

BRIGHT STAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Douglas County School System and Bright Star Elementary School is to provide a quality education for all students in a safe, supportive environment.

VISION

Our vision is to build a community of lifelong learners that become responsible individuals, independent thinkers, and productive citizens.

GOALS

- To provide a challenging, comprehensive instructional and curricular program for all learners.
- To provide a school environment that is safe and supportive, and enhances the learning process.
 - To improve communication throughout the school community.

BELIEFS

We believe that we must...

- Understand how children and adults learn and continue learning.
 - Build communities of lifelong learners.
- Cultivate the leadership potential of every employee, student, and parent in our school system
 - Be creative, energetic visionaries who respond quickly to diverse and evolving issues.
 - Meet the needs of our stakeholders (students, parents, employees, and community)
- Maintain efficient and effective administrative processes for instruction, operations, human resources, and sound fiscal management.

WELCOME!

Welcome! On behalf of the faculty and administration, we warmly welcome you to Bright Star Elementary School. You are about to join an outstanding team of professionals, a dedicated group of parents, a proud community, and enthusiastic students on a grand adventure—building a community of learners. We are pleased that you are a part of our school. Your involvement and cooperation will make this a successful year!

Information regarding Douglas County Board of Education Policies is available at <https://www.dcssga.org/>. For access to Douglas County Board of Education, please feel free to use any of the computers in Bright Star's Media Center.

ABSENCES

Students are required to be in school every day. Regular attendance is essential to the learning process. In addition, students who are absent from school are deprived of a variety of educational experiences shared with their peers. As early as possible on the day of the absence, please notify the Attendance Clerk at (770) 651-3400. Even when parents call, a student who is absent must bring a written excuse signed by the parent or guardian the day the student returns to school. After 10 absences any excuse for absences must come from a doctor, dentist, or legal entity. The Douglas County Board of Education lawfully excuses students for the following reasons: personal illness, death in the immediate family, and special and recognized holidays observed by their faith. Work missed due to illness must be made up by the student within 3 days of absences. For extended excused absences, your child's assignments may be collected before, during or after the absence. Completion of work missed during an absence is determined at the teacher's discretion and the needs of the student. Perfect attendance is defined as a student that has no absences, tardies or early check outs.

ADMISSION/WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

Students seeking admission to a Douglas County School should have withdrawn from their previous school. Withdrawal papers should be presented at the time admission is requested. The following items are required for enrollment.

1. Certificate of Live Birth with a state file number.

2. Certificate of Immunization-Form 3231(Georgia Form).
3. Social Security Card.
4. Legal documents (i.e., custody), if applicable.
5. Vision, hearing, and dental screening (Georgia Form 3300)
6. Proof of residence. (Lease agreement, utility bill, etc.)
7. Parent/Guardian Photo ID

All Douglas County School admissions will take place online.

Registration is open for all grades. Click [here](#) for DCSS' online registration portal. For more information about the enrollment process, visit the **DCSS Enrollment Process** page.. Phone: 770 651-2050.

Preferably, parents or guardians should notify the teacher at least a week before the student is withdrawn from school. A minimum of 24 hours notification will be required so withdrawal paperwork can be completed. All textbooks and library books must be returned and lunch fees must be paid before records can be released.

ARRANGEMENT FOR IRREGULAR DEPARTURE

If it is necessary for a student to leave school early, please send a note in advance to the student's teacher. Any student leaving before regular dismissal time must be signed out in the office by a parent or legal guardian or a parent designee (this name must appear in the student's file). Proof of identification is required. If a student is to ride home in any way that is different than normal, or with a different person picking them up, the parent must notify the school in writing. That person must provide identification prior to the release of the child.

Any changes in transportation must be completed prior to 1:30 P.M. These changes must be completed by e-mailing lisa.sanders@dcssga.org or stacy.roark@dcssga.org. If you do not receive a confirmation email, please call the office to verify receipt. PLEASE NOTE: Email will not be checked between 1:30 and the end of dismissal.

