



# Zolfo Springs Elementary School Racing To Success!



Handbook for Parents and  
Students  
2018-2019

**ZSE MISSION STATEMENT**

*"Achieving excellence in education  
in a safe, positive, learning  
environment"*



# ZOLFO SPRINGS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

3215 Schoolhouse Road  
Zolfo Springs, Florida 33890

Phone Number: (863) 735-1221 Fax Number: (863) 735-1788  
[www.hardee.k12.fl.us/zse](http://www.hardee.k12.fl.us/zse)

**Tammy Pohl, Principal**

**Leigh LaJeunesse, Assistant Principal**

*Dear ZSE Parents and Community,*

*Welcome to Zolfo Springs Elementary School! As principal of ZSE, it is my pleasure to welcome you to our school. As an educational team, we are dedicated to academic excellence and holding high expectations to ensure that each and every student is a successful learner. We are committed to creating a safe and positive learning environment where staff and students promote and model responsible, respectful behavior in order to provide each student the best learning opportunity.*

*I encourage you to be an active participant at Zolfo Springs Elementary. Whether you are a classroom volunteer, a member of the PTO, participate in special events, or attend parent nights throughout the school year, you are encouraged to be involved! Research clearly demonstrates that parent participation in their child's school coincides with a greater likelihood of academic success for their child. Our students have experienced great academic success over the past several years and, with your help, we can make this the best year ever for your child!*

*This 2017-2018 Handbook for Parents and Students will provide the information you need to have a successful school year: school procedures, school and county policies, and a school calendar to help you know in advance some of our important events and their dates. It is our desire to keep you informed of all that is taking place at school. Check out our Zolfo Springs Elementary web page at [zse.hardee.k12.fl.us](http://zse.hardee.k12.fl.us) Your child's teacher will talk about the information contained in the handbook; however, it is important that you and your child go over the contents of this handbook together. If you have questions that remain unanswered after reading the handbook, please call the school office @ 735-1221 for further clarification.*

*ZSE administration, teachers, and staff will greet you with a smile and welcome your visits. I look forward to a very productive academic year as we continue to strive for excellence in education.*

*Sincerely,*



*Mrs. Tammy Pohl, Principal*

## ZSE MISSION STATEMENT

***"Achieving excellence in education in a safe, positive, learning environment"***

**Zolfo Springs Elementary School**  
**Events Calendar for 2018-2019**

**First Day for Students** – August 10, 2018

**Last Day for Students** – May 24, 2019



**Picture Day** – August 23

**Picture Retakes** – November 8

**Group/Spring Pictures** – February 28



**Grading Periods**

First Nine Weeks – August 10-October 15

Second Nine Weeks – October 16-December 22

Third Nine Weeks – January 7-March 20

Fourth Nine Weeks – March 21-May 24

**Early Release Days**

October 5 20 – Homecoming

December 21 – Early Release/  
Winter Break

May 14 – Students

May 24 – Last Day for Students



**Student Holidays**

September 3 – Labor Day

September 14 – Teacher Inservice

November 17-25 – Fall Holidays

December 22-31 – Winter Holidays

January 1-6 – Winter Holidays

January 21 – MLK Holiday

February 18 – President's Day

February 22 – Teacher Training

March 9-17 – Spring Break

April 19 – Holiday



**Testing**

May – FSA Writing

May – FSA Grades 3-5

May – K-2 Testing



**Progress Reports**

September 12

November 14

February 7

April 18

**Report Cards**

October -29

January 16

April-3

May 24

**Parent Involvement Activities**

August 10 – Boo-Hoo Breakfast(KG parents only)

August 28–Back-to-School Night (Orientation)

October 15-19 – National School Lunch Week

October 18– Parent Activity Night

December 18– Parent Activity Night

February 5 – Parent Activity Night

May 7– Teacher Appreciation Day

April 16 – Parent Activity Night



**PTO Meetings**

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each Month

**SAC Meetings**

1 hour before Parent Activity Nights begin

5:00 P.M

**Awards Assemblies**

October-19 – First Nine Weeks

January 11– Second Nine Weeks

March 29– Third Nine Weeks

May 10<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grade Banquet/Awards

May 17- Fourth Nine Weeks

May 16 3rd Grade Awards Ceremony

May 20- 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Awards

May 21-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Awards

May 22-4<sup>th</sup> Grade Awards

May 23-KG Awards

## **HARDEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT VISION**

*“Empower and inspire all students for success”*

## **ZSE MISSION**

*“Achieving excellence in education in a safe, positive, learning environment.”*

## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS**

Florida Law (Section 1003.21, Florida Statutes) states that all children who are either six years of age, who will be six years old by February 1 of any school year, or who are older than six years of age but who have not attained the age of 16 years, must attend school regularly during the entire school term.

