

Rena Student Handbook

2022-2023



720 Rena

Road
Van Buren, AR 72956
Phone: (479)471-3190
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Every Student Matters. Every second counts.

In compliance with federal nondiscrimination laws, the Van Buren Public School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, gender identity or disability in its employment and educational practices.

After reading the Rena Elementary School student handbook with your child, this page must be signed, dated and returned to school

Thank you!
Tia Smith, Principal

I have read and discussed the material in this handbook with my child. I understand and agree that my child will abide with the rules and regulations set by the Van Buren School District and Rena Elementary School.

Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____ Grade: _____

Homeroom Teacher: _____

Release of Information

*I hereby authorize emergency medical services for this student. I give VBSD staff permission to give my child first aid treatment with OTC ointments and pain relieving sprays, cough drops, band-aids and bandages. I hereby authorize the Van Buren School District Health Services to share or discuss my child's health issues with any **pertinent** person.*

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature _____ Date: _____

Rena Elementary Faculty and Staff 2022-2023

Kindergarten:	Landi Brown	Valerie Burns	Amy Martin	Shannon McKeown
First Grade:	Misti Gardner	Jill Haley	Tara Ree	
Second Grade:	Megan Bradley	Edie Chappell	Hillary Elliott	
Third Grade:	Deanah Dalhem	Angela Guess	Amra Nicholson	
Fourth Grade:	Crista Kham	Dawn Nichols	Angela Shackelford	
Fifth Grade:	Shayna Collie	Josie Hudson	Taylor Webb	
Special Services:	Kendra Fanning	Kami Morey	Meagan Duplantis	
	Speech	Resource	Speech	
Speciality:	Angie Blake	Tina Jenkins/ Meagan Van Herpen	Andy Lockhart	Marlene Summerhill
	P.E.	Art	Music	Librarian
Paraprofessionals:	Carrie Berry	Rosemary Gregory	Kathy Harris	Heather Riley
Office Staff:	Sarah Davis	Lauren Knoner	Amber Anderson	
	Secretary	Receptionist	Nurse	
Cafeteria Staff:	Souriya Webb	Stacey LaRue	Paula Dillard	Adriana Hernandez Gaylee Morris
Custodians:	Michael King	Tasha Lee	David Sexton	
	Tia Smith Principal	Alexa Brown Assistant Principal	Eryn Wallis Counselor	Officer Megan Slayton SRO

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The teachers, staff, and administration of Rena Elementary School welcome you to our school. The word *our* truly means our children, our parents, our teachers, and our entire staff. Together, we enable our school to climb to its greatest heights. As educators, we know the greatest adventure for every child is discovering their own individual path to knowledge, understanding and awareness. Therefore, we strive to create a climate of caring and compassion that affirms that, as educators, we can and do make a difference in children's lives. The faculty and staff join together in saying we are excited to have you as part of the Rena family.

The pages of this procedure book are filled with important information regarding school procedures. The information in this Procedure Manual is in alignment with Arkansas law and Van Buren School District Policy. There is nothing in this student handbook that supersedes the Van Buren School District's board policy. The pages of this manual are filled with important information regarding school policy and procedures. I suggest that parents and students review the contents together. Should you have any questions, concerns, or ideas, please feel free to call me. If I can't take your call, I will get back with you as soon as possible.

We welcome your participation and support during the school year and encourage your involvement. Working together, we will be able to reach our collective and individual goals for student success. We look forward to celebrating with you the achievements of our students!

Sincerely,

Tia Smith
tia.smith@vbsd.us
(479)471-3190

Rena Core Beliefs

When it comes to the education of the children of Rena Elementary, we believe:

- The highest quality faculty and staff, along with parents and the community, must work collaboratively to provide all resources necessary to maximize learning.
- The most effective learning occurs when based on an appropriate opportunity, as well as an engaging and enriched curriculum.

All students deserve an environment that is safe and supportive of all learning.

Attendance

The school day is from 8:00–3:00, with the first bell ringing at 7:50.. Regular attendance is essential to success in school. If a child must be absent due to illness or a family emergency, the parent is to contact the school office. Excessive tardies and early releases hinder your child’s academic progress. Students will not be released between 2:45 and 3:00 pm. Refer to District Policy 4.2.3

Safety Procedures

At Rena Elementary, the safety of our students is the primary goal as they leave at the end of the school day. Parents are asked to follow these safety procedures every day:

- 1) **BUS RIDERS:** Students riding a bus will be released from class at 3:00 p.m. They will then go to a designated area and wait quietly to board their bus.
- 2) **CAR RIDERS:** Students traveling by vehicle will be released from class at 3:00 p.m. They will go to the designated area and sit quietly and wait to be called to go to their vehicle. All traffic must enter the school parking lot from Darla Lane, then onto Mitzi Lane where you will form two lanes to exit onto Rena Road. Adult drivers must stay in their vehicle in the car line to pick-up students. There will be no standing outside of the vehicle to wait for students.
- 3) **WALKERS:** Students walking home from school will be released from class at 3:00 p.m.
- 4) **END OF SCHOOL DAY CHECKOUT:** Students may not be checked out after 2:45.

