

Rock Creek Elementary School

Parent/Student Handbook 2024 - 2025

1121 East Erwin Road
Erwin, TN 37650
Phone: 423-743-1648
Fax: 423-743-1664

Website: <http://www.unicoischools.com/rcsonline/>

Principal: Mr. Danny O'Quinn
Secretary: Ms. Donna Willis



**Rock Creek
Panthers**

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Name

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UNICOI COUNTY SCHOOLS CALENDAR 2024-2025



August-2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

September-2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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29	30					

October-2024						
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November-2024						
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29	30					

December-2024						
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January-2025						
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February-2025						
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29						

March-2025						
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April-2025						
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May-2025						
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June-2025						
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29	30					

July-2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

- 8/5-8/9 In-Service
- 8/12 First Day of School (Dismiss 11:45/12:00)
- 8/28 Professional Development (Dismiss 11:45/12:00)
- 9/2 Labor Day (No School)
- 9/19 Parent/Teacher Conference (Dismiss 11:45/12:00)
- 9/25 Professional Development (Dismiss 11:45/12:00)
- 9/30-10/4 Fall Break (No School)
- 11/5 Election Day (No School)
- 11/13 Professional Development (Dismiss 11:45/12:00)
- 11/27-11/29 Thanksgiving Break (No School)
- 12/20 Professional Development (Dismiss 11:45/12:00)
- 12/23-1/3 Christmas Break (No School)
- 1/6 Professional Development (No School)
- 1/20 Martin Luther King Day (No School)
- 2/5 Professional Development (Dismiss 11:45/12:00)
- 3/13 Parent/Teacher Conference (Dismiss 11:45/12:00)
- 4/9 Professional Development (Dismiss 11:45/12:00)
- 4/18-4/21 Spring Break (No School)
- 5/22 Professional Development (No School)
- 5/23 Last Day of School (Report Cards)

COLOR CODES	
	Students in School
	Students out of School
	Schools dismiss early

Principal's Message

Dear Rock Creek Students and Families,

On behalf of the Rock Creek faculty and staff, I am very excited to welcome you to the 2024/25 school year at Rock Creek Elementary. I hope everyone had a great summer break and had plenty of time to relax and recharge with family and friends before we start the new School year!

Our goal for this year is to grow students in their academic abilities as well as in their social/emotional capacities. I would also like to encourage all of you to become a part of our school community, if you are not already, by joining our PTO, volunteer programs, and signing up for our school messaging system, Bloomz. With strong community and family support in our school, we will be able to accomplish so much more for our students.

This family/student handbook has been designed to provide students and families with facts about Rock Creek Elementary and our daily procedures. We strongly encourage you to take the time to read this information and share it with your student. As you read this handbook you may note some changes from the prior year, if you have additional questions or need more information, please contact the school at 743-1648.

If I can be of assistance in any way, please feel free to contact me at 743-1648 or oquinnd@unicoischools.com.

Sincerely,

Danny O'Quinn
Principal

Again, welcome to Rock Creek!

Mission Statement

The mission of Rock Creek Elementary is to prepare our students for success inside and outside of the classroom by providing them opportunities to learn and grow in a safe environment.

Vision Statement

For Rock Creek to be a school that works with all stakeholders in creating an environment that is most beneficial to student growth and achievement.

School Motto

**Reaching
Children for
Educational
Success**

Belief Statements

Stakeholders involved with Rock Creek Elementary want what is best for each child. Students are challenged, praised, and rewarded for their efforts. We believe:

- All students can learn.
- Instructional practices will incorporate differences in learning styles in a safe and comfortable environment.
- Challenging expectations increase individual student performance and growth.
- Involvement of stakeholders is valued in the decision making process.
- Policies are designed with the understanding that each student is a unique individual with diverse needs.

Enrollment/Withdrawal of Students

Any student enrolling in school for the first time must provide a birth certificate, medical examination, and evidence of state-required immunization*.

*Enrollment of students who qualify as immigrants, migrants, and/or homeless, under the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act, may not be delayed due to lack of availability of the above requirements. Students will be enrolled, and appropriate district personnel will provide assistance to the families in meeting the requirements in a timely manner.

If you are moving and are withdrawing your child from school, please call or come by the school prior to the withdrawal date. This will give ample time to complete the necessary paperwork, etc. Your cooperation is always greatly appreciated.

Arrival:

Rock Creek opens at 7:15 a.m. with students beginning classes at 8:00am. Students who do not ride the bus are asked to arrive no earlier than 7:15 a.m. Students arriving between 7:15-7:30 a.m. should report to the gymnasium. Students arriving between 7:30 and 8:00 should report to their homeroom teacher. Any student arriving after 8:00 a.m. must have a parent to sign the student in as tardy at the secretary's office. Students wishing to eat breakfast should arrive at school by 7:40 am.

Dismissal:

Students are dismissed at 3:00 p.m. and should be picked up by 3:15 p.m.