Excused absences include those for illness, contagious diseases, a death in the family and accidents. **Children are required to bring a note from parents or guardians explaining any absence.** Please be certain that your note explains **exactly why your child was absent and is dated and signed by the parent or guardian.** Excessive absences without notification will be investigated.

If a student is unable to participate in PE, he/she must have a written excuse from a parent or guardian. Extended non-participation will require a note from the doctor.

## **RULE ON TARDINESS**

Instructional time begins at 7:30 AM. It is very important that your child be present in the classroom so that he/she will not miss valuable instruction. Tardies and early sign-outs are noted in FOCUS.

If your child arrives at school after 7:35 AM, **an adult must sign your child in** for the day before being allowed to go to his/her class.

In accordance with Hardee County School Board Policy, when the minutes a student is late equals a six (6) hour school day, that day will be marked as an unexcused absence. After three unexcused absences in a thirty (30) day period, the child is considered truant.

Please make an extra effort to see that your child is here at school before 7:35 AM so that he/she will not be considered tardy.

## **EARLY PICK-UP**

Just as important as arriving on time is staying at school until the final bell rings at 1:50 PM. Classroom instruction continues until that time so your child will miss needed academic time if he/she is taken out of school early. Please try to make medical/dental appointments during after-school hours.

## **STUDENT TRANSPORTATION**

### **Walkers / Bikers**

**Students should not arrive at school before 7:00 AM.** Supervision is provided only between the hours of 7:00 AM and 2:00 PM.

Children who walk to and from school should not arrive at school before 7:00 AM and should go directly to the cafeteria if they eat breakfast or to their designated area if they do not eat breakfast.

All walkers crossing highways or streets must cross at points where school guards are posted and obey police and crossing guards at all times.

Students who ride bicycles to school must place them in the bike rack located in front of the school. To insure bike safety, students should place locks on their bicycles while they are parked.

No skate boards, skates or bicycles will be allowed on school walkways or playground.

### **Bus Students**

Students riding the bus must obey the bus rules posted on the bus. Failure to obey the bus rules or the bus driver could result in an accident. Inappropriate bus conduct will be reported to the principal and continued misbehavior may lead to suspension from the bus. Chronic misbehavior on the bus may lead to suspension from school.

Children may ride only assigned buses. If a parent or guardian wishes his/her child to vary from this policy, he/she **must contact the district transportation department for permission to change buses. This must be done well in advance of the child boarding the bus.** Children will not be permitted to board a bus other than their own unless they have a form approved by the district transportation department (773-4754).

### ***TRAFFIC IN SCHOOL ZONES***

Parents and guardians are expected to obey all traffic signs on and around school grounds. Do not block driveways, streets or bus loading zones and especially important is maintaining the 15 mph speed limit within our school zone.

### ***SCHOOL SAFETY PATROL***

The school safety patrol contributes to the safety of the children on school grounds. Responsible fifth grade students are chosen to be members of the Safety Patrol.

Their role is one of assistance and direction in areas where supervision of students is needed. They will need and deserve the cooperation of students, parents and guardians.

### ***RAINY DAY SCHEDULE***

Parents and guardians of children who do not ride a bus should tell their children what to do when school dismisses in bad weather. Children need to know **IN ADVANCE** what they are to do in case of bad weather.

### ***GUIDELINES FOR A SAFE AND ORDERLY SCHOOL***

A well-maintained school needs rules to function efficiently. The school-wide rules for Zolfo Springs Elementary School are listed below.

### **General Rules**

1. Respect people and property.
2. Speak quietly in the building and hallways.
3. Walk at all times unless directed otherwise.
4. Follow directions and safety rules.
5. Abide by the Hardee County Schools Code of Conduct.
6. Follow classroom rules as posted in each class.
7. Chewing gum is **not** permitted.
8. Bullying others or the use of profanity, name calling, or obscene gestures will not be tolerated.
9. **DO NOT** arrive before **6:50 AM** or remain after **2:00 PM** without special permission.
10. Students, after arriving, must stay on the school grounds between 7:30 AM and 1:50 PM unless checked out by a parent or guardian through the office. He/she must have an office note to pick up a child from any area except the office.

### **Arrival at School**

School hours are 7:30 AM to 2:00 PM and classes start promptly at 7:30 AM. Please have students at school on time. The student pick-up and drop-off area is in the south parking lot.

