

# PLEASANT PLAINS



---

## FAMILY HANDBOOK

---



Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to Pleasant Plains Elementary School! This handbook was designed to assist you and your child as members of the Pleasant Plains community. It provides information about school procedures and answers many of the questions parents and students commonly ask.

We, the faculty and staff at Pleasant Plains, encourage you to be an active partner in your child's education. Together we can ensure that all of our children achieve learning success.

We look forward to your participation in a successful school year. Please contact us if we may assist you.

Sincerely,

*The Faculty and Staff of Pleasant Plains Elementary*

Important Phone Numbers:

Office phone: 410-887-3549

Office fax: 410-887-8088

Website

<http://www.pleasantplainses.org>

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I.</b>	<b>The School Day .....</b>	<b>4-6</b>
	Daily schedule	
	Arrival to School	
	Dismissal from School	
	Before & After School Care	
	Inclement Weather (or other school-wide emergency)	
	Early Closing Procedure	
	Emergency Information Cards and Additional Emergency Release Form	
	End of Day Early Release	
<b>II.</b>	<b>Health and Safety .....</b>	<b>6-8</b>
	Behavior, Discipline, and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Program	
	School Emergency Plan / Crisis Management	
	Health Services	
	Visitors	
<b>III.</b>	<b>Information and Communication .....</b>	<b>8-9</b>
	Calendars	
	Monthly Newsletter	
	Grading Procedures	
	Homework	
	Parent Teacher Association (PTA)	
	Parent Teacher Conferences	
	Visiting Classrooms	
<b>IV.</b>	<b>School Services.....</b>	<b>10-13</b>
	Meals	
	Office	
	Transfer of Students	
	Special Areas and Support Programs	
<b>V.</b>	<b>General Information .....</b>	<b>14-16</b>
	Attendance	
	Baltimore County Public Schools Cancelled Check Policy	
	Books	
	Curriculum	
	Dress Code	
	Field Trips	
	Lost and Found	
	Personal Property	
	School Pictures	
	School Supplies	
	Testing	
	Volunteers	
<b>VI.</b>	<b>School Rewards Programs.....</b>	<b>17</b>

## I. THE SCHOOL DAY

### DAILY SCHEDULE

8 a.m.	School office opens
8:10 a.m.	Safeties enter the building
8:30 a.m.	Adult supervision begins; students enter the building and breakfast service offered
8:40 a.m.	Homeroom exercises and morning announcements
8:50 a.m.	Morning announcements (Students who arrive at this time must report to the main office to be signed in by a parent or guardian.)
11:15 a.m.	Morning pre-kindergarten dismissal
12:30 p. m.	Afternoon pre-kindergarten arrival
3:10 p.m.	Afternoon announcements & afternoon dismissal
4 p.m.	School office closes

### ARRIVAL TO SCHOOL

Students arrive to school by bus, car or on foot. Bus riders will be assigned a bus route name and color. Buses will arrive in the front of the school and park in the lane closest to the main lobby doors. School staff and safeties will assist students as they exit the buses and enter the school through the main lobby doors. Bus riders are asked to abide by the following Baltimore County Transportation Department policies:

- Children should arrive at their assigned stop five minutes early.
- Children are permitted to ride *only* on their assigned bus and may get off *only* at their assigned stop.
- Any changes in pick-up of the student must be submitted to the school office in writing.

Specific bus riding rules are posted on the bus. Parents and children should familiarize themselves with the following rules:

1. Follow directions from the driver the first time they are given.
2. Remain seated at all times while the bus is in motion.
3. Keep all body parts inside the bus.
4. Keep hands, feet, legs, arms, personal property and your voice to yourself.
5. Do not eat, smoke, drink or use vulgar language on the bus.

Students who arrive by car should be dropped off on Pleasant Plains Road and should use the crosswalk to safely cross the street. Students should not be discharged from a vehicle in the middle of the street. In accordance with Baltimore County fire department policy, vehicles are not permitted in the school bus loop during school hours.

Walkers should plan to arrive between 8:35 and 8:40 a.m. All students are asked to use the sidewalks and crosswalks at all times to ensure their safety. Walkers will wait on the front porch of the school. Adult supervision begins at 8:30 a.m.

### DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL

Bus riders are dismissed by bus route name and color following afternoon announcements. They will exit the building from the Kindergarten wing and walk in a line to their bus. Staff and safeties will assist students lining up, exiting the building and getting on their buses.

Walkers are dismissed to the outside through the classroom doors or the main lobby doors and are expected to walk directly home. Students are reminded to always use sidewalks and marked crosswalks.

Students enrolled in the onsite *Learn –N-Play* after care program will be dismissed to the cafeteria.

Car riders are dismissed with the walkers. They will exit from the main lobby doors and are to remain on the front porch until they see their parent or guardian pull to the curb. They **must** use the crosswalk with the crossing guard to safely cross the street. Students should **never** be asked to enter a vehicle in the middle of the street. Thank you for helping to keep your child safe.

## **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE**

A fee-based on premise before and after care program is available for Pleasant Plains students. Contact *Learn-N-Play* at 410-296-9140 for information about this program. There also are other daycare programs throughout Baltimore County.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER (OR OTHER SCHOOL-WIDE EMERGENCY)**

Inclement weather and unforeseen emergencies, such as a power failure, can cause schools to be closed for the day, open late or close early. *Please do not call the school for closing information.* Baltimore County Public Schools will alert the media and provide the necessary details to be made available to local television and radio stations (i.e. WBAL at 1090 AM, WYPR at 88.1 FM and the cable TV education channel). You also may call the Baltimore County Public School weather information number at 410-887-5555 or check online at [www.bcps.org](http://www.bcps.org). Please remember that Pleasant Plains is *not* in the Hereford Zone.

## **EARLY CLOSING PROCEDURES**

The Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) calendar will list days that students are scheduled to be dismissed early. Schools also may close early due to an emergency or inclement weather. Please note the following procedures for scheduled and unscheduled early closings.

If school closes **three hours early**,

- students will be dismissed at 12:15 p.m.;
- lunch will be served to students in grades K-5;
- all bus riders will go home on their assigned school bus;
- *morning pre-kindergarten parents are requested to come to school and pick-up their students at the normal dismissal time*, as midday bus service will not be available
- afternoon pre-kindergarten will be cancelled.

If school closes **two hours early**,

- students will be dismissed at 1:15 pm.;
- lunch will be served to students in grades K-5;
- All bus riders will go home on their assigned school bus;
- dismissal for *morning pre-kindergarten students* is unchanged and will be at 11:15 a.m.
- afternoon pre-kindergarten will be cancelled.

If school closes **one hour early**,

- *all* students will be dismissed at 2:15 p.m.;
- lunch will be served to students in grades K-5;
- all bus students will ride home on their usual buses;
- dismissal for *morning pre-kindergarten students* is unchanged and will be at 11:15 a.m.

When school is closed early due to inclement weather, all planned use of the school facilities after school hours is automatically cancelled. This includes aftercare offered by *Learn-N-Play*.

## **EMERGENCY INFORMATION CARDS & ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY RELEASE FORM**

At the beginning of the school year, every student is given an “Emergency Information Card” and an “Early Dismissal Contact Form”, which must be completed, signed and returned by parents or guardians. Each Pleasant Plains student must have both emergency information cards on file at school. They provide the office and school nurse with your address, home and work phone numbers, places of employment and other contact information. It is vital that these cards be updated when any information changes.

The standard emergency information card will be used for all day-to-day situations such as illness or minor injury. Families with custody issues are asked to provide the school office with written legal documentation outlining who is authorized to pick up their children.

Because parents/guardians may want the school to release children to other family members or designated care providers during an emergency/crisis other than those listed on the standard “Emergency Information Card”, parents are asked to complete the “Early Dismissal Contact Form” and return it to your child’s homeroom teacher. This form authorizes the school to release a child to the designated individuals. It will be placed in the school’s “emergency tool box” and used only in an emergency or crisis situation. In accordance with BPCS policy, parents and guardians are asked to provide photo identification when signing out children.

