

Sterling Elementary School

2020-2021

200 W. Church Road

Sterling, VA 20164

Phone: (571) 434-4580

Fax: (703) 450-1583

Absentee Call-In Line: (571) 434-4581

Principal: Mrs. Jennifer Meres Short

Assistant Principal: Mr. Colt Fletcher

We expect Sterling Elementary Students to follow "SPOT" behavior: safe, polite, on-task, and trustworthy.

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|--------------------------|
| THIS PLANNER BELONGS TO: |
| Name _____ |
| Phone _____ |
| Address _____ |
| Grade _____ |
| Teacher _____ |

Loudoun County Public Schools

2020-2021 Calendar

August 27: First Day of School

September 4-7: Holiday (Labor Day)

October 12: Holiday (Columbus Day)

October 29: End of First Grading Period

October 30: Student Holiday (County-wide Staff Development)

November 2-3: Student Holidays (Planning/Records/Conference Days)

November 25-27: Holiday (Thanksgiving Break)

December 23- January 1: Winter Break (Classes Resume January 4)

January 15: End of Second Grading Period

January 18: Holiday (Martin Luther King Jr. Day)

January 19: MOVEABLE STUDENT HOLIDAY** (Planning/Records/Conference Day)

January 20: Holiday (Inauguration Day)

February 15: Holiday (Presidents' Day)

March 2: Student Holiday (County-wide Staff Development)

March 29-April 2: SPRING BREAK

April 9: End of Third Grading Period

April 12: Student Holiday (Planning/Records/Conference Day)

May 31: Holiday (Memorial Day)

June 15: Last Day of School/End of Fourth Grading Period

*NOTE: Parents with childcare or other weekday scheduling concerns – The date of the Moveable Planning/Records/Conference Day between first and second semesters may change if the school calendar must be changed due to school closings for inclement weather or other emergencies.

SCHOOL HOURS 7:50 am-2:35 pm

Students may arrive as early as 7:30 am but not before to ensure appropriate supervision of students.

STERLING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

We believe teaching is a collaborative commitment in which we positively impact the lives of students in a nurturing environment by respecting their differences, facilitating learning, encouraging growth, and discovering ways to give each child a bright, successful future.

*SCHOOL PROCEDURES**

ATTENDANCE and ABSENCES

All students have a responsibility to attend school each day. Parents must share this responsibility by stressing the importance of regular and prompt attendance and encouraging their children to be in school each day. Whenever a student is absent from school, documentation is required to verify the reason for the absence. Parents are required to notify the school as to the reason for the absence. This may be done through the school's absentee call-in line at (571) 434-4581. Any absence not confirmed by the parent will be considered unexcused. If the parent has not called the school to verify the absence, the school will make a reasonable effort to call the parent to verify the day's absence. Upon the student's return to school, a written explanation from a parent or guardian is required for each absence. The note should include: date(s) of the absence, reason for the absence, and signature of the parent/guardian.

Per LCPS School Board Policy §8-14, excused absences include: (1) Personal illness, (2) Death in the family, (3) Medical or dental appointments, and (4) Court appearances. In addition, the principal (or his/her designee) may excuse students who are absent for any of the following reasons: (5) Illness in the immediate family that requires the student to be absent, (6) Emergencies that require the student to be absent, and (7) Trips or activities that enhance or extend the student's education (when approved by the principal or his/her designee in advance).

If a student is absent for more than 10 days or 10% of the period, the school will send a letter to the parents and may require a physician's note for all further absences. At the principal's discretion, contact may be made sooner or waived due to extenuating circumstances.

At the point when a student accumulates five unexcused absences, a referral can be made to the Attendance Officer. In the case of unexcused absences, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has provided the following directives for the reporting of student unexcused absences:

- At five unexcused absences, the school is required to have contact with parent(s) and develop an attendance improvement plan;
- At six unexcused absences, the school is required to schedule and hold an attendance conference with parent(s) and student; and
- At seven unexcused absences, the school is required to report whether legal charges were initiated against the student, parent(s), or if legal charges were not initiated because the attendance improvement plan is in place and successful

Reasonable make-up work is required of students who are absent. Arrangements for making up work are made with the classroom teacher upon return to school.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT DROP-OFF and PICK-UP

Parents may drop off and pick up their students in the Kiss and Ride line in the loop on the gym side of the building. Please maintain a slow rate of speed, refrain from cell phone use, and only release your child from the car on the sidewalk side when staff members are present. At the end of the school day, your child will enter the car on the sidewalk side under a staff member's guidance. Please remember to display your child's name tag in the front windshield when picking them up at the end of the day. If you do not have a name tag, please request one. When leaving the side Kiss and Ride loop, remember you may only turn right. This is a mechanism put in place to ensure safety and keep a smooth traffic flow. Any time your child's dismissal

procedure changes from the normal procedure shared with the teacher, please send in a written note with your child. The safety of your students is of utmost importance.

