

Kiker Elementary School

2019-2020 PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK

Administrative Team

David Crissey - Principal
Alma Chapa Moore - Assistant Principal (Grades: Kindergarten, 4, 5)
Bridget Farr - Assistant Principal (Grades: Kindergarten, 4, 5)
Kelly Meyer - Assistant Principal (Grades: 1, 2, 3)
Kathryn Bankston – Counselor (Grades: Kindergarten, 4, 5)
Randie Fraser – Counselor (Grades: 1, 2, 3)

Front Office

Esther Bull - Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper
Penny Considine - Administrative Assistant
Amy McGovern - Attendance Specialist and Registrar
Robin Mealey - Administrative Assistant
Kristi Samon - Administrative Assistant

**5913 La Crosse Avenue
Austin, Texas 78739
Phone: 512-414-2584 Fax: 512-288-5779
www.kikerelementary.org**

Kiker's Philosophy

We believe that ALL Kiker Comets can learn and become successful academically, physically, socially, emotionally, and behaviorally. These various strengths, differences, and talents will be used to help students learn and grow. All students have struggles, weaknesses, and learning needs. Therefore, we strive every day to reach new academic, physical, social, emotional, and behavioral goals, working to ensure that every child is prepared to meet the challenges they encounter in college, career, and life.

At Kiker Elementary we ask a simple question which summarizes our philosophy of celebrating every child every day. The question is "what's right with Kiker Elementary?" and the answer we expect from our children, staff members, and parents is "I AM."

Core Beliefs

In order to be successful in and out of school students need to learn a set of social and emotional competencies – integrity, resiliency, compassion, courage, and connection – and a set of academic competencies – academic mindset, perseverance, learning strategies, and academic behaviors.

Our core belief statement includes our newly adopted school-wide **values** of:

- Integrity
- Resiliency
- Compassion
- Courage
- Connection

These social constructs will be our environmental milieu and collectively we will consistently celebrate, teach, and model these expectations at every turn. Our renewed focus on a growth mindset will use these expectations as levers for our coaching and learning sessions with students.

Within our core belief statement there are **four key domains** that serve as the foundation of our academic and social-emotional programming at **Bernice** Kiker Elementary:

Four Key Domains

1. **Engaging Academics** – We will create learning tasks that are active, interactive, appropriately challenging, purposeful, and connected to students' interests.
2. **Positive Community** – We will nurture a sense of belonging, significance, and emotional safety so that students feel comfortable taking risks and working with a variety of peers. This will be accomplished through robust and daily morning meetings.
3. **Effective Management** – We will create a calm, orderly environment that promotes autonomy and allows students to focus on learning.
4. **Developmentally Responsive Teaching** – We will use our knowledge of child development, along with observations of students, to create a developmentally appropriate learning environment.

Finally there are six **guiding principles** that will inform our academic and social-emotional programming at **Bernice** Kiker Elementary:

Guiding Principles

1. Teaching social and emotional skills is as important as teaching academic content
2. How we teach is as important as what we teach
3. Great cognitive growth occurs through social interaction
4. How we work together as adults to create a safe, joyful, and inclusive school environment is as important as our individual contribution or competence.
5. What we know and believe about our students – individually, culturally, developmentally – informs our expectations, reactions, and attitudes about those students
6. Partnering with families – knowing them and valuing their contributions is as important as knowing the children we teach

“Our” Curriculum

Our curriculum is composed of multiple puzzle pieces. Initially our curriculum starts with the students and their community. Their lenses and common experiences shape their perspective and their thought processes. It is essential to understand this fact when discussing curriculum. The standards adopted by the Texas Education Agency are the TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills.). The TEKS are used to plan what we want the student to be able to know and do; the teacher then plans the materials and venues for how to ensure the student is successful with what she/he wants the student to know and do; the TEKS are then what is assessed. This is what we will use to create the academic goals for the whole class, small groups and individually.

School Hours

7:10 a.m.	Doors open for student arrival
7:40 a.m.	Pledges and moment of silence
7:45 a.m.	Students dismissed from pledges to class
2:50 p.m.	Kindergarten classes dismissed
2:55 p.m.	First grade dismissed
3:00 p.m.	All other classes dismissed

Allergies

There are children on our campus who have a severe food allergy to peanuts and/or tree nuts. Please instruct your child not to share food with other classmates unless a teacher gives approval to do so. Food allergies can be very serious and potentially fatal. The only way to avoid a reaction is to avoid the offering of food. In order to provide a safe environment for all children, particular classes will be designated as NUT AWARE. In NUT AWARE classrooms, we request that you voluntarily consider finding alternatives when providing lunches and snacks for your child.

