

Student Handbook

2023-2024



FLORENCE BOWSER
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

"WE ARE WORLD CHANGERS"

Dr. Shalise M. Taylor, Principal
shalisetaylor@spsk12.net

Mrs. Joylyn Dildy, Assistant Principal
joylyndildy@spsk12.net

Ms. Natalie Karakla, Dean of Students
nataliekarakla@spsk12.net

FLORENCE BOWSER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

4540 Nansemond Parkway

Suffolk, VA 23435

757-923-4164

<http://fbes/spsk12.net/>

[Twitter.com/EaglesFbes](https://twitter.com/EaglesFbes)

September 2023

Dear Parents and Students:

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year at Florence Bowser Elementary! We hope you have had a safe and relaxing summer. We have been diligently preparing for the new school year, and we are ready to nurture and teach each child that walks through our doors.

We want students to have a rigorous and relevant learning experience, while developing strong positive relationships within the school community. Our desire is that every child reaches their highest potential and leaves fully prepared to make a difference in the world around them. We believe our students are world changers!

At Florence Bowser, we are a family, and we are committed to partnering with you to ensure your child's success. Encouraging and motivating your child, communicating with your child's teacher, and staying current with your child's progress are all ways we can work together to support your child.

In this handbook, you will find important information about our school. Please take time to review the guidelines, procedures, and important dates noted in this handbook, and share with your child. If at any time you have questions, please reach out to us.

Again, we are excited about the new school year and we look forward to making wonderful memories together this year and seeing all that our students will accomplish.

Sincerely,

Dr. Shalise M. Taylor
Principal

Mrs. Joylyn Dildy
Assistant Principal

Ms. Natalie Karakla
Dean of Students

VISION

Florence Bowser Elementary is a place where we believe in family. It is a place where we are preparing every student to make a global impact.

“We are World Changers.”

MISSION

Develop critical thinkers through a *rigorous* educational experience.

Prepare students for a global society by valuing cultural diversity and making learning *relevant*.

Provide a caring and nurturing learning environment by building strong *relationships* and meeting the academic, social, and emotional needs of students.

INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS

Rigor, Relevance, Relationships

BELIEF STATEMENTS

- ★ **Rigor**-All students have the right to a stimulating learning experience that challenges them academically, and develops their technological skills.
- ★ **Relevance**-All students have the right to a meaningful learning experience that values cultural diversity, considers learning differences, and prepares students to make a difference in the world around them.
- ★ **Relationships**-All students have a right to a safe and caring learning environment, in which they feel a sense of belonging and have the support of staff, parents, and peers.

GENERAL INFORMATION

**Florence Bowser Elementary School
4540 Nansemond Parkway
Suffolk, VA 23435
Phone: 757-923-6124**

SCHOOL WEBSITE:
<http://fbes/spsk12.net/>

SOCIAL MEDIA:
Twitter Handle: @FBES_Eagles
Twitter.com/EaglesFbes
Facebook Page: Facebook.com/florencebowserelementary

SCHOOL HOURS:

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Office Hours | 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. |
| Staff Hours | 8:50 a.m. - 4:20 p.m. |
| Student Arrival | 9:00 a.m.- 9:25 a.m. |
| Instructional Hours | 9:25 a.m. - 3:50 p.m. |
| Student Dismissal | 3:50 p.m. |

School Mascot: Eagles
School Colors: Green and Yellow

Administrative Team

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Dr. Shalise Taylor | Principal |
| Mrs. Joylyn Dildy | Assistant Principal |
| Ms. Natalie Karakla | Dean of Students |
| Mrs. Janet Myers | Academic Coach |
| Ms. Maria Britt | School Counselor |
| Mrs. Janelle Everette | School Counselor |

Office Staff

| | |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Mrs. Felicia Stokley | Bookkeeper |
| Mrs. Lori Bess | Secretary |
| Mrs. Sharon Riddick | School Nurse |

Food Services

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Mrs. Jessica Ruffin | Cafeteria Manager |
|---------------------|-------------------|

Facilities

| | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Mrs. LaTonya Clark | Head Custodian |
|--------------------|----------------|

