

Pea Ridge Elementary

Student & Family Handbook

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This handbook serves as a guide to the policies, procedures, and expectations that help Pea Ridge Elementary run safely and smoothly. Our goal is to ensure all students have a structured, supportive environment where they can learn and grow. We ask families to review this handbook thoroughly and keep it as a reference throughout the school year. In addition to these school-specific policies, students and families are also responsible for adhering to the Santa Rosa County Code of Student Conduct.

To ensure students are aware of the attendance, behavioral and other important policies, classroom teachers will review the Code of Conduct with students at the beginning of the year and each student will take a grade-appropriate assessment to demonstrate their understanding.

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Section 1: General Information

Bell Schedule

Student Arrival begins at 6:50 a.m.

Tardy Bell at 7:15 a.m.
Dismissal Bell at 1:29 p.m.

Breakfast

Breakfast will be served each day starting at 6:50 a.m. Students eating breakfast should report directly to the cafeteria in the morning.

At 7:05 a.m., the cafeteria will be silent to encourage student eating and on-time arrival to class. Students arriving to breakfast at 7:10 a.m. or later will be sent to class with their breakfast.

Library

- Open for book checkout daily from 6:50 a.m. – 7:10 a.m.
- Additional checkout is available throughout the day with teacher permission.
- Students also attend scheduled library classes throughout the year.
- Pre-K – 1st grade are permitted to check out two (2) books at a time. 2nd – 5th grade are permitted to check out three (3) books at a time.
- Lost or damaged books must be paid for before additional checkouts are allowed.

School Day

- Students may arrive between 6:50 a.m. 7:15 a.m. Students who are on campus but not in their classroom by 7:15 a.m. will be marked tardy.
- Student supervision is not provided prior to 6:50 a.m. or after 1:50 p.m.
- Students arriving after 7:15 must be signed in at the front office by an adult.
- Students staying for school-sponsored activities must arrange transportation before arriving to school and be picked up promptly after the activity ends.

School Advisory Council

Pea Ridge Elementary School has a School Advisory Council (SAC) to help develop and oversee our School Improvement Process. This council includes the school administration, staff, parents, and community representatives. There are four (4) meetings per year at minimum and open to all stakeholders.

If you are interested in joining the SAC, the nomination and election process occurs during August.

Title 1 Information

Pea Ridge Elementary is a Title 1 school and receives federal funding to support academic achievement for all students. We are responsible for providing parents with access to the following

- Annual School Accountability reports
- Description of Title 1 Programs and Parent Compact
- Notification of your right to know your child's teacher qualifications
- Parent Involvement Opportunities
- Access to resources available on our school website
- A Parent Resource Center
- Access to our School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Parent and Family Engagement Plan (PFEP)

Visitors

We welcome visitors and families on campus, and we prioritize safety. All visitors must:

- Report to the front office and present a state-issued photo ID at the front door bell.
- Sign in and receive a yellow visitor's badge.
- The badge must be worn on the visitor's shirt in a visible location for the entirety of the school visit.
- Return the badge to the front office when signing out at the conclusion of the school visit.

Adult/Visitor Dress Code:

All adult visitors and volunteers must follow the same dress code expectations as students while on campus or at school-sponsored events.

The school principal or assistant principal reserves the right to ask any visitor to leave campus or a school-sponsored event if their presence is deemed disruptive to the educational environment.

Volunteers

We value our school volunteers! A volunteer orientation will be hosted at the beginning of each school year. To volunteer for any activity, including field trip chaperoning, splash week, or classroom celebrations, the following is required:

- A completed and school-board approved Santa Rosa County Volunteer Application
- A state-issued photo ID upon arrival. Refer Section 1/Visitors for check-in procedures.

Withdraw Procedures

If you plan to withdraw your child from Pea Ridge Elementary:

1. Call the school to notify the front office of the intent to withdraw.
2. Enroll at the new school. The new school will send a records request to PRE.
 - a. Student records will be sent directly to the new school upon receipt of the official request.
3. Prior to leaving, all unpaid meal balances must be paid and library books returned.

