Taylor County Elementary School



Be your Bulldog BEST every day, every way!

Student & Parent Handbook 2026-2027

Taylor County Elementary is a Title I school, and as such, ensures that all students receive educational services based on their identified needs. Title I is the largest federal educational funding program and is intended to help ensure that all children can obtain a high-quality education and reach proficiency on challenging state academic standards and assessments.

TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT CALENDAR
2026-2027

August
3 - Teachers first Day
11 - First day for students

September
7 - Labor Day Holiday
23 - Early Release/Staff Development

October
12 - Last day 1st nine weeks (44)
14 - Student Holiday/Staff Professional Learning

November
11 - Veteran's Day Holiday
23-27 - Thanksgiving Holidays
30 - Students Return

December
18 - End of 2nd Nine Weeks (42) Early Release
21-31 - Students/Staff Holidays

January
1-3 - Student/Staff Holiday
4 - Student Holiday/Staff Professional Learning
5 - Students Return
18 - Martin Luther King Day Holiday

February

10 - Student Holiday/Staff Professional Learning
15- President's Day Holiday

March
3 - Early Release/Staff Development
12 - End of 3rd Nine Weeks (46)
22-26 - Spring Break
29 - Holiday
30 - Students Return

April

May
27 - Early Release/Last Day for Students (48)
28 - Staff Planning Day
31 - Memorial Day Holiday

Taylor County School District's 5 C's of Learning



TCES Mission Statement

Taylor County Elementary School is committed to providing all students with a relationship-centered learning environment that supports high student growth and achievement, promotes effective tiered instruction through differentiation, and closely monitors academic and social development.



TCES Vision Statement

Taylor County Elementary School will promote a healthy and safe learning community where all stakeholders support and encourage students to succeed academically and take ownership of their role as a citizen and community member.

Taylor County Elementary Faculty and Staff

Leadership Team

Rachel Poppell – Principal

Jennifer Amman – Assistant Principal

Eli Walker – Assistant Principal

Brittany Poore – Instructional Coach

Tracy Hall – Staffing Specialist

3rd Grade Teachers

Bassett, Holly
Jackson, Teresa
Perry, Nadine
MacNeill, Sally
Richardson, Harmony
Russo, Adreanna
Sadler, Summer
Wallster, Cindy
Welch, Lillie
TBD

4th Grade Teachers

Anderson, Kim
Bishop, Karli
Brassil, Christine
Brooks, Lilly
Lytle, Hannah
Morris, Kourtney
Proudman, Caitlin
Smith, Eric

5th Grade Teachers

Bohlman, Annsley
Lago, Heidi
Louk, Delanie
Loyed, Danika
MacNeill, Joanie
Murphy, Deborah
Weatherly, Caitlin
Webb, Hannah

Multi-Grade Teachers

Taylor, Laura
Scott, Eric

Enrichment Staff

King, Katie – Media
Monk, Amy – P.E.
Morris, Stephen – P.E.
Wiggins, Cathy - Computer

Acceleration/Intervention

Blanchett, Kristy
Kreidler, Kathy

TCSD Social Worker

Brooks, Rhonda

ESE Support Facilitation

Howard, Marla
Lundy, Leigh Ann

Therapist

Alford, Bart - SLP
Barfield, Savannah - OT
Gray, Jeremy - PT
Martinez, Georgette - SLP
Money, Tracey - OT

Title I Parent Liaison

Kidd, Olinka

Non-Instructional Aides

Almade, Nichole
Chewning, Areial
Cruce, Josie
Fierro, Renee
Mann, Carla
Miller, Helen

Clinic Staff

Arnold, Jasamine
Chitwood, Hailey
Love, Amber

Office Personnel

Office Manager
Faircloth, Donna
Data Entry
Searcy, Tammy
MIS-Technical Support
Mash, Debra
Secretary
Bass, Kacy
Receptionist
English, Hanna

Custodial Staff

Hill, Maxine
Jones, Sedrick
Markey, Pam
McDonald, Kristen
Shine, Sean
Thomas, Betty

SRO

Burford, Lance
K-9 Duke

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ATTENDANCE

Taylor County School Board ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS

The Legislature finds that poor academic performance is associated with nonattendance and that school districts must take an active role in promoting and enforcing attendance as a means of improving student performance. The Legislature finds that early intervention in school attendance is the most effective way of producing good attendance habits that will lead to the improvement of student learning and achievement.

