



Ardent Elementary School Staff Campus Handbook

2026-2027

"Attitude is a Choice"

Ardent Independent School District

Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information that will help with questions and prepare the way for a successful year. Not all district policies and procedures are included. Those that are have been summarized. Suggestions for additions and improvements to this handbook are welcome and may be sent to the campus leadership team.

This handbook is neither a contract nor a substitute for the official district policy manual. Nor is it intended to alter the at-will status of non-contract employees in any way. Rather, it is a guide to and a brief explanation of district policies and procedures related to employment. These policies and procedures can change at any time; these changes shall supersede any handbook provisions that are not compatible with the change. For more information, employees may refer to the policy codes that are associated with handbook topics, confer with their supervisor, or call the appropriate district office. District policies can be accessed online at www.ardentisd.net.

District Information

POLICY AE

Ardent ISD Mission Statement

The mission of the Ardent Independent School District is to provide an educational environment that will enable all students to develop essential academic skills for a lifetime of learning and to prepare students to be responsible, contributing citizens in a diverse and changing world. The District is committed to maintaining high expectations of students as well as staff by demonstrating professional behavior and by supporting all students and school programs.

"Attitude is a Choice"

2026-2027 Staff Handbook Introduction

This handbook has been prepared for all staff members of Ardent Elementary School. It is provided so that employees have the knowledge and direction necessary to be successful in executing their duties and responsibilities. The handbook also explains the standard operating procedures used. The contents are based on the Texas Education Code, Board Policy, and the administrative procedures of Ardent ISD. It is also based on Ardent ISD's Employee Handbook distributed online by the Ardent ISD superintendent. This handbook is meant to supplement, not replace, the Ardent ISD handbook.

NEW FOR 2026-2027 The following items reflect recent Texas legislation and updated Board policy. Each is detailed in its own section: statewide cell phone restrictions for students (H.B. 1481), display of the Ten Commandments and a daily prayer or reflection period (S.B. 10 and S.B. 11), armed-intruder response and mental-health training requirements (updated safety statutes), the state's uniform grade-reporting and parental-notification expectations, artificial-intelligence acceptable use, and updated child-abuse and human-trafficking reporting duties. Where any handbook provision conflicts with state law or Board policy, state law and Board policy control.

Employee Attendance — Absences, Arriving Late, Leaving Early

Each employee has an obligation to provide the best possible education for every scholar, every day of the school year. Through daily attendance, we not only serve as appropriate role models for scholars, we also have an impact on the instructional program. Should the need arise to be late, absent, or leave early, please complete the Absence Request form and follow the procedures listed below. Personal leave (discretionary) may not be approved during critical events such as the first day of school, days before and during STAAR testing, the day before or after a holiday, the last day of school, special school-wide events, and similar occasions.

While we understand that emergencies arise, the professional nature of your job requires you to make formal preparations with the principal and senior administrative assistant so your class is properly covered during your absence. If you know in advance that you must be absent for more than three (3) days, you must personally complete the necessary form. Extended absences require special attention be given to your class, and we want to ensure that your substitute can remain in the class and that they are appropriate for the assignment. Additionally, you will need to confer with the principal and senior administrative assistant when these types of absences occur to be sure appropriate paperwork is filled out for your absence. The District considers all absences beyond 10 days in a

school year as excessive. The campus principal is obligated to notify Human Resources should this occur. Teachers will be docked if leave is unapproved. Please refer to the district handbook for information concerning this matter.

Should the need arise to be late, absent, or leave early, complete the district's Absence Request form and speak with the principal. Only the principal can approve an absence or give permission to leave campus. Contact **Ms. Reyna Caldwell** first at **(210) 555-4821** by phone. After informing Ms. Caldwell, immediately contact **Ms. Trina Holloway** at **(210) 555-6390**. Ms. Holloway will request the substitute.

Acceptable Use Policy (Technology)

Personal Use of Electronic Media

POLICY DH

The Ardent ISD technology resources will be used only for learning, teaching, and administrative purposes consistent with the district's mission and goals. The district will make available copies of the acceptable use policies for all users. Users are expected to sign this yearly. Access to the district's communications system is a privilege and not a right. All users are required to be aware of, understand, and comply with all administrative regulations governing the use of electronic systems. Noncompliance may result in suspension of access or termination of privileges with other disciplinary consequences consistent with district policies (see District Staff Handbook). An employee who knowingly accesses or brings prohibited material into the school's electronic environment will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with district, state, and federal policies and guidelines.

NEW FOR 2026-2027 **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Acceptable Use.** Staff may use district-approved generative AI tools to support planning, communication, and administrative tasks. Do not enter confidential scholar data, personally identifiable information, or protected records into any AI tool that has not been approved by the district. AI-generated content used with scholars must be reviewed by the teacher for accuracy and age-appropriateness before use. Scholar use of AI tools must follow the Scholar Code of Conduct and applicable grade-level guidance. When in doubt about whether a tool is approved, contact the technology department before use.

Scholar Personal Communication Devices

POLICY FNCE / H.B. 1481

NEW FOR 2026-2027 In accordance with Texas House Bill 1481, scholars may not use a personal wireless communication device, including cell phones, smartwatches, and personal tablets, during the instructional day. Devices must be silenced and stored out of view in a location designated by the campus (for example, a labeled classroom pocket chart, the scholar's backpack, or an office holding area). Staff will collect or direct storage of devices at the start of the day and return them at dismissal per campus procedure. Exceptions apply for a device required by a scholar's IEP, Section 504 plan, or individual health plan, or as directed by a licensed provider. Teachers should report repeated violations to the office rather than confiscating devices for extended periods; the office will follow the progressive process in the Scholar Code of Conduct. Staff are reminded to model the same expectation by keeping personal devices stored during instruction.

Accident Reporting

Please inform Ms. Caldwell, or a member of the leadership team, if you have an accident resulting in injury in or around the school. Accidents must be reported within 24 hours. All work-related accidents or injuries should be reported immediately to the supervisor first, then to the Business Manager. Employees who are unable to work because of a work-related injury will be notified of their rights and responsibilities under the Texas Labor Code. See Workers' Compensation Benefits for information on use of paid leave for such absences.

Announcements, Pledges, and Reflection

POLICY EC / S.B. 11

Each morning, announcements will be provided by a member of the leadership team and students. We begin with the Pledge of Allegiance, the Texas Pledge, and a moment of reflection. It is expected that scholars and staff stop and stand at attention when the pledge is said. Scholars who do not say the pledge, due to religious or philosophical

differences, should sit or stand quietly. If scholars are not participating, please make sure you have contacted their parents. Scholars should be attentive and respectful during these announcements. Anyone having items to be announced should submit the information, in writing, to the front office prior to needing the announcement.