Student Behavior

Students are to act respectfully toward each other, toward our staff and toward the property of others. Students are expected to behave in a manner which will allow everyone to be successful at school and which will help students grow into citizens of honorable character. These behaviors include:

- Coming to school ready to learn
 - Fully participate in class activities with a positive attitude
 - Having each day’s homework and assignments completed and ready to hand in or share
 - Working to reach the highest expectations
- Showing respect for the rights, feelings, and property of others
 - Keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves
 - Refrain from talking without permission
 - No name calling or “put downs”
 - Bullying will not be tolerated in accordance with the Van Buren School District Policy 4.3.6
 - Walk quietly and orderly inside the building
 - Play safely and fairly
- Demonstrating responsibility
 - Making parents aware of conferences and school events
 - Making teachers aware of notes, money, or information from parents
 - Following all classroom and school procedures
 - Acknowledging the responsibility and consequences of their behavior

The Discipline Plan in the classroom is designed to help students honor these expectations and to encourage them to make positive choices. If a student chooses to disrupt the learning environment there will be logical and consistent consequences. In most cases, the first time will be a verbal warning. If inappropriate behavior continues, the teacher will employ an established prompting and consequence system to remind

students to make better choices. The teacher will communicate with you the specifics of the classroom plan. In extreme cases, students will be referred to the assistant principal/principal for further disciplinary action.

We will make every attempt to keep you informed of your child's behavior. Thank you for working with us to provide a nurturing, safe and orderly environment for learning.

Character Education

Rena values the uniqueness and dignity of each person. It is our desire to help children grow into citizens of the highest character. Some of the delivery systems for our character education program include a Friday morning assembly, *Rise & Shine*, and a "Word of the Month" representative of universally accepted guiding principles.

Curriculum

The instructional program of Rena Elementary School is in alignment with the curriculum and instructional methods of the Van Buren School District and the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). This includes a program of comprehensive literacy, standards based mathematics, inquiry based science, social studies, physical activity, and the arts. Specific student learning expectations for each grade level are available on the ADE website under Arkansas Frameworks at

http://arkedu.state.ar.us/curriculum/curriculum_framework.html.

Discipline

Each staff member at Rena Elementary accepts responsibility for the maintenance of discipline and for the promotion of wholesome human relations. A student's behavior should conform to acceptable standards of conduct that reflects self-respect and consideration for the rights, feelings, and property of others. If a student is sent to the office for disciplinary action, a written report will be sent home. Parents will receive a written copy of the classroom discipline plan. Refer to District Policy 4.3

Dress

Hats are not to be worn inside the building. Students may not wear clothing that can be hazardous to them in their educational activities. Students may not wear shoes with wheels. No flip flops may be worn during physical education. Refer to District Policy 4.3.4

HEALTH INFORMATION

Students are expected to have on file a record of immunizations according to the state laws of Arkansas. The school's staff will care for any child who becomes ill or injured at school. If the child's condition is thought to be serious, the parents will be contacted and the child sent home. For a condition which may be contagious, students will be sent home until the child is no longer a danger to other students. Students should be free of fever for 24 hours before returning to school. In case of an emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital and the parents notified. Refer to District Policy 4.1.2

Rena students are not allowed to bring medicine to school. Students may be administered medications by office personnel while at school under the following policy:

- No over the counter drugs will be given at school.
- A parent must bring in prescription medication. Transportation of medicines on school buses is strictly prohibited.
- A parent must sign the consent form before any medications will be given.

- Medications must be in the original container with the child's name on the prescription.
- With the exception of ADD/ADHD medications, no medication which is prescribed for three times a day or less will be administered at school.

IMPORTANT: It is very important for you to list on the Emergency Call Card at least **two** people who can be reached in case of an emergency with your child.