### **END OF DAY EARLY RELEASE**

In the event of an unavoidable appointment during school hours, please send a note stating the reason, date, and time you will be picking up your child. Students will be called to the main office to meet their parents or guardians. Parents/guardians will be required to sign the early dismissal book after showing photo identification. If someone other than the parent/guardian is picking up a child, please make sure you have included that person’s name on the emergency card. If the name is not on the card, a note may be faxed to the school by the parent (410-887-8088) giving permission for the child to be released.

## **II. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **BEHAVIOR, DISCIPLINE, & POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS PROGRAM (PBIS)**

Pleasant Plains is committed to using positive behavior interventions to teach students self-discipline. Consistent classroom behavior expectations are communicated, taught, reviewed, practiced and reinforced by the faculty and staff throughout the school year and apply to students when they are in school, traveling to and from home and when attending field trips. Students are expected to abide by the Panther Promise, which reads:

I am respectful.  
I am responsible.  
I am safe.  
I am prepared.

Additional information about behavior expectations is found in the *Baltimore County Public Schools Student Handbook*. This book is given to each student at the beginning of the school year along with a brochure on sexual harassment. These handbooks outline BCPS policies and procedures for safety and expectations of student behavior. They also describe the disciplinary measures that may go into effect if students disobey the rules.

During the first few weeks of school, children participate in a discussion of the *Student Handbook* with teachers and administrators. All parents/guardians and students are required to sign and return the form located in the back of the *Baltimore County Public Schools Student Handbook*, indicating their understanding of the behavior code. The school guidance counselor will review the brochure on sexual harassment.

## **SCHOOL EMERGENCY PLAN / CRISIS MANAGEMENT**

In the event of an emergency or crisis, a well-organized and rehearsed safety action plan goes into effect. In addition, there is a crisis management team comprised of administrators and staff members that meets regularly to review the Baltimore County Public Schools guidelines and modify our procedures as needed. The goal of our plan is to maintain safety and be able to account for all students and staff during any emergency. Our plan includes the following drills: fire, lockdown, evacuation and severe weather safe area. In the event of an emergency, we want you to have the following information:

- If we *evacuate the building but remain on school grounds*, you may pick up your child at the rear corner of the building closest to Putty Hill Avenue. A staff member will direct you to the area where your child is waiting. Another staff member will assure that each child is released to the correct adult.
- If a *lockdown emergency* occurs, no one will be allowed into or out of the building. Once the emergency is over, parents, guardians, or designated individuals will be able to go to the main office to sign out their children.
- If there is an event that requires us to *evacuate the building and move to a temporary location*, we will walk to Loch Raven Academy. *BCPS will use the media to inform parents/guardians of where they may pick up their child.*
- All individual who are picking up children must be listed on the *Early Dismissal Contact Form* and must present photo identification.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

A full-time school nurse is available for students in need of medical attention. The nurse may be reached by calling 410-887-3549. In order to care for your child in a timely manner, there are two *required* health forms pertaining to medication that parents must complete and return to the school office.

### *Consent for Discretionary Medication*

At the beginning of the school year, parents receive a form listing medications supplied by the BCPS Department of Health, which are available for occasional use at the nurse's discretion (e.g. Tylenol for headache, throat lozenges, Tums, etc.). In order for a child to receive over-the-counter medications, parents must provide consent by signing and returning this form.

### *Prescription Medication*

The prescribing physician must complete a doctor's order if *any* medicine sent from home has to be administered at school. This applies to both prescription and over-the-counter medications.

All medication must be brought to school by an adult and given to the nurse in the original pharmacy package. No child may carry medication during the day or bring medication in a lunch bag.

## **VISITORS**

We welcome and encourage parents and guardians to visit our school. For safety reasons, the front doors of the school are locked. Please ring the doorbell to gain entry to the building. In accordance with state law, *all* visitors must register in the school office and obtain a *visitor badge*.

If you are coming in to drop off materials that your child left at home, we ask that you leave them in the main office and the office staff will notify your child. Visitors requesting conferences are to schedule them with an administrator and/or the teacher prior to coming to the school. Also, be aware that the school and school grounds are smoke-free zones. Smoking is not permitted in the school or on school grounds.