Students should not arrive at school before 7:00 AM. **When they arrive, they should go directly to the cafeteria if they eat breakfast or to their designated area.**

**A PARENT OR GUARDIAN MUST CHECK IN STUDENTS WHO ARE TARDY AT THE OFFICE.** The child will be admitted to class only with a tardy slip to give to the classroom teacher.

**After School Hours**

1. Students are not permitted back in the building after dismissal.
2. Students waiting for rides are to do so at the designated loading area on the south end of the school.  
**\*Parents and guardians, please do not park in the loading area. Parking places are available if needed.**
3. Walkers and bike riders are to leave immediately upon dismissal.
4. Bus students should go directly to the bus when dismissed.

**\*\*\*\*\*FOR STUDENT SAFETY**

PLEASE DO NOT ENTER THE PARKING LOT IN FRONT OF CAFETERIA (BUS LOOP) FROM 7:00-7:30 AM and 1:30-2:00 PM. THIS AREA IS DESIGNATED FOR THE UNLOADING AND LOADING OF BUSES DURING THESE TIMES.

<p><b><u>Cafeteria</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Follow the directions of those in charge.</li><li>2. Stand in line in an orderly manner.</li><li>3. Use good table manners.</li><li>4. Do not share food.</li><li>5. Raise your hand for assistance.</li><li>6. Talk quietly to the people at your table.</li><li>7. Stay seated until you are dismissed.</li><li>8. Leave eating area clean.</li></ol> <p><b><i>*No glass containers or canned carbonated drinks are allowed in the cafeteria.</i></b></p>	<p><b><u>Physical Education</u></b></p> <p>Our students are expected to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Practice good sportsmanship.</li><li>2. Observe safety procedures.</li><li>3. Remain in the designated area.</li><li>4. Follow the instructions of the coach.</li><li>5. Participate in all activities unless excused by a physician or a note from home stating illness.</li><li>6. Wear shoes appropriate for physical activity (athletic or tennis shoes).</li></ol>
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***SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE***

Lunches are served between the hours of 10:45AM – 12:15 PM depending upon the child’s grade level.

**No application needed!**

We are pleased to inform you that the School District of Hardee County will continue to participate in the Community Eligibility Program (CEP) for School Year 2018-2019.

Through this program the District School Nutrition Program provides healthy breakfasts and lunches each day at no charge for ALL students enrolled in Hardee County Schools.

***STUDENT CONDUCT GUIDE***

For the convenience of parents and students, a document entitled the HARDEE COUNTY SCHOOLS’ STATEMENT OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT is included, in part, as a section in this handbook. Parents/guardians should read and review this document with their children, so there is an understanding of students’ rights and responsibilities.

## ***RECOMMENDED DRESS CODE***

Faculty, parents, and students feel that students should take pride in their grooming and general appearance by selecting appropriate dress for school in order that they may develop proper and acceptable habits.

Clothing which affords modesty and good taste in pursuit of learning is encouraged. Several items of clothing currently in fashion have their place in the area of recreation but are out of place in the classroom.

- A. Student dress and appearance should fall within the limits of cleanliness, good grooming, and proper taste.
- B. Wearing apparel shall be free of inflammatory, suggestive or inappropriate writing, advertisement, or artwork.
- C. Sunglasses and hats may be worn **outside** the buildings.
- D. Extremes in dress or grooming that cause undue attention or become a disruptive influence are not allowed. Intentionally altered clothing or unbuttoned and ill-fitting garments are not acceptable, such as baggy or sagging pants or shorts. **Unnatural colored hair, tattoos, and body piercing (other than the ears) are other examples of extreme dress or grooming.**
- E. Shirts and blouses must be long enough that the midriff is not showing if the arms are lifted up.
- F. Students should wear at least one non-removable shirt with sleeves.
- G. Shorts, skirts or dresses should not be excessively short in length.
- H. The wearing of headbands, bandanas, or bicycle shorts (spandex) is not permitted.
- I. For safety reasons, students should wear athletic shoes at PE.
- J. Cleats or skate shoes (even with wheels removed) are not to be worn at school.

We ask the cooperation of parents in creating an environment that will serve the best interest of the students and encourage student achievement.

## ***HOMEWORK POLICY***

Homework is a review of skills that have already been taught with first through fifth grades taking approximately 30–40 minutes. In addition, students should also read their AR book for at least 20 minutes each night. A homework sheet will be sent home weekly outlining the assignments for the week. Homework is checked and reviewed daily but not used as a hard grade. When homework is assigned, it is the responsibility of the student to complete it and turn it in. “0”s are not an option! Consequences for not turning in homework could include no recess. A parent signature may be required, but students are not penalized for not having a parent signature.