BICYCLES

Students who do ride a bike must: walk the bike on school property, respect the rights and safety of pedestrians of all ages, and follow safety rules. Students must wear a helmet when riding bicycles. Bike racks are available; however, the school assumes no responsibility for bicycles stolen or damaged.

BIRTHDAYS

To minimize classroom disruptions and meet the needs of our students who suffer from food allergies, we are asking parents to please send in non-food items only for birthday treats if they choose to send in items. Unfortunately, we are unable to accept cake, cupcakes, cookies, and other sweets as birthday treats. Below is a list of recommended suggestions for your child's birthday treat: fun pencils, stickers, school supplies, recess equipment, a board game for the classroom, card games or bubbles. We ask you to refrain from bringing balloons as well. We appreciate your anticipated support as we ensure a safe and healthy environment for your students.

BREAKFAST

Breakfast is available between 7:30-7:50 am.

BUS

Transportation is provided for elementary children who are not residing in the walking zone as established by the Department of Transportation. Students must be at their bus stops at least five minutes before the regular pick-up time but no earlier than ten minutes. A bus pass must be requested from the office for a child to ride a different bus home. Students eligible for bus transportation are to consider riding the bus a privilege that can be revoked for misconduct. All bus riders receive appropriate instruction in safety rules the first week of school. Bus rules are also posted on each bus.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones or other personal communication devices should not ring during the school day. If you have a message for your child, please contact the office. Any cell phone used during the school day without teacher direction may be confiscated.

CHANGES

Any changes in a parent or guardian's phone, address, or approved emergency contacts must be reported to the school promptly in writing. This will assist us in case of emergencies.

CLINIC

The clinic is in the office area. It is attended by the Health Clinic Specialist. Parents or authorized adults listed on the emergency card are the contacts to pick up children who are sick in the clinic and need to go home. It is, therefore, important that the information on the emergency card is current. Please notify a school secretary promptly if there are changes in telephone numbers and/or persons to be notified in an emergency.

CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of the first quarter. We ask that teacher conferences are scheduled and prearranged. Feel free to contact your child's teacher or the office (571-434-4580) to arrange such conferences.

DAMAGE TO SCHOOL PROPERTY

Any student who causes deliberate damage to school property will be expected to pay for repairs or replacement, whichever is necessary.

DRESS CODE

The primary responsibility for the proper dress of students rests with the parent or guardian of each student. Please be sure that appropriate attire is worn, and in compliance with School Board policy 8270. Clothing should not cause a safety issue or disrupt the educational environment. Clothing that promotes smoking, drugs, or alcoholic products is prohibited.

EARLY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

When it is necessary to pick your child up for early dismissal, please write your child's teacher a note to be submitted on the morning of the appointment. When the parent arrives in the office to sign the student out, the student will be called to the office. Parents are not allowed to pick the student up directly from the classroom.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND GAMES

Extremely valuable articles, including electronic games, should NOT be brought to school. If they are brought to school and/or lost or stolen, the school will not be held responsible. Other electronic devices should only be brought in accordance with structures outlined for use of school-assigned devices and the BYOT initiative.

GUM

Chewing gum is not allowed at school or on the bus.

ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

School Board Policies address the possession, distribution and use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs by students. These policies clearly set forth the responsibilities of students and the consequences of violating the policies. Parents may review the policies in their entirety in the School Board Policy Manual located in the school library or online.

LIVE ANIMALS

Live animals may not be brought to school unless you have permission from the principal.

LOST AND FOUND

All personal belongings such as hats, sweaters, gloves, notebooks, lunch boxes, umbrellas, and purses should be labeled with the student's name. Lost and found items are kept in the cafeteria. Students should be encouraged to check periodically for lost items. At the end of each quarter, unclaimed items may be donated to charity.

LUNCH

Students may purchase a lunch with a choice of entrees. Checks should be made out to "The County of Loudoun." Soft drinks are not permitted in the cafeteria. Students are expected to exhibit appropriate table manners and SPOT behavior. For health reasons, and to maintain compliance with allergy guidelines, students are not to share or trade food.

