***Dreams For The Future Start Here***

***L. MENDEL RIVERS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL***

***THOUGHT OF THE YEAR:***

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***“Every success story is a tale of constant adaption, revision and change.”***

***Richard Branson***

***MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENTS***

Dear Parents and Students,

The Rivers Staff welcomes you to the 2020- 2021 school year. We are looking forward to an exciting year. Rivers School has over the years been recognized as an outstanding Academic School. Over the years this school received an A rating on the Oklahoma School Report Card, named a National Blue Ribbon School by the United States Department of Education and also recognized by the Oklahoma State Board of Education as a High Performing School. We will work again this year to have high expectations and commit to preparing students for success.

The faculty and staff at Rivers Elementary are dedicated to providing our students with a safe, secure, and caring environment where the highest quality education can be achieved. As we prepare for the upcoming school year, we continue to monitor the changes in our current Covid-19 changes. Rivers is putting in precautions that will aid in keeping our students, staff and community safe. We believe that parents play a critical role in the success of their children’s education and that the home/school partnership is the most important relationship that can be established and maintained for children. We understand that change is hard and appreciate your understanding and cooperation at this time. When possible and safe, we would like to invite you to serve as a volunteer, room parent, join our PTO and attend Parent Teacher Conferences.

Rivers takes pride in our mission as educators of military connected students. We will always place the education of our students first, never accept defeat, never leave a student behind, guard the American dream of a better life, and will serve our country by being educators. As we work together, open communication is encouraged. We welcome your calls, questions, and involvement in the education and of your child/children at Rivers.

Sincerely,

Angela Cook

Rivers Principal

***PHILOSOPHY***

At Rivers Elementary, our philosophy is to establish a firm foundation on which students build citizenship and gain skills valuable to themselves and society. Through a safe and positive learning environment, we provide opportunities for each child to study in a comfortable surrounding. We encourage cooperation among school, home, and community because we believe the cooperative effort is necessary to the success of the whole individual—intellectually, emotionally, and physically.

Because we are committed to the learning success of each child and believe all children can learn, we challenge each to achieve a level of success in accordance with his or her abilities and potential. By equipping students with knowledge and skills, we strive to prepare all students to become life-long learners and productive citizens in an ever-changing world.

***OBJECTIVES***

We will know we have accomplished our mission when all students demonstrate they are:

1 Complex Thinkers who continue to develop intellectually by using various learning strategies and resources to reason and make decisions.

2 Accountable Individuals who show responsibility for their physical and emotional actions by applying acquired skills and making positive choices.

3 Community Contributors who cooperate with others, respect others, and accept others, which are necessary to be a contributing member of society.

4 Creative Producers who appreciate and experience creative expression in various areas.

***ALTUS PUBLIC SCHOOLS***

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 USC 1232 g: 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U>S> Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents rights with respect to their children’s education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are “eligible students.”

● Parents of eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student’s education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

● Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

● Generally, schools must have written permission form the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student’s education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions. (34CFR 99.31):

1. School officials with legitimate educational interest; 2. Other schools to which a student is transferring; 3. Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes; 4. Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student; 5. Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school; 6. Accrediting organizations; 7. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena; 8. Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and 9. State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law. Schools may disclose, without consent, “directory” information such as a student’s name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPS. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

For additional information, you may call 1-800-USA-Learn (1-800-872-5327) (voice). Individuals who use TDD may use the Federal Relay Service.

Or you may contact us at the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office U. S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

CIVIL RIGHTSCOMPLIANCE

The Altus School District I-18 hereby gives notice that it does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Inquiries concerning the application of this policy may be referred to the school counselor by phone at (580) 481-2183 or by mail at L. Mendel Rivers Elementary, 3000 Veterans Drive, Altus. OK 73521

ASBESTOS STATEMENT

Under AHERA 40 CFR Part 763 Altus Schools has an asbestos-containing material. Periodic surveillance of the facilities is conducted during January and July with 3 year re-inspections conducted tri-annually. Building occupants and workers shall be informed when response actions take place. Management plans for the facilities that contain asbestos are available for review in the superintendent’s office and at each school’s administration.

**Student Meal Charges**

The district is committed to ensuring that all students receive the nutrition they need to engage in active learning during the school day. In accordance with applicable federal guidance from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), this policy is intended to serve the purposes of meeting student needs, while maintaining the fiscal integrity of the district’s school food service account.

Students paying full or reduced price for meals who do not have money in their account or in hand to cover the cost of a meal at the time of service will be permitted to charge a meal. However, these students will be denied permission to charge a la carte or “extra items”, such as a second milk, additional meal, or additional entrée.

“Students are responsible to pay in full for any meal charge accrued against their meal account.” A maximum limit of $25 dollars charge may be accrued against a school meal account. After this the student will be offered a designated alternate meal such as a meat or cheese sandwich with milk for lunch and a breakfast grain item with milk for breakfast.

If a financial hardship exists, parents and families are encouraged to apply for free or reduced priced lunches for their child. Applications are available at schools and the district Board of Education Office.

Parents/guardians will be notified on a regular and consistent manner that a school meal debt has been accrued through means such as verbal, e-mail, phone call, letters relayed at parent/teacher conferences or low balance due to notice from the school district. Charges that place the student in a negative status at any time during the school year remain the parent’s responsibility.

Employees of the district will be expected to maintain a positive meal account balance or opt to pay cash for all meals.

