

## **Barrow Elementary School Family Handbook 2014-2015**

The purpose of this handbook is to clearly communicate some of the important programs, procedures, and expectations we have developed over the past several years at Barrow. We strive to establish a friendly, inviting school environment where all families and visitors feel welcome and comfortable. We also know it is important to maintain a safe and orderly school environment. These policies and procedures help us maintain that kind of environment, so that students and staff feel safe and parents can trust that their children are in good hands. We believe that a school that is safe and has clear policies and procedures can then focus on providing exemplary instruction every day.

### **Our Mission**

It is the mission of Barrow Elementary School to provide students a content-rich, academically rigorous education with a well-defined, sequential curriculum in a safe and supportive environment. This mission seeks the on-going collaboration of a culturally diverse community including students, parents, school staff, and local citizens who share the goal that all Barrow students will become successful self-directed, independent thinkers, respectful of themselves and others.

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## **ACADEMICS**

### **Curriculum**

We follow the state and county curriculum guides which provide us with plans for teaching the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards in Language Arts and Mathematics, and the Georgia Performance Standards in Science, Social Studies, Health, Art, Music, and Physical Education. Grade level teams plan together weekly to make sure they are following the curriculum guides with fidelity and enriching the curriculum for all students. It is our philosophy that we have a responsibility to educate the “whole child.” We enrich the required curriculum through classroom lessons, field trips, guest speakers, and school activities in the areas of: social-emotional learning, environmental education, service learning, career education, creativity, health and wellness, civic education, and fine arts.

### **Instructional Programs**

All students have access to core instruction during Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. In addition, we offer a variety of programs and services to meet students’ individual needs through a different models of service.

- Early Intervention Program (EIP) is a state-funded program designed to provide additional instruction to students who are not meeting grade level standards in reading and math. We have 4 EIP teachers who work with identified students in grades K-5 during regular instruction time as well as extended learning time. If your child qualifies for EIP, you will receive a letter in the fall and also be notified during parent conferences in October.
- Spectrum (Gifted Program) is a gifted education program available for students in grades K-5. We follow the state procedures and criteria for identifying students for the gifted program. Referrals to the gifted program can come from teachers, parents, or students. We currently have 5 teachers who serve students in the regular classroom through the collaborative model

and gifted-identified students in a resource model during extended learning time. We also have several gifted-endorsed homeroom teachers who provide differentiated instruction for students.

- Special Education services are provided for students who meet eligibility criteria established by the GA Department of Education for several areas of exceptionality. Students can be served in a variety of settings and through different service models, including direct, collaborative, co-teaching, and consult.
- English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is a federally funded program that provides supplemental services to all English Language Learners who meet eligibility criteria. This program helps students learn English language skills through immersion in an English-speaking classroom and with the guidance of an ESOL teacher.

For more information about curriculum or our specialized services, please contact the principal, assistant principal, or the program lead teachers (see contact information at end of handbook).

### **Assessment and Grading**

Students are assessed on grade level standards in a variety of ways throughout the school year. We use both formal assessment (standardized tests, class tests, performance tasks) and informal assessment (observation, mini-checks, question and discussion, running records). Assessment data is used by teachers to plan for instruction for the whole class and to differentiate instruction to meet student needs. Our expectation is that all students will meet or exceed standards each quarter.

There have been several changes to both state and local testing for this coming school year. Information about our testing program will be presented at various school meetings (Curriculum Breakfasts, PTA meetings) and through school newsletters.

- Kindergarten: All Kindergarten students are assessed using a state program called GKIDS. We assess students on basic skills related to language arts, math, approaches to learning, and personal/social development. Teachers collect data throughout the year by observing students as well as working with them one-on-one and in small groups.
- Grades 1-2: Students in these primary grades will be assessed throughout the year on reading level, reading fluency, writing, math fluency, and will be given two “benchmark tests” to assess their understanding of grade level content.
- Grades 3-5: Students in grades 3-5 will take a new state test this year, called the Georgia Milestones, which replaces the CRCT. The test will assess student mastery of content in Reading, ELA, Writing, Math, Science, and Social Studies. It will include multiple choice and open-ended questions. Students will also be assessed throughout the year on reading level, reading fluency, math fluency, and will be given two “benchmark tests” to assess their understanding of grade level content.

We use standards-based grading which provides teachers and parents with more in-depth information about a child’s strengths and areas for further growth. Parents will receive a report card every nine weeks and progress reports each mid-quarter. We use the following grading system:

E = Exceeds the Standard

M = Meets the Standard  
P = Progressing toward Standard  
I = Insufficient Progress toward Standard

### **Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences**

Conferences are held each October and March to review academic, social, and behavioral achievement and progress. We have student-participation conferences at Barrow, which means that your child will attend the conference with you to share his/her goals and work samples. We encourage open communication among the parent, teacher, and child to make sure that we are all working for a common goal. During the conference, we will share your child's report card, testing data, attendance record, and work samples. Teachers will also share resources you can use at home to support your child's learning. In addition to the two conferences, parents are welcome to make appointments to meet with their child's teacher at any time.

