



Ballenger Creek Elementary School

5250 Kingsbrook Drive

Frederick, Maryland 21703

Phone: 240-236-2500 Fax: 240-236-2501

School Website: <http://bces.sites.fcps.org>



Welcome to the 2018-2019 school year! We are excited to share our newly crafted **Vision** and **Mission** with you as we embark on a year of learning and growing together.

BCES Bobcats are leaders!

We...

✦ Rectangular Snip

Bring our best
Own our mistakes
Build each other up
Challenge ourselves
Accept each other
Take risks
Support safety and wellness

***Love
Learn
Lead
Succeed***



Our **Vision**(Bobcats Acrostic) and **Mission** (*Love*Learn*Lead*Succeed*) were built from our **Shared Values**:

- Demonstrate **positivity** in your thoughts and actions
- Promote **safety** of self, school, and society
- Show **character** by treating others as we want to be treated
- Build **meaningful relationships**
- Persevere through **challenges**
- Find **joy** in teaching and learning
- **Lead** others to find your voice/Lead yourself and others to find your best self
- Embrace and celebrate **differences**

Having a Mission, Vision and a set of Shared Values unites us as a school community. We hold each other and our students to these statements that are grounded in our belief that all children deserve the very best from us and from each other every day. You are invited and encouraged to be an active participant as we work collaboratively to continue to strengthen this community to serve our children.



Find Out First

Our school and systemic FCPS news is shared electronically through Find Out First (FOF). Parent/Guardian email addresses provided to our school via your child's Student Information Card are entered into the FCPS Student Information System (SIS) and uploaded to our FOF service to receive school and systemic email messages - such as school events and when schools close unexpectedly due to inclement weather or other emergencies. From FOF, you will also receive instructions about how to log in to add a mobile phone number to get emergency-closing text messages. You will also receive instructions about how to sign up for systemic communication such as calendar updates, newsletters, BOE action and more. If you change your email address during the school year, please notify our school office so you will continue to get FOF notices. Your Bobcat Bulletin will be shared bi-weekly via FOF throughout the year and will keep you up to date with important BCES news. Make sure to follow Ballenger Creek Elementary Principal, Kristen Canning, on twitter @fcpscanning for your front row seat into what is happening in classrooms and around the school.

Thursday Bobcat Folders

All students in grades PK-5 will have a blue Bobcat Folder that will come home every Thursday. The folder will be used to distribute school wide communication that can't be sent electronically, as well as, student work from your child's classroom. Please check the folder each Thursday and send it back to school with your child on Friday.

Teacher Communication

We are committed to maintaining open and efficient lines of communication. Families are encouraged to contact our team with any concerns, questions, or to share your ideas. Email is the most effective way to contact your child's teacher. Please remember that teachers are with students from 8:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. each day, with a 45 minute planning time. They will return phone calls and/or emails within 24 hours. Teachers are not available to talk with families during arrival or dismissal time, as they are actively supervising students. We will always work with families to coordinate a convenient time to collaborate, as needed.

Community Liaison

Liz Sherman - 240-236-2508

Our community liaison serves as a link between the home and school and can assist families in understanding and utilizing available resources. You may request the assistance of our community liaison to help with:

- Home/school communications
- Health immunizations
- School supplies
- Emergency food needs
- Meetings with your child's teacher
- Linking you to available support services, agencies, and programs
- Lending of educational materials
- Emergency transportation
- Attendance concerns

Safety and Security

The safety and security of both students and staff is our greatest responsibility; therefore, we have the following guidelines and procedures in place.

1. Our school building is equipped with security cameras and a card swipe system. All exterior doors are locked during the instructional day and visitors enter the building using the front entrance buzzer entry system. Visitors will be asked to state their full name and reason for visiting.
2. **Upon entering the building, visitors will enter the front office to sign in and pick up a visitor badge that should be worn while in the building. All visitors will be prompted to share a photo ID for verification. If a photo ID is not available, each visitor will be asked to provide his/her name and birthdate. Our FCPS Visitor Management System requires this process for all individuals.**
3. All students and staff will participate in scheduled emergency drills according to FCPS and MSDE policies.
4. Visitors are to adhere to FCPS and BCES rules and policies during emergencies.
5. Visitors may be asked to leave if not following safety and security guidelines.
6. Each student must have a current student information sheet with at least one emergency contact number. In the event of an emergency when a parent or guardian cannot be reached, the school will reach out to the emergency contact person. Any changes to student information or emergency information should be shared with the office immediately to ensure safety.

