

# W.H. Rhodes Elementary

## “Home of the Junior Panthers”

We are working diligently to ensure that your child has a rigorous and meaningful learning experience here at Rhodes Elementary. We consistently strive to provide our students with a learning environment that engages students in challenging and rewarding instructional activities.

Our Vision and Mission:

Education at Rhodes Elementary is designed to meet the needs of each individual student. Our school's mission statement as written in the School Improvement Plan States:

- \* Rhodes Elementary School
- \* Family
- \* School Community
- \* Together We Can Make the Difference

The vision of Rhodes Elementary School is to help children develop the learning skills necessary for continual improvement as responsible, productive members of the community. Each student will gain from school according to the effort he/she applies. to increase the degree of educational success, it is very important that teachers, parents, and administrators communicate openly and frequently concerning the progress of students. You, the parents/guardians, must play a key role in the education of your children. Your words of encouragement, a hug when the day has been rough, your interest in your child's work, and your presence at school are vital!

Parents/guardians count! Come to school, meet us, join the PTO, and volunteer your time and energy. your involvement will show your children that you value their education. Let's work together!

Quality Education: It's My Responsibility!

Rhodes Elementary is a Positive Behavior Support Program School.

At Pea Ridge, we are proud to have a school-wide positive behavior program. Our students and staff are asked to live up to the following PAWS Expectations:

P – Positive Attitude

A – Always Respectful

W- Work Hard

S – Stay Safe

That's the Jr. Panther way!

Students have daily opportunities to earn pawbucks by showing good character. We feel our school-wide program helps create a positive atmosphere that lets our students know we recognize and value them.

In addition to our school-wide expectations, teachers have classroom expectations. Classroom expectations include both incentives and consequences. While Rhodes Elementary strives to maintain a very positive atmosphere, inappropriate behavior is not tolerated. Teachers follow their classroom behavior plans when disciplining students. However, continued or severe behavioral issues may result in an office referral.

# Parent/Student Handbook

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### Accelerated Reader Program

Accelerated Reader (AR) is a program that helps motivate and encourage a love of reading. AR is coordinated through our Media Center in conjunction with goal setting facilitated by classroom teachers. This program identifies the reading level of each child and guides students in selecting books that are on the student's individual reading level. Points are awarded based on the accuracy of a student's answers to computer-based quizzes. Incentives for points and meeting goals are included in the program.

### Arrival Procedures

Parents/guardians who bring their children to school are required to drop students off between 7:00 and 7:25. If your child plans to eat breakfast, please drop them off by 7:10. The school has two designated areas for student drop-off. Students in grades K-2 may be dropped off in the front of the building. Turn right into the parking lot from Byrom St. Students in PK and grades 3-5 may be dropped off in the rear of the building from Sanders Street. Drivers should come to a complete stop and wait for a signal from the school employee on duty to help the student get out of the car. To make this process operate smoothly and avoid delaying the flow of traffic, please make sure your child is ready to exit your car as soon as you pull forward. Parents may not drop off students in any area except the designated car rider line. Children may not walk alone from the parking lot to the school entrance. For safety reasons, passenger vehicles are not allowed to use the bus ramp area for drop off.

Returning and new students in all grades may be escorted to their classroom by their parent/guardian for the first day of school. After the first day, children should be dropped off in the car rider line. Due to limited parking, traffic congestion, and establishing routines, parents may not walk first through fifth grade students to class after the first day. School personnel are on duty, and they will assist your child in the mornings. Kindergarten parents may walk their child to class the first 3 days of school. If your child has social needs or experiences anxiety with transitions, please contact administration.

## Attendance & Truancy

*Good school attendance is a major contributing factor to academic success in school.*

Florida Statute 1003.21 requires students ages six (6) up to 18 to be in regular attendance at school. A student who has been absent from school shall have his or her absence reported in a manner which is described in the school's Student Handbook.

Excused Absences: Absences granted for personal illness, illness or death of a member of the immediate family, medical or dental appointments, religious holidays, religious instruction, court date and special emergencies or pre-arranged absences approved by the Principal or designee. The parent/guardian must notify the school to provide the reason for the absence or respond to the school's inquiry about the reason for the absence within three (3) days of the absence, or it becomes an unexcused absence

A student who desires to be absent for reasons not given above; may make a prior arrangement request to the school Principal by bringing a written request from his/her parent or guardian.

1. Pre-arranged absence requests must be made at least five (5) school days prior to the date of the absence, except in the case of an emergency.
2. Students shall make pre-arrangements for their school work to be done; it will be due the day the student returns to school. Work done in the pre-arranged time allotted will be given full credit.

Unexcused Absences: Absences for shopping trips, vacations, pleasure trips, truancy, dismissal from school, or other avoidable absences which have not been pre-arranged and approved by the Principal or designee. Five (5) late to school Check-Ins and/or Check Outs, will equate to the student receiving one (1) unexcused absence for truancy purposes.

