

Back Creek Elementary School

7130 Bent Mountain Road

Roanoke, Virginia 24018

540-772-7565

Fax: 540-776-7144

School Colors: Red and White

Mascot: Bears

Mission Statement

It is the mission of Roanoke County Public Schools to ensure that all students participate in quality learning experiences necessary to grow, adapt, and meet the challenges of a changing world.

Roanoke County Hotline: 562-6000

Roanoke County Schools Website:

<http://www.rcs.k12.va.us/>

Safety

Safety is a major concern at Back Creek. The school safety plan is updated annually and addresses everyday safety as well as emergency situations. We ask parents to support our efforts to provide a safe environment by reinforcing school rules with their children regarding behavior at school and on buses. We appreciate adults practicing safe driving around our school and following arrival and dismissal procedures.

ATTENDANCE

The school day begins promptly at 7:55 a.m. Students should arrive early with all materials needed each day. The importance of regular attendance cannot be over-emphasized! Students should be in school every day that they are physically healthy. If there are symptoms of illness, they should be kept at home to recover and to protect the health of other students.

Virginia State Law requires that parents be contacted when a child is absent from school. Parents are asked to call the school when their child is going to be absent. Please call the office by 8:30 a.m. If the parent is unable to call, the school will contact the parent as early in the day as possible.

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EXCUSED ABSENCES

When a student returns to school, A WRITTEN EXCUSE FROM THE PARENT OR PHYSICIAN IS REQUIRED AND SHOULD STATE THE REASON FOR THE ABSENCE. Examples of excused absences are personal illness, doctor or dental appointment, or death in the family.

LATE ARRIVALS

Students arriving in the classroom after 7:55 a.m. are considered tardy. Tardiness can adversely affect a student's progress because he/she misses the instruction at the beginning of the day. Tardiness will be noted on attendance records. A parent must sign the child in at the office where the student will receive a tardy pass before proceeding to class. In the event of excessive student tardiness, appropriate steps such as setting up parent conferences and/or having students make up time after the regular school day shall be taken. If it does become necessary for a student to make up time due to tardiness, it will be the responsibility of the parent to pick up the child at the appropriate time after school.

RELEASE OF PUPILS DURING SCHOOL DAY

Definite procedures are followed to assure the safety of children who are released during the school day:

- The parent (or other adult named in a note) **MUST COME TO THE OFFICE and SIGN FOR THE CHILD. ALL children MUST BE signed out in the office.** If any person other than the parent or guardian is to pick up the child, the school must have a written statement from the parent specifying the necessary information.
- If your child becomes ill during the day and needs to be picked up, a parent or legal guardian will be called to pick up the child.

REPORT CARDS/CONFERENCES

Report cards will be sent home at the end of each nine weeks for students in grades 1-5. Kindergarten students receive their report card at the end of each semester, and a fall review is sent home in October. Students in grades K-2 are evaluated using a checklist on their report cards. Students in grades 3-5 receive grades in all four core subjects each nine weeks. Parents are encouraged to attend Parent/Teacher conferences as a means of keeping informed about their child's progress. Additional conferences may be requested at any time by parents or teachers.

INTERIM REPORTS

Interim reports are sent home during the middle of each nine weeks grading period for students in grades 1-5.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS WHO MAINTAIN TWO HOUSEHOLDS

Upon request, Back Creek Elementary will make available to the non-custodial parent any information concerning his/her child unless otherwise instructed by the court.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework may be assigned at the discretion of the teachers and shall be in accordance with the needs of the students.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT REQUESTS

When a student is absent, parents may request homework assignments. Please call the school to request assignments before 8:30 am. Assignments may be picked up after school on the day of the request.

MAKE-UP WORK POLICY

Students in grades K-12 are expected to make up all missed work from an absence within 10 school days upon the student's return to school. If the student does not complete the make-up work within that time frame, he/she will earn a zero for those assignments.

Assignments made prior to an absence are due upon the return to school. Exceptions may be granted by individual teachers.

Excused and School Related Absences: Students are required to request make-up work on the first day back to school. Students will be given 10 school days to make up the work. Exceptions for a longer time period for make-up work may be granted by individual teachers.

Unexcused Absences: Students are required to begin to make up all work missed on the first day of return to class. Students will be given 10 school days to make up the work. The maximum grade given for such make-up work shall be "69". Time extensions will not be granted.