A copy of this policy will be given to each parent/guardian at the start of each school year and posted on our website. All School personnel will also be notified of this policy.

*\*This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*

**2020/2021 Safety Protocols**

Altus Public Schools shall conduct all school activities consistent with and informed by applicable health orders, protocols and guidelines. These include the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Activities and Initiatives Supporting the COVID-19 Response and the President’s Plan for Opening Up American Again guidelines, school decision guidance from the CDC, Governor Stitt’s Executive Orders and Open Up and Recover Safely (OURS) Plan, the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) Return to Learn Oklahoma framework and COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions, as each is updated periodically. Additionally, the Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) has developed the Oklahoma COVID-19 Alert System, a multitiered risk measurement tool with corresponding color categories that identify the current COVID-19 risk level on a county-by-county basis. 1. These designations, as modified below for purposes of school operations and which, at a minimum, Altus Public Schools shall conduct activities in accordance with, will be updated weekly each Friday based on updates to the Oklahoma COVID-19 AlertSystem. Depending on public health conditions, additional actions, orders or guidance provided by OSDE 2. or OSDH may be necessary as a county’s designation changes. Some counties may not experience a straight path from a red designation to a yellow and then a green designation. Instead, cycling back and forth among designations may occur as public health indicators improve or worsen. Each school should account for changing conditions and include those scenarios in their local plans. 3. Finally, this School Safety Response document must not be interpreted as a substitute for close consultation with local, regional and state health agencies and experts. Scientific understanding of the novel coronavirus is increasing rapidly, so efforts to mitigate transmission of COVID-19 will necessarily evolve with additional research and experience. Moreover, circumstances will vary regardless of county alert level. The Altus Public Schools District must remain vigilant, monitor data and stay in close communication with public health experts.

**GREEN LEVEL** **Instruction:**

Altus Public Schools will offer in-person, on-site instruction in accordance with their reopening plan and may begin the 2020-21 school year as determined by the local board of education. Health Protocol: Follow all applicable health orders and required protocols, and adhere to district policies relating to:

■ Screenings of staff, students and visitors prior to entry

■ Policies for social distancing and gatherings on and off campus

■ Additional mitigation techniques, including hygiene practices, proper ventilation and school cleaning practices Masks:

■ Masks are strongly recommended for all staff and students. Teachers of students in PreK-3rd grade should consider protective face shields or clear-paneled masks.

■ See Mask Exemptions and Accommodations.

Special Education Classrooms: Teachers and staff in special education classrooms are strongly recommended to wear protective face shields and/or masks when social distancing cannot be practiced or students are without masks. In addition, gloves and gowns are recommended for special education staff when providing services for medically vulnerable students. Visitors and Service Providers: It is recommended that school visitations be restricted and that any visitors allowed on premises wear masks at all times. Temperature checks and symptom checks should be required for all visitors. In cases where schools and districts have partnerships with community organizations, health care providers and local government agencies that provide additional educational and wraparound services to students, staff of such partners should be allowed into buildings following the same procedures as for school personnel. Child Nutrition: Provisions for school meal programs should continue. Extracurricular Activities and Group Assemblies: Schools should remain vigilant and plan with caution. Group gatherings, assemblies and spectators at indoor and outdoor events without PPE or social distancing can accelerate community transmission and a loss of GREEN LEVEL status.

**YELLOW LEVEL** **Instruction:**

Altus Public Schools will continue in-person, on-site instruction in accordance with their re-opening plan and may begin the 2020-21 school year as determined by the local board of education. Health Protocol: Follow all applicable health orders and required protocols, and adhere to district policies relating to:

■ Screenings of staff, students and visitors prior to entry

■ Social distancing and gatherings on and off campus

■ Additional mitigation techniques, including hygiene practices, proper ventilation and school cleaning practices Masks:

■ Masks are required for all staff and students in grades 4-12, with exemptions for adults and children who are physically unable to wear them.

■ Masks are required for students in grades PreK-3 in hallways, common areas and during times of school transportation. Masks may be removed while inside classrooms if classroom cohorts remain grouped together throughout the day. During such time, teachers are still required to wear protective face shields and/or masks. Teachers may wish to wear both a face shield and a mask to provide an additional safeguard layer when students are not wearing masks.

■ Exceptions are allowed for the following: when eating meals, naptime, recess and during physical education if social distancing is possible.

■ Adults are required to wear masks around other adults.

■ See Mask Exemptions and Accommodations.

Special Education Classrooms: Teachers and staff in special education classrooms are required to wear protective face shields and/or masks when social distancing cannot be practiced or students are without masks. In addition, gloves and gowns are recommended for special education staff when providing services for medically vulnerable students. Visitors and Service Providers: It is required that school visitations be restricted and that any visitors allowed on premises wear masks at all times. Temperature checks and symptom checks should be required for all visitors. In cases where schools and districts have partnerships with community organizations, health care providers and local government agencies that provide additional educational and wraparound services to students, staff of such partners should be allowed into buildings following the same procedures as for school personnel. Child Nutrition: Provisions for school meal programs should continue. Extracurricular Activities and Group Assemblies: It is recommended that schools limit gatherings, assemblies and spectators at indoor and outdoor events to decrease community transmission.