### III. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

#### CALENDARS

Baltimore County Public Schools distributes an academic calendar and information booklet at the beginning of the school year. Changes and updates are published with the school newsletter as necessary. In addition, a yearly schedule, combining Baltimore County Public Schools' information and information specific to Pleasant Plains Elementary, is sent home early in the school year. The best source for up-to-date information is the school's monthly newsletter and the school website: <http://pleasantplainses.bcps.org>.

#### MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

At Pleasant Plains, Tuesday is News Day! Our newsletter is distributed on the last Tuesday of each month. The newsletter is your information lifeline, providing up-to-date information about the school, community, important events, school closings, and activities. Monthly newsletters also can be accessed on the school website: <http://pleasantplainses.bcps.org>

#### GRADING PROCEDURES

Report cards are sent home four times a year for students in grades two through five, three times a year for students in first grade, and twice a year for students in Kindergarten. Distribution dates will be noted in the school newsletter and on the school calendar. The instructional code used on the report cards varies with the grade level of the child. Interim reports may be sent home mid-way through each quarter and are given to students who are not meeting grade level expectations.

Report card grades are based on the three major components of class work, homework, and assessments. For an in depth explanation of these components, please refer to BCPS Board Policy 5210 and other related BCPS policies and rules.

#### HOMEWORK

Homework is an important extension of student learning. It encourages the development of independent study habits, skills, and responsibilities. It also provides an opportunity for family involvement in the child's education. The BCPS Board recommends the following homework guidelines for elementary students:

<b>Grades 1 - 3</b>	An average of 30 minutes per day for all subjects combined.
<b>Grades 4 - 5</b>	An average of 60 minutes per day for all subjects combined. Independent, long-term projects may be assigned as well.

*All students are expected to read for 15 minutes per night in addition to the times stated above.*

#### PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

The Pleasant Plains Elementary PTA acts as an advocate for all children and strives to foster closer relations between the home, community and school. In addition, the PTA participates and sponsors a number of fundraising activities, which in turn provide financial support for enrichment programs and school events.



All families, community members and business partners are invited and encouraged to join the PTA for a nominal fee. All members are encouraged to attend PTA meetings, held monthly during the school year. Details and dates will be listed in the newsletter.

Examples of some of the activities that the Pleasant Plains PTA supports are listed below:

- **Ice Cream Social**  
This social event is planned for all new Pleasant Plains families and families of English Language Learning (ELL) students. It is typically held in the fall.
- **Cultural Assemblies**  
These are a variety of plays, science demonstrations, musical productions, etc. presented by professionals to enhance the students' educational experiences. They are held periodically throughout the academic year.
- **Field Trips**  
The PTA provides financial support for field trips that each grade takes during the school year.

The PTA fund-raisers, programs, events and activities are reviewed annually by the PTA executive board and may vary from year to year.

## **PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Communication between parents and teachers is critical for academic success. During the year, there will be at least one conference scheduled for parents to meet with and discuss their child's progress with teachers. However, at any time during the school year, parents may call or send a note to the teacher to arrange a conference to discuss progress and address any concerns. Scheduling an appointment is the best way to ensure there is adequate time for both teachers and parents to address academic performance.

We cannot stress strongly enough our belief in the importance of good parent-teacher communication and hope that parents will communicate with their student's teacher(s) to discuss their child's progress.

## **VISITING CLASSROOMS**

We welcome visitors to our school and offer several structured opportunities to visit classrooms. Read the monthly newsletters for more details about the following:

- **Sneak-a-Peek:** Families are invited to meet their student's classroom teacher(s) and visit the classrooms the Friday before the school year begins.
- **Back-to-School-Night:** Early in the school year, parents are invited to visit their child's classroom for a curriculum presentation by the homeroom teacher. This is an adult-oriented presentation.
- **American Education Week:** Held in November, American Education Week is an excellent opportunity for parents to visit and observe classes in progress. A classroom visitation schedule will be sent home early in November.
- **Volunteering:** There may be opportunities to volunteer in your child's classroom or elsewhere in the school. Some opportunities are directly curriculum-related; others, depending on teachers' needs, may be of a social or clerical nature. If you plan to volunteer in the school, you must complete volunteer training, which will be offered throughout the school year.