Attendance procedures shall be carried out in accordance with Taylor County School Board Rule 5200, Florida Statute 1003.26, and the Code of Student Conduct and Attendance Policies.

1. According to FS 1003.21, any student between the ages of 6 and 15 is within compulsory school attendance age requiring regular school attendance. Parents of a child within the compulsory school attendance age shall be responsible for such child's attendance as required by FS 1003.26. It is understood that ALL students will be subject to the stipulations within this attendance policy. Attendance is required of all students for at least 180 days of instruction, or the equivalent as provided by law, except for absences which are excused or as otherwise provided by law.

Attendance is defined as the actual presence of a student at school or away from school on a school day engaged in an educational activity that constitutes a part of the school-approved instructional pupil program.

Absence is defined as the non-attendance of a student on days that school is scheduled to be in session. Any tardy/absence of 10 minutes or more from a class will result in an absence from that class. Absences may be defined as excused or unexcused in accordance with local policy.

Excused Absences

In compliance with Florida School Laws, the Taylor County School Board recognizes excused absences as those resulting the following:

- Personal illness of the student (medical evidence may be required by the principal or designee for absences exceeding five consecutive days)
- Court appearance of the student
- Medical appointment of the student
- Approved school activity
- Insurmountable conditions (e.g., extreme weather, disease outbreaks, etc.)
- Other absences with prior approval of the principal
- Attendance at a center under Children and Families Servies supervision
- Religious instruction or religious holiday
- Death in immediate family
- Appointments for a therapy service provided by a licensed health care practitioner or behavior analyst.

Excused absences, described above, shall be handled as follows: the student shall have a reasonable amount of time, up to 10 school days, to complete make-up work. Principals may grant extensions to the make-up time limit for extenuating circumstances. At TCES, is the responsibility of the student and their parents to plan with their teachers to complete missed work.

The parents of a student who misses one (1) or more period during the school day must notify the school of the reason for the absence(s) as soon as is practicable *but no later than 5 days after the student's first day back. Notification can be via written notes and/or by uploading notes into Focus through the Parent Portal*. No more than 3 parent-notes per semester will be accepted for excused absences. Failure to do so shall result in an unexcused absence. **The final authority for determining acceptability of the reason for the absence(s) shall rest with the principal**.

Students with unexcused absences and determined to be truant or skipping are subject to disciplinary action.

Monitoring of Absences

As outlined in FS 1003.26, upon each unexcused absence, or absence for which the reason is unknown the school principal, or his or her designee, shall contact the student's parent to determine the reason for the absence. If the absence is an excused absence, the school board shall provide opportunities for the student to make up assigned work and not receive an academic penalty unless the work is not made up within a reasonable time.

The steps below outline the procedures school staff should take when a student is suspected as exhibiting a pattern of non-attendance:

- The student's primary teacher(s) will make **frequent documented** attempts at parent contact once they suspect the student may be exhibiting a pattern of non-attendance (2-4 absences within a calendar month). Such attempts shall be logged in Focus under student documentation.
- After at least 5 unexcused absences within a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences within a 90-day period, and documented communication attempts, the teacher shall report to the principal that the child may be exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance.
- Unless there is clear evidence that the absences are not a pattern of nonattendance, the principal must refer the case to the school's child study team to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing.
- If the child study team finds that a pattern of nonattendance is developing, a meeting with the parent must be scheduled to identify potential remedies. The parent may be allowed to attend the meeting virtually or by phone if unable to attend in person. If the parent fails to attend the child study team meeting, the meeting recommendations shall be provided to the parent within 7 days after the child study team meeting.
- If the meeting does not resolve the problem, the child study team take additional action as described in Taylor County School Board Policy 5200.

BULLYING

TCSD STUDENT BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY 5517.01

The School Board is committed to providing an educational setting and workplace that is safe, secure, and free from bullying and harassment for all students and employees.

