



BLANTON
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
AUSTIN Independent School District

**PARENT-
STUDENT
HANDBOOK
2021-2022**

**Victoria O’Neal,
Principal**

**Daniela Ruiz,
Assistant Principal**

**Matthew Kenny,
Assistant Principal**



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Dear Blanton families,

Our dedicated teachers and staff recognize that a successful school results from an active partnership with parents. To enhance and promote this partnership, this student handbook describes procedures and systems to better meet the needs of students, parents, and staff. It is our promise to you that we will make every effort to ensure that your child has a quality learning experience. Any change in procedures will be communicated to you through office memos and/or bulletins.

Please read carefully the information contained in this handbook and keep it for future reference. If you have any questions or suggestions concerning any information in this handbook, please contact me personally at victoria.oneal@austinisd.org or 512-414-2026.

Sincerely,

Victoria O'Neal, Principal

Pandemic Procedures

Until further notice, the COVID procedures will be as follows:

- Students will be dropped off at the front door.
- Parents may not have lunch on campus.
- We will provide “front porch” office services.
- To the greatest extent possible, conferences and meetings will be conducted virtually or by phone.

These procedures will be re-evaluated at such time that our students have the opportunity to be vaccinated (with adequate time for full efficacy) or the pandemic fades to Austin-Travis County Stage 1 restrictions.

Registration Information

Students must be registered at Blanton before they can attend classes.

The following items are needed for registration:

1. Birth Certificate
2. Immunization Record of up to date vaccines
3. Proof of Residence – A lease, property tax statement or an electric bill
4. Parents’ Identification Card
5. Proof of Income (only PK3/4) for qualification purposes only
6. AISD Withdrawal Card (only students from other AISD school coming after school begins)

Parent/Community Involvement

Blanton Elementary encourages and promotes parent and community involvement through partnerships, donations, mentoring, and volunteering. Multiple opportunities are provided throughout the year for parent participation in school life. You are highly encouraged to attend all community/school events.

Campus Advisory Council

The purpose of the Campus Advisory Council (CAC) is to involve the professional and clerical staff, parents, and community members in establishing and reviewing the campus’s educational plans, goals, performance objectives, major classroom instructional programs, and school budget. It also assists the principal in developing, reviewing and revising the campus improvement plan. The CAC is made up of parents,

community, and professional staff representatives who serve staggered two-year terms. All parents are invited to the meetings. Parents wishing to place an item on the CAC agenda must inform one of the co-chairs at least two weeks prior to a meeting. Meetings are held monthly, usually the first Thursday of the month at 5pm. The CAC is an advisory group, and the principal makes the final decision for any CAC recommendation.

PTA

All families are encouraged to join the PTA. The PTA is established to support Blanton staff, students, and families and provide volunteer and fellowship opportunities. You can learn more about events and join the PTA at: <https://ptablanton.ptboard.com/>

Rules for all Students

Respect Self: Blanton students respect themselves. They share ideas, tell the truth, act responsibly, stay healthy, and take responsibility for their own actions.

Respect Others: Blanton students respect others. They work and play cooperatively, listen to the ideas of others, and recognize the value of differences among people.

Respect Environment: Blanton students respect their environment. They are respectful of all their surroundings.

AISD Code of Conduct

The AISD Student Code of Conduct sets forth the rules of student behavior and the consequences for rule violations. Parents may review the Student Code of Conduct at the following link:

<https://www.austinisd.org/family-support/conduct-code>

Blanton Discipline Policy and Procedures

It is the school policy that consequences of a student's behavior should be meaningful and consistent with his or her social and emotional development and with the AISD Student Code of Conduct. Individual guidance and behavior contracts may be entered into between teacher

and student or between teacher, student and administrator as deemed necessary.

Unacceptable student behavior may result in, but is not limited to, the following: reflection time in a classroom; removal from class to the principal or assistant principal's office; lunch or breakfast away from the class; discipline referral; written explanation of behavior with alternative methods to handle situation; counseling on an individual or small group basis; In-School Suspension; a letter of apology.