Kindergarten sends homework home on Monday and it should be completed and returned by Friday.

## ***GRADE REPORTS***

FOCUS is the online portal that can be viewed 24/7. Parents can access their children's grade and attendance data through the Focus School Software student information system. Parents are encouraged to register on FOCUS.

A Report Card will be sent to parents/guardians after each nine-week grading period closes. The card should be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to the classroom teacher no later than three (3) days after it is issued. An explanation of the grading system is printed on the report card.

All parents/guardians will also be sent a Progress Report at the midpoint of each grading period. If your child is not demonstrating satisfactory progress, please call and set up an appointment with his/her teacher as soon as possible. We, like you, want your child to be successful in school.

## ***AWARDS***

An awards assembly will be held each 9 weeks recognizing students who have excelled in various areas. Academic awards are based upon performance while enrolled at Zolfo Springs Elementary.

Perfect attendance pencils will be awarded to those students who have been enrolled and present at ZSE for 45 days each 9 weeks and 180 days for the year. Being tardy to school will prevent a student from receiving this award.

In addition to the above awards, our school offers various other incentives for students to strive for excellence. These may be in the areas of reading, math, writing, character development and others. For a complete list, contact the Assistant Principal.

## ***PARENT / TEACHER COMMUNICATION***

A child's success in school is directly influenced by a parent's involvement in his/her education. Each teacher will contact the parents/guardians of the students in their class during the first six weeks. We also encourage parents to meet regularly with their child's teacher to monitor progress and maintain an open line of communication. If a conference is requested, both parents/guardians and teachers should make every effort to attend. To schedule a conference, please contact your child's teacher by calling 735-1221 or by sending in a note.

## ***PARENT / TEACHER ORGANIZATION***

All parents and other interested persons are encouraged to attend the Zolfo Springs Elementary PTO activities. Several meetings and/or programs are held during the school year. Information concerning the PTO can be obtained by calling the school office (735-1221).

## ***SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS***

Volunteers are a welcome part of our school community. There are many opportunities to contribute to the education of ZSE children both at home and at the school site. If you have an interest in tutoring, mentoring, or sharing your talent or career, please call the school office (735-1221). All volunteers will be expected to adhere to the district policy. We welcome your interest in contributing to the success of our students. You **CAN** make a difference in a child's life

## ***VISITORS***

Parents and guardians are encouraged to visit the school. For the protection of our students and the security of the school, **ALL visitors must check in at the office and obtain an ID badge to be worn while on school grounds. Visits should be scheduled with classroom teachers 24 hours prior to the visit.**

## ***SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL***

Parents are encouraged to participate in the School Advisory Council (SAC). The purpose of this group is to actively involve parents, community members and business partners in making decisions concerning the progress of our school programs. Three to four meetings are held during the school year and written notification will go home to voting members. Please see our school calendar for dates and times.

## ***TEXT AND LIBRARY BOOKS***

Textbooks and library books are furnished free to students by the taxpayers of the State of Florida. Students are responsible for taking proper care of books issued or checked out to them. In accordance with Florida Statute 233.47, the student's parents/guardians shall pay for lost or damaged books.

Guidelines for the care of textbooks and library books are as follows:

- Do not mark or underline in textbooks or library books.
- Do not damage or allow damage to occur to textbooks or library books.
- Payment for lost or damaged library books must be made before a new one can be checked out.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for payment of lost or damaged textbooks.

## ***MEDIA CENTER***

The Media Center can be an exciting place, and we encourage children to use it. Students may begin using the library at 7:00AM each morning and any time their teacher gives permission during the school day.

The following rules apply in the library:

1. Students must check out books in order to take them from the library.
2. Books checked out are due back in the library in two weeks.
3. Books destroyed or lost must be paid for by the child's parents/guardians (Florida Statute 233.47).
4. All other appropriate school rules apply when using the library.
- 5.

## ***FIELD TRIPS***

Field trips are planned as part of the educational program at Zolfo Springs Elementary School. **A notarized emergency card for your child must be on file before he/she is allowed to go on a field trip.** This card goes with the student in case of illness or injury. Permission slips **MUST BE SIGNED AND RETURNED** to school prior to each trip.

Children who do not meet the deadlines for emergency cards, permission slips, and/or money may not be allowed to go. In addition, students must demonstrate proper behavior and the ability to follow directions in the classroom and on school grounds to be eligible to attend field trips.