Attendance Awards

Perfect Attendance-Students who are present every day for the entire day will receive perfect attendance awards. **Students must be at school from 8:00 to 3:00 every school day and cannot have any tardies or check-outs for the entire school year to receive a perfect attendance award.**

Attendance Policy:

Attendance is a key factor in student achievement and therefore, students are expected to be present each day school is in session. The Board has set, in compliance with the State Department of Education requirements, a daily student attendance goal of 95%. The attendance supervisor/director of schools oversees the entire attendance program which shall include:

1. All accounting and reporting procedures and their dissemination;
2. Alternative program options for students who severely fail to meet minimum attendance requirements;
3. Ensuring that all school age children attend school;

Absences shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the principal or his/her designee. Excused absences shall include:

1. Death of immediate family member;

2. Medical appointments w/documentation
3. Religious observances; or
4. Court appearance w/ documentation
5. Medical appointments should be made after school. If made during the school day, the child will be excused for a reasonable amount of time for the appointment. Students should return to school with a doctor's excuse.

ATTENDANCE

Strive For Less Than 5

As a community, we are focusing on attendance this year. Families and students are challenged to “*Strive for Less Than Five*” absences during the 2024-2025 school year. We will be celebrating students that reach attendance goals throughout the school year. If a student has five or more absences, it can impact their learning. Students that attend school regularly and on time are able to learn with their grade level peers. Studies show that students who are chronically absent and tardy struggle to be on grade level in reading and math. This is a community challenge. As a whole, we want to support and encourage good attendance.

Expectations:

Attendance is a key factor in student achievement. Therefore, students are expected to be present each day school is in session. The Board of Education has set, in compliance with the State Department of Education requirements, a daily student attendance goal of 95%.

Absences shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the principal. Excused absences include:

1. Personal illness (as determined by the school nurse)
2. Death of immediate family member
3. Medical appointments
4. Religious Observances

A child is marked unexcused until we have an excuse provided by a doctor's office or a written note from a parent or guardian. Parents or guardians have one day to provide the school with a written excuse or phone call. In the case of tardiness, the parent **MUST** sign their child in with the main office and state the reason for tardiness. If it is not one of the above reasons, then the tardy is unexcused.

Regular school attendance is a key to good school grades, overall achievement, and a rewarding educational experience, as well as being required by Tennessee State Law. Parents or guardians will be contacted by letter, Dojo message, or phone call when students have absences. If absences are excessive, the Attendance Supervisor at the Central Office will be informed. A Truancy Board has been established to deal with parents/guardians and students that have chronic absenteeism problems. Court action could result. The process is as follows:

1. When a student is absent, parents will be contacted by phone and/or in writing to determine if the absence is excused or unexcused and to document the number of absences.
2. After five (5) days of unexcused absences, a referral form will be completed by the school and forwarded to the Attendance Supervisor. A meeting will be scheduled with the Truancy Board.
3. A letter will be mailed to the parent/guardian with the date and time they are expected to appear before the Truancy Board. The Truancy Board will meet at the school during school hours. At least one legal parent/guardian must be in attendance.

4. Formal assessment and documentation of reasons for absences will be completed. After meeting with the parent/guardian, the Truancy Board will determine the necessary action to take. This may include an attendance contract and/or an online truancy course for parents to complete.
5. If absences continue after the initial meeting with the Truancy Board, the parent/guardian may be referred to court for legal action.

Steps to Follow when Absence Occurs

1. Parents or guardians should phone the school to inform the office of the absence if possible.
2. A written excuse giving name, date, days of absence, and reason for absence with parent's or guardian's signature or a doctor's excuse is brought to school and given to the child's teacher.
3. The school will accept up to 3 written parent/guardian notes as excused absences.
4. The student should ask for make-up assignments from their teachers (Completion of make-up work and its prompt return is the responsibility of the student).

OFFICE PROCEDURES & POLICIES

Telephone Use:

Only in cases of emergency will students be permitted to use the telephone. Permission must be granted at the office. Only in an emergency will students be allowed to receive phone calls. School business is transacted on the phone and the line must be kept clear. Interruptions often distract from the teaching-learning atmosphere.

Visitors, Visits, Classroom Interruptions, and Parent Teacher Conferences:

We welcome visitors to our school. All visitors to the school, including parents, must be granted access into the building. After ringing the front doorbell, please state your name and the student's name for which your visit pertains and your relationship to the student. Your child's safety is very important to us. We use these safety measures to ensure that no visitor is allowed to enter the building if they have no right to see the student.

All persons visiting the school should enter the building in the identified main entrance and report to the office. All other doors are locked for the safety of the students. Permission from the office is required to visit any part of the school. A visitor's pass must be obtained and worn when inside the building.

Teachers or students are called out of class only in case of emergency. Important messages will be delivered. Please cooperate and do not go directly to the classroom. Learning is adversely affected when a classroom is disturbed, and the teachers' scheduled duties are interrupted. Time on task is directly related to student learning.

If there is a need for a conference with a teacher, other than those times that are regularly scheduled, an appointment should be requested through the school secretary. Please do not "Drop By" to talk with teachers, as preparations are required to ensure a constructive conference. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated in this respect. You may be assured that conferences will be scheduled, and telephone calls will be returned as soon as possible.

Check in/Tardy/:

If a student arrives after 8:00, the student must be accompanied by an adult to the office to sign in.