MEDICATION

All medicine must be administered through the clinic. Prescription medicine must be in the original prescription bottle. A parent or guardian must bring all medication, prescription and non-prescription, to school. Students may not transport any medication to/from school. A medication form must be on file which indicates the student's name, purpose of the medication, dosage and time of administration, possible side effects and measures to be taken if side effects occur, and termination date.

MENU/NEWSLETTER/CALENDAR

The school menu, calendar, and newsletter are displayed on the website each month. This information can also be found on the LCPS website.

PARENT VISITS

Each visitor will be greeted through the AIPHONE where they will show identification and share the reason for their visit. A “visitor” badge must be displayed at all times while in the building. This is for the safety and security of the students.

PTA

The PTA is a positive and effective part of the school organization. PTA manages the volunteer program and serves as the school’s chief fund raiser. The PTA works to support the educational program by offering assemblies, incentives, and special purchases. Active participation in the PTA is an excellent way for a parent to become involved with the school in a supportive manner.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are published and viewable on ParentVUE. Interim reports may be sent during the marking period to communicate exemplary improvement or a regression in progress. If you have questions regarding report cards, please contact your child’s teacher.

SAFETY DRILLS

Fire drills are conducted once per week during the first month of school, and at least once a month after the first month of school. Lock-down drills as well as two bus evacuation drills are held each year. Tornado and earthquake drills are also held at least once a year.

SCHOOL HOURS

The school doors open at 7:30 am and the school day begins at 7:50 am and ends at 2:35 pm. However, to maintain student safety, bus riders will be dismissed at 2:35 pm and at 2:40 pm, car riders, York Street walkers, and daycare are dismissed followed by Church Road walkers at 2:45 pm.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Each student is given a list of basic tools and materials which are considered school supplies for the school year. We will happily and quietly assist any student whose family needs financial assistance in obtaining these supplies. If you have a need, please contact Mrs. Short, Principal.

SOLICITATION

Non-school related solicitation is prohibited.

TARDINESS

Students need to start their school day on time. Parents must share the responsibility for promptness. A student who arrives after 7:50 am must report to the school office where a tardy slip will be issued. Parents are requested to write a note explaining the student’s tardiness or accompany the student into the office.

Occasional tardiness for valid reasons is not a serious offense; however, repeated or habitual tardiness encourages the formation of undesirable personal habits and disrupts the orderly instructional process of the school. When a student arrives tardy, parents must escort their child to the office and assist him/her in obtaining a tardy pass to class. This is required to ensure the safety and well-being of the student. In addition, the school may require the parent or guardian to provide justification to

determine the reason for the child's tardiness. If this does not occur and documentation is not provided by the parent, the tardy may be considered unexcused. If a student is tardy more than 10% of the marking period, a letter will be sent to the parent as notification of the school's concern for the student's non-attendance, and a physician's note may be required. If the pattern of tardiness does not improve, a referral will be made to the Attendance Officer.

TELEPHONE

Students will only have access to the school telephone in the case of emergencies. Telephone messages will be delivered at appropriate times. Classes cannot be disrupted to relay a message to students or teachers except in emergencies.

TESTING

Students are administered both achievement and aptitude tests during the school year.

The following standardized tests will be given during the school year:

2nd Grade: Loudoun County Quarterly Assessments, CogAt, MAP

3rd Grade: Loudoun County Quarterly Assessments, Standards of Learning (Math, Reading), Naglieri, MAP

4th Grade: Loudoun County Quarterly Assessments, Standards of Learning (Math, Reading, Virginia Studies), MAP

5th Grade: Loudoun County Quarterly Assessments, Standards of Learning (Math, Reading, Science), MAP

The ACCESS test is given to all students in grades K-5 who are eligible for ELL services.

TEXTBOOKS

All books are loaned to students free of charge. The parent assumes responsibility of compensating the school for book loss and/or unreasonable damage.

THE CURRICULUM

Our plan of studies is based on Loudoun County Public School's curriculum. Loudoun County's curriculum is compiled from the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL's).

THE ARTS

The academic content areas alone are not enough to develop the full potential in every child. Sterling Elementary believes that the arts play a vital role. Students attend art class once each week and music class twice each week.

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

The lessons in Family Life Education curriculum are intended to teach basic social values. The information presented to students emphasizes the importance of the family as the primary unit of society. It also stresses the need for individuals to make decisions appropriate to values established within their families and to accept the responsibility for and consequences of their behavior. The curriculum encourages discussion to foster mutual support between the home and the school.