**ORANGE LEVEL** **Instruction:**

Altus Public Schools will remain in-person, on-site instruction and will be preparing for distance learning in consultation with local and state health officials and OSDE. Health Protocol: Follow all applicable health orders and required protocols, and adhere to district policies relating to:

■ Screenings of staff, students and visitors prior to entry

■ Policies for social distancing and gatherings

■ Additional mitigation techniques, including hygiene practices, proper ventilation and school cleaning practices Masks:

■ Masks are required for all staff and students in grades PreK-12, with exemptions for adults and children who are physically unable to wear them. Teachers of PreK-3 grade students should consider protective face shields or clear-paneled masks.

■ Exceptions are allowed for the following: when eating meals, naptime, recess and during physical education, if social distancing is possible.

■ Adults are required to wear masks around other adults.

■ See Mask Exemptions and Accommodations.

Special Education Classrooms: Teachers and staff in special education classrooms are required to wear protective face shields and/or masks when social distancing cannot be practiced or students are without masks. In addition, gloves and gowns are recommended for special education staff when providing services for medically vulnerable students. Visitors and Service Providers: It is required that school visitations be restricted and that any visitors allowed on premises wear masks at all times. Temperature checks and symptom checks should be required for all visitors. In cases where schools and districts have partnerships with community organizations, health care providers and local government agencies that provide additional educational and wraparound services to students, staff of such partners should be allowed into buildings following the same procedures as for school personnel. Child Nutrition: Provisions for school meal programs should continue. Extracurricular Activities and Group Assemblies: Buildings and campuses may not be used for extracurricular activities, including spectator sports, where social distancing guidelines are not possible or for other group activities such as assemblies and performances. Masks will be required at all events for all non-participants.

**RED LEVEL** **Instruction:**

Altus Public Schools will close buildings to students and provide distance learning until community transmission declines to ORANGE LEVEL on the COVID-19 Alert System or as advised by local and state health officials and OSDE. Students with disabilities who are unable to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) solely through a distance learning environment (as determined by the IEP team) and those students who are unable to receive instructional services through distance learning, not to exceed fifteen percent (15%) of students enrolled at a site, may receive certain services at a school site that is closed or at an alternate school site or other location. Teachers and staff will keep regular hours on-campus. Health Protocol: Follow all applicable health orders, protocols and guidelines, including those relating to:

■ Screenings of staff, students and visitors prior to entry

■ Additional mitigation techniques, to include hygiene practices, proper ventilation and school cleaning practices Masks:

■ Masks are required for all staff and students with exemptions for adults and children who are physically unable to wear them. Exceptions are allowed for meals.

■ Adults are required to wear masks around other adults.

■ See Mask Exemptions and Accommodations.

Special Education Classrooms: Teachers and staff in special education classrooms are required to wear protective face shields and/or masks when social distancing cannot be practiced or students are without masks. In addition, gloves and gowns are recommended for special education staff when providing services for medically vulnerable students. Visitors and Service Providers: It is required that school visitations be restricted and that any visitors allowed on premises wear masks at all times. Temperature checks and symptom checks should be required for all visitors. In cases where schools and districts have partnerships with community organizations, health care providers and local government agencies that provide additional educational and wraparound services to students, staff of such partners should be allowed into buildings following the same procedures as for school personnel. Child Nutrition: Operation Bulldog Thunder Mobile Feeding Program will resume. Extracurricular Activities and Group Assemblies: Buildings and campuses may not be used for extracurricular activities, including spectator sports, or other group activities such as assemblies and performances. Buildings and campuses may not be utilized for public events and gatherings.

**MASK EXEMPTIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS**

■ Persons who work or directly interact with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, and who rely on lip-reading to communicate, may remove a face covering for the duration of time as is necessary to communicate or interact directly with the individual(s). In this situation, consideration should be given to using a clear face covering. If a clear face covering is unavailable, staff members should consider using written communication, closed captioning or decrease background noise to make communication possible while wearing a cloth face covering that blocks the lips.

■ Persons with a medical condition or disability that prevents wearing a face covering must wear a face shield.

■ Persons with a medical condition for whom wearing a face covering could obstruct breathing or who are unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance.

■ Persons who are hearing impaired, or communicating with a person who is hearing impaired, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.

■ Persons for whom wearing a face covering would create a risk to the person related to their work, as determined by local, state or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines. This includes people who work in a setting where cloth face coverings may increase the risk of heat-related illness or cause safety concerns due to introduction of a hazard (for instance, straps getting caught in machinery) may consult with an occupational safety and health professional to determine the appropriate face covering for their setting.

■ Persons who are obtaining a service involving the nose or face for which temporary removal of the face covering is necessary to perform the service.

■ Note: Persons exempted from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition who are employed in a job involving regular contact with others should wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, as long as their condition permits it.

**SCHOOL ARRIVAL**

New addition due to current pandemic: subject to change

DAILY TEMPERATURE CHECKS - Each morning, families are asked to take their children's temperatures, as a fever of 100 or greater may be an indication of an active case of COVID-19. If this is the case, please keep your child home to monitor for additional symptoms. Additionally, APS will take students' temperatures at their first point of contact with Altus Public Schools. As students, faculty, and staff make their first contact with Altus Public Schools on the bus, the drop-off line, or entering the school building, the student's temperature will be taken. Anyone with a temperature over 100 degrees will be prohibited from entering the school building. Altus Public Schools recommends all faculty, staff and students monitor their own temperatures each morning. As students enter the building they will be directed to go to their classrooms or a general area in which social distancing is feasible. Students will not be gathered in large groups to wait for their school day to begin. Parents will not be escorting their children into the building. All parents will be asked to remain in their cars and drive through the drop-off line to ensure a safe exit from and entrance into their family vehicles.