Notification to School: Any student who has been absent from school shall bring a note from one of his/her parents or guardians stating the cause of the absence. A Principal may choose to accept notification in person or by telephone in lieu of a note. Failure to properly notify the school or the inability of the school to reach the parent/guardian to establish the reason for the absence within three (3) days shall result in an unexcused absence.

1. The school shall receive notification of the cause of the absence within three (3) days.
2. The school will determine if the absence is to be excused or unexcused.

### Excessive Absences

A habitual truant is a child who has 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days with or without the knowledge or justifiable consent of the child's parent or legal guardian, who is subject to compulsory school attendance under Florida Statute 1003.21(1) and (2)(a), and who is not exempt under Florida Statute 1003.21(3) or 1003.24 or any other exemptions specified by law or rules of the state Board of Education.

The principal may require doctor's notes documenting an illness or injury for a child who has missed 10 or more days of school. Should such documentation not be provided, the absence will be considered unexcused. Missing 9 days of school, either excused or unexcused, is considered excessive, and parents may be contacted for a truancy conference to discuss strategies to prevent future absences. The principal has the authority to retain any child who has been absent from school 20 or more days. The absences may be excused, unexcused, or a combination of both.

## Truancy Procedures:

If a student has had at least five (5) unexcused absences\* or absences for which the reasons are unknown within 30 calendar days, or ten (10) unexcused absences or absences for which the reasons are unknown within 90 calendar days, the student's primary teacher shall report to the school Principal that the student may be exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance.

\* Five (5) late to school Check-Ins and or Check-Outs prior will equate to the student receiving one (1) unexcused absence.

1. The Principal shall, unless there is clear evidence that the absences are not a pattern of nonattendance, refer the case to the school's MtSS team (Multi-tier student support) to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing.
2. The parent/guardian shall be invited to meet with the MtSS team to develop a written Truancy Intervention Plan.
3. The parent/guardian shall be informed of the requirements of compulsive attendance laws, Truancy Pick-Up Program and the Department of Motor Vehicle sanctions.
4. If an initial meeting does not resolve the problem, the MtSS team shall implement interventions that best address the problem. The interventions may include, but need not be limited to the following:
  - referral to the school Social Work Department
  - frequent communication between the teacher and the family
  - changes in the learning environment
  - mentoring
  - student counseling
  - tutoring, including peer tutoring
  - placement into different classes
  - evaluation for alternative education programs
  - attendance contracts
  - referral to other agencies for family services
  - other interventions, including, but not limited to, a truancy petition pursuant to s.984.151, F.S.

### Major Considerations in a Truancy Plan

The plan is developed in cooperation with the parent/guardian and school.

The plan can be developed without the participation of the parent/guardian should they choose not to attend.

Should a child's attendance not improve upon the development of a Truancy Plan, the parent/guardian could be summoned to appear in court. This could result in court-imposed sanctions and expectations.

### Tardiness

A tardy is the absence of any student at the time attendance is taken, provided the student is in attendance before the end of class except in the case of checking in to school after the designated start time. Repeated and/or excessive incidents of tardiness may potentially result in disciplinary action. Our first bell rings at 7:25. The tardy bell rings at 7:30. Students arriving after 7:30 will be marked tardy.

### Leaving School Prior to End of Day

It is required that the parent or designated adult sign the student out unless prior arrangement has been made by the parent/guardian. *Repeated and/or excessive incidents of leaving school prior to the end of the day may potentially result in disciplinary action for the student.* Five (5) accumulated "late to school Check-Ins" or "early Check-Outs" will equate to the student receiving one (1) unexcused absence. Dismissal procedures begin at 1:16. Please do not make any afternoon destination changes after 12:45. Also, please refrain from checking out students after 12:45. Should an emergency arise, or check out be necessary, the parent/guardian will be required to come to the office, show proper identification, and sign their child out. The child will then be called to the office.

A picture ID will be requested before we can release a student from our care. Only persons indicated by the parent/guardian on the written health cards are allowed to pick up a child when the school calls for an emergency or illness. Should an emergency arise when an individual not listed on the health card is required to pick up your child, the parent/guardian must notify the office in advance of this change.

#### Late to School Check-In or Early Check-Outs:

- a. Students arriving after a school's designated start time are considered late to school and will receive a "Late to School Check-In" coding.
- b. Students checking out of school prior to the end of the school's designated dismissal time will receive an "Early Check-Out" coding.
- c. Five (5) accumulated "Late to School Check-Ins" or "Early Check-Outs" will equate to the student receiving one (1) unexcused absence.

#### Make-Up Work

When a student is absent from school for school-sponsored activities or for an excused absence, the student shall be responsible for making arrangements with teachers for completing all work and assignments missed during the absence. All make-up work assigned shall be completed within three (3) days after the student returns to school unless given an extension of time by the teacher. Tests announced prior to the absence can be given on the student's first day back to school, or at the discretion of the teacher. Assignments given prior to an absence that were due during the absence should be turned in the first day the student returns to school (see "Excused Absences"). If the teacher finds it necessary to provide an alternate test or assignment for a student who has been absent, the test or assignment shall be comparable in length, design and degree of difficulty of the test or assignment given to the other students in the class for which the student was absent.

