leads directly to a parking lot.
2. Posting in the common area located by the main office of the school.
- 3.

Please note that notification is not given for use of sanitizers, germicides, disinfectants or anti-microbial cleaners. In certain emergencies, such as an infestation of stinging insects, pesticides may be applied without prior notice to prevent injury to students, but you will be promptly notified following any such application, via the two posting methods identified (above). You may review the school's Integrated Pest Management program and records of any pesticide application upon request by [by emailing Doug Montey](#), or calling (269)-471-7725.

Parents or guardians of children attending the school are also entitled to receive the advance notice of a pesticide application, other than a bait or gel formulation, by first class United States mail postmarked at least 3

days before the application, if they so request. If you would like to be notified by mail please contact the Building & Grounds Department at 269-471-7725, Ext. 1225. Please give the Secretary, your name, mailing address and what school(s) your child or children attend and they will put your name on the advance notification by US Mail list.

PHYSICAL/VERBAL ASSAULT

Physical assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor which may or may not cause injury, may result in charges being filed, and subject the student to expulsion. Physical assault is defined as “intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.”

Verbal assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor or making bomb threats or similar threats directed at school building, property, or a school-related activity will be considered verbal assault. Verbal threats or assault may result in suspension and expulsion. Verbal assault is a communicated intent to inflict physical or other harm on another person, with a present intent and ability to act on the threat.

"At school" means in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises.

“Under state law, the District **may** suspend up through permanent expulsion of a student who commits Criminal Sexual Conduct (CSC) with another District student, **regardless of location** (on or off school property). The District **shall** suspend or permanently expel a student who is convicted, by plea or adjudication, of CSC with another District student.” Mandate kicks in only after there has been a Court proceeding and adjudication – which could be months later.

If a student is convicted of CSC against another student in the District, the Court (not the District) shall order that the convicted student not attend school in the same building as the victim.

Personal Protection Order (PPO) to be issued to the student-victim (on top of the bar from attending the same school).

Remember: School District is NOT a party to the Order or PPO. The parties to the proceeding, not the school, are responsible for complying with any Order from the Court.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

“Restorative Practices” means practices that emphasize repairing the harm to the victim and the school community caused by a student’s misconduct. The school will consider restorative practices to remediate

offenses such as: interpersonal conflicts, bullying, verbal and physical conflicts, and harassment and cyberbullying – before imposing discipline under this policy. Such practices include but are not limited to, victim-offender conferences that are initiated by the victim (and approved by the victim’s parents or legal guardian), are attended by the victim, a victim advocate, the offender, members of the school community and supporters of the victim and offender. This is the “restorative justice team.”

The purpose of this conference is for the offender to accept responsibility for the harm caused to those affected, and to participate in setting consequences to repair the harm.

Outcomes of restorative practices:

An opportunity for the offender to accept responsibility for the harm caused to those affected, and to participate in setting consequences to repair the harm, such as any combination of:

- Apologizing
- participating in community service
- restoring emotional or material losses, or counseling
- paying restitution

SCHOOL CLOSING/TWO (2) HOUR-DELAY

In case of bad weather, it may be necessary to cancel/delay school. Listen to the following Radio/TV stations:

FM Radio Stations: Oldies 94.3, Sunny 101.5, Country 99.9, WSJM 94.9k, WIRX 107.1, WYTX 97.5, WCSY 103.7, WCXT 98.3, and WSBT 96.1

TV Stations: WSJV Fox 28, WNDU NBC 16, WSBT CBS 22, ABC TV ABC 57

If Berrien RESA is closed your child does not have school and the bus will not pick him/her up. If there is a 2-hour delay, the school start time for students will be 10:30 am. Buses should arrive two hours later from your original pick-up times. The ½ day D-2 classroom will have the morning and afternoon students alternate attending when on a 2-hour delay. Dismissal will still be 3:00 pm. In addition, BLC’s off-site CBI programs in Niles and St. Joseph will also close/delay should the districts in which they reside close/delay due to weather conditions only. Parents are responsible for knowing of emergency closings and delays.