STUDENT REGULATIONS

ATTENDANCE

- a. **ARRIVAL:** Students can be dropped off as early as 9:00am. Students should not be dropped off prior to this time, as school personnel cannot assume responsibility for students who are brought to school before 9:00 a.m. Students should arrive at school no later than 9:25 a.m. each morning. **Late arrival causes a disruption of instruction for your child and the instruction of other students.**
- b. **ABSENCE:** Students should bring a written excuse signed by a parent/guardian explaining the absence on the day they return or no later than 5 days after the absence if it is to be considered an excused absence. Also, please notify the school if your child will be absent for more than one day to allow for assignments to be sent home. **Please aim to have students present every day. Attendance affects learning, grades, and promotion to the next grade level. Student attendance also determines whether or not our school will be accredited.**
- c. **TARDINESS:** Students must report to the office **with a parent** if they arrive after 9:25 a.m. to receive a class admittance pass. Delayed bus arrivals do not constitute tardiness. Please make every effort to ensure that tardies are kept to a minimum as they have an adverse effect on student progress.
- d. **EARLY DISMISSAL/STUDENT RELEASE:** For your child's safety and well-being it is necessary to adhere to the following procedures: Students will not be permitted to leave school with anyone other than the parent or guardian.
 - Any adult picking up a student from school must be indicated on the authorization for Pick-up Student Card.
 - You must submit a written note if someone not indicated on the Authorization for Pick-up Card is picking up your child.
 - An adult picking up a student must be prepared to show photo identification, complete the release ledger in the office, and then the student will be called to the office prepared to leave.
 - Please make every effort **not** to take your child from school during instructional time.
 - Parents are asked to remember that the instructional day does not end until 3:50 p.m. and students should not be picked up early except for special circumstances verifiable appointments. Unless a student has a special circumstance or verifiable appointment, classroom instruction will not be interrupted to have a student released early.
- e. **DISMISSAL:** Students are dismissed each day at 3:50 p.m. If your child's mode of transportation home changes due to an emergency, **you need to contact the school before 3:00 p.m.** to support the notification of your child's teacher and the bus driver.

ADDRESS/TELEPHONE CHANGES

Please notify the school immediately if there is a change in your address, telephone number, or person to contact in an emergency. This information is important in case your child becomes ill or injured.

ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS

Assembly programs are planned to enrich classroom experiences of the student body as well as to entertain. Assemblies also provide an opportunity for students to learn the following formal audience behavior:

1. Enter the activity quietly and have a seat in assigned sections.
2. Give the person at the podium your undivided attention immediately.
3. Be courteous to one another and to the speaker or performer(s) throughout the program.
4. Applaud generously and courteously in keeping with the occasion.
5. Remain quiet (no talking) during pauses in the program.
6. Remain seated until your class is dismissed. Leave quietly.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Florence Bowser Elementary School partners with various agencies both on and off site to provide before and/or after school care for students. Specific information can be provided upon request.

BUS PASSES

Bus drivers are instructed not to pick up or take an additional student without a written bus pass. The parent/guardian must send a permission note to the school office if the student is to ride another bus. A bus pass will be given to the bus driver. Students must ride their regular bus and get off at their assigned bus stop unless the school has received a written note from the parent.

BREAKFAST & LUNCH

The cafeteria serves breakfast and lunch. A menu is available online. All students breakfast and lunch will be free of charge for 2023-2024 school year. We will continue the bag-and-go breakfast. Parents may choose to place any amount of money into the student's account using the Titan Link website: family.titank12.com or visit the Food and Nutrition tab at spsk12.net. The cafeteria will take cash **HOWEVER; No change will be provided. Any excess money will be put on the student account.**

CAFETERIA EXPECTATIONS

- a. All students are to enter the cafeteria in a quiet orderly manner and remain in line.
- b. Students must select the required number of items from the serving line.
- c. Students will remain seated at the table and raise their hands when making requests.
- d. Students will leave tables, chairs, and floor clean.
- e. Students will follow the directions of the adults when emptying trays.
- f. Students will talk at a voice level of 1 and use good manners.
- g. Students will not bring canned or bottled drinks and/or items with sharp edges to the cafeteria. (i.e. drinks, tuna, etc...)
- h. Students are not to bring food items from home that need to be heated in a microwave. Microwave ovens are for employee use only.
- i. Students will NOT share food items or candy due to allergies.