### Use of Electronic Devices

If a student brings a cell phone or other wireless communication device to school, it must be in the "OFF" position and must not be visible at all during the school day. Refer to the Student Code of Conduct. If a student has the phone or wireless device out and/or turned on for any reason, the phone/wireless device will be confiscated and held by administration until a parent/guardian comes to school to retrieve the item.

Please make sure your child is aware of this policy. County policy states that discipline of a student for this offense is up to and includes out-of-school suspension for a period up to three (3) days for a first offense and out-of-school suspension of the student for a period up to and including ten (10) days for each subsequent offense.

### Changes in Address or Contact Numbers

*Notify the school office immediately of any changes in your address and/or emergency contact phone numbers.* This includes your work number as well as the phone numbers of individuals listed as designees for checkout. It is vital that the school maintain accurate and up-to-date emergency phone numbers for each child in case a parent needs to be contacted.

### After-School Care / Community School

We have an after-school childcare program housed at our school. It is under the complete direction of the Santa Rosa Community School Program. If you have any questions about this program, please call the Community School at 983-5650.

### Classroom Treats

Due to health and safety concerns, home baked goods are not permitted at school. Birthday cakes, cookies, cupcakes, etc., must be purchased commercially. This is in compliance with School Board Policy 9.30 VIIIA which states that *"Foods may be sold or served on campus only if prepared in the school kitchen under supervision of the school cafeteria employees or if prepared in commercial conditions, approved by the Department of Health."*

### Community Involvement

Rhodes Elementary School works toward the goal of being a “Five Star School” and earning the “Golden School Award.” These awards are based on the school’s commitment to community involvement. We realize some parents are unable to volunteer during the school day; however, we have opportunities for volunteers needed beyond school hours. We ask every parent to complete and return a volunteer form to the school. Each person must be approved before volunteering on or off campus. We look forward to all families being a visible part of Pea Ridge Elementary School.

### Conferences/Classroom Visitation

Communication between home and school is vital to a child’s academic success. It is also important that we maintain the best environment possible for learning to occur.

Please follow these guidelines when arranging to meet with your child’s teacher:

- Always sign-in at the office and wear the “Visitor’s Pass” while on campus.
- Arrange conferences in advance by calling the school office. This enables the teacher to be prepared to discuss your child’s progress and have important information readily available. Conferences are scheduled at a time when your child’s teacher is not responsible for his/her class (after school or during a planning period). Let the teacher know what specific items or concerns you would like to share or discuss before the conference occurs.
- Drop-in conferences are not permitted. All parent/teacher conferences must be pre-arranged.

To avoid classroom interruptions, always check in at the office if you have items to drop off (lunches, messages, homework, or clothing). We ask that items remain in the office. Office personnel will notify the teacher that the item needs to be picked up. No interruptions will occur during the 90 minute reading block unless it is an emergency.

### Curriculum

Curriculum is essential for providing students proper instruction. Our school maintains and uses state-adopted core curriculum materials in Reading, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Every 5 years the district reviews and selects new, up-to-date curriculum. We are currently using the following core curricula:

Houghton-Mifflin Reading

Houghton-Mifflin Math

Houghton-Mifflin Science

American Publishing Social Studies

### Custody of Children

School personnel are bound by state law to release children and all information about the children (report cards, teacher notes, academic records, etc...) to both biological parents when requested. The only exception is when the school has a copy on file of court orders specifying otherwise and prohibiting a biological parent from obtaining this information.

In the absence of court documents, the biological parents have equal rights to the child in many circumstances. We ask, for the best interest of the child, that disputing parents please address issues through the court system and work out custody issues after school hours. School is not the place for custody issues to be settled.

### Discipline Policy

It is the responsibility of our school staff to provide a safe and secure environment in which all children can learn. Any behavior that causes our learning atmosphere to be disrupted will not be tolerated. Rhodes Elementary School uses the “Positive Behavior Support” (PBS) approach to discipline. PBS assists schools in increasing academic performance, increasing safety, decreasing problem behavior, and establishing a positive school culture. With the help of PBS, we expect to have an atmosphere of kindness in our school with an emphasis on strong character.

Our students are expected to be:

P – Positive Attitude

A – Always Respectful

W- Work Hard

S – Stay Safe

It is vital that parents, teachers, and administration communicate frequently and support one another, especially when there is a discipline concern. The support, suggestions, and kind words from home go far in alleviating behavior problems at school.

### Discipline Referrals

Students at Rhodes are expected to follow school wide expectations and classroom expectations. If a teacher has exhausted classroom management consequences for continued misbehavior, a student will receive an office referral. This document is completed by administration and sent home for a parent’s signature. The referral becomes a permanent part of the student’s record. The signature does not indicate agreement by the student or parent(s). It signifies a parent has seen the referral and is aware of the situation.