The Board will not tolerate unlawful bullying and harassment of any type. Conduct that constitutes bullying and harassment, as defined herein, is prohibited:

A. during any education program or activity conducted by the TCSD;
B. during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity, or on a District school bus, or at a District school bus stop;
C. through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the TCSD, meaning regardless of ownership, any

computer, computer system, or computer network that is physically located on school property or at a school-related or school-sponsored program or activity; or

D. through the use of data or computer software that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the District or school, if the bullying substantially interferes with or limits the victim's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by the District or school or substantially disrupts the education process or orderly operation of a school. This paragraph does not require a school to staff or monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program.

Definitions

Bullying: includes "cyberbullying" and means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one (1) or more students or employees. It is defined as any unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by an adult or student, that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; causes discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interferes with the individual's school performance or participation; and may involve:

teasing; threats; intimidation; stalking; cyberstalking; physical violence; theft; sexual, religious, or racial harassment; public or private humiliation; destruction of property; social exclusion

Cyberbullying: means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which includes, but is not limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of communication to more than one (1) person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one (1) or more person, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Cyberstalking: means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.

Harassment: means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:

- places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property;
- has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits; or
- has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying and Harassment also encompass:

- Retaliation against a student or school employee by another student or school employee for asserting or alleging an act of bullying of harassment. Reporting an act of bullying or harassment that is not made in good faith is considered retaliation.

- Perpetuation of conduct listed in the definition of bullying and/or harassment by an individual or group with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause emotional or physical harm to a student or school employee by: incitement or coercion accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the TCSD; or acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying or harassment.

Harassment also means: electronically transmitted acts (i.e., internet, e-mail, cellular telephone, personal digital assistants (PDA), or wireless hand-held device) that a student(s) or a group of students exhibits toward another particular student(s) and the behavior both causes mental and physical harm to the other student and creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student(s).

Sexual Cyberharassment: means to publish a sexually explicit image of a person that contains or conveys the personal identification information of the depicted person to an Internet website without the depicted person's consent, for no legitimate purpose, with the intent of causing substantial emotional distress to the depicted person. Sexual cyberharassment may be a form of sexual harassment.

Within the scope of TCSD: means regardless of ownership, any computer, computer system, or computer network that is physically located on school property or at a school-related or school-sponsored program or activity.

The remainder of this policy can be found in its entirety here: Taylor County School Board Policy 5517.01

CAFETERIA/LUNCH

The Taylor County School District has received a grant enabling all students to eat breakfast and lunch free of charge. This is for every child regardless of their economic status. Food and drinks should only be brought for lunch or snack and should be packed away in a lunch box that is not accessed during instructional time.

Parents/guests are welcome to have lunch with their child. All visitors must sign in at the front office to receive a visitor's pass. Parents/guests must have the security passcode, photo ID, and be approved through the RAPTOR screening process. Visitor passes must be worn on guests' shirts and be visible at all times. We have provided a designated area for parents and guests and encourage parents to eat with their child or children. **Other students are not allowed to join visitors during lunch.** Students are to remain on campus for lunch. Outside vendors are not allowed to deliver lunches to students. The side door of the cafeteria near the parking lot will be locked to ensure the safety of our students and staff. To check out the monthly menus visit on the district website or by clicking this link.

To ensure all students feel safe and are able to enjoy their lunchtime, the following expectations are set forth in the TCES cafeteria:

1. Students will enter the cafeteria in a quiet and orderly manner.
2. Students will stay in line until seated.
3. Students will stay at their assigned table and/or assigned seats, only getting up when permission has been granted by a staff member.
4. Students will use their inside voices when talking with other students.
5. Students will get and stay quiet when called to do so by staff members.
6. Students will raise their hands when they need assistance.
7. Students will dispose of all open food and drinks before exiting the cafeteria.
8. Students will use good table manners.
9. Students will help others remember the cafeteria rules.
10. Students **will not** share food that has been opened with others.