Health Screenings (state mandated)

Vision: (A.C.A. 6-18-1501)

Act 1438 of 2005 requires students in grades PreK, KF, 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, and transfer students to have an eye and vision screen. Only failure notifications are sent home. A child who does not pass the screening shall be required to have an exam conducted by an optometrist or ophthalmologist within 60 days of receipt of the screening report and show proof of the exam. Parents needing financial assistance should contact the school nurse.

Hearing: Hearing screens are mandated for students in grades PreK, K, 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, and transfer students. Only failure notices are sent home. Parents have 60 days to show proof that a doctor or audiologist examined their child.

- Insurance is billed for students covered under Medicaid/Arkansas Kids 1st will be billed, where applicable, for hearing and vision screenings conducted at school unless notified in writing, by parents to decline within 60 days of receipt of the handbook.

BMI: (ARK Code 20-7-133 and 3.04)

Act 1220 requires students in grades KF, 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10 to have their height and weight assessed. A parent who refuses to have their child assessed must provide a written request of the refusal to the school. Screening results will be sent home only upon request of the parent/legal guardian.

Scoliosis: Act 95 of 1989 and Act 41 of 1987

The acts require girls in 6th grade and all students in 8th grade be screened for scoliosis. Parents of a child who fails the screening will be sent an information letter stating the need to see a licensed physician. A parent, who refuses to have their child screened, must provide a written request of refusal to the school.

Release of Information: I hereby authorize emergency medical services for my child. I give VBSD staff permission to give my child first aid treatment with OTC ointments and pain relieving sprays, cough drops, band aids and bandages. I hereby authorize the Van Buren School District Health Services to share or discuss my child's health issues with any pertinent person.

Inclement Weather

When severe weather creates hazardous conditions, the regular school schedule may be suspended to ensure students' safety. It is the parent's responsibility to monitor news reports via television and radio stations for announcements regarding changes in the school schedule. On a school day with wet or extreme temperature (below freezing or heat index over 100 degrees) students will remain indoors during recess and before school starts.

Drills and Procedures

Fire Drills: The fire signal will be one continuous alarm that can be heard throughout the facility. Students should remain quiet and listen for the directions of the teachers. Students will walk to their assigned places. Everyone will exit the classroom and building following the designated routes that are posted in each room. The all-clear signal for returning to the facility will be a verbal command.

Tornado Drills: The signal for a tornado drill will be a vocal command. Students will walk quickly and quietly to their designated area. Students should be quiet and listen for directions.

Lost and Found

Parents are urged to clearly mark student jackets, sweaters, backpacks, and other personal items with their child's name. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Any item that is found will only be kept at school for a limited time. All items not claimed within a reasonable time will be given to a charitable organization.

Parent Involvement

The Rena PTA is a vital part of our school program. We encourage your membership and participation in the PTA. Meetings are usually held monthly with several projects throughout the year.

Parents are encouraged to volunteer in many ways at school. You will have an opportunity to indicate your interests in volunteer programs at the beginning of the school year. Please feel free to suggest other ways in which you can become involved. We hope you will be an active part of your child's school career.

A parent facilitator from the faculty heads a Parent Advisory Committee which serves multiple functions such as setting the calendar for parent involvement events and reviewing data for our school improvement process.

Parents are welcome to visit school to have lunch with their child, observe a special event, or provide volunteer services so long as our check in procedures have been followed and their presence does not interrupt the learning process.

If eating lunch with your child, please keep in mind that your child needs to be escorted back to his/her classroom by a teacher. Parents are encouraged to eat lunch; however, the lunch schedule and instructional time needs to be honored and not interrupted. Parents are not allowed to go onto the playground or back to the classroom with their child. You may only eat with your student, their friends will not be allowed at the parent table.

Parent /Teacher Conferences

Arkansas State Law requires a minimum of two Parent/Teacher Conferences per year. In our calendar we will provide afternoon and early evening times for your convenience. The teacher will contact you a few days beforehand so you can select an appointment time. We also welcome your requests for conferences at additional times. Please schedule conferences by calling the school office so the secretary can assist you in arranging a conference with your child's teacher or the principal. Please note that Open House and other school events are not appropriate times for discussing your child's progress with the teacher.

School Hours

School hours are from 8:00 to 3:00 each day. Children should not arrive earlier than 7:15 AM or remain on the campus later than 3:30 PM. Students who are tardy must be checked in by a parent at the office before

attending class. If a student must leave early for any reason, a parent must come into the alcove in the office to sign-out the student. Unless absolutely unavoidable, parents are requested not to pick students up before 3:00 because it interferes with the required 6 hours of instructional time.