## IV. SCHOOL SERVICES

### MEALS

The cafeteria serves breakfast and lunch. Children may bring a packed lunch from home or purchase lunch or snacks in the cafeteria. Free and Reduced Meal forms are distributed at the beginning of the school year and may be obtained through the Office, throughout the school year. All families are encouraged to fill out the form and return it to school. The Office of Food and Nutrition processes the forms. *All information is considered highly confidential.* The Office of Food and Nutrition mail notification of acceptance for free or reduced meals directly to the home.

Rules and procedures for the cafeteria are reviewed with students at the beginning of the year. Please note the following:

- Students may purchase breakfast in the cafeteria from 8:20-8:30 a.m. *Breakfast food should not be brought to school.* On days that school has a delayed opening or is scheduled to close early, breakfast will not be served.
- In addition to hot lunches, students may purchase snack food, ice cream and beverages. When students buy a hot lunch, they must choose a minimum of two items or a maximum of four different items. One item must be an entrée and one must be milk. For example, a student may choose a hot entrée plus one milk, one juice, and one vegetable. Or, a student may choose a hot entrée plus one milk, one juice and one fruit.
- At the beginning of the year, a PIN number is assigned to each child. This number is linked to a cafeteria spending account. Money must be deposited in this account in order for purchases to be made. Payments may be made by cash or check. The cafeteria manager sends out updates and reminders for replenishing the account as needed. If parents wish to send cash for their child's account, it must be given directly to the cafeteria manager.
- The cafeteria procedures for credit extended for insufficient funds are as follows:
  - ◆ The credit limit is equivalent to one day's worth of meals (a breakfast and a lunch). The card system is set up to allow charging only up to this limit.
  - ◆ If a student's limit is reached, a letter will be sent to the parent/guardian requesting reimbursement.
  - ◆ Students at the credit limit will receive an alternative meal (cereal, milk, and graham crackers) until the credit extended is repaid.
- If a child forgets to bring his lunch to school, it may be dropped off at the office.

### OFFICE

The office is open from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. on all school days. The office phone number is 410-887-3549. Please note that all visitors must report to the office upon entering the building. The office will serve as a main point of contact under the following circumstances:

- If your child is to *leave school early* for any reason, you must go to the school office to meet him/her. Please do *not* go to the classroom.
- If your child *forgets something* necessary for the school day, that item may be dropped off in the office and *not* in the classroom. Please make sure items are clearly marked with your child's name.
- *Urgent messages* for children may be called in to the office.

## TRANSFER OF STUDENTS

If you are relocating from our school or school district, please contact the office with your new address, the name of the new school your child will be attending and your child's last day of expected attendance at Pleasant Plains Elementary. A transfer form will be sent home with your child on the last day of attendance. This form will contain all of the information necessary to enroll your child in his/her new school. Official school records will be mailed directly to the new school upon the school's request. Please be sure to return all Pleasant Plains Elementary books and materials prior to your child's last day.

## SPECIAL AREAS AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Pleasant Plains has a strong team of special area and support professionals on staff. Below is a brief description of the professional assistance they offer. For additional information about support programs, please inquire in the school office.

➤ **Library Media Specialist**

Students visit the library weekly for a scheduled 50-minute class. During that time, they receive instruction and sign out books, which are to be returned the following week. Please check with your child to determine the day of the week on which his/her library period falls and make certain that the child brings the books to class on the assigned day. If the book is not returned, a new one may not be signed out. Lost books should be paid for in a timely manner.

➤ **Technology Integration Teacher**

The technology integration teacher plans instructional activities utilizing technology across all curricular subjects. Students are provided weekly opportunities with their classroom teacher and the technology integration teacher to work on classroom curriculum projects.

➤ **Art Education Teacher**

The art teacher plans instruction that enables students to create personally meaningful artwork, while they explore the visual arts and the world around them. Lessons incorporate knowledge about the art elements and principles of design and requires the students to use critical thinking and creative problem solving skills. Interdisciplinary connections help reinforce the classroom curriculum.

➤ **Physical Education Teacher**

The Physical Education teacher contributes to each student's growth and development in the physical, mental, and social domains through a movement-based curriculum. The program teaches skills, knowledge and behaviors to promote life-long fitness.