No students will be checked out from the classroom between 1:45 PM except for doctor appointments or extreme emergencies.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

The building is open for students at 7:00 A.M. The only designated student drop-off area is the west side door of the building. **School begins at 7:40 A.M. Students should arrive at school by 7:25. Students not in their classrooms at 7:40 A.M. are considered tardy.** Excessive tardies will impact a student's academic work. When a Douglas County school bus is late, students riding that bus are not counted tardy. DROP EVERYTHING AND READ begins at 7:40 AM.

Dismissal is at 2:20 P.M. No students will be checked out from the classroom **AFTER 1:45 PM** except for doctor appointments or extreme emergencies. The only designated car-rider dismissal area is the west side door of the building. This area will be closed from 7:40 A.M. until 2:00 P.M. due to the location of the mobile classrooms and the playground. For student safety, student names must be displayed in the front windows of vehicles. If no sign with the student's name is visible, the parent/guardian **MUST** come to the office and provide identification. Students will not be allowed to enter cars not displaying the name of the student. See ARRANGEMENT FOR IRREGULAR DEPARTURE.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER

Please notify the attendance clerk of any change of address or phone number as soon as possible. Accurate records are necessary to be able to notify parents/guardians in case of an emergency.

CLASSROOM VISITATION CONFERENCES

Visitors and volunteers are always welcome at Bright Star. All visitors must enter and exit through the front doors of the school near the office. Visitors and volunteers must sign in at the office and be given a

sticker. This sticker must be visible during your visit at Bright Star. Please sign out in the office upon departure. Instructional time with students is guarded throughout the day. **Classroom observations are limited to 20 minutes. Prior notification must be provided at least 24 hours in advance. Visitors may not visit classrooms AFTER 1:45. Teachers welcome the opportunity to discuss student progress; however, due to confidentiality and guarding instructional time this should be done during a scheduled conference.** We believe that the educational success of your child is a joint venture between the school and the home, and we want to keep communication lines open. If parents desire to contact the teacher, please call the office, send an email or send a Class Dojo message. Parent conferences may be initiated by the parent, teacher, or school administration and held at mutually agreeable times.

Visitors are asked to follow the dress code guidelines that are expected of students.

CLINIC

Bright Star Elementary has a staffed clinic; however, we are not certified to treat serious injury or illness. If your child becomes seriously ill or is injured, the parent will be notified. Children who become ill with diarrhea, vomiting or fever are required to be isolated from other students. Parents/guardians will be asked to pick-up their children when they become sick. Following state health guidelines, students must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. Information from the emergency information cards will be used to contact someone else if parents are unavailable.

CLUBS

- **ROAD RUNNERS**—the purpose of the club is to encourage students to become physically active. The members of the club will practice running and participate in community road races.
- **BETA CLUB** is available for 4th and 5th grade students who maintain a “B” average. The purpose is to promote achievement and civic mindedness.
- **CHORUS**—the purpose of the club is to provide 4th and 5th graders the opportunity to develop their creativity through music.
- **Drumming Club**-the purpose of this club is to teach students beats and drumming routines.
- **Boys-to-Men Club**- the purpose of this club is to teach etiquette, make friends, do community service projects.
- **Chess Club**-the purpose of this club is to teach the game of chess and compete in competitions.

DISCIPLINE

We believe that all students have the right to learn in a safe, warm, nurturing climate. A school climate that is conducive to learning and free of disruptive behavior is provided for each student. We believe strongly in positive reinforcement. We work to create a positive atmosphere in which students can learn. Yet we believe that our students are responsible for their own behavior and academic success. It is our duty to help students become more responsible for their own behavior. A variety of methods are encouraged to ensure appropriate conduct including student and parent conferences, time-out, opportunity rooms, action plans, after school detention and out-of-school suspensions. Chronic behavior which disrupts instruction and physical contact will result in school suspension. Student discipline is the joint responsibility of the school and home. Parental support for good discipline enables us to maintain a wholesome environment for learning.

This year we will be using Class Dojo. All behavior communication will be available to parents through the Dojo App. Please download the App and follow the directions given by the classroom teacher. All special areas teachers will be using this as well.