NEW FOR 2026-2027 **Period of Prayer or Reading.** Consistent with Texas Senate Bill 11, the campus offers a designated period during which scholars and staff who have submitted a signed consent form on file with the office may pray or read a religious text. Participation is entirely voluntary. Scholars who do not participate will continue with a quiet, non-disruptive activity. Staff must not encourage, discourage, or comment on any scholar's choice to participate or abstain, and must supervise all scholars equally during this time. Direct questions about consent forms to the front office.

Arrival and Departure (Staff)

All staff members are responsible for duty. All staff members are expected to sign in upon entry to the building and be at their respective places by 7:30 a.m. (7:15 for Educational Associates) each school day in order to greet scholars, except those on duty. The typical workday is 7:25 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (7:15 to 3:45 for Educational Associates). All employees are required to work until the work for the day is completed, including faculty meetings, district meetings, after-school events, and other campus-wide events.

Staff members are on duty all day and should leave school only in case of necessity after obtaining approval from campus administration. If it is necessary to leave before 4:00 p.m., the principal must approve. If this is the case, please be sure to sign out in the office. If you leave the campus during your lunch or conference, you must sign out in the front office.

Attendance (Scholar)

The teacher is responsible for taking attendance. Attendance is monitored daily by the campus secretary. Teachers should take attendance at 8:45 a.m. If attendance is not taken by 8:45 a.m., the teacher will be notified by the attendance clerk to immediately take attendance. A daily report will be printed documenting the times teachers take or do not take attendance. The administrative team will be monitoring and addressing concerns as needed.

Awards

All awards at Ardent Elementary School are based upon the scholar's achievements and/or attendance. An Awards Assembly will be held at the end of the school year, with the exception of the Friday Dynamic Dillo of the Week and the perfect-attendance celebrations. Teachers will notify the parents of scholars receiving an award. The following criteria will be used for campus awards:

- **Armadillo of the Year** — Scholars who demonstrate the Dynamic Dillo characteristics all year. Each teacher will select one scholar from their class.
- **"Dynamic Dillo" of the Week** — Scholars representing the traits in the AES Creed and the campus-wide core values will be recognized during an assembly each Friday. One scholar will be recognized each week from each class. The first scholar will be chosen by the classroom teacher. Each scholar thereafter will be selected by the scholar who last received the award.
- **Perfect Attendance (all grades)** — Scholars who were not absent during the school year will receive a perfect-attendance trophy. This award will include attendance at other schools if it can be verified that perfect attendance was maintained. Tardies that are not excessive do not count against the scholar. The scholar must have been physically present every day, all day, during the school year. Each six weeks, scholars will be recognized with a celebration acknowledging their perfect-attendance achievement, and parents will be invited.
- **Outstanding Attendance (all grades)** — Scholars who were absent (excused) three or fewer times throughout the school year will receive an attendance medal. This award will include verified attendance at other schools. Tardies that are not excessive do not count against the scholar.
- **Gold Honor Roll (1st-4th grade)** — An honor-roll trophy for scholars who achieved all "A's" on their report card for the year and Excellent or Satisfactory in P.E., Art, and Music.
- **Silver Honor Roll (1st-4th grade)** — An honor-roll medal for scholars who achieved more "A's" than "B's" and Excellent or Satisfactory in P.E., Art, and Music.
- **Bronze Honor Roll (1st-4th grade)** — An honor-roll certificate for scholars who achieved more "B's" than "A's" and Excellent or Satisfactory in P.E., Art, and Music.

A Principal's Breakfast will be held in May for scholars who have earned A Honor Roll all year.

Other Awards (Classroom Specific)

In order to be consistent across the grade level and campus, we will present only the above-mentioned awards at the ceremony. Teachers are welcome to give out any other awards they would like in the classroom. Please inform parents that this is something you are doing independently. Scholars will receive incentives and certificates each six weeks to be included with the report card. These will be given by the incentives committee. The teacher is responsible for keeping track of which scholars receive incentives via the tracking sheet in the appendix.

Benchmark Assessment (CBA/CFA)

Scholars will be given periodic benchmark tests in the core subject areas of reading, writing, science, and math. The benchmark tests will assess whether scholars are acquiring the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) taught for a designated period of time. The results will be used to determine areas in which a scholar needs additional instruction or intervention. In reading, mathematics, and writing, scholars are assessed on the STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) in the spring semester. Dates will be published. Other assessments will be given according to district guidelines. Results of each assessment should be logged into the Scholar's Data Notebook and used to guide instruction.

Building Care

Our building is the responsibility of all staff, scholars, parents, and visitors. The appearance of the school, individual classrooms, and public areas is a reflection of our work with the children. It is what people see first. Please follow these guidelines:

1. Display items on appropriate hallway walls.
2. Prepare bright and attractive bulletin-board displays. These should be changed periodically according to units of instruction.
3. Items to be placed on walls in hallways and common areas, such as advertisements, must have prior approval of the principal.
4. No more than 25% of the hallway may be covered by posters, scholar work, and similar items (Fire Code).
5. Treat the floors gently. Avoid dragging furniture. Scholars leaving black marks on the floor should be directed to remove them by rubbing the sole of their shoe on the mark. A tennis ball will also remove marks.
6. Scholars should be instructed to leave the room in a manner easy to clean. They should pick up trash before leaving and be urged to keep the furniture, building, and common areas clean.
7. Classroom door windows should not be fully covered.
8. All food must be in a sealed container to avoid insects and rodents.
9. No open flames or candles are allowed in the building.
10. It is the responsibility of each grade level, department, and support staff to clean up after themselves in the workroom and lunchroom, including the refrigerator and microwave.

Building/Classroom Damage

When staff members note that the building or campus equipment is damaged, either by intention or accident, they shall communicate the damage to Ms. Holloway, who will complete a district work order if needed. It is the duty of staff members to supervise scholars so that damage to the school building, furniture, equipment, or other school property does not occur. Teachers are responsible for the appearance of their classroom and for seeing that the room is properly ventilated and lighted. Special needs may occur that require maintenance or custodial assistance; in such cases, enter a maintenance request as a work order.

Bullying Prevention and Intervention

POLICY FFI / TEXAS BULLYING LAW

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on or is delivered to school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by the District, and that:

1. Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; or
2. Is sufficiently severe, persistent, and pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating,

threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.

This conduct is considered bullying if it exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct, and interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school.

Bullying is prohibited by the district and could include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor spreading, or ostracism. In some cases, bullying can occur through electronic methods, called "cyberbullying," including bullying that occurs off school property or outside a school-sponsored event if it interferes with a student's educational opportunities or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the campus.

If a scholar believes he or she has experienced bullying or has witnessed bullying of another scholar, it is important for the scholar or parent to notify a teacher, counselor, principal, or another district employee as soon as possible to obtain assistance and intervention. The administration will investigate all reported allegations of bullying. Teachers who witness or believe they have witnessed bullying must report the incident to the principal immediately.