Section 2: Communication, Attendance, and Safety

Clear and timely communication is essential for your child's success. Pea Ridge Elementary uses the following tools to stay connected with families:

- SRCDS App
- FOCUS Parent Portal
 - View grades, attendance, and progress updates
- School Website: pre.santarosaschools.org
 - Access school news, handbooks, SAC documents, Title 1 resources
- Facebook: facebook.com/PREChiefs
 - Stay up-to-date with the great things happening on our school campus

For general questions, you are always welcome to call our front office at 850-995-3680.

Attendance

Refer to pages 20-24 of the Santa Rosa County Code of Student Conduct for full details on attendance statutes and policies.

Excused absences may include, but are not limited to:

- Illness
- Death in the immediate family
- Medical or dental appointments, including ABA or other therapies
- Religious holidays or instruction
- Court appearances
- Emergencies approved by the principal or designee

Unexcused absences may include, but are not limited to:

- Vacations (that are not pre-approved)
- Car troubles
- Shopping trips
- Missing the bus
- Oversleeping
- Excessive illness without medical documentation
- Other avoidable absences that were not approved in advance

Pre-Arranged absences:

- Must be submitted to the school principal for approval at least five (5) school days in advance.
 - The principal or designee will determine if the absence qualifies as excused.
- Each student is allowed up to five (5) excused pre-arranged absences per school year.
 - Students on a Truancy Intervention Plan that requires physician's notes for excusal are not eligible for pre-arranged absences.
- School work provided to students prior to a pre-approved absence must be completed and submitted on the day they return.

Late Check-Ins and Early Check-Outs

- Any three (3) unexcused late check-ins and/or early check-outs will count as one unexcused absence for truancy purposes.
- Students not in their classroom when the 7:15 a.m. tardy bell rings will be marked as tardy.
- Students arriving after the 7:15 a.m. bell must be signed in at the front office by a parent/guardian.
- Only approved adults listed in FOCUS are permitted to check-out a student.
- Adults are required to have a state-issued photo ID to check out a student.
- Check-outs are not permitted after 1:00 p.m.

Students who leave campus without permission will face disciplinary action, and the Sheriff's Office may be notified.

Truancy Intervention and Non-Attendance:

Students who accumulate five (5) unexcused absences in 30 days, or ten (10) unexcused absences in 90 days will be referred to the school's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) team for attendance intervention. Parents may be required to meet with administration and sign a Truancy Intervention Plan. Continued non-attendance may lead to:

- A referral to social services
- A truancy petition filed in court
- Potential loss of driving privileges (students aged 14+)
- Possible court-ordered penalties for parents/guardians
- A report to the Department of Children and Families or impact state benefits

Transportation – Bus, Car, Walker

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures:

- Morning drop off is from 6:50 a.m. until 7:15 a.m.
- Car Rider drop off should enter through school lane and follow staff directions through the car loop.
 - Ensure both lanes are being used in the car rider drop off area.
 - Parents remain in the vehicles at all times.
 - Students may only be dropped off in this designated location.
 - DO NOT PASS sitting traffic on School Ln.
 - During pickup, a designated car rider tag must be displayed. Cars without a car tag will be directed to the front office for an ID check.
- Bus Riders will be dropped off on the bus loop and enter at the designated hallway.
 - Afternoon bus riders will be escorted to their designated bus by school staff.
- Walkers will enter at the back gate (bus loop entrance).
 - Escorting parents and guardians shall not enter campus.
 - Students will be supervised by school employees as they walk down the bus ramp sidewalk to enter at the designated hallway.
 - All bikes and scooters shall be stored in the gate area near the entrance.
 - During afternoon dismissal, walkers will be supervised in the cafeteria and escorted to the back gate by a staff member once the bus ramp is clear of all traffic.
- Students arriving after the 7:15 a.m. bell must be signed in at the front office by a parent/guardian.
- Dismissal begins at 1:29 p.m.