**Please do not take younger children to the classroom at any time during the day, even during special events. Events during the school day are for school aged children and families.*

Birthdays

Birthdays are very exciting and we love to recognize individual birthdays each day on the morning announcements. Due to student health and safety related to both known and unknown food allergies, **parents will not be allowed to bring food of any kind, homemade or pre-packed, to school to celebrate birthdays. We have several students with serious food allergies, particularly to nuts and products containing nuts.** Goodie bags with non-edible items such as pencils, erasers or items students use in the school setting may be distributed at the end of the school day by the classroom teacher. **Birthday party invitations can only be distributed at school if all students in the class are included.**

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

1. Students should not be dropped off before 8:30. There are no adults to supervise, as it is before staff duty hours.
2. The front drive is strictly utilized for dropping off (8:30 – 9:00 a.m.) and picking up (3:30 – 4:00 p.m.) children..

3. All drivers on school property must follow school procedures to ensure a safe environment. **Cell phone use while driving is prohibited.**
4. There are multiple ways students arrive and dismiss from our school.
 - **Bus Rider** – The buses will pick up and drop off on the blacktop area outside of the gymnasium. Students may only ride their assigned bus to and from school. In an emergency, school administrators may approve a parental request.
 - **Walkers**
 - Students who walk should use Castle Court crosswalk to cross Kingsbrook Drive and will enter through the front entrance doors. They will exit the school by the direction of staff. Parents are responsible for establishing a safe route for students to walk to and from school using designated crosswalks where appropriate.
 - Students who ride their bike or scooters to school are considered walkers. They will use the main entrance for arrival and dismissal and will be required to walk with their equipment on school property
 - **Kiss n Ride**
 - Arrival - Parents will form a single line in the front driveway and have their children ready to exit the car on the right side. When the staff member approaches to open the door, students should be ready to exit on the right side and follow the staff direction. Parents should remain in their vehicle.
 - Dismissal - parents will form a double line. Just after **3:30** students will be escorted by staff outside to waiting cars. Parents should remain in the car and pull up if your child requires assistance. Please do not exit your vehicle. A note should be sent to the office in the event someone different will be picking up your child.
 - **Park n Ride**
 - Arrival – Parents who park in the front parking lot should escort their children safely through the parking lot, using the pedestrian crosswalk. Students should follow the direction of staff to cross the when safe to get to the sidewalk, then enter the school through the front door. **Cars should not park on Kingsbrook Drive and allow children to walk through the parking lot unattended.**
 - Dismissal - Parents will park in the front parking lot and use the pedestrian crosswalk and sidewalks to enter the area designated outside the cafeteria door. Students will be dismissed at **3:45** to the side of the building near the cafeteria.

Attendance Policy and Procedures

Regular school attendance is important! In elementary school we are building good habits and laying the foundation for future success. Our goal is to achieve 96% attendance for the school year, an excellent rating! A student with a 96% attendance rate misses 7 days or less each school year.

What can Parents/Guardians do to help?

- Talk positively about school with your child and stress the importance of attendance.
- Establish regular schedules that promote rest and nutrition
- Schedule appointments before or after school, when possible
- Schedule vacations and trips around holidays and school breaks
- Notify the school in writing if your family will be taking a vacation during the regular school year. Students who take a trip with their parents will be excused no more than twice per year, with a combined maximum of five days (FCPS Reg. 400-70).
- Please call our school counselor (x62507) if you feel that your child is avoiding school due to stress or anxiety.

There is no need to call the school when your child is absent, but instead, send a note when your student returns (must be sent within 48 hours of the absence to be considered lawful). The note should include the child's full name, date(s) of absence, the reason, and the signature of the parent/guardian. Without a note, each absence is considered "unlawful". Please refer to FCPS Regulations 500-25 for more information. Student attendance is monitored regularly by our administration. In addition, our Pupil Personnel Worker supports families to assist with attendance considerations.

Tardiness

Students arriving after 9:00 a.m. are late to school. **You must walk your child to the office to sign-in if he/she arrives after 9:00 AM.** Each student will receive a late pass to enter the classroom. It is important that your child arrives on time. This allows him/her the opportunity to get organized for the day and receive important instructional directions. Student tardiness directly affects access to instruction will be closely monitored in conjunction with student attendance.

Early Dismissal

We ask that families avoid early dismissals, when possible, to minimize interruptions to instruction. **If your child must be excused for an appointment, please arrive to the office prior to 3:15 p.m.** A note should be sent to the teacher, who will then forward it to the office. When arriving to the front office, please sign your child out and our front office staff will contact your student's classroom for dismissal.