School Messenger

Emergencies occur, schedules change, busses run late. The district uses a system to instantly alert families/caregivers if/when these events happen. In order for you to be contacted/notified via phone, e-mail, or text message, you will need to ensure the contact information is accurate and up to date.

During School: If a severe storm starts or is forecast while school is in session, the buses may leave early to return children home. **If there is a bad weather forecast and you are not at home, please call and let us know where your child may be taken.** Every effort will be made to reach parents or other emergency contacts if school is dismissed early.

SCHOOL HOURS

The students' school day is from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm. Pre-Primary students on half-day schedule attend from 8:30 am to 11:30 am or 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Dismissal for half-days is at 11:30 am. Lunch is served on the following *schedule:

- A Pod – 12:00 pm
- B Pod – 11:45 am
- D Pod – 11:30 am

*Times may vary due to menu item served and pace of student/teachers.

SCHOOL YEAR PROGRAMS

Rule 340.1738 Severe Cognitive Impairment program and Rule 340.1748 Severe Multiple Impairment programs designate that students who participate in these programs are eligible for a minimum of 200 days **and** 1,150 clock hours of instruction. The regular school year consists of 178 days and then these students return for summer to complete the remaining 22 days for which they are eligible. The summer hours will run from 9:00 am to 1:50 pm. This is their regular school year program and not considered extended school year services.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

The Board of Education has charged school authorities with the responsibility of safeguarding the safety and well-being of the students in their care. In the discharge of that responsibility, school authorities may search school property such as lockers used by students or the person or property, including vehicles, of a student, in accordance with the following policy.

The Board recognizes that the privacy of students or his/her belongings may not be violated by unreasonable search and seizure and directs that no student be searched without reasonable suspicion or in an unreasonable manner. The extent of the search will be governed by the seriousness of the alleged infraction, the student's age, and the student's disciplinary history.

Search of a student and his/her possessions, including vehicles, may be conducted at any time the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education, if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is in violation of law or school rules. A search may also be conducted to protect the

health and safety of others. All searches may be conducted with or without a student's consent.

The Board acknowledges the need for in-school storage of student possessions and shall provide storage places, including desks and lockers, for that purpose. Where locks are provided for such places, students may lock them against invasion by other students, but in no such places shall students have an expectation of privacy as to prevent examination by a school official. The Board directs the school principals to conduct a routine inspection at least annually of all such storage places. In the course of any search, student's privacy rights will be respected regarding any items that are not illegal or against Board policy.

Anything that is found in the course of a search that may be evidence of a violation of school rules or the law may be taken and held or turned over to the police. The school reserves the right not to return items which have been confiscated. In the course of any search, students' privacy rights will be respected regarding any items that are not illegal or against school policy.

All computers located in classrooms, labs and offices of the District are the District's property and are to be used by students, where appropriate, solely for educational purposes. The District retains the right to access and review all electronic, computer files, databases, and any other electronic transmissions contained in or used in conjunction with the District's computer system, and electronic mail. Students should have no expectation that any information contained on such systems is confidential or private.

Review of such information may be done by the District with or without the student's knowledge or permission. The use of passwords does not guarantee student's knowledge or permission. The use of passwords does not guarantee confidentiality, and the District retains the right to access information in spite of a password. All passwords or security codes must be registered with the instructor. A student's refusal to permit such access may be grounds for disciplinary action.

SECTION 504 AND ADA

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are both civil right statutes for persons with disabilities. All students eligible for services under IDEA are eligible for protections under Section 504 and ADA. Compliance with requirements of Section 504 and the ADA will be coordinated by the Asst. Superintendent of the Berrien Regional Education Service Agency. S/he may be reached at the Administrative Center, 711 St. Joseph Avenue, Berrien Springs, Michigan 49103 or by calling 269-471-7725.