CLINIC PROCEDURES

Our school is proud of the clinic and health services offered to our students. These are the required procedures of the clinic:

a. All students must have an **Emergency Contact** form on file. This will allow the nurse to notify the appropriate people in case of an emergency. It will also list those people that the parent/guardian has given permission to sign-out the student in the event of an illness. Parents are expected to provide any changes in home or business telephone numbers to the school as soon as possible.
b. Written parental consent on a Taylor County School Board form is required before any medication can be administered. This school and district will not be held responsible for the effects of dispersing medication. NO STUDENT WILL BE GIVEN ANY MEDICATION WITHOUT A MEDICAL CONSENT FORM. Medication forms can be obtained by contacting the TCES clinic.
c. Parents are responsible for providing necessary medications in their original containers and bringing them into the clinic. ***Students* are *not allowed to bring any type of medication to the school***. For prescription medications, the bottle must have a legible pharmacy label with the student's name, dose, frequency, and the name of the medication.
d. Students are **not** permitted to carry medications of any kind in their pockets, backpacks, purses, lunchboxes, etc. during school hours or on the school campus. All medications are to be checked in with the school nurse in the clinic when brought to school. Inhalers are permitted only if the school nurse is notified and provided with required documentation from the child's physician.
e. The school cannot be held liable for civil damages as a result of administering such medications that have been provided by parents for administration at school with accompanying documentation.
f. Students with fevers are required to stay home.
g. If a student becomes too sick to stay in class, or is seriously injured, he/she will report to the clinic with a pass from his/her classroom teacher. The school nurse will notify the student's parent/guardian, so the student can be picked up from school by their parent/guardian.
h. Students may not go to the clinic between classes or at break time. They must report to their next class and receive a pass from that teacher to go to the clinic.

Accidents - Any accident occurring on campus or during school hours must be reported immediately to the teacher so that the proper accident reports can be completed, and the student can receive necessary first aid. If a student has school accident insurance, medical attention should be received within 30 days following the accident to receive benefits. Claim forms are available in the front office.

Head Lice - In accordance with Florida State Statutes and Taylor County School District Policy, students who have evidence of head lice shall not be permitted to attend class until presenting a current written notice from a doctor declaring the child to be free from head lice or being cleared by the clinic staff. Students with head lice are also prohibited from riding Taylor County School buses, so arrangements must be made for infected students to be picked up. Parents/guardians are strongly urged to obtain valuable information from the school clinic staff on the proper prevention, detection, and treatment of head lice. Students will not be marked present until they have been cleared by the clinic (or doctor with a written note) and are attending class.

COMMUNICATION

Parent/Teacher Conferences: Our teachers will make every effort to contact each parent during the first two weeks of school. The following guidelines ensure successful parent-teacher conferences:

a. Every conference **must** be pre-arranged so parents and teachers may bring all pertinent materials to the conference.
b. **"Drop-in" conferences during the school day are NOT permitted.** Parents, please respect the time just prior to or during dismissal from school when our teachers are busy supervising the whole class of students. A scheduled conference between parents and teachers will allow you the benefit of having the teacher's undivided attention and will be much more effective.

c. If parents or teachers want the principal, assistant principal, dean, or academic coach to participate in the conference, the teacher or parent should notify staff members in advance.

FOCUS Parent Portal: The FOCUS parent portal gives access to current information about your child's data, attendance, discipline records, and your latest grades. Additionally, teachers may share information about class instruction and activities using Focus's communication tool. It is imperative that parents check their Focus parent portal frequently to stay informed about their child's education. Report Cards and Mid-Term Progress Reports will be sent electronically via Focus. Visit: https://focus.taylor.k12.fl.us/focus

Parent/Teacher Communication Folder: Each Wednesday, teachers will send communication folders home with students to give to their parents. These folders will contain important feedback on assignments, tests, word lists, and other pertinent information about the student's progress and/or general school information. Parents are to review information, sign the folder and return the empty folder with the child the next day so it can be used week after week during the school year.

Phone/Phone Messages: Our schools use Focus Communication to notify parents about attendance and other school information. To stay informed of events and emergency situations, please make sure to keep your phone number and address updated as well as your email address in the parent portal.