The student will be given a slip to give to the teacher. Tardiness is a part of attendance and counts towards truancy. Exceeding numbers of tardies will result in referral to Truancy Board. A note should accompany the student to explain the reason for his/her tardiness. **Tardiness is time missed which counts against attendance.**

Early Dismissal/Checkout

We encourage you to try and schedule your child's doctor's and dental appointments around school hours. If this is not possible, you must come to the main office first and sign out your child.

Identification of the adult taking the child must be made at the office. **Under no circumstances will children be released to unidentified or unauthorized persons. Please do not depend on telephone calls to have children dismissed. Positive identification cannot be made by phone. Requests must be made in writing or in person to the school office. Please do not go directly to the classroom; wait at the office for your child as not to interfere with the education process.**

OFFICE PROCEDURES & POLICIES

Student Illness or Injury:

If a student becomes ill at school or is injured, the school will make every effort to contact the parent or guardian. **It is imperative that each student has a phone number where a relative can be reached in an emergency.** If the emergency form is found not to contain numbers at which we can reach an adult, the child will not be allowed to return to school until this is rectified.

Emergency School Closing:

In the event that weather conditions are such that it would be dangerous for the school buses to run, school will be closed. If threatening or adverse weather conditions occur after the beginning of the school day school will be closed early. Announcements will be made on social media, the radio, and TV, and school will be dismissed. Please have an alternate plan for your child on file in the school office in case you are not at home. **Should you come to pick up your child when a school closing is announced, come to the office before going to the classroom.** We will send early dismissal instructions forms home to be filled out.

Emergency Form:

Emergency forms will be filled out and updated online at the beginning of the year. This information is of the utmost importance and needs to stay current and accurate for the safety of your child. A record of this information is kept in the school office in case you need to be contacted. Please make sure all telephone numbers and addresses are accurate online. Remember to put the name and telephone number of a person who can be contacted in case you cannot be reached. We must have a minimum of two contacts besides yourself.

Please update your information if you change addresses or telephone numbers during the year. It is very important that our records are kept current. If at any time during the year a change in the custody, phone number, address or information concerning people allowed to pick up your child occurs, the parent/legal guardian must come to the school and request those changes. If a change in custody occurs, court documents must be presented and kept on file in the student's permanent record.

Medication Policy 6.405:

All prescription medications given at school shall be prescribed by a licensed prescriber on an individual basis as determined by the child's health status.

A. Prescription medications must be brought to school in the original, pharmacy labeled container. The container shall display:

- Child's name
- Prescription number
- Medication name and dosage
- Administration route
- Date
- Licensed prescriber's name
- Pharmacy name, address, and phone number

B. Prescription medications require written instruction, information and possible side effects with a prescriber signature on a permission form supplied by the school. Beginning and ending dates must also be provided.

OFFICE PROCEDURES & POLICIES

C. Prescription medications require a written parental/guardian request which shall include:

- Child's name
- Name and address of parent/guardian
- Name of medication, dose, route, time of administration
- Discontinuation date
- Reason medication is needed
- Current parent/guardian phone number in case of emergency

D. Documentation required for long-term prescription medications will be renewed annually.

E. Changes in prescription medication shall have written authorization from the licensed prescriber and parent/guardian. The change must be noted on the Medication Administration Record (MAR) without obliterating the previous information. Only an RN or LPN can make changes on the MAR. Changes can include but are not limited to: time, dose, additions, or discontinuation.

All non-prescription medications given in school shall:

A. Be brought in with the original retail label listing the ingredients and dose schedule on the packaging. The child's name is to be written on or in some way affixed to the container.

B. Require a written parental/guardian request which shall include:

- Child's name
- Name of medication, dose, route, time of administration
- Discontinuation date
- Reason medication is needed
- Current parent/guardian phone number in case of emergency

A written request/permission form is required for all prescription and non-prescription medication to be given during school hours or during school sponsored activities. No medication can be taken until this form

is completed and returned to the school with the medication. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that the written request/permission form and the medication are brought to the school.

All medications are to be stored in a secure, separate, locked drawer or cabinet. Medications requiring refrigeration should be refrigerated in a secure area. This refrigerator should be for medications only. If the refrigerator must be shared with food, medications must be stored in a leak proof, locked container. The parent/guardian shall be responsible at the end of the treatment regimen for removing any unused medication from the school. When the duration of a medication is complete or out of date, the parent/guardian will be notified for replacement medication.

OFFICE PROCEDURES & POLICIES

Pediculosis (Head Lice) Policy 6.4031

Pediculosis, or head lice, is a common condition that has become a major school and community problem. It results in millions of cases, hundreds of millions of dollars of consumer costs and lost parental wages. The impact on school systems dealing with pediculosis is also very significant. School system employees spend a great deal of time managing pediculosis in addition to the revenue lost because of children being excluded for school attendance. Persistent, or chronic, pediculosis also impacts student's academic performance when they are frequently absent from school, missing valuable instruction time. Finally, the negative social impact of persistent head lice is also important to consider for these children. Development of a comprehensive and coordinated approach to the management of pediculosis provides an effective method for reducing the risk of transmission in the school setting with early detection and treatment. Since the greatest incidence of head lice is seen in children between the ages of 5-12, the Board has developed a Pediculosis Management Program for each elementary and middle school. **The Pediculosis Management Program includes routine screenings for head lice and their egg sacs (nits), scheduled lice case tracking and follow-up. The program also promotes education among school children, school officials, educators, and parents.**

Once a child has been excluded from school for head lice/nits, only the day sent home will be excused. Any absences thereafter will be unexcused. Once a student is cleared and returns to school, there will be NO excused days if there is a reoccurrence within two weeks of the initial exclusion.