## Consequences

There are several consequences for an office referral. The type of consequence is an administrative decision and is based on the severity or chronic nature of the misbehavior. The consequences might be:

- Time out in the office
- Discipline assignment
- Loss of privileges (lunch detention, in school detention, character assignment, etc.)
- Detention – Isolation from other children for the full school day. The student will spend the school day completing their work in a designated area of the school, away from other students.
- Out-of-school suspension – The temporary removal of a student from all classes of instruction on public school grounds and all other school-sponsored activities, except as authorized by the principal or the principal's designees, for a period not to exceed ten (10) school days. Homework assignments given will be due on the day the student returns to school.

## Dress Code

*Students must come to school clean, neatly dressed, and ready to learn. Parents should avoid dressing students (or allowing them to dress) in extreme styles. Clothing and overall appearance should never serve as a distraction to others in any way.*

Clothing that is not allowed:

- Tops that expose the midriff or breast at any time
  - Pants that hang off the hip exposing undergarments
  - Form-fitting/spandex material
  - Short skirts or shorts (Use finger tip length as a measure.)
  - Any type of clothing that reveals undergarments
- Tank tops (muscle shirts), tube tops, halter-tops, or spaghetti straps  
Clothing that advertises alcohol or tobacco products or has inappropriate comments

Students who do not comply with the dress code are required to contact someone who can bring a change of clothing. A student not in compliance with the dress code will not be allowed in class until proper clothing is provided.

According to the code of conduct, anything that distracts from the learning environment such as colored or dyed hair, other than a natural shade, is not permitted. Hats and sunglasses are not allowed in the building. These items cause distraction in the learning environment. Students who need to wear sunglasses or hats, for any reason, must have a note from a doctor stating this is medically necessary.

*School administrators reserve the right to request clothing or hair color changes at any time if clothing or hair color is perceived to be distracting or inappropriate.*

### ESE

Rhodes offers a variety of services for students with disabilities. Please contact our school guidance counselor for information. If your child enrolls in our school and has been served in an ESE program, please share this information and/or a copy of the child's IEP, Individual Education Plan.

### ESOL

Rhodes offers services for students whose first language is not English. Please check with our guidance counselor if you think your child may qualify for services.

### Field Trips

Field trips are an important aspect of the educational program at Rhodes. In order for a student to participate in a field trip, a signed permission form from the parent or guardian must be returned to the teacher. These forms are sent home with the child well in advance of each field trip.

Parents/guardians are welcome to attend field trips to serve as chaperones (as needed and based on the event). However, all children going on the field trip are required to ride the bus to the destination. Once the event has concluded, parents may check their child out through the classroom teacher in charge.

Parents/guardians attending field trips must complete a volunteer application or field trip attendance form. The volunteer application forms for such approval are available in the office or from your child's teacher. These forms should be filled out at least one month prior to the scheduled trip. Please remember the following guidelines when attending a field trip with your child:  
Younger (or older) siblings are not allowed to attend field trips.  
Use of tobacco products is not allowed on the school premises or at any school function, including a field trip. This is in accordance with policies of the Santa Rosa School Board.

Please dress appropriately as we each represent our school and school district to others. Refer to the student dress code (page 12) for guidance.

### 504 Plans

According to Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, your child may be eligible for certain services. If you feel your child may be eligible for accommodations/modifications to the school environment, you may request a determination of eligibility conference for Section 504. For this conference, you may include a written statement from your child's physician to support the condition which limits classroom activity. An eligibility meeting must be held to determine eligibility for a 504 Plan. If you feel your child might be eligible, contact the school and ask for the Guidance Counselor.

### School Breakfast and Lunch Program

Our cafeteria is operated in conjunction with the Federal government's subsidy program requiring us to serve a Type A lunch daily. This means your child gets one third of the daily food requirements when they eat a school lunch. Lunch includes a choice of entrée, up to 2 side offerings, and a choice of milk.

Lunch prices for 2016-2017:

\$2.45

\$3.25

While students are allowed to bring a lunch from home, please do not send foods that require refrigeration or microwave warming.

In compliance with district policy we cannot charge meals. Students may pre-pay for meals. Checks for meal payment should be made out to Rhodes Cafeteria. The cafeteria cannot cash a check and provide the remainder for non-lunchroom items. Please write your child's name in the "Memo" portion of your check. On-line pre-payment is also an option by logging on to myschoolbucks.com. User name and password for this option can be obtained by calling the food service office at 983-5140

Applications for free/reduced breakfasts and lunches are given to each child as the school year begins. You may also request an application form at any time during the school year. Applications must be filled out completely (using black ink) before being processed. Parents/guardians are responsible for all meal payments until the District's Food Service Office has approved the application. This includes recipients of Food Stamps or TANF. **The parent is responsible for all meal payments until an application has been submitted for meal benefits, and the application has been officially approved at the Food Service Office. This includes those who are on Food Stamps or TANF.** The school system is granted 10 days to process a food service application. If your child/children were approved the previous year, they will be covered under the program for the first 30 days of the new school year. During that time period, a new application must be completed and officially approved. Other-wise, after the first 30 days, the student(s) will be considered full pay.