UPDATED Consistent with David's Law and current Texas Education Code requirements, the district will notify the parent of a scholar alleged to be a victim within three business days and notify the parent of the scholar alleged to have engaged in the bullying within a reasonable time. Anonymous reporting is available. Any retaliation against a scholar who reports bullying is prohibited.

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying has occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action when the behavior falls within the established authority of the school district. The administration will inform the parent if the behavior is outside the authority and jurisdiction of the district and advise on any known options for addressing the behavior. The district will contact the parents of the victim and of the scholar who was found to have engaged in bullying. Available counseling options will be provided to these individuals, as well as to any scholars identified as witnesses. The principal may, in response to an identified case of bullying, decide to transfer a scholar found to have engaged in bullying to another classroom at the campus. The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit bullying and to respond to reports of bullying with investigation and intervention as necessary.

Cafeteria (Dillo Den)

Breakfast as well as lunch will be served. All scholars are encouraged to eat breakfast in the morning. Scholars are served breakfast from 7:30 a.m. until 8:00 a.m. PreK and K may have different hours.

Lunch. The efficiency of our lunchroom schedule depends on following a strict schedule. Please do not alter the time schedule, as it will affect everyone. If for some reason your class is not going to eat in the cafeteria (field trip, reward, etc.), please notify the cafeteria and the principal two weeks in advance. Scholars should be escorted to and from lunch by the classroom teacher. Please do not leave scholars unattended in the cafeteria. Be sure a supervising teacher or other adult is present to oversee activities.

Scholars who accumulate excessive charges will not be allowed to continue charging. However, those scholars should not go without lunch; they will be given an alternate lunch.

When bringing your class to lunch, please follow these steps:

1. Line your class up with lunch boxes at the front of the line to help expedite the process.
2. Classes will be seated at assigned tables. All scholars must sit with their class.
3. Lunch monitors are responsible for dismissing scholars.
4. Please adhere to the given time schedule so everyone has ample time for lunch.

Eating in the Classroom. If you have a specific purpose for scholars eating in the classroom, the teacher must remain with the scholars. Teachers waive their 30-minute duty-free lunch in this situation.

Calendar — Master

There will be only one master calendar at our school; it will be maintained by the school secretary. To request calendar space, email a request to Ms. Holloway. The secretary will submit it to the principal for approval and then place the event on the master calendar. The master calendar is comprehensive. Information for the master calendar must be submitted two weeks prior to the event.

Campus Advisory Team (CAT)

The Campus Advisory Team is made up of grade-level representatives, special-education representatives, special-areas representatives, parents, community members, business members, and a representative from Central Office. Their role is to research issues of importance to the campus and make recommendations on how the campus should move forward. The CAT is essential to the formulation of the Campus Improvement Plan (CIP). As a faculty member, it is vital that you know who the CAT members are and how to bring issues to their attention. The CAT has regularly scheduled meetings, with additional meetings as needed. Minutes from all meetings are on file in the office and are open to the public.

Campus Improvement Plan (CIP)

The CIP is a living document that guides decision-making on this campus. Everyone is responsible for input and implementation. We will discuss the contents of the CIP quarterly during staff meetings. Teachers and staff members are welcome to assist in drafting the document. The Campus Improvement Plan is available at www.ardentisd.net.

Campus Committees

Ardent Elementary will have committees to represent the various interests and needs of faculty and staff. There will be a spirit committee that supports monthly staff celebrations. In addition, the following committees are established to support scholar growth, cultural awareness, diversity, and global citizenship:

- Events Committee (Hispanic Awareness, Multicultural Fair, etc.)
- CATCH Committee
- Dillo Choir
- Campus Beautification Committee
- Incentives Committee
- Student Council
- Safety Patrol
- Dillo Daughters
- Dillo Dudes
- Horticulture Club
- Art Club

Cell Phones, Emails, Text Messaging, and Phone Calls

Staff. Barring extenuating circumstances, staff members should not be on cell phones or other electronic devices during the work day, in accordance with the Ardent ISD acceptable use policy. Classroom phones should be set to low volume. The office staff will forward phone calls to voicemail. Only in emergency situations will you be called to the phone. Please check your mailbox twice a day. Phones are also available for your use in the lounge and workrooms. Regarding email, the Ardent ISD email system is only for District use. In accordance with the staff handbook, if electronic-media usage interferes with an employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Reporting Child Abuse of All Types

UPDATED It is the responsibility of campus personnel to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. A report must be made no later than 48 hours after the employee first suspects abuse or neglect. The number for the 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline is **1-800-252-5400**, and reports may also be made online at the Texas Abuse Hotline website. An employee may not delegate this duty to another person and may not rely on the campus to make the report on the employee's behalf. Failure to report abuse, neglect, or trafficking of a child is a crime, punishable by fine and/or imprisonment. Suspected human trafficking of a child must also be reported. If you are unsure what constitutes any form of abuse, neglect, or trafficking, consult the counselor. See the Ardent ISD staff handbook for more information.

Child Nutrition Policy

State guidelines from the Department of Agriculture regarding Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value (FMNV) do not allow scholars to be given candy or non-juice drinks during a school day. The current guidance prohibits competing with the school's federal feeding program.

Nurse Clinic Procedures

If a scholar becomes ill:

1. Give the scholar a clinic pass stating the time he or she leaves the class. The nurse will note the time the scholar is released when he or she returns to your class.
2. The school nurse is the only person at school who can send a scholar home for illness.
3. Scholars and teachers may not call parents to pick them up due to illness without the permission of the nurse. The school nurse will notify parents when their child is ill.
4. The nurse will confer with teachers who have scholars with severe allergies or medical issues. Teachers must adhere to the restrictions of the medical issue.
5. If a scholar brings a medical note or medicine, the teacher should notify the campus nurse immediately.

Sudden illness or serious injury:

1. The principal must be notified along with the school nurse. The nurse or clinic assistant will attempt to contact the parents or guardians using listed emergency phone numbers.
2. The school nurse and administrator, possibly after consulting with the parent or guardian, are responsible for determining if emergency medical assistance is needed.

Life-threatening emergencies:

1. In life-threatening situations when there is no time to consult with the nurse or administrator, the employee responsible for the scholar activity will exercise judgment as to whether emergency medical assistance is needed. The employee must still notify the nurse and administrator of the actions taken.

Classroom Celebrations

Without prior principal approval, three classroom parties per year are allowed, as outlined in the Ardent ISD Scholar/Parent Handbook. Foods of minimal nutritional value are not allowed in designated food-service areas where reimbursable meals are served or consumed. Do not allow scholars to distribute personal party invitations unless all children, or all boys and/or all girls in the class, receive an invitation. Parents may bring treats to school in honor of a birthday, as long as the treats comply with FMNV guidelines. All treats must be store-bought and will be served during the last few minutes of the school day. Special deliveries, including but not limited to balloons, flowers, and candy, are not allowed in classrooms; if these items are brought to school, they will remain in the office until the end of the instructional day. Teachers must remain sensitive to the backgrounds and preferences of families who restrict celebrations. Parents must be notified if any non-TEKS or non-curriculum-related celebration is to occur, and an appropriate alternative activity must be provided and discussed with parents.