➤ **Vocal Music Teacher**

The vocal music teacher works with students in grades K - 5 to instruct them in the study of the basic elements of music: rhythm, melody, harmony, form, texture, timbre, and style. The focus of the program is on expressive terms, vocabulary, core songs, and core listening. All students sing, move, play instruments, and listen to a variety of musical styles in classroom music. The choral program is a part of every fifth grade elementary school program in addition to the classroom music instruction

➤ **Instrumental Music Teacher**

The Instrumental Music Teacher introduces the Exploratory Music program in grade 4 with students studying clarinet, violin, and trumpet, as they learn about the instruments of the orchestra. The band is an integral part of every fifth grade elementary school program.

➤ **Guidance Counselor**

Guidance services are available every day for students who are having difficulties with school or personal situations. Students may make an appointment with the counselor by writing her a note or seeing her in person. The counselor also is available to meet with parents to discuss a variety of issues related to their children.

➤ **Reading Specialists**

Reading specialists are available to assist students who are having difficulty mastering basic reading skills. The reading specialists work very closely with the classroom teachers to identify students in need of service and to provide support.

➤ **Special Educators**

Special education teachers work with students who have diagnosed learning disabilities, as well as a need for remediation. Students are identified through the Individualized Education Program team process (IEP) and services are provided based on the student's IEP.

➤ **Speech and Language Therapist**

A speech and language clinician works directly with students who have been identified as needing speech therapy. Students are identified through the IEP team process, and services are provided based on the student's IEP.

➤ **Occupational Therapist**

An occupational therapist works directly with students who have been identified as needing fine motor and/or visual perceptual integration. Students are identified through the IEP team process and services are provided based on the student's IEP.

➤ **English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Teacher**

The ESOL teacher works with students whose native language is not English. The ESOL program provides direct instructional and educational support to English Language Learners (ELLs). These students may be immigrants, refugees, non-permanent residents, or native-born Americans and possess a broad range of academic skills and knowledge of English.

➤ **Nurse**

A full-time nurse is on duty in the school. When students feel ill, they are sent, with a pass from their classroom teacher, to visit the nurse. She will listen to each child's complaint and assess each child's condition. If a child's condition is deemed serious, the parents/guardians will be contacted immediately. If the child's ailment is a minor one, a letter may be sent home to the parents/guardians advising them of the visit. Any medication that needs to be taken at school must be given to the nurse in the original prescription bottle with the doctor's order.

➤ **Instructional Coach**

Instructional Coaches provide services to Title I schools which assist teachers in responding to student data effectively for all learners. They represent on-site professional development within a school, working one-on-one with teachers and teams to foster high-quality instruction through data analysis, conferencing, co-planning, modeling, co-teaching, and the observation and feedback model.

➤ **GT Catalyst**

GT Catalyst teachers consult and collaborate with classroom teachers in order to increase services to Gifted and Talented students, as well as to provide enrichment opportunities for students not formally identified as Gifted and Talented. GT Catalyst teachers model instructional strategies, co-plan, co-teach and provide individual, grade level and whole school professional development.

➤ **Parent Involvement Liaison**

Parent Involvement Liaisons work toward providing an inviting and welcoming environment where involvement of parents, guardians, families, and community is valued and respected. They collaboratively work with other staff members toward fostering strong family/community/school relationships. Additionally, they assist parent/guardians and families enhance parenting skills and foster conditions that support student learning. They also provide opportunities for parents to develop and refine the knowledge and skills needed to support students' academic achievement.

➤ **Paraeducators**

Paraeducators assist students who are having difficulty in reading and math. They provide support for the students so that they can meet with more success. Paraeducators work with students in small groups or one-on-one and work closely with the teachers.

➤ **Behavior Intervention Staff Person**

This Paraeducator position is provided to the school in order to assist students in maintaining good behavior and work habits in order to help them improve student achievement. The BIS is available to assist students in working through altercations before they become behavior offenses that would warrant time off task. This person also works with the PBIS committee in order to support the school wide Positive Behavior Interventions for the school.

➤ **Paid Parent Helpers**

Paid Parent Helpers provide assistance to the Kindergarten students and work closely with the Kindergarten teachers. They provide extra support during Kindergarten literacy and math center time. Paid Parent Helpers also assist other grade levels as necessary.