Transportation Changes must be made in writing and include a date and parent signature. No transportation changes will be accepted after 1:00 p.m.

Transportation changes WILL NOT be accepted via phone, email, text, or the SRCDS app.

Custody of Children

By law, school are required to release children to either biological parent unless a court order specifying custody restrictions is on file.

- It is the responsibility of the family to provide up-to-date custodial paperwork.
- The school will not be used for visitation purposes.

Confidential Information

To protect student privacy and ensure student safety:

- Confidential records and information will NOT be provided over the phone.
- Parents/guardians must come in person and present a state-issued photo ID to access or receive copies of confidential information.

Conferences

Pea Ridge Elementary encourages parent-teacher conferences. Conferences:

- Should be scheduled at a mutually agreed upon time.
- Should be scheduled by contacting the teacher directly.

In the event a parent requests to observe a student in the classroom setting, the observation:

- Must be scheduled in advance with administration at a mutually agreed upon time.
- Is limited to 30 minutes or less.
- The observer will be accompanied by a school administrator for the duration of the visit and the observer:
 - May not speak to or communicate with the teacher or any student in the classroom, including his/her personal child.
 - May only observe his/her personal child.
 - May not capture any photos or videos or sound recordings.
 - May not interrupt the learning environment in any way.

Section 3: Health Policies and Services

Illness and Injury

- Students may visit our school clinic with teacher/staff permission and a clinic pass.
- When students visit, our health technician will assess the student and contact families as needed.
- Parents must ensure that emergency contacts are accurate and up-to-date in FOCUS.
- Students may NOT call/text a parent/guardian for pickup. Clinic staff will handle all communication.

Illness Guidelines

Student must be free of fever, vomiting, and diarrhea for 24 hours without medication before returning to school following an illness.

Students will be sent home if they have:

- Fever of 100.4 or higher
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Symptoms of a contagious illness

Head Lice

Students found with head lice must be immediately picked up from school. To return to school, students must be nit-free and cleared by the health tech before riding the bus or going to class. Two (2) excused absences are provided for each incident of head lice. Absence beyond two (2) days for lice treatment are unexcused.

Health Services

A Health Services form must be submitted at the beginning of each school year or upon enrollment. This form provides permissions/consent to various health services.

Immunizations

All students must have up-to-date immunizations on file. Students without proper documentation may have a disruption of educational services until such documentation is obtained.

Medication

Refer to page 31 of the Santa Rosa Code of Student conduct for the full medication policy.

All medication, prescription and non-prescription, must:

- Be brought to school by a parent or guardian.
- Be in its original pharmacy-labeled container and contain student name, physician name (if applicable), medication name and dosage, instructions for use, and expiration date.
- Be accompanied by a 'Dispersion of Medication' form (available in our clinic)
- Be counted and logged when dropped off.

Please note, missed doses from home will not be administered at school. The school does not provide any medication (including Tylenol, cough drops, etc.).

With appropriate documentation, students may be permitted to self-carry:

- Epipens
- Inhalers
- Insulin
- Medication to relieve a headache

Physical Education

Physical Education and recess are required components of our school day. Tennis shoes are required for participation. If your child is unable to participate due to illness or injury, a signed and dated note from the parent/guardian is required. Prolonged non-participation may require a physician's note.

Accident Insurance

Pea Ridge Elementary and the school district do not automatically provide student accident insurance. Optional coverage is available for family purchase. Forms are sent home with students at the beginning of the school year.

Section 4: Academics and Support

504 Plans and Accommodations

According to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, students may qualify for accommodations to ensure equal access to education.

If you believe your child may need accommodations, please contact the school counselor.

A medical diagnosis is required to begin the eligibility process.

Grading Policy

Grades reflect a student's mastery of academic standards. All grades are recorded in FOCUS within a reasonable time after the assignment is completed.

