**FORT GARRISON**

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Dr. Hope Baier, Principal Mrs. Sara Solter, Assistant Principal



**Parent/Student Handbook**

3310 Woodvalley Drive

Pikesville, Maryland 21208

443-809-1203

443-809-1204 – *Fax*

Website: fortgarrisones.bcps.org

**School Colors: Red & White**

**School Mascot: Pedro the Fox**

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**Welcome**

**to**

 **Fort Garrison Elementary School**



**A Message from the Administrative Team**

**Dr. Hope Baier, Principal**

**Mrs. Sara Solter, Assistant Principal**

Our mission for Fort Garrison Elementary School is to prepare students to thrive in a globally competitive society. Through rigorous, responsive instruction and meaningful engagement students will be empowered to be innovative problem-solvers and caring community citizens.

We believe that in order to realize this mission, the home and school must work in partnership. It is in this spirit that we work together in the overall planning, implementation, and evaluation of the total school program. Your involvement in your child’s education continues to make the difference.

This handbook has been provided especially for you. The purpose of the handbook is to provide important information about our school.

Let’s keep the lines of communication open. Please do not hesitate to call us at any time. We welcome questions and concerns. It’s also nice to hear the good things you might have to say. We look forward to our partnership!

School Hours

Pre-Kindergarten through Grade Five 9:05 a.m. – 4:20 p.m.

School doors will open at 9:05 a.m. Students **may not** be dropped off early or **must** be supervised by a parent/guardian if they arrive prior to 9:05 a.m. It is important that children arrive in their classroom before the 9:20 a.m. bell in order for them to organize supplies and have time to socialize with peers.

All of our students are provided with bus transportation. If parents decide to drive their children to school, they will need to park their car on either Marcie Drive, Birch Hollow, or Woodvalley Drive, past Birch Hollow. The front doors will be the only doors that are open in the morning, with the exception of the Integrated Model/Pre-K door for these students only. **Parents may not park in either staff parking lot.**

**The driveway in the front of the building is reserved for buses only**. Children arriving in cars may not be dropped off in the bus loop until 9:30 a.m.

Children will walk to class independently, with the help of our staff as needed. This will enhance the children’s confidence and independence. This independent arrival also enables teachers to focus their attention on your children as soon as they arrive at the classroom door.

The instructional day at Fort Garrison Elementary School ends at 4:05 p.m.

Parents are asked to assist with dismissal procedures by making certain that children are clear about dismissal plans before they enter school each morning. Last minute changes in plans are often confusing to children. All changes in transportation plans must be put in writing and sent to the children’s teachers. Do not email the school with changes in transportation, as an email may not be read until the end of the school day as teachers are teaching. End of day phone calls to the office to change your children’s dismissal plans create many problems for the school. When numerous calls are made to the office near the end of the school day, it is difficult for the office to honor these requests. If changes must be made to dismissal plans, parents MUST notify the school by 3:00 p.m. These calls should be limited to emergencies ONLY.

All walkers will be dismissed to parents by the cafeteria door and doors facing the ball field. Students in Kindergarten, 4th, and 5th grade will be dismissed via the cafeteria doors. Students in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade will be dismissed at the door facing the ball fields. When siblings attend, all family members will be dismissed at the youngest child’s designated spot.

Pets are not allowed on school property between 9:05 a.m. to 4:20 p.m. If you choose to bring your pet to student drop-off or pick-up, please ensure your animal stays off school property. Your child will be dismissed to you from the designated areas and will walk to you.

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# Absence/Tardiness/Early Dismissal

When a student is absent, a note explaining the reason for the absence **must** be given to the teacher on the day the student returns to school. Students arriving after 9:20 a.m. report to the office to receive a late pass. Parents picking up students early from school should report to the school office to sign out their child. When there is a planned early pick-up, parents should send a note of excuse with a specified time of pick-up to school that morning. Students, in turn, will be called to the office upon parent’s arrival.

**Attendance Policy:** If a student is absent from school, he/she may not attend or participate in after school activities, or concerts.

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# Home/School Communications Folder

Every child at Fort Garrison Elementary will receive a home/school communication folder. This folder is to go home and be returned by students on the next school day. Items such as bulletins, information from teachers, and homework will go home weekly in the folders. Parents are asked to review the folder, pull out appropriate materials, and check their child’s work. In turn, parents can use the folder to communicate with teachers, as well as the school office. Please review your child’s folder on a regular basis.