Every classroom is equipped with telephone service. However, students will not be allowed to place calls by themselves. If a call is warranted, the teacher or school staff member will place the call and allow the student to talk to their parent/guardian. Telephone calls to the classroom are **not permitted** and will not be sent through from the front office. Instead, a message will be sent to teachers letting them know they received a call. Parents are encouraged to send the teacher a message using the parent portal to schedule a time for a phone call, rather than interrupt the learning process in the classroom. If there is an emergency, please call the TCES front office and a staff member will assist you.

Family Engagement Nights: TCES hosts quarterly Family Engagement Nights. Important information is shared at each Family Engagement Night, including but not limited to: how to access student grade and assessment data, activities to be implemented at home to reinforce literacy and math skills, and information about classroom and grade level activities and ceremonies.

CURRICULUM

TCES follows rigorous standards-based curriculum programs designed to improve and maintain students' reading and math abilities. Students are assigned to flexible reading and math groups for instruction at the appropriate levels. Each classroom will also utilize differentiated learning strategies to meet the needs of all students.

CUSTODY OF CHILDREN

School personnel are required by law to release children to either of their parents unless the school has on file a copy of a court order stating that one parent has been granted custody of the child.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Supervision of Students Begins	7:30 AM
Instruction Begins	7:55 AM
Lunch Blocks	3rd Grade: 12:15-12:45 4th Grade: 11:55-12:25 5th Grade: 11:40-12:10 Mutil-Grade Classes (Scott & Taylor): 11:35-12:05

Dismissal	2:30 PM

Students are expected to arrive at school before the instructional day begins. Drop off begins at 7:30 AM. Upon drop off, students who need breakfast will report to the cafeteria. Students who do not need breakfast will report directly to class.

Classes begin promptly at 7:55 AM.

Students late to school MUST report to the office and get a tardy. Students who have an excessive number of tardy days will be turned over to TCSD for truancy.

DISCIPLINE & DRESS CODE

Student Code of Conduct – can be found by visiting the link below, or on the district website.

TCSD Student Code of Conduct Approved by School Board 01/27/2026

Students and parents should be advised that a similar, but revised version, of the Student Code of Conduct is pending school board approval at the board's August 18, 2026, meeting. If and when the revised version is approved, it will take immediate effect and be followed for the remainder of the 26-27 school year.

NOTE: The principal has the final authority for determining consequences once a discipline referral is submitted by school staff.

DISTRICT POLICIES

Please visit Taylor County District website at www.taylor.k12.fl.us to see policies on:

- Statement of Non-Discrimination
- Equity Statement
- Maintenance of Student Records
- Location & Availability Student Educational Records
- Who can Access Student Records
- What Information is in a Student's Record
- Notification of Rights Under FERPA
- Authority to Remove Disruptive Students
- Alcohol, Mood-Modifying, or Controlled Substance on Board Property
- Student Use and Possession of Tobacco and Tobacco Products
- Dangerous Weapons in School
- Parental Notification of School Health Services
- AIDS Policy Statement
- Sexual Harassment Statement
- Gun-Free Schools Act

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

In the best interest of all, students should leave electronic devices at home. If a parent feels it is necessary for their child to have a cell phone at school, the following rule applies; cell phones must always remain off, out of sight, and in student backpacks during school hours. Students may also opt to voluntarily turn their phone in to their teacher(s) to hold until the end of the school day. If a student violates this policy the cell phone will be confiscated, and a parent will have to come to the school to pick up the phone. The discipline matrix will be followed for non-compliance. The school will not take responsibility for any electronic devices that are lost or damaged.

*Smart glasses, smart watches, or other similar devices will not be permitted for use in class or throughout campus.

ENRICHMENT WHEEL CLASSES

Physical Education - Structured activities, led by our highly qualified staff, are designed to make children aware of the importance of physical fitness. Our PE curriculum includes health education and a character education component as well as physical activities designed to teach the foundational skills of physical education. Students participate in the President's Physical Fitness Program each year.

Media (Library) - Our media center supports the academic curriculum of the school. Library programs provide a welcoming, resource-rich environment that supports multiple literacies, cultivates a culture of inquiry and literacy appreciation, and encourages the independent, ethical exploration of information and ideas. Students also have opportunities to check out books and participate in the Accelerated Reader (AR) program.