Sack lunches for field trips are available from the cafeteria for free, reduced, and full price students. Parents should note on the field trip permission slip if they would like a sack lunch from the cafeteria for their child

### Breakfast

Breakfast is served from 7:00-7:20 daily. Only those students arriving on a late bus (after 7:20) are served breakfast outside of this time frame. *Full-price breakfast is \$1.05 for students and \$1.75 for adults.* Students are not permitted to charge breakfast.

### Eating Lunch with Your Child

Parents may have lunch with their child at school. We ask that students who are eating lunch with their parent(s) sit at a special table designated for visitors. We do not permit other students to join them at the visitor's table during lunch. We encourage visitors to enjoy lunch in our cafeteria. We discourage food brought in from local restaurants.

### Guidance

Rhodes Elementary School strives to provide a quality educational program for every child, endeavoring to meet academic, physical, emotional, and social needs in a professional manner. A guidance counselor is available for our students, teachers, and parents. The guidance counselor coordinates all of our exceptional student education referrals. In addition, the counselor has many valuable resources to help parents, teachers, and students. The goal of our guidance department is to make sure all student's educational, emotional, and social needs are met so the student can concentrate on learning. The counselor does provide some small group counseling. Parents may call the office to arrange a conference with the counselor. Our counselor also coordinates FSA testing and the assessment of children for special assistance programs.

## Medication

Rhodes Elementary School has a well-equipped health clinic staffed with a Certified Health Technician for the emergency needs of our children in Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. All medication used by our children must be delivered to the school by the parent/guardian in its original container. A “Dispersion of Medication Form” must be completed for prescription and over-the-counter medicines like cough drops, Tylenol, etc. The prescriptive medicines MUST have the child’s name, doctor, name of medication, dosage, directions, and expiration date.

Students are not allowed to have any medications (including over-the-counter) in their possession while at school, on a school bus, or at a school function. The only exceptions are Epipens, insulin pens, and asthma inhalers. Epipens, insulin pens, or asthma inhalers will be permitted to be carried with parental permission and physician’s signature on the “Dispersion of Medication Form.” The parent/guardian of a student with diabetes should contact the school to update the “Students Health Care Plan for Insulin Dependent Diabetes Form.”

Any child found in possession of prescription medication could face serious consequences that could include out-of-school suspension or expulsion. Please refer to the Code of Student Conduct (given to each student at the beginning of the school year and found on the district website) for further information, guidelines, and consequences related to student possession of medication.

### Head lice

School Board Policies 4.5036 and 5.5033, for head lice infestation:

A student who has been sent home with head lice and/or nits should return to school, free of head lice and/or nits, within 3 (three) calendar days; absences from school during the three calendar days will be excused. For each occurrence of head lice and/or nits, absences beyond 3 (three) calendar days will be unexcused.

### Ill or Injured Children

If a child becomes ill or injured at school, the parents are notified by phone. Therefore, parents should have a current address and phone number on file at the office. A current health card must be on file so that you or someone you list can be reached in case of an emergency. Please note any health conditions that are emergency related, for example epilepsy, insect allergies, food allergies, etc. Severe health concerns may require a Health Care Plan.

It is very important that you pick up your child as soon as possible after you are notified of your child's illness. We DO NOT have a nurse on staff. Our clinic is covered by a School Health Technician.

Please do not send children to school with a fever. When your child has been out sick, he/she must be fever free (without medication) for 24 hours before returning to school. In addition, if your child has symptoms such as diarrhea or vomiting, they must be symptom free before returning to school.

School Board policy requires that any student with a contagious concern (such a pinkeye, scabies, or head lice) be removed from contact with all other children immediately. It is also required that the parent/guardian return the child to school only after treatment and clearance is provided by a doctor or the school's clinic. *Please note attendance policies.*

### Internet Access

Parents must sign the “Acceptable Use Policy for Students” each year before a student will be given Internet access. Each student’s use of the network will be under the teacher’s direction and monitored as a regular instructional activity. Failure to adhere to guidelines established by the Santa Rosa County School Board and Rhodes Elementary School may result in suspension or revocation of the student’s privilege of access. For additional Internet information, please see the Santa Rosa County School District *Code of Student Conduct*.

### Mandatory 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Retention

Students with a substantial reading deficiency in Grades 1, 2, and 3, as determined by District assessments in Grades 1 and 2 and the state reading assessments in Grade 3, must be remediated by achieving the levels of performance for student progression established by the state for the Grade 3 reading assessments (FSA). Students who have been identified as having reading deficiencies in Grades 1, 2 or 3 and who have received remediation, but score at achievement Level 1 on the Grade 3 FCAT 2.0 reading test and who have a national percentile rank score below the 45th percentile on the SAT 10 in reading must be retained, unless exempted from mandatory retention by the school board for “good cause.”