DRESSCODE

In the selection of school dress, parents and students should exercise good taste and good judgement. Many “fads” in dress are not appropriate for school. Therefore, student dress should reflect neatness, cleanliness and should not distract or cause disruption in the educational process of school. The school administration reserves the right to determine if a student’s dress and personal appearance are too casual, too revealing, or too distracting from the learning environment to be considered appropriate for school. The health and safety of all students will be taken into consideration when making decisions regarding appropriate /inappropriate attire.

Every student enrolled in Douglas County Schools is expected to observe a standard of grooming and dress consistent with the level of formality of the school setting.

Certain items of dress are not considered appropriate and therefore, are not acceptable, and could result in a child having to call parents at home or work to bring more appropriate clothing.

Examples include (but are not limited to) the following:

- a. Hats, visors, hoods pulled up, sweat bands, skull caps, bandanas or other head garments including non-prescription sunglasses worn inside the building;
- b. Beach or shower shoes, slides, bare feet, flip flops or rubber and/or metal cleats are not allowed in school or on buses;
- c. Shoes with any type of wheels or other rolling apparatus.
- d. Clothing that shows the bare midriff, bare back or the bare shoulders.
- e. Tank tops; (Shoulders must be covered; arm holes tight fitting) are permitted only for students in K, 1st, 2nd, grades. Tank tops are not permitted in 3rd, 4th and 5th grades.
- f. See-through or mesh clothing unless worn over other apparel;
- g. Any clothing or articles advertising or displaying the insignia of drugs, tobacco, or alcoholic beverages shall be prohibited;
- h. Any clothing with profane or obscene language or symbols displayed, any clothing which promotes violence; or does/may cause a disturbance.
- i. Gang related appearance, clothing or objects are prohibited.
- j. All pants which are not worn at the waist;
- k. Heavy coats or raincoats inside buildings and classrooms;
- l. Heavy chains or dog collars around the waist or neck, or attached to a wallet. Purses (including cross-strap) must be kept in a bookbag.
- m. Shorts, dresses and skirts that are too tight, too short, (must be at least five inches from the top of the kneecap) or not worn at the waist are not permitted;
- n. Pajamas, bedroom shoes or other sleepwear; ****This includes “wearing” a blanket as a jacket.**

o. Holes or patches, on clothing, above the knee; girl's leggings or tights (unless under a dress or covering buttock area by a top).

Good taste and good judgment should be used by parents and students alike in the selection of school dress. Many "fads" in dress are not appropriate. The school administration reserves the right to determine if certain other items are too casual, too revealing or too distracting from the learning environment to be considered appropriate for school. Health and safety of all students will be taken into consideration when making decisions regarding appropriate/inappropriate attire, including the tucking of shirts.

Some exceptions to these guidelines may be made for special activity days such as field days and character costume days as determined by the school principal. Special accommodations may also be made for health reasons. Total days for exceptional dress must be limited to no more than 5% of the student calendar (9 days) due to impact on the learning environment. Exceptions should be announced to students and parents well ahead of the date. Clear explanations of what will and will not be allowed must be included in the announcements.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

If the decision is made to close school due to inclement weather, local television and radio stations will broadcast this information. Radio station WSB (750 AM) will broadcast emergency school closings or early school dismissals. In the unlikely event that school should be dismissed during the school day, please help us by talking to your child about emergency procedures and discussing with your child which neighbors' home he/she should go to if your home is locked. Please update your email address with us, like us on Facebook, follow us on Class Dojo. This will allow us to inform you of upcoming events and special notifications.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips may be planned throughout the school year. These field trips are an integral part of the academic curriculum of the school. Field trip permission slips must be completed for all students attending off campus activities. These activities are wonderful opportunities for parents or guardians to spend time with their Bright Star children, so other arrangements should be made for preschool aged siblings. Due to insurance guidelines, Douglas County School System prohibits preschool aged children from riding buses. Parents and guardians planning to accompany the classes on field trips should notify their child's teacher before the day of the trip. If a student requires extra supervision, a parent or guardian may be asked to accompany the student as chaperone. ****Ga Drivers License must be provided for prior approval to attend field trips.**

FOOD SERVICES

Students are encouraged to participate in the school nutrition program. Nutritionally balanced breakfasts and lunches are available to all students. Breakfasts are designed to meet one-fourth of the recommended daily allowance (RDA) of nutrients for all Americans. Lunches meet one-third of the (RDA). Several choices in menu offerings are available. Prices are \$1.25 for breakfast and \$2.25 for lunch. However, free or reduced priced meals \$.30 for breakfast and \$.40 for lunch are available to students who qualify. Extra milk or juice may be purchased for \$.60.