Computer Science - Students will have the opportunity to extend their learning beyond our core curriculum and intervention programs through our computer based instructional program. The purpose of this course is to enable students to develop basic skills in computer science.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NIGHT

As a Title I school-wide project, we will sponsor Family Engagement activities for you and your family. Our school will also be offering several meeting nights during the school year. Please consult your monthly newsletter, school Facebook page, and Focus Messenger for more detailed information about each planned activity. We look forward to your participation.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are a part of our schools' programs of activities; therefore, the same Code of Conduct required at school will be enforced during these functions. Only students who demonstrate appropriate behavior prior to the trip will be allowed to attend (per TCSD Student Code of Conduct). Bus rules are to be observed on such trips as well.

Parents will receive information regarding field trips in advance, and we encourage parents, if space is available, to accompany their children on field trips. Parents wanting their child to ride home with them may sign their child out during the trip or at the end of the trip, but all students are to ride to the event on the school (or charter) bus as they are participating in a school-sponsored event.

Some field trips are extracurricular and voluntary with parents funding the cost of their child's participation in the trip. Other field trips are curricular activities with every child participating in the field trip at no cost to the parents. A signed and notarized Field Trip Permission Form is required for any student going on any field trip or off-campus event.

GRADING POLICY

In accordance with the legislative ruling, the following grading procedure applies at TCES:

Letter Grade	Percent	Definition
A	90-100	Outstanding Progress
B	80-89	On Grade Level
C	70-79	Average Progress
D	60-69	Lowest Acceptable Progress
F	0-59	Failure
Additional Grades (Conduct and Enrichment Wheel Courses)		**Definition**
E	99-100	Excellent
S	90-98	Satisfactory
N	80-89	Needs Improvement
U	<80	Unsatisfactory

Grading Protocols for Grades K-5: *See Pupil Progression plan at www.taylor.k12.fl.us*

Report cards will be issued via Focus to your student on the school board approved calendar days shown on the District Calendar which can be accessed at www.taylor.k12.fl.us or the front of this handbook.

HOMEWORK

Homework is not graded; however, it is expected that students and families will review the skills taught throughout the week. Homework may include:

- Read AR Book
- Review math facts to improve fluency
- Review science skills taught

INSURANCE

Our schools and the Taylor County School District make available a school insurance plan for students. Participation in the school insurance plan is optional. The school district does not profit from your child's participation in this plan, nor do we control the process by which claims are handled. Parents who wish to participate in the Supplemental Insurance Program must complete and return the Insurance Registration Form as directed. The program has a time limit for participation. The website for this insurance is: www.schoolinsuranceagency.com.

LOST & FOUND

We would like to encourage students and parents/guardians to make sure all articles are properly labeled with the student's name, especially coats and jackets. All unlabeled items found at TCES will be placed in the lost and found area. Unclaimed items are donated at the end of the school year.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT & VOLUNTEERS

We enjoy and appreciate the support and involvement of families and friends. The TCES **Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)** is open to all school employees, parents, grandparents, neighbors, and friends that

help with fund-raisers, field trips, family night activities, recognition programs, teacher appreciation activities and a variety of other projects.

Serving on a **School Advisory Council (SAC)** is another opportunity for parents to become involved. By state mandate, our membership must consist of at least 51% non-school-based personnel. Parents, business leaders, and community leaders must make up this percent and must maintain a racial/ethnic balance based on the student population at the school. We also strive to balance the membership according to the socio-economic status of our students. The parents at large will be given the opportunity to vote after school begins. In accordance with the Florida Sunshine laws, our SAC meetings are always open to the public. All parents and other stakeholders are invited to attend these meetings. To improve accessibility, TCES will offer virtual attendance options to SAC meetings.