## ***ILLNESS OR INJURY***

If a student becomes ill or is injured at school, he/she should notify the teacher, who will make necessary arrangements for care.

The school has responsibility for first aid only. In case of illness, the child will be cared for until the parent arrives or he/she returns to the classroom. In case of minor injuries, first aid will be administered to the child and he/she will return to class. In case of major injuries, first aid will be administered and the parent/guardian will be notified immediately.

**IT IS NECESSARY FOR THE SCHOOL TO HAVE CURRENT PHONE NUMBERS TO REACH YOU IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY.** Please leave a phone number where you can be reached and the number of others who will be responsible if we are unable to reach you. **Please keep these numbers updated if there is a change.**

## ***MEDICATION***

If medications are to be given at school, they **MUST** be brought to school by parents, not by students. Florida Law permits the school to administer medication **only** under the following conditions:

A signed authorization form **FROM THE DOCTOR** (Medication will not be given without this authorization.) The medication in its original container with a pharmacy label noting the following:

- the name of the student for which the medicine was prescribed
- the dosage instructions including how much is to be taken
- the name of the doctor who prescribed the medication

Students **should not** bring over-the-counter medication to school.

## ***COMMUNICABLE DISEASES***

Any child suspected of having a communicable disease shall immediately be excluded from school and may not return to school until the disease has completely subsided and/or the child presents a written statement by a physician or the Health Department that he/she is free of communicable diseases and may return to school. If the child is to be out of school for an extended length of the time, the school should be notified, and a doctor's note should accompany the child upon returning to school.

## ***HEALTH SCREENINGS***

Florida Law 81-18 requires that parents and guardians be informed that children in school will receive noninvasive screenings during the school year. Such screenings and examinations will be for vision, hearing, height, weight, dental, scoliosis, head lice, etc. These screenings are visual checks for any health problems that the child might have. Should we find any problems, you will be notified at once.

Invasive screenings, such as immunizations, tuberculin tests, etc. will **always** require prior written permission from parents or guardians.

## ***HEAD LICE***

If a child is found to have head lice, he/she will be excluded from school and will not be permitted to return to school until his/her head is free from lice and nits. The child must first be re-assessed by the nurse and given written permission from the nurse before being admitted to class.

## ***SAFETY DRILLS***

Safety of students is a priority at Zolfo Springs Elementary School. We hold monthly fire drills throughout the school year in order to prepare students and teachers for such emergencies.

Long buzzing sounds will indicate a fire drill. At the teacher's direction, students will move out of the building quickly and quietly. Students will line up in assigned areas and quietly return to their classrooms when the all-clear signal is given.

In addition to fire emergencies, students will be properly prepared and practiced in case of tornadoes or intruders. A crisis plan has been written and practiced in order to prepare faculty and students for such emergencies.

## ***PERSONAL PROPERTY***

All personal property (such as sweaters, coats, caps, etc.) should be labeled with the child's name. Remind your children not to bring valuables from home, as they may be lost. Toys are not permitted at school.

## ***DOGS***

Please keep your dog at home. You will be held responsible if your dog bites someone. Dogs on school grounds may be impounded at the owner's expense. Efforts will be made to contact the dog's owner, unless the dog has become a chronic problem or endangers students.