Consequences for severe or chronic disruptive behavior, fighting or bringing a weapon to school, include (but are not limited to):

- Immediate removal from the classroom
- Immediate notification of parents by phone
- Conference with parents, teacher, student and administrator before student may return to school.
- REFERRAL TO CHILD STUDY TEAM meeting (members of this team are the principal, assistant principal, counselor, teachers, and other support personnel as needed) to discuss needs and develop an action plan to address behavior of concern.
- Suspension and/or removal to district alternative school for one to three days

Parents, please monitor what your children bring to school with them each day. If an item shoots a projectile (object) of any type, it should not be taken to school. Even if an item is appropriate in a martial arts class (e.g., nun chucks, throwing star, etc), it should not be taken to school.

Possession of these items may result in disciplinary action, and in some cases, require police involvement. Please see the Student Code of Conduct for more information.

Parents and students should refer to the AISD Student Code of Conduct for more information on unacceptable behaviors and the consequences for such behaviors.

Bullying

Definition: Bullying means a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means or physical conduct that a school district's board or the board's designee, the principal or other appropriate administrator determines:

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;
2. Is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for a student; or
3. Infringes on the rights of the victim at school; and
4. Includes cyberbullying.

This conduct is considered bullying if it:

1. Interferes with a student's educational opportunities; or
2. Substantially disrupts the operation of a classroom, school, school-sponsored or school-related activity.

Bullying can have long lasting results for many students. These acts cause feelings of anxiety, fear, and shame in the students who are targets. They interfere with concentration, inhibit full participation in class and interrupt academic and social learning.

Reporting & Retaliation. Bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Students who believe they have been the target of bullying by a student, employee or the school district, or any third party on the campus should immediately contact a counselor, teacher, or school administrator. Anyone may report bullying, and Blanton Elementary encourages any person who has seen bullying, has knowledge or belief of conduct which is considered inappropriate, or thinks another student may feel uncomfortable or unsafe to report the problem to school administrators, teachers, counselors, or staff members. Students are not required to talk about the problem in front of the person who hurt or offended them.

There is no time limit on making a bullying report, but reporting the problem as soon as possible helps Blanton Elementary in investigating and finding correct information. Upon receiving any report of bullying, a school administrator will investigate and make a written recommendation. The name of anyone who reports a problem will be kept secret to the greatest extent possible.

No retaliation. Blanton Elementary will not tolerate retaliation for reporting bullying. School staff will discipline any student who acts against anyone who reports an incident or who testifies or helps in an investigation. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to; any form of intimidation, revenge, or harassment, whether physical or verbal.

Tattling vs. Reporting. Blanton Elementary defines **tattling** as telling an adult about another student's actions with the sole purpose of getting that student in trouble.

Blanton Elementary defines **reporting** as telling an adult about another student's actions with the purpose of getting help with a difficult situation, e.g., one that is perceived by the individual making the report as threatening or hurtful. We are committed to take all cases of reporting seriously to keep our students safe.

Student Searches and Seizures

Purses and Backpacks: Student purses and backpacks brought to school are subject to reasonable search by a school official (principal, assistant principal) when he or she has established reasonable cause to believe the student is violating or has violated a student code of conduct rule, school rule or law. *New Jersey v. T.L.O.*, 469 U.S. 325 (1985); *Coffman v. State*, 782 S.W.2d 249 (Tex. App.-Houston [14th Dist.] 1989). Parents should remind students not to bring items to school that are in violation of the student code of conduct (guns, knives, weapons, drugs, etc).

School Desks: School desks are school property and as such may be searched periodically for contraband (i.e. illegal items) and for overdue or missing books, stolen items, and spoiled food. As desks are school

property, the student and parent are on notice that there is a diminished expectation of privacy in the use of the desks. **Highly valuable items toys and/or items with sentimental value should remain at home as the school is not responsible for the loss or theft of such items.**

Any contraband found in plain sight will be confiscated and the student may be subjected to disciplinary action.

Counseling Services

Our counselor serves as facilitator to help students resolve their own problems and make their own decisions. She/he provides counseling services one-on-one or in small groups. Students can request counseling services or be referred to the counselors by the teacher, parents, or an administrator. For more information regarding counseling services, parents may call the school office at 414-2026.