Incomplete Work: A grade of incomplete (I) will be entered on a student's report card when make-up work has not been completed, and the allowed make-up time extends across the end of one grading period into another. After make-up work is completed, a corrected grade will be submitted by the teacher. If make-up work is not

completed by the established deadline, the incomplete (I) will be changed to the computer average with incomplete work averaged as a zero.

Students with pre-approved absences may request their assignments prior to their absence from school. Make-up work for students with pre-approved absences, i.e. tests, quizzes, etc., will be given to the student upon his/her return to school.

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CONDUCT

(As stated in the Roanoke County Schools Student Conduct Code)

An atmosphere for learning must exist in any school if quality education is to prevail. In order to preserve an orderly and productive atmosphere for education, the Roanoke County School Board has adopted a Student Conduct Code.

Each year parents receive a copy of the Student Conduct Code. Parents must sign and return the "Acknowledgment of Receipt" form and the "Internet Use Agreement." Both are found at the back of the Conduct Code. These documents describe the standards of conduct expected of all students and the consequences for violating the conduct code.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION FOR VIOLATION OF RULES:

The violation of any of the rules of conduct as stated in the Student Conduct Code shall be subject to disciplinary actions. Disciplinary action may consist of a conference, warning, reprimand, assignment, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion.

After reading the Student Conduct Code and returning the signed portion, parents should keep the document for review and referral.

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DRESS CODE

General Guidelines for Clothing:

- Short/Skirt length should be no higher than 5" from the top of the knee
- Sleeveless shirts are allowed; shoulder straps must be a minimum of 3 inches in width
- No undergarments, cleavage, or midriffs should be exposed
- Safe shoes are required at all times

The following SHOULD NOT be worn to school:

- Sleeves with oversized armholes
- See through garments
- Form-fitted shorts (i.e. biker shorts)
- Cut offs, torn or ripped clothing
- Grossly oversized clothing
- Shirts with spaghetti straps
- Tube/tank tops
- Pajamas/Bedroom slippers
- Heavy, metal chains
- Any accessories with spikes (jewelry, belts, etc.)
- Dog chains or collars
- Sunglasses
- Headgear including hats, caps, sweatbands, bandanas, wave caps, or scarves (except for religious beliefs)

Anything considered dangerous, distracting, or disruptive to the instructional environment is prohibited. Clothing or accessories should not bear messages or pictures that are profane, obscene, offensive to others or promote gangs, violence, drugs, or alcohol.

The administration at each school reserves the right to judge appropriate appearance.

BOOK BAGS

For safety reasons, students are not allowed to have anything hanging from book bags. Strings, key chains, and other such items must be removed.

WEAPONS

A student shall not knowingly possess, handle, or transmit any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon or a dangerous instrument on school property or at any school activity. Carefully review Rule 1 in your Student Conduct Code.

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BULLYING/HARASSMENT

Bullying occurs when an individual is exposed repeatedly to negative actions on the part of one or more persons and there is a real perceived imbalance of power. Negative actions may refer to any word, look, sign, misuse of technology that hurt a person's body, feelings, and/or property. Further, it shall be a violation for

bystanders to tolerate or participate in bullying. Please review Rule 3 of the Student Conduct Code.

TOYS

Toys, cards, electronic games, etc. are not allowed at school or on the bus without prior permission from the teacher. When allowed, students must follow class rules for use and storage of these articles. Failure to comply with these rules may result in the confiscation of the item. If permission is given for toys, etc., to come to school, it is the student's responsibility to keep up with the item. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

VISITORS

To ensure the safety of all the children and personnel in the building, ALL visitors to the building *must* stop by the office and sign in. ALL visitors must wear a badge provided by the office. If a parent needs to see his/her child, the child will be called to the office. This is necessary for the safety and protection of the child and to cut down on classroom disruptions to the instructional program.

TEXTBOOKS

There is no fee for textbooks. However, a textbook contract is sent home at the beginning of school for parents to sign. Any loss or damage to the textbooks will result in a charge based on the cost of replacement.

INSURANCE

School insurance is offered every year for those who wish to purchase coverage for their child. Information is sent home during the first few days of school. The school will collect the fees.

Dental insurance information is also sent home but we do not collect fees for this.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Students may purchase lunch from the cafeteria. Lunch is \$2.00 and breakfast is \$1.00 each day. Lunch menus will be sent home monthly. Lunch money can be placed in each child's own account in advance. We encourage you to take advantage of this option.