Collection of Money, Deposits, and Disbursement of Funds

At various times during the year, you will be required to collect money from scholars for school pictures, fundraisers, and the like. In order to avoid the opportunity for theft, money is **not to be kept in your room**. All money needs to be turned in to the office each day. Permission from the principal must be obtained before any contracts or commitments for exchange of money with vendors occur.

Confidentiality — FERPA

District employees are directed to keep scholar information confidential. Only staff members with a legitimate educational interest should discuss matters related to individual scholar demographic data, academics, discipline, and social, emotional, or behavioral information. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law in place to protect the privacy interests of parents and scholars with regard to educational records. More detailed information can be found in Board Policies. At no time is it appropriate to berate or list your personal opinions about scholars. You are entitled to your own feelings, but not entitled to share them with others at school. If you feel it necessary to discuss scholar concerns, please see the counselor.

Crisis Management Plan

POLICY CKC / EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

Fire drills, disaster drills, intruder drills, and other types of drills will be held according to District policy. In the event of a tornado or storm alert, the playground will be cleared and all scholars will return to their homeroom to await further instructions. Each classroom will have a diagram showing exit routes. Ardent ISD uses the Standard Response Protocol.

Scholars should be regularly instructed as to class procedures for emergency situations.

- Evacuation drills prepare scholars for actual emergencies such as fire, bomb threats, and gas leaks.
- Fire drills and disaster drills should be practiced beginning the first week of school and consistently throughout the year.
- There will be a minimum of one fire drill per month.

Drills or evacuations will be announced as follows:

- The fire alarm will sound for fire drills.
- Tornado and lockdown drills are announced over the intercom. An emergency that requires a lockdown may occur without warning and may not give staff time to announce it. Analyzing a situation and the data presented may indicate that a lockdown is necessary. Anyone may institute a lockdown if they believe a dangerous situation will ensue.

When the signal to evacuate the building is given, scholars and teachers should leave the room immediately, close the classroom door, and follow the route shown on the evacuation diagram. Teachers are to take the emergency bag and roll sheet with them so the class roll can be checked to verify everyone's presence. Scholars and teachers should move to the safe zone, then turn to face the building. Scholars should stay in line (quick walk, no talk) and wait for the all-clear signal before returning to the building. It is the responsibility of each teacher to instruct scholars in fire prevention and safety, including fire-drill procedures and conduct during drills.

UPDATED Campus Safety and Armed-Intruder Response. Consistent with Texas Senate Bill 11 and House Bill 3 and current Texas Education Agency school-safety requirements, the campus maintains a multi-hazard emergency operations plan, conducts required mandatory intruder-detection audits, and holds drills on the schedule set by the district safety and security committee. Every classroom and interior door capable of being locked will remain locked or lockable during instruction. Staff will complete annual safety training that includes active-threat response and, where assigned, mental-health first aid or comparable training. A silent panic-alert system is available in each instructional space; know the location and use of the device nearest you. Report any door, lock, or safety-system deficiency to the office the same day.

Copier and Copy Paper

Each person is authorized to use the copier located in the staff workroom. The copier needs care in order to work properly. Please ask for assistance from the office staff if the machine is experiencing difficulties.

Correspondence

A copy of all correspondence to be distributed to staff or scholars must be provided to a member of the leadership team for review and approval. It is important for teachers to constantly explore new ways to involve parents in their children's schoolwork. A weekly or monthly newsletter is an expectation. Daily correspondence to parents regarding work and progress is encouraged; these notes do not need the principal's approval unless the content is sensitive or you are in doubt about the wording. Notes sent to the whole grade level must be given to the principal for review, with a copy for the file.

Custodians

Ardent Elementary has a wonderful team of custodians. Custodians empty trash, sweep rooms, spot mop and mop, clean boards, dust, clean carpets, and empty pencil sharpeners. Maintenance items will be handled with a work order completed by Ms. Holloway.

Daily Schedules

Daily schedules are used by office staff to locate teachers or scholars in cases of emergency, and by administrators to schedule data walks, walkthroughs, and observations.

- Grade-level teams are to follow a consistent daily schedule.
- Daily schedules are to be visibly posted outside every classroom and updated as needed.
- A copy of your daily schedule should be provided to Ms. Holloway.
- Daily schedules should be specific as to what is being taught and follow the master schedule.
- Daily schedules should not be changed unless administration has been notified and has approved. Changing a schedule may affect special-education teachers, reading specialists, and other predetermined schedules.

Defibrillator

The district requires all schools to have a defibrillator easily accessible for use in an emergency. They are uniformly placed on the wall by the cafeteria doors in all schools. The Medical Emergency Team and nurse are trained in its use.

Discipline Philosophy

It is our belief that any discipline plan should be enforced as consistently as possible. It is also important that discipline plans be flexible enough to take individual needs and differences into consideration. The Discipline Plan is developed from a sense of PRIDE:

- **P** — persevere
- **R** — relate
- **I** — influence
- **D** — determine
- **E** — engage

Campus Procedure

When a scholar's behavior becomes a problem, use the following process:

1. Have a one-on-one restorative conference, outside the view and hearing range of others, with the scholar.
2. After the first contact has been made, if no change in behavior is noted, restate the problem and desired changes. Assign a consequence for the inappropriate behavior.
3. Contact the parent for a phone or personal conference.
4. Refer the scholar to the office.
5. Parents should not hear about the scholar experiencing difficulty for the first time from the office.

When referring to the office, call, email, and send a note with the scholar so there is no confusion between the adults. There will be occasions when you cannot follow this procedure and the scholar should be referred immediately to the office, for example: physical altercations, threat of severe harm to self or others, possessing any dangerous object at school, possession of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, and possession of weapons.

In-School Suspension

In severe or recurring discipline cases, ISS may be used. ISS is social isolation for a scholar in the hope that it will deter unacceptable behavior. Teachers are not to assign ISS. Scholars will complete a social-emotional lesson while in ISS. There is no academic penalty for a scholar in ISS; therefore, the following process should be followed:

1. Scholar placed in ISS by administrator.
2. Grade-level material will be given to the scholar and the homeroom teacher notified of the placement.
3. The homeroom teacher, at his or her next break, must gather appropriate assignments and directions.
4. After the ISS period is complete, the teacher should collect and grade the assignments.

