

2021-2022
Kindergarten to 4th Grade

Student Handbook



Coldwater Elementary School

530 Taylors Chapel Road
Anniston, Alabama 36201
Phone: (256) 241-3870

Principal
Assistant Principal
Guidance Counselor
Office Assistant
Office Assistant

Dr. Catherine Finkley
Abbey Gilchrist
Amy Knighton
Angela Perez
Dawn Simpson

DeArmanville Elementary School

170 School Road
Oxford, Alabama 36207
Phone: (256) 241-3918

Principal
Assistant Principal
Guidance Counselor
Office Assistant
Office Assistant

Amy Copeland
Kelley Williams
Tiffany Fuller
Jennifer McGuire
Patti Mixon

Oxford Elementary School

1401 Caffey Drive
Oxford, Alabama 36203
Phone: (256) 241-3844

Principal
Assistant Principal
Assistant Principal
Guidance Counselor
Secretary/Bookkeeper
Office Assistant/Registrar

Claire Gamble
Darryl Spradley
Jordan Pilkington
April Livingston
Cathy Key
Christi Gaskins

Oxford City Schools Vision Statement

Our vision is to be **THE** leader in all aspects of education. From the time a child enters kindergarten until graduation we want to provide the best instruction, extracurricular activities, facilities and services enabling our students to become productive successful citizens

Oxford City Schools Mission Statement

The mission of the Oxford City School System, the focal point of a growing, diverse community, is to ensure the academic success of all students through a student-centered system of individualized instruction, highly qualified staff, exemplary facilities, and effective use of all resources.

Principals' Message

Dear Parents and Students,

We want to welcome you to the 2021-2022 school year. We look forward to working together with you this year to make it an exciting and rewarding experience. Our goal is that every student will grow and achieve success in all areas. It is important that we are focused on growing the whole child by providing multiple learning opportunities. We are able to offer Maker Spaces, art, music, technology, health, library and guidance classes in addition to academics and physical education. Students are able to demonstrate what they have learned at student-led conferences.



We encourage you to follow what's happening at your child's school by visiting their Facebook, Twitter, or school website. If we can be of any assistance to you this year, please don't hesitate to contact us.
Let's make it a GREAT year! Go Big O !!

Oxford City Schools Pre-Kindergarten-4th Grade Principals

Dr. Catherine Finkley, Coldwater Elementary School
Amy Copeland, DeArmanville Elementary School
Claire Gamble, Oxford Elementary School

Attendance Information

Student attendance will be recorded on a daily basis. To be counted present for the day, a student must attend at least half of the school day (11:15). A student must attend a minimum of 156 days to be considered for promotion unless the principal approves excessive absences. When a student returns to school after an absence, a note of explanation from the parent, guardian, physician, or other health provider must be submitted within **THREE SCHOOL DAYS**. Parents/legal guardians must submit a written excuse. Excuses **cannot** be sent on apps (e.g., Class Dojo, See Saw, Remind, or text, etc.) Failure to submit notes for absences within this time period will result in the absence being marked unexcused. The principal must promptly approve any absences in excess of 20 per year. All absences, whether lawful or unlawful, are charged against the maximum allowed.

Please note: The Alabama Department of Education defines chronic absenteeism as students missing 15 or more days (excused and unexcused) during the school year. This number is used for accountability purposes when determining the school grade on the annual A-F report card.

NOTE:

After 5 unexcused absences a parent will be required to attend the Early Warning Program at juvenile court.

After 7 unexcused absences- a parent will be required to attend Truancy Court. The school system has the right to file charges and an order is filed with the court.

- A petition will file charges against the parent and place them on probation for 6 months.
- A warrant will file charges against the parent, will result in arrest and bailing out, and they will be placed on probation for 12 months.

Method of Taking Attendance:

All teachers in the Oxford City School System will take attendance each day.

1. Tardy to school is defined as not being in the homeroom at 7:35 for roll call.
2. Absent from school is defined as not being present in class at least half of the day (11:15 a.m.).
3. Please refer to the Student Code of Conduct for further information regarding absences.