Breakfast students may arrive at 7:35 for breakfast (use the office entrance) and all other students may be delivered to school at 7:45. Our first bell rings at 7:50 for students to prepare for the day. The tardy bell rings at 8:00. Students need to be in class and ready to learn by this time.  Teachers are on duty to supervise students until 7:45 a.m. Please do not drop students off before that time.

Pre-K parents who are escorting students may drop students off by the Pre K doors located at the rear of the building. This will be located off of the playground.

Kindergarten parents who are escorting students may drop students off by the Kindergarten doors located at the rear of the building. This will be located off of the playground.

Older students who are attending class may escort younger siblings to class.

**STUDENT DISMISSAL**

New additions due to the current pandemic: subject to change

While awaiting dismissal, students will be in their classrooms, still following social distancing guidelines by not waiting in large groups.

Pre-school, Kindergarten, First, and Second grade students will be dismissed at the north entrance and Third and Fourth grade students will be dismissed at the office entrance.

Parents are expected to pick their children up before 3:15 p.m. each day. Please do not bring dogs as you drop off or pick up your child. This is a safety issue for the students.

Parents are asked to wait in cars while staff call out students. Parents who are walking students are asked to practice social distancing. All students who are walking will be released by grade level, youth center students will be called out to awaiting workers. Finally, After School Care students will be escorted to workers after all students have been dismissed.

Keep all entrances and sidewalks clear so students can be dismissed out of the building.

**TRAFFIC**

There is a parking area on the south side of the building and a few parking spaces on the north side of the building. When delivering your students, you may use the north or south parking lot. Please do your part to keep traffic flowing by using the drop off zones and park in designated areas.

Just as we all wait in line as we follow procedures to enter and exit Altus Air Force Base each day, the school also has some procedures that we ask that you follow. Have your children ready to exit your vehicle when you come to the drop off area. The students need to have all of their belongings ready and goodbyes to brothers and sisters done by drop off time. Remember, you may have a small wait as we safely get your child to and from your vehicle. More than half of our students come from off base so there is a great deal of traffic each day. Please allow yourself enough time so your child will not be late for school. We are happy to assist your child to and from the vehicle. Know that at the beginning of the school year and during bad weather it will take a little longer to get students to the vehicles.

Traffic is very congested at the beginning and end of each day and the safety of the students is the most important issue. Obey the speed limit at all times

and be attentive as students enter and exit the building.

There is a drop off and pick up lane on the north side of Rivers and school personnel will assist getting your child to and from your vehicle. We can load and unload 5 to 6 cars at a time. Please follow these guidelines to insure the safety of each child.

● Be patient

● Please do not park your vehicle in the street (When your vehicle blocks traffic it increases traffic congestion and causes unsafe conditions.)

● ( You may have to circle around the block)

● Remain in your vehicle while in the loading and unloading zone

● Children will not be allowed to cross the street unescorted by a parent

● Your child should be ready to exit on the right side of the vehicle when you pull up to the drop off space in the mornings. ( Have backpacks, lunch money, and goodbyes taken care of before you pull into the drop off line)

● Pull up a safe distance behind the next car as we load and unload your child

● Obey all speed requirements

● Be observant, cautious, and courteous

Students will be monitored and escorted to you or your car. Do not leave your car unattended in the loading and unloading zone. This causes traffic to become congested. Be patient as we get the students safely to you.

We ask that you observe the above safety rules so that all of our students and personnel will be safe each day as we start and end our school day.

**LUNCH AND BREAKFAST**

New additions due to current pandemic: subject to change

Students will wash hands prior to eating. As much as possible, the children will be seated in the cafeteria in a manner to allow for distancing. When cafeteria space is limited, students will be directed to eat in another area in order to provide for distancing. No guests will be allowed to have lunch on-site as long as the threat of COVID exposure is predominant in the community. Parents are encouraged to limit the times they check their students out for lunch in an effort to minimize unnecessary potential exposure.

Students pay for their lunches in the office. They may pay by the day, week, or month. We encourage you to pay by the week or month. Lunches in the cafeteria are $2.75 for regular price and $.40 cents for students who qualify for a reduced price lunch. An extra carton of milk may be purchased for $.35 cents. Adult school employees may purchase a lunch for $3.85 and non-school employees may purchase a lunch for $4.25.

We do not allow charging of meals. If your account runs out of money, your child may eat lunch that day and then bring in payment the next day.

Students who are going home for lunch need to bring a note from home indicating that they have permission to leave the school grounds and go home. This precaution is for the safety of your child.

Please let us know by 8:00 a.m. if you are planning to eat with your child. You may send the money with your child or pay in the office.

Students are welcome to bring their lunches to school. Remember to prepare lunches that they can easily unpack. If your child forgets his or her lunch and you need to bring it by the school, you may leave it in the office and it will be delivered before lunchtime.

Students have the opportunity to eat breakfast each morning. The cost for breakfast is $2.25 and the reduced price is $.30. Adult breakfast for employees is $2.35 and non-school employees $3.00. You may pay for breakfast daily, weekly, or monthly. Breakfast is served from 7:35 a.m. until 7:55 a.m. Students are dismissed from the cafeteria at that time.

Applications for the free and reduced meals are available in the school office. Please feel free to fill out an application at any time.