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

The school phone number is (269) 473-2600. If you wish to talk with your child’s teacher, the best times to call are 8:00 – 8:30 am and 3:00 – 3:45 pm. Teachers are with students between 8:30 am and 3:00 pm. Messages may be left on voicemail during this time and the teacher will be able to return calls at their earliest convenience. Emergency calls should be placed to the school office at extension 1. Administrators, social worker, nurse, and secretaries are available throughout the day. You may also communicate with staff via e-mail. Addresses can be found on the Berrien RESA website at www.berrienresa.org.

STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

MI-Access is Michigan’s alternate assessment system; designed for students with cognitive impairments who the IEPC (Individualized Educational Planning Committee) team has determined that M-STEP assessments, even with accommodations, are not appropriate. MI-Access satisfies the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as reauthorized in 2004 and the ESSA that require all students with disabilities be assessed at the state level.

MI-Access BY Grade Level, Test, and Content Area					
Type	Functional Independence – FI				
Subject	ELA: Accessing Print and Expressing Ideas	ELA: Expressing Ideas	Math	Science	Social Studies
Grades	3-8, 11	3-8, 11	3-8, 11	4, 7, 11	5, 8, 11
Type	Supported Independence – SI				
Subject	ELA	Math	Science		
Grades	3-8, 11	3-8, 11	4, 7, 11		
Type	Participation - P				
Subject	ELA	Math	Science		
Grades	3-8, 11	3-8, 11	4, 7, 11		
FI = Functional Independence P/SI = Participation and Supported Independence					

STUDENT COMMUNICATIONS

The administration reserves the right to address off school online speech or expression on social media sites that will 1) cause an actual disruption

at school, 2) express a true threat and 3) material that is substantially likely to cause a disruption at school.

STUDENT DRESS & GROOMING

All students are expected to be neat, clean, and appropriately dressed for school. This means light clothing for spring and fall, and warm clothing for winter. Extremes in dress that might cause health or safety problems and/or disruptions in school will not be allowed.

Shorts are permissible, but they must be in good taste. Short shorts, running shorts, gym shorts or tennis shorts are not acceptable. Any top that exposes a midriff on persons of either gender is also unacceptable.

It is important to mark boots, caps, mittens, etc. with your child's name. Properly labeled items will be returned to students immediately. A lost and found box is maintained so that unlabeled items can be retrieved. Please remember that the students do go outside to play and should be dressed appropriately for the prevailing weather conditions.

Board of Education recognizes that each student's mode of dress and grooming is a manifestation of personal style and individual preference. The Board will not interfere with the right of students and their parents to make decisions regarding their appearance, except when their choices interfere with District's educational program.

Accordingly, the Superintendent shall establish such grooming guidelines as are necessary to promote discipline, maintain order, secure the safety of students, and provide a healthy environment conducive to educational purposes. Such guidelines shall prohibit student dress or grooming practices which:

- A. present a hazard to the health or safety of the student himself/herself or to others;
- B. interfere with school work, create disorder, or disrupt the educational program;
- C. cause excessive wear or damage to District property;
- D. prevent the student from achieving his/her own educational objectives because of blocked vision or restricted movement.

STUDENT DROP-OFF / PICK-UP

Special circumstances may arise when you will be bringing your child to school or picking him/her up.

DROP-OFFS: Notify the Transportation Department early so the driver does not make an unnecessary stop. Sign your student in at the office to make sure he/she is included in the lunch count and the office is prepared should an emergency arise. Students should not be brought to school before 8:30 a.m. since no supervision is available prior to that time. Please do not take your child directly to the classroom.

PICK-UPS: Notify the Transportation Department so that the driver is not waiting for a “missing” student. Do not take your child directly from the classroom without signing him/her out in the office. We must be aware that the student is out of the building. Students must be picked up before 3:00 p.m. since no supervision is available after that time. A student will be permitted to leave only with the parent, legal guardian, or person designated by the parent in written form. These procedures are designed specifically for the safety of your child.