Student Technology Policy

Unicoi County Schools have access to computers, network, and the Internet. This technology is the most effective way we have found for introducing students to the global nature of information. It allows us to find, synthesize, and share information in a variety of unique ways. The Internet has come about because groups of individuals have chosen to network their computers in order to share information. A small minority have made objectionable materials available over the Internet. The Unicoi County School System takes every precaution to restrict access to this information. However, an industrious user may discover it. We firmly believe that the valuable information and interaction available on the Internet far outweigh the possibility that users may obtain unsuitable material. Disciplinary action will be taken against users found sending or acquiring objectionable material over the Internet or any part of the school system network.

Terms and Conditions of Use:

- Passwords if issued will not be shared among users.
- All network communication must be polite, kind, and free from inappropriate language.
- Electronic mail is not guaranteed to be private.
- Personal work and electronic mail shall be deleted regularly due to space limitations.

- ❑ No personal address, phone numbers, full names, or financial information will be included in any network communication.
- ❑ No attempt to tamper with other people’s data or gain unauthorized access to accounts or files is permitted.
- ❑ It is the user’s responsibility to seek guidance from the system administrators if questions of proper use arise.
- ❑ The Unicoi County Schools do not condone and specifically forbid the unauthorized duplication of software.
- ❑ Users will abide by the copyright law.
- ❑ Students will be monitored.

STUDENTS AND PARENT/GUARDIANS WILL BE REQUIRED TO SIGN A USER’S AGREEMENT.

TRANSPORTATION:

Drop Off/Pick Up:

The drop-off area is on the right side of the school. Please have students ready to exit on the **PASSENGER** side of the car upon arrival and stay in the vehicle to optimize school safety. When picking up students at the end of the day, adults need to stay in the vehicle while school personnel bring the student to the vehicle. This will ensure the safety of our students and keep traffic flowing. Students will not be released to any person who is not on the emergency contact list without prior arrangements. Faculty and staff will not be responsible for buckling or securing your child in their car or booster seat.

School Buses:

All school rules apply on the school bus. The bus driver is in charge, and the students are to follow the directions of the bus driver. Transportation is provided as a convenience to students and parents. Students who do not follow the rules and create disturbances on the bus will be punished for the behavior. Students are expected to:

- respect everyone on the bus
- remain seated
- speak in a low voice
- follow all directions of the driver
- keep hands inside the windows
- keep all objects inside the bus (No objects of any kind can be thrown out the window)

No student will be allowed to get off the bus at any bus stop other than his/her own without written permission from the parent or legal guardian. No student will be allowed to ride the bus home with another student without written permission from a parent or legal guardian. These permission slips must be taken to the office and signed by the principal and a copy will be kept in the office. Students will not be allowed to call home to get permission. Failure to follow these rules or directions will result in the following:

- 1st offense-Front seat placement and parent notification**
- 2nd offense- Three day bus suspension from all bus transportation**
- 3rd offense-One week suspension from all bus transportation**
- 4th offense-Six week suspension from all bus transportation**
- 5th offense-Remainder of year suspension from all bus transportation**

Transportation Change:

Please notify the office in advance and advise the teacher if there is to be a change in transporting your child. If no notification is received, your child will follow his/her regular method of getting home.

CAFETERIA

Breakfast/Lunch:

The Federal Lunch and Breakfast Program provides free and reduced price meals through approved applications. Everyone is encouraged to participate in the hot lunch program. Nutritious meals are served daily. Menus are sent home and they are also posted in the office.

By Federal School Lunch Regulation, **no identified commercially prepared food may be brought into the cafeteria and eaten during the specified lunch hours.** Breakfast is free and lunches may be paid for by the day, week, month, or entire school year. Meals must be paid for in advance. Credit is not available through the cafeteria.

PRICES	ADULT	GRADES	REDUCED PRICE
		K - 5	
Lunch	\$4.00 (staff) \$5.00 (visitor)	\$2.50	FREE
Breakfast	\$2.00	FREE	FREE
Milk/Juice	\$.50	\$.50	\$.50 (if extra)
Water	\$.75	\$.75	\$.75

Ice cream is available for \$.50. **No charges are allowed for ice cream.** Students will have an opportunity to earn a free ice cream if they are on time, eat school breakfast, and eat school lunch for ten days.

Students are expected to behave in the cafeteria. Students will be called to enter the line when called. Once students are seated, students may not change seats. Inside voices are expected during a meal, and students are expected to clean up before lining up for class. Expectations and consequences are also outlined in our discipline policy.

