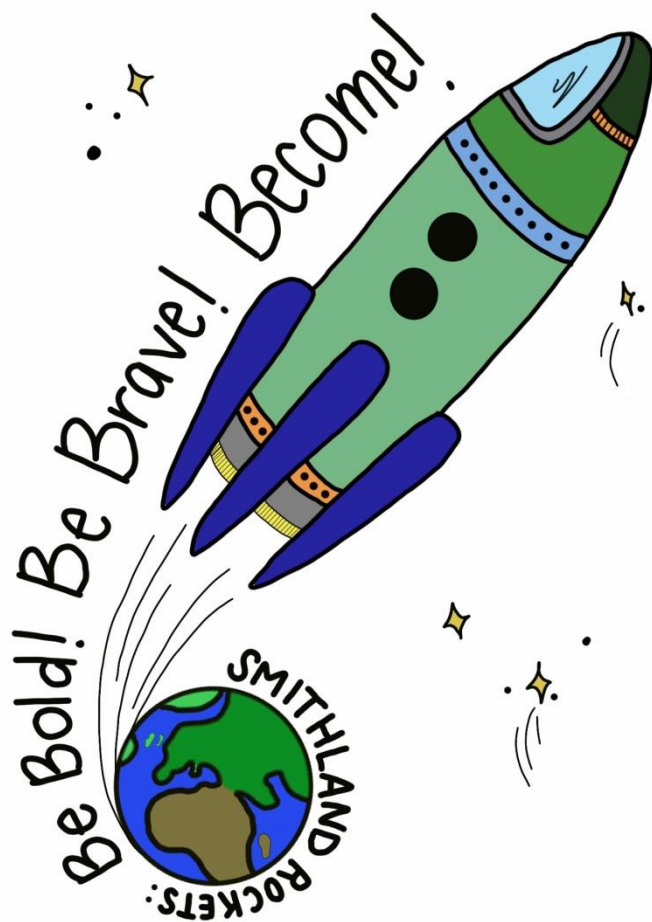


# Smithland Elementary School 2017-2018 *Student Handbook*



## *Home of the Rockets*

### **Our Mission Statement:**

**We will take risks, be empathetic leaders, lifelong problem solvers, and change makers.**

### **Smithland Rockets Will:**

**Be Bold! Be Brave! BECOME!**

Janis L. Churchill  
Principal

Norris Bunn  
Assistant Principal

# Smithland Elementary School

474 Linda Lane  
Harrisonburg, Virginia 22802

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Telephone: (540) 434-6075 Fax: (540) 434-6059  
[www.harrisonburg.k12.va.us/smes](http://www.harrisonburg.k12.va.us/smes)

Janis Churchill  
Principal

Norris Bunn  
Assistant Principal

Dear Smithland Friends,

I am writing to welcome you to a new school year at Smithland. We are excited for a year of learning and success and look forward to working together as a school community to make learning meaningful for every student. Each year at Smithland is filled with new hopes, new opportunities and new adventures. We are glad you will be a part of our school this year!

I am fortunate to be part of a dedicated and talented team at Smithland. I work alongside Mr. Norris Bunn (Assistant Principal), Mrs. Kim Harper (Administrative Assistant), Mrs. Teresa Gilkeson (Administrative Assistant) and Mrs. Gail Shears (Bookkeeper) in the front office to insure that every child is safe and that every child is learning. We see ourselves as problem solvers, and are available to answer questions or provide help at any time. Our office is open from 8:00 – 4:30, Monday through Friday. Please feel free to call or stop by if we can be of any assistance to you.

Please take a few minutes to read through our parent handbook where you will find information about our school policies and procedures as well as the instructional program at our school. We have tried to include information that will be helpful in answering some of the basic questions you might have. Please feel free to call the school if you would like more specific information regarding any of the topics included herein.

As school community members, we share a common purpose for the school year; that every child will experience the joy of learning and success! One of our goals as a staff this year is to write a school mission statement. We look forward to sharing it with you as it is completed.

I'm very excited for a wonderful school year!

***Janis L. Churchill***

Janis L. Churchill  
Principal

## 2017-2018 Faculty and Staff— Smithland Elementary School

### Administration

Janis Churchill, Principal  
Norris Bunn, Assistant Principal  
Sharon Shuttle, Early Learning Coordinator

### Main Office

Teri Bosley, School Nurse  
Kim Harper, Administrative Assistant  
Teresa Gilkeson, Administrative Assistant  
Adam Shank, Home/School Liaison  
Gail Shears, Bookkeeper  
Anita Warner, Family & Diversity Specialist

### Pre-School

Ashley Anderson  
Cynthia Arehart  
Lacey Berns  
Lisa Heatwole  
Lauren Smith  
Anne Marie Warren  
Kristi West  
Amanda Wolcott  
Katie Zigler

### Kindergarten

Angelica Diaz Bernabe  
Michelle Hunt  
Kristie Sleight  
Suzanne Webb

### Grade 1

Lauren Fields  
Molly Hollinsworth  
Julianne Romero  
Andrea Skelton  
Jana Wenger