Students who bring their lunch from home or those who want extra milk, may purchase milk for \$0.50 or juice for \$0.50. Ice cream is also available for \$.50.

Parents who wish to eat lunch with their child should choose their entrée and notify the office by phone or note by 8:30 a.m. The price of an adult lunch is \$2.50.

Since the gym is the school's dining room, the students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner for a public dining area. All students and parents are expected to eat in the cafeteria.

BORROWING LUNCH MONEY

It is Roanoke County's policy not to loan lunch money. However, in an emergency, we will charge lunch. It is very, very important that the money be returned the following day. If a child needs to borrow lunch money for the second day in a row, then the parent will be called. Extras and/or breakfast may not be bought if the child owes money to the cafeteria. If a student should exceed the 5 charge limit, the student will be offered a cheese sandwich and a carton of white milk for lunch.

JUICE/ICE CREAM

Orange, grape, and apple juice, as well as ice cream, are available each day. The juice costs \$0.50 and the ice cream is \$0.50. Juice and ice cream cannot be used as a lunch substitute.

PARTIES

We do not have student birthday parties at school. It is acceptable, however, to send a HEALTHY snack for each child in the classroom or ice cream may be bought for each classmate. Please let your child's teacher know that you wish to send a snack.

Distribution of birthday party invitations at school *is prohibited* during school hours.

Room mothers host seasonal parties for the children.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are planned by the classroom teachers to extend and enrich instruction. Trips are related to curriculum and help to meet an SOL objective.

Parents *must* complete the required field trip permission form sent home in order for their child to go on the trip. Faxes, telephone, and/or oral permission are not acceptable.

Students may be denied the privilege of participating in a field trip if his/her behavior would cause a safety concern for other students or interfere with the learning of other students.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

POLICY 7.13 ADMINISTERING MEDICATION TO STUDENTS

To protect the safety of all students from the misuse of medication, the policy of the Roanoke County School Board for administering medication is as follows:

1. School personnel shall give prescription medication to students only when a written request from the physician or nurse practitioner is received detailing the name of the drug, dosage, time to be given, reason to be given, and possible side effects and with written parent permission. Parents must deliver the prescribed medication in person to the school in its original container.

2. If over-the-counter (OTC) non-prescription medication is required, it must be supplied to the school in the original container by the parent. Written parent permission must be provided with specific directions for administration. This rule applies to cough drops and topical ointments.

DO NOT SEND MEDICATION WITH YOUR CHILD!

Non-Prescription Medication Administration (Over the Counter)
Grades Kindergarten through Eight

1. Written parental permission must be provided indicating the name of the medication, dosage, time to be given, the reason for administration, and the parent/guardian's signature on the Medication Permission Form. A handwritten note is acceptable if it provides the aforementioned information.
2. The medication should be hand delivered to the school by the parent/guardian. Medication must be in the original container and must be appropriately labeled with the manufacturer's direction. The pills should be counted by the parent and school staff when delivered to the school and documented on the medication log.

Additional Guidelines

Medication, both prescription and over the counter, to be given to the student by school personnel must be brought to the school by the parent/guardian. The parent must complete form I381.

Medication should be picked up by the parent at the time it is discontinued. All medication must be picked up at the end of the school year. Any left over medication will be destroyed.

Parents should monitor their child's medication and supply additional medicine as necessary. Since only the physician and the parent know whether a child is to continue medication, it is not the responsibility of the school to notify parents or physicians if a child needs additional medication.

HEALTH SCREENINGS

The health nurse and trained volunteers conduct vision, hearing, and height and weight screenings for certain grade levels. The speech therapist also conducts a speech screening for all students new to the school. Parents and/or teachers may request that the specialist screen a student for speech or hearing concerns.

NURSE

We have the services of a county nurse, Jennifer Simmons, each day from 8:30 to 1:30. She provides treatment for minor illnesses and injuries. If a child becomes ill or is injured, parents will be contacted and arrangements will be made to have the child picked-up.

ALLERGIES OR OTHER HEALTH CONCERNS

If your child has been diagnosed with specific allergies, please send written notification to the office and your child's teacher. Please notify your child's teacher in writing of any other health concerns which might affect his/her achievement or well being while at school.