For more information, please call Mr. Tarren Kingsley, our school nurse, at 512-414-2584. To learn more about food allergies, you may visit the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network's website, www.foodallergy.org.

Arrival and Dismissal

The school day begins at 7:40 a.m. for our pledges and a moment of silence. At approximately 7:45 a.m. when classes begin to head to their classrooms with their teachers, students will wait at front/back door until all classes have exited the hallways before being escorted to his/her classes by an adult. Because we want our students to travel to their classes safely without getting separated, we will limit the amount of traffic in the hallways after 7:40 a.m.

Kindergarten – Fourth Grade Students – Start their day in the cafeteria.

Fifth Grade Students – Report directly to Faulkner Hall.

The circle drive in front of the school is for student pick-up and drop-off. Please park in spaces designated "visitor" or on the street, not along the fire lane. Vehicles parked in fire lanes or no parking areas are subject to tickets and towing. The rear entrance to the main building is for PPCD, bus and daycare van pick-up and drop-off only. Students should not be dropped off in the bus area or by the portable buildings. They are unsupervised and at risk of injury from traffic. Students who walk, ride skateboards, scooters, or bikes should be aware of car and bus traffic. Stay on sidewalks or in bike lanes at all times. Please walk bikes when on campus. Skateboard, scooter, and bike riders should wear helmets at all times to protect themselves from injury. Students should cross streets only in marked crosswalks. Please DO NOT let your child cross between cars.

In order to provide safe arrival and departure of Kiker students, the following traffic patterns have been established for the front drop-off and pick-up of students before and after school.

- Morning Drop-Off - Children exit car quickly so this line moves at an appropriate pace. At the crosswalk, stay in a single-file line until you have passed the crosswalk.
- Afternoon Pick-Up - Parents waiting in vehicles for a student may pull into a parking space, park on the street, or circle through the line of traffic again while waiting for your child to come out of the building. (Encourage your child to watch for your vehicle and quickly enter it). Please do not pull out from the curb around the cars in front of you unless you have picked up your child.
- Safety Patrol members will be stationed along the right curb to open doors for students entering or exiting cars. Children must always exit from the right side of the car.
- Please put your child's name, grade level and teacher's name in the right front window of your vehicle to better assist with pick up and traffic flow.
- Please do not signal your child to come to you if they have to walk between cars and cross the circle drive or any other street. Always instruct them to use the crosswalk.
- Do not leave vehicles unattended along the right-hand curb area. This is a fire lane and unattended cars parked here cause a safety hazard. If you need to come into the school, please park in a visitor parking place or on the street.

Please remember these general guidelines:

- Model safety
- Follow traffic signs
- Stay off cell phone when driving in the Kiker school zones.
- Stop at crosswalks.
- Park in spaces marked “visitor” in front of the school or on the street
- Fire lanes are reserved for emergency vehicles only

Safe transit for students and parents is critical to all of us. Bernice Kiker Elementary staff members and other parents appreciate your assistance in providing a safe environment for all children.

Attendance/Absences

Students, if you come to school EVERY DAY you will not miss any learning time or fun at school. However, if you are running a fever or are ill, it is important you stay home to rest until you are fully recovered. Parents, a fever is “a temperature of 100 or higher.” If children have a fever, they only return to school once they have been fever free for 24 hours after stopping medication. Please check your child’s temperature the night before and the morning of the day he or she returns to school to be sure there is no fever. Please help your child’s recovery and keep other students healthy by keeping your sick children at home.

Parents, if one of your children must be out for any reason, please send a note to the office stating the reason for the absence the day your child returns or the absence will be considered unexcused. Notes are only accepted up to 48 hours after an absence. In case of illness, work missed will be provided to the student upon returning to school. Teachers need at least 24 hours’ notice to prepare assignments for these students. Attendance is taken daily at 10:00 a.m. If your child arrives after 7:40 a.m., he/she will be marked tardy.

Early Checkouts - When it is necessary to check your child out of school prior to 3:00 p.m., please sign the student out in the office. Office personnel will call the classroom and have the student sent to meet you in the office. Please be prepared to show your identification in the office each time you pick up your child. Students must remain in the classroom until they are checked out in the office. Please remember, it is very difficult to check a student out after 2:30 p.m.

Extenuating Circumstances - Please contact Amy McGovern, attendance specialist, in the front office at 414-2584.