### **Homework**

Homework supplements class work, provides practice, and develops study habits, independence, and responsibility. The amount and type of homework varies by grade level, teacher, and individual needs. Homework may consist of such activities as reading with a parent or silently, collecting materials for classroom projects, completing work begun in the classroom, completing additional practice on skills learned in the classroom, or using digital resources to practice skills/complete assignments. Please talk with your child's teacher about his/her policy on homework. Children should do their own homework with parents serving as a resource.

Time should be set aside each day for children to complete their homework and to read for enjoyment. Parents can help by designating a place to do homework, encouraging their child to read, supplying library books that are of interest and on the appropriate level, praising children's efforts and desire to read, and reading themselves.

### **Digital Learning**

As a model technology school, we strive to provide teachers and students with the latest technology to enhance teaching and learning. We believe it is important for students to acquire skills that will help them learn and live in a digital and global world. We incorporate the ISTE Standards (International Society for Technology in Education) in our daily instruction. These advanced standards include: Creativity and Innovation; Communication and Collaboration; Research and Information Fluency; Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making; Digital Citizenship; and Technology Operations and Concepts. We recommend that all families talk to their children about digital citizenship and internet safety, to follow up on the important lessons we do in school. Common Sense Media has excellent resources ([www.commonsensemedia.org](http://www.commonsensemedia.org)).

### **Field Trips**

We believe field trips are an important way to enrich the curriculum and to give children hands-on experiences in the community. Every grade level takes field trips that support the learning of curriculum standards. At the beginning of the year, we ask that parents sign a "Walking Field Trip Permission Form"

which allows our students to take advantage of the many resources we have within walking distance from our school. We will notify you when we have planned a walking field trip. For trips that require bus transportation, we will send home separate permission forms for each trip notifying you of the date, location, and purpose of the field trip. Some trips cost money, however, we try to keep those to a minimum, and no child will be denied a field trip due to lack of payment. Two of our most special field trips are our 4th grade overnight field trip to the Blue Ridge Outdoor Education Center in the fall, and our three-day, two-night 5th grade field trip to the Marine Education Center on Skidaway Island on the coast of Georgia in the spring.

### **School Hours and Schedule**

School hours for students are 7:40 a.m. to 2:35 p.m. Students who arrive after 7:40 a.m. will be marked tardy and must be signed in by an adult. Supervision may not be provided to students who arrive before 7:15 a.m. Students will not be released between 2:05 p.m. and 2:35 p.m. as we are preparing for dismissal. Students are expected to be at school from 7:40a.m. until 2:35p.m.

Our master schedule follows the district guidelines for number of minutes for each content area, recess, lunch, specials, and Extended Learning Time. Teachers will send home class schedules in their beginning of year letters.

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### **ATTENDANCE**

Student attendance is recorded in our student information system (called “Campus”) each day by homeroom teachers. Students are considered “Tardy” if they arrive to the classroom after 7:40 a.m. and absent if they arrive after 11:40 a.m. Absences are either marked “Excused” or “Unexcused.” Excused absences include: illness, serious illness or death in the family, and certain religious holidays. All other absences are considered unexcused. We request that parents send notices in writing when their child is absent, informing the teacher of the reason for the absence. We also record when students are checked out early—that is before the school day ends. If you have access to the “Parent Portal,” you can check your child’s attendance records. We would be happy to print you a copy of your child’s attendance record at any time. According to district policy, we do monitor student attendance and send home attendance letters when children have 5 or more unexcused absences or excessive tardies.

When your child has many unexcused absences, and you have not been in touch with your child’s teacher or the school about the absences, we often make a referral to our district Social Worker who will follow-up with families and make a plan for improved student attendance. If your child has excessive illnesses and you would like to consult with our school nurse, please do not hesitate to call her. Our nurse is Catie Lees and she can be contacted at 706-543-2676 ext. 38242. If you have other issues that make it difficult to get your child to school, please contact our Family Engagement Specialist, Mimi Elliott-Gower (ext. 38306). Her job is to support families so that children can be successful in school. She will problem solve and help make a plan for your family.

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### **TRANSPORTATION**

### **Morning Arrival Procedures**

We have students who come to school by bus, car, bike and on foot. When students arrive in the morning, they should either go to the cafeteria to breakfast or to their homerooms to begin their day.

### **Dismissal Procedures**

Afternoon safety is extremely important to us. It is a big responsibility to make sure that all 545 students get home safely each day! Please let your child's classroom teacher know your "normal" schedule for dismissal (bus rider, car rider, walker, or after school program). Any changes to your normal schedule need to be made in writing. **We do not accept change of afternoon dismissal plans over the phone.**

For safety reasons, we will not accept phone calls with changes, except in emergencies (which must be approved by the Principal or Assistant Principal).