CHILD CUSTODY

If you have legal custody of your child through a court order (deed of separation), please ensure that a **current copy** of this document is provided to the Office Staff and/or administration (principal/assistant principal). Ensure we are aware of any custody issues and/or any family member who is not authorized to pick up your child from school. This information should be provided to the homeroom teacher as well.

CHROMEBOOK USE

Each student has access to a chromebook to use in school. K-2 students will keep their chromebook at school each day. Students in grades 3-5 are able to take their chromebook home at the direction of the teacher. Students are expected to follow the Acceptable Use policy of Suffolk Public Schools. Students are expected to take special care of chromebooks and to use them in a safe manner.

CHROMEBOOK REPAIRS

If a student has damaged or lost their chromebook, or if their device is not working properly, please notify the teacher. The teacher will input a repair ticket to the SPS technology department. Some repairs may be fixed within the technology department without a fee, while other repairs may result in a fee at the expense of the student. If the technology department determines that a repair results in a fee at the expense of the student, the fee will need to be paid before the student is reissued a chromebook.

CIVILITY

We encourage positive communication and discourage disruptive, hostile, or aggressive communications or actions. At FBES, we will treat all community members with courtesy and respect. We also expect all staff to be treated with courtesy and respect by parents and other adults. Any behavior which 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.

COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Cell Phones are prohibited on the bus or at school without permission from administration. If parents would like for their child to be able to bring a cellphone to school, please obtain a Request Form from the Main Office. If permission is granted for a student to bring a cellphone to school, the cellphone must remain off and put away at all times. Using a cellphone in an inappropriate manner on the bus or in school will cause a student to be disciplined in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

COMMUNICATION FOLDER (Teachers & School-Wide)

Teachers may use Class Dojo, email, phone, or communication folders to communicate to parents.

School-wide communication is provided through email, text, and digital monthly newsletters (World Changers Parent Report). Some information is also sent home with students in the form of paper flyers or bulletins.

CONFERENCES

Your child's teacher welcomes the opportunity to discuss your child's progress with you. Although there are pre-scheduled conference days (see Parent Teacher Conferences), the school staff encourages you to arrange conferences when you have concerns. Parents must contact the teacher to set a conference time. ***Instructional time will NOT be interrupted to hold parent conferences or impromptu meetings.*** An administrator or designee will be available in the building from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily. Any parent/guardian desiring to have a conference is always welcome. We recommend scheduling an appointment ahead of time to be sure you can be seen. Parents may arrange appointments in person, by phone, note, or email.

EARLY STUDENT CHECK-OUT

Students who need to be dismissed from school early must have a parent/guardian sign them out in the office. Parents may not go directly to the classroom to pick up children. Adults picking up students must be prepared to show a photo identification prior to personnel releasing students. If your child is to be picked up by someone other than the parent or 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 to be used to identify those parties who are allowed to pick up the student

in case of early dismissal or emergency. Please remember that the instructional day does not end until 3:50 p.m. and students should not be picked up early except for special circumstances verifiable appointments.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Bus evacuation drills are practiced twice a year.

Emergency/Crisis Drills (Code Yellow, Red, Blue, or Orange) are practiced minimally four times per year.

Fire drills are held at school on a regular monthly basis for your child's safety. They are held once a week for the first month of school and once a month thereafter.

Random metal detector checks are conducted regularly and include the use of the detector wand and can include a check of bags or other items carried by the randomly determined students.

Weather drills (also known as Code Blue) will be held at least once a semester.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

An emergency card will be kept in the nurse's office for each child. Please provide the school with the necessary emergency information needed. It is important that information (employment, telephone number, doctor, etc.) is **up-to-date**.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

Family Engagement events are set for the following days:

- ★ **Tuesday, September 19, 2023: Open House & Watch DOGS Pizza Party Kick-Off**
- ★ **Friday, October 20, 2023: Trunk-a-Treat**
- ★ **Friday, December 8, 2023: WinterFest & Book Fair**
- ★ **Tuesday, February 6, 2024: Family Dance Party**

ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

In the event of illness or accident, we will contact you to arrange transportation home. Please make sure that your child's emergency card is kept up-to-date with current contact numbers.