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# Report Cards

Regular communication between parents/guardians and teachers is very important to the educational process. There are four reporting periods during the school year. We strongly encourage parents to monitor grades through Schoology. The report cards will be posted on November 14, 2023, for the first term for grades 1-5, January 29, 2024, for the second term, April 16, 2024, for the third term, and for the fourth quarter on the last day of school in June. In addition, students who are not meeting with success will receive an interim report mid-way through each quarter. Kindergarten students will receive a report card twice each year.

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# Emergency Early Dismissal Plans

At the beginning of each school year, parents will be asked to complete an Emergency Early Dismissal Plan Form. This form provides the school with specific instructions about where a child is to go in the event of an emergency early school dismissal. If a parent chooses to have their child follow normal dismissal procedures and ride the bus home, this choice is limited to the child’s own bus route. Some parents indicate that the child is to ride the bus home and report to a particular neighbor’s house. Parents need to provide a plan for when Fort Garrison is the only school to close. In the event of an emergency such as a power outage, the middle and high schools will not close, so alternative arrangements for childcare that had been provided by older siblings must be made.

Inclement Weather

When it is decided that schools are to be closed for inclement weather, announcements will be made by local television and radio stations. Students and parents are, therefore, asked to please not call the school for this information. These announcements are made for the cancellation of school, as well as for delayed openings and early dismissals. Parents will be notified of a Fort Garrison only closing via BCPS School Messenger.

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**School Closing Policy**

 **Delayed Openings and Early Dismissals**

When schools will have a delayed opening or early dismissal unexpectedly, a message will be sent to families via media outlets. In the event of a Fort Garrison only closing, all families will notified via School Messenger.

In the event of a 1 hour delay, Fort Garrison Elementary will begin at **10:20 a.m.** (Doors open at 10:05 a.m.).

In the event of a 2 hour delay, Fort Garrison Elementary will begin at **11:20 a.m.** (Doors open at 11:05 a.m.). There will be no A.M. Pre-K class.

In the event of a 1 hour early dismissal, students will be dismissed at 3:05 p.m.

In the event of a 2 hour early dismissal, students will be dismissed at 2:05 p.m.

In the event of a 3 hour early dismissal, students will be dismissed at 1:05 p.m.

Every effort will be made to serve lunches to all students, thus some adjustments to lunch shift schedules will be necessary.

**Safety**

As we all continue to work together to ensure the safety of our students, we would like to call to your attention to the following:

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* All outside doors are locked. **All students must enter the school through the** **front door in the morning with the exception of pre-k and Integrated Model students.**
* The parking lots to the left and right of the school have been specifically designated for **staff parking only**. This is not a drop off area. Cars **may not** enter the bus circle from 8:45 – 9:30 a.m., or 3:00 – 4:20 p.m.

**Breakfast and Lunch**

This year all students will be provided with a grab and go breakfast and lunch, free of charge. Of course, parents may choose to pack lunch for their children. We strongly discourage families from using drop-off services (Door Dash, Grub Hub) as the times cannot be guaranteed that the lunch will be delivered on time within the student’s lunch period. It can also present issues within the class when students have special lunches and others cannot have this option.

**Celebrating Birthdays**

Children enjoy distributing treats at school in celebration of their birthdays. If your child would like to pass out small items to their class, we encourage pencils or stickers. Food and anything edible is not permitted due to food allergies. If a food item is sent, it will be sent home. **Do not send balloons or decorations to school**. In addition, we will only distribute invitations to events outside of school if every child in your child’s class is invited. We would never want a child to feel left out.

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**Bus Policies and Procedures**

Fort Garrison Elementary is served by approximately 9 buses. In order to facilitate an orderly and safe dismissal, students must ride home on their assigned buses. **Students will not be allowed to ride home on any bus but their own**. **Whenever your child’s transportation routine is altered, a dated note must be sent to your child’s teacher to specify the change. We cannot accept emails for change in dismissal.**

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**Toy Alert**

Students are to refrain from bringing toys to school (regardless of value) including devices, electronic games, cell phones or trading cards to school. Children do not need a cell phone in school. If a parent would like their child to have a cell phone, the phone is to be off and kept in a student locker.

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**Dress Code Guidelines**

In order to create a positive and respectful learning environment at Fort Garrison Elementary School, the following Dress Code Guidelines are followed:

1. The length of shorts or a skirt should not be shorter than fist length when you are standing with your arms down at your sides.