Excerpts from the OCS Student Code of Conduct

Excuses

In accordance with State Law, a parent/legal guardian/custodian **MUST** explain the cause of every absence of students under his/her control or charge. **Every student MUST bring a written excuse signed by his/her parent/legal guardian/custodian or a doctor's excuse within three (3) days after he/she returns to school following an absence(s).** Failure to present the signed note or doctor's excuse within the time noted will result in the absence being marked UNEXCUSED. All absences shall be designated as "excused" or "unexcused" in accordance with the following:

1. Excused Absence - A absence is excused whenever the School System receives a documented written doctor's/legal excuse.

2. Undocumented Excused Absence - An absence is excused when the parent/legal guardian/custodian sends a signed note explaining the absence. A student may only have 8 undocumented excused absences per semester.
3. Unexcused Absence - A absence is unexcused:
 - a. when the parent/legal guardian/custodian does not send a written note explaining the absence within three (3) days following the absence.
 - b. when the nature of the absence is not for legitimate reasons as defined by Alabama law.
 - c. if a written note is presented that indicates the absence occurred for other than personal sickness, family sickness, or death in the family.
 - d. when a parent note is presented for more than 8 absences.
4. Any exceptional circumstances must be addressed by the parent and the Principal or Principal's designee in conference.

School Participation Absences

Students who are away from school because of participation in official school-sponsored activities, field trips, etc., shall be marked present and allowed to make up missed work.

Students who are absent from school for an unexcused reason shall not participate in any school extra-curricular or co-curricular activities that day (athletic contest, cheerleading, scholars bowl, etc.). A student must be present for $\frac{1}{2}$ of the instructional day in order to participate in any extra-curricular activity. Students suspended out of school or placed in an in-school disciplinary setting for more than $\frac{1}{2}$ day may not participate in any activity.

Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the building level principal or his designee.

Denial of Credit Based on Excessive Unexcused Absences

1. Grades K-6 - A student in grades K-6, who accumulates more than 20 absences (excused or unexcused) per year, may be denied promotion.
2. Grades 7-12 - A student in grades 7-12, who accumulates more than eight (8) absences (excused or unexcused) per semester, may be denied promotion and/or class credit.

Make-Up Work - Excused Absences

If a student is absent for any excused reason as defined above, the student shall be allowed to make up all major assignments and other work missed during said absence or absences at a time agreeable to the teacher(s). Teachers shall not be required to re-teach lessons, but students shall be given a reasonable opportunity to learn the lessons missed due to excused absences.

Students assigned to transitional education may make up tests and class work. Work assigned while a student is in TE must be submitted by the student upon re-admittance to class or at a time designated by the classroom teacher. An assignment to TE counts as an absence from class and not from school.

At the Elementary Level (Grades K-6) –

The parent/legal guardian/custodian or student shall be responsible for arranging necessary make-up work.

Time Limit - Arrangements for make-up work must be made within three (3) days after returning to school from an excused absence.

Normally, arrangements and make-up work must be completed within a total of three (3) school days; however, for long-term absences additional days to make up the work may be approved by the principal. Teachers may elect to use discussion/essay tests in lieu of the original test instruments to ensure that the make-up assignments have produced student attainment of the objectives covered.

Make-Up Work - Unexcused Absences

Teachers shall provide make-up assignments or examinations for students absent for unexcused reasons. Students absent for unexcused reasons must make up homework, class work, etc., on a ½ credit basis in order to help such students maintain academic pace. Teachers shall not assign zeros to students absent for unexcused reasons on an automatic basis; zeroes may be assigned to such students only when other students in general receive grades for homework, examinations, recitation, etc. Teachers may elect to use discussion/essay tests to ensure that the make-up assignments have produced student attainment of the objectives covered.