### Grade 2

Maria Billings  
Catherine Lugo  
Virginia Munns  
Meagan Ours  
Kaila Spurlock

### Grade 3

Annie Anhold  
Jori Deffenbaugh  
Erick Luna  
Kelly Shriver  
Leatrice Woods

### Grade 4

Rosie Ehlers  
Rachel Lanctot  
Noelia Rodriguez  
Stephanie VanNortwick

### Grade 5

Aaron Billings  
Damian Hyde  
Daisy Vega Hall  
Megan Weaver

### Resource Teachers

Kim Brantley, ITRT  
Terry Cary, Counselor  
Elisabeth Dhillon, Music  
Tawnya Doss, Instructional Coach  
Terri Gehman, ESL Teacher  
Samantha Kullander, Physical Education  
Lori Lichti, Reading Specialist  
Sarah Lopacinski, Advanced Learning Specialist  
Mary Marshburn, Special Education  
Breanne Metz, Speech Language Pathologist  
Laura Paige Mertins, Art  
Deanna Moore, ESL Teacher  
Andrea Nolley, Media Specialist  
Lee Purnhagen, Reading Specialist  
Betty Simenson, Reading Specialist  
Derek Smiley, Technology  
Allison Swanson, ESL Teacher  
Kinya Walker, Special Education  
Rachel Weaver, ESL Teacher  
Zach Wilmot, Physical Education  
Julie Yoder, Speech Language Pathologist

### Paraprofessionals

Jane Perry Blatt  
Susan Cyzyzson  
Jessica Cardoso  
Emily Fischer Parkinson  
Heidi Jablonski  
Hope Jenner  
Rena Lanning  
Rita Longworth  
Cynthia Marafino  
Lynn McGranahan  
Stephanie "Michelle" Miller  
Carmen Segura  
Denise Sherman  
Sone Stemple  
Sherry Strother  
Melody Vazquez  
Alyssa Vette

### Custodians

Kathy Fix  
Robbie Hinkle  
Roger Rose  
Yousif Kori

### Cafeteria

Kris Ressin, Gerente  
Chasity Marcus, Subgerente  
Valbona Bajrami  
Jessica Cardoso  
Jaqueline Deputy  
Joyce Derrer  
Teresa Gauthier  
Deuane Khampharong  
Sandy Lucas  
Charmain Martin  
Suheila Rasul  
Sabahate Rexha  
Susan Shifflett  
Connie Singleton  
Tessa Turner-Woods  
Edith Woods

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## **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

Our school doors open at 8:00 a.m. each morning. **Please do not leave children unattended by the school doors prior to 8:00 a.m.** Children arriving between 8:00-8:20 a.m. will enter the school building and report for morning movement activities. At 8:20 a.m., children may enter their classrooms.

8:00 – School doors opened

8:00-8:20 Morning Movement Activities

8:20 Breakfast in the classrooms

8:35 – Tardy bell – classes begin

9:30 PreK Arrival

10:35-1:15 – Lunch Schedule

3:25 – PreK – 5 dismissed

Students who are not picked up by 3:45 p.m. will return to the office. **Parents will enter the main office to sign out their children after this time.** Please call if you need special arrangements regarding dismissal.

When it is necessary for a student to be excused during the school day, a parent should come to the office and the student will be called. Students must always be signed out in the school office and teachers are not permitted to dismiss students from classrooms. Please send a note or call the office in the morning if you are requesting an early dismissal. **It is helpful if you can refrain from calling to request an early dismissal between the hours of 3:00 and 3:25.** This is a very busy time in the office and it is difficult to effectively make special arrangements for students at this time.

## **ART EDUCATION**

A wide variety of media is available to provide students with opportunities for self-expression through exploring and experimenting in the areas of drawing, painting, construction, etc. All students have formal art instruction once each week for 50 minutes.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Successful progress in school depends upon prompt and regular attendance. In recognition of this philosophy, the Commonwealth of Virginia has established

a compulsory school attendance policy that applies to all children. Students who are absent must bring a parental note on the first day the student returns to school stating the reason for the absence. According to an amendment of Section 22.1-258 of the Code of Virginia, whenever any student fails to report to school on a regularly scheduled school day and no notification regarding the student's absence has been received by school personnel, a reasonable effort to notify the parent, guardian or emergency contact person by telephone at home or their place of work will be made. **If your child is going to be absent, please help our office staff by calling and letting us know the reason for the absence.**

The only absences that may be excused are:

- Illness (more than 2 days will require a note from a doctor.)
- Court appearance;
- Death in the family;
- Religious holidays;
- Extenuating circumstances which are determined by the school administration **and have received prior approval.**

If you are planning a family trip, even for one day, please share this information with Mrs. Churchill via phone, email or letter as soon as possible. All family trips are considered unexcused absences from school.

All students who have **5 unexcused absences for the year** will receive a letter informing the parents of the present attendance situation and a meeting with appropriate school/community personnel will be scheduled.