The lunch clerk will collect all money. She is located at the front office.

LUNCH SCHEDULE

Pre K LUNCH 10:45-11:10

Kindergarten LUNCH  10:50--11:15

1st & 2ND LUNCH 11:20-11:45

3RD & 4TH 11:50-12:15

**PLAYGROUND RULES**

New additions due to current pandemic: subject to change

1 Stay on assigned playground area 2 Do not climb on fences 3 Only one child to a swing --- Do not stand or lay in the swings 4 No tackle games are allowed 5 No throwing of foreign objects such as rocks, sticks, sand, etc. 6 No games played involving grabbing someone, or pulling on clothing 7 Do not bring any toys from home to use on the playground 8 Use all equipment correctly

**Water fountains**

New due to the current pandemic: subject to change

As school opens, all traditional “bubble up” water fountains will be disconnected. Most schools now have water bottle filling stations; these will remain connected and available to students and faculty. Students and staff are encouraged to bring filled water bottles or other non-breakable water containers to school with them. Student restrooms will be cleaned multiple times throughout the day by the site custodial staff, who will use portable disinfectant foggers to sanitize the areas. Staff restrooms will also be disinfected periodically throughout the school day.

**CLASSROOM RULES**

1 Be respectful of others at all times 2 Follow guidelines set by the school and classroom teacher 3 Use appropriate language and actions 4 Make smart choices

**HALLWAYS**

Children should always walk in hallways, classrooms, or the cafeteria. Students should move in single file order with a teacher in charge when changing classes or leaving the building.

**GUIDANCE**

The purpose of the guidance program is to help each student achieve his/her highest potential mentally, emotionally, and socially. Individual conferences may be requested by the student, teacher, or parent.

**READING**

Reading is such an important skill. Most students who are not reading on grade level by the end of the third grade experience difficulty in school. Because of this, some students do not reach their full academic potential. Having all students reading on grade level by the end of the third grade has become a priority in Oklahoma. Altus Public Schools is committed to having all of our students reading on grade level each year.

Students are given assessments to determine strengths and weaknesses in reading. Mrs. Kelley, the reading teacher, will work with teachers and students using varied strategies to enhance reading skills.

Rivers uses several curriculum sources to teach reading. The focus for reading is to ensure that students gain adequate exposure to a range of texts and tasks. Rigor is also infused through the requirement that students read increasingly complex material through the grades. Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year’s grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.

There will be benchmarks each nine-week period that your child’s teacher will inform you of at the beginning of the year that your child must reach. These benchmarks will be a major part of your child’s grades reported on the grade card.

Quote

“We can affect the lives of more children, more deeply, for a longer period of time, at less cost, by teaching them to read well by third grade, than by any other single thing we can do in our school systems.”

-----Kathleen Dally, Kennewick School

**The Reading Sufficiency Act Reading Goal**

The reading goal for Oklahoma public schools is as follows:

By July 1, 2008, and each year thereafter, all third-grade students will read at or above grade level by the end of their third-grade year, excluding up to fifteen percent of those students who have an individualized education program excluding those students who are English language learners who have been determined not to be proficient in English as defined by a state-designated English proficiency assessment.

The Reading Sufficiency Act Screening and Assessment Kindergarten, First, Second, and Third Grade Students Each student enrolled in kindergarten, first, second, and third grade of the public school of this state shall be assessed at the beginning of each school year using a screening instrument approved by the State Board of Education for the acquisition of reading skills, including, but not limited to, phonological awareness, phonics, spelling, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

For those students at risk for reading difficulties, teacher shall emphasize reading skills as identified in Oklahoma Academic Skills, monitor progress throughout the year, and measure year end reading progress.

Section H, I, and J of Senate Bill 346

H. Beginning with the students entering the first grade in the 2011-2012 school year, if the reading deficiency of a student, as identified based on state approved assessments, is not remedied by the end of third grade, as demonstrated by scoring at the unsatisfactory level on the reading portion of the third-grade criterion-referenced test administered pursuant to Section 1210.508 of SB 346 the student shall be considered for retention upon review by committee.

I. The parent of any student who is found to have a reading deficiency and is not reading at the appropriate grade level and has been provided a program of reading instruction shall be notified in writing of the following:

● Current services

● Description of proposed supplemental instructional services for remediation

● Strategies for parent to use

J. No student may be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion.

**MATH**

The Math instruction at Rivers primarily comes from various resources. The focus of math instruction will concentrate on the following:

● Numbers which includes the whole number operations and relations

● Geometry which includes spatial relations and measurement

These standards are broad and include the application of and define what students should understand and be able to do with numbers and number concepts.

There will be bench marks for skills each nine week period that your child’s teacher will inform you of at the beginning of the year that your child must reach. Students are required to learn the math facts appropriate for each grade level. These benchmarks will be a major part of your child’s grades reported on the grade card.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

All students in grades PK-4th will participate in physical education. P.E. will be taught by a qualified P.E. instructor. A note should be sent from home when your child cannot participate in P.E. because of illness. A doctor's statement may be required for continued illness.