GIFTED

For students found eligible, a one-day a week gifted program (FUTURA) is offered at a nearby school for grades 4 and 5. In grades K-3, a teacher of the gifted works with the classroom teacher to develop the special academic talents of all students and to help identify and challenge gifted students (SEARCH).

GUIDANCE

The school counselor meets with individuals, small groups, and classrooms to provide guidance and counseling to students. In addition, the counselor is available to work with parents and staff.

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

Library hours are between 7:45 am-2:25 pm daily. Each class has a weekly scheduled library period. The librarian shares literature and provides library skills instruction. Students are able to use the library for research, individual, or small group projects.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical education instruction is given three days each week by the physical education teacher. A drug education and awareness program are taught in conjunction with health, physical education, and science.

READING

Sterling Elementary utilizes a balanced literacy approach through the implementation of Loudoun's Pathways to Reading and Writing. The Pathways framework helps teachers provide their students with specific skills to become better reader and writers. This balanced literacy approach includes large group, small groups, and independent activities during reading and writing time. Students work on a variety of skills including phonics and phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Components include writer's workshop, word study, independent reading, shared reading, read aloud which allows the teacher to model and focus on skills, and guided reading where the teacher guides the reading of small, differentiated student groups based on their appropriate level. Units of Study are the focus of mini lessons. The reading teachers work with students in literacy groups as well as serving in an instructional coaching role. The reading teacher is available for diagnostic testing of students, to assist teachers with strategies and materials, and to provide instruction to students.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Sterling has services available for students eligible to receive special education services. Students with disabilities are included in general education classes as much as possible as stipulated in their Individualized Education Plan.

TECHNOLOGY

Students have access to digital devices in the classroom to enhance learning. Interactive boards are used in every classroom to enhance instruction. An Instruction Facilitator of Technology and Technology Assistant are on staff at Sterling Elementary to provide additional instruction and support.

WORD STUDY

Sterling Elementary School uses a developmental spelling model called Word Study to teach children how to spell. Student's progress through stages of spelling development by moving from a reliance on sound to more pattern-based strategies as their experience with print broadens. Word Study is a natural bridge between reading and writing. It serves as the means for strengthening and advancing students' understanding of words so that they can read and write more fluently, as well as enhancing children's phonics, spelling, and vocabulary knowledge. Word Study promotes discussion, language appreciation, critical thinking, curiosity, and greater interest in reading and writing.

ENHANCED PROGRAMS

ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS AND FIELD TRIPS

With the help of the PTA, the school hosts assembly programs each year. We also have field trips at each grade level. Teachers incorporate these programs into their classroom instruction.

DARE (DRUG ABUSE RESISTANCE EDUCATION)

Fifth graders participate in a program taught by the Sheriff's Department based on the "Just Say No" national program. DARE is a state-wide program in Virginia and is highly acclaimed nationwide.

MUSICAL PROGRAMS

Students may participate in dramatic/musical programs or demonstrations during the school year.

SAFETY PATROL

Fifth grade students who qualify may participate as a Safety Patrol. The duties of the Safety Patrol are to ensure that students behave in a safe manner when coming to or going from school.

Loudoun County Public Schools
Department of Instructional Programs – Federal Programs
21000 Education Court
Ashburn, VA 20148
Telephone: 571-252-1080
FAX: 571-252-1635

Parent's Right to Request Information on Assessment Opt Out

On December 10, 2015, the *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015* (ESSA) was signed into law. Section 1112(e)(2) of ESSA states that parents of students in Title I schools have a right to know about state or division policies regarding student participation in any assessments mandated by ESSA, including any policy, procedure, or parental right to opt students out of such assessments. If you would like to receive information about this topic, please contact Leigh Bennett, Assessment Services Supervisor, either by phone at (540) 751-2590, or in writing at 20 High Street, Round Hill, Virginia 20141.

All students enrolled in Virginia public schools are expected to take the applicable state tests. The Virginia Board of Education Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia state:

"In kindergarten through eighth grade, where the administration of Virginia assessment program tests are required by the Board of Education, each student shall be expected to take the tests" and "each student in middle and secondary schools shall take all applicable end-of-course SOL tests following course instruction" (8VAC20-131-30).

The Virginia regulations do not provide for what is sometimes referred to as an "opt out policy" for students regarding the Virginia assessments. If parents refuse to have their student participate in one or more of the required Virginia assessments, they should be aware that their student's state assessment score report will reflect a score of "0" for any test that is refused.