Parents who make regular school attendance a priority are helping their children develop patterns of responsibility that will carry through their school years and beyond. We expect students to be in their seats, ready to learn when the school day begins at 8:45 each morning. Bus transportation is cost effective and ensures a timely arrival, yet each day brings lines of students who are late for school. Whatever the method of transportation, please provide your child with every opportunity to be successful in school and make sure they arrive at school on time!

All students who **have 5 tardies for the year** will receive a letter informing the parents of the present attendance situation. If the tardies continue, a meeting with school administration will be scheduled.

### **BUS SAFETY/ ACCIDENT**

Procedures regarding bus safety and bus accidents will be covered with each student during the bi-yearly bus evacuation drills. Please refer to the division handbook for more information.

Students are expected to stay in their seats when the bus is moving, use a quiet voice when talking with friends, and treat everyone with kindness and respect. Failure to follow the rules on the bus may result in the suspension of this service.

### **CHARACTER EDUCATION**

Our character education program was designed by teachers. It includes morning meetings in every classroom where the focus is supporting the goals of mental, emotional, and social health. Our program is most effective when our parents, school staff and students understand the rewards of being kind and respectful. Leadership qualities are highly valued and taught at Smithland. We want students to be proactive, begin with the end in mind, put first things first, think win-win, seek first to understand, then to be understood, work collaboratively, and develop healthy habits. A growth mindset is key in empowering students to take responsibility for their own learning. Restorative justice practices are encouraged as we learn to get along with our peers and mentors.

### **SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM**

Smithland's elementary counseling program is designed to serve the needs of all children at each stage of their development. The focus is proactive and promotes healthy social, emotional, and intellectual growth. The objectives of this program are to help children develop self-awareness and to prepare them to make choices and decisions that will help students be effective students and productive members of the community. Utilizing leadership, advocacy, and collaboration, school counselors promote student success, provide preventive services, and respond to identified student needs by implementing a comprehensive school counseling program that addresses academic, career, and personal/social development for all students.

School counseling services are a part of the instructional program and include classroom lessons, small group counseling, and individual counseling. The counselor also meets with parents, teachers, administrators, and other community professionals for the purpose of developing appropriate plans to

benefit children and their families.

### **CLOSING OF SCHOOLS DUE TO WEATHER**

The decision to close schools or open late due to snow or inclement weather will be made as near 6:00 a.m. as possible. The announcement will be made over the local radio stations and the local TV station. When no information is given over the radio or TV stations about the Harrisonburg City Schools, schools will be open. Announcements will be made only if we are going to close or if we are going to have a delayed opening. An automated telephone call will be made regarding school closings and delayed openings as well. If weather conditions deteriorate during the course of the day, please tune to a local radio or TV station for information about an early closing of schools. Additionally, a message on our school answering machine will reflect a school closing or delayed opening in both English and Spanish.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

During the school year at specified times, you will receive reports of your child's progress. Report cards are issued to students in kindergarten through fifth grade each nine weeks. These reports will be sent home with the children. Report cards are issued one week following the end of each reporting period. Additionally, interim reports will be sent home in the middle of the nine week period. Please review these reports carefully with your child. If you would like more information, contact your child's teacher by filling out the comments section on the back of the report card envelope.

We encourage all parents to attend parent/teacher conferences and/or to schedule appointments with teachers as additional concerns arise. Two conference days (November 6<sup>th</sup> and March 1<sup>st</sup>) have been scheduled for you to meet with teachers during the year. We hope you will take advantage of these days to gain a more complete understanding of your child's progress. Please keep us informed of any achievements or difficulties your child may have. Ongoing communication between the home and school helps create the healthy environment necessary for a quality education.

Effective communication is important to all of us. Any problem or concern you may have is important to us. We encourage parents to address classroom



concerns with the appropriate teacher before contacting an administrator.

### **DISCIPLINE, RULES, AND REGULATIONS**

Our school-wide discipline plan is based on the character traits of caring, fairness, honesty, respect and responsibility. Classroom teachers create positive learning environments that reinforce skills and positive behaviors demonstrated by students and teach strategies to help students recognize and replace inappropriate behaviors with positive behaviors. We continue using a five STEP discipline plan in classrooms. The following steps are helpful as we work to maintain positive learning environments.

1. A statement from the teacher that specifically identifies any inappropriate behavior.
2. An oral or written explanation by the student of the inappropriate behavior and a positive statement of anticipated improvement.
3. Conference with teacher, parent and student to discuss problem(s) being encountered.
4. Discipline referral is completed and the student is sent to the office.

*If behavior presents an immediate threat to pupil safety, we may proceed directly to Step 4.*

#### **General School Rules**

1. Students will show respect for each other and for all adults by exhibiting appropriate behavior and by using kind language.
2. Students will respect all school property.
3. Students will demonstrate proper behavior in the hallways by walking quietly and by keeping their hands to themselves.
4. Games, fidget spinners, gum or candy, trading cards, tablets and other electronic devices are not permitted at school during the school day. An exception could be made for a special occasion if teacher approval has been obtained.
5. The use of cell phones and other communication devices is prohibited from the time students arrive on school property until the end-of-school dismissal bell. Students may have cell phones in their possession, but they must be turned off and kept out of sight at all times.
6. High heeled shoes and flip flops are not appropriate given the activities students participate in throughout the day. Students should wear tennis shoes to school each day to insure their safety when playing on the

- playground during recess and participating in physical education class.
7. Possession of weapons or look-alike weapons is prohibited on school grounds.