Religious Holy Days - The State Board of Education has specified that students shall receive an excused absence for the purpose of observing religious holy days, when it is a tenet of their faith that they must be absent from school during such time, provided a written request is sent in advance by the parent or guardian.

Trips/Vacations - Please plan trips around the school and AISD calendar. Many families take vacations throughout the school year without realizing the impact the missed school days have on a child’s education. These absences are unexcused.

Behavior Expectations

In order to be successful in and out of school students need to learn a set of social and emotional competencies – integrity, resiliency, compassion, courage, and connection – and a set of academic competencies – academic mindset, perseverance, learning strategies, and academic behaviors.

Our core belief statement includes our newly adopted school-wide **values** of:

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These social constructs will be our environmental milieu and collectively we will consistently celebrate, teach, and model these expectations at every turn. Our renewed focus on a growth mindset will use these expectations as levers for our coaching and learning sessions with students.

Our responsibility is to develop a school-wide management plan that creates a cohesive and positive learning community and supports engaging instruction. These elements are the essential building blocks of a rigorous, relevant, and relationship-based classroom. This management plan helps us to establish a learning environment that is calm, orderly, and safe. It provides children with the opportunity to develop self-control and self-discipline while providing opportunities for children to learn and practice being responsible, contributing members of their community.

While we assume positive intent, have a growth mindset, and take responsibility for creating a supportive environment there are times when our children make poor choices. In the event of a behavioral incident please note your child's team will provide the necessary supports to help them move forward and learn from their mistakes. Also note that Bernice Kiker Elementary follows the Austin Independent School District's Code of Student Conduct which can be referenced here - <https://www.austinisd.org/parent-information/conduct-code>.

Harassment, bullying, or hurting another student with your body or an object is strictly prohibited at Bernice Kiker please contact your child's teacher or administrator if you have concerns or an incident to report.

Birthday Celebrations

In accordance with the Austin Independent School District's Wellness Policy as well as recommendations from the Bernice Kiker Elementary Campus Advisory Council, birthday treats (edible and non-edible) are not allowed. We have children with health concerns, severe food allergies, reactions to artificial colors and ingredients, and severe reactions to preservatives and other ingredients. By eliminating birthday treats, we will discontinue a practice that contributes to the complication of these allergies and conditions. We will continue to recognize our students' birthdays on Friday morning during pledges and individual teachers will still celebrate our Comets on their special day.

Cafeteria

Providing good nutrition in a courteous atmosphere at school is one of our goals. Breakfast is available beginning at 7:15 a.m. at a cost of \$1.50. Student lunch is available for \$2.90 (\$3.50 for adults). Milk, juice and dessert or snack item may also be purchased. If students choose to buy a snack in the cafeteria, they will only be allowed one snack daily! Each student has a personal identification number (PIN) for his or her cafeteria account. Parents, please send cash in an envelope marked with your child's name, grade and teacher, and enclose the appropriate amount. The cafeteria cannot accept personal checks. You may purchase several meals in advance. To avoid sending money daily you may prepay using credit or debit cards through www.schoolcafe.com. Monitor your child's account balance periodically.

Cafeteria Expectations

- Walk calmly and quietly into the cafeteria and find your seat.
- Stay in your seat.
- Raise your hand for help.
- Follow the route (arrows on floor) with hands and feet to yourself.

Table Expectations

- Remain seated and raise your hand to request permission to use the bathroom or get something
- Use your inside voice.
- Keep hands and feet to yourself.
- Eat your lunch and keep your area clean.

Dress Code

Austin Independent School District's Student Dress Code is in place to maintain a safe, respectful, positive learning environment, and to model good citizenship. The dress code can be viewed here:

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

Bernice Kiker Elementary follows the Austin Independent School District's dress code with one exception: Kiker students **MUST WEAR** closed toe shoes daily to ensure their safety at recess and in PE.

In order to ensure sensitivity to all students, please note students will be addressed individually, and all staff members will keep in mind the student's age and maturity when having sensitive discussions with students.

Electronic Devices

If electronic devices (e.g. cellphones, tablets, smart watches) must be brought to school, they should be in silent mode and put away at all times. If you need to reach your child, please call the front office.

Emergency Contact Information

It is essential that the school office has current home, work, and emergency contact numbers for each child. These numbers must be kept current. Please notify your child's teacher, as well as the school office, of any telephone or address changes as soon as possible.