Absences Due to Illness

Children should stay home from school if they have:

- A temperature of 100 degrees or above anytime in the past 24 hours.
- Vomiting or diarrhea anytime in the past 24 hours.
- When prescribed an antibiotic, your child should stay home for at least 24 hours after starting medication before returning to school.

School Health Room

Health Room Hours: 8:30 am - 4:00 pm

Dispensing Medications: To dispense prescription medications at school, we must have completed medication and treatment authorization forms on file in the School Health Room and the appropriate prescription bottle with original labels. Forms are available at www.fcps.org/forms.

- Any dosage changes must have written notification from the attending health care provider. The first full day's dosage of any new prescription medication will not be given in school.
- Medications are not to be transported to school by students.
- Non-prescription medications will not be dispensed unless a healthcare provider has completed the Authorization Form for that purpose.
- Classroom teachers are prohibited from dispensing any medications.

Childhood Immunizations: The School Nurse and Health Technician are responsible for ensuring all students are properly immunized and will contact parents to verify immunization records if necessary. Note: The Frederick County Health Department provides immunization.

Vision and Hearing Screenings: The School Health staff will conduct vision and hearing screenings for all students in pre- kindergarten, new students in kindergarten, all 1st graders, and all students who are new to FCPS in any grade.

Pediculosis (Head Lice)

In accordance with Regulation 400-21:

- The school and health staff will provide evidence-based information and guidance to parents/guardians and all school staff regarding prevention, treatment, and management of head lice at the beginning of the school year and as needed throughout the school year.
- Students will be checked in the health room if they report an itchy scalp or demonstrate excessive scratching of the head.
- Staff will always support a calm, non-stigmatizing environment and maintain the confidentiality of any student suspected of or known to have a head lice infestation. We will ensure students returning to school following treatment for head lice are checked for efficacy of treatment upon return to school and one week later.
- School staff will collaborate with the school nurse to determine (on a case-by-case basis) if a student must be excluded from school due to head lice infestation. Exclusion from school will be a last resort and based on best practice school health standards. Students will not be excluded from school solely because of the presence of nits.
- School staff will collaborate with school health staff to identify prevention and control strategies when head lice is identified in the school setting.

Health Room Visits: If your child visits the Health Room during the school day for sickness or injury, he/she will receive a Health Room Visit Form to take home. A phone call home is not always made when a student visits the health room.

Dress Code

We want students to come to school comfortable and ready to learn! Please note the following:

- Shirts and blouses should cover the student's stomach, chest, back and shoulders.
- Skirts and shorts should be an appropriate length and cover the student's under clothing.
- Proper shoes should be worn for physical education and recess to ensure safety.
- Coats and outer clothing gear should not be worn during class.

The following items are prohibited in school and students may be asked to turn clothing inside out or given alternate clothing:

- hats, hoods, visors, and headgear are prohibited - except on announced special days
- clothing with offensive or obscene language
- clothing with pictures or words depicting sex, drugs, alcohol or weapons, offensive groups, or offensive comments

General Information for Parents and Students

1. Cell phones will be permitted on school property in accordance with county policy. The cell phone must be off and in the student's book bag during the school day. If the cell phone rings or vibrates and is visible during the day, it will be confiscated and returned directly to a parent or guardian from the office.
2. Students are not allowed to sell items for personal gain or profit on school property. This does not include school sponsored or PTA fundraisers.
3. Students are required to participate in all curriculum-related field trips. Permission slips will be sent home prior to each field trip and should be signed and returned immediately. If parental permission is not granted for a student to participate in a school based field trip, alternative arrangements will be made through the principal's office.
4. Students in attendance must eat a meal during the school day unless for religious reasons. Snacks will not be provided during the instructional day. See Food Service Information.
5. Students are required to follow all bus rules to ensure safely to and from school. Failure to adhere to the bus rules may result in a bus suspension.
6. The Lost and Found is located in the cafeteria.
 - Label all clothing, bookbags, and lunch boxes with your child's name.
 - Check the Lost and Found to reclaim missing items.
 - Unclaimed items will be donated to a charitable organization periodically and at the end of the school year.

Food Service Information

Breakfast will be served daily in the classroom free of charge.

Lunch will be served daily between 11:00 – 1:10.

Elementary Lunch - \$2.65

Reduced Price Lunch - \$.40

You may add money to your child's account at myschoolbucks.com.