Classroom Guidelines

1. Basic classroom rules and consequences are to be established and posted in the classroom.
2. Classroom rules must be communicated to parents.
3. Group punishment is prohibited.
4. Behavior-management practices that involve the embarrassment or humiliation of a child will not be tolerated.

Playground Rules

The following rules should be reinforced by each adult responsible for supervising outside. Staff should be separated and able to monitor all parts of the playground at all times. Post playground rules for your scholars and be consistent in enforcement.

1. Strict compliance with the school philosophy and district guidelines.
2. Throwing anything at anyone is unacceptable, including sand, balls, and rocks.
3. Chase, tag, and other organized running activities are not allowed on pavement areas.
4. Use playground equipment for activities for which it was designed.
5. All organized games should be played on the blacktop or field.
6. Games of soccer, tackle, or any other game in which scholars routinely get hurt should be closely monitored or are not allowed.
7. No games should be played in areas out of view of an adult.

Cafeteria Rules

1. Walk directly to your assigned table and be seated.
2. All conversation should be conducted in a normal speaking voice. Level 1 voices are appropriate.
3. Raise hand for permission to leave your seat or to get assistance from an adult.
4. Keep your eating area clean.

Lunch Supervision Guidelines

1. Use an attention-getting signal to get scholars' attention.
2. Dismiss scholars one class at a time after surveying their eating area.
3. Remove or relocate scholars who are too loud or otherwise disruptive. A warning outlining the specific behavior is appropriate.
4. Recognize positive behaviors frequently.
5. Keep focused on supervision of the scholars.
6. Scholars are to raise their hands for permission to get up from the table after being seated.
7. Scholars other than those taking regular medications need a nurse pass or note to go to the clinic.
8. Keep eating utensils in hand to reduce the scholars' need to get up from the table.

Emergency Lesson Plans

Emergency lesson plans are separate plans kept in the office in case of your unexpected absence. In the event that an emergency occurs and you are unable to prepare lesson plans for a substitute, every teacher is required to file three days of emergency lesson plans with the office clerk. These plans should be on file by the Friday before Labor Day and should include the following:

- Daily schedule, including special areas
- All duty assignments (time, place, and responsibility)
- Morning routine and bell schedule
- Map of the building
- Seating chart
- Dismissal plan showing how students get home (the office staff should also have a copy)
- Extra activities for scholars who finish early
- Emergency exit procedures
- Names of two reliable scholars and a nearby staff member to contact for assistance
- Other pertinent information you deem necessary

Extracurricular Activities

Ardent Elementary will provide extracurricular activities to scholars once the instructional day has ended. These activities include but are not limited to:

- Chess Club

- Robotics Club
- Art Club
- Choir
- Student Council
- Coding Club

Although these activities are not required, staff members are encouraged to sponsor one of the clubs to enhance scholars' connections to school and foster relationships with scholars outside their own classroom or grade level. Remember, we are teaching the whole child.

Faculty Meetings and Trainings

At Ardent Elementary, every effort is made to ensure that faculty meetings are professional-growth experiences. Attendance at faculty meetings, team meetings, and planning is required so that everyone receives the same information and materials. Sign-in sheets will be distributed at every meeting; failure to attend 90% of faculty meetings and trainings will result in an unsatisfactory rating on the summative evaluation. Teachers will be notified in writing prior to the summative conference.

Field Trips

All off-campus field trips must be approved in advance by the principal. Each grade level must decide on a grade-level field trip. The trip must be educational and tied to the curriculum. Staff can secure field-trip request forms from the office. A copy of the form should be submitted to the principal for approval at least one month in advance. The Director of Transportation will determine final availability of buses. Teachers should have a complete itinerary to be sent home with scholars along with a permission form. No scholar may leave campus without a signed permission slip. A note signed by the parent will suffice as long as it has the date, parent signature, and states that the parent gives permission for the child to go to the specified location.

All trips should be scheduled to depart from school no earlier than 8:45 a.m. and must arrive back at school no later than 2:00 p.m.

Field trips and activities are scheduled to be an extension of the school curriculum. All scholars must ride the school bus. Adults may be asked to assist if extra supervision is necessary. Any adult attending a trip must complete the online volunteer application and pass the required criminal-history background check before the trip. Parent chaperones may ride the school bus; however, siblings of scholars may not. The final decision concerning adult participation will be made by the classroom teacher and/or principal. Adults who help on a field trip may not bring other children. Parents or relatives who assist are expected to follow the direction of the teacher and follow all school rules. No adult should be left alone with a group of scholars who has not been cleared. All adults are to be a model for the scholars, must stay with their assigned group, and no one is allowed to curse, smoke, vape, or drink alcohol on the field trip. Any parent attending must receive a letter stating the expectations.

Scholars should be aware that field trips are an extension of school and therefore all rules apply. If you are concerned about a scholar attending a field trip, discuss the matter with the principal before excluding anyone. Be conscious of your responsibilities for supervision on the trip, including the bus. There is a mileage limit allotted for field trips.

Grading Requirements

Key Understandings

Daily Grades (Formative Grades) are grades earned during the learning process. Daily grades can be given for daily work, guided or independent practice, quizzes, labs, draft essays, and draft compositions. All campus teachers will collect a minimum of two daily grades per week, for a total of 12 grades per six-week period.

Major Grades (Summative Grades) are assessment grades earned after instruction has taken place to determine what students know, understand, and can do at one point in time. Major grades can be given for major projects or products, unit assessments, final essays, and final compositions. All campus teachers will collect three major grades per six-week period.

Unit Assessments (replacing CBAs) are assessments given to students at the end of each unit of instruction, aligned to our adopted and viable curriculum.

Elementary Grading Weights (Non-Negotiables)

Grade Type	Weight	Frequency
Daily Grades (Formative)	35% of six-weeks grade	2 per week, 12 per six-week period
Major Grades (Summative)	65% of six-weeks grade	3 per six-week period

Additional Language Arts Requirements

- **1st and 2nd Grades:** Reading grade is 75% of the Language Arts average; Written/Oral Communication is 25%, of which spelling is 5%.
- **3rd and 4th Grades:** Reading grade is 50% of the Language Arts average; Written/Oral Communication is 50%, of which spelling is 5%.

REVIEW Grade-reporting practices follow the district's uniform grading guidelines and Texas Education Code requirements that a district's grading policy allow a reasonable opportunity for make-up work and re-assessment. Grades must reflect a scholar's relative mastery of an assignment and may not be changed by an administrator except as permitted by law and Board policy.

Within 10 days of receiving a failing grade, students will receive intervention and be given the opportunity to redo or complete an alternate assignment in lieu of the failing grade, without a student or parent request, due to the student's age. The average of both grades, the original and the redo, will be the new grade earned. Teachers have five days from the day the failing grade was entered in the gradebook to submit the Assignment Redo Request Form. This will be monitored by administration for compliance.