If you have any transportation questions, please talk to your child’s bus driver or call Yolanda Suarez, Transportation Supervisor (269) 471-9308.

STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The school is here for the benefit of the students. The staff is here to assist each student in becoming a responsible adult. If a student has suggestions that could improve the school, s/he should feel free to offer them. Written suggestions may be presented directly to the principal or assistant principal.

When concerns or grievances arise, the best way to resolve the issue is through communication. No student will be harassed by any staff member or need fear reprisal for the proper expression of a legitimate concern. Any suggestions, concerns, and grievances may be directed to the principal or assistant principal.

Michigan Child Protection Law requires certain professionals to report their suspicions of child abuse or neglect to Children’s Protective Services (CPS) and/or Adult Protective Services (APS) at the Department of Human Services (DHS). These people are mandated reporters and have established relationships with children based on their profession. Mandated reporters include the following school personnel: Administrators, Nurses, Social Worker, Teacher’s, Psychologists, Therapists, and transportation personnel. Thus all employees in a public school system are mandated reporters.

STUDENT PERSONAL SUPPLY LIST

The school provides all basic school supplies needed by the children. However, there are certain personal items that parents are requested to send to school.

- Change of clothing: Old clothes to be kept at school in case of need. Underpants must be included. No shoes needed.
PLEASE MARK CLEARLY WITH STUDENT’S NAME.
- Kleenex; large box
- Toothbrush and toothpaste: One (1) large tube of fluoride type.
- Brush or comb: One (1) pocket size or larger
- A supply of any personal items needed, such as extra clothing, disposable diapers, wet wipes, pull-ups, Chux (blue disposable under-pads), feeding items, bibs, etc. may be sent to school.

Used clothing will be returned to you on the bus. If your child uses disposable diapers, a box may be sent to school.

- Gym shoes: If your student cannot tie her/his own shoes, a Velcro tab type is appropriate.
- Swim Supplies: One well-fitting swimsuit (no bikinis) that is left at school and laundered at school. A swim cap (optional) and swim diapers if appropriate.
- Deodorant
- Feminine hygiene products (for girls)
- Skin protection cream: Lantiseptic, Desitin, Gab Ga.m, etc. These items may be administered if we have a **current doctor's order** on file.

****IMPORTANT!** Parents, please plainly mark student's name in all clothing, gym shoes, etc. Thank you!

PLEASE! Do not send other items to school unless your child has special needs or there is a special "Show & Tell" time. Dolls, toys, MP3 players, i-pods, CD players, cell phones, etc. show NOT be brought to school except with special permission. The school cannot be responsible for the damage to, or loss of items.

STUDENT VALUABLES

Students are encouraged not to bring items of value to school. This includes items such as cell phones, CD players, MP3 players, i-pods, radios, toys, extra money, or any personal communication device with wireless, etc., or any device that takes photos of any kind. The school **will not** be liable for loss or damage to these items. The teacher will let you know about any special programs or "show and tell" types of activities where these items may be permissible. The school may confiscate such items and return them to the students' parents should it become a disruption or an issue.

SUPPORT SERVICES

THERAPY: The Speech and Language, Occupational, Physical and Music Therapists are fully certified and approved in their professional field. In addition to providing direct service to eligible students the therapists also evaluate students referred for direct services and provide consultation to classroom instructional staff. Although every effort is made to follow the prescribed service time for therapies as stated in the IEP, exceptions do occur. If the student is not available for a regularly scheduled therapy session due to holidays, student absences, snow days, or medical issues, it is possible that the missed therapy session may not be "made up" or rescheduled.

HEALTH: The nurse supervises the giving of any medications at school (these cannot be given without a physician's order) and works with the

child, the family, and their physician. Parents are encouraged to call the school nurse regarding any health concerns. The school nurse is also responsible for school health programs including Hearing and Vision Screening, and special clinics held in the community. The school nurse can also assist parents and the physician in carrying out a positive health plan for the student.