Parent/Teacher Communication

Weekly Folders

Teachers send weekly folders home with each student on Thursday. This is a communication instrument between the school and home. Along with student work and the class newsletters from the teacher, the folder may contain notes from the principal, calendar of school events, AISD information, and/or community communications, etc.

Parents are to carefully read the information in the Weekly Folder. This system is designed to improve home/school communication by packaging information and sending it home on a particular day. If you do not receive a Weekly Folder, be sure to ask your child where it is.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Communication between parents and teachers is essential for each student's progress. Parent/teacher conferences are held in the fall and spring of each year, on the dates indicated on the AISD calendar. At the conference, the teacher, the parents and the student discuss the child's strengths and areas of need, and review work portfolios to include student growth. Together they develop an action plan for the child and record the plan on a conference summary sheet. In the event that a parent is unable to attend a scheduled conference with the teacher, the conference can be rescheduled at a mutually agreeable time.

If a child has learning or behavioral difficulties, additional conferences can be scheduled at a mutually agreeable time. Teachers have a conference period during the school day and are also available after 3:20 p.m. Morning drop off and dismissal are not appropriate for conferences as teacher must supervise their students at this time.

Back-to-School Night (Parent Information Night)

At the beginning of the school year, parents are invited to attend a Back to School Night in their child’s classroom. At that meeting, the teacher provides parents with information about the curriculum for the school year and the methods and programs used by the teacher to implement the curriculum. This is not a conference opportunity.

Communication with Administration

The Blanton administrators listed on the cover have an open-door policy for all student caregivers. We want to partner with you, your child’s teacher, and your child to have the best learning experience here at Blanton. If you need to speak with an administrator, please contact us at 512 414 2026 or by email.

Class Creation and Teacher Assignments

The Blanton staff works collaboratively to create class lists and teacher assignments that are balanced and fair. Students are assigned to a teacher and a class after much consideration and deliberation. Feedback about future placement may be sent to the principal for consideration, but teacher requests by name will not be accepted.

Occasionally students are reassigned during the year due to gaining or losing a teaching assignment or to best meet student needs. Final placement is up to the principal, in collaboration with teaching staff.

Daily Schedule

- 7:25 a.m. Doors open for students to report directly to class
- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast in the classroom
- 7:40 a.m. Students not in class are tardy and **must** report to the school office. Morning meeting begins in class.

3:10 p.m. Dismissal--Car pick up in the circle drive and walk-up pick up at the side gate

Make Plans for After School

Elementary school children need the security of knowing exactly what to do when the school day is over and should be reminded of how they will go home. If after school routines change for your child, please write a note to your child's teacher and update registration info in the office. In order to have optimum instruction, classes cannot be interrupted. Therefore, messages phoned to the office will not be delivered until the end of the day. A predetermined plan should be made for rainy days. Children who miss their bus or carpool should be instructed to go to the school office for assistance.

After School Care

Extend-a-Care offer a daily, on-site, after-school program from 3:10 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.

<https://www.austinyymca.org/branches/extend-care-ymca>

Creative Action offer a daily, on-site, after-school program from 3:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.

<https://creativeaction.org/programs/after-school/>

BASE offers a daily, on-site, after-school program from 3:00 p.m. until 5:45 p.m. You may obtain information about this program by calling their office at 512-826-2692.

Local daycares also provide pick-up services from the school. Please contact their offices so see if that service is offered.

Arrival at School

The school day for students is from 7:30 a.m. to 3:10 p.m. The doors open for students at 7:25 am. Parents should not leave students unsupervised prior to that time. For the security of all students and staff, parents should drop off their students at the door. There will be staff members posted at various areas of the school to guide your student to their designated areas. All students should arrive through the front door. Be mindful of traffic safety when dropping students off.

Dismissal

All students are dismissed at 3:10 p.m.

Teachers will supervise students at the dismissal area until 3:20. Students remaining at that time will be taken to the office to be supervised.

Everyone at dismissal will have a yellow Blanton card to identify the students to be picked up. Extra copies of the cards are available for car pool, grandparents, nannies, etc.