We encourage all families to complete the pink car rider registration form. On this form there is a place to list all people who may pick up your child. We keep this in the office and will only release students to people on the pick-up list. Even if your child normally rides the bus, there are times when you will need to have someone pick up your child because of an emergency situation-we cannot allow children to be picked up by people who are not on your list. You may update this list at any time in the front office.

### **Car Riders**

The drop-off line is meant for efficient drop-offs. Please drive slowly and pay attention as you enter the Barrow driveway off Pinecrest. Pull your car up to the farthest spot and someone on duty will open your car door to let out your child. Your child should exit from the right side of the car, never the left. Your child should be ready with his/her materials when leaving the car.

- To keep the car line moving, please do not get out of your car, park your car, or have conversations with staff/students on duty. If you want to get out of your car or help your child with materials, etc., then we ask that you park in an official parking spot.
- Please wait to let your child out of the car until you are pulled up to a sidewalk and there is someone to open the door/assist your child. We often have parents who let their children out when they are far back in line, and we are concerned that children could get hurt as they walk through cars, traffic, etc.
- When leaving Barrow, make a right hand turn.
- We ask that you not drive into Barrow from the Rutherford side (lower lot) as there are many families walking to and from school in the a.m./p.m. and students/teachers walking to buses in the p.m.
- If you see aggressive or unsafe drivers on our property, please report it to the adult on duty or the principal.
- If you arrive after 7:40, please walk your child into the front office to sign him/her in as tardy.
- In the afternoon, please pull in and make two lanes to keep car traffic off of Lumpkin. Merge respectfully!
- Car rider pick-up ends at 2:50 p.m. Any students not picked up by that time are brought to the front hall until 3:00, and then will be placed in the After School Program. There is a \$6 daily fee for ASP and an annual one-time \$10 registration fee, which must be paid.

### **Walkers**

Walkers may arrive and be picked up at the side door by the terrace—which is near the cafeteria. You may walk from home or park your car at a nearby church and walk to Barrow. Do not park at the Kangaroo gas station or Cali-n-Titos, or there is a chance your car will be towed. In the afternoon, please make sure your child’s teacher has a written note if you are going to walk and pick up your child—so we can have your child in the right place. Bring your green pick-up card.

### **Bus Riders**

If you have any questions about bus transportation, please contact the bus garage (706-548-6971). If we know a bus is going to be late for various reasons, we will try to send out an all-school email to notify parents. Please note: PreK and K parents must be at the bus stop to meet their child in the afternoon, or the child will be returned to school.

### **Afterschool Program**

Our After-School Program will be in operation from the time of school dismissal until 6:00 p.m. Activities include snack, recreation, sports, study/homework time, arts and crafts, and free play. A registration form must be completed and an annual registration fee of \$10 per child must be paid prior to participation in the After-School Program. The cost of the ASP is \$6.00 a day. Late fees will be imposed for pickup after 6:00 p.m.

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## **HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

Your child’s health and well-being are important to us. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have information about your child’s health that will help us plan for his/her instruction and care. If your child has health needs, please make sure they are communicated to our school nurse, Catie Lees, so she can create a health plan for your child.

### **Wellness Initiative and Policies**

We follow our school district’s new wellness initiatives. Our school has an active Wellness Committee consisting of school staff, parents, and community members. This group will continue to meet during the year to discuss wellness at Barrow and make recommendations for us as a community. If you are interested in participating in our Wellness Committee, please contact our school counselor, Lauren McElhannon.

### **Class Parties**

While we like to celebrate and enjoy our times together, we do not have classroom parties to celebrate birthdays, Halloween, Valentine’s Day or other holidays. We ask that you not send in candy, cupcakes, and other treats, or balloons, stuffed animals, and flowers. In general, if a teacher or grade level plans to have a celebration, they will contact parents if they need anything brought in to school. If you would like to do something special for your child at school on his/her birthday, please contact the classroom teacher to make arrangements for something that will fit into the schedule and be appropriate. Oftentimes, teachers will recommend that you come into the classroom to read a story or have lunch with your child.