Adults who wish to eat lunch at school with their child should notify the cafeteria at the beginning of the day. (770-651-3424) Adult prices are \$4.00 for lunch and \$1.65 for breakfast.

As a courtesy to other students, parents are *discouraged* from bringing meals from local fast food restaurants for their child to eat in the cafeteria at lunch or breakfast. In addition, designated seating will be provided for visitors who wish to eat with their children.

Due to concerns for students with food allergies, only commercially prepared items with ingredient labels may be distributed to students for celebrations.

GOALS

We are striving every day to reach for the stars. We want students constantly working to meet goals that will boost confidence, academics and overall success! This year we will be working to meet 4 goals each nine weeks. Your student will have goals for attendance, behavior, reading and math. Students can earn bronze, silver, gold or platinum level each nine weeks.

Level	Prize
Platinum-all 4 goals met	VIP Platinum Prize, Party, treat, HW pass
Gold-3 goals met	Party access, treat, HW pass
Silver-2 goals met	Treat and homework pass
Bronze-1 goal met	Homework pass

**Attendance-no more than 1 absence, tardy or early check out

*Behavior-no discipline referrals to the office, no bus referrals and 90% positive behavior points on Class Dojo. A write up will automatically disqualify a student from the party.

*Math Goals-STAR test score level 3 or 4 or growth by one level

*Reading Goals- STAR test score level 3 or 4 or growth by one level

**Kindergarten goals for math and reading will differ. The teacher will send the goals home with your child.

Celebrations will occur every 9 weeks!

GUIDANCE COUNSELING PROGRAM

In Douglas County, the elementary school guidance program is designed to help students by assisting them in making decisions and changing behavior. The purpose of guidance and counseling is to impact specific skills and learning opportunities in a productive and preventive manner which ensures that all students can achieve school success through academic, career, and personal/social development.

Guidance is defined as the help all students receive to assist them in making appropriate educational and career choices. Counseling is defined as the help some students receive from a professionally trained counselor to help them overcome personal and social problems, which may interfere with learning.

The lessons taught in classroom or small group guidance provides a link to define student competencies. These standards are included in the guidance curriculum. Counselors coordinate and implement delivery of guidance lessons in the areas of academic, personal/social and career development. Lessons can incorporate study skills, test taking skills, problem solving, decision-making, self-knowledge, life skills, personal safety, and career planning. All of which will help facilitate your child's academic achievement.

Small group counseling may address specific needs such as understanding-self and interpersonal skills or help students dealing in crisis situations, such as divorce or death in a child's life. Students may participate in these small groups as a result of referrals from parents, teachers or themselves. This counseling relationship with students will be treated as confidential except when a student poses an imminent danger to themselves or others; or when the student reveals matters that by state law must be reported. The Douglas County Board of Education provides all students the opportunity for counseling services.

The elementary school counselor consults and collaborates with parents, guardians, teachers, and significant others such as school psychologist, special education personnel, school social workers, and medical professionals in the community. They are also involved with classroom performance and behavior, childhood growth and development, a positive school climate, identification of exceptional children, interpretations of test results, psychological reports and other relevant data and communication between home and school.

Students will be taught the **SPEAK UP BE SAFE** program. **SPEAK UP BE SAFE** is a body safety program, which teaches children in a very comfortable way to talk about a very sensitive problem. Unfortunately, every year more than 100,000 children are sexually abused in our country. Informing children of the following concepts helps to lessen their vulnerability to abuse.