Check-Outs

All check-outs shall be recorded. A check-out is defined as leaving school prior to the end of the respective school's regular daily activities. Check-outs shall be considered unexcused absences from those class periods missed unless evidence is presented to the principal or designee by the parent/legal guardian/custodian that check-out was for an excused reason.

Students must check-out through the school office in compliance with each school's procedures.

Perfect Attendance Award

Grade K-12 - A Perfect Attendance Certificate shall be awarded to students in grades K-12 who have attended school every day for the entire day (No check ins or check outs) during the school year.

Religious Absences

A student will be excused for official religious holidays when the student's parent/legal guardian/custodian notifies the principal in advance for the student to be absent for this purpose. Students shall be allowed to make up work missed during such absences.

Absence Due to School-Approved Trips

Students on school approved trips are not counted absent from school while participating in activities under the supervision of a school system employee. The student is responsible for making up all classroom work missed while on the approved trip within the same time frame as other make-up work.

Absence Due to Administratively Approved Activity

The Principal or his/her designee may approve absences due to exceptional circumstances or unavoidable conditions, provided that the guardian/custodian makes a written request in advance to the principal.

Absentee Referrals

The following provisions shall apply:

1. The home room teacher shall refer all cases of known truancy, parental neglect, and chronic absenteeism to the principal. The principal shall refer any such students to the Attendance Officer in accordance with the Truancy and Early Warning Prevention Program.
3. Students taken into custody by officers in compliance with the Truancy and Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Program shall be reported to the Attendance Officer by the principal.

Backpacks

As part of our Safe School Plan, if a student chooses to bring a backpack it must be clear or mesh.

Birthday Celebration

If you want to recognize your child's birthday at school you might consider purchasing a book for the library or the teacher's classroom library. We will not distribute or allow distribution of birthday invitations or food items at school.

Check In/Out

Persons checking out a student must show a driver's license and be listed on the approved license numbers for that student. Students who check-in during the day should report to the office before going to class. Students should be checked out in the office. Absences from class(es) incurred due to checkouts will impact negatively on a student's progress. No parent will be allowed to check out a child after **2:40 p.m.** to avoid the car riders' traffic line. Our office staff has other responsibilities at the end of the day and these unnecessary checkouts take them away from their assignments. Remember that our buses do serve all areas of our school system. In order to check out a student, a "Student Checked out" slip must be completed. A doctor/dentist excuse must be returned within three (3) days for the check out to be coded excused.

Change of Address/Phone Number

The school must have a current and correct home address and at least two (2) telephone numbers where parents or relatives may be reached in case of an emergency. PLEASE NOTIFY THE REGISTRAR or SECRETARY AND SUPPLY NEW PROOF OF ADDRESS AND NEW TELEPHONE NUMBERS in person.

Child Nutrition Program

Charged Meal Policy: It is the intent of the Oxford City Board of Education to provide an opportunity for every student to eat a nutritious breakfast and lunch during the school day. It is also the policy of the Oxford City Board of Education to comply with all federal guidelines pertaining to the National School Breakfast and Lunch programs. Meal charges are not allowed. Students, employees, and guests must remit payment for meals at the time of service. Meal pre-payment is available online at www.paypams.com for a small fee, and provided at no charge by sending cash or check to the student's school. The school office will make arrangements for students who have insufficient meal funds available for Pre-K through Grade 6. The school office will allow students in Grades 7-12 to call home to request meal funds. Written notification will be sent home with the student when insufficient meal funds are available.

School Meals: Breakfast and lunch meals are offered at all Oxford City Schools. A student may bring meals and drinks from home. Advertisements for competitive foods to include food and beverage containers or bags are prohibited in school cafeterias. These food items must be wrapped in plain packaging if brought into the cafeteria. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure that a child has money for school meals. Applications for the Free and Reduced Meal program are available online and at each school. It is strongly encouraged to pre-pay for meals ten days in advance. Pre-payments are accepted online at www.paypams.com, by cash, or check. Meals can also be paid for longer duration such as monthly or yearly. Ala carte items and additional portions of menu items are NOT available this school year. Refunds for the pre-payment of school meals can only be requested by a parent or guardian, and a refund form must be completed. The forms are available online and at each school.