### **DRESS CODE**

A student's dress and appearance shall not be such that it causes disruption, distracts others from the educational process or creates a health or safety problem. Any clothing that is considered a disruption to the learning environment will not be allowed. Students must comply with specific building dress regulations and of which students will be given prior notice. The following are examples; not an exclusive list of inappropriate dress at school:

- Halters, see-through shirts, tank or tube tops that bare the midriff, no shoes, no shirts, apparel which conveys an inappropriate message such as violence, symbols for illegal substances, gang affiliation insignias, displays of offensive or obscene language, or clothing that reveals undergarments, etc.

All hats and head coverings are to be removed when entering the school building, with the exception of those related to religious beliefs.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are a means through which a teacher enhances classroom instruction. Field trips are planned for the benefit of our students. Parents and guardians are encouraged to chaperone at the teacher's discretion. **Teachers and administrators reserve the right to revoke field trip privileges if concerned about the safety of the child or others when out of the school building, based on the student's in school behaviors.** Since this is quality time for our students, siblings are not permitted to attend. No student will be denied access to any field trip for financial reasons. Donations are permitted and welcomed to assist in funding field trips. **Students who do not participate in a field trip are still required to attend school on the day of the trip.**

### **GIFTED EDUCATION**

We have a formal identification process in place to identify gifted students in the areas of language arts and math. This will be expanded to include other curriculum areas in the future. Our instructional program offers a differentiated curriculum in all areas. Within the regular curriculum, students will be extending their independent study and research skills. They will also participate in learning activities to increase their ability to think critically and solve problems. Our Advanced Learning Specialist works with classroom

teachers to provide appropriately challenging instruction and activities for all students. For more information regarding the identification or appeals process for our gifted program, please contact Norris Bunn, Assistant Principal and Gifted Coordinator.

## **HISTORY, SOCIAL SCIENCE AND SCIENCE PROGRAMS**

Our history and social science program is based on the Virginia Standards of Learning which include the development of student understanding of local, state and world geography, local, state and world history, world resources, economics, current issues, career choices and citizenship. The curriculum is rich and diverse and is taught using a variety of resources. Instructional field trips are taken in conjunction with the social studies program.

The Science program develops attitudes, values and understandings about the environment, develops skills to seek and evaluate information, and encourages experimentation, discovery and research with a variety of materials to strengthen basic concepts and processes. Our science program uses the Science Fusion series from HoughtonMifflinHarcourt as a base of instruction. Teachers use a hands-on approach to make learning science more meaningful. I-STEM lessons and Project Based Learning techniques are a valuable part of this program as well.

Family Life Education curriculum is taught in Kindergarten through fifth grade. Informational letters outlining objectives for your child's grade level are sent home each year. Topics include safety at home, building self-esteem, and the dangers of substance abuse. The complete Family Life Curriculum is available for review by request.

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework is an integral part of the learning experience, and its completion is the responsibility of each student. Assignment of homework is planned in terms of student needs. A recommended schedule for elementary homework is:

Kindergarten/Grade 1: Assignments are informal and may include daily reading

Grades 2&3: Assignments may total 1.5 - 2.5 hours per week and will include daily reading

Grade 4&5: Assignments may total 3-3.5 hours per week and will include daily reading

## **ILLNESS AT SCHOOL**

If a student becomes ill or injured at school, he or she will be taken to the clinic where the following procedures will be followed:

1. Parents will be required to pick up their child if he or she is too ill to remain in class.
2. Students leaving early must be signed out in the school office.
3. If a parent cannot be contacted, the school will call the emergency contact.
4. If a serious injury occurs, parents will be notified and students will be transported to the hospital by the Rescue Squad.
5. Accident reports are completed and placed in the cumulative file.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY**

Smithland has two PC labs, as well as a wireless mobile lab, that is available for teachers to use with their classes. These computers are networked and have internet access. All classrooms are equipped with desktop computers, Smartboards, and document cameras. Students in kindergarten through second grade have access to classroom sets of iPads. Students in third through fifth grade have access to classroom sets of Chromebooks.

## **INTERNET**

Internet access is provided. Students are supervised while using the Internet. A filter is in place to block inappropriate websites; in addition, available websites are periodically evaluated. To access the school's webpage, go to: <http://www.harrisonburg.k12.va.us/smes>. There you will find general information about the school and individual staff websites.

A notice on technology usage by students is included in the school division handbook. Parents are required to read this notice and return the form found in the handbook each school year if they do not want their child participating in the use of various technologies.

## **LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAM**

Reading and language instruction is aligned with the Virginia English Standards of Learning and is organized within thematic units, following the scope and sequence of the Houghton Mifflin Reading Series K – 5. Our reading program includes instruction in phonics, phonemic awareness, comprehension,

oral fluency, and vocabulary development. Our language program includes specific instruction in the writing process as well as language usage and mechanics. Students also work to develop oral language proficiency, listening skills, study skills and handwriting skills. Data is collected to track the individual progress and skill proficiency in language of each student.