### Media Center

The Rhodes Media Center provides a multi-dimensional media program that promotes student learning and aids teachers with supplementary curriculum materials. The media center consists of a main reading room with the print collection, an ITV studio, a faculty professional library, and an audio-visual materials storage room. Library services are fully automated with computer circulation and an on-line card catalog. Parents are asked to share in the responsibility of teaching their children the proper care of library materials entrusted to them. The goals of the media center are to promote a positive learning environment where students enjoy and respect learning, and develop skills to be-come lifelong readers.

### Title I Information

Rhodes Elementary School is a Title I school. What is Title I? Title I of No Child Left Behind is “Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged.” Due to our rate of students who receive free/reduced lunch, our school receive Title I education funds. Our school receives this money through our state and district, and more than half of all public schools (55 percent) fall into this category, often called “Title I schools.”

### Parents’ Right to Know

*No Child Left Behind* provides funding to help teachers improve their instructional skills through training and other professional development. The law also requires states to develop plans to ensure all teachers of core academic subjects are highly qualified. It defines a highly qualified teacher as one with a bachelor’s degree, full state certification, and demonstrated competence for each subject taught. Santa Rosa County School District is committed to providing information to you regarding your child’s teacher and paraprofessional qualifications in a timely manner upon request. All teachers hired at Title I schools must be Highly Qualified.

You have the right to request the following information from your School Principal:

- Whether the teacher has met state 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 qualifications of 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 of degree.
- Whether your child is provided services by paraprofessionals, and, if so, their qualifications.
- The achievement level of your child on the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA)

You will be notified in writing if your child has been assigned or has been taught for more than four consecutive weeks by a teacher who has not met the NCLB highly qualified criteria. Please be assured that Santa Rosa County School District is dedicated to providing a quality education to students in our district.

### SPAR

Florida's NCLB School Public Accountability Reports (SPAR) are generated to comply with federal NCLB legislation that requires annual report cards on the educational progress of schools, school districts, and state. The report contains information about your school: readiness, student performance, school safety, teachers and staff, Adequate Yearly Progress, and student demographics. These reports are initially published prior to the beginning of the school year. For specific information on the measurement of Adequate Yearly Progress for individual schools, school districts, and the state, please visit the website at: <http://schoolgrades.fldoe.org>

To see the SPAR report for your school, visit: <http://doeweb-prd.doe.state.fl.us/eds/nclbspar/index.cfm>

### Title I Parent Resources

Our parent resource center houses resources, purchased with Title I funds, for parents to checkout. In addition, Rhodes Elementary will offer opportunities for parent involvement throughout the school year in conjunction with PTA meetings. Please visit our school website for links to additional parent resource opportunities.

### Parent/Home Communication

Communication between the school and home plays a very important role in the student's overall achievement in school. Listed below are some of the various ways Rhodes uses to communicate with parents.

Jr. Panther Press is our school newsletter. School newsletters will be sent home bi-monthly (August, October, December, February, and April). Newsletters will also be available on the school website. Please read this newsletter as we try to keep you informed about school events. All grade levels will be sending home a parent newsletter at least once a month; some may send newsletters more frequently.

Connect-ED is a web-based parent notification service. It provides automated calls to update and inform parents on various topics including school functions, school closings, attendance, and emergency information. *Connect-ED* is used regularly throughout the school year.

Facebook- Rhodes Elementary has a facebook page. We update our status regularly.

School Website-Rhodes has a school website. Go to <http://whrhodes.weebly.com/> to learn more about our school.

### Student Planners

5<sup>th</sup> grade students are given a planner, and they are required to use it to help prepare them for middle school. Teachers instruct the children on proper use. This planner is a vital part of good school/home communication. Please check your child's planner daily for homework assignments, upcoming tests, and notes from the teacher.

Parent-teacher conferences may be scheduled anytime during the school year by either party. This allows parents and teachers the opportunity to discuss any problems or to ask pertinent questions about a child's progress. Do not hesitate to schedule a conference if a need is felt. Much understanding and progress can come from a good conference.

Mid-term progress reports are sent home at the mid-point of each nine-week grading period to all students. Mid-terms are as important as the report card in communicating to parents how their child is academically performing. . You are asked to sign and return the progress report promptly. Contact your child's teacher immediately if you have any questions or concerns about your child's grades.

#### MID-TERM GRADE REPORTS

Kindergarten-5<sup>th</sup> Grade

September 16

November 18

February 10

April 28

Report cards will be issued every nine weeks, or four times during the year. Report cards have been developed that best suit the reporting needs at each grade level. Students in Grades are based on a child's performance by demonstrating their understanding of concepts taught. Parents/guardians of Kindergarten students are required to come in for a conference with their child's teacher prior to their first report card.

#### REPORT CARDS

Kindergarten-5<sup>th</sup> Grade

October 28

January 20

April 7

June 2

### Grading Scale

The Santa Rosa County School District assigns grades based on the following scale:

Kindergarten

MP = Meets Proficiency

DP = Developing Proficiency

BP= Below Proficiency

Grades 1st through 5th

A = 90 – 100

B = 80 – 89

C = 70 – 79

D = 60 – 69

F = 0 – 59

I = Incomplete

Art, music, and physical education receive grades of E, S, N, U, or I.