## V. GENERAL INFORMATION

### • ATTENDANCE

In accordance with state law, students are required to attend school 180 days as outlined in the Baltimore County Public Schools Calendar. Please note the following absence/tardy information:

- Students are considered tardy after the bell rings at 8:45 a.m.
- To obtain a late pass, students will need to be escorted to the office by a parent or guardian and present a note explaining the reason for the lateness.
- State law requires attendance each day of school. Personal illness, religious holidays and death in the immediate family are considered legal or excused absences.
- When a child is absent from school, he/she must bring a note, signed by a parent/guardian, on the day he/she returns to school. The note should indicate the date(s) and reason for the absence. Students who do not bring a note will be marked as unexcused.
- If you believe your child will be absent two or more days due to illness, please inform the school nurse by calling 410-887-3549.
- Excessive tardiness and/or absences may result in your child's being retained at their present grade level.
- Please call the school office if you need to discuss a prolonged absence with a teacher and/or an administrator.

### • BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS CANCELLED CHECK POLICY

Issuers of dishonored checks presented to Baltimore County Public Schools will be given ten days to submit full payment by means of a money order, cashier's check, or cash of the check amount plus bank charges incurred by BCPS. If this is not received by the end of ten days, the issuer will need to submit full payment of the check amount plus an additional \$35.00. If payment is not received at the end of the 20-day period, BCPS will turn over the dishonored check, and all other available information related to this check, to the State's Attorney for criminal prosecution. If the dishonored check is turned over to the State's Attorney for collection, the school will not accept restitution from the check issuer. The funds will be remitted to the school by the State's Attorney's Office.

### • BOOKS

Students are issued various school textbooks and novels during the year. Once issued, these books are the responsibility of the student. It is expected that the student will return the book in the same condition as it was in when issued. If books are lost or damaged, parents or guardians are expected to reimburse the school for the replacement cost of the book.

### • CURRICULUM

The BCPS Board of Education sets the Core Curriculum. A copy of the curriculum for each grade level is provided and discussed with the homeroom teacher at "Back-To-School Night". Information about the curriculum as well as ideas about how to help your child at home is available at [www.bcps.org](http://www.bcps.org) and our school website.

Specials are scheduled for students in all grades. The specials at Pleasant Plains Elementary are art, library, music, physical education and technology.

- **DRESS CODE**

Children should be dressed appropriately for safety, modesty, personal hygiene, climate and consideration of others. Clothing should not be too short or too tight. Shirts should cover the entire torso. Halter-tops and bare midriff tops should not be worn. Undergarments should not show. Tennis shoes or rubber sole shoes are recommended for safety reasons. They protect feet from injury and are essential for participation in physical education classes and using playground equipment. Sandals, flip-flops and other open shoes are not recommended for school. Clothing that advertises alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or that displays inappropriate language should not be worn to school.

Together, if we set clear and consistent expectations for student dress and behavior, we will continue to maintain a positive learning environment for all of our children.

- **FIELD TRIPS**

Every grade level has several field trips planned during the year. On each occasion, information about the trip and a permission slip will be sent home with your child. The permission slip must be signed by parents and students and returned to school in order for your child to go on the trip. Parents of ESOL students may contact the ESOL teacher if they do not understand any of the information sent home about the field trip. Please send in any money required as soon as possible. Due to BCPS Board Policy 6104, money cannot be refunded if you pay for a field trip and your child is unable to go.

Adult chaperones often accompany classes on field trips. Your child's teacher will ask for chaperones if they are needed. Chaperones must complete the volunteer training in order to accompany students on a field trip. Please let your child's teacher know if you need to complete the training.

- **LOST AND FOUND**

Please mark all of your child's belongings clearly and check the lost and found box if your child loses something. The box is located outside of the cafeteria, next to the vending machines. All unclaimed items are donated quarterly to a charitable organization.

- **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

It is a Pleasant Plains Elementary rule that students *not* bring any toys, cell phones\*, games, sports equipment, trading cards, etc. to school. These items sometimes get broken or lost, and they interfere with student learning. Students should *only* bring the items listed on the school supply list distributed by their classroom teachers. As stated in the Baltimore County Public Schools Student Handbook, BCPS does not accept responsibility for students' personal property.