Volunteering in the classroom is another opportunity for parents to become involved in the school. Our staff will help to make your participation at the school a most enjoyable and productive experience. All volunteers will need to complete and return our Volunteer Survey and application and provide a copy of their driver's license. Once returned to the school, the application will be reviewed for approval. All parents/guardians are invited to attend monthly meetings with the **Taylor Elementary Parent Teacher Organization**. The school district will put into operation programs, activities, and procedures for the involvement of parents in all its schools with Title 1, Part A programs, consistent with section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Those programs, activities and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children. To view the policy in full please check the Taylor County Website at: https://www.taylor.k12.fl.us/parentalinvolvement

PROMOTION

Students are expected to make significant academic progress during the school year. Our academic curriculum is aligned to Florida's B.E.S.T. Standards. These standards identify the subject area skills to be mastered. A pacing guide can be accessed on the district website. Promotion for students in grades K-5 will be based on proficient achievement in classroom work as evidenced by the report card grade and acceptable levels of performance on state assessments.

Student retention will occur when the student does not fulfill promotion requirements as outlined above. Third grade students who score **Achievement Level 1** on the FAST ELA assessment will be given the Exact Path Reading and STAR Reading assessments in May. If they do not score in the 50th percentile or higher on these assessments, they will be scheduled to attend 3rd Grade Summer Reading Camp for 4 weeks in the summer. At the completion of the 4 weeks, they will be given the FAST ELA Retake, Stanford 10 Reading Test (SAT-10), and STAR Reading Assessment. Those who do not score at the required percentile (Level 2 or higher on FAST retake, 45th percentile or higher on SAT-10, and/or 50th percentile or higher on STAR Reading), must be retained in accordance with Florida State legislation.

There are only six "good cause" exemptions. A good cause exemption allows 3rd grade students to be promoted despite scoring a Level 1 on the FAST ELA assessment in accordance with Florida law. The available good cause exemptions are:

1. Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students with less than 2 years of English instruction.
2. Students with a disability with an IEP indicating BEST standards and assessments are not appropriate.
3. Students with acceptable performance of 45% on the SAT 10 or a 50% on STAR 360.
4. Students who read on at least a Level 2 as evidenced by portfolio documentation.
5. Students with disabilities who take the FAST and whose IEP, or 504 Plan says that they have received intensive remediation in reading for more than two years, but who still show a deficiency in reading and who were previously retained in kindergarten through grade 3.

6. Students who have received intensive remediation in reading for two or more years but who still show a deficiency in reading and who have already been retained in kindergarten through grade 3 for a total of two years.

REASONABLE ACCOMODATION PROVIDED

Individuals with a disability needing reasonable accommodations to participate in and enjoy the benefits of services, programs, and activities of the School Board are required to notify the administrator at the school/center at which the event or service is offered, in advance, to request reasonable accommodation. To assist parents in making informed decisions regarding their child's education, please refer them to the Taylor County School District website https://www.taylor.k12.fl.us/exceptionalstudenteducation (under information for parents) for placement, least restrictive environment, diploma options, FAST Waiver options and a list of contact organizations. **Teachers are responsible for reading all students' IEPs in their class within the first two weeks of school.**

REGISTRATION

All registration procedures and forms must be completed before the student attends school. An orientation is scheduled prior to the start of the school year to provide parents time to complete the registration forms. Any phone number or address changes occurring during the school year need to be promptly reported to the office to ensure that communication between school and home is not interrupted. You may send a note with your child or call the front office if information changes are needed.

RESTROOMS

Restroom facilities are available to students in each classroom. Each classroom teacher will develop his or her own policy regarding the method of use. It is the policy that any child will be allowed to use the restroom as needed *within reason*. Should your child have a medical condition or physical challenge which requires further restroom consideration, please advise the principal, clinic staff, and classroom teachers in writing.

SAFETY

Safety drills (fire and lockdown) will be conducted monthly throughout the year to ensure the safety and protection of students and staff.

Videotaping by the Taylor County School District on campus, in classrooms, and on school buses for instructional, safety, or security purposes is an accepted practice in the Taylor County School District.