- a. **MEDICAL TREATMENT:** When a student becomes seriously ill or injured the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately. School personnel may not diagnose or administer medication or treatment beyond first aid.
- b. **MEDICATION:** School employees may not administer medication to students. A medication form must be completed/signed by the physician and signed by the parent if medication must be administered to a student during the school day by the school nurse and/or designated staff members. Parents should bring any medication to the clinic. **Do not send it to school with your child on the bus.** Over-the-counter medication such as aspirin, Tylenol, cough syrups, etc., cannot be given. Again, please do not send any medication to school by your child.

INTERIM REPORTS

Students will receive interim reports mid-way through each nine week grading period. The bottom portion of the interim report is to be signed and returned to the student's teacher. Interim reports will go home on the following dates:

- ★ **Thursday, October 5, 2023**
- ★ **Thursday, December 14, 2023**
- ★ **Wednesday, March 6, 2024**
- ★ **Wednesday, May 15, 2024**

LIBRARY

The library is open daily from 9:30 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. for student's use.

MONEY

Students should avoid bringing large amounts of money to school. Students should bring only the amount of money needed for necessary purchases. The school is now able to accept online payments. You can use a credit or debit card (VISA, Mastercard or American Express) on a secure online payment system. Parents will need their child's student ID number for payment. Payment options will be added as needed (e.g. field trips, lost/damaged library books, donations). Please visit the school's website for additional information. The ONLINE SCHOOL PAYMENT link is located under the "For Parents" tab.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

The P.T.A. is an integral part of our school, serving as a support system for our students, faculty, and staff. Parents are strongly urged to volunteer to help strengthen our P.T.A. The 2023-2024 PTA President is: **Mrs. Keli Noll**

For information regarding the PTA Executive Board, membership, and meetings, please email: florencebowserpta@gmail.com

PTA MEETINGS

PTA meetings are typically held on family engagement nights. Prior notification of all upcoming PTA events and meetings will be communicated through Blackboard and email. Dues are required for PTA membership, however, you do not need to be a member of the Florence Bowser PTA to attend meetings. We encourage all parents to join our PTA.

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCE

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held quarterly during the school year by appointment ONLY. Parent-Teacher Conferences will take place on the following days:

- ★ **Tuesday, October 24, 2023**
- ★ **Thursday, February 15, 2024**
- ★ **Friday, April 26, 2024**

PARKING

When you arrive on the Florence Bowser campus, please be prepared to follow all signs (specifically parking and designated spaces). If a parking space has a designated sign, do **not** park in that space. Designated handicap spaces are to be used **ONLY** by vehicles with the handicap license plate or handicap placard displayed. Please be reminded that parking on the bus ramp, fire lane, “No Parking” zones, and reserved spaces is **prohibited** at all times. Violators may be ticketed by Suffolk Police Department.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS and SUPPORT (PBIS)

PBIS is a proactive approach that we use to improve school safety and promote positive behavior. We teach students positive behavior strategies, just as we would teach about any other subject—like reading or math. In the event the strategies and skills offered have not been successful, student behavior is still subject to disciplinary action according to the school district’s code of conduct. Each teacher will prepare and share with students and parents a classroom discipline plan that will consist of classroom rules and consequences.

PBIS is an evidence-based, three-tiered framework to improve and integrate all of the data, systems, and practices affecting student outcomes. PBIS creates a school where all students succeed!

Tier 1- Tier 1 practices and systems help establish a foundation of regular, proactive support, while preventing unwanted behaviors for ALL students. We have many incredible Tier 1 proactive programs in place here at FBES.

Tier 2- Tier 2 practices and systems support students by helping to prevent more serious behaviors before they start. These supports help students develop the skills they need to benefit from core programs at FBES.