Scholar Failure Criteria

Parents must receive notification if scholars are receiving a failing grade on the progress report or report card. Every available avenue should be used to contact parents, and documentation of the effort of contact, as well as confirmation of contact, must be recorded in the district reporting system. A conference must be scheduled with a parent or guardian of scholars who fail during the grading period, and documentation will be submitted to your appraiser or principal.

Make-Up Work

Make-up assignments or tests shall be made available to scholars after any absence. Teachers shall inform scholars of the time allotted for completing make-up work after an absence (three days for each day of absence). Corrections completed for grades shall be performed at school, after re-teaching.

Grade-Level Meetings

Grade-level teams will meet every week to ensure coordination and uniformity of instruction, materials, and resources, as well as to address scholar academic progress and needs. All team members are expected to attend and actively participate. Minutes are to be recorded on a standard form provided by the principal, and the team leader will submit minutes to the principal. Grade-level leads will facilitate the meetings with support from the instructional and literacy coaches as needed. Teams are to submit wanted or needed instructional items to the instructional leadership team to ensure training is appropriate to their needs.

Grade Placement Committee

The Grade Placement Committee meets in April and May to decide what is in the best interest of each scholar. Forms will go out for teachers to list all scholars they have concerns about. The GPC reviews each child's information, then decides if the child needs summer school for promotion, or if the child should be retained or placed. The GPC members are the administrator, counselor, intervention teacher, homeroom teacher, and parent.

Health

For injuries of a non-serious nature such as a cut, scrape, abrasion, or bloody nose, the child should be sent to the clinic for first aid. If the situation warrants, another child may accompany the injured child to the office. If a child suffers an accident of a serious nature, such as the possibility of broken bones, unconsciousness, or any injury where movement may aggravate it, do not move the child. Instead, notify the office by intercom, radio, or scholar messenger, and the office will send assistance.

If an accident occurs that requires medical attention or for the parents to pick up the child, an Accident Report Form will be filled out by the nurse. All scholars sent to the health office must have a health slip, with the exception of an immediate emergency; otherwise the scholar will be sent back to the classroom. Children may not bring medicine, including cough drops and aspirin, to school unless medical forms are filed. Any and all authorized medications will be kept and administered in the clinic. Medication may only be administered as per doctor's orders on file. Send all parents or scholars with medication directly to the clinic.

Homework

Purpose

Homework should be something scholars can do independently. It should be work that has previously been guided or modeled by the teacher so there is reasonable assurance that scholars will practice correctly. Should scholars need assistance, homework should also be something parents or guardians can readily assist their children with. The homework policy is designed to help each child reach his or her academic potential and develop habits of self-discipline and responsibility, and to foster increased communication between school and home.

Common purposes for homework are:

- To develop independent study habits
- To reinforce or practice classroom learning; when assigned for practice, it should be structured around content with which scholars have a high degree of familiarity
- To prepare scholars for new learning
- To elaborate on content that has been introduced or studied

Responsibilities

- The principal and teachers are responsible for the implementation of the homework policy on a class-by-class and individual-child basis.
- The parent's or guardian's responsibility is to facilitate and monitor their child's completion of daily homework assignments. Teachers will monitor the finished product daily and provide feedback in a timely manner.
- The parent or guardian, the scholar, and the school all share responsibility for providing the opportunity for the scholar to be successful.

Expectations

- Regularly assigned homework (Monday through Thursday evenings)
- STAAR practice opportunities as appropriate for the age of the scholar (grades 3-4), likely increasing a few weeks before STAAR administration
- An assignment sheet may be used for daily monitoring and communication

Recommended Study Times

Grade	Recommended Time	Days
Kindergarten	15 to 20 minutes	Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
Grade 1	20 to 25 minutes each evening	Monday - Thursday
Grades 2-3	35 to 45 minutes each evening	Monday - Thursday, including study and test prep
Grade 4	45 to 60 minutes each evening	Monday - Thursday, including study and test prep

Keys and Proxy Cards

The secretary will provide appropriate keys and proxy cards for teacher use. Keys cannot be duplicated, and all keys must be returned during final teacher checkout. Scholars are not to use teachers' proxy cards to enter the building at any time. Teachers may be charged by the district for lost keys or proxy cards.

Leaving School During the Day (Scholars)

Since the school has legal responsibility for all scholars, scholars who leave school for any reason must sign out in the office so the school is aware of their absence and destination. Scholars may not leave without written permission

from parents. Only in emergency situations will the school phone parents to obtain permission for a scholar to leave. Scholars who leave school without parent permission or without signing out will be skipping part of a class, a class, or classes. Such an absence will be unexcused and the scholar will be disciplined. Refer to the District Scholar Code of Conduct for discipline.

Lesson Plans

Lesson plans are to be turned in weekly on Fridays by 3:45 p.m. in your teacher folder for the following week. Plans should include, but are not limited to, the lesson frame ("I will, we will" statements), the gradual-release model of the lesson cycle, recognize-and-reinforce opportunities, formal and informal assessment, and research-based best practices.

There are two kinds of lesson plans for the regular teacher, plus a third kind for substitute teachers.

1. Long-range plans

- Are for a week, month, semester, or year.
- Provide a tentative itinerary of what and when.
- Must be continually monitored and adjusted.
- Include distributed practice.

2. Daily plans

- Determine, based on today's lesson, what will be taught tomorrow.
- Should represent the next step beyond what the scholars already know.
- Involve decisions about what to include and exclude for a clear presentation that speeds learning.

The daily planning process consists of mental steps that, depending upon teacher expertise and style, may or may not need to be recorded. The extent of written detail should be determined by the teacher and principal.

1. **Diagnose.** Ascertain the next new learning needed by a scholar or group of scholars.
2. **Task-analyze.** Break a broad generalization or concept into subsets or sub-skills, then into long-term objectives and daily objectives.
3. **Set the daily objective.** Confirm there is a good purpose, that the scholar can transfer the concept or skill, and that the objective is small enough to teach in a 20- to 30-minute lesson. Write the objective so observable validation can be made that learning has taken place.
4. **Check independent practice.** Confirm the practice requires the new learning, that scholars have the necessary skills, and that it requires thinking rather than guessing.
5. **Plan practice.** For a 20- to 30-minute period of independent work, plan mass practice of the new objective with varied activities and practice of different objectives.
6. **Distribute practice.** After the information is initially learned, distribute practice over a long period to increase retention.

Library

The goal of a school library is to guide children as they become independent lifelong library users and avid readers. All scholars and teachers are encouraged to make full use of the Ardent Elementary Library and its resources. The librarian will distribute a schedule providing the library period for each class. Teachers are to remain with their scholars during the library period.

Lounge

The employee lounge is off-limits to children. They may not use the soda machine in the lounge. Employees with children at Ardent Elementary should remind their children to stay out of the lounge. Please do not purchase sodas for scholars from these machines or send children to the lounge to purchase a soda for you. Keep the lounge clean by picking up after yourself.