## **Healthy Snacks**

Each teacher will communicate his/her classroom snack plan, which often depends on the time lunch is scheduled. Some teachers coordinate class snacks and some ask students to bring their own. We follow our district guidelines for healthy snacks. On July 1, 2014, the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools went into effect. This list will be updated to ensure that all recommended snacks meet the nutrition standards in the Smart Snacks rule. To learn more about Smart Snacks in School, visit:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/smart-snacks-school>

### **Food:**

- Fresh seasonal fruit (grapes, watermelon, bananas, etc)
- Applesauce cups (no sugar added)
- Fresh raw vegetables (carrots, celery, broccoli, cauliflower) with low fat dip (ranch dressing, peanut butter\*)
- Dried fruit mix (add nuts\* for protein)
- Raisins
- Yogurt\*
- Granola/dry cereal (with fiber)
- Baked chips
- Crackers & cheese\* or peanut butter\*
- Pretzels (try honey wheat)
- Trail mix (pretzels, peanuts\*, raisins, Cheerios)
- Half a bagel with low fat cream cheese\* or peanut butter\*
- Graham crackers/Animal crackers
- Fig Newtons
- Low fat mini muffin
- String cheese\*
- Low fat pudding cup\*

### **Beverages:**

- Milk\* (non fat, low fat, plain, flavored)
- Fruit and/or vegetable juice with at least 50% real juice
- Fruit and/or yogurt smoothie\*
- Water (no sugar added for flavored varieties)

\* Items containing protein

Mix and match the above items to incorporate protein for optimum mental performance.

Please note: This list is not exhaustive. All foods fit into a balanced diet as long as they are consumed in moderation. Certain items may need to be limited to smaller portions and eaten less often.

## **The Clinic**

We have a clinic in the front office that is staffed by a nurse 2 days a week. During the other days, we have several staff members on duty who are trained in First Aid, CPR, and giving medication. Students who are not feeling well are sent to the clinic with a card that describes their symptoms. We will call a

child's parent if a child has a fever, has thrown up, has an injury, or just needs to be checked on by a parent.

### **Illnesses**

We want your child in attendance at school every day he/she is not ill. It is important to keep your child at home when he/she is not feeling well and cannot participate in learning activities. Our nursing department has provided the following guidelines for when to keep your child at home:

- Fever of 100 or greater - keep your child home until there is no fever for 24 hours and no medicine has been given for fever for 24 hours.
- Vomiting more than one time-keep your child home until they have not vomited for 24 hours
- Diarrhea
- Pain Examples: earache, sore throat, stomach
- Rash
- Illnesses that are contagious to other children. Examples: Pinkeye and chickenpox

For more information about specific illnesses, conditions, medication, screenings, and immunizations, please refer to the CCSD Nursing Services website:

<http://www.clarke.k12.ga.us/offices.cfm?subpage=279>

### **Medication**

The Clarke County School District has imposed strict guidelines for the administration of medicine at school. If a student must be given medicine at school, the parent must complete a PERMISSION FOR MEDICATION form. On that form indicate the specific length of time the medicine is to be given, dosage, and time it should be given to your child. Prescription medicines must be in the original container. This form can be obtained in the school office and will be kept on file. If there are any changes in medication, a new form must be completed before a new medicine or a different dosage can be given.

NO CHILD IS TO CARRY MEDICATION ON HIS OR HER PERSON. This includes aspirin, cough drops, over the counter medications, and prescription drugs. There is a new policy that allows students to carry inhalers and epi-pens, however please contact the school nurse to make a plan for this and complete the proper paperwork.

NO CHILD IS TO CARRY MEDICATION ON THE SCHOOL BUS. All medicine must be transported to and from school by the parent.

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## **BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS**

We ask that you discuss with your child the importance of and the need for good behavior and a good attitude at school. Please review the Clarke County School District Code of Conduct, our school's behavior plan, and the teacher's classroom expectations with your child. We believe it is important for us

to teach, model, and reinforce the behaviors we expect children to exhibit on a daily basis. We also understand that children make mistakes with their behavior and that our role as adults is to help them learn from their mistakes so they can make positive contributions to our school community. At times, consequences are required to communicate to students that some behaviors are unacceptable at school. We strive to work with families to ensure students are getting the most out of their education at Barrow.

### **Responsive Classroom**

We use the Responsive Classroom approach in all classrooms and throughout the school, which emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong and supportive community. We recognize that social learning is as important as academic learning and we strive to teach important social competencies to our children through variety of practices. Some of the practices we use include: daily Morning Meetings, Rule Creation with students, Interactive Modeling, Positive Teacher Language, Logical Consequences, Academic Choice, Guided Discovery, Classroom Organization, and Working with Families. For more information on this approach, see: [www.responsiveclassroom.org](http://www.responsiveclassroom.org)

### **Our School-Wide Positive Behavior Plan**

Many families ask about our approach to student behavior and discipline. Barrow implements a framework, referred to as PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports), which is a research-based approach that teaches all students desired behaviors in the school setting. PBIS prevents inappropriate behavior through teaching and reinforcing appropriate school-wide expectations, rules, behaviors and procedures. PBIS helps to promote a positive classroom environment that enhances both academic and social-emotional learning. PBIS and Responsive Classroom complement one another in many ways. This will be our 7th year implementing PBIS, and each year we make minor changes based on discipline, survey, and observational data.