## ***POLICY STATEMENTS ON MATTERS OF MAJOR INTEREST TO PARENTS AND STUDENTS***

1. Corporal Punishment: Florida Statute 232.27 authorizes administrators and teachers (with authorization from the administration) the right to administer corporal punishment.
2. Pledge of Allegiance: In accordance with F.S. 1003.44, as of July 1, 2016, a student is not required to stand or recite the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. School Attendance Regulations: Regular school attendance is required unless a student is excused for one of the legal reasons as defined in Florida Statutes. The administration of the school will explain those legal exemptions upon request.
3. Excused and Unexcused Absences: Absences will be excused for the following reasons (all other absences are unsatisfactory and are classified as unexcused):
  - a. *Student's Illness*: A note from the parent or guardian must accompany the student upon his return to school. This note must explain the student's illness and must be signed by the parent or guardian. For long term illnesses, a doctor's excuse will be required.
  - b. *Death in the Family*: The student must have a note as described above.
  - c. *Medical or Dental Appointments*: Appointments, whenever possible, should be scheduled after school hours. When this is impossible, the appointment should be cleared by school administration.
  - d. *Trips with Parents*: Days missed will only be excused if pre-arranged with school administrator.
  - e. *School Sponsored Activities*: Days missed will only be excused if prearranged with administration.
4. Checking Out of School: Students may be allowed to leave school under the following conditions:
  - a. If one of the parents or guardians of the child comes to the school and signs the student out of school from the office.
  - b. If special permission is granted by a school administrator.
  - c. If the student is ill and the parents/guardians are contacted. (If they cannot be contacted, the alternative telephone numbers as listed on the student's Emergency Information Card will be called.)
5. Riding the School Bus: The principal or his designee may suspend any student transported to or from school at public expense from the privilege of riding the bus, giving notice in writing to the student, parent or guardian and to the superintendent within twenty-four (24) hours. If a pupil has been suspended from riding a school bus, it is still the parent/guardian's responsibility to see that the student attends school regularly, unless he/she is suspended from both the bus and school in the same action. The principal's authority to suspend a student from bus transportation is Florida Statute 232.25.
6. Personal Search: (including vehicles parked in the school's parking lot): Students, their backpacks and vehicles in the parking lot may be searched if school officials have reason to believe that the health and safety of that student or any other student are in jeopardy, the pupil is told of the reasons for the search or the student gives his consent to be searched. If the student refuses to be searched, he/she will be removed to an area away from the other students and law enforcement officials will be called to conduct the search.
7. Release of Students to Law Enforcement Officials: Students may only be released into the custody of law enforcement officials (police, sheriff, federal agent, Division of Youth Services, Social and Economic

Services, etc.) if the officer has properly identified himself/herself and the officer has filled out the Release of Student to Law Enforcement Officials form.

8. Parents Right to Know: Parents have the right to request the following information:
  - a. Whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
  - b. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
  - c. 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.
  - d. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.
  - e.

### ***PROCEDURE FOR ADDRESSING STUDENT COMPLAINTS***

Step 1: If a student, currently enrolled in the Hardee County District, has a complaint, based on an alleged discrimination of the basis of race, sex, national origin, marital status or handicap, the student has the right to voice this complaint to the school principal.

Step 2: The student may appeal to the superintendent or his/her designee, if not satisfied with the decision in Step 1. The superintendent, or his/her designee, will hear the complaint, investigate the facts and render a decision as to the proper disposition of the complaint. This decision will be final unless the student wishes to proceed to Step 3.

Step 3: The student may appeal to the School Board by requesting in writing that the superintendent place the appeal on the agenda for the next Board meeting. The Board, after hearing the facts, shall take whatever action is deemed appropriate. The decision of the Board is final.

### ***STUDENT RECORDS MAINTAINED BY THE SCHOOL SYSTEM***

The FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT OF 1974 grants parents and/or students, over the age of eighteen (18) years, the right to inspect/review, to challenge and to control the release of personally identifiable information contained in education records.

#### **EDUCATION RECORDS**

A permanent cumulative education record is maintained for each student from entrance into school through the twelfth grade or its equivalent. The school which initially enrolls a student is responsible for establishing the record. Each school principal has the legal responsibility for maintaining the record.

Educational records are those records, documents and other materials which contain information directly related to the student and which are maintained by an educational institution or agency. Information contained in the record is classified as follows:

Category A: Permanent educational importance which is retained indefinitely. This information includes the student's full name, location and dates of last school attended, days present, days absent, date of enrollment and withdrawal, courses taken, achievement record, graduation date and requirements.

Category B: Temporary information of clear education importance which will be periodically corrected and/or eliminated as prescribed by law. This information includes but is not limited to health information, test scores, honors/activities, disciplinary records, exceptional student records, driver education certificates and correspondences from external agencies.

#### **NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA FOR HARDEE COUNTY SCHOOLS**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age

("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

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

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

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading.

Parents or eligible students may ask Hardee School District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record that they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

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

One exception, which permits disclosure with consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

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

Upon request, the District discloses education records without consent to officials or another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

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

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U. S. Department of Education  
600 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

(NOTE: In addition, a school may want to include its directory information public notice, as required by S99.37 of the regulations, with its annual notification of rights under FERPA.)

## ***IDENTIFICATION OF EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS***

The Hardee County School District actively seeks to locate exceptional students and maintains information on those students screened and identified as exceptional. The term "exceptional student" includes the mentally handicapped, the speech and language impaired, the deaf and hearing impaired, the blind and partially sighted, the physically handicapped, those with specific learning disabilities and the gifted.

Information gathered may include the student's social, emotional, physical, psychological, academic, and communication behaviors and abilities.

Information is collected through screening programs, checklists, teacher observations, standardized tests and from such individuals as parents, guardians, teachers, psychologists, audiologists, social workers, physicians, other professional personnel and the child himself/herself.