### Party Invitations

Birthday party invitations, other notices/invitations, or special recognition granted to individual students are not permitted. It is particularly distressful for students who do not receive invitations to such events; therefore, we can only permit invitations to be given out at school if it is an event that ALL students in the classroom will be given an invitation. Please do not request that the teacher permit invitations to be given out to specific individuals. It is up to the teacher as to what time of day the invitations will be passed out. This MUST not interfere with the routine classroom schedule.

### Pets/Animals

Caution is shown in allowing any animal on campus. All requests must be cleared by administration. No animals, dead or alive, are allowed on a school bus. Reptiles, turtles, and birds are forbidden due to the fact that they can be carriers of salmonella bacteria and other serious diseases.

### PTA

Rhodes Elementary has a growing, active, and supportive Parent Teacher Association. Our PTA sponsors many school functions, rewards student and staff achievement, and supports our school in a variety of ways. All funds raised through the PTA are used for school-related programs and materials. The success of this wonderful organization depends on the involvement of everyone. PLEASE JOIN! We would love to have every family represented.

### Safety at School

The safety of your child and school staff is of utmost importance. Students are under supervision throughout the day. Please remind your child that they are to never leave an area without the knowledge and permission of the supervising adult. All visitors are required to sign in at the office and wear a visitor's badge at all times while on campus.

### Schedule & Hours of Supervision

Breakfast is served from 7:00-7:20 (no breakfast served after 7:20). Therefore, if your child is a car rider, please make sure they arrive prior to 7:20 if you want them to eat breakfast.

Parents CANNOT drop off car riders prior to 7:00am. Supervision begins promptly at 7:00am.

First Bell	7:23
Tardy Bell/Start Time	7:30
After School and Car rider	1:20
Grades 3-5 bus dismissal	1:25
Grades 1-2 bus dismissal	1:27
Kindergarten bus dismissal	1:30
Dismissal Bell	1:36

Supervision is provided 30 minutes prior to start time and 30 minutes after dismissal. Dismissal begins at 1:20 for children and ends at 1:36. All students should be off campus by 2:06 unless they are staying for a prearranged after school activity such as tutoring or chorus.

### Early Release Days

*Early release for designated holidays/planning days is 11:15.* There will be four early release days during the school year. Two of the early release days are designated for faculty and staff professional development. The other two early release days are the day before Christmas Break and the last day of school.

September 14

November 2

December 21

February 15

June 2

### Special Area Classes

As part of our total educational program every child in our school participates daily in a special area class. Special area classes include Art, Music, and Physical Education. A certified instructor leads each class. Our goal is to develop an appreciation for the content of the course and develop each child to his or her fullest potential in that area.

### Physical Education

All students are expected to participate in physical education classes. Only those children who provide a parent's note will be excluded from this requirement. Children who need to miss more than three (3) days of Physical Education (PE) are required to provide a doctor's note.

All students are required to wear athletic shoes for Physical Education. Sandals, boots, and dress shoes are not appropriate footwear for physical activity. Children not wearing appropriate footwear will not participate in PE and will not receive a grade for the day.

### Testing

Assessment and standardized testing are two ways to monitor student progress. Students in all grades are assessed using Discovery Education Assessment. Rhodes uses a variety of assessments to drive instruction such as STAR, I-READY, STAR Early Literacy, core curriculum assessments, and teacher created assessments. Teachers use assessment to drive the intensity of instruction, the implementation of support services, and professional development in content areas. When a student is having difficulty in class and test scores indicate concerns, it takes the effort of the school and the parents to work to improve student performance. We will celebrate our success and work to improve areas of need.

## FSA

Students in grades 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> take the FSA (Florida Standards Assessment) each spring to assess reading and math. In addition, fourth grade and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students take the FSA Writing Component during the 3<sup>rd</sup> nine weeks of school. Fifth grade students take FCAT Science in the spring with the reading and math test. Florida state law requires mandatory retention of students in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade scoring Level 1 in Reading. It is critical that testing be taken very seriously. Teachers, guidance, and administration work hard to decrease student test anxiety by focusing on motivation and teaching students to do their best. Test preparation also helps students feel confident about their abilities. Orally reviewing test prep worksheets and booklets with your child is one way to contribute to testing success and reduction of anxiety.

## Textbooks

Textbooks are loaned to our students by the State of Florida. Children are responsible for the care of their textbooks. Should a child abuse or misplace a textbook, a fee will be assessed for the book's replacement. The child is loaned another textbook when all such debts are paid in full.

## Supplies

It is necessary for pupils to have supplies for schoolwork. A list will be furnished to students when they enter school. It is recommended that parents see that their child has supplies all through the school year. Supplies are suggested but not required. In no instance are these supplies required or collection of fees mandatory according to School Board Policy.