1. Touch can be good, and/or confusing.
2. Children are special and they have the right to know all the safety rules.
3. Children can say no to inappropriate touches.
4. Children should tell a trusted adult if they ever have a problem with bad or confusing touches.
5. Sexual Abuse is never the child's fault.

The Douglas County Board of Education has approved this program and is very pleased and excited to be involved. Mrs. Naomi Gilbert, our school counselor, will be teaching this program. You may contact her at 770-651-3434, if you would like to preview this program. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's involvement in any guidance or counseling group activity, please call Mrs. Gilbert.

HOMEWORK

Home study is a necessary part of each student's educational program. Each student will be expected to spend time on homework in addition to scheduled class instruction to achieve satisfactory work. This includes nightly reading and math practice. Homework reinforces skills taught in the classroom, increases the student's success on achievement tests, and provides an opportunity for parent involvement and responsibility.

Estimated times for daily homework are shown below.

Kindergarten and First Grade: 15-20 minutes

Second Grade: 20-30 minutes

Third Grade: 30-40 minutes

Fourth Grade: 40-50 minutes

Fifth Grade: 50-60 minutes

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

Textbooks and instructional materials are furnished free of charge to all elementary students. If a textbook or library book is lost or damaged, a fee will be charged. Student report cards will be withheld pending payment for lost materials. Donations of consumable supplies are appreciated.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Bright Star Elementary is organized to include kindergarten through grade 5. In general, the classrooms are self-contained at all grade levels. However, the self-contained organization may be modified slightly in order to group for instructional and team teaching.

Standards include the following: language arts (reading, writing, listening, speaking), mathematics, social studies, science, health, music, physical education, and art. Instruction is enhanced by the availability of computers to assist students in each of the major subject areas. The emphasis of standards based instruction is a hands-on continuous achievement approach. In addition to the classroom teacher, Bright Star Elementary School has full-time art, music, and physical education teachers as well as a counselor and media specialist. We also have an Instructional Lead Teacher.

INTERNET

Bright Star Elementary students have access to the Internet in their classroom and in the media center. The purpose of school Internet connectivity is to support research and education. The user is responsible for all actions and activities involving the Internet. Teachers and students will also discuss the acceptable use of the Internet before actual use by students. Bright Star students must have written parental permission to access the Internet in their classroom or media center. This documentation will be kept on file in the student's classroom.

LOST AND FOUND

Clothing and personal belongings, including backpacks that are brought to school should be labeled with the child's

name in bold. Found articles are housed in the school's lost and found box. Unlabeled or unclaimed property is given to a local agency after the winter holidays and at the end of the school year.

MEDIA CENTER

The checkout period is one week, but books may be returned and new ones checked out before that time is up. Students should not lend library books to each other. Any book checked out in a student's name is the responsibility of that student.

PARKING

Parents and visitors are asked to park in designated areas only. Visitor parking is available on the north side of the building. Parking in the bus lane or on curbs is not permitted at any time.

NUISANCE ITEMS

This includes **cellular phones**, recording devices, skates, skateboards, toys, toy guns, playing cards, water pistols, iPods, video games, etc. which are not to be brought to school. If confiscated, parents will be required to claim the item from the school office. Also, rolling bookbags ARE NOT permitted without written documentation from a doctor. They can become a safety hazard while students are walking in hallways and loading buses.

PARTIES

Douglas County Board of Education procedure allows two parties each year in the class- room. Please do not ask the teacher to make exceptions to this board policy. The faculty determines dates of the party. Students' birthdays will be recognized at school and any treats should be served during the regular lunch period. All baked goods must be provided during the last few minutes of lunch and must be store bought. PLEASE limit treats to individual packaging or cupcakes. Staff members do not have access to materials to cut whole cakes.

No invitations to birthday parties should be sent to school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical education is a component of our instruction program. If there is a particular reason why your child should not participate in activities, please send a note in advance to your child's teacher. If your child is to miss more than 3 days of class participation, a note from the doctor is required. If your child requires adaptive physical education activities on a regular basis a letter from the physician stating the physical limitations must be given to the physical education department.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued quarterly. Progress reports are sent home in the middle of each quarterly marking period. The purpose of progress reports and report cards is to communicate clearly with parents the child's academic progress.