Snacks: All snacks including ice cream sold by school offices are in compliance with the federal and state snack guidelines, and are not sold one hour before or after scheduled meal times. Ice cream is managed by each school individually, and funds for ice cream may not be added to your child's account for breakfast and lunch meals.

Conferences

Each parent should schedule at least one conference with a child's teacher during the school year. Additional conferences may be scheduled by the teacher or parent. These conferences are scheduled during teacher planning time on a day convenient to both parents and teachers.

Dress Code

See the Student Code of Conduct for this policy.

Guidance

The objective of our Guidance Department is to assist each student in social and school adjustments. The counselor attempts to achieve this by individual and group conferences. Whenever necessary, please feel free to telephone the counselor during school hours.

Gifted Program and Referral for Services

Intellectually gifted children and youth are those who perform at or who have demonstrated the potential to perform at high levels in academic or creative fields when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment. These children and youth require services not ordinarily provided by the regular school program. Children and youth possessing these abilities can be found in all populations, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor. (AAC, 1999)

Teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self, or any other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities may refer a student. Additionally, all second grade students will be observed as potential gifted referrals using a gifted behavior checklist.

For each student referred, information is gathered in the areas of Aptitude, Characteristics, and Performance. The information is entered on a matrix where points are assigned according to established criteria. The total number of points earned determines if the student qualifies for gifted services.

To make a referral for screening, contact the school's guidance counselor.

Head Lice

Students are checked for head lice once a month or as deemed necessary. If live lice are found, the student's parents will be required to take the student home and treat him/her with a lice killing product. A parent must accompany the student back to school, along with proof of treatment, and be checked by the school nurse or designee for readmission to class. If nits are found, the student will be allowed to stay in class. The parent will be notified to treat the student's hair and will be given instructions on removing the nits.

Ice Cream Sales and School Snacks

Policies regarding snacks/food brought from home are at the discretion of each school principal. Snacks may be brought from home or purchased at the school office. No JUICE or FRUIT DRINKS may be brought. Water is the only drink that is allowed for snack time. All water must be clear. If your child brings flavored water then it must be clear. We have snacks and bottled water available. Prices are \$0.50 for snacks and \$0.50 for water. Students are not allowed to use vending machines. Ice cream will be

sold on Fridays only. The price for ice cream is \$1.00. Ice cream should be paid monthly, by semester, or by the year. No refund policy with ice cream.

Inappropriate Items

Items such as a cellular phones, computer games, digital devices, cameras, trading cards, baseball bats, toys, laser pointers, facsimiles of weapons, etc. are not necessary to the instructional program and therefore should be left at home. If these items or others not essential to the educational process are brought to school, they will be confiscated and returned only to a parent or guardian.

Internet Policy

All students will be given a copy of the Internet Policy at the beginning of the year. Parents and students are asked to sign the policy and return it to the school. Only those students who have the signed policy will be allowed to access the Internet.

Library/Media Center

All students go to the library on an open library schedule and may participate in the Accelerated Reader program. Students are encouraged to check out books regularly. Parents may assist by showing an interest in the child's library books and by taking time to read and share books.

****Don't Have a Computer?**

Don't forget that the Oxford Public Library offers computers with free internet access.

Lost and Found

A "lost and found" is located in the gym. Students should check periodically for misplaced articles. Students should write their names in all workbooks, textbooks and notebooks. Please make sure your child's name is labeled inside of his/her jacket. It is also recommended that all Personal Property items be labeled. Items not claimed will be disposed of after a reasonable length of time.

Lunch Reservations-

We will be accepting lunch reservations on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. We welcome you to enjoy visiting with your child in the school environment. Reservation forms are a part of our ongoing efforts to monitor and improve our safety and security procedures. You will be provided with copies of the reservation form or you can download it on the school website. We do ask that you follow the expectations listed below.