Lunch Charges

Students will be able to charge if they forget their lunch money. Charges should be paid back the next day. Students will be given a charge ticket in the office to take home for parents to sign and return the next day with money. If charges are not paid in a reasonable time, the parent will be called. **Charges must be paid back to the office in cash. Students are not permitted to take money out of their lunch accounts to pay charges in the office. Checks cannot be cashed to pay office charges and put money into their accounts. For accounting purposes both accounts must be kept separate.**

Students who have withdrawn or graduated from Unicoi County Schools can request a refund of the credit balance in their lunch account within 30 days of graduation or withdrawal. Please contact School Nutrition at 423-743-1612 for assistance.

CONDUCT

Security

Safety is of the utmost concern for our students. Fire and tornado drills are held at regular intervals throughout the school year. Remember these basic rules:

1. Check the instructions in each classroom indicating how to leave the building in case of fire.
2. Walk. No Talking. Move quickly and quietly to designated areas.

We also practice additional safety drills throughout the year to prepare our students for emergency situations.

Zero-Tolerance Offenses Policy 6.309

The Board of Education agrees in order to ensure a safe and secure learning environment free of drugs, violence and dangerous weapons; any student who engages in the following behaviors will be subject to suspension requirement on a case-by-case basis. Nothing in this section shall be constructed to prohibit the assignment of students to an alternative school.

1. Students who bring or unlawfully possess a drug or dangerous weapon onto school property or to any event or activity.
2. Any student who is on a school bus, or on school property or while attending any school event or activity.
 - a. Unlawfully possesses a drug or dangerous weapon; or
 - b. Commits battery on a teacher, or other employee of the school.

Note: Due process stops with the Superintendent

Bullying/Discrimination/Harassment (Sexual, Racial, Ethnic, Religious)

The Unicoi County Board of Education has determined that a safe, civil, and supportive environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. In order to maintain that environment, acts of bullying, cyber-bullying, discrimination, harassment, hazing or any other victimization of students, based on any actual or perceived traits or characteristics, are prohibited. This policy shall be disseminated annually to all school staff, students, and parents. This policy shall cover employees, employees' behaviors, students and students' behaviors while on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided equipment or transportation, or at any official school bus stop. If the act takes place off school property or outside of a school-sponsored activity, this policy is in effect if the conduct is directed specifically at a student or students and has the effect of creating a hostile educational environment or otherwise creating a substantial disruption to the education environment or learning process. Building administrators are responsible for educating and training their respective staff and students as to the definition and recognition of violations of this policy.

Definitions

Bullying/Intimidation/Harassment - An act that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, and the act has the effect of:

- Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property;
- Knowingly placing a student or students in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student's property;
- Causing emotional distress to a student or students; or
- Creating a hostile educational environment.

Bullying, intimidation, or harassment may also be unwelcome conduct based on a protected class (race, nationality, origin, color, gender, age, disability, religion) that is severe, pervasive, or persistent and creates a hostile environment.

Cyber-bullying - A form of bullying undertaken through the use of electronic devices. Electronic devices include, but are not limited to, telephones, cellular phones or other wireless telecommunication devices, text messaging, emails, social networking sites, instant messaging, videos, web sites or fake profiles.

Hazing - An intentional or reckless act by a student or group of students that is directed against any other student(s) that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of the student(s) or that induces or coerces a student to endanger his/her mental or physical health or safety. Coaches and other employees of the school

district shall not encourage, permit, condone or tolerate hazing activities. "Hazing" does not include customary athletic events or similar contest or competitions and is limited

***Any bullying/harassment violations will follow school board policy (6.304)

Complaints:

Parents who have complaints about anything concerning the student and his/her teachers should follow a standard procedure. First, the teacher should be contacted through the office. If satisfaction is not obtained, the next step should be a conference with the principal, the supervisor, the director of schools, and finally the members of the board of education. The board members should be contacted through the director of the school's office.

Discipline/Behavior

One of the most important lessons education should teach is discipline. While discipline does not appear as a subject, it underlines the whole educational structure. It is the training that develops self-control, character, orderliness, and efficiency. It is the key to good conduct and proper consideration for other people.

It is necessary that children learn to develop self-discipline in order to further their learning. We ask that you discuss with your children the importance of and need for good behavior and a good attitude while at school. Our school-wide discipline policy focuses on behaviors that should be practiced on a daily basis by students.

Cell Phones Policy 6.312

Students may possess personal communication devices, such as cell phones, while on school property. However, the personal communication device must be in the off mode and must be kept in lockers. The principal or his/her designee may grant a student permission to use a personal communication device at his/her discretion. A device used outside these parameters shall result in confiscation of the device until such time as it may be released to the student's parent or guardian. A student in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action. Use of cameras on personal communication devices is strictly prohibited on school property or at school functions. A student in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action. Any items lost or stolen are not the responsibility of the school or system.

Personal Electronic Items Policy 6.312

Personal electronic devices including but not limited to (CD players, iPods or MP3 players, notebook computers, tablet computers, any other computing device) must be kept in lockers. The principal or his/her designee may grant a student permission to use a personal communication device at his/her discretion. Improper use or improper storage of the personal electronic device will result in confiscation of the device until such time as it may be released to the student's parents or guardian. A student in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action. Any items lost or stolen is not the responsibility of the school or system.