Grading Policies

Kindergarten:

- First, Second, and Third 9 Weeks: Exemplary, Satisfactory, Needs Improvement, Unsatisfactory
- Fourth 9 Weeks: Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developmental Skills (GKIDS 2.0)

First – Fifth Grades:

- A = 90 to 100
- B = 80 to 89
- C = 71 to 79
- D = 70
- F = Below 70

Art, Music, and Physical Education

- S = Satisfactory
- N = Needs Improvement
- U = Unsatisfactory

Student conduct shall be evaluated as follows:

- S = Satisfactory
- N = Needs Improvement
- U = Unsatisfactory

**Parents will have access to the Parent Portal. Parents can log on to access student attendance and grades. More information and directions can be found on our website.

SPECIAL SERVICES

In addition to regular classroom experiences, students have available to them the following special services/classes:

- School Counseling
- Physical Education Classes
- Media Classes
- Music Classes
- Art Classes
- School Social Services
- Services for Special Needs Students

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM

All schools in Georgia use Student Support Teams (SST) to identify and offer alternative strategies for students having academic and social difficulties. The team may consist of the teachers who work with the student, along with the principal, assistant principal, counselor, educational evaluator, school psychologist, other teachers, and/or special education teachers. Every effort is made to provide for academic, behavioral, and/or social success in school. The referral of a student for special education is initiated through the SST process. This team also serves as a retention/placement committee when retention or placement is considered.

TELEPHONES

Children are permitted to use the school telephones only in an emergency situation.

THREATS/HARASSMENT

To keep Bright Star Elementary a safe learning environment, all threats of violence toward another individual will be taken seriously. The offender will be subject to disciplinary action and may be reported to law enforcement officials. Teachers and students are urged to notify the administration of any threats of violence. The administration will take immediate steps to investigate and determine the factual circumstances of the threat and then determine the appropriate action to take. Such action may include disciplining the student as appropriate under school rules, contacting the parents of the students involved, contacting appropriate law enforcement or other officials.

It is the policy of the Board of Education to maintain an educational environment that is free from sexual harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the district staff, any student, or for any third party to harass a student through conduct or communications of a sexual nature. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other inappropriate oral, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when made by a member of the school staff to a student or when made by any student to another student, or when made by a third party to a student constitutes sexual harassment.

TRANSPORTATION (BUS INFORMATION)

Transportation/Bus information can be obtained at 770-651-2400.

Safe transportation is considered an integral part of the total educational program. **Riding a school bus is a privilege contingent upon safe, proper, and courteous conduct.** The Douglas County Board of Education recognizes that safe school bus operation is only possible with the full cooperation of our parents, students, and school staff.

Students must get on and off the bus at their own stop. A student is not allowed to ride another student's bus, unless the parent submits written authorization to the office. Students who ride the bus are expected to stay in their seats while the bus is in motion, speak in low voices, refrain from throwing objects, keep hands and feet to themselves, cooperate with the bus driver, and act in a respectful manner. Students may be subject to disciplinary procedures when bus safety rules are violated. Rules may include suspension from riding the bus for one or more days according to the procedures outlined by the Douglas County Board of Education.

Any changes in transportation must be completed prior to 1:30 P.M. These changes must be completed by e-mailing lisa.sanders@dcssga.org or stacy.roark@dcssga.org. If you do not receive a confirmation email, please call the office to verify receipt. PLEASE NOTE: Email will not be checked between 1:30 and the end of dismissal.

WEAPONS

The following items can be defined as dangerous weapons: firearms, knives, explosives, and any other objects which may be used in such a manner as to inflict bodily injury or place another person in fear of his/her safety. A student shall not possess, handle, or transmit weapons and dangerous instruments. This also includes "look-a-like" weapons. The parents and law enforcement agency may be notified. We will follow Douglas County School System Discipline Policy for disciplinary actions.

WEB SITE

On our site you will find information regarding our staff, classrooms, homework, current events, menus and many other items of interest. Visit our website <https://bses.dcssga.org/>