SIGN-OUT POLICY

Early sign outs are strongly discouraged. When a student is signed out early, valuable teaching opportunities are lost, and they are still responsible for missing work. Please make every effort to leave your child in school until school dismissal time. However, if a child is sick (excused by clinic) or has a doctor/dentist appointment, a parent/guardian or someone that has written authorization must sign out the student to leave campus in the front office. Such sign outs will be UNEXCUSED until a note from the appointment is returned. Please be prepared to present a **photo ID and your child's Security Code**. The secretary will call the student to meet you in the reception area. If the student returns during the same school day (i.e., after a dentist appointment), then the student signs back in on the same log sheet in the front office. Teachers are directed **not** to release students from class without a call or notification from the reception area. For the safety of all students, parents/ guardians will wait in reception area for their child. **TCES WILL NOT ACCEPT SIGN OUTS AFTER 1:30pm, DUE TO END OF DAY PROCEDURES,** please make arrangements prior to this time**.**

SOCIAL MEDIA

You can follow Taylor County Elementary School on Facebook. Use this link: TCES Facebook

The Taylor County School Board has a YouTube page which is located at:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQGw6YQ2f1XUp2kRmHYXB7A

The Taylor County School District's Facebook and YouTube accounts are meant to be another source of information to the community, as well as a place for the district to engage with its stakeholders. We welcome the opportunity to hear from you and encourage your participation.

At the same time, we would like to establish some rules for engagement. We expect that the people who use our pages exercise civility and common sense when posting comments to our pages. Please remember that your comments can be viewed by many people in our community and are in the public domain. While the district does not want to limit the opinions or comments of its community members, certain types of comments will not be tolerated. We reserve the right to delete posts that:

- are vulgar or profane
- contain personal attacks or accusations
- could be offensive to or target specific ethnic or racial groups
- incite violence
- encourage others to break the law
- could be considered campaigning for a political office
- easily identify students and/or staff in defamatory, abusive, or generally negative terms
- promote services or products
- are rude or ridicule the opinions of others

Thank you for observing the rules of engagement and we welcome your participation and feedback. If you have any questions or concerns about our Facebook page, please email, or call the school.

TRANSPORTATION

Students transported by parents or guardians in vehicles must be dropped off and picked up in the area located in front of the school. We ask that you remain in your vehicle; please pull all the way forward and use the entire sidewalk to drop off your child. Parents are not allowed to use the cafeteria driveway to drop off students. **For safety reasons, parents are NOT allowed to walk their child to class. Students are also not allowed to walk up from the parking lot unattended or with an adult unless administrative permission has been given due to a student's disability.**

All bikes must be parked and locked in the racks provided in front of the school. Students may not ride bicycles through the bus loading area or through the courtyard. In the interest of safety, students may not ride scooters, skateboards, nor use skates or "skate shoes" at school.

Buses will drop students off and pick students up on the right side of the school (nearest the district office). Teachers will bring students to the loading area during dismissal.

Transportation Change Requests

To ensure safe and efficient transportation for all students, Taylor County School District will assign each student to one bus route and one designated pick-up/drop-off location.

Transportation Changes

Because many buses are operating at full capacity, the district is unable to accommodate frequent or last-minute transportation changes. Parents and guardians are responsible for coordinating transportation between residences when needed.

Approved Schedule-Based Arrangements
Preplanned and necessary schedule-based transportation arrangements, such as custody schedules or consistent alternative schedules, will continue to be allowed when approved in advance.

- Written documentation must be submitted to the school in advance.
- The arrangement must be approved by school administration and the transportation director.

Same-day Pick-up Requests
If your child needs to be picked up instead of riding the bus on a given day, please contact the school directly before 1:00 p.m.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we work to maintain a safe, efficient, and consistent transportation system for all students.

WITHDRAWAL PROCESS

The parent must request a withdrawal form from the front office on the last day of attendance. Books are to be returned to the library and individual teachers. Student records will be forwarded to the student's new school upon official written request from the new school.

Keys to a Great School-Parent Partnership

TCES Appreciates Parents who:



- Refrain from criticizing teachers, administrators, or the school in front of their child
- Follow the chain of command by first going to the teacher with concerns
- Call, e-mail, or FOCUS message when they have questions
- Encourage their child to take responsibility
- Say thank you, especially if someone has gone the extra mile
- Support consequences for inappropriate behavior
- Give important information that may help the teacher understand changes in the child's behavior
- Attend conferences and other extracurricular events in which their child is involved
- Are civil, courteous, and respectful