Flexible Instruction Time (FIT)

We have a school-wide time called Flexible Instruction Time (FIT) that is unique to each grade level. During this time students that need intervention services are being pulled from the classroom. In the past these services were often in conflict with core instruction. It is essential we make sure that students keep up with what is happening in the classroom while they catch up on skills they are lacking. You cannot have one without the other. FIT provides the school with the opportunity to allow students to catch up AND keep up. Teachers are not introducing new material during their FIT times, but rather, are using this time for differentiating instruction through individual and small groups.

Bernice Kiker Elementary Grounds (Kiker Creek, Playground and Recess Safety Rules and Expectations)

Bernice Kiker Creek Rules and Expectations

- Enjoy the creek with your eyes and ears but not with your hands or feet – please do not enter the water.
- Ensure you are using common safety sense by not touching the electrical outlets or the water valve.
- Refrain from putting any items in the creek or removing any items from the creek.

Playground Rules

- Keep your hands and feet to yourself.

- Leave whatever is on the ground, on the ground.
- Include others in your play by inviting them to join in.
- Make responsible decisions.

Playground Equipment

- When you use the Kiker Playscape, go up and down using the steps. Use only the stairs and firemen's pole to get off the Kiker Playscape. Climbing on the top of the Playscape is not permissible.
- When you play on the parallel bars, use your hands only (to build upper body strength) with feet pointing to the ground. We never pull on someone else who is playing in an attempt to get them off the equipment.
- When you use the monkey bars, start at one end and finish at the other end using only hands (no feet on bars). We never pull on anyone when he or she is on the Bernice Kiker Elementary Playscape structure or the monkey bars.
- When you decide to use the swings, sit on your bottom. Completely stop swinging when you are ready to get off the swing. Do not jump out of the swing.
- Slide down the slide and use the stairs to go up. Do not use the slide as a stairway or the stairs as a slide.
- The Bernice Kiker Elementary Playscape is open to the community when school is not in session. Please do not use the Kiker Playscape after dark.

Medication

In order for the Austin Independent School District staff members to administer medication to a student, a parent must sign a "REQUEST FOR ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL" form. These forms are available in the school office. All medication MUST be in the ORIGINAL container and clearly show the student's name and dosage to be given. Students should come to the office to take medication when needed. If your child needs to be reminded, please write a note to the teacher. Teachers may not administer medications except in the case of field trips.

Parent Involvement

Volunteer - There are many opportunities to volunteer at Bernice Kiker Elementary. During the first months of school, we will send a list home with volunteer opportunities. Kiker Comets depend upon your strengths, talents, and passions.

Join and Actively Participate in our CAC and PTA - Our Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and Campus Advisory Council (CAC) work to create unity, advise the leadership team, and plan for student success. Visit our website at kikerpta.org to learn more about these opportunities.

Visit the Campus - You are always WELCOME! Whenever possible, please let your child's teacher know at least one day in advance to avoid scheduling conflicts and disruptions to learning, particularly when extended visits are planned.

Conference with Your Child's Teacher - If you desire a conference with your child's teacher, please call or send a note in advance to schedule the conference. A planned conference with a teacher is a positive and productive experience. Always sign in at the office before going to the classroom.

Come Have Lunch - Adults are welcome in our cafeteria. Check your child's lunch schedule and sign in at the office before joining your child in the cafeteria for lunch. Please meet your child's class in the cafeteria not in the classroom. Due to the short lunch break, we recommend that you remain on campus during this time. You may wish to experience lunch on the deck by our Comet Creek. Please take ONLY your child to the deck if you choose to go outside. With the exception of your child, it is against school policy to take any child out of the lunchroom.

Read All Materials from School - Watch for the "Kiker Comments" newsletter that we send out via email each week. It contains timely articles to keep you informed about routines, events, and fun at Bernice Kiker Elementary and usually links

to other important information. Also, please look through your child's take home folder each week to see class work, communication materials, classroom newsletters, notes from the principal or nurse and campus activity notices. Please join the Bernice Kiker Elementary Facebook Group to stay in the know and be sure you are getting the school's emails through School Messenger.

Pets on Campus

Pets are NOT ALLOWED on school grounds at any time to ensure safety of students.

Social Media Use and FERPA

Please do not include photos or videos of children other than your own on social media.

Textbooks and Library Books

It is the responsibility of the school to issue, collect, care and account for all state adopted textbooks. Text and library books that are damaged, destroyed, or lost by a student must be paid for at the cost established by the State Board of Education.

Visitor Procedures

All visitors are required to bring a driver's license and sign-in at the office each time they arrive on campus after 7:40 a.m. and obtain a visitor sticker. Staff members have been trained to ask you to sign in if they do not see that you have a sticker.