Each teacher will communicate his/her classroom grading and weighting policies at the beginning of the school year. This grading policy will include details and expectations for missing and incomplete work.

Grading Scales:

- Kindergarten
 - E = Exceeds expectations
 - S = Satisfactory progress
 - N = Needs improvement
- Grades 1st – 5th Grade
 - A = 90-100
 - B = 80-89
 - C = 70-79
 - D = 60-69
 - F = 0-59
- Conduct Grades
 - E = Excellent
 - S = Satisfactory
 - N = Needs Improvement
 - U = Unsatisfactory

Cheating: If a student is caught cheating, parents will be contacted by the teacher. A zero may be assigned at the discretion of the teacher and school administration.

Homework may be assigned for review and reinforcement, but not graded.

- Each classroom teacher will establish and share their homework expectations at the beginning of the year.

Report Cards and Mid-Term Reports will be sent home each quarter. Parents can monitor progress at any time via the FOCUS Parent Portal (accessible through our school and district website).

Educational Records Rights and Privacy

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) grants parents and students over 18 the right to:

- Review and request correction of education records
- Consent to disclosures (with limited exceptions)
- File complaints with the U.S. Department of Education

These rights transfer from parent to student at age 18 (or if the student is legally emancipated).

Parents may opt out of the release of directory information. Please contact the front office to request the appropriate form.

Exceptional Student Education

Pea Ridge Elementary provides a full continuum of ESE services in the least restrictive environment as outlined in each student's IEP. Services may include:

- Speech and language therapy
- Learning support for specific disabilities
- Gifted education
- Varying exceptionalities support

For questions about ESE eligibility or placement, contact our ESE School Liaison or our School Counselor.

Field Trips

Field trips are planned throughout the year to support curriculum goals. Important guidelines:

- Permission slips are required. Students without signed slips will stay on campus.
- All students must ride the bus to the field trip destination.
- Parents may check out their child after the event through the teacher. A state-issued Photo ID is required for check-out and the adult checking out must be on the student's approved list in FOCUS.

Chaperone Requirements:

- All chaperones must be School Board-approved volunteers.
 - Submit the Volunteer Application Form at the beginning of the year
- A Visitor Form for the field trip must be submitted at least 3 days in advance
- No siblings or non-enrolled children may attend field trips
- No smoking, vaping, or consuming alcohol on field trips
- Adult volunteers and visitors are expected to follow the same dress code as students.

School Counselor/Student Services

Our school counselor provides academic, social, and emotional support for students. The counselor also supports students with individual check-ins, small groups, crisis response, and family referrals to outside services.

Students may request to speak to the counselor through their teachers. Teachers or parents may also initiate referrals by contact our school counselor.

The school counselor may also make a referral to CDAC counseling, with parent consent.

Students restricted by a diagnosed condition for 15+ school days may qualify for homebound instruction.

Section 5: Expectations and Behavior

This section outlines the expectations, rules, and support systems that help foster a safe, respectful and positive learning environment at Pea Ridge Elementary.

School-wide behavior framework: PBIS

We follow the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) model and teach expectations through our schoolwide **PRIDE** acronym:

Positive – Resilient – Involved – Determined – Encouraged

Students will be taught the common area expectations with ‘The Chief Way’ lessons. These areas include the hallways, cafeteria, playground, bathroom, and school bus. The lessons also teach students voice level expectations.

Students displaying expected behaviors may be rewarded by any staff member with a feather. Students will have the opportunity to redeem their feathers at our school store, their classroom store, or to purchase experiences.

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Refer to the page 36 and page 52 of the Santa Rosa Code of Student Conduct for the full Electronic Device policy.

Electronic and recording devices include but are not limited to cell phones, smart glasses, tablets, smartwatches, cameras, and any device capable of listening, recording, storing, viewing, or playing back audio or visual content.

Students in elementary school may possess a wireless communications device while the student is on school property or in attendance at a school function; however, elementary school students may not use a wireless communications device during the school day. Parents who need to reach their child (or vice versa) should communicate via the front office if an emergency arises.