- The reservation form must be submitted to your child's teacher or the office by 8:00 a.m. of the day you are planning to visit. Reservations for lunch must be submitted on this form only. This will assist us in planning for your visit. All visitors that will be entering the school building must be listed on this reservation.
- Visitors will report to the office before and after lunch. Bring your photo ID. Lunch visitors must be on the student's check-out list or accompanied by a parent/guardian on the list.
- Lunch visitors will be permitted into the building no more than 5 minutes prior to their child's lunch time.

- Lunch visitors will report directly to the cafeteria/lunchroom after checking into the office. After lunch, lunch visitors must go straight to the office to check out (i.e., lunch visitors are not permitted in other areas of the building without the office being aware of it.)
- Visitors will sit in a designated area in the cafeteria/lunchroom. Visitors will only be permitted to eat and interact with their child/children.
- In order to be good role models for our students, visitors should adhere to the Oxford City Schools grooming and dress code for students in grades K-12.

We will not accept reservations the first week of school. Students will be learning routines and procedures.

Medication

See the Student Code of Conduct for this policy.

Messages

Parents should be sure that their children are aware of any changes in after-school plans BEFORE the student comes to school. Naturally, emergencies arise from time to time which requires a message or item to be given to a child. The school is happy to assist, but your cooperation in keeping these calls to a minimum is appreciated. A student must have permission from the student's teacher, principal or secretary before using the telephone. The teacher will not be disturbed during blocks of instruction time.

Work Folders (Currently we will not be using work folders. Classwork and assessment information paper or electronic will be sent.)

Work folders requiring a parent's signature will be sent home each Monday with each Kindergarten-4th grade student. Class work, assessment and information will be included. The parent should review the papers and keep while returning the signed folder with each child each Tuesday.

Notes Required from Parents

The school requires notes from parents explaining the following:

- Absences
- Request to miss recess or physical education
- Permission for field trips
- Permission to go home with another student
- Change in the usual method of transportation
- Absences for trips and religious reasons must be sent to the principal prior to the absence to be considered for an excused absence.
- Any known allergies
- School Nurse Contact is required for:
- Authorization to administer medication
- Specific health needs

Parents

- Get involved with your child's learning at home. Know what your child is learning at school and be aware of his or her progress. Keep track of homework assignments and be sure your child is doing them. Talk about the value of education.
- Encourage your child to read. Read to and with your child every day. Have lots of reading materials for your children at home-books, magazines, newspaper, catalogs, and product instruction sheets. Let your child see you reading. Take your child to the library.
- Attend as many school activities as possible. Get to know your child's teacher. Find out the best ways to stay in touch-notes, telephones, or email and communicate with them often.

Peanut Aware

CES, DES and OES are peanut aware environments. Please do not send any items with peanuts or peanut products.

Physical Education

All students are required to participate in P.E. activities unless a doctor's excuse is presented. Any requests over three (3) days will require a doctor's excuse. Students who are temporarily ill for one or two days should bring a note from their parents stating the nature of the illness. Girls are encouraged to wear shorts under a dress during P.E. activities. Slip-on shoes are NOT allowed in P.E. Tennis shoes should be worn during P.E. Children should be able to run, jump and climb comfortably in their school clothes.

Promotion/Retention

OCS Promotion Criteria Grades 1 – 4 into the next grade: No student shall be allowed to pass to a higher grade if the student fails to master the established standards for a particular grade level, level of learning, or subject matter content achievement level. The decision as to whether to promote a student to the next grade shall rest with that student's classroom teacher and school principal.

Safe School Plan

Fire, severe weather and intruder drills are conducted periodically. These will be both announced and unannounced. In the event of severe weather during the school day, children will go into the prescribed bad weather procedure. Parents who are at the school during such a time are encouraged to observe the bad weather procedure. This is for the safety of the child and parent.

When the school is placed under a tornado warning, parents are strongly encouraged to leave their children in a protected area inside the school building. Parents are welcome to join us in the building.