1. Muscle shirts and shirts with spaghetti straps may not be worn without a shirt over or under them.
2. No bare midriffs, halter tops, or sexually suggestive clothing.
3. Flip flops or shoes that come off as a child goes up steps should not be worn for safety reasons. Tennis shoes must be worn during physical education class.
4. Clothing should not have offensive or suggestive language/pictures or products or concepts named or pictured that are inappropriate for school (alcohol, tobacco, weapons, or violence).
5. Clothing should fit properly and not be extremely large.
6. Undergarments (i.e. underwear or bras) are not to be visible.

Families will be notified and asked to bring clothing to school if a student is wearing inappropriate clothing for the school setting.

***Thanks for your cooperation!***

**Notes from the School Nurse**

The health and well-being of your child are primary concerns while your child is in school. To ensure and maintain his/her good health and safety, please take a few minutes to review the following guidelines:

* ****Administration of medication at school is discouraged: however, if your physician decides it is necessary for your child to receive a medication during the school day, the approval and specific directions must be provided to the school by the physician. **Parents must bring the medication to the school in the original box or bottle with the current prescription label on the container.** **All** medications **(even over the counter medications)** require a written physician’s order. **Students are not to have medications in their possession**.
* Please keep all home, work, and emergency phone numbers at school up-to-date. When children become suddenly ill or injured at school, **it is essential that we have current phone numbers.**
* Please keep the nurse informed of significant changes in your child’s health. For example: changes in diet, daily medication, new allergies, and changes in physical restrictions, vision and/or hearing impairment.
* Please assess your child daily for signs and symptoms of illness including colds and allergies. If your child has a fever, the BCPS policy is to keep them home until they are fever-free for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications, such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen.

By communicating your child’s special health and safety needs to us, we can ensure a safer and healthier school year.

All students are to keep a change of clothing in their lockers in case of illness, spills from lunch or mud at recess.

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| **FACULTY EMAIL ADDRESSES** |
| **Name** | **Title** | **Email** |
| Baier, Hope  | Principal | hbaier@bcps.org |
| Bare, Kelly | 1st Grade Teacher | kbare@bcps.org |
| Baron, Caroline | 2nd Grade Teacher | cbaron@bcps.org |
| Benedetti, Melanie | Primary Inclusion | mbenedetti@bcps.org |
| Case, Stephanie | Vocal Music Teacher | scase@bcps.org |
| Cohen, Jodi | Kindergarten Teacher | jcohen4@bcps.org |
| Dukes, Melissa | Intermediate Special Education | mderobertis@bcps.org |
| Ferrigno, Ashley | 4th Grade Teacher | aferrigno2@bcps.org |
| Gold, Adria | 3rd Grade Teacher | agold2@bcps.org |
| Grapes, Beth | Physical Education Teacher | bgrapes@bcps.org |
| Harrison, Emily | Integrated Model Teacher | eharrison3@bcps.org |
| Hoffman, Jennifer | 1st Grade Teacher | jhoffman4@bcps.org |
| Hunt, Leah | Kindergarten | jhunt@bcps.org |
| Hyson, Jennifer | Integrated Model Teacher | jhyson@bcps.org |
| Kahn, Laurey | School Nurse | ldobson@bcps.org |
| Levin, Stacey | Special Ed Teacher – PS/PK | slevin2@bcps.org |
| Levine, Lisa | 5th Grade Teacher | llevine@bcps.org |
| MacNichol, Natasha | Art Teacher | nmacnichol@bcps.org |
| Moreland, Casey | 3rd Grade Teacher | cmoreland2@bcps.org |
| O’Donnell, Lindsay | Library Media Teacher | lodonnell@bcps.org |
| Orenstein, Kate | 5th GradeTeacher | korenstein@bcps.org |
| Protzko, Rachel | 4th Grade Teacher | rprotzko@bcps.org |
| Reusing, Alex | Social Emotional Learning | abraun3@bcps.org |
| Sevy, Kathy | Office Secretary | ksevy@bcps.org |
| Siegel, Stacy | Reading Specialist | ssiegel@bcps.org |
| Sharp, Carole | Office Secretary | csharp@bcps.org |
| Solter, Sara | Assistant Principal | ssolter@bcps.org |
| Thompson, Caren | 2nd Grade Teacher | cthompson4@bcps.org |
| Weingard, Lauren | School Psychologist | lweingard@bcps.org |
| Wingrat, Tara | Integrated Model Teacher | twingrat@bcps.org |
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