We are fortunate to have a reading intervention program that is federally funded through a Title 1 grant. This program concentrates on needs pre-determined by the student's performance in the area of reading and is set up to supplement a student's regular classroom instruction in reading. Reading specialists work collaboratively with regular classroom teachers to address individual student's areas of need in order to improve student achievement. Additionally, students who are reading significantly below grade level participate in a Tier 3 intervention program that may include either Corrective Reading or Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI). These are systematic approaches to the teaching of reading with a concentration in the areas of decoding and phonics instruction.

In a Title I Schoolwide program, parents may request information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers, which will include, at a minimum, the following:

- whether the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
- the baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher and the field of discipline of the certification or degree and
- whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications. 20 U.S.C. 6311(h)(6)

### **LIBRARY SERVICES**

The goal of the library staff is to promote a love of reading and lifelong learning. To meet this goal, a variety of programs are offered through the library including book fairs, buddy reading programs that involve the Rotary Club and older students paired up with younger students, Family Library Nights, and reading incentive programs. The library also partners with

community programs that support reading by promoting the Gus Bus, Barnes and Noble, and Massanutten Regional Library.

All students have scheduled library classes and checkout times. Library lessons focus on locating and selecting books, information skills, using reference materials, and lessons that enrich and extend classroom learning objectives. Once a student checks out a book/books, those materials are due on a weekly basis, but may be renewed as many times as needed as long as the materials have not been reserved by another student or teacher. If a student has lost or damaged a book beyond reasonable repair, the student or his/her parents will be expected to pay the current cost of replacing it. Donations are gladly accepted in the library with the understanding that if the materials are not needed for the library collection, they will be offered to classroom teachers. Volunteers are also needed. If you are interested in volunteering in the library, please contact Andrea Nolley.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Each year a considerable quantity of unclaimed clothing and articles accumulate in the lost and found. Each week a picture of lost and found items is posted in the parent section of our school's website. The items are boxed and stored for six weeks and then appropriately donated. To provide more efficiency in returning lost goods, all articles such as books, purses, clothing, lunch boxes and equipment **should be plainly marked with the child's first and last name**. This will be a great help to us in identifying and finding the proper owner. Names on clothing are especially helpful in the primary grades.

### **MATHEMATICS PROGRAM**

Math in Focus is a program that focuses upon skills that are critical to mathematics success in the elementary grades. Among them are understandings of number, number sense, and place value. Math in Focus stresses mastery, coherence, and focus. Students master foundational math skills early and carry those skills with them as they progress through the grades. With each new concept learned, students build on what they have already learned. This systematic approach to mathematics is particularly evident in the program's approach to teaching place value. From grade level to grade level, place value is developed, honed, and applied to operations. As a result, numbers are demystified and students excel in mathematics because, for them,

numbers become tools for solving problems rather than obstacles that cause frustration. This program includes a visual approach to word problems. Model drawing, often called “bar modeling”, is a systematic method of representing word problems and number relationships that is explicitly taught beginning in second grade and extending all the way to secondary algebra. Students learn to use the bars to model problems that involve the four operations both with whole numbers, fractions, and ratios. The use of the rectangular bars and the identifications of the unknown quantity with a question mark help students visualize the problem and know what operations to perform. In short, students will be able to view all problems from an algebraic perspective beginning in early elementary grade levels. This program fosters both good number sense and the ability to solve complex problems. Additionally, Smithland teachers use a systematic calendar program called *Calendar Counts* that utilizes calendar activities to promote concept understanding. An individual math folder is kept on each student that monitors their progress and proficiency in mastering the Commonwealth of Virginia's Standards of Learning.

### **MEDICATION**

Harrisonburg City Public Schools personnel may only administer medication to children with a completed Medication Authorization, signed by both the physician and parent or guardian. Such medicine, whether prescription or nonprescription, must be in the original container. In the case of prescription medications, the original container must contain the student’s name, the name of the medication, the required dosage, and when the medication is to be administered. School personnel must follow the Harrisonburg City Public Schools procedural guidelines for administration of medicines. Students are not allowed to transport medicine to and from school. All medication will be kept with the nurse in the school office.

### **MINUTE OF SILENCE**

The daily observance of one minute of silence in each classroom is required by state law (Code of Virginia 22.1-203). During the one-minute period of silence, the teacher shall take care that all students remain seated and silent. The teacher further shall ensure that no student disrupts or distracts other students during the minute of silence.

### **MUSIC EDUCATION**

The purpose of the music program is to develop an understanding and appreciation of music through the use of the voice and rhythm instruments. Students experience making music, performing, listening, and reading music. All students have formal music instruction once each week for 50 minutes.

### **PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATIONS**

Smithland Elementary school has active P.T.O. and Latino PTO groups that encourage parents to join and participate in the various programs and activities at the school. Both groups share the goal of working jointly with parents, teachers and staff to build partnerships that will enhance communications and improve the educational process for the benefit of our children.

### **PARKING AND TRAFFIC FLOW**

The front of the building is where parent drop-off and pick-up occurs. Please park your car in a parking place if you are going to get out of your car to enter the building. Parking in the drop-off or pick-up lane impedes traffic flow and creates congestion in this area. Also, please park in a designated space and not at the end of the rows or along curb adjacent to the crosswalk.

### **PARTIES AND GIFTS**

Each year, classes have instructionally related “special events” that are successful because of careful planning and parent assistance. We are not able to deliver birthday invitations, flowers or balloons to classrooms during the instructional day. If private birthday invitations are provided for all members of the class, the teacher may send them home with all children. As we work to protect our instructional day, we ask that birthday snacks are shared with others during the lunch period.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

A well-rounded program of movement, beginning game skills, and physical fitness characterize our physical education program. Our program provides sequential development experiences based on the student's abilities and needs. Activities are designed to develop body fitness and attitudes of fairness and sportsmanship. All students have formal physical education instruction, twice a week for 50 minutes. A written note from parents or the family doctor is



needed in order to be excused from physical education. **Tennis shoes are required of all students.** Competitive sports of a varsity nature are prohibited in the elementary schools in Harrisonburg.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE**

All students are required by state law (Code of Virginia 223.1-202) to learn the Pledge of Allegiance and to demonstrate such knowledge through daily recitation in the classroom. No student, however, shall be compelled to recite the Pledge if he/she, or his/her parent or legal guardian objects on religious, philosophical, or other grounds. Students who are thus exempt shall remain quietly standing or sitting and shall make no display that disrupts or distracts others who are reciting the pledge.

### **RETURNED CHECKS**

A service charge of up to \$20.00 will be imposed on all checks returned to us by the bank for insufficient funds.

### **SAFETY AWARENESS**

Due to many changes in society in general and in our community, everyone – teachers, parents, students and staff members – must be vigilant in overseeing safety procedures in our building and on our grounds. For this reason, we ask your support of the procedures listed below:

1. **Visitors - All** visitors must sign in at the office to get a visitor's pass. Staff members have been asked to stop persons in the hallway who do not have a pass.
2. **Buddy system** – All students will be accompanied by an adult or use the “buddy system” when walking through the Smithland hallways.
3. **Doors locked at 8:45 a.m.** - Visitors are to use the Main Entrance.
4. When picking students up at 3:35 p.m., parents may wait outside the office in the lobby area or outside. **No one is permitted to wait outside classroom doors.**

### **SAFETY DRILLS**

To ensure our students' safety, several safety drills are performed throughout the school year. Fire drills are practiced monthly. A severe weather alert drill,

intruder drill, and bomb threat drill are each performed once during the school year. The procedures for each are as follows:

**Fire Drill:** Faculty, staff, and students follow fire drill routes to exit the building quickly and safely. If the children will be out of the building for an extended period of time, transportation will be contacted and school buses will take everyone to Waterman Elementary School.

**Severe Weather Alert Drill:** Faculty and staff will move all students into interior hallways where everyone drops to their knees and covers their heads.

**Intruder Drill:** Faculty and staff lock classroom doors and move students to a location in the classroom where they are no longer visible.

**Bomb Threat Drill:** Faculty and staff evacuate students along fire drill routes to a designated location away from the school building. Again, if students are out of the building for an extended period of time, arrangements are made to move students to Waterman Elementary School.

### **SCHOOL ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

School accident and dental insurance is available to your child. This insurance covers injuries caused solely by accidents while a student is on the school grounds, on a field trip, or going to and from school. It is offered as a service to parents, but the actual contract exists between the company and the parent. The school system receives no remuneration for the service and does not submit the claim forms. Parents are responsible for the completion of forms and forwarding claims, medical bills, etc.

### **SCHOOL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

We invite you to be a part of our school community and are excited to have parental involvement whenever possible. You are invited to participate in your child's classroom, **but ask that you make prior arrangements with the teacher in this regard.** (The class visit should not be considered a conference time as the teacher cannot provide direction to the class and also give full attention to a personal conference.) **Please turn off all cell phones before entering the building.** This will help us to maximize instruction and to

eliminate disruption of our instructional time.

Our printed school newsletter, The Smithland Scoop, will be sent home four times each year with information about the school program and activities. In addition, classroom newsletters are sent home periodically throughout the school year. Volunteer sign-up begins at fall registration for parents and community persons to volunteer their time, talents and interests to enrich school activities during the year.

### **SCHOOL NUTRITION**

Harrisonburg City Public Schools cafeterias serve nutritious breakfasts, lunches, and after school snacks (to students participating in an approved after school activity) through USDA National School Lunch, Breakfast and Snack Programs. The School Nutrition Department's goal is to offer nutritious meals that are acceptable to students at a reasonable price for parents. In addition to providing healthy foods, the program has the goal of educating students about the importance of healthy eating. Menus are posted in each room and are also available on the HCPS and individual school websites. Additional nutrition related information is available on the School Nutrition website at [www.harrisonburg.k12.va.us/Departments/School-Nutrition.aspx](http://www.harrisonburg.k12.va.us/Departments/School-Nutrition.aspx).

### **PROCEDURES FOR MEAL PAYMENTS**

*Lunch prices are as follows:*

Full Price – Elementary \$1.80, Middle \$2.00, High \$2.10

Reduced Price – \$0.40 all levels

Adults – \$3.00

*Breakfast prices are as follows:*

Full price – \$0.75 middle and high, no cost for elementary students

Reduced Price – \$0.30 middle and high, no cost for elementary students

Adults – \$1.50

Breakfast is made available at no cost to all students at the elementary level, and is served at the start of the day in classrooms instead of in the cafeteria. Students are encouraged, but not required, to participate in classroom breakfast, so please discuss with your elementary student whether they will eat breakfast at home or at school.

*A la carte prices are as follows:*

Extra entrée - \$1.75

Ice Cream - \$1.00

Bottled Water or Juice - \$1.00

Milk - \$0.50

Small Juice - \$0.35

Extra Fruit/Vegetable - \$0.75

With the exception of milk, a la carte items are only available for purchase at middle and high schools.

Payments can be made for any given period of time: a day, a week, a month, or even the entire school year and can be made with cash or check. Credit or debit cards are not accepted at the school level. Parents may set up an account to check meal balances and purchases and to add funds to an account using a credit or debit card at [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com). If you would like to check your child's account balance, you may also call or email the cafeteria manager at their school or call or email Andrea Early, School Nutrition Program Director, at 437-3300 or [aealy@harrisonburg.k12.va.us](mailto:aealy@harrisonburg.k12.va.us).

Please put payments in an envelope with the student's name and account number (ID number) on the envelope. It is helpful to write the student's name and ID number on all checks. Please have students bring payments to the cafeteria.

No cash will be returned to a student who presents a check for meal payment. Refunds from student accounts will be made only if a request in writing or by email is made by a parent or guardian. Funds will not be transferred between siblings in a family without prior written authorization from a parent or guardian.

Account balances from the previous year will roll over to the new school year. Parents of students who are graduating or leaving the district should make a request in writing or by email for a refund of an account balance. Notices will be sent to parents of graduating seniors who have a positive balance of more than \$1.00. Balances remaining on accounts of graduating seniors after June 30<sup>th</sup> will be transferred into a hardship fund. This fund will be used by the Director of School Nutrition to offset meal charges on a case by case basis.

Meal charges are also reflected in the student's meal account balance. Students with meal charges will not be allowed to charge or purchase a la carte (extra) food items.

Security for this system relies in students not sharing their individual account number.

Students who receive free or reduced lunch also qualify for free or reduced breakfast. Please note that free and reduced status applies to full meals only, not individual items (milk for example).

### **PROCEDURES AND POLICY FOR MEAL CHARGES**

A meal charge is defined as a short-term loan for a child to eat because the child has forgotten or lost money for that day. The School Nutrition Program is self-supporting and relies on revenue generated from meals that are served. Therefore, charges must be kept to a minimum.

Cafeteria Managers, through the use of the computerized school nutrition accounting system, will allow and record charges, collect monies for payment of charges, and issue charge notices as deemed necessary. Parents will be notified by automated phone call when their student's account is in a negative status.

Full meals will always be provided to elementary and middle school students regardless of amount owed. High school students may accrue no more than

\$20.00 in charges. High school students with more than \$20.00 in charges should not go through the regular serving lines, but should go directly to the kitchen to receive an alternate meal (sandwich, fruit, and drink). Students with meal charges will not be allowed to charge or purchase a la carte (extra) food items. Parents are expected to pay meal charges in a timely manner at all school levels. School staff may accrue no more than \$12.00 in charges.

If a hardship has occurred, please submit a new application for free/reduced meals immediately. Please note that parents are expected to pay charges accrued to a student's account prior to their being approved for free and reduced meals. A hardship fund is maintained and may be used to offset these charges on a case by case basis.

If you have questions, please call the cafeteria manager at your student's school or call Andrea Early, School Nutrition Director, at 437-3300.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

### **CAFETERIA PROCEDURES**

We have made changes in our cafeteria to create a lunchroom environment that is more conducive to students eating a healthy lunch and conversing with friends. Students eat lunch with their class and a buddy class and are expected to practice positive social skills while they dine. Our students are appreciative that we are creating a more positive atmosphere where they can relax and enjoy eating lunch with friends. We hope you will continue to join us for lunch throughout the year.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

Harrisonburg City Public Schools are committed to providing a full educational opportunity for identified disabled individuals. This commitment is demonstrated, in part, through the following efforts:

- An ongoing child find effort is made to locate and identify disabled individuals from birth through age 21
- A free and appropriate public education is provided to all disabled students, ages 2 through 21 inclusive, in the least restrictive environment. All federal and state regulations are either met or exceeded by local school practices
- An active and involved advisory committee meets on a regular basis to review programs and the special education annual plan. The committee is composed of parents and community agency representatives. These meetings are open to the public and are publicized

Parents are involved throughout the educational process. Parental permission and notification of procedural safeguards are obtained before an evaluation takes place. Parents are also invited to attend child study and eligibility meetings, and participate with educators in jointly developing

their child's individualized education program.