Our behavior expectations are called the “5 Be’s:”

- **Be Kind:** Be a friend; include others; use polite words; help others; be considerate of others.
- **Be Responsible:** Keep your hands and your feet to yourself; take care of yourself and your space; use equipment and materials appropriately; learn from your mistakes.
- **Be Respectful:** Treat others the way you want to be treated; listen to and follow directions; respect others’ space; be a team player; allow others to be different; acknowledge others’ ideas.
- **Be Productive:** Come prepared to learn; use time wisely; always give your best effort; persevere; be creative; take risks; problem solve.
- **Be Peaceful:** Use a quiet voice and calm actions; walk quietly so others can learn; transition calmly; work together to solve problems.

We teach students how these behaviors look in the classroom, the halls, the cafeteria, the bathroom, and on the bus. We use the same language when we discuss these expectations so students hear the same message from all adults in the building.

One component of PBIS is the use of incentives to reinforce expected behaviors. At Barrow, students can earn “High Fives” for showing one of the 5 Be behaviors in an exemplary manner. Students cannot

lose high fives—once they earn them, they keep them. Every two weeks, students can choose to trade in their high fives (which are like tickets) for special privileges, such as extra computer time, eat with a friend, no shoes day, or other fun activities. Often, the students help make decisions about the incentive menu for their classroom. We try not to reward students with tangible items, however, occasionally we might include pencils, stickers, or other “treasure box” type rewards. Each quarter, we have a special event to recognize students who have not been referred to the office.

PBIS does include consequences when students do not follow our expectations. For minor behaviors, we use a series of consequences: verbal warning, “take a break,” take a break in another classroom, note/phone call home, and finally, an office referral for chronic behavior. For major behaviors, we follow the Clarke County School District Code of Conduct, which is sent home with all students at the beginning of the year. Schoolwide discipline is always a part of our School Improvement Plan. Each year, we seek new ways to decrease negative behaviors, which can be disruptive to instruction and hurtful to others. We strive to have a safe, positive learning environment for all students. If you have concerns about behavior issues, please contact your child’s teacher FIRST. Sometimes a child’s perspective is different from what is really happening in the classroom and it’s always a good idea to follow up with the teacher. For more information about PBIS, see [www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org)

### **Barrow Honor Code**

As a result of data from last year, we recently decided to introduce to students a Barrow Honor Code. Some undesirable behaviors we noticed last year included actions such as using another student’s username and password inappropriately, taking items from the book fair, and not being honest. We believe that having an Honor Code that students understand and can recite will help them think about behaving in an honorable way. Here is our Honor Code:

**As a Barrow Buddy I promise to be fair, honest, and trustworthy,  
even when no one is looking because that is the right thing to do.  
My good choices will help make Barrow excellent.**

As you can see from the last line, we believe that the behavior of each and every student impacts our school environment and we seek to instill a sense of personal responsibility towards a common good in our students.

### **Dress Code**

In order to maintain an orderly environment for education, we have set a standard of student dress that we feel is conducive to a proper educational climate. Clothing worn by students should be neat, clean, and in good repair for the general health and safety of the student. The following clothing is NOT allowed: sagging pants, lengthy belts, any item that advertises drugs or alcohol, short (crop) tops, shorts that do not reach the fingertips, see-through clothing, hats worn indoors (unless on special or designated days), hoods, flip-flops, slides, and accessories such as jewelry that cause disruption. Students who come to school dressed inappropriately will be asked to call home for a change of clothes. In the case of a t-shirt that is inappropriate, the student will be asked to turn the t-shirt inside out.

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## **CAFETERIA**

Barrow School serves breakfast and lunch daily. Menus are available each month on the CCSD Nutrition website (<http://www.clarke.k12.ga.us/menus>). Students always have the option of bringing a lunch from home. If your child is having school meals, please pay in advance. Payment may be made daily, weekly, or monthly with cash or check, or through the online payment system (<https://www.mypaymentsplus.com/>). Please place meal payments in an envelope with your child's name, grade level, and the name of the homeroom teacher on the outside. An application form is available for families who may need assistance with lunch fees. You are welcome to eat with your child at breakfast or lunch for the price of an adult meal. The costs of meals are:

- Student: Breakfast -\$1.10 Full price/\$0.30 Reduced price per day; Lunch- \$1.75 Full price/ \$0.40 reduced price per day
- Adult: Breakfast - \$1.75 per day; Lunch - \$3.00 per day

If a student wants to buy lunch items "a la carte" they must bring change or have credit on their account.

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## **COMMUNICATION**

Effective communication is very important to us at Barrow and you will see that we take extra effort to make sure you know what your child is learning and how they are progressing. We want you to be informed of important Barrow events and ways we can work together as a team to make sure your child is challenged and reaching his/her fullest potential. I urge you to be engaged in your child's learning by reading communications from school, staying in close contact with your child's teacher, talking to your child about school, reading nightly with your child, and attending some school activities. If there are ways we can improve our communication efforts, I invite you to give us your feedback.

