

## *Message from the Principal*

Dear Parents,

As we embark on the new school year, we have extraordinary expectations for Wildlight Elementary School. We will strive for excellence and toward continuous improvement in all areas of school life. The most effective schools enjoy tremendous parental support. Our goal is to work as a team with you to foster that support.

Communication between school and home is also an indicator of effective schools. We will use the student daily planner as a primary communication tool. You are encouraged to keep an open line of communication with your child's teacher. If any questions or concerns should arise, please conference with them first. Should a conference not resolve your concern, please feel free to contact our guidance counselors, Mrs. Norfleet or Mrs. Parks, the Assistant Principal, Mrs. Ray or me.

This handbook contains information about the day-to-day operations of our school and our policies and procedures. A copy of our Parent/ Student/ Teacher Compact is provided as well. The district code of conduct can be found on the district website ([www.nassau.k12.fl.us](http://www.nassau.k12.fl.us)).

Please take the time to review the information on the next few pages with your child and please check his/ her planner daily for assignments and messages. Thank you in advance for your support of your student and Wildlight Elementary School.

Sincerely,

*Scott Hodges*  
Scott Hodges  
Principal

## **PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Parents have the responsibilities in guiding the child's behavior at home and in influencing his conduct at school. Per Florida Statute, parents are responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly, arrives on time, and dresses properly in a condition of health and mental alertness to benefit from instruction.

**If your child arrives late to school, A PARENT/ GUARDIAN MUST SIGN HIM/HER IN AT THE OFFICE.**

## **VISITORS**

Parents are a vital part of our success and always welcome on campus. However, parents wishing to volunteer in classes should notify the teacher of their intent prior to arriving at school and sign up with the volunteer coordinator to receive necessary clearance and information. A Volunteer Training Session will be announced and held at the beginning of the year. For your child's protection, everyone must sign in with the front the office with a valid driver's license or State issued ID before entering campus. Students may not bring visitors to school.

## **ATTENDANCE/ ABSENCES/ TRUANCY**

1. Regular attendance is required by Florida School Law and is the responsibility of the parent or guardian (1003.21, 1003.24). Regular attendance is defined as attending school for the full day of each day during which school is in session (1003.23).
2. A written explanation is required for EACH absence. The parent/ guardian is responsible for immediately submitting a written explanation when a student returns to school from an absence (1003.26).
3. Parent notes for up to ten (10) days will be excused for illness.
4. Absences in excess of ten (10) days will be excused if only one of the following is provided:
  - Appointment slip or note signed by a doctor or health department
  - Evidence that student has been out due to a death in the family
  - Official letter, subpoena, or other legal documents

**Attendance is a Promotion Criteria. More than 10 undocumented absences in a school year may result in retention!**

5. A student who has had at least five (5) unexcused absences within a calendar month or ten (10) unexcused absences within a ninety (90) calendar day period shall be considered truant and will be reported to the superintendent. The superintendent may take necessary steps to bring criminal prosecution against the parent, guardian, or person having control.
6. **Leaving School without Permission** – If a student leaves school without permission, the parent or guardian and the Nassau County Sheriff's Department will be notified. If this action continues, the State of Florida Division of Youth Services will be notified.

**For a more detailed and thorough examination of all attendance policies and procedures, please refer to the Code of Student Conduct, the Nassau County Student Progression Plan, and the Nassau County School Board Policy.**

## **IF A CONCERN ARISES**

If your child comes home with a concern, there is a procedure to follow. Most situations can be resolved in the first or second step.

1. The teacher and student should work together to solve the situation first. Encourage your child to talk with the teacher when other students are not present. This provides an opportunity for open discussion without the pressure of others being involved.
2. If there is no resolution between the student and the teacher, the parent should then participate. Schedule a meeting with the teacher by calling the school or writing a note to arrange a time. The parent, student and teacher should work toward a solution.
3. If there is still no resolution, the parent and student should schedule a meeting with the principal or guidance counselor.
4. Finally, if satisfaction is not reached, the parent should arrange an appointment with the Director of Elementary Education.