Parent Drop Off and Pick-Up

Drop Off: The school day begins at 8:00 with the first bell ringing at 7:50. Two car tags will be provided for pick-up to hang on your rear-view mirror. Morning Students are not allowed at school before 7:15. Students should NOT be allowed out of the car before a school staff member is present! For the safety of all children, please use the car drop off lane to drop your child(ren) off. Stay in the car line when picking up and dropping off. Do not park and walk up to the porch for your child. This is in the best interest of all involved in the drop off and pick up process. We will have greeters assisting young children out of the vehicle until 8:00. Students should not be dropped off in the parking lot area, nor should you park and walk your child across the traffic.

Pick Up: Students are dismissed at 3:00. Students will stay inside the building and be called out to the parent pick up area by one of our duty aides. Students will come straight to your vehicle. Parents will not be allowed to wait on the sidewalk or in the front office area for students. You must come through the car lane so the duty teacher will know to call your student outside. Parents will be given two Rena car tags per student. The person picking the student up must have the car tag in order to pick the student up. If the person picking up the student does not have the car tag they will be asked to go into the alcove and check the student out to ensure they are on the authorized pick up list. This is for the safety of all students. Our goal is to make the car line run as seamless as possible, so please pull up as far as possible and do not stop and wave your student to the car. Parents should stay in their cars until they pick up their child. We will walk your student wherever you fall in line and assure they safely walk to their designated spot. The cars must drive through the drive, do not park on the street or in the parking lot. Bus riders will be called out by their bus numbers to load their bus. Please communicate with the Rena office staff if your child will go home in a different way than how they normally go home.

Walkers

Walkers will be released at 3:00. Students will be walked across the bus area and down the sidewalk by a duty teacher. If you wish to meet your child, you must wait at the bottom of the sidewalk closest to the road. You will not be allowed to wait on the front porch. If you do not live within walking distance of the school, do not have your student be a walker. It is unacceptable and unsafe to tell your child to be a walker and then drive to pick them up on a nearby street to avoid the car line. Unless your address is within a reasonable walking distance, your child will need to be parent pick-up or a bus rider.

Going Home With Other Children

You must send a signed note to school giving permission for your child to go home with another child as well as a note from the parent of the child with whom your child is going home. Notes from both guardians are required.

School Meals

Breakfast is free of charge district wide. Lunch may be purchased on a daily basis or paid in advance. Students use a computerized debit system to pay for their meals at school. Send your check or money in a sealed envelope to the classroom teacher. Write on the outside of the envelope the student's name, teacher's name, and the amount of money enclosed for meals. Due to the large number of charges not being paid, the Van Buren School District will only permit a limited number of charges per student. We prefer that meals be paid

for in advance. Any remaining balance at the end of the year will be returned to you. Applications for Free/Reduced Meals are available through the school office. If you qualify we encourage your participation in this program and assure you that all financial information is confidential.

Lunch price: \$2.85 (full price) \$0.40 (reduced)

Non-Nutritional Days

The Arkansas Department of Education has passed rules governing nutrition standards in Arkansas Public Schools. These rules have an effect on what food item parents are allowed to send to school.

Please note the following rules, sign, and return the bottom portion indicating you have read and understand.

- Elementary students will not have access to vended (sold or given away) food and beverage items anytime, anywhere on school premises during the declared school day.
- This does not apply to students with special needs indicated in the student IEP or to school nurses providing health care to individual students.
- Students may be given any food and/or beverage items for up to nine (9) different school events each school year to be determined and approved by school officials.
- Nutritional foods may be used for instructional purposes. The school, as part of the planned instructional program, may also distribute nutritional snacks (kindergarten snacks for example).
- This does not restrict what parents may provide for their own child's lunch or snack.
- To meet state regulations (law), we must ask parents not to provide food/beverage items to other children at school for events such as birthday parties. Parents may provide food/beverage items upon request to support one of up to nine (9) allowable events such as Valentine's Day.

Student Information

Parents will be asked to complete a packet of informational pages regarding their child upon enrollment and at the beginning of each school year in an online format called HelloSign. It is imperative that the school office be notified immediately of a change of address, home or office telephone number, or of a change in emergency information during the academic school year. In the case of Court ordered custodial parents or guardians, a copy of the Court document granting custody, along with other pertinent information should be on file in the school office to prevent unauthorized access to students or their records. According to the Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, only school personnel, parent/guardian, or person by Court order are permitted to inspect and review educational records relating to the student.