### **Contacting Your Child's Teacher**

You may contact your child's teacher through written note, email, or phone call. Most teachers give contact information in their beginning of the year letter. All teachers have a phone extension in their classrooms. If you call your child's teacher during the school day, we will take a message or it will be transferred to their voicemail and you may leave a message. Teacher email addresses can be found on the Clarke County School District website ([www.clarke.k12.ga.us](http://www.clarke.k12.ga.us)).

### **Monday Folders**

Our "Monday Folders" come home with your child each week on Mondays. This folder will contain newsletters and information from the Barrow office and the Clarke County School District, as well as any flyers that have been approved by the district. We try to reduce the amount of paper we produce by sending these types of communication home one per family. Typically, we send things with the "oldest" or "only" child that attends Barrow. The Monday Folder will also contain notes from your child's teacher and graded work. Please make a habit of reading the items in your Monday Folder each Monday night and returning the folder with your child each Tuesday. You will also have the option of signing up for the electronic distribution list, which will allow you to have most school and grade level newsletters and flyers sent electronically rather than paper copy.

### **Contact Information**

It is important that we have current contact information for all Barrow families. Your address and phone numbers are kept electronically in our student information program. If your address, phone numbers, or email address change, it is important that you give us this updated information. At parent conference time, we always share the information we have and ask you to check/update.

### **Custody**

If you have a situation regarding child custody, we ask that you give us copies of official court papers that explain the custody situation. We keep this in a secure, confidential file. We need to have this official information if there are issues with pick-up, visitation, or release of records. Transfer of custody cannot take place on school grounds during school hours.

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## **SAFETY PLAN & PROCEDURES**

Your child's safety is our number one priority. We want you to feel confident leaving your child in our care every day of the school year. Each year we prepare a School Safety Plan that clearly designates how we would respond in different situations and who would be responsible for different actions. This plan is communicated to our staff. We also have a Safety Committee that reviews our plan and is alert to ways to make our school be as safe as possible. During the school day, all doors are locked except for the front entrance way. Visitors must come in through the office to sign in before they are allowed to enter the building. We have the support of our district police officer, who frequently visits all schools to review plans and provide additional assistance to us as needed.

### **Safety Drills**

Each month, we practice a fire drill or tornado drill so that students know how to be safe in those situations. Adults in the building also practice a "first responders" drill in the event a child or adult is unresponsive. During the year we talk to students about different kinds of "lock-down" procedures, both soft lock-downs and hard lock-downs. We will do this in a sensitive way that focuses on how to be safe, not what would cause a lock down. While we have practiced this with adults after school hours, we will not practice with students at this time.

### **Inclement Weather**

In the event of inclement weather, parents should tune to an Athens-based radio station for information regarding school closings. School closings are usually aired beginning at 6 a.m. This information is also available on the Clarke County School District website: [www.clarke.k12.ga.us](http://www.clarke.k12.ga.us). You will also get an email or text message if you sign up for the CCSD e-News on the CCSD website.

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## **FAMILY & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

### **Visitors**

We love having visitors at Barrow! We ask that you notify your child's classroom teacher if you would like to visit the classroom or have lunch with your child. If you would like to meet with your child's teacher,

please make an appointment with the teacher. Because we need to focus on our students and instruction, we ask that you not meet with a teacher during morning drop-off or dismissal time. All visitors must come through the front doors at Barrow and check-in at the front office. We have an electronic sign-in system which requires you to type your name and reason for visit. You will get a visitor sticker printed with your name. When you leave, please check out using the same system. Our office staff will be happy to help you with this system.

### **Volunteers**

We welcome volunteers in our school. Some of the tasks we need help with are: reading with students, shelving books in the media center, and helping with some clerical tasks. We ask that people who are interested in volunteering, complete a volunteer application, which will be processed by our school counselor, Lauren McElhannon. Volunteers are required to sign in at the front office and wear a volunteer badge. In some situations, parents can volunteer in their child's classroom, however, this can sometimes be distracting to your child. We will work with you to find the best place to use your volunteer skills!

### **PTA**

We have an excellent Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) that works hard all year to support programs at Barrow and build school community. PTA meetings are open to all parents and are usually held the 1st Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. We have pizza and salad at 5:00 p.m. and free childcare in our after school program. Most of the PTA work takes place through various committees, which are reviewed at the first PTA meeting and open to all volunteers who want to contribute. Some of the committees are: 'A' is for Arts, Barrow Boogie 5K, Gardens and Grounds, Safe Routes to School, Spaghetti Supper, Teacher Appreciation, Spring Fling, Football Parking, and the EA Brown Barrow Buddy Fund, among others. Each year the PTA prints a Barrow Directory for each family so you can have contact information for other Barrow parents and children in your child's class. For more information about our PTA, visit their webpage ([www.barrowpta.org](http://www.barrowpta.org)) or "like" Friends of Barrow on Facebook.