Personal Items

Personal items are to stay at home. No radios, video games, cell phones, toys or games of any kind are to be brought to school except with the teacher's permission on special days such as field trips.

Illegal Items

No student may have in his/her possession such items as drugs, tobacco, matches, lighters, razor blades, knives, sticks, or any other item judged capable of inflicting harm to others or causing property damage. No radios, video games, toys or games of any kind are to be brought to school except with teacher permission on special days.

Care of Building:

Students are requested to cooperate with the custodian in keeping the building and playground clean and orderly. Wastebaskets are placed throughout the building to receive wastepaper and trash. Marking, defacing, or otherwise being destructive of school property is a serious offense and will result in punishment.

Gum Chewing:

Careless disposal of gum in drinking fountains, furniture, and floors presents sanitation and cleaning problems, and costly repair; **therefore, gum chewing is not permitted.**

Assemblies and Programs:

Assemblies and programs are a part of the curriculum and as such, are designed to be educational as well as entertaining experiences. They provide one of the few opportunities in school to learn formal audience behavior. Regardless of the type of program, courtesy demands that the student body be respectful and appreciative. In live entertainment, unlike radio, TV, or movies, the performers are very conscious of their audience. Talking, whispering, stamping of the feet and booing are discourteous. Yelling is also inappropriate.

Guidelines for Assembly/Program Behavior

At all times the student's behavior should be refined and courteous. An indication of the cultural level of the school is the conduct of the student body at an assembly. Whether guests are present or not, each student is personally responsible for the impression made by the school as a whole. If the behavior of a student impedes the program or assembly, the student may be removed from the program or assembly.

Textbooks:

Textbooks are provided to students through a checkout system and paid for by the taxpayers. If books are lost, damaged or destroyed, the system must be reimbursed by the parent or student.

Dress Code

Dress should be a matter of personal taste as long as it does not interfere with instruction; however, there are limits of modesty, safety, and cleanliness, which each student should follow. Students should dress comfortably, healthy, and cleanly at all times.

Dress Respectfully:

Shirts should:

- ✓ Be appropriate
- ✓ Should not show undergarments
- ✓ Not have spaghetti straps
- ✓ Cover the waistband of pants when arms are raised
- ✓ Should be clear of promoting drugs, alcohol, wrestling, tobacco products, or anything considered inflammatory or derogatory

Shorts should:

- ✓ Be the length of the student's fingertips when walking
- ✓ Should be appropriate and clear of writing on the seat on the shorts

Pants should have no holes above the knee.

Leggings should be worn with either a shirt that is the length of a student's fingertips or worn under a skirt or shorts that meet the length of the student's fingertips. Leggings are NOT pants.

We suggest that flip-flops, crocs, or sandals not be worn in Physical Education classes or on the playground because of safety issues. They may be worn in the regular classroom. The student should have athletic shoes in his/her backpack to participate in P.E. and playground.

If there is doubt as to whether an item is appropriate, the student should consider not wearing it to school. If the dress code is violated, then a phone call will be made to bring the student a change of clothing.

Discipline Policy

Students are expected to behave in an appropriate manner that is conducive to learning. Please go over our standards for behavior that are listed below and encourage your child to have appropriate behavior in all classes. Our system is based on rewarding success when appropriate behavior is displayed at school.

Each classroom incorporates the school-wide discipline policy and has consequences for students when they do not meet the behavior expectations. **Each class has a discipline policy in place that provides actions before a student is referred to the office** unless it is a safety issue or physical harm. Once a student is referred to the office, the following consequences are in place:

Consequences from Office (Consequences may Change based on Principal's Decision)

- Warning with note sent home from office
- Lunch Mentoring/loss of electives/note sent home
- Phone call home with description of behavior/automatic loss of in-school activities
- Phone call home with description of behavior with written punishment
- Parent meeting with principal / teacher/ guidance counselor
- Loss of field trip privileges
- Suspension

***Please note that any suspension will result in an automatic loss of a field trip privilege for that semester.**

Notification of Rights under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the school to amend a record should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(3) The right to privacy of personally identifiable information in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the school has outsourced services or functions it would otherwise use its own employees to perform (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

(4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Directory Information

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires that Unicoi County Schools, with certain exceptions, obtain a parent's written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a child's education records. However, Unicoi County Schools may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless the parent has advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Unicoi County Schools to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent.

If you do not want Unicoi County Schools to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the district in writing. Unicoi County Schools has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems that cannot be used to access education records without a PIN, password, etc. (A student's SSN, in whole or in part, cannot be used for this purpose.)

Footnotes:

1. These laws are: Section 9528 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 7908) and 10 U.S.C. § 503(c).

STUDENT RELATED INFORMATION:

Child Abuse and Neglect

Reporting

All personnel shall be alert for any evidence of child abuse or neglect. Child abuse is defined as any wound, injury, disability, or physical or mental condition which is of such nature as to reasonably indicate that it has been caused by brutality, abuse, or neglect or which on the basis of available information reasonably appears to have been caused by such. Staff members having knowledge or suspicion of any child who is suffering from abuse or neglect shall report such harm immediately. The report shall be made to the judge having juvenile jurisdiction, the office of the chief law-enforcement official where the child resides, or to the Department of Children's Services in a manner specified by the department, either by contacting a local representative of the department or by utilizing the department's centralized intake procedure where applicable.

