

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024



ELEPHANT'S FORK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2316 William Reid Drive
Suffolk, Virginia 23434
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(757) 925-5596 [fax]

Dana A. C. Bilby, Principal – danacherrybilby@spsk12.net
Dennis Tysinger II, Assistant Principal – dennistysinger@spsk12.net
Valerie Smith, Dean of Students – valeriesmith@spsk12.net

Elephant's Fork Elementary School
Suffolk Public Schools
2023-2024

Mrs. Dana A. C. Bilby	<i>Principal</i>
Mr. Dennis Tysinger, II	<i>Assistant Principal</i>
Ms. Valerie Smith	<i>Dean of Students</i>
Mrs. Erin Yunker	<i>Academic Coach</i>
TBD	<i>Bookkeeper</i>
Ms. Russell	<i>Secretary</i>
TBD	<i>Nurse</i>
Mrs. Coltrane/Mrs. Taylor	<i>School Counselors</i>

SCHOOL HOURS OF OPERATION

- Office Hours: 8:30 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.
- Staff Hours: 8:50 a.m.- 4:20 p.m.
- Bus Arrivals: 9:00 a.m.
- Breakfast Served: 9:00 a.m.- 9:24 a.m.
- Student Hours: 9:25 a.m. - 3:50 p.m.
- Students arriving after 9:25 a.m. should be signed in at the front counter in the main office by a parent/guardian in order to receive a tardy pass.
- Early Dismissal: 1:15 p.m. (Lunch served)
- Bus Changes: Without a written request (no phone requests) from parents, a child will not be permitted to ride a different bus to or from home.

GENERAL INFORMATION

School Colors	Blue and Gold
School Mascot	Elephant

STUDENT PLEDGE

We are..... **E**mpowered to learn.
We know our..... **F**uture is bright.
We know.....**E**ven our mistakes help us grow.
We know.....our students are built for **S**uccess.

ELEPHANT'S FORK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2023 - 2024 PTA OFFICERS

President - Mia Langford-Edwardandme6@gmail.com
Vice President - Marla Florom-Marlaflorom@gmail.com
Secretary- Faye Darden-Faye.Darden@cbre.com
Treasurer - Glynnis Coon-Glynnis.small@gmail.com
Volunteer Chair-Mikka Coughlin-Mikka.Coughlin@gmail.com

SCHOOL MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission at Elephant's Fork Elementary School is to enable all students to reach their full potential by providing a variety of programs and opportunities. We believe all students can grow and succeed academically, socially, physically, and emotionally.

OBJECTIVES

The faculty and staff of Elephant's Fork Elementary School are committed to the following objectives:

1. To provide an instructional program which will enable students to achieve and to be successful.
2. To provide an atmosphere where the staff and the administration will work as a team for the benefit of the students.
3. To provide communication relating academic progress, student behavior, and school activities to students and parents.
4. To provide information about school activities to the community.
5. To provide students with instructional and auxiliary services to meet their individual needs.
6. To provide students with awareness and pride which will enable them to maintain a respectful attitude towards the staff, the administration, the school, and the community.
7. To provide outside resources and programs.
8. To provide an environment conducive to teaching and learning.
9. To provide an environment that will foster a positive self-image for all students.

ARRIVAL, ABSENCES, AND TARDIES

The circle driveway in front of the building will be open only from 9:00am to 9:25am. A staff member, parent volunteer or student safety patrol will be present to assist children to the main entrance.

- Students cannot be dropped off any earlier than 9:00am unless they are registered in the early academic program or participating in a club.
- Any student arriving later than 9:25am, must be signed in at the front office by a parent or guardian. **Please refrain from just dropping your child off.** All visitors will be required to walk through a metal detector. Visitors are encouraged to leave all personal items in the car.
- Park in a designated parking space at all times.
- Be mindful of the traffic patterns for morning drop off to ensure the safety of our students, as well as to prevent car accidents.
- Do not drop students off in the parking lot and allow them to walk across the parking lot.