## Textbooks

## Toys/Games

School is not a place for children to bring toys or games. Unless a teacher specifically requests they be brought to school for a special occasion, toys and games must remain at home. Students should understand that toys and games brought to school with teacher permission should not become a problem on the bus nor be seen outside that particular classroom. Teachers can confiscate toys or games and require parents to pick up such items.

To keep our school as safe as possible and to avoid distractions in the learning environment, children are not allowed to bring the following to school: Knives, sling shots, fire crackers, toy guns, weapons of any kind, any type of ammunition (used or unused), marbles, trading cards of any type, beepers, cell phones, CD players, electronic games or devices (including iPods or iPads), bats, or balls. Refer to the Code of Student Conduct for further information.

### Flowers/Balloons

Please do not deliver flowers or balloons to your child during the school day. These items are not allowed on the bus.

### Transportation

#### Bus Transportation

Riding to and from school on a bus is a privilege, not a right. If a child chooses to misbehave on a bus, they will lose that privilege with suspension.

It will then be the responsibility of the parent to daily provide transportation to and from school. Please work with us to assure your child's appropriate bus behavior.

#### Basic Bus Rules

- Stay away from the road while waiting for the bus to arrive.
- Follow the drivers' directions the first time they are given.
- Eating or drinking is not allowed on a bus.
- Keep hands and objects away from the bus windows.
- Sit quietly at all times, facing the front of the bus.
- Do not talk while stopped at railroad crossings.
- Glass containers, balloons, toys, or animals are not allowed on the bus.
- Electronic devices are not allowed on a bus (refer to the Student Code of Conduct).

After exiting the bus, obey the driver's directions for crossing the street.

## Rhodes Bus Rules

R-Remain Seated

I-Incorporate Safety

D-Demonstrate Responsibility

E-Enter and Exit quietly

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to assume supervision of their child when school is dismissed. Pre-K students are not dropped off without someone present to receive them. We highly recommend an adult be present to receive kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. Rehearse with your child what to do if you are not home. Please consider as best practice to always have someone present to receive kindergarten age children.

*\*NOTE:* District bus policy states that if a child does not ride their bus for 3 days in a row, the driver is not required to make a stop at that house. The parent must notify Transportation to resume pick-up.

## Changing Buses

A student may ride only the bus to which they have been assigned. Unless the student has a pass from the school office indicating a different destination, a child is not allowed to ride a different bus or get dropped off at a different stop. A parent may obtain a bus pass for their child by calling the school office (before 12:30) or sending their child to school with a note indicating the change. Please be very specific as to dates and destinations. You must have your child's student identification number to make afternoon bus destination changes.

## Bus Routes

The School Transportation Department and Durham School Services establish bus routes. Neither the driver nor the school has the authority to make changes on the routes.

### Car Rider/Afternoon Pick-Up Procedure

Car riders are dismissed at 1:25 and should be picked up no later than 1:45. A parent picking up a student on a regular basis will need to obtain a “car rider tag,” which lists an assigned number. Parents should place the tag with the number side out on the rear view mirror. Car rider tags are issued during parent/student orientation or on an as needed basis from the office. Please help your young child learn his/her number by practicing the number at home. If your child is an afternoon car rider, please line up in front of the school for 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade students and on 1<sup>st</sup> grade car ramp for kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade students. Please wait in your vehicle. Your child will be dismissed in the order designated. To avoid long lines, you will find it helpful to wait until 1:35 before arriving at school. Please follow the map you received to assist with proper line-up.

### Transportation Changes

Changes in your child’s afternoon transportation must be made early and well in advance. Please send a note detailing the change. Your child must give it to his/her teacher at the beginning of the school day.

If a note is forgotten, please call the school office (995-3680) before 12:30. After 12:30, we cannot guarantee the transportation change. You must have your child’s identification number to make changes.

Only individuals indicated by the parent/guardian on the health card are allowed to pick up a child when they need to leave for illness. Should an emergency arise and another individual is required to pick up your child, you must notify the office of this change. Even though individuals are listed on the health card, they are not permitted to check out students. Parents must send a note each time anyone needs to check out their child.

### Volunteers

Our school volunteer program includes parents, senior citizens, resource persons and other community members who have a genuine interest in being involved with children and education. Volunteers assist in the classroom in areas designated by the teacher. These areas may include arts and crafts, working with individual children, making instructional materials, reading to children, and tutoring. They are also used for clerical work, assistance in the media center, field trips and as resource persons to share information on areas in which they have knowledge. School Volunteers are to sign in on the office computer and wear a “volunteer” badge at all times.

A Volunteer Orientation will be held at the beginning of each school year. Each volunteer must complete an application that will be presented to the School Board for approval. For more information about the school volunteer program, please contact Mrs. Kacie Reaves at 983-5670.

### Withdrawals

To withdraw students from school, please follow these steps:

The parent/guardian should contact the school office in person at least 2 days before the students’ last day.

Verify that all textbooks, library books, and planners have been returned.

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Please contact administration if you have additional questions not addressed by the content of our Student Handbook. We wish you and your child a wonderful school year!