\*If it is necessary for a child to have a cell phone, please call the school at 410-887-3549 to arrange for the phone to be kept in the office.

- **SCHOOL PICTURES**

Individual and class photographs will be taken during the school year. This typically takes place during the fall and spring. A make-up day is scheduled for children who are sick on the day the *individual* pictures are taken. Purchase of school pictures is optional. Information about picture day will be sent home by the teachers and highlighted in the school newsletter.

## • SCHOOL SUPPLIES

The school provides all textbooks and instructional materials. A list of supplemental school supplies each child will need for the following year (paper, pencils, scissors, pocket folders, glue, notebooks, etc.) is sent home at the end of each academic year. The list also is available in the school office.

## • TESTING

County reading and mathematics assessments are administered during the school year. In addition, standardized county-mandated and state-mandated tests are administered once a year, depending on grade level. Watch the school newsletter for your child's testing schedule and please ensure that your child is present each day for testing. There also is a testing calendar on the BCPS website.

## • VOLUNTEERS

Volunteering at the school provides an opportunity to connect to the school and be a leader in the school community. Many volunteer opportunities are available each year. Some are directly curriculum-related; others, depending upon teachers' needs, may be of a social or clerical nature. These include, but are not limited to:

- Volunteering to help with a PTA organized event
- Donating goods, services, or time to school activities.
- Helping teachers with curriculum-related activities in the classroom. These vary depending on grade level and the individual teacher.
- Helping at class special events (e.g., picnics, parties, field day).
- Performing clerical/administrative work for teachers or office staff (photocopying, etc.).
- Chaperoning field trips.
- Working on the school grounds.
- Helping cafeteria assistants and students during lunch.
- Tutoring, under a teacher's guidance, in reading, writing, or math.
- Helping in the library or assisting students with their 100 Book Challenge reading

If you plan to volunteer in the school, you *must complete volunteer training*, and fill-out the necessary paperwork. *Please remember:* All volunteers are required to register in the school office and pick up a visitor's badge each time they come to work in the building.



## VI. SCHOOL REWARDS PROGRAMS

Pleasant Plains Elementary School has the opportunity to earn money through a variety of programs available in the business community. Please take a moment to review some of the programs below. We truly appreciate your support!

- **Cartridges for Kids**  
Pleasant Plains is pleased to participate in Rapid Refill®'s cartridge recycling program. This environmentally friendly program pays cash for empty copy machine and computer printer cartridges. Participation in this program helps protect the environment and raises money for technology items. Just send your empty copy machine and computer cartridges to the school. We'll do the rest.
- **A+ Bonus Bucks by Giant**  
With A+ BonusBucks, shoppers who designate Pleasant Plains Elementary as the recipient of their support accrue points with each purchase that uses the Giant Card. Points also are accrued with purchases made online with Peapod by Giant. At the end of each month, these points determine the school's cash total which is automatically credited to its account. Log on to [www.giantfood.com](http://www.giantfood.com) to designate online, or dial 1-877-366-2668 to designate over the phone
- **General Mills Box Tops for Education**  
Participation in the Box Tops program is easy! Simply clip the 10¢ Box Tops coupons from hundreds of General Mills products and partnering brands, like Cheerios®, Betty Crocker®, Hefty®, Juicy Juice®, Ziploc®, Kleenex® and bring them to school. We'll take care of the rest!
- **Take Charge of Education by Target**  
Target credit card holders can enroll in the Take Charge program and designate Pleasant Plains as the recipient of a bi-annual donation from Target. The amount is based on the total Target credit card purchases made in a specified time period.
- **Campbell's Labels for Education**  
The Labels for Education program has a focus on instilling healthy eating and living habits in children. You can collect labels from participating Campbell products and bring them to school. We'll redeem them for educational resources that range from sports equipment to musical instruments to health and wellness materials.
- **5% Back to Schools Program by Office Depot**  
This program offers schools a chance to earn 5% of purchasing credit towards free supplies. When shopping at Office Depot, simply request that Pleasant Plains Elementary School receive 5% of your total sale. Office Depot will total the qualifying purchases made during each program period and award our school 5% of that total value in merchandise credit that can be used towards free supplies.