Car pick ups will come through the front circle drive. Staff members will call students to meet their cars.

Walk up pick ups will come to the side gate and staff members will call students to meet their pick up person.

For efficiency and safety, it is important that families stick with one dismissal location.

Students in grades 3-5 and younger siblings may walk or ride bikes home, with clear authorization by the parent to the teacher.

Parking

Please do not leave your car unattended in the circular drive at any time during the day. If you need to come to the office please park on the street. **Please respect the neighbors' yard and driveways.**

Tardy Policy

Persistent tardiness is **not** acceptable.

A child is tardy if he arrives after the 7:40 bell and will need a tardy slip from the office to be admitted to class. A student with three or more unexcused tardies in the same grading cycle will not be considered for perfect attendance for that cycle. When a student is picked up during the school day, it will be counted as a tardy. The exceptions to this are for medical appointments, for which a doctor's note is required as proof. Other than these medical appointments or late buses, there are no excused tardies. This is AISD policy, not a campus policy.

Absences

Attendance is checked every day at 9:30 a.m. If a student is not present at that time, the student will be counted absent, unless the student has been out to see a physician. A child brought to school at any time during the school day with a doctor's note for that day will not be counted absent. A note from a parent or guardian explaining absences is required when a student returns to school. A note must be brought to school within two days of absence to be considered excused.

When your child is absent, please call the school office before 9:00 a.m.

Bus Information

Students living two or more miles from the school and within the school boundaries are eligible for bus service. Transfer students are not eligible for a school bus. The school office has copies of the bus routes and designated stops.

Rules for Riding the Bus

In order to ride the bus, students must abide by the following rules:

- Stay in your seat
- Keep head, hands, and feet inside the bus
- Do not throw objects inside the bus or out the window
- Do not eat or drink on the bus
- Do not engage in destructive behavior
- Be courteous
- Cooperate with the bus driver
- No loud talking or profane language
- Bus driver is authorized to assign seats

Consequences of Rule Violations

If a student violates a rule, the bus driver will report the violation to the school administration, the student will have a conference with the school administration, and the student's parents will be notified. For a second offense, the student may be suspended from the bus, the student's parents will be notified, and the school staff will issue a written warning of consequences for future violations. For a third offense, the student will be suspended from the bus for up to three days. For the fourth offense,

the student may be suspended from the bus until an agreement is reached between the student, parent, principal, and bus driver. Parents will be responsible for the child's transportation to and from school if a suspension from the bus occurs.

Appropriate Dress

Students should wear appropriate dress for an active school day. Close toe shoes are required for PE day and strongly recommended every day. Students will have recess and WOW outdoors every day, and open toed shoes can be a safety hazard or cause discomfort on the gravel track or playground.

On Fridays, it is Blanton Spirit Day. Please wear a navy, white, or school-branded shirt.

The AISD Board of Trustees has adopted a district dress code.

<https://www.austinisd.org/family-support/dress-code>

Parents of students not dressed appropriately will be contacted to bring a change of clothes or students will be given clothing to wear if any is available on campus.

All students, particularly students in 2nd and below, should pack an extra change of clothes in their backpack in the case of accidents.

Meals at school

The school cafeteria delivers breakfast to the classrooms. Students will have breakfast in their classrooms from 7:30-8:00 am. Lunch is served from 10:30 a.m. until 1:20 p.m. with each class having 30 minutes for lunch. Appropriate table manners are expected at all times. Students may not share food.

All students are provided breakfast and lunch free of charge. The AISD food service department provides high quality meals, including scratch made recipes and local produce.

<https://www.austinisd.org/nutrition-food-services>

Students enrolled in after school programs will be provided a hearty snack in the afternoon.

Students may bring a packed lunch and snack as well.

Our school participates in CATCH (Coordinated School Health Education). We encourage making healthy choices to help us succeed in school. We teach our students to make healthy eating choices and to stay active.

Teachers may communicate other snack expectations based on the age of students.