Mailboxes — Faculty/Staff

Mailboxes are located in the workroom. Your mailbox should be checked at least three times daily to ensure important communications are received in a timely fashion. Under no circumstances should scholars be sent to check

a teacher mailbox. Please do not let mail accumulate. Scholars are not allowed in the workroom; employees with children at Ardent Elementary should remind their children to stay out. Any formal written communication placed in staff mailboxes must first be approved by an administrator.

Medicine at School

All medication must immediately be delivered to the school nurse upon arrival at the school. At no time shall a scholar have in his or her possession any form of medication, whether non-prescription, prescription, herbal substance, or dietary supplement. All medication should be brought to school by a parent or guardian and kept in the nurse's office. A medical release form or letter from the parent or guardian, giving a written request to administer the medication, must be signed and must include the scholar's name, date, name of drug, and the time and dosage required.

A scholar with asthma or severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) may be permitted to possess and use prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication at school or school-related events only if he or she has written authorization from a parent and a physician or other licensed health-care provider on file with the school nurse. The scholar must also demonstrate to the provider and the school nurse the ability to use the medication, including any required device. The school nurse or health professional will notify you if a scholar fits these criteria.

News Media

The district has a Communications Office responsible for the district's relations with all local, state, and national news media. All inquiries from the news media, especially those that are controversial in nature, should be handled by or referred to the Communications Office. At no time is an administrator or employee to contact the news media on his or her own to release negative or controversial information about a school, department, or the district, unless he or she has the consent of the Superintendent, **Dr. Marcus Vance**, or the Assistant Superintendent, **Ms. Priscilla Marsh**.

Newsletters and Webpage

- It is expected that grade levels create a monthly newsletter.
- Send all written communication home in the Thursday folder.
- Possible newsletter topics include upcoming units of study; math and literacy tips; ESL tips and vocabulary study; a calendar of upcoming events; study tips; upcoming programs and assessments (screeners, STAAR, benchmarks, TELPAS, etc.); scholar and parent recognitions; parent instructional tips and strategies to use at home; and parent-involvement activities.

Parent Night

The purpose of Parent Night is to provide parents and guardians with end-of-grade-level expectations. Parents should leave the evening knowing what their child should be able to do by the end of the school year. The focus is on learning more than administrative issues like discipline or schedules. Specific instructions will be given by the building administrator. In order of priority, information presented should include:

1. Exit-level objectives for the grade level.
2. Criteria for grading (what counts and how much).
3. Skills that can be practiced at home to help speed learning.
4. How a parent can best work with the child at home.
5. The discipline-management system that will be used.
6. A handout of the child's daily schedule.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The purpose of the PTO is to provide parents, guardians, and teachers a bridge to connect. The PTO is a vital part of our school community, and all staff members are expected to participate.

Playground / Recess

UPDATED Consistent with Texas Education Code recess and physical-activity requirements, scholars in full-day programs receive daily unstructured recess. It is required that you allow scholars unstructured play each day, with time for travel and restroom breaks. When scholars are at recess, teachers are to monitor scholars with the utmost vigilance and stand in an area that allows full visibility. This is not an opportunity for teachers to take breaks or congregate in small groups. Circulate throughout the area to ensure scholars are being safe.

All staff are to abide by the campus playground rules:

1. Scholars must engage in structured games with safety in mind to meet the requirements for PE.
2. Whole classes may use the playground equipment. Coordinate times to ensure equitable use of campus facilities.
3. If the ball jumps the fence, call an adult to get it.
4. Make sure you have an attention signal and scholars are given directions on how to proceed when they hear it.
5. Structure activities to include all scholars.
6. Adhere to the master schedule.

Organizing scholars into groups is helpful in monitoring the large number of scholars on the playground. Coach is available to help grade levels organize stations for activities, which cuts down on accidents and keeps scholars engaged.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

Grade levels will meet with the instructional leadership team each week to discuss scholar data and planning to ensure uniformity of instruction. During these meetings we will analyze scholar data, review scholar data notebooks, choose a standard to monitor for the next few weeks, and plan instruction during intervention. This time will also be spent looking at strategies used by teachers, best practices, and possible scholar misconceptions. These PLCs do not take the place of grade-level team planning and meetings. Please adhere to the campus PLC schedule.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

The purpose of implementing PBIS at Ardent Elementary is to enrich the lives of scholars by building a more positive school culture and to create collective responsibility among all stakeholders. As part of this initiative, we will recognize one scholar each week from each homeroom during Dynamic Dillo Fridays. Posters will be placed in all common areas to remind scholars of expectations.

Progress Reports

Progress reports are an important communication tool between the school and the home. At the end of the third week of each reporting period, a progress report will be sent to all parents. A parent-teacher conference is required after the first report card, and each six weeks for failing scholars or scholars in danger of retention. Educational accountability is enhanced by frequent calls or emails to parents informing or updating scholar status; in certain cases, calls or emails will be a requirement. Document such parent contacts and make contact within 24 hours. Be sure to include behavioral information on the progress report, particularly if the scholar is in danger of getting an "N" or "U" in the General Conduct section. Be timely in entering grades and honor the dates for posting.

Promotion / Retention

Please see district policy.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued every six weeks.

Failure Rates

Please keep in mind we must not exceed a 10% failure rate. While we realize that scholar effort and cooperation is a must, what you do as a teacher in the form of intervention is important as well. Please let the administration know how we can assist you. Some suggestions for scholars who may be failing include:

- Documenting parent contact
- Including the scholar in multiple small-group rotations

- Placing the scholar in RTI for extended monitoring
- Placing the scholar on an administrative contract for extra monitoring
- Placing the child in small-group counseling sessions focusing on academic achievement

Report Card / Progress Report Reporting Dates

See the District Calendar.

Responsibilities of Grade-Level Chair / Team Leader

- Represent the grade level at campus leadership meetings.
- Take notes at meetings and share with team members who may be on duty or absent.
- Share or secure information with and from other teachers in the grade level.
- Schedule a grade-level meeting at least once every week to coordinate and share concerns outside the weekly team meeting.
- Order grade-level materials and maintain inventory.
- Inform the office of all grade-level special activities and ensure the administrator has a copy of every note sent home.
- Act as textbook coordinator for the grade level.
- Set the agenda for team meetings and submit grade-level notes to the principal.
- Make arrangements for grade-level field trips.
- Provide the librarian with grade-level needs for audio/visual materials.
- Arrange and keep grade-level materials organized.
- Plan grade-level schedules for special activities.