LEAVING EARLY

Parents/guardians must have a photo ID to check students out of school. Additionally, all visitors will be required to walk through a metal detector. Visitors are encouraged to leave all personal items in their car except their photo ID. Every effort will be made to respect the instructional program; therefore, parents/guardians will not be allowed to go to the classroom to pick up children. If your child is to be picked up by someone other than the parent/guardian, please send a note to the office identifying the person and noting the time of dismissal. All students should have an Authorization to Pick Up card on file at the school office, this is used to identify those parties who are allowed to pick up the student in case of early dismissal or emergency. **In an effort to maximize instructional time, we ask that parents/guardians schedule appointments and other obligations after 3:50pm if possible.**

DISMISSAL

The instructional day ends at 3:50pm and buses are called at 3:50pm. A parent/guardian of early start and kindergarten students **must** be at the bus stop to receive their student. This is considered a hand to hand pick up. If a parent/guardian is not at the bus stop for hand to hand pick up, the student will be returned to school and the parent will have to pick the student up at school as soon as possible (EFES Office closes at 5:00pm or an hour after the last bus leaves). The parent/guardian will be notified immediately and a “friendly reminder” will be given. If a student is returned to school repeatedly additional steps may be taken, which include, but are not limited to, contacting Social Services.

EVERYDAY PARENT PICK UP

To alleviate the amount of parents/guardians entering the building, parents are asked to participate in the everyday parent pick up program. The guidelines to participate in the everyday parent pick up program are listed below to ensure a safe, orderly dismissal:

- Parents/guardians will receive two parent pick up numbered car tags and student tags for their backpack.
- Parents/guardians must have the parent pick up number car tag visible **daily** for student pick up.
- If the car tag is not visible, parents/guardians will be required to park and come into the building to sign out the student(s).
- Parents/guardians must be prepared to show their drivers license for identification and will be required to walk through a metal detector. Visitors are encouraged to leave all personal items in the car.
- If carpooling, you must have car tags visible for each student number.
- Students will **NOT** be allowed to switch back and forth between the bus and car rider.
- Adhere to directives of parent pick up staff.
- When waiting in the line, eliminate gaps between cars.
- When waiting in line, avoid jumping the line and stay to the right to allow buses to pass.

ABSENCES

Attendance at school is a part of promotion and is tied to accreditation. **If 15% of our students have 18 or more absences (excused or unexcused), EFES will not be accredited.** Being absent from school can affect a student's academic performance and growth. It is important that students attend school daily; however, if your child must be absent for any reason, a written note explaining the absence must be received within five (5) days of the absence. **Every absence is considered unexcused until a written explanation for the absence is received and approved by the principal or his/her designee.** If a student is absent more than 15% of the school year (excused or unexcused), they are considered chronically absent. Parents/guardians will receive information if their child is at risk of becoming chronically absent. Parents/guardians must communicate with the school when a student is absent due to an emergency. Attendance meetings will be held with parents/guardians once a student has been absent 7-10 days and an attendance plan will be created.

CHILD CUSTODY

If you have legal custody of your child through a court order (or deed of separation), please see that the Administrative Assistant, Ms. Russell, has a current copy of this document. Please do not assume that school employees know about custody issues. Be sure we know if any family member is not to pick-up your child from school. Please make sure that this information is included on the school's Emergency Information Card and the Authorization to Pick-Up.

CHROMEBOOK EXPECTATIONS

Suffolk Public Schools provides a Chromebook for each student. Damage to student Chromebooks has a significant financial impact on Suffolk Public Schools in parts and labor. This damage ranges from cracked displays, damaged keyboards, case damage, to complete destruction.