School Day

The school day begins at 7:35 a.m. NO STUDENTS SHOULD ARRIVE TO SCHOOL PRIOR TO 7:15 a.m. Students arriving at 7:15 a.m. will report to the cafeteria for breakfast pick up or to their classroom. Breakfast will be served at 7:15 a.m. Students not in their classrooms at 7:43 a.m. will be considered tardy. The school day ends at 3:10 p.m. Any student who must be dismissed prior to 3:10 p.m. must be signed out in the office. ONLY those persons listed on the registration cards are authorized to sign out in the office. Student information must be current.

Severe Weather

When, in the opinion of the superintendent, weather conditions are too hazardous for safe operations, schools will not open. This judgment will be made before 6:30 a.m. The decision will be released to the news media by the superintendent's office. Parents should listen to the radio for announcements or view the website for information. Also, the OCS will notify parents by an automated messaging system that will call by phone. The phone calls will go to numbers in the school computer system so it is important to keep the school informed of any changes.

If conditions become hazardous during the school day, the superintendent will consider the best interest of the students in deciding whether the schools should stay open or close. Parents should have a plan for their children where to go should buses have to run early. Car riders, walkers, and day care participants should have definite instructions from their parents.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

OXFORD CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION - NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of the Oxford City Board of Education that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, disability, sex, religion, creed, national origin or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program, activity or employment. The Oxford City Board of Education provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Student Assessment

The reporting system is designed to inform students and parents of test results and other information concerning growth and achievement. We use a variety of student assessments: student's portfolios, teacher, computer, textbook made tests, tasks, teacher observation, and proficiency scales. Students in 2nd, 3rd & 4th grade will take a state assessment. K-4th students will be given benchmark assessment three times a year. To conform with the system-wide reporting period, report cards in K-4th will be issued as follows:

Cell Phone/Digital Device in a Testing Setting By Students

The possession of digital devices (including but not limited to cell phones, MP3 players, cameras, mobile entertainment, social connections, navigation devices, or other telecommunication devices) is strictly prohibited in the testing setting. Local education agency (LEA) school personnel will collect such devices before students can enter the testing room. If a device is in the possession of a student in the testing setting, testing for the student will cease, the device will be confiscated, the student will be dismissed from testing, and the student's test will be invalidated. Additional disciplinary action may be taken by the LEA.

Study Habits and Homework

Good study habits are important. We expect the best from each individual student. Homework, effectively done, helps bring out the best work from students. Parents can do their part to improve their child's study habits and homework by providing good conditions. Be sure to find out your child's teacher's routine practices regarding homework.

Technology

Students are responsible for the proper use and care of the digital devices that are used at school. Please carefully read the **ACCEPTABLE AND RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS** in the Code of Student Conduct.

Telephone

The office telephone is for business use only. All students should have a clear understanding with parents as to the manner they will be going home. They should have made prior arrangements with their parents. CHANGES IN TRANSPORTATION WILL NOT BE MADE BY TELEPHONE or EMAIL.

Textbooks

Students will be loaned a set of textbooks (if available) after she/he has checked them out with the teacher. It is the responsibility of the student to take care of textbooks to avoid loss or damage. Any book that is lost or destroyed must be paid for before a replacement is issued to the student.

Transportation

Safety is of primary concern for us. State law requires that a transported student be under school supervision from the time he/she steps on the bus in the morning until stepping off in the afternoon. As a result, classroom behavior is expected while on the bus, and drivers will report any misbehavior to the administration. Bus riding is a privilege. Students who do not abide by the rules and regulations will be denied the convenience of bus transportation to Oxford City Schools. Regular procedures are as follows: 1st notice – Note Home, 2nd notice – Phone call from the

office, 3rd notice – 3 day bus suspension, 4th notice – 1 week bus suspension, 5th note – 2 week bus suspension – 6th notice – bus suspension for the remainder of the year. Fighting and/ or severe infractions will warrant automatic bus suspension. If there is a change in your child’s transportation, a written note must be provided to the school. (Parents/legal guardians must submit a written excuse with a signature
Excuses cannot be sent via email or on apps (e.g., Class Dojo, See Saw, Remind, text etc.) Also, it is required that parents/guardians or adults on the check-out list be visible to the bus driver daily when the students are dropped off at their bus stop.