A Student may use a wireless communications device during the school day in accordance with the student’s individualized education plan, Section 504 plan, or a doctor’s note from a physician licensed under Chapters 37 458 or 459, Florida Statutes, certifying in writing that the student requires the use of a wireless communications device based upon valid clinical reasoning or evidence.

Failure to follow the rules regarding the possession and use of an electronic device or a mobile device will result in disciplinary action up to and including a loss of the privilege of carrying said device(s) on campus for a period of time to be determined by the school official. Devices may also be confiscated for parent pick-up.

Technology Use Guidelines

All use of school devices must follow the district’s Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

Prohibited actions include:

- Vandalism (damaging hardware or tampering with settings)
- Uploading or spreading viruses
- Accessing inappropriate content
- Misusing district login credentials

Consequences may include:

- Loss of internet or device access
- Detention or suspension
- Financial liability for damages
- Legal actions, if warranted

Failure to Notify/Report

Students who know of a situation that may result in harm to themselves or others, or a situation that may result in a campus disruption and fail to report it may face disciplinary consequences

Gifts and Deliveries

- Balloons, flowers, or other gifts may not be delivered to students at school
 - These items are not allowed on buses and may disrupt the learning environment
- Food delivery services are not permitted for students

Birthdays

Students may bring store-bought treats to celebrate their birthday if:

- All classmates are included
- Arrangements are made with the teacher in advance

Birthday Invitations may only be distributed if all classmates are invited.

Discipline

Pea Ridge Elementary strives to maintain a safe and respectful environment through clear expectations and proactive support.

All incidents involving unexpected or unacceptable behaviors are investigated thoroughly and handled according to the Santa Rosa County Code of Student Conduct. Student age and developmental level are considered when determining outcomes and consequences. Progressive discipline will be followed, with interventions and consequences increasing in severity if the unexpected or unacceptable behavior continues or repeats.

Students are entitled to due process, including the opportunity to be heard and to respond to allegations before disciplinary action is taken.

Some offenses (i.e. physical aggression, vaping, threats, possession/use of weapons) may result in immediate suspension from school or legal action.

Off-campus behavior, including social media activity, may be subject to school consequences if it substantially disrupts the school environment.

Dress Code

Refer to the page 28 of the Santa Rosa County Code of Student Conduct for the full dress code policy.

Pea Ridge Elementary follows the district's dress code policy, which promotes safety, cleanliness, and a respectful learning environment. Students must come to school dressed appropriately and ready to learn.

Dress Code Expectations:

- Clothing must be clean, neat, and not pose a disruption to the learning environment.
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses must be near the knee in length.
- Shirts must fully cover the chest, midriff, and undergarments (even when sitting or raising arms).
- Shoes must be worn at all times. Tennis shoes are required for PE and recess.
- Students may wear hats or hoodies outside only, not in the building.

Not Allowed:

- Clothing that shows undergarments, midriffs, or is see-through or low-cut
- Form-fitting clothing like leggings, spandex, yoga pants (unless worn under appropriate-length tops or skirts)
- Tank tops (less than three fingers wide) halter tops, muscle shirts exposing the midriff area , sports bras, or undershirts as outerwear
- Clothing or accessories with profanity, violence, gang affiliation, or references to drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
- Flip-flops, high heels, or slippers (unsafe for school activities)
- Items with metal projections, chains, or wallet chains
- Sunglasses or hoodies worn over the head inside the building

Important Notes:

- Students who violate the dress code will be required to change clothes before returning to class.
- A parent/guardian may be required to bring a change of clothes to school for repeat offenses or if clothes are not available at the school site.
- Repeated dress code violations will follow the school's progressive discipline plan.
- Dress code rules apply to all school-sponsored events, including field trips.
- Adult visitors and volunteers must follow the same dress code expectations as students.
- The principal or designee has the final authority on what is considered appropriate.