School Office

The school office hours are 7:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. The phone number is 512-414-2026. Instruction will not be interrupted to give messages. Messages will be put in the teacher's mailboxes or delivered at the end of the day unless it is an emergency. **To help ensure that a message reaches your child before the end of the school day, calls to the office must be prior to 2:00 p.m. Urgent messages for teachers should be sent through the office during the day.**

Student Telephone Use

There is a telephone in the office for student use in the case of an emergency. The school phone is a business phone and is not to be used to make arrangements to go home with a friend, etc. These arrangements should be made at home the day before.

Visitors

At this time, due to COVID safety procedures, visitors to the building/campus will be restricted. Parents are encouraged to communicate with their child's teacher by virtual meeting, phone, or email.

Students Leaving School Early

Students leaving school during the school day must be signed out in the office by a parent or guardian or other adult designated on the emergency care card. Please be prepared to show proper identification if the office staff does not personally know you. **No student will be released from**

the classroom prior to 3:10 p.m. unless the student is signed out in the office. After arriving at school, students should never leave the school campus without permission from the office.

Illness or Injury

Emergency Contacts

At registration, parents are asked to provide emergency contacts and alternate approved people who may pick up students. Parents must provide their telephone numbers as well as those of relatives and friends who can be reached in case of illness or injury. Parents should include pager and cellular numbers and let friends know if they are designated as an emergency contact. **Notify the school office of any changes in emergency contact information during the year.** If a child needs emergency care and no one named on the emergency card can be reached, the school will call the City of Austin Emergency Medical Services (EMS). Parents are responsible for the medical bills from EMS and the hospital used.

School Health Service

Blanton participates in the Austin Independent School District Health Services Program administered by Children’s Hospital of Austin. A registered nurse and a health aide are available during school hours. If the school nurse or health aide is not available, the office staff provides care for ill or injured children.

After school care programs are responsible for the health services of students in their care.

Illness

Children are to be kept home from school if they are ill or have a communicable illness. **Students should be free of fever (without medication to reduce it) for 24 hours before returning to school.** A child taking antibiotics should be on the medication for 24 hours before returning to school unless otherwise directed by the doctor. Parents must send a note to school following a child’s absence.

Parental Notification of Illness or Injury at School

Should your child have a higher than normal temperature, injury that requires medical attention, or other medical needs, parents will be notified immediately by the teacher, school nurse or office staff.

Medication

Students taking medication during school hours must have a signed medication form on file in the office. All prescription and over-the-counter medications must be in their original containers and kept in the office. A student may keep his prescription inhalant with him but a form must be signed and kept in the school office to do so. Medication may only be taken under the supervision of the nurse or others designated by the principal.

Immunization

All students must be current on their immunizations. Blanton enforces state laws requiring records of mandated immunizations or proper exemptions.

Lice

Lice are common among school-age children and do not reflect on the hygiene standards of the students or their families. To contain the spread of lice, parents who suspect their child has lice or has been exposed to a case of lice should contact the child's teacher or the school nurse. A child cannot be asked to go home because of lice, except in extreme case determined by the nurse. Information will be sent home in how to eliminate them. Alert letters will only be sent home in the event of a 25% or greater number of students infested in a classroom to the parents of that specific classroom to protect student privacy.

Crisis Management Procedures

A Crisis Management Procedure has been developed to ensure the safety of the children on our campus. The plan includes procedures for the management of crisis situations, such as fire, natural disaster, intruders, and severe injury or death of a student, parent, or faculty member (consistent with AISD Crisis Management Policy and Guidelines). Instructions in the event of fire or tornado are reviewed and practiced. Exit routes are posted in each classroom.

The school conducts emergency drills at regular intervals as a safety precaution. Students, staff and visitors on campus treat drills as if they are actual emergency situations. Although speed is important in this procedure, staying calm and following directions is of greater importance.

Curriculum and Enrichment Activities

Blanton teachers use a variety of methods and programs to implement the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and the AISD adopted curriculum and Instructional Planning Guides. Teachers strive to keep abreast of all programs that will be beneficial for each child. Parents can learn more about the methods and programs used by their children's teachers at Back to School Night, which is held at the beginning of each school year, and at the parent/teacher conferences, which are held at least twice during the school year.