- Normal wear and tear is defined as: expected depreciation that results from daily use not damages as a result of neglect or abuse.
- Normal wear and tear is as follows: case, keyboard, mouse pad, hinges and other external parts may show light wear and/or light scratches and marks, but no structural cracks or flaws.
- Neglect or abuse is as follows: cracks in the display, case, covers or hinges, missing or damaged keyboard keys, damaged ports, paint or other markings not from the school district, damage to the camera, damage to the charger, liquid damage, thermal damage, or any other damage that was due to neglect or abuse.
- Users should take appropriate care and precautions to ensure the longevity of the school issued Chromebook.
- Best practices are: power the device off when not in use, place it in a sleeve or other case to protect it while it is not being used, do not use it near food or liquids, keep it clean, don't leave it in a hot or cold location, place it in a secure location when it is not in use, and only use the original charger to charge the device.
- Alterations of any form are not considered normal wear and tear. Drops, spills, and liquid immersion are not considered normal wear and tear.
- **The repair/replacement fee will be charged to every student who has a damaged device.** The purpose is to offset the replacement costs of providing repairs or replacement to student issued Chromebooks.
- **All students with a damaged device will be charged a \$25.00 fee for each occurrence. This fee includes replacement chargers.**
- **Students who have lost their device and do not have a police report indicating the device was stolen will be charged \$100.00**
- **Students who have damaged the Chromebook beyond repair will be charged a \$100.00 fee.**
- A student with a Chromebook damaged in house fire or other natural disaster must return the damaged device in order for the lost/stolen fee to be waived.
- **Students who are withdrawing from Suffolk Public Schools will be charged as described above if they return a damaged device or fail to return the device.**
- **Warranty related issues will not incur any charges.**
- All fees will be collected at the school level and remitted to the Suffolk Public Schools Finance Department.
- **Students that do not pay the damage fee will not be permitted to take the Chromebook home.**
- Loaners will be limited.
- Schools may choose to waive fees for students, however those fees will be deducted from the school allocation.

CIVILITY

We encourage positive communication and discourage disruptive, hostile, or aggressive communications or actions. We expect our staff to be treated with courtesy and respect by parents and other adults. Any behavior that disrupts the orderly operation of the school will result in removal from the premises, contacting law enforcement, and/or termination of a meeting, conference, or telephone conversation.

DISCIPLINE

Students attending Elephant's Fork Elementary School are **expected to conduct themselves in an orderly, courteous, dignified, and respectful manner**. In an effort to maintain an orderly atmosphere, **the teacher's authority extends to all students**, whether or not the teacher has the student in his or her class. When self-control falters and self-discipline fails, disciplinary action must be imposed to protect the rights of others and to ensure uninterrupted instruction by teachers for students.

Disruptive student behavior is subject to disciplinary action by the teacher or building administrators. The action may take the form of reprimand, conference with the teacher or administration, separation from the group, parental/guardian notification, discipline referral, restriction of privileges, in-school suspension, short-term suspension (ten days or less), long-term suspension, and expulsion. Each teacher will prepare and share with students and parents a classroom discipline plan that will consist of classroom rules, consequences, and rewards. Elephant's Fork Elementary School follows the discipline policies and procedures set forth by Suffolk Public Schools. Please refer to the Suffolk Public Schools Code of Conduct for additional information. **Students may not participate in any school-related activity while suspended from school. Field trip fees will not be refunded if a student is suspended and not allowed to attend his/her trip.**

PBIS BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Elephant's Fork Elementary School will continue to implement the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program. This program teaches correct and appropriate behaviors while offering positive reinforcement (Good Behavior Events and Caught Being Good Cards) to students when they make the right choices. Students who meet our behavior expectations will have the opportunity to earn "Caught Being Good Cards." Please review our school wide expectations with your children. Each classroom will also have its own expectations that relate to our core statements: **Be Safe, Be Respectful, and Be Responsible**. Classroom expectations will be shared by your child's teacher. Below you will find the EFES School-Wide Expectations Matrix.