The physical education plan for Rivers Elementary incorporates into the daily program discussion of the food groups, the importance of proper nutritional meals, and healthy physical activities. The students begin their physical education classes using circuit-training activities. These activities are used to strengthen their body's systems such as respiratory, circulatory and muscular. Some examples of these exercises/activities are ladder stretches, push-ups, sit-ups, and squats as well as jumping jacks. Activities are used to demonstrate that exercise can by fun as well as beneficial to our health. These activities are age appropriate to encourage students to participate. The activities are designed to improve health by releasing stress and building character through sportsmanship as well as improving leadership. Student progress is determined by successful participation in class activities and assignments as documented by the report card grade.

**FINE ARTS**

All students in grades K-4 will participate in music education. Music will be taught by a qualified music instructor.

The Fine Arts are organized around four standards:

● Language of the Arts Students will learn to use appropriate vocabulary as it relates to the area of art they are studying.

● History and Culture of the Arts Students will recognize the development of music and the visual arts from a historical and cultural perspective.

● Expression in the Arts Students will perform a variety of music by singing or playing musical instruments.

● Music Appreciation Students will learn to appreciate music and expand their listening beyond music currently familiar to them.

**TECHNOLOGY**

Technology will be a part of all subject areas. We are fortunate in Altus Schools to have IPads in the classrooms and also a computer lab for students. This is an exciting time for our teachers and students because we will be integrating technology in the classrooms in various ways.

**STUDENT IPAD USE AND GUIDELINES**

Care of iPads in the classroom are the responsibility of both students and teachers. The teacher’s responsibility is to share correct guidelines and procedures and to monitor students as they use and transport iPads in the learning environment. Guidelines and access should be age appropriate for each grade level of student. IPads are one learning tool that we use and just like other materials in the classroom, we understand the usual wear and tear on devices. Altus Schools asks that you adhere to the following iPad use and guidelines.

● Take good care of iPads and accessories in order to prevent damages to the devices

● Keep the iPad in the protective case at all times

● Ipads will be retrieved and returned to the charging cart according to the teacher’s directions

● Food and beverages should be kept away from iPads

● Disassembly of any part of the iPad is not allowable

● IPads will not be used in ways that are not educationally appropriate by following the Acceptable Use Policy procedures and the teacher’s instructions

● Markers, crayons, stickers, or tape will not be used on iPads

● Serial numbers must not be tampered with on the iPads

● IPads are the property of Altus Public Schools and intentional damage and defacing is considered damage to school property

● Contact the teacher immediately if there is a problem or damage to an iPad

Failure to follow the above guidelines could result in limited use and access to iPad devices in the classroom.

**GIFTED AND TALENTED**

Multi-criteria evaluation procedures are used for the purpose of identification and placement of students in the gifted and talented program. Students will attend these classes at Rivers.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION**

It shall be the policy of the Altus Public Schools to follow state and federal laws and regulations with respect to eligibility and placement in special education. Please refer to Policy 200.410, 200.411, and 200.412 in the Altus Board Policy Book.

**HOMEWORK**

Homework is a valuable educational tool. It is important to a student’s academic development that parents be aware of and involved with assignments and offer encouragement.

Homework is to be returned the following day after it is assigned. Students who do not turn in homework or complete work will be assigned detention or miss recess in order to complete that work so they do not receive a 0.

**DETENTION**

Detention is defined as a period of time, other than class time when a student is detained. Detention is held in the library. Students are responsible to bring their assignments and complete the work. Students may need this time to complete work or tests after being absent for several days or if homework is incomplete. Students who have been tardy for unexcused reasons for the third time also attend detention. Detention is held during recess.

**ILLNESS, MEDICATION and Covid-19**

New additions due to current pandemic: subject to modifications

Oklahoma State Law requires that all student health records are current with documentation of the required vaccines. The school health records are kept by the school nurse and she is required to notify parents to bring shot records to school if they are incomplete. Active records are kept in a safe place in the school office. Health records of transferred or graduated students will be kept on file. If you become ill at school, we will contact parents. If we cannot contactparents, we will use the emergency contact numbers provided on the enrollment cards. The nurse or secretary will treat minor cuts and bruises.

DAILY TEMPERATURE CHECKS - Each morning, families are asked to take their children's temperatures, as a fever of 100 or greater may be an indication of an active case of COVID-19. If this is the case, please keep your child home to monitor for additional symptoms. Additionally, APS will take students' temperatures at their first point of contact with Altus Public Schools.

RESPONSE TO ADDITIONAL SYMPTOMS - While many children will present with fever initially, many will not. Other symptoms that may develop initially include the following: chills, cough, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion, runny nose, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Any of these are cause for keeping a child home from school. HYGIENE - Handwashing is one of the best means of protection against infection. Students will be reminded to wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing their noses, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating. They will also have access to an alcohol-based hand sanitizer throughout the school building when hand- washing opportunities are not readily available.

SOCIAL DISTANCING - While it will be difficult to maintain distance between the students at school, each site will be devising plans to provide, to the best of our ability, for this precaution in the common areas of hallways, classrooms, cafeterias, gyms and buses.

FACE COVERINGS - Evidence continues to mount on the role and importance of face coverings in interrupting the spread of COVID-19. The latest indication is that the use of face coverings protects both the wearers and those with whom they come in contact.

MASKS FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

Face masks for elementary students are highly recommended. Masks will be encouraged anytime social distancing is difficult to accomplish; therefore, all students are asked to have a mask available at all times. To the extent possible, schools will promote and reinforce the use of face coverings for all students; however, masks will not be provided by the school. Practices such as mask-wearing will be more feasible the older the student, as younger students may touch their faces more than usual when wearing a mask.