SOCIAL WORK: The school social worker is fully approved with a MSW and is available to assist students and their families with concerns, future planning, and relationships with other community agencies. The school social worker serves as a member of the Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MET), a diagnostic team that re-evaluates student eligibility for special education, program placements and related services and provides counseling for students both individually and in small group situations.

SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL

Students at Blossomland Learning Center may be suspended from school in accordance with Board of Education Policy, should they be found guilty of a gross misdemeanor or persistent disobedience. The length of the suspension should be in relationship to the severity of the offense.

SWIM / PHYSICAL EDUCATION

We provide an extensive swim and physical education program with certified staff for all students attending BLC. These programs are offered to all students and are adapted for their individual needs. Students will shower before/after each swim class as a requirement of the Health Department, and older students will shower after each gym class. In addition, we ask that families/caregivers provide showers on a regular basis at other times. For swim days your student will need a swim suit and swim cap. On gym days students need to bring gym shoes. Teen/Adult students will need deodorant. Being physically active enhances the quality of your students' life. However, it is also important that you keep the school advised of any health concerns or changes in status so that we can provide program adaptations and continue to provide fun, safe activities. Students are expected to participate in swim/gym on a regular basis unless they have a medical release from a doctor excusing them from participation.

TRANSPORTATION

Berrien RESA will provide transportation. Transportation is responsible to/from a residence or childcare only, this includes our off-site programs with Berrien Bus and Dial-A-Ride. As parents/caregivers, you can understand why good behavior on the bus is necessary for safety reasons. Riding the bus is a privilege and a child can be refused permission to ride the bus if their behavior endangers the safety of himself or herself, other students, or the safe operation of the bus.

If you choose to transport your child to/from school, you must bring them into the building and sign them in and out at the office.

It is the parents' responsibility to let the transportation office and the school know when your child will not be attending school and to call when he/she is ready to return to school. It is also the parents' responsibility to see that your child gets on and off the bus safely. Please refer to the transportation handbook for detailed bus rules and other transportation information.

VIDEO RECORDING ON DISTRICT PROPERTY

The Board of Education has installed video cameras on District property to monitor student behavior. If a student violated the Code of Conduct and his/her actions were recorded on a video recording, the recording will be submitted to the principal and may be used as evidence of the misbehavior. Since these tapes are considered part of a student's record, they can be viewed only in accordance with Federal law.

VISITORS

Visitors, particularly parents, are welcome to visit Blossomland Learning Center. In order to properly monitor the safety of students and staff, each visitor must report to the office upon entering the school to obtain a pass. Any visitor found in the building without a pass shall be escorted to the Principal/Assistant Principal. If a person wishes to confer with a member of the staff, he/she should call for an appointment prior to coming to the school, in order to schedule a mutually convenient time. The Principal/Assistant Principal has the right to prohibit entry or to expel any person when there is reason to believe the presence of such person would be harmful to the good order of the school.

WEAPONS OFFENSES

In compliance with State and Federal law, the Board may expel any student who possesses a dangerous weapon in a weapon-free school zone in violation of state law or commits either arson or criminal sexual conduct in a District building or on District property, including school buses and other school transportation. For purposes of this policy, a dangerous weapon is defined as "a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over three (3) inches in length, pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles" or other devices designed to or likely to inflict bodily harm, including, but not limited to, air guns and explosive devices. The term "firearm" is defined as: a) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of the explosive; b) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; c) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or d) any destructive device. Such term does not include an antique firearm. This policy shall also encompass such actions as false fire alarms, bomb threats, or intentional calls to falsely report a dangerous condition. This will result in immediate reporting to the parent or guardian and the local law enforcement agency after discovery of the weapon and could result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension/expulsion. The method used for consideration of the mitigating factors is that the sole discretion of the board.