EFES School-Wide Expectations Matrix

Expectations	Hallway	Cafeteria	Restroom	Bus	Playground
Be SAFE	Walk at all times. Leave space between yourself and others.	Keep your food on your plate. Stay seated and raise your hand.	Keep water in the sink. Report safety concerns to teachers or staff. Keep hands and feet to yourself.	Stay in your assigned seat. Use your inside voice.	Use all equipment properly. Stay in the assigned areas. Keep hands and feet to yourself.
Be RESPECTFUL	Walk silently in the hallway. Keep hands and feet to yourself.	Use appropriate language. Stay silent in the lunch line.	Wait your turn to use the sink. Wait your turn to use the toilet. Wait your turn to use the paper towel dispenser.	Keep your hands, feet, and objects to yourself.	Wait your turn. Share equipment. Follow directions given by your teacher or staff member.
Be RESPONSIBLE	Stay in your spot in a single, straight, and silent line.	Get everything you need before leaving the lunch line. Clean up after yourself.	Put paper towels in the trash can. Use the restroom in the toilets only.	Stay in your assigned seat. Keep your school items in your book bag.	Line up promptly when it is time to leave. Tell an adult if someone is hurt or doing something dangerous.

While we will be teaching, reviewing, and enforcing these expectations at school, we would appreciate your support by reviewing the EFES School-Wide Expectations Matrix with your student.

STUDENT CONDUCT ON THE SCHOOL BUS

The school bus is considered school property; therefore, students are expected to follow the PBIS Bus Expectations while on the school bus, at the bus stop and going to and from the bus stop. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. **Parents are prohibited from boarding buses to address concerns while the drivers are on their routes.** Anyone who has a transportation concern should contact the school Principal or the Transportation Department.

PBIS Incentives

Our PBIS program focuses on teaching expectations and desired behaviors. When students are able to demonstrate the expectations they can earn incentives.

Caught Being Good Cards: These are written by any staff member who catches a student following our school-wide expectations of being safe, respectful, or responsible. Students are recognized during morning announcements each week.

Caught Being Good Events: All students are invited to our PBIS events 4 times throughout the school year if we reach the desired number of Caught Being Good Cards. Students can win prizes with the Caught Being Good Drawing as well.

Golden Tickets: These tickets are similar to the Caught Being Good Cards, but are distributed by bus drivers and monitors to students who are following bus expectations. Students are recognized during morning announcements each week.

Pride of the Herd Bus Award: This award is given to buses who have no referrals. Students on the bus route are recognized with the Pride of the Herd Bus Award, which will be displayed on the bus and a small prize is given to these students.

MORNING MEETINGS

As a part of our Social Emotional Learning initiatives, each classroom facilitates morning meetings. These meetings are dedicated to initiate discussion and to build relationships as a class/community. This time helps to develop the following:

- Set the tone for respectful learning
- Establish a climate of trust
- Motivate students to feel significant
- Create empathy and encourage collaboration
- Support social, emotional and academic learning

SAFETY DRILLS

Elephant's Fork Elementary students will participate in various safety drills throughout the school year in order to practice procedures that will keep all students and staff safe in the event of unforeseen circumstances. These drills include bus evacuations, fire drills, lockdown drills, metal detector checks, and weather drills. All drills, with the exception of Code Red drills, will be unannounced. Parents will be notified 24 hours in advance of conducting Code Red drills.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an integral part of our curriculum. Every effort is made to ensure that all students can participate and that the experience is enriching. Students are also expected to follow the same rules and regulations relating to school while on field trips. No student will be allowed to participate on a field trip without a returned signed permission form. All money for field trips must be received on or before the date due as stated on the parent notice/permission form.

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

Elephant's Fork Elementary will periodically sponsor fund raising projects to raise money for school-related purposes. Parents must give permission to allow their child to participate in such activities. **Door-to-door solicitation is prohibited to ensure student safety.**

LUNCH

All students will receive breakfast and lunch free of charge. The cafeteria will take cash, HOWEVER; No change will be provided. Any excess money will be put on the student account. Parents can also go to the Titan Link website to put money on their child's account. If a student

wishes to purchase a snack, they need to bring money. Students are strongly encouraged to leave excess money at home. It is virtually impossible to recover money when it is either lost or stolen.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