Visitors / Volunteers

All visitors must enter through the main entrance to the school, sign in and be cleared to enter. Approved volunteers and lunch visitors are welcome in the building on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Parents who wish to meet with a teacher will need to call the office in advance to schedule a time that is convenient with the teacher. VISITORS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED IN CLASSES DURING INSTRUCTIONAL BLOCKS.

We welcome parent volunteers who wish to help teachers with tasks (i.e., copying papers, cutting, laminating items, etc.) If your schedule allows you to volunteer, you will need to complete the volunteer form. This form is part of our ongoing efforts to monitor and improve our safety and security procedures.

Withdrawals

Students needing to withdraw from school must report to the main office accompanied by a parent or guardian and receive a clearance form that must be signed by all teachers and the principal, as indicated. These signatures indicate clearance with reference to textbooks, library books, other school equipment and debt.

Website

Learn about the school and your child’s class by logging onto Oxford City Schools’ website <http://www.oxfordcityschools.com/>. You can select your child’s school to receive information about your child’s classroom. You will find useful information as well as email links that will let you communicate directly with your child’s teacher.

The Alabama Literacy Act

The Alabama Literacy Act was passed in 2019 and created to help improve reading in Alabama public schools and to ensure students are reading on grade level by the end of the 3rd grade. Reading is essential to lifelong achievement and success.

Third grade students must be proficient in foundational reading skills in order to comprehend texts. If students are unsuccessful, they will have difficulty understanding grade level reading material. This results in students beginning to fall further behind each year. Strong reading skills

are needed by students in order to learn other school subjects such as science, social studies, writing, and even math.

Requirements of the law:

- All students in Kindergarten through 3rd grade with an identified reading deficiency will be required to have a Student Reading Improvement Plan (SRIP). A reading deficiency is determined by a consistent deficiency in any of the following areas: letter naming fluency, letter sound fluency, nonsense word fluency, sight words, oral reading accuracy and fluency, vocabulary, or comprehension.
- Assessment of early literacy skills three times during the school year
- Parental notification within 15 days of identification of a reading deficiency
- Supplemental reading intervention
- Strategies and resources for parents to use at home
- Summer reading camp

If your child is reading below grade level expectations entering 3rd grade, you will be informed that he/she may not be promoted to 4th grade unless sufficient progress is made. Beginning in the 2021-2022 school year, if your child does not demonstrate sufficient reading skills at the end of 3rd grade, you will receive notification that he/she may not be promoted to 4th grade.

Good cause exemptions allow students who are reading below grade level to be promoted to the 4th grade but still receive interventions and other support. The good cause exemptions apply to:

Students with limited English proficiency with less than two years of instruction in an English Language Learner program; Students with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) indicates that participation in statewide accountability assessment program is not appropriate; Students with a disability whose IEP or Section 504 plan indicates the student has received intensive remediation for two years but still demonstrates deficiency in reading and was previously retained in kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, or 3rd grade; Students who have received intensive intervention in reading for two or more years but have been previously retained in kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, or 3rd grade for a total of two years.

Third grade students who demonstrate an acceptable level of reading proficiency on an ALSDE approved supplemental standardized assessment or reading portfolio may be promoted to 4th grade.

[**Alabama Literacy Act link**](#)

Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015

We are pleased to notify you that in accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, you have the right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's teacher. Specifically, you may request the following:

- Whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria has been waived.
- The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.
- Information on the level of achievement and academic growth of the student, if applicable and available, on each of the state academic assessments required under this part.
- Timely notice that the student has been assigned or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet applicable state certification or licensure requirements at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.