Information is used to assist in the development of appropriate educational programs for exceptional students and for reports to the state and federal agencies.

Students are screened periodically for vision, hearing, speech and academic achievement as the initial step in the process of identifying those students with suspected exceptionalities. If your child is selected for further testing, you will be notified and the contents of the evaluation and the procedural safeguards will be made available to you.

Exceptional Student Education Reports will be destroyed five (5) years after the student graduates (or its equivalent in time). Parents or guardians may contact the school and receive an official copy of these records prior to destruction.

### ***504 Plans***

A student that has a physical or mental condition that substantially limits a major life activity and, as a result, requires instructional or other accommodations within the school environment may be eligible for a 504 Plan. A 504 Plan lists accommodations related to the student's disability and required by the student so that he or she may participate in the general classroom setting and educational programs. Questions or concerns regarding 504 Plans can be addressed by contacting the school counselor or Kerry Terrell, 504 Coordinator, 200 South Florida Avenue, Wauchula, Florida 33873, [kterrell@hardee.k12.fl.us](mailto:kterrell@hardee.k12.fl.us), 863-773-2600

## ***HARDEE COUNTY SCHOOLS STATEMENT OF STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT***

The fundamental objective for the Hardee County Public School System is to help develop each student's potential to the fullest. This development applies not only to his learning activities but also to his interaction with other people. It follows then, that the student's conduct has a very large effect upon his progress in every facet of his life.

The purpose of this document is to assist students, parents and school administrators in developing and maintaining an understanding of our local Code of Student Conduct relative to the rights and responsibilities of students, the grounds for disciplinary action and the procedures to be followed in response to acts requiring discipline, including corporal punishment.

Each student, parent, teacher and school administrator should read and understand this document so we can collectively ensure the daily development of a better atmosphere in the Hardee County Schools.

### ***Section 1: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS***

Students, of course, have all the rights of any citizen of the United States of America. Their rights are guaranteed in the Constitution and shall not be abridged.

Rights, however, are accompanied with very grave responsibilities based almost entirely on respect for others as well as for oneself. For example, no student has the right to interfere with the education of his fellow students. He/she must respect himself/herself enough to respect others.

We must base all our statements concerning student conduct on one major idea - RESPECT. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the right of all those involved in the process of education. Accompanying responsibilities follow the exercise of rights. Equal in value among these are the following:

- Respect for Oneself
- Respect for Individual Dignity
- Respect for the Property of Others
- Respect for Others and Their Rights

***THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES APPLY TO AND SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD BY ALL STUDENTS, PARENTS AND SCHOOL PERSONNEL***

1. Attendance: All children of school age in Florida have the right to attend public school. At the same time, each student, between the ages of 6 and 16, has the legal responsibility to attend school when not ill or prevented by any other major circumstances. This responsibility extends to the student's parents, who According to Florida Statute 232.9, "...shall be responsible for such child's attendance as required by law".
2. Respect for Persons and Property: Students have the constitutional right of property. That right, however, is balanced by the school's responsibility to protect the health, welfare and safety of all its students. The student has the responsibility not to carry or conceal any prohibited material. The student also has the responsibility to accept the consequences for the contents stored within his/her backpack. Finally, students and backpacks are subject to reasonable searches.
3. Knowledge and Observation of Rules of Conduct: Students have the right and responsibility to know and observe all school rules, as stated in the student handbooks of the various school centers. They have the responsibility to accept the consequences that come with violations of these rules.
4. The Right to Learn: Each student has the right to learn as much as he/she is capable of learning - free from interruption by those who take this right lightly. He/she has the responsibility to exercise this right to the fullest extent, learning all that he/she can, preparing himself/herself for a full life.
5. Free Speech and Student Publications: One of the school's important rules is to provide effective avenues through which students may freely express themselves on a wide range of subjects, including the stating of opinions on issues. Students have the responsibility to adhere to student handbook guidelines and school policies regarding the posting of material on bulletin boards or wall areas designated for use by students and student organizations.  
They must also accept the responsibility for the effect that posting, publishing or distributing this literature might have on normal school activities. Students have the responsibility to refrain from posting or otherwise distributing libelous and / or obscene materials, to obtain full information on the topics about which they write, and to observe the normal rules of responsible journalism. Principals may suppress or recall literature which they consider primarily commercial in nature or material which could endanger the orderly operation of the school.
6. Assemble: The right to peaceful assembly is guaranteed in the Constitution. It is not right, however, to damage property, to disrupt scheduled activities or to endanger substantially and directly the physical health or safety or others. Students also have the responsibility to plan for, seek approval of and conduct those activities which are consistent with the education objectives of the school.
7. Participation in School Programs and Activities: Each student has the right to participate in school programs and activities regardless of race, sex, color creed or political belief. This includes both curricular and extracurricular programs and activities. The responsibility is his, however, to enter into and to participate in each program and activity in such a way as to enrich classes and activities through cooperative and constructive behavior.