### **School Council**

The School Council is an advisory board, comprised of the principal, parents, teachers, and business partners. Members are elected every two years. The work of the School Council focuses on school improvement and student achievement. We meet 4-5 times per year to analyze school data, review and monitor the implementation of the school improvement plan, and discuss other school issues. Our School Council meetings are listed on the district calendar and are open meetings. In addition, you may contact any of the representatives about school-related issues and they will bring them forward at Council meetings.

### **Family Engagement Resource Center**

The renovation of Barrow in 2013 brought us a dedicated space for family resources. Our room is the first glass door on the left as you enter the main part of the building. Open during the school day (7:40 am to 2:35 pm or by other arrangement), this space houses a computer and printer, telephone and table space available to families. We also maintain a bulletin board with community events posted as well as resources designed to help families better help their students at home. This space is used by mentors, PTA groups and other school committees and we like to see it busy! Look for announcements of family

meetings and groups you might like to attend ( for example: holiday learning loss, parent discussions on issues like homework, sleep and discipline, learning for younger siblings who haven't started school yet).

We welcome your input. If you have ideas of "stuff" we should have in the resource room, let us know. If you would like to talk more about a certain topic, we will do our best to make that happen. Our goal is to make strong the school/home connection. We need your ideas and support and expertise in your own student to reach this goal. Contact our Family Engagement Specialist: Mimi Elliott-Gower, [elliottgowerm@clarke.k12.ga.us](mailto:elliottgowerm@clarke.k12.ga.us) (706.543.2676 ext. 38306)

### **Title I Family Engagement Documents**

You may have heard the term "Title 1 School District"; if not, you will! The term Title 1 refers to funds that our District and Barrow receive from the Federal Government. Every school in our District (elementary, middle school, and high school) receives this funding and are then able to purchase extra resources, both in people and in equipment or programs. While the funding is meant to help close the achievement gap, Title 1 money benefits us all.

Family input is not only encouraged but is required as part of this funding. You will learn more about your rights and responsibilities throughout the year and specifically at the Annual Title 1 Meeting held in the first month or two of school each year.

- Family Involvement Plan--This document is also developed jointly with families, faculty/staff and community members. This plan helps us look at 6 components of school functioning like communication, decision making and culture. The hope here is that if we start with a written plan, we will be more likely to meet the stated goals. Again, this document can be used by families to keep our school accountable.
- School-Family Compact--We develop, with input from faculty, staff and families, a document (called a compact) that outlines how students, families and school will work together to meet our school improvement goals. Our efforts are directed at creating grade level specific compacts. Our challenge is to then hold each other accountable for what we said we would do!

Both of these documents are available in a variety of formats: on our school website, by hard copy in the Family Resource Room, at meetings like the our curriculum breakfasts and our Student Led conferences in the Fall and Spring. We will also send home a copy of the Family Involvement Plan in our Monday folder or electronically if you choose that form of communication. Compacts are generally signed at Fall conferences. Look for invitations to attend meetings and give feedback all through the year! **Title 1 is about and for all of us!**

### **Partners in Education**

We appreciate our Partners in Education for their support of our students, teachers, and families: *Athens Classic Properties, Athens Veterinary Surgery Center, Domino's Pizza, Earthfare, Georgia Power, Jittery Joe's Coffee Roasting Company, Jittery Joe's Coffee Shop, Liberty Mutual Insurance, UGA Athletic Association*

If you have an organization that is interested in learning more about our Partners Program, please contact Ellen Sabatini.

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### **ABOUT OUR COUNSELING PROGRAM**

Our school counselor, Lauren McElhannon, provides support, guidance and services to help address the academic, personal/social/emotional and career development needs of all students in grades PK-5. The role of our school counselor is to counsel, consult and/or collaborate with administration, staff, students, families and community partners. Our school counseling program is based on this collaborative effort to create an environment that promotes student achievement. Some basic counseling services that are provided are: individual counseling, small group counseling and classroom guidance lessons. Some specific classroom lesson topics that are required annually are:

- body safety (Good Touch/Bad Touch Program) for grades K, 1, 2 & 4;
- health/changing bodies lessons for grades 4 & 5;
- middle school transitioning activities for 5<sup>th</sup> graders;
- grade-specific lessons on all 17 Career Clusters for grades 1-5;
- bullying awareness and prevention (PK-5).

In addition, our school counselor can help families find resources in our community for needs like: food, clothing, shoes, school supplies, transportation, holiday assistance, utilities, mentor, and more.