DENTIST OR DOCTOR APPOINTMENTS

In order to preserve instructional time, please do not make doctor or dentist appointments during school hours.

CHARACTER EDUCATION

Character Education is the deliberate effort to develop good character based on common core virtues that are good for the individual and good for society. The Commonwealth of Virginia has passed a law requiring schools to teach character education. In response to this, Roanoke County has elected to use the program "Character Counts" to accomplish this goal.

Through this program, students will be exposed to the six "pillars" of character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. Students and staff are expected to abide by these pillars in dealing with others and following school rules.

GUIDANCE

Cindy Noble is the Guidance Counselor at Back Creek. She is here everyday. She works with students, teachers, and parents. Objectives for the program include assisting students in developing academic skills, effective interpersonal relationships, realistic self-concepts, self-awareness and self-direction, and effective coping behaviors. Classroom guidance and small group sessions are scheduled on a regular basis. Mrs. Noble will schedule private conferences with students or parents upon request.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Stephanie Fleshman, Kim Cochran, and Cathy Burke, learning specialists, provide a resource program in individual and small group settings according to individual needs. Consultation is available when needed for teachers and parents.

MEDIA - LIBRARY

The media specialist/librarian, Carolyn Arrington, makes available books and magazines, audio-visuals, and equipment to all students and teachers in an effort to better coordinate the school program. A professional library is also maintained for use by teachers and parents. Mrs. Arrington plans and suggests resources to enrich units of study.

MUSIC

Students receive music instruction each week. The music specialist, Sue Giles, offers a varied program. The vocal music program includes singing, listening, music appreciation, rhythmic experiences, instrumental instruction, music reading, and creative experiences. It

provides a means for wholesome emotional release, develops group participation, creates an interest in a field which the child may later develop further, develops a coordinated physical expression, and gives pleasure and satisfaction to the individual child. Instrumental instruction taught at various grade levels includes guitars, recorders, xylophones, and rhythm instruments.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Shawn Fortner is our physical education specialist. The classroom teacher will conduct physical education the other three days of the week. During this time, the teacher provides exercises and activities that help develop healthy minds and bodies. **EACH CHILD NEEDS TENNIS SHOES EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK.** If your child cannot take physical education, send a note explaining why he/she cannot participate and how long he/she will be unable to join in activities. Because of the vital importance of physical activity, children are expected to participate in the program unless a health condition prohibits participation.

GIFTED EDUCATION

Kim Barker will be working with us in this area. When seeking to identify gifted students, the school system is searching for those children who by virtue of outstanding abilities are capable of exceptional performance. Those students who are identified require curriculum adaptations and/or additional services beyond those usually provided by the regular school program.

Roanoke County's identification processes incorporate standardized and non-standardized data which relate achievement, intelligence, performance, and teacher ratings. Although the approach to identification varies for students in Grades K-2 and Grades 3-6, the ultimate goal of each is to find those children whose outstanding

capabilities necessitate curriculum adaptations and/or additional services.

If you have specific questions about the screening process and/or feel your child's abilities make him/her a candidate for screening, consult the principal or guidance counselor.

If your child is new to Roanoke County Schools and participated in a gifted program in his/her former school, please consult with the principal or guidance counselor to begin the screening process.

Roanoke County also provides a program for artistically talented children in Grades 3-6. Screening for this program begins in January of each school year and involves students in Grades 2-5 who are referred by parents, classroom teachers, and/or art teachers.

BAD WEATHER OR EMERGENCY CONDITIONS

The decision to operate or not operate schools during inclement weather is the responsibility of the Superintendent of Roanoke County Schools. If schools will not operate, or will open late, announcements will be made on local radio and TV stations, as well as the Instant Alert System. If weather conditions make it necessary to close schools during the day, it will be announced on radio and TV stations, as well as the Instant Alert System. Parents may call the county information number, **562-6000**, to find out about early school closing or delayed opening.

SINCE PARENTS ARE NOT ALWAYS AT HOME, PLEASE MAKE ARRANGEMENTS AND MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD KNOWS WHERE HE/SHE IS TO GO IN THE EVENT SCHOOL CLOSES EARLY. On the first day of school, you will receive a form regarding your plans for your child in the event of inclement weather or emergency early dismissal.

Teachers are not to release children to go home with anyone other than the child's parents without permission from the parent. When a child is picked up by a parent or others, the child must be signed out in the office by the person picking up the child. The office will advise the teacher to send the child to the office.