COVID-19 SYMPTOMS AT SCHOOL

If a teacher suspects that a student may have COVID-19 symptoms, he/she will contact the office to arrange for an adult to come to the classroom and escort the student to an isolation area. The student will be required to wear their mask, if they are not already. Parents will be contacted immediately to pick up their child and seek a medical opinion.

EXPOSURES, DIAGNOSES, & RETURN TO SCHOOL AFTER COVID-19

According to the CDC: \* Anyone who has had close contact with someone positive for COVID-19 should stay home for 14 days after exposure, based on the time it takes to develop the illness. \* Any child who tests positive or has COVID-19 symptoms may return to school after three days with no fever and diminished respiratory symptoms and ten days since symptoms first appeared. Two consecutive negative COVID-19 tests given 24 hours apart would also indicate that a child may return to school. The negative test results should be provided to the school if the child is home for fewer than ten days. \* A child who tested positive for COVID-19 but had no symptoms can return to school after 10 days have passed since the test. Two consecutive negative COVID-19 tests given 24 hours apart would also indicate that a child may return to school. The negative test results should be provided to the school upon return. \* As always, be sure to call the school to report your child's absence. \* For more information, visit the following website: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus

**ADMINISTERING MEDICATION**

Administration of Prescription and Non-Prescription Medication:

The school nurse, principal, or her designee may administer prescription or non-prescription medication, if provided by the parents with correct documentation. The student must have a medication permission and emergency form on file.

No medication shall be administered unless provided by the parent with correct instructions and permission from the doctor. A medical form must be completed before any medicine will be given to a student. All medication must be brought to school by a parent.

All asthma inhalers will be kept with the student. Parents must sign a form indicating that their child will keep asthma inhalers with them in their class.

Please alert your child's teacher and the office staff about severe allergies that affect your child.

**TEXTBOOKS and LIBRARY BOOKS**

Please help us take care of our resources. Books belonging to the school which are lost, stolen, or damaged shall be paid for by the pupil responsible.

**TELEPHONE USE**

The telephone is available for emergency use only. You must have permission from the principal, or secretary to use the telephone. Students will not be called to the telephone except in an emergency. Messages will be delivered to the student’s classroom teacher.

**STUDENTS LEAVING CLASS EARLY**

All students will be checked out through the office if they need to leave school early. Please stop at the office and school personnel will get your child from class. Any time out of class will be noted on the attendance record.

**ATTENDANCE AND TARDIES**

In the case of an absence, please notify the school at 481-2183 as early as possible. Make-up work will be allowed in the case of excused absences. Make-up work may be picked up at the end of the school day in the office. Students should be responsible for asking for work when they return to school. The time limit for turning in make-up work is one day for every day a student is absent. Assignments not made up will be recorded as a zero for the grade. If an absence is due to future events please notify the teacher ahead of time, so you can be provided with a study sheet for subject areas that will be missed. Most class work and assessments will be completed at school when the student returns.

Excessive tardies were a major problem at this school site last year. We certainly understand the occasional reason for being tardy; however the records indicate that the same students were habitually tardy throughout the school year.

Students are considered tardy after the 8:00 bell rings. When students are late to class it not only causes a disruption in their day, but also the entire classroom. Please help everyone by getting your child to school on time each day. If a student is tardy they will need to make up any missed work that school day. Students must pick up a tardy or admit slip before they enter class.

Excessive Absences: If a child is absent without a valid excuse for four or more days or parts of days within a four-week period, or is absent without valid excuse for ten or more days or parts of days within a semester, schools are required by law to report these excessive absences to the District Attorney.

Absences will be considered excused for the following reasons providing communication is made to the school the day of the absence; illness, bereavement, family emergencies, recognized religious holidays, and doctor or dentist appointments. All other absences are considered unexcused. Make-up work will be provided for excused absences.

Because excessive absences cause a severe disruption in student learning, it is important that students be in attendance except for illness and emergencies.

The federal No Child Left Behind Act gives each school site a rating to determine the adequate yearly progress of the school and Oklahoma uses a report card grading system which assigns a letter grade. The factors that are used to determine these grades are test scores, student progress, and student attendance. Please help keep absences to a minimum.

Situations may arise that require your child to miss school because of family emergencies or deployments, please let us know so that we may work with you during those difficult times. 

**SCHOOL WITHDRAWALS**

Parents of students withdrawing from school during the year will need to contact the office in order for records to be prepared. Students must be in attendance through the sixth school day preceding the end of regular classroom instruction during a semester to receive a final grade for work done during that semester. Students checking out of before the sixth day preceding the end of class work will receive a transfer grade of all work completed to that point.

**STUDENT DRESS CODE**

Appropriate dress is required at all times. No clothing or anything attached to the clothing that advertises beer, alcoholic beverages, drugs, or has words or statements that are vulgar or suggestive may be worn. Also, see-through clothing, clothing that reveals bare midriffs or backs are not acceptable. Sagging pants will not be permitted at school or school-related activities. Any clothing or hairstyle (painted hair and or tall, spiked

mohawks) that causes a disruption to the learning in the school is not permitted.

**FIRE AND LOCK DOWN DRILLS**

Fire drills and lockdown drills will be conducted periodically during the school year. They are necessary for the safety of the students, faculty and staff. Everyone should know specific information about what to do during this time. Teachers will go over this information with the class. Evacuation routes are posted in each room.