At Florence Bowser Elementary, we are World Changers and implement the following school-wide expectations:

- Be Safe**
- Be Respectful**
- Be Responsible**



We are World Changers

Florence Bowser Elementary

PBIS School-Wide Expectations



| We are..... | Student (All Areas) | Student (Bus) | Staff | Parents & Stakeholders |
|--------------------|---|---|--|--|
| Safe | Listen and follow instructions Walking feet Keep hands, feet, body and objects to yourself | Facing forward No eating or drinking Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself | Be punctual Model expectations Sign in and out daily | Provide photo identification when picking up students Maintain updated authorization for pick up form Be mindful of school policies |
| Respectful | Encourage one another Speak with kindness Communicate appropriately (written, verbal, electronic) | Follow rules and directions Speak with kindness Communicate appropriately (written, verbal, electronic) | Encourage one another Speak with kindness Communicate appropriately (written, verbal, electronic) | Encourage one another Speak with kindness Communicate appropriately (written, verbal, electronic) |
| Responsible | Be prepared Clean up after yourself Be accountable | Keep items in backpack Sit in your assigned seat Stay in your seat facing forward | Check in with students (daily) and parents (as needed) Complete tasks and assignments accurately and in a timely manner Collaborate with colleagues and attend required meetings | Check in with students (daily) and teacher (as needed) Be mindful of instructional hours(9:25-3:50) HAC (Home Access Center) account created and monitored |

RECOGNITIONS

Students are recognized for the following: **Principal’s List, Honor Roll, B.U.G. Club** and **Student of the Month**. An annual awards assembly will be held at the end of the school year. All other nine weeks the students will receive certificates of recognition with their report card.

The criteria for **Principal’s List, Honor Roll, and B.U.G. Award** are as follows:

- ★ **Principal’s List**- Students receive this award if they earn all A’s or M’s.
- ★ **Honor Roll**- Students receive this award if they earn all A’s and B’s (Citizenship does not factor into this award).
- ★ **B.U.G. Award** – Starting the second nine-weeks grading period, students may earn B.U.G. Club status by “Bringing up their Grades”. To qualify, students must raise one letter grade in at least one subject area without the grades in other subject areas dropping.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be issued on the following dates:

- ★ **November 17, 2023**
- ★ **February 9, 2024**
- ★ **April 19, 2024**
- ★ **June 14, 2024**

Parents of students in grades 1-5 can monitor grades online. This is highly recommended. To get set up to access grades, please contact **the School Secretary or the School Counselors**. They will help you gain access to Home Access Center (HAC). This will allow you to view your child's grades.

SCHOOL COLORS/MASCOT

Our school colors are Green and Yellow with a White accent. Our mascot is the eagle. Friday is our designated "Spirit Day" in which students and staff will be asked to show their school spirit by wearing school spirit wear.

SCHOOL MOTTO

Florence Bowser Elementary school motto is ***"We are World Changers."***

SCHOOL PICTURES

Pictures will be taken twice this year, once in the fall and once in the spring. All students will take pictures. Additionally, class pictures will be taken in the spring and must be prepaid. Picture money is to be given to the photographer. If parents do not like the pictures we may do a retake on a specified date or LifeTouch will refund the money. Student picture dates will be forthcoming.

SCHOOL SCHEDULE

9:00 am - 9:24 am Students report to classrooms. "Grab and Go" breakfast is available.

9:25 am Morning Announcements and Instructional day begins

3:50 pm Dismissal

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Each student is expected to come to school fully prepared for daily lessons. This includes having requested school supplies (refer to Suffolk Public Schools Supply List). Please replenish supplies throughout the school year. Please note that there will be no community sharing of supplies this year. All supplies must be labeled with your child's name for proper identification.

SELLING AND SOLICITING

Students are not permitted to sell items or services at school.

TELEPHONE

Students will **ONLY** be allowed to use the telephone in the event of an emergency. Phone calls are usually not transferred to staff members during the instructional day, except in the event of an emergency. Telephone messages will be placed in staff mailboxes throughout the school day.

TRANSPORTATION

Early Start and Kindergarten students must have an ADULT at the bus stop in the morning and afternoon. If there is not a parent present at the bus stop in the afternoon, the driver will return the student back to school.

YEAR LONG DONATION OPPORTUNITIES

The school can receive free materials and donations from various businesses. Parents are asked to designate Florence Bowser Elementary School as the recipient of any donations through Food Lion, Kroger, Target, etc. Other fundraisers and donation opportunities will be available throughout the year. Thank you in advance for your support.

The information in this handbook should be reviewed by parents and discussed with their children.