Responsibilities of All Teachers and Staff

- Turn in lesson plans as specified.
- Stay current on professional research and reading.
- Adhere to all IEP-required modifications for scholars with disabilities.
- Prepare notes to be sent home for parents.
- Arrange and keep organized classroom materials.
- Check in materials at the end of the school year.
- Collaborate on grade-level plans for improvement of curriculum and instruction.
- Plan as a team weekly.
- Maintain professional dress and behavior. Jeans are only allowed on Friday or other days as specified by administrators.
- Provide a caring, positive climate and discipline in a positive way.
- Participate and cooperate in campus professional development.
- Meet as required for planning, collaboration, committees, and curriculum alignment.
- Keep recorded grades up to date using the gradebook (two grades per week per content). These grades are available to parents.
- Maintain required records in compliance with policies.
- Be punctual to school, duty, meetings, and turning in requested items.
- Check your email frequently throughout the day.
- Participate in PTO meetings, Literacy Night, Math/Science Night, and all other campus events.
- Complete any additional duties as assigned.

Response to Intervention (RTI)

RTI is a tiered framework for service delivery that is systematic and data-based for identifying and resolving scholars' academic or behavioral difficulties through implementation of scientifically based instructional practices based on the individual learner's needs. This framework provides high-quality instruction and intervention matched to the scholar's needs, frequent assessment through progress monitoring to make decisions about changes in instructional strategies

and goals, and child-response data applied to educational decisions, including special-education eligibility determination for scholars suspected of having learning disabilities.

Key Components of RTI

- The use of teaching methods and interventions proven to work because they are research-based.
- The tracking of progress of scholars receiving the interventions.
- The use of data derived from monitoring scholar progress to make important educational decisions, including providing more intensive interventions when progress is not adequate and considering special-education resources when a scholar does not respond to interventions of increasing intensity.

RTI meetings will be held every three weeks. RTI protocols can be found on the district's webpage.

Safety and Security

All visitors to the campus are required to report to the office and obtain a picture-ID sticker. This includes spouses, friends, and relatives. Greet all visitors and ascertain if they have the appropriate badge. If the visitor does not, let them know a visitor's badge must be obtained from the office. Offer to walk the person back to the office if you can, or call someone immediately to do so.

UPDATED All visitors, contractors, and volunteers are screened through the district's visitor-management system, which includes a sex-offender registry check, before being issued a badge. Exterior doors remain locked during the instructional day. Staff must not prop open or bypass any exterior door and must challenge or report any person in the building without a visible badge.

Purses and personal items of value should be kept locked. Equipment and other valuables should be stored daily in areas that are safe, away from windows, or in a locked area. Staff will be trained in the Standard Response Protocol, which should be posted in every classroom.

Science Lab / Classrooms

Science materials are designed to enhance the science-education program. Communication of, and adherence to, safety and security procedures is necessary for education to be safe and efficient for everyone. Supervision, lessons on lab safety, lab-safety contracts, lab orientation, and posted lab guidelines are all essential elements of safe and proper lab use. Grade-level leads should report to the principal when items have been depleted.

Selecting Appropriate Enrichment Materials

The following guidelines will assist you in making suitable choices of films, videos, graphic art, music, internet content, and other media used in the classroom.

1. Use materials that carry the "G" rating.
2. In the event that parents do not grant permission for their scholar to watch a "G"-rated film or film clip, an alternate assignment must be provided.
3. Under no circumstances should "PG-13," "R," or "X"-rated materials be used.
4. Board Policy EFE (Local), Copyrighted Material, must be adhered to.
5. If you are uncertain about the appropriateness of material, seek assistance from the librarian or principal.
6. The lesson plan must reflect how the enrichment materials help teach or elaborate the objectives and TEKS.
7. If a parent questions the appropriateness of material, provide information pertaining to item 6.
8. All videos must be cleared through the office and approved by the principal at least one week prior to the date shown. Teachers should not have a television on during school hours when scholars are present unless pre-approved by an administrator.

Sexual Harassment

POLICY DHC / DIA

Sexual harassment will not be tolerated at Ardent Elementary School. District information is contained in Policy DHC (Legal/Local). There are laws protecting employees and scholars against any form of harassment. If you ever feel you have been harassed at Ardent Elementary, confer with a school administrator immediately. District policies are

available for review on the Ardent ISD website.

Split Class Lists

A copy of a split class list should be created and kept on or near your desk. The split list should be updated as the class roster changes to ensure the safety and learning of scholars when teachers are absent and a substitute is not available. Provide updated copies of this list to the front office as changes occur.

Substitute Folder

In addition to your lesson plans, please have a clearly labeled folder turned in to the office by the end of the third week of school with information for a substitute. Make sure your plans are updated periodically. Your substitute folder should include:

1. A copy of the daily instructional schedule, including special pullout activities such as library and computer lab.
2. Schedules for special scholars with times they go to resource, speech, etc.
3. Modifications for scholars with special needs.
4. Lunch and duty schedules.
5. Discipline plan and forms to be used.
6. Calendar of special activities.
7. Meaningful supplementary activities to be used if time allows.
8. Other pertinent scholar information, such as a food allergy.

Supplies and Materials

If certain supplies or materials are needed for instruction, submit a request to the campus secretary at least one week prior to the date needed. If materials are purchased with your own money, prior approval must be received in order to be reimbursed. The district only reimburses up to \$100. A receipt is needed, and sales tax will not be reimbursed.

Take-Home Folders

1. Ardent Elementary will have take-home folders provided by the school.
2. Thursday is the required day for distribution of the folders to ensure consistent communication across all grades. Information for distribution will be placed in your mailbox by Wednesday afternoon.
3. Take-home folders should also include graded work.
4. Teachers should include communication with parents.

Technology Procedures and Expectations

Classroom tablets and laptops are for instructional purposes only. Teachers can use them for administrative tasks as well. These systems are pre-loaded; please do not load anything without proper licensure. Ardent Elementary has additional computers available in the library, and the librarian will provide a schedule based on programs and scholars' needs. Please adhere to the schedule at all times. Teachers are expected to implement technology to enhance instruction. If training is needed, contact an administrator so we may facilitate campus training as needed.

Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS)

Volunteers in Public Schools are vital to the school climate and scholar success. Please encourage your parents to become volunteers. All volunteers must complete the online application and pass the required criminal-history background check before working with scholars.

Websites

Websites should include information about the class schedule, assignments and major projects, rules of the classroom, conference period, and other pertinent information to assist parents and scholars. All photos and postings must adhere to District policy. Staff photos should be dignified and adhere to the standards expected of a District

teacher and staff member. Teachers are expected to update websites each week.

Wellness Program

A wellness program is approved for employees and scholars at Ardent Elementary. Activities and events for participants will be generated by the coach and the CATCH committee. Ardent ISD encourages staff and community members to be a part of the Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) initiative.

Please see the District Employee Handbook regarding all other policies and procedures not addressed in this handbook. Where any provision here conflicts with the Texas Education Code, federal law, or Board policy, those authorities control.