The report shall include:

1. The name, address and age of the child;
2. The name and address of the parents or persons having custody of the child;

3. The nature and extent of the abuse or neglect; and
4. Any evidence to the cause or any other information that may relate to the cause or extent of the abuse or neglect.

The person reporting shall be immune from liability and his identity shall remain confidential except when the juvenile court determines otherwise. The director of schools shall develop reporting procedures, including sample indicators of abuse and neglect, and shall disseminate the procedures to all school personnel.⁵ However, nothing in the reporting procedures shall eliminate the staff member's legal responsibility to directly make a report to the authorities stated above.

To report suspected child abuse, call **1-877-237-0004 or 1-877-54ABUSE**

Investigations

School administrators and employees have a duty to cooperate, provide assistance and information in child abuse investigations including permitting child abuse review teams to conduct interviews while the child is at school; the principal may control the time, place and circumstances of the interview, but may not insist that a school employee be present even if the suspected abuser is a school employee or another student. The principal is not in violation of any laws by failing to inform parents that the child is to be interviewed even if the suspected abuser is not a member of the child's household.

STUDENT RELATED INFORMATION:

Report Cards

Students are given grade cards at the end of the nine week grading period. A mid-term report will be sent home as well. The school grading scale is as follows:

A= 90-100
B= 80-89
C= 70-79
D= 60-69
F= Below 60

Report card will be computer generated. It will be printed each nine weeks and sent home. The parent/guardian signature will still be required, and the student will bring the report card slip back, so that we will know the parent/guardian received it. After the first nine week grading period, the previous nine weeks grade will appear on the report card so parents can see each grading period that has been completed.

Homework Policy

Homework is assigned as practice for students to master needed skills for their grade level. It is expected that students complete homework assignments on time to assess their progress. Each teacher will send out homework expectations at the beginning of the year.

Effective Study Habits:

It is important that every student establishes as good a record as possible while attending school. Your record becomes part of you and remains with you for the rest of your life. The grades, conduct marks, attitudes displayed, test results, and attendance records become a part of your permanent record and can never be changed. Try as hard as possible to make it as impressive as you can.

The development of good study habits and skills is one of the most important achievements for any student. They transfer from one type of activity to another. The following are suggestions for improving study and developing good work habits:

1. Develop a desire to learn.
2. Know exactly what is to be done.
3. Keep up to date on your homework.
4. Budget your study time wisely with various subjects.
5. Make good use of study time at school.
6. Study in a quiet place at home.
7. As you read, keep in mind questions you are trying to answer.
8. Make notes as you read.
9. Relate new facts and ideas to known facts and ideas.
10. Prepare for examinations by doing your workday by day.
11. Learn to work independently, under your own direction.
12. If you have questions about your work, arrange to talk them over with your teacher.
13. Be determined to succeed and stay with the task until it is completed.

Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)

Your child will use the school system device(s) and will have access to the Internet. The school system will share your child's information with 3rd parties including but not limited to textbook manufacturers, eBackpack, Google (Google Apps), and Food Service Applications. Federal Law requires 3rd parties to provide protection and restricts how the information may be used. 3rd parties may store your student's information as long as they remain enrolled in our district and/or the service is used by the school system. If you would like copies of how the companies use the data, please contact your school district central office.

QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires all students be taught by fully certified teachers. Tennessee's state licensure requirements still require a bachelor's degree and demonstrated content knowledge. Verification of licensure and certifications is maintained at the school system central office.

You as a legal parent/guardian, have the right to request information regarding professional qualifications of your child's teacher(s). Upon your request, the school system will provide you with the following information: whether a teacher is teaching under emergency status for which certification has been waived, and the degree major of a teacher and any other graduate degree or certification the teacher may hold. Under ESSA, you will be promptly informed if for any reason a non-highly qualified teacher teaches your child for four or more consecutive weeks.

ESSA also requires that instructional paraprofessionals in Title I schools demonstrate highly qualified status by passing a test to demonstrate knowledge of and the ability to assist in the instruction, having completed two years of higher education, or having obtained an associate's or higher degree. All instructional paraprofessionals at Unicoi County High School have demonstrated highly qualified status. You have the right to request information about the paraprofessionals that may work with your child. Verification of highly qualified status is maintained at the school system central office.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The state of Tennessee and Rock Creek School have accountability measures in place with TNReady, STAR Testing, and Student Portfolios (grade K). Currently, accountability ratings are in place for 2016-17 and 2017-18. All accountability measures will be used to improve student instruction and teacher performance.

While the federal government requires states to maintain rigorous state-established top-line goals, it is also the state's responsibility to determine the interim measures that will lead to achieving its top-line goals. The state defines measurement tools, including how to measure growth in outcomes and reduce gaps in student achievement. Additionally, the state sets district goals, measures district and school level progress annually (disaggregated by historically underserved student groups), and reports district and school results publicly. Each year after we receive our system's report card from the state, we will inform you about each school's accountability status, as well as how the achievement of the students compares to those in the system and the state.