SAFETY DRILLS

Students are instructed in the necessary safety procedures to follow in case of an emergency. Fire drills are practiced monthly. Bus drills, tornado drills, and lockdown drills are practiced a minimum of twice a year.

TRANSPORTATION

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES-CAR RIDERS

MORNING

Parents wishing to bring their children to school may arrive at 7:35 am. Please do not bring your child earlier than 7:35 am, because there will not be a staff member here to supervise him/her. There will be an adult on duty for arrival and dismissal of car riders. Students should NOT exit the vehicle until an adult is outside.

AFTERNOON

Parents wishing to pick-up their children from school should arrive at 2:05 pm. An adult will assist students getting into cars.

BUS RIDERS

- Students should be standing at the bus stop 5 minutes prior to scheduled time (not inside a vehicle or inside the house looking for the bus).
- Preschool, Kindergarten, and First grade students should be met at the bus stops by an adult. If a parent is not at the bus stop the child will be taken back to the school to be picked up.

Getting on the bus:

- When waiting for the bus, stay away from traffic and avoid roughhousing or other behavior that can lead to carelessness. Do not stray onto the street.
- Line up away from the street as the school bus approaches.
- Use the handrail when stepping onto the bus.

Behavior on the bus:

- When on the bus, find a seat and sit down. Loud talking or other noise can distract the bus driver and is not allowed.
- Never put head, arms, or hands out of the window.
- Keep book bags out of the aisle because it is a tripping hazard.
- No eating or drinking on the bus.
- Keep all belongings in book bag.

- At your stop, wait for the bus to stop completely before getting up from your seat.

Getting off the bus:

- If you have to cross the street, always cross in front of the bus. Make sure the driver can see you. Wait for the driver to signal for you to cross.
- If you think you have left something on the bus, never run back to the bus. Anything left on the bus can be retrieved on the following day.

For the safety of all students who ride buses to and from school, bus conduct rules should be followed at ALL times.

Riding a school bus is a privilege. Failure to comply with all bus rules may result in loss of bus privileges. If bus privileges are lost it is the parents' responsibility to transport the child to and from school. Please read carefully the section of the Student Conduct Code entitled Pupil Transportation.

DISMISSAL/PERMISSION NOTES

Students riding a different bus or getting off at a different stop **MUST** bring a note from their parent. If your child is going home with a friend, you **AND** the friend's parents must both write a note giving permission. If your child plans on staying after school for extra curricular activities a note must be sent each time they stay.

Change in dismissal arrangements should be phoned in to the office no later than 1:30 p.m. **NO EXCEPTIONS!!!**

EARLY DISMISSAL

If you need to pick up your child earlier than 2:05, please come to the office, sign your child out, and he/she will be called to the office.

MISCELLANEOUS

Please mark your child's clothing and other possessions including lunch boxes, bag lunches, and book bags with his/her name. There is a Lost and Found box in the office if your child has misplaced something. Please come in and check it for any lost items.

TELEPHONE USE

Teachers cannot accept phone calls during the instructional day. Please leave a message in the office. Teachers will return telephone calls as quickly as possible.

Students are not allowed to make phone calls home unless they have permission from the classroom teacher and the office staff.

COPYRIGHT POLICY

A student's creative work belongs to the student. After the work has been reviewed, corrected, evaluated, or graded, the work will be returned to the student. Except for classroom and instructional purposes, no one may publish, display, perform, record, or transmit a student's work, or use that work as a part of another work without a student's permission. However, if the student submits the work for publication, display, or performance to any school activity, the school or school group has been granted the right to edit, publish, display, perform, record, and transmit the work. For information on

registering work, contact the Copyright Office, Section LM455, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., and ask for publication RI Copyright Basics.

PARENT/TEACHER ASSOCIATION

The Back Creek Elementary PTA is actively involved and very supportive of the total school program. It provides a wide range of programs and activities designed to improve educational opportunities for our children and enhance school-community relationships. The PTA sponsors fund-raising activities to raise funds for much-needed equipment, instructional materials, and operating expenses for special programs. All fund-raising activities prohibit door-to-door solicitation in compliance with Roanoke County School Board Policy.

You are encouraged to join the PTA and attend the meetings. Board meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. Notices will be sent home to remind you of general meetings. Current officers and a calendar of meetings are published in the back of this handbook and in the PTA newsletter.

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