***Section II: CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT***

The Code of Student Conduct is a separate document, which outlines minimum consequences for certain infractions. It is offered to students and parents in the belief that full knowledge of school rules and regulations helps avoid accidental violations and promotes good school citizenship. This document is available to parents in the school office.

## **IMPORTANT DISTRICT POLICIES**

Hardee County Schools Tobacco Free Policy states, "No student, employee, volunteer, contractor, or school visitor is permitted to use tobacco products of any kind or e-cigarettes in any building, facility, or vehicle that is owned, leased, or rented by the school district; on any district-owned, leased, rented, or chartered grounds and property including all schools, district offices, athletic fields, practice fields, playgrounds, parking lots, administrative offices, maintenance or transportation areas; at any off-campus, school-sponsored event."

**Policy Against Bullying and Harassment:** The School Board of Hardee County believes that all students and employees are entitled to a safe and harassment-free school environment; therefore, bullying, harassment, or discrimination will not be tolerated.

These and other important district policies may be viewed online at <http://hardee.k12.fl.us/pages/information/district-policies.php>

## **ASBESTOS REPORT**

In 1986, Congress passed the Asbestos Hazard Response Act (AHERA). The law required all schools, kindergarten through twelfth grade, to be inspected for asbestos-containing materials.

Hardee County School Board contracted with PSI to bring our schools into compliance with AHERA regulations. PSI is the nation's largest and most experienced environmental engineering and analytical testing firm specializing in asbestos.

The objectives of our contract with the consulting firm were to:

1. Sample, analyze and quantify asbestos-containing materials in our schools.
2. Determine any potential for exposure of building occupants to asbestos fibers.
3. Provide recommendations for corrective actions.
4. Establish priority levels for abatement activities.
5. Provide estimates for removal and replacement of asbestos containing materials.

Our schools were inspected, in accordance with the law by EPA accredited PSI inspectors. We are happy to report that we have cleared all friable asbestos from our district. The only asbestos remaining is floor tile which has been removed in many areas. We are happy to report there is no dangerous asbestos in any area.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Asbestos Management/Planner at 863-735-2055. A copy of the Management Plan is on file for your review at the school administration office.

## ***Hardee County School Board Rule 2.43 NON-DISCRIMINATION***

The Hardee County School Board adheres to a policy of non-discrimination in educational programs, activities, benefits, and employment practices and strives affirmatively to provide equal opportunity for all as required by the following:

- (1) No person shall, on the basis of race, national origin, sex, handicap, color, religion, age, or marital status, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity, or in any employment conditions or practices of the Hardee County School Board.

*General Statutory Authority: 120.52, 120.53, 120.54, 120.55, 230.220, 230.23, 228.2001, 230.22(2), 230.23(17) F.S. Specific Statutory Authority: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act 1964; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Age Discrimination Act of 1967; Sec. 228.2001, 228.041, 228.2001, 230.23(5); 230.23005(11) F. S.; 34CFR200.43(c), P.L. 201-44 Code of Federal Register*

## ***Policy Against Sexual Harassment or Other Forms of Harassment Prohibited by Law***

A. The School Board desires to maintain an academic and work environment in which all employees,

volunteers, and students are treated with respect and dignity. A vital element of this atmosphere is the Board's commitment to equal opportunities and the prohibition of discriminatory practices. The board's prohibition against discriminatory practices includes prohibitions against sexual harassment, or any other form of harassment based upon a person's membership in a protected class and specifically prohibited by applicable state or federal law. The School Board forbids sexual harassment, or any other form of illegal harassment, of any employee, student, volunteer or visitor. The Board will not tolerate sexual harassment, or any other form of illegal harassment by any of its employees, students, volunteers or agents.

- B. The prohibition against discrimination including sexual and other forms of illegal harassment shall also apply to non-employee volunteers who work subject to the control of school authorities, and to all vendors or service providers who have access to School Board facilities.

\*For more information contact your school administration or Sherri Albritton, District Equity contact, at 863-773-9756.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

My teacher is \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Circle One: (walk/bike home) (car rider) (ride bus # \_\_\_\_\_)

**Class Activity Schedule**

Activity Day	Activity	Time
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
	Lunch	