Gifted and Talented

Students are selected for screening based on parent and/or teacher nominations. The screening process includes a portfolio of various information and assessment data. Parents are provided with information on Gifted & Talented Explorer and the procedure for requesting a nomination form prior to the commencement of the screening process each year. Blanton has teachers at each grade level that are certified as gifted/talented teachers. Instruction is differentiated at each grade level according to the individual student's needs. There is a campus GT representative that parents can refer their questions. For more information, parents may also contact the AISD Advanced Academics office.

Physical Education

Physical education is an integral part of the school day. Students learn and practice skills, participate in team games and compete against themselves to improve their physical abilities.

Art

Blanton students' artwork is displayed throughout the city and opportunities for displaying their work are continually sought. Students

also have the opportunity to display their work, if selected, at the annual AISD art show.

Special Education

Special Education is one provision of a continuum of child-centered educational and supportive services. Based on student individual needs the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee determines the appropriate service to be provided. For more information about special education services, please contact your child's teacher, the school counselor, or the school principal.

Library

The library is an integral part of the school's educational program. A full-time professional librarian works with teachers to enhance students' information and problem solving skills and encourage students' appreciation of good literature. The library collection is based on the school curriculum and the reading interests and needs of the students. In addition to books and magazines, audio-visual and electronic materials are available in the library. The library also offers access to online databases and other information resources through the Internet. The library operates with a flexible schedule so students can come to the library as needed.

Pre-Kindergarten Program

The Pre-Kindergarten program is offered to students who are 3 and 4 years old by September 1. Parents may contact the Early Childhood department at AISD for more information about the school's Pre-Kindergarten Program for Pre K guidelines.

Field Trips

Field trips are a regular part of our school program and are used as an introduction, extension, and/or culmination of a learning unit. All children are expected to participate in field trips. Students are not permitted to go on a trip without written parental permission.

Homework

Homework Guidelines

Homework guidelines for each grade level are prepared by the teacher for that grade and distributed to students and parents the first week of the school year.

Report Cards

Students receive report cards at the close of each nine-week grading period. In addition, a student will receive a **mid nine-week progress report** if that student's work in any subject area is as follows:

Pre-Kindergarten-2 nd	1 Needs Improvement
3 rd – 5 th Grades	C- (70-73) or below

Report cards are only provided digitally at the email address registered by the parent or in the parent portal.

Criteria for grading:

Pre-K – 2nd: the following scale will be used:

Academic Performance	Personal Development
4 = Advanced	4 = Consistently
3 = Skilled	3 = Frequently
2 = Basic Understanding	2 = Occasionally
1 = Needs Improvement	1 = Rarely

3rd-5th grades: the following scale will be used:

Academic Performance		
A+ 98-100	B+ 88-89	C+ 78-79
A 94-97	B 84-87	C 74-77
A- 90-93	B- 80-83	C- 70-73
		F below 70

Personal Development

4 = Consistently
3 = Frequently
2 = Occasionally
1 = Rarely

Lost and Found

Parents should mark a child's clothing clearly with the child's first and last name. Items found at school are placed in the school's lost and found located in the cafeteria. Unclaimed items are given to charity at the end of each school year. The school will do everything possible to

prevent theft of personal items. However, the school is not responsible for personal items that are stolen or damaged.

Additional Notices and Policies

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires that school districts not discriminate on the basis of handicap in programs and activities. If you have questions, please contact the counselor or Assistant Principal.

Tobacco-Free Environment

The use of all tobacco or vaping products on school property by students or parents is prohibited at all times. Any student in violation of this policy shall be subject to immediate disciplinary action.

Changes in Policies and Procedures

This handbook is not a contract. The purpose of this handbook is to serve as a guide only. The procedures contained within this handbook are subject to AISD Board Policy and **can be changed at any time**.

This handbook is intended to serve as a guide to our school. It describes the school's procedures, as well as parent and student responsibilities. This handbook should be used in conjunction with the Austin Independent School District Student Code of Conduct and the policies of the Board of Education and the Texas Education Agency.