## **RULES AND REGULATIONS**

Each team or individual teacher has a discipline plan, classroom procedures, and grading standards. The first day of school, a copy of this plan will be sent home to the parents. A student is referred to the principal as the last consequence in the discipline plan unless the infraction warrants earlier intervention. The principal or his designee will investigate the problem and decide the discipline of the student. The discipline plan will include a "severity clause" stating that if a student severely disrupts a class he/she will immediately have to report to the principal. All students will be held accountable to the Elementary Education Code of Conduct. A complete copy of the Elementary student code of conduct can be located at [www.nassau.k12.fl.us](http://www.nassau.k12.fl.us). A hard copy is available for viewing in the offices of the Assistant Principal or Principal. At the end of the school year, students who have not received any discipline referrals (long forms) will be rewarded with Field Day activities.

## **BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS**

### **1. Respect**

Courtesy and respect must be exhibited to everyone at all times. If needed, parents will be contacted to assist in this area.

### **2. Disruptive Behavior**

A. **Classroom**-Children's learning & safety are a priority at Wildlight Elementary School. Therefore, disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. The student will be sent to the office with an accompanying note and action will be taken by the administration.

B. **BUS**-The bus driver shall report to the principal any misconduct on the part of the pupil. Any student misbehaving while on the bus could be suspended from riding the bus, but would be required to attend school. The same policy governing a student's classroom behavior is applicable to the student's behavior on the bus. **The student should ride the bus to which they are assigned. Assigned bus numbers and stops can only be changed with a note from home, which has an accompanying phone number where the parent can be reached for verification. Please take care of transportation issues prior to school hours. This will ensure minimal classroom disruptions and reduce the risk of miscommunication to your child.**

C. **Lunchroom**-The lunchroom behavior will be consistent with classroom behavior. Any inconsistency will be handled through proper channels.

### **3. Fighting**

Fighting is prohibited at Wildlight Elementary School. Any students fighting will be sent to the office. The incident will be investigated and the student may be subject to suspension. On the second offense, the student will be suspended and may only be allowed to return when accompanied by a parent. (Fla. School Law 1006.09)

### **4. Destroying School Property**

Any student who destroys or defaces school property will be held responsible for restoration. Parents will be expected to make financial restitutions.

### **7. Intimidation**

Any student caught intimidating another student is subject to suspension.

### **8. Selling Foodstuffs at School**

Because of the school lunch program and Nassau County School Board Policy, no student is permitted to sell food items (food, candy, nuts, etc.) at school.

### **9. Throwing Objects**

Students should not throw objects since this endangers the safety of others and is punishable by suspension.

### **10. Profanity**

Profanity should be interpreted as any profane, vulgar or unnecessarily crude utterance or gesture. For disciplinary purposes, it does not matter whether the profanity is directed toward a teacher, classmate, or merely done overtly. Such instances should be referred to the appropriate administrator.

### **11. School Sponsored Functions**

**A.** Most prices for school sponsored functions are pre-set and pre-paid to the organizations. Refunds will be made only if available to Wildlight Elementary School from the organization.

**B.** Students are expected to conduct themselves at all school-sponsored functions after school hours in the same manner as they should during school. This includes functions such as ballgames, band concerts, school dances, etc. (ALL EMPLOYEES HAVE THE RIGHT & RESPONSIBILITY TO CORRECT ANY STUDENT AT ANY TIME DURING THE DAY OR AT ANY SCHOOL SPONSORED FUNCTION.)

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY**

It is a student's responsibility to know and abide by all rules in the Student Handbook. It is well advised that students should leave any area or group when a school rule is being broken.

The School will not be responsible for any child on campus 30 minutes before school begins or 30 minutes after school ends unless they are attending a school sponsored activity. Upon arrival, all students are to report directly to their classrooms or the cafeteria if they attend breakfast.

## **BUS CONDUCT- Responsibilities of Transported Students-School bus Policy**

Riding a public bus is a privilege and safety violations will not be tolerated. Therefore it is imperative that all students comply with school bus policies. Students who violate bus safety rules will be suspended from the bus. If a bus related concern arises, contact the Transportation Department at 225-0127. Students are expected to follow the classroom rules while riding the bus. Additionally, they should:

1. Remain seated in their assigned seat at all times
2. Keep their back to the back of the seat
3. Keep hands, feet and objects to themselves
4. Talk quietly only to the students sitting in their seat

## **BOOK BAGS/ BACKPACKS**

Students may use book bags/ backpacks to assist in carrying school supplies. However, rolling type book bags are not allowed. Toys, electronic devices, CD players, hats, sunglasses, or games are not allowed on campus at any time. Any employee who observes any of these items on campus has the right to confiscate said items until a parent or guardian comes to the school to retrieve them. WES is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items that are brought on campus without permission. No member of the WES staff will assist in searching for lost or stolen items that should not have been brought to school.