Wondering if you should reach out and contact our school counselor? Here are just a few examples of times when contact may be helpful:

- When your child is having difficulty learning
- When family/friendship changes interfere with academic progress
- When you want to arrange a meeting
- When you have a concern about a change in your child's behavior
- When a parent/guardian wants information about community resources

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### **ABOUT OUR MEDIA CENTER**

In the Barrow Media Center we expect the miraculous every day. Our mission is to offer forward-thinking instruction, space, and programming that develops innovative leaders who create content that reaches a global audience. We operate on a flexible schedule, which means that your child's teacher will schedule various times to come to the library for collaborative projects, storytimes, and check out. In general, students in PreK-2nd grade check out up to 2 books at a time and 3rd-5th grade check out up to 3 books. These guidelines are flexible based on individual student needs. Families are also welcome to setup an account to check out additional books. If you have questions about our media center or programming ,please contact our media specialist, Andy Plemmons ([plemmonsa@clarke.k12.ga.us](mailto:plemmonsa@clarke.k12.ga.us); 543-2676 ext. 38280).

In our media center, your child has access to:

- Approximately 10,000 print books
- Over 300 ebooks
- Databases such as PebbleGo, Britannica, SIRS Discoverer, and more
- Makerspace resources such as a 3D printer and robotics. Many more tools are coming soon including Makey Makey and Littlebits.
- iPad, iMac, Macbook Pro, and Lenovo Thinkpad
- Each child also has access to a full suite of Google Apps for Education

Special events to look forward to throughout the year:

- International Dot Day (September)
- Storybook Celebration (October)
- Book Fairs in October and March
- Polar Express Day (December)
- Read Across America and World Read Aloud Day (March)
- Poem in Your Pocket Day (April)
- Battle of the Books in 3rd-5th grade (Winter/Spring)
- Contests such as a poetry contest and shelf challenge

Stay connected:

- A monthly newsletter will come in Monday folders on the first Monday of the month.
- Our blog, [barrowmediacenter.com](http://barrowmediacenter.com), is updated 2-3 times per week with exciting collaborative projects that incorporate a variety of technology and multiple formats of reading.
- Our facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/barrowmediacenter>, include periodic posts about online resources, community opportunities, and collaborative projects.
- You can follow our library and Mr. Plemmons on Twitter: @barrowmc and @plemmonsa
- Our website: <http://www.clarke.k12.ga.us/webpages/aplemmons>

Volunteer:

Our media center does not have a paraprofessional, so volunteers are critical in keeping the media center organized and running smoothly. There are 2 kinds of volunteers:

- Regular volunteers who come at the same time on a weekly basis to shelve books, assist students in finding materials, and completing various projects
- “As-needed” volunteers who lend their talents to specific projects that come up during the year. For example, book fair, designing library signs, creating special displays, etc.
- To volunteer, fill out the form <http://goo.gl/MqeVQE>

Use our resources at home:

- Search our library collection from home: <http://destiny.clarke.k12.ga.us>
- Access our school digital resources: <http://start.clarke.k12.ga.us/bar>

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### **IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have additional questions about our policies, procedures, or program, you can contact these Barrow staff members:

Principal: Ellen Sabatini, ext. 38200; [sabatine@clarke.k12.ga.us](mailto:sabatine@clarke.k12.ga.us)

Assistant Principal: Jennifer Leahy, ext. 38201; [leahyj@clarke.k12.ga.us](mailto:leahyj@clarke.k12.ga.us)

Secretary: Kristy Mayfield, ext. 38210; [mayfieldk@clarke.k12.ga.us](mailto:mayfieldk@clarke.k12.ga.us)

Receptionist: Regenia Dalton, ext. 38211; [daltonr@clarke.k12.ga.us](mailto:daltonr@clarke.k12.ga.us)

Nurse: Catie Lees, ext. 18361; [leesca@clarke.k12.ga.us](mailto:leesca@clarke.k12.ga.us)

Counselor: Lauren McElhannon, ext. 38260; [mcelhannl@clarke.k12.ga.us](mailto:mcelhannl@clarke.k12.ga.us)

Family Engagement Specialist: Mimi Elliott-Gower, ext. 38306; [elliottgowerm@clarke.k12.ga.us](mailto:elliottgowerm@clarke.k12.ga.us)

Cafeteria Manager: Renee Williams, ext. 38230; [williamr@clarke.k12.ga.us](mailto:williamr@clarke.k12.ga.us)

Gifted Team Leader: Natalie Hicks, ext. 38316; [hicksn@clarke.k12.ga.us](mailto:hicksn@clarke.k12.ga.us)

Special Education Team Leader: Cary Ritzler; ext. 38303 [ritzlerc@clarke.k12.ga.us](mailto:ritzlerc@clarke.k12.ga.us)

ESOL Teacher: Phyllis Childs, ext. 38344; [childsp@clarke.k12.ga.us](mailto:childsp@clarke.k12.ga.us)

After School Director: Jan Mullins, ext. 38324; ext. 38231; [mullinsj@clarke.k12.ga.us](mailto:mullinsj@clarke.k12.ga.us)

CCSD Board Office: 706-546-7721

Transportation Department: 706-548-6971