**SEVERE WEATHER PROCEDURES**

The following procedures will be followed in the event of severe weather.

1 Board of education officials will monitor the situation and work

closely with Civil Defense. 2 Parents will be contacted by call or text to keep parents informed 3 Children will not be released to leave school unless a parent or adult with parent permission arrives at school to pick up the child. 4 Busses will not run until an all clear sounds. 5 All schools are equipped with battery operated storm sentry radios. 6 Teachers will remain with students until they are released by the building principal. 7 During threatening weather, students should be moved to interior areas of the school building. 8 Severe weather drills will be conducted during the school year to be prepared for any such emergency.

**PARENT CONTACT SYSTEM**

Altus Public Schools has a messaging system which enables the school to contact parents in case of emergencies, school changes, and any other important information by phone, text, and e-mail. You will be asked to complete a form at the beginning of the year to give us that information so you may be notified as quickly as possible. Please help us by keeping your information current.

**GRADING SYSTEM AND REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are issued to students on the Wednesday following the end of each nine-week grading period. A progress report will also be sent home during the nine weeks period as indicated on the school calendar. The evaluation of student achievement is one of the important functions of the teacher. A EXCELLENT (90-100) H HIGH B GOOD (80-89) S SATISFACTORY C AVERAGE (70-79) L LOW D POOR (60-69) U UNSATISFACTORY F FAIL (BELOW 60)

An honor roll will be published for 4th grade students at the end of each nine- week grading period using the following point value system.

A 4 points B 3 points C 2 points

**FOURTH GRADE HONOR ROLLS**

Nine- Weeks Honor Roll

1. Fourth grade students must have a 3.0 point average. 2. Art, music, penmanship and physical education grades will not be counted for the nine weeks honor rolls. 3. Any student who makes a “D” or “F” will be automatically disqualified from the nine weeks honor roll.

Principal’s Honor Roll (Semester)

Fourth grade students must have a 3.5 grade point average on semester grades to be included on the Principal’s Honor Roll.

Superintendent’s Honor Roll (Semester)

Fourth grade students must have a 4.0 grade point average on semester grades to be included on the Superintendent’s Honor Roll.

Altus Elementary Honor Society (Year)

Fourth grade students who make the nine weeks honor roll for three of the four periods each year will be members of the Honor Society.

Students making the different Honor rolls will be recognized at semester and yearly assemblies.

**Recognition of Good Grades**

Students who make A’s and B’s in grades first through fourth will be awarded certificates at the end of each nine-week period.

The school will present reading awards for grades 1st through 4th grade levels at the end of the school year.

**SCHOOL PARTIES AND INVITATIONS**

Due to the current pandemic this is subject to change

The scheduled school parties are in December and February. All parties will begin at 2:15. The school will provide an end of year celebration for the students.

At this time, we are not allowing snacks to be brought in for birthday celebrations. Please do not send birthday invitations to school to be passed out unless every child in the class is invited. Birthday balloons and flowers that are delivered to the school for students will be given to the children at the end of the school day.

**Snacks**

New due to current pandemic subject to change

No class-wide snacks will be allowed or distributed at school. Students choosing to bring a snack to school may bring an individually wrapped snack for themselves.

**SUPPLIES**

New due to current pandemic, subject to change

Sharing of supplies such as crayons, markers, scissors and pencils will not be allowed. Students will keep their individual supplies separated from those of others in individually labeled containers or cubbies. Any manipulatives needed for instructional purposes will be sanitized prior to use by another student.

**VOLUNTEERS**

Parent volunteers are an important part of Rivers Elementary. Parents donate thousands of hours each year to help our students. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, you can contact your child’s teacher or sign up as a volunteer on PTO projects. We will allow volunteers as it is safe to do so.

**MOMENT OF SILENCE**

The Oklahoma State Legislature passed a law in the 2002 session that requires each school site to observe a moment of silence each day. The law reads as follows:

“The board of education of each school district shall ensure that the public schools within the district observe approximately one minute of silence each day. A student may engage in the exercise of his or her individual choice, to reflect, meditate, pray, or engage in any other silent activity that does not interfere with, distract, or impede other students in the exercise of their individual choices.”

**PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parents are welcome to come to school and meet with teachers during a teacher’s conference time. In addition, scheduled parent teacher conferences will be held on the following dates for 2019-2020. September 17, 2020 3:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. February 11, 2019 3:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

**VISITORS**

New additions due to the current pandemic: subject to be modified

Visitors will be limited or restricted due to the current pandemic. Limitations of visitors for when school zone is at appropriate level for Covid-19 cases. Restricted when school zone is at the recommended restriction level.

It is the policy of the Altus Board of Education that all visitors to any school sign in at the school at the front desk.

It is important that we protect learning time at school. We ask that you not

interrupt teaching and learning by going to classrooms. The office staff will be happy to get your child from class or give your child a message. If you need to make an appointment with a teacher, you may leave a message or e-mail the teacher and he or she will set up a conference time.

YOU MAY VIEW THE DISCIPLINE POLICIES AND ANY OTHER BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY ON THE ALTUS PUBLIC SCHOOL’S WEB PAGE

www.altusps.com

THE OKLAHOMA ACADEMIC STANDARDS, CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES, AND OTHER SCHOOL INFORMATION MAY BE LOCATED AT THE OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION www.sde.state.ok.us

THANK YOU FOR BEING A PART OF L MENDEL RIVERS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL