



**Elizabethtown  
Independent  
Schools**



**PANTHER ACADEMY KINDERGARTEN**



**Handbook**



**2019-2020**

*(ESTABLISHED 2012-2013)*



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August 1, 2019

Dear Families,

Welcome to Panther Academy! Panther Academy was established as a preschool and kindergarten center in 2012. Since that time, the staff and families have worked extremely hard to build a strong foundation for our school. The focus of our school is to create a love of learning and do what is developmentally appropriate for our young learners.

We are excited to have your child at our school and work with you throughout this year. Our school mission statement is *Passionate About loving to learn*. Our hope is that your child is excited about learning and loves to come to school each day. Our vision statement is *a school family that provides a positive and nurturing environment for the whole child*. Our staff works diligently to build strong, nurturing relationships with the students and their families.

Families are encouraged to get involved in their child's education as many ways as possible. Sometimes students will have a book to read to you or a project to complete. We have opportunities to get involved during the school day too, such as volunteering to help PTO, working with small groups in a classroom or making copies or games for teachers to use.

Please take the time to look through this handbook in order to familiarize yourself with important policies and procedures for our school. If you have any questions or concerns at any time as my door is always open, please call the office at 270-765-3007.

Yours in education,

Carla Kuhn

# GETTING TO KNOW THE STAFF

**Panther Academy**

**270-765-3007**

**Office Staff:**

Carla Kuhn  
Leonard Brown  
Kim Druen  
Heather Dennie

Principal/Preschool Director  
Behavior Interventionist  
Secretary  
Attendance Clerk

**Kindergarten Staff:**

**Teachers**

Becky Pinkham  
Caitlin Shilts  
Dana McCurry  
Erin Lee  
Jill Valentine  
Melissa Gregory  
Nicole Hines  
Stephanie Taylor

**Instructional Assistants**

Miranda Miller  
Sarah Kolley  
Taylor Donahue  
April Hutson  
Debbi Farrow  
Caryn Pedigo  
Patricia Raine  
Phyllis Cunigan

**Preschool Staff:**

**Teachers**

Betsy Beach  
Julia Keathley  
Laura Rogers  
Stephanie Ash

**Instructional Assistants**

Missy Hill, Janet Graves  
Nina Hamler  
Claudia Black  
Mackenzie Hinton

**Support Staff:**

Emily Ede  
Kristy Pritchard  
Dana Napier  
Amy Truitt  
Brenda Gilkerson  
Tammy Hayes  
Marci Kauffeld

Resource Teacher  
Resource Teacher  
Resource Instructional Assistant  
Librarian/RTL Interventionist  
RTL Intervention Assistant  
Speech Pathologist (for kindergarten)  
Speech Pathologist (for preschool)

# PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

## Morning Arrival:

- The instructional day begins promptly at 8:00AM with a school-wide morning meeting.
  - If your child is a car rider and plans to eat breakfast at school, please drop off your child by 7:45AM each day so he/she has plenty of time to eat before the school day begins.
- Student dropoff for kindergarten begins at 7:20AM.
- Car riders unload at the side of the school near the playground.
- Buses unload at the back of the school near the gym.
- If your child arrives to school after 8:00AM, you will have to bring them into the school and sign them in which will result in a tardy on the attendance record.

## Afternoon Dismissal:

- The school day ends at 2:00PM.
- Bus riders will dismiss from the gym in the rear of the school.
- Car riders will exit with staff supervision from side of the school nearest the playground.

## Transportation Procedures:

- **Changes in your child's transportation are required in writing by 12:00PM each day.** You can write a note to your child's teacher or email the office by noon.
- A picture ID will be required by supervising staff anytime a child is picked up.
- Phone calls for transportation changes can be done in the event of an emergency only.
- Kindergarten students will not be dropped off at the designated location if there is no one at the location to receive the child. In the event this should happen, the student will be brought back to school for someone to pick up.

## Odds and Ends Information:

- Breakfast and lunch are available to all students at no charge. Milk can be purchased for \$ .30 if your child brings a lunch and needs a drink.
- **If you plan to go beyond the school office, you must leave your driver's license in the office. This is a security measure that we put in place in the event of an emergency in our school.**
- Please make sure your child has a change of clothes in their backpack or cubby. Sometimes students get preoccupied and forget to take restroom breaks. If your child has an accident and does not have a change of clothes, we will have to call you to bring them clothes.
- Label your child's belongings (jackets, backpacks, lunchboxes).

## SCHOOL SAFETY MEASURES:

Panther Academy, as well as all Elizabethtown Independent Schools has formal safety procedures in place in the event of any emergency. We have a Crisis Management Team in place to secure regular practice drills for evacuations, lockdowns, weather safety, etc. In addition to having formal procedures/ policies and a crisis management team in place to ensure student safety, the school district participates in the Kentucky State Police Adopt-A-School Program, as well as the local E'town Police Adopt-A-School Program. Both serve to be visible and patrol the school area on a regular basis to conduct general welfare checks, etc. Student safety and proper supervision of students is a top priority at Panther Academy.

# IMPORTANT POLICIES

## School Attendance:

We want to work with you to help your child have a wonderful kindergarten year. One way to ensure your child grows as much as possible throughout this school year is to have the child at school and on time each day.

- **The instructional day starts at 8:00 and ends at 2:00PM.**
- **Student drop off for kindergarten begins at 7:20AM.** If the child is a car rider, you can drop your child off at the kindergarten drop off line where a staff member will be there to greet your child and get him/her safely into the building. That door will close at 8:00AM. Once that door closes, your child is considered tardy to school and will be documented in their attendance.
- **If your child is sick or unable to come to school, please call the school by 8:30AM and let them know each day.**
- Documentation for each absence needs to be provided when the child returns to school. The first 6 absences can be excused by calling the school office or writing a note from the parent. After the 6th absence, the absence will be unexcused unless you submit a doctor's note and/or legal documentation.
- Tardies can affect your child's attendance and academic success. A student is considered tardy when he/she signs in late or leaves school early.

**To read more about the policy as established by Elizabethtown Board of Education, please visit the district website at [etown.kyschools.us](http://etown.kyschools.us). Policy 09.123 explains this in detail absences and excuses.**

## Wellness:

Panther Academy has a wellness policy that was adopted by the SBDM. The policy focuses on promoting healthy eating and exercise habits. When having school parties or celebrating individual birthdays, we ask that you send in healthy snack/treat options. For example, instead of sending in cupcakes for your child's birthday, you could send in rice krispie treats or yogurts.

## Health and Medication:

Trained staff may dispense medications under very strict Kentucky Department of Education guidelines. **Do not send medications of any kind with your child. Both prescription and over-the counter medications must be brought in and hand delivered by an adult. A medication form must be completed before we can give your child medicine. (You may ask for this form in the office.)**

- Over the counter medication must be in the original bottle and will be given out based on your directions unless they differ from the directions on the bottle. In this case, a doctor's note will be required before we can give your child a higher dosage than indicated on the bottle.
- Prescription medications must be in the original bottle with a current date.

You will also need to bring the appropriate dispensing/measuring tools as we are not allowed to use regular spoons, etc. for this purpose. If pills need to be broken in half, etc., you will also need to do that at home, as we are not allowed to alter the medications in any way. These same restrictions also apply to ointments, inhalers, and other medical devices.

**Any child showing signs of communicable illnesses such as an elevated temperature, vomiting, head lice, chicken pox, scabies, pinworms, ringworms, impetigo, diarrhea, etc. should not be sent to school.** In the event these symptoms show up while your child is here at school, you will be called to pick up your child. Please keep your contact information as accurate as possible in the event of an emergency or illness. **It is recommended that a child would not return to school until he/she is 24 symptom free.**

# CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

## Curriculum

Panther Academy curriculum addresses the needs of the whole child, academically and socially. Academically, students have access to core curriculum: reading (to include phonics, phonemic awareness, decoding words, reading sight words and understanding what has been read), math and writing (handwriting as well as writing to share one's own thoughts and ideas.) Additionally, science and social studies are incorporated into units of study. Once a week, students have instruction in special areas are taught as well: PE/health, art, music and library. Socially, teachers use Second Steps and Character First to promote good character. Additionally, the students start their day with a focus on a character trait during the school-wide morning meeting. Our school's **Guidelines for Success** are: **be respectful, be responsible, be cooperative, be kind.**

## Assessments

All first year kindergarteners must be screened using The Brigance. The screener is a requirement from the Kentucky Department of Education. This data is used to help determine kindergarten readiness for the students in each school.

The Brigance is not the only assessment used by the teacher at Panther Academy to develop an understanding of your child's ability. The classroom teachers assess formatively and summatively throughout the school year. A report card is sent home at the end of each 9 weeks which allow families to stay informed on their child's progress throughout the year in priority skill areas.

We use a benchmark testing called AimsWeb Plus. This testing is completed three times throughout the year for all students: fall (August/September), winter (January), and spring (May). This assessment measures reading and math skills and help guide intervention services for students needing extra help and support.

# PARENT INVOLVEMENT

## PTO

Our parent and teacher organization works together to assist the school in providing support and financial assistance with the goal of improving the school and helping instruction. We encourage all parents to become involved and help our PTO throughout the year. PTO has a Facebook page to help you stay connected. Just search for Panther Academy PTO. All parents and guardians are automatically members of PTO. Please sign up to help wherever you can.

## SCHOOL-BASED DECISION MAKING COUNCIL (SBDM):

Two parents are elected to serve on our council each year. In addition, parents may serve on the council committees. Considering joining a committee and sharing your expertise in that area.

## VOLUNTEERS

At Panther Academy, we welcome volunteers anytime. We always have a child that needs someone to read to him, materials to cut out or preparation for an upcoming activity, or copies made to help the teacher prepare. If you are interested in becoming a parent volunteer, contact the school office or your child's teacher. A background check will be required which takes about 2 weeks to process. Once approved as a volunteer, you will be notified by letter from the school board office. The PTO will have volunteer opportunities throughout the year in which you can help. If you want to help in your child's class, you will set that up with the teacher.

## VISITORS

All visitors must enter the school from the front door. You will need to identify who you are and why you wish to enter. **For safety precautions, visitors are required to leave their licenses in the office if you plan to go past the school office.** The license will be returned once you sign out. Additionally, all visitors must have a visitor's tag worn that is easily visible.

# **SCHOOL-BASED DECISION MAKING COUNCIL**

**The SBDM Council will meet on the 2nd Friday of each month at 2:15 PM.**

## **2019-20 Council Members:**

- Carla Kuhn - chairperson
- Julia Keathley, Emily Ede, Melissa Gregory - teacher representatives
- Kyle Fortune, Heather Sallie - parent representatives

## **Meeting Dates:**

August 9, 2019

September 13, 2019

October 18, 2019 \*changed due to fall break

November 8, 2019

December 13, 2019

January 10, 2020

February 14, 2020

March 13, 2020

April 10, 2020

May 8, 2020

June 12, 2020

**Families are always welcome and encouraged to attend!**



**CODE OF ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE**

<b>LEVELS OF MISCONDUCT</b>	<b>EXAMPLES</b>	<b>DISCIPLINARY RESPONSE PROCEDURES</b>	<b>RESPONSE OPTIONS</b>
<p>I. Minor misbehavior on the part of the student which impedes orderly classroom procedures or interferes with the orderly operation of the school. These misbehaviors can usually be handled by an individual staff member but sometimes require the intervention of other school support personnel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom disturbance</li> <li>• Classroom tardiness</li> <li>• Abusive language</li> <li>• Non-defiant failure to complete assignments or carry out directions</li> <li>• Dress code violation</li> <li>• Telecommunication device violation</li> </ul>	<p><b>There is immediate intervention by the staff member who is supervising the student or who observes the misbehavior.</b> Repeated misbehavior requires a parent/teacher conference, conference with the counselor or administrator or both. A proper and accurate record of the offenses and disciplinary action is maintained by the staff member</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal reprimand</li> <li>• Special assignment</li> <li>• Behavioral contract</li> <li>• Counseling</li> <li>• Withdrawal of privileges</li> <li>• Strict supervised study</li> <li>• Detention</li> <li>• Temporary removal from class</li> <li>• Temporary confiscation of telecommunication device</li> </ul>
<p>II. Misbehavior whose frequency or seriousness tends to disrupt the learning climate of the school. These infractions, which usually result from the continuation of LEVEL I misbehaviors, require the intervention of personnel on the administrative level because the execution of LEVEL I disciplinary options has failed to correct the situation. Also included in this level are misbehaviors which do not represent a direct threat to the health and safety of others but whose educational consequences are serious enough to require corrective action on the part of administrative personnel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuation of unmodified LEVEL I misbehavior</li> <li>• School tardiness</li> <li>• Truancy</li> <li>• Possession or use of tobacco on school grounds or school property.</li> <li>• Using forged notes or excuses.</li> <li>• Disruptive classroom behavior</li> <li>• Cutting class</li> <li>• Willful disobedience</li> <li>• Abusive language</li> <li>• Sexual Harassment</li> <li>• Leaving school grounds</li> <li>• Harassment</li> <li>• Intimidation</li> <li>• Bullying</li> </ul>	<p>The student is referred to the administrator for appropriate disciplinary action. The administrator meets with the student or teacher or both and affects the most appropriate response. The teacher is informed of the administrator's action. The administrator maintains a proper and accurate record of the offense and the disciplinary action. A parental conference is held Prior to student suspension, the principal or assistant principal will administer due process procedures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher or schedule change</li> <li>• Saturday School</li> <li>• Detention</li> <li>• Counseling</li> <li>• Alternative Instruction</li> <li>• Suspension</li> <li>• Expulsion</li> </ul>
<p><b>III. Acts directed against persons or property but whose consequences do not seriously endanger the health or safety of others in the school.</b>  These acts might be considered criminal but most frequently can be handled by the disciplinary mechanism in the school. Corrective measures, which the school should undertake, however, depend on the extent of the school's resources for remediating the situation in the best interests of all students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unmodified LEVEL II misconducts</li> <li>• Fighting</li> <li>• Vandalism (minor)</li> <li>• Furnishing or selling or possessing or using unauthorized substances</li> <li>• Stealing</li> <li>• Threats to others</li> <li>• Sexual Harassment</li> </ul>	<p>The administrator initiates disciplinary action by investigating the infraction and conferring with staff on the extent of the consequences. The administrators meet with the student and confer with the parent/guardian about the student's misconduct and the resulting disciplinary action. The administrator maintains a proper and accurate record of offenses and disciplinary actions. Prior to student suspension, the principal or assistant principal will administer due process procedures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temporary removal from class</li> <li>• Alternative Instruction</li> <li>• Temporary out-of-school suspension</li> <li>• Full out-of-school suspension</li> <li>• Expulsion</li> <li>• Saturday School</li> <li>• Report behavior to law enforcement agencies as required by law</li> </ul>
<p>IV. Acts which result in violence to another's person or property or which pose a direct threat to the safety of others in the school. These acts are clearly criminal and are so serious that they always require administrative actions which result in the immediate removal of the student from school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities and action by the board of education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unmodified LEVEL III misconducts</li> <li>• Extortion</li> <li>• Bomb threat</li> <li>• Possession or use or transfer of dangerous weapons</li> <li>• Assault or battery</li> <li>• Vandalism</li> <li>• Theft or possession or sale of stolen property</li> <li>• Arson</li> <li>• Furnishing or selling or possessing or using unauthorized substances</li> <li>• Sexual Harassment</li> </ul>	<p>The administrator verifies the offense, confers with the staff person(s) involved and meets with student. The student is immediately removed from the school environment. Parents are notified. School officials contact law enforcement agency and assist in prosecuting the offender. Prior to student suspension, the principal or assistant principal will administer due process procedures. A complete and accurate report is submitted to the superintendent for possible board action. The student is given a full due process hearing before the board, if expulsion is recommended</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative Instruction</li> <li>• Suspension</li> <li>• Expulsion</li> <li>• Report behavior to law enforcement agencies as required by law</li> </ul>

**BUS SAFETY CODE OF ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE**

<b>LEVELS OF MISCONDUCT</b>	<b>EXPECTED BEHAVIORS</b>	<b>DISCIPLINARY RESPONSE PROCEDURES</b>	<b>RESPONSE OPTIONS</b>
<b>Level 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Staying seated</li> <li>· Talk at a reasonable level</li> <li>· Keep hands to self</li> <li>· No littering</li> </ul>	Driver intervention Investigate infraction Meet with student Confer with parent/guardian Record offense/action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Verbal warning</li> <li>· Special seat assignment</li> <li>· Withdrawal of privileges</li> <li>· Special assignment</li> <li>· Detention</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· No profanity</li> <li>· No abusive language</li> <li>· No bullying</li> <li>· No blocking the aisles</li> <li>· No tobacco products</li> <li>· No throwing things inside the bus or out the window</li> <li>· Keep all body parts inside the bus</li> <li>· Share the seating space</li> <li>· Follow the driver's instructions</li> </ul>	Investigate infraction Meet with student Administer discipline Confer with parent/guardian Record offense/action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Detention</li> <li>· Saturday School</li> <li>· Bus suspension</li> <li>· School suspension</li> </ul>
<b>Level 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· No fighting</li> <li>· No tampering with bus equipment</li> <li>· No sexual harassment</li> <li>· No stealing</li> <li>· No usage of tobacco products, matches, or lighters</li> </ul>	Investigate infraction Meet with student Confer with parent/guardian Record offense/action Submit to superintendent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Saturday School</li> <li>· Bus suspension</li> <li>· School suspension</li> <li>· Removal from bus</li> <li>· Law agency notified</li> <li>· Alternative placement</li> <li>· Expulsion</li> </ul>

# INFORMATION FOR PARENTS



## IF YOUR FAMILY LIVES IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS:

In a shelter



In a motel or campground due to the lack of an alternative adequate accommodation



In a car, park, abandoned building, or bus or train station



Doubled up with other people due to loss of housing or economic hardship

*Your school-age children may qualify for certain rights and protections under the federal McKinney-Vento Act.*

### Your eligible children have the right to:

- Receive a free, appropriate public education.
- Enroll in school immediately, even if lacking documents normally required for enrollment.
- Enroll in school and attend classes while the school gathers needed documents.
- Enroll in the local school; or continue attending their school of origin (the school they attended when permanently housed or the school in which they were last enrolled), if that is your preference.
  - \* If the school district believes that the school you select is not in the best interest of your children, then the district must provide you with a written explanation of its position and inform you of your right to appeal its decision.
- Receive transportation to and from the school of origin, if you request this.
- Receive educational services comparable to those provided to other students, according to your children's needs.

*If you believe your children may be eligible, contact the local liaison to find out what services and supports may be available. There also may be supports available for your preschool-age children.*



Local Liaison

State Coordinator

If you need further assistance with your children's educational needs,  
contact the National Center for Homeless Education:  
1-800-308-2145 • [homeless@serve.org](mailto:homeless@serve.org) • <http://nche.ed.gov>

# Elizabethtown Independent Schools

## Notification to Parents of Professional Qualifications Compliance with P.L. 114-95

TO: Parents/Guardians of Elizabethtown Independent Schools Students

FROM: Mr. Jonathan N. Ballard  
Superintendent, Elizabethtown Independent Schools

DATE: 2017-2018 School Year

SUBJECT: Notification to Parents of Professional Qualifications  
Compliance with P.L. 114-95

The Federal *Every Student Succeeds Act* of 2015 requires school districts that receive federal Title I funding to notify parents of their right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers and paraprofessionals, if applicable, who instruct their child.

As a recipient of these funds, Elizabethtown Independent Schools will provide you with this information in a timely manner if you request it. Specifically, you have the right to request the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers.

- Whether the teacher meets the state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional status because of special circumstances.
- Whether the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
- Whether paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if so, their qualifications.

Elizabethtown Independent Schools is committed to providing quality instruction for all students and does so by employing the most qualified individuals to teach and support each student in the classroom. If you would like to receive any of the information listed above for your child's teacher, please contact the Director of Personnel and Public Relations at 270-765-6146.