We have an active PTA here at Elephant's Fork Elementary. We encourage you to join "your" PTA and help us further the objectives of **parent-teacher-student** work. Dues entitle you not only to membership but also give you the right to vote on all issues concerning the PTA. We look forward to seeing you! Parent involvement is crucial to the academic success of our students - **Together We Do Make A Difference. Scan the QR code to join the EFES PTA.**



PARTNERS-IN-EDUCATION

Elephant's Fork Elementary proudly recognizes the following Partners-In-Education: 7-11 (Main Street), Community Church, Communities In Schools, Delight Restaurant Group (Wendy's), Suffolk Sheriff's Department, Life Enrichment Center, (LEC), Dick's Sporting Goods, Suffolk Christian Church, Chick-Fil-A, Subway, McDonald's of Suffolk, Target, YMCA of South Hampton Roads, West End Baptist Church, Suffolk Library, Suffolk Christian Church, Atlantic Union Bank, Junto Woman's Club and Hampton Roads Housing Redevelopment. If you own a business and would like to become a partner, please contact Mr. Tysinger, Assistant Principal.

PERSONAL ITEMS

Students are not permitted to bring cell phones, pagers, CD players, tape players, sunglasses, toys, games, walkmans, trading cards, virtual pets, etc. to school. Additionally, students are strongly encouraged to leave excess money at home. It is difficult to recover money when it is either lost or stolen. If any of these items are brought to school, they will be confiscated until the parent can pick them up. Loss of such items is the responsibility of the student.

PICTURES

School pictures will be taken twice, once in the fall and once in the spring.

Friday, September 29, 2023 - Fall Individual Pictures

Wednesday, November 15, 2023 - Fall Individual Retakes

Wednesday, February 28, 2023 - Spring Individual Pictures AND Class Pictures

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Each student is expected to come to school fully prepared for active engagement in instructional activities. This includes having a fully charged Chromebook, supply of notebook paper, pencils, erasers, etc.

[SPS School Supply List](#)

[EFES School Supply Lists](#)

STUDENTS' PROGRESS

System-wide Progress Reports will be sent home on the following dates:

October 5, 2023	December 14, 2023	March 6, 2024	May 15, 2024
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System-wide Report Cards will be issued on the following dates:

November 17, 2023	February 9, 2024	April 19, 2024	June 14, 2024
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Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher throughout the school year when a conference is necessary. **To ensure safety and minimize instructional distractions, we ask that parents contact teachers to schedule individual conferences after school hours or during the teacher's planning period.** The division has set aside **October 24, February 15, April 26** as conference days; however, the parent/guardian, teacher, or administration may request additional conferences. *Please be aware that conference dates are early release days. Students will be dismissed at 1:15pm (lunch is served) and conferences will start after 2:00pm.*

TELEPHONE

Students will not be allowed to use the telephone except in the case of an emergency and only with the permission of the teacher and/or office staff.

TEXTBOOKS

Students will be assigned textbooks (checked out in students' names grades 1-5) for the year at no charge. Students are responsible for lost and/or damaged books and will be assessed a fee accordingly. These charges apply to library books as well. Please encourage your child to return their library books in a timely manner.

The student will not be permitted to:

1. mark pages of textbooks;

2. underline or highlight phrases or important lines within paragraphs;
3. fill in the blanks of questions throughout the textbooks.

If a book is lost, the school will issue another book once the parent has paid for the lost book.

VISITORS/ VOLUNTEERS

We encourage parents, guardians, and others to visit our school. **All volunteers will be required to complete a [Volunteer Form](#) and read the guidelines (Visit [Suffolk Public Schools website, Community Tab, Select Volunteer](#)) to be approved to volunteer for school related activities.** Once approved, visitors must sign in at the main office and obtain a visitor's badge. This badge must be visible at all times.

In an effort to protect the instructional environment and avoid liability issues, alternate child care must be secured for students who are not enrolled at Elephant's Fork Elementary School. Please contact the administration if you are interested in supporting our students and staff by donating time. If you are unable to volunteer your time during the school day, alternate projects are available for you to take home.