### **SPEECH AND HEARING SCREENING**

Each year all students in kindergarten have their hearing and speech screened by the speech therapists in the school system. All new students entering the system receive both speech and hearing screenings. Parents will be notified if their child fails any of the screenings and a follow-up on the child will be recommended. If you do not wish for your child to be screened, you must contact the school office within two days after school starts or within two days of their enrollment date.

### **STANDARDS OF LEARNING (SOL) TESTING**

Harrisonburg City Public Schools use the Virginia Standards of Learning as the core of their academic curriculum. Smithland Elementary uses the Virginia Standards of Learning as defined for grades K through 4. For information regarding the academic standards, curriculum framework, test blueprints and released tests, please visit the Virginia Department of Education website at: [www.doe.virginia.gov](http://www.doe.virginia.gov).

Students at Smithland will take SOL tests in May each school year as mandated by the Virginia Board of Education in the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia. The exact dates will be communicated to parents when the school division schedule is set by the Department of Education.

Students in grade 3 must take and pass the SOL tests in two core academic disciplines of Mathematics and English. Students in grade 4 will take tests in Reading, Mathematics and Virginia Studies. Students in grade 5 will take test in Reading, Mathematics and Science. Alternative tests/forms as well as specific accommodations may be provided to students with disabilities and/or students identified as limited-English proficient. Student test results must be used as one of multiple criteria developed by the Harrisonburg City School Board to determine promotion or retention at grades 3 - 8.

### **STUDENT RECOGNITION**

Appropriate praise and positive reinforcement play an important part in building healthy self-esteem that promotes academic success. The following

awards are given during the school year and at our end of year awards presentations:

- **Excellent Attendance:** It is very important that students be on time and attend school regularly. The school presents excellent attendance awards to students who have been not been absent more than 3 days and do not often arrive late or leave early. Attendance is taken at 8:45 each morning.
- **Honor Roll:** Each nine weeks, all students who receive all A's and/or B's and NO C's in the areas of reading, spelling, language, mathematics, social studies, science, and health qualify for the school honor roll. The "A" Honor Roll is used to distinguish those students having straight A's for each nine weeks throughout the school year in every area. This is not an average. The "A/B" Honor Roll is used to distinguish those students having only A's and B's in every subject for each nine weeks throughout the school year. To be eligible for a nine weeks' recognition, there must be at least one "A" each six weeks. This is not an average. Students are recognized and rewarded by having their names published in the DAILY NEWS RECORD.
- **Rotary Club Code of Ethics Award:** This award honors one male and one female student in fourth grade as part of its activities to recognize the importance of ethics in our community. The criteria include truthfulness, consistency, dependability, integrity, service to and concern for others, friendliness, depth of commitment, and reverence.
- **President's Education Awards Program:** The Office of the President of the United States awards certificates to those students meeting the highest academic standards. These standards include designated grade point averages and achievement on standardized tests.

Additionally students are recognized every Friday with **BRIGHT SPOTS** for displaying exemplary character traits throughout the school week. Every nine weeks students who display a strong work ethic in their goal setting will get a chance to share about their goals and play with the **PrinciPALs** in a movement activity in our gymnasium!!

### **TEXTBOOKS**

These books belong to the public schools of Harrisonburg and should be handled with the same care as one would his own. If mistreated or unduly

worn or damaged, a proportionate part of the cost of the book will be charged to the student. Since textbooks are expected to last for a six-year period, students are asked to handle their books with care.

### **TOYS/ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Toys/electronic devices are to be left at home. This includes, but is not limited to, tablets, MP3 players, trading cards, fidget spinners and hand held computer games. If a toy/electronic device is brought to school, a staff member may confiscate the item. The item will be returned by sending it home at the end of the day with a note to parents, calling parents to come pick it up, holding it until the next conference you have, or trying any other reasonable solution to get the item home.

### **VISITORS**

Visitors are welcome at Smithland Elementary. All visitors must report to the main office to log in on the computer for a visitor's pass. Visitors must also sign out in the main office. Unauthorized persons, including suspended students, will be requested to leave school grounds by the building administrator.

### **WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL**

Parents should contact the school office before withdrawing a child. This allows us to complete withdrawal procedures that are in the best interest of your child.

### **WORLD-CLASS INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN AND ASSESSMENT**

#### **(WIDA)**

Harrisonburg City Public Schools uses the WIDA English Language proficiency standards for English Language Learners in Pre-K through Grade 12 to assess oral and written language fluency. The assessment component (ACCESS Test) will be administered to all English Language Learners during the spring to assess their proficiency in meeting these standards. This test is given to all pre-K through 12 students whose first language is not English.



**Important Phone Numbers:**

Smithland Elementary School Office

434-6075

Smithland Elementary School Fax

434-6059

Harrisonburg City Public Schools Central Office

434-9916

Harrisonburg City Public Schools Welcome Center

433-3644

Harrisonburg City Transportation Department

432-0492