## **CELL PHONES**

Per Fl. Statute, cell phones are permitted on campus. However, they must remain put away and turned off during the school day (from the first bell until the last bell). Cell phones that are on or in sight during the school day will be confiscated. The same rules apply on school busses. A parent or guardian must come to the school to retrieve a confiscated phone. WES is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged phones that have been used inappropriately on campus.

## **AWARDS**

The faculty and staff at Wildlight Elementary School strive to recognize individual student achievement. In doing so, a Nine Weeks Award Assembly is held at the conclusion of each nine weeks. Students are recognized for Perfect Attendance, Citizenship, BUG (bringing up grades), all E or ES, A-B Honor Roll and all A Honor Roll and success with Accelerated Reader and other curriculum based initiatives. Additionally, students who have perfect attendance each semester are put into a drawing for a free bicycle.

We also strive to recognize the extra-curricular accomplishments of our students. Please contact the principal if your child receives an honor or award for athletics, community service, hobbies, or other activities which occur outside normal school hours so that the school community can celebrate along with your family.

## **DRESS CODE**

Please refer to the Code of Student Conduct for Elementary Students located at the district website [www.nassau.k12.fl.us](http://www.nassau.k12.fl.us).

The School Board of Nassau County policy 2.31 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, gender, religion, nation or ethnic origin, genetic information, sexual orientation, disability, political or religious beliefs, or marital status against student or employee in the state system of public education. Information may be found on the district website at [www.nassau.k12.fl.us](http://www.nassau.k12.fl.us) or may be obtained by calling 904-491-9888.

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## **FISCAL TRANSPARENCY**

According to House Bill 7029, parents have the right to a report card about the school grade, including a school financial report that indicates the average amount of money expended per student in the school. Once this report is released, Wildlight Elementary School will send a copy home with your student. Let the school know if you do not receive this information by September 1, 2018, so that we can send you another copy in a timely manner.

## **COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL**

Students are more successful in school when the important adults in their lives are working together to support them. A concerted effort is made by the staff at Wildlight Elementary School to keep parents informed of the skills, topics, and activities being pursued and the success each child has achieving them.

Our school-wide home/school communication tool is the color-coded folder and agenda/planner binder. Teachers also send home weekly classroom newsletters. The Trailblazer Times is a monthly school newsletter published and posted to our school's website and FB page, along with a calendar and lunch menu. Important dates are also published on the school marquee.

While technological forms of communication may be popular and convenient, these methods are not encouraged. Texting, Facebooking, Twittering, etc. are not School Board approved methods of home-school communication. We do have a very informative school website which is designed to keep you up-to-date and which allows you instant access to your student's FOCUS account directly from the site so you can track your student's current grades. To facilitate ease of communication, teachers have e-mail and voicemail accounts as well. **Teachers check phone and e-mail messages during non-student contact times. We will make every effort to return communication within 24 hours, during scheduled work days.**

**At WES, we work hard to keep open lines of school/family communication.** Should any concerns arise, please contact your child's classroom teacher first to seek resolve. Teachers love working with your students, and desire to work with their families to make the school year successful for all of our students. Although not ideal, should you desire to have your child transferred to another class; a request can be made to the school Principal. At WES, we follow the Nassau County policy of two conferences with Administrative involvement to attempt resolution. Following this process, the request will be approved or denied by Administration within two weeks of the initial request. If the request is denied, we will notify the family and specify the reason. We all desire for students and families to have a positive school experience in every classroom at WES!

Additionally, Wildlight Elementary utilizes a recorded telephone message system for all pertinent school reminders and event information. Effective communication between all stakeholders is key for success! Thank you for helping us with these efforts!

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / PATRIOTIC PROGRAMS**

According to Nassau County Administrative rules, the Pledge of Allegiance is recited on a daily basis at Wildlight Elementary School. Please know that House Bill 7029 authorizes student rights to not recite the Pledge of Allegiance should this be the desire of the student or family. Please contact the school should you desire to have your child opt out of the pledge or patriotic experiences at WES.