You will also be provided information on the achievement level of your child on each of the state academic assessments as soon as is practicably possible after we receive the assessment results.

SAFE SCHOOLS

All Unicoi County Schools have been deemed "safe schools" under the guidelines of our state and ESSA. However, should your child become the victim of a violent crime at any Unicoi County School, you have the right to request a transfer to the nearest county school, pending their enrollment. The Tennessee State Board of Education Unsafe School Choice Policy states that the district may choose to facilitate a requested transfer to another school; however, such transfer shall not be required. Unicoi County Schools' faculty and staff are making every effort to prevent any situation in which your child may not be safe. If you have any questions regarding safety policies or procedures, please contact the central office at (423) 743-1600.

Special Considerations for Covid-19

Rock Creek Elementary will follow the guidance of the Unicoi County Schools Re-Opening Plan (please see attached below).

https://2e9c1d74-cd62-4447-b86f-093f70bb01d6.filesusr.com/ugd/2c6f8c_e12110aecebe4d23861d09a9dd513088.pdf

We will communicate with parents via Dojo and Social Media the various changes to our school reopening plan. All plans are subject to change depending on the impact of Covid-19 cases in Unicoi County.

3rd Grade Families

A Message for Third-Grade Families,

Welcome Back! We are excited that you have chosen to send your third grader to our school. Our third-grade teaching team has a busy year planned for their students. Third grade is an essential year in your child's kindergarten through twelfth-grade educational experience.

In third grade, students have a goal to solidify their ability to read fluently and comprehend what they read. By the end of third grade, we want them to be ready to apply their reading skills to standards-based tasks, such as determining the main idea of a text and explaining how the details support the main idea. This additional layer of learning can be challenging for students in third grade.

At the end of the school year, your child will take the statewide assessment called the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program, or TCAP. This assessment provides important information and data regarding how your student is progressing toward mastering academic standards.

Tennessee requires third-grade students to demonstrate proficiency on TCAP in English Language Arts as part of the promotion to fourth grade. We want to keep you informed about your child's progress throughout third grade, and we encourage you to support your child's learning in third grade in several ways. You can find information and resources for families on the Pathways to Promotion for 3rd and 4th graders tab at <https://www.unicoischools.com/pathwaystopromotion> or www.tn.gov/education/learning-acceleration.

You can partner with us to support learning at home by

- Make sure that your child gets a good night's sleep before coming to school and attends school every day.
- Develop a strong relationship and communication strategy with your child's third-grade teacher.
- Pay close attention to information sent home from school, especially letters sharing your child's progress in third grade. You will receive a home literacy report in early October outlining your child's progress. This important letter will help you understand how your child is progressing in their ability to learn to read.
- It is important for your child to practice reading at home. One way your child can practice reading is to read aloud with you for twenty minutes each day.

Unicoi County Schools is committed to your child's academic success, and we are glad to have the opportunity to provide your child with the necessary instruction and support he or she may need.

Sincerely,

Danny O'Quinn

4TH Grade Families

A Message for Fourth-Grade Families,

Welcome Back! We are excited to have your child enrolled in Unicoi County Schools this year. Our fourth-grade teaching team has a great year planned for students.

At the end of the third grade, students in Tennessee took the statewide assessment called the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program, or TCAP. This assessment provided schools with important information and data about how each student progressed toward mastering academic standards. Based on that assessment **some students** who did not demonstrate Proficiency on the 3rd grade TCAP must engage in additional support opportunities throughout fourth grade to be promoted to fifth grade. Families of students enrolled in Unicoi County have been engaging in these conversations over the summer. Additionally, we will reach out to families who enroll in fourth grade. Early in the school year, we also will hold meetings with individual families to discuss implementing support for students who need additional support.

You can partner with us to support learning at home by

- Encouraging your child to read every day.
- Make sure that your child gets a good night's sleep before coming to school and attends school every day.
- Develop a strong relationship and communication strategy with your child's fourth teacher.
- Pay close attention to information sent home from school, especially letters sharing your child's progress in fourth grade. You will receive a home literacy report in early October outlining your child's progress. This important letter will help you understand how your child is progressing in their ability to learn to read.

You can find information and resources for families on the Pathways to Promotion for 3rd and 4th graders tab at <https://www.unicoischools.com/pathwaystopromotion> or www.tn.gov/education/learning-acceleration.

Unicoi County Schools is committed to your child's academic success, and we are glad to have the opportunity to provide your child with the necessary instruction and support he or she may need.

Sincerely,

Danny O'Quinn

Parent / Guardian / Student signature page

The RCES handbook is available also online at: <http://www.unicoischools.com/rcesonline/>. Your child's teacher has gone over the contents with him or her in the classroom. We are aware of the content of the handbook and have discussed these. We acknowledge receiving a copy of the

Rock Creek Parent / Student Handbook for the 2024 - 2025 school year. We understand that we are responsible for the guidelines and policies contained in the handbook:

PLEASE RETURN THIS PAGE TO YOUR CHILD’S TEACHER

DATE

Print Student’s Name

Student Signature

Parent / Guardian Signature