Student Performance and Evaluation

Reports of student progress will be sent home at the end of each quarter (about 9 weeks) and at mid-term of each quarter. Our evolving communication of student progress reflects our goal of every student succeeding on standard learning expectations. The grading system may include portfolio assessment, reading levels (rather than grades), scoring guides (4=advanced, 3= proficient, 2= basic, 1= below basic) and/or a letter grade scale (ES= Exceeding Standard, MS=Meeting Standard, BS=Below Standard, RS= Requires Support).

Remediation Plan

In order to provide a learning environment that enables all students to learn at high levels, Rena Elementary will provide an intense remediation program to any student failing to achieve the proficient level on the state

mandated criterion-referenced tests or scores below the fiftieth percentile on the state mandated norm-referenced test. The program will be specific to the student's identified deficiencies, different from the previous year's regular classroom instructional program, and take into account the student's learning style. After evaluation by school personnel knowledgeable of the student's performance, a student plan will be developed, identifying the student's specific areas of deficiency in literacy and/or mathematics, the desired level of performance in these areas, and the instructional and support services provided to meet the desired levels of performance. The plan shall be flexible, contain multiple remediation methods and strategies, include formative assessments and shall be revised periodically based on the results from the formative assessments. Students shall receive remediation from a highly qualified teacher and/or highly qualified paraprofessional under the guidance of a highly qualified teacher. According to state regulations, failure to participate in required remediation may result in retention if proficiency is not attained. In addition, Rena Elementary utilizes an intervention team of highly qualified personnel to create and provide additional instructional and or behavioral support.

Technology

We are fortunate to have computers and other technology available at Rena for student use in the pursuit of learning. Technology is also used by staff for communication, administrative and assessment purposes. In accordance with school district policy, students will be asked to sign a contract regarding appropriate use of technology while at school. Refer to District Policy 2.29. Families are encouraged to communicate with staff via e-mail and to visit the school's website for current school information at www.vbsd.us.

Toys or Electronics

Students are requested to leave toys at home with the exception of soccer balls, kick balls, and basketballs. Students may bring soccer balls, basketballs, or kick balls to school. The school is not responsible for any toys brought to school. If a student brings a toy or electronics to school, the teacher, assistant principal, or principal may confiscate it until a parent comes to claim it. If a student brings these items to school, the school will not be responsible for the theft of these items.

Cell Phones

If a student brings a cell phone to school, it must remain off and in the child's backpack throughout the day. If a student takes the phone out of the backpack, it will be taken from the student and a parent must pick it up in the office. Rena is not responsible for any lost or stolen cell phones.

Video Surveillance

The Board of Directors has a responsibility to maintain discipline, protect the safety, security, and welfare of its students, staff, and visitors while at the same time safeguarding district facilities, vehicles, and equipment. As part of fulfilling this responsibility, the board authorizes the use of video/audio surveillance cameras, automatic identification technology, data compilation devices, and technology capable of tracking the physical location of the district equipment, students, and/or personnel. Video/recording devices may be in use in school buildings, on school grounds and in school vehicles as determined by the VBSD. Refer to policy 4.48.

Change of address or phone number

THIS IS OF EXTREME IMPORTANCE: In case of serious illness or injury, we need at least two (2) phone numbers of parents or relatives. With our current laws, it would do little good for us to take a child to the hospital if we

could not get a parent or guardian's approval for medication or treatment. **Take care to see that all emergency phone numbers and addresses are current.**

Parents Can Make the Difference

Parents can help their children reach their full potential in school. The home environment and the quality and quantity of time spent with your child (ren) can make the difference. Here are some ideas:

- Provide a suitable space for study and work.
- Praise your child for the work shown to you.
- Help your child organize his or her work.
- Help your child to be responsible for coming to school prepared.
- Set reasonable standards of behavior, and help your child meet them.
- Communicate your problems or concerns to the teacher or principal.
- Participate in school-sponsored activities with your child.
- Make sure your child gets healthy meals, enough sleep, and good exercise.
- Avoid comparing your child to brothers, sisters, and friends.
- Limit and monitor the television programs watched by your child(ren).
- Encourage reading! Help your child find worthwhile reading materials.
- If your child is home ill, his or her homework should be to get well. Teachers will take care of makeup work, if necessary, upon your child's return to school. If your child insists on doing something academic, try reading a book. He or she could read a part, and you could add to the interest by reading a part too.

“Every Child...Whatever It Takes!”

At Rena Elementary, we recognize the child's primary caregiver is the most important influence in his/her life and learning. The staff members at Rena Elementary welcome all parents, grandparents, guardians and other caregivers into our building and are pleased to have them join our learning community. In an effort to support each student's learning and well being, we provide several opportunities for teachers and parents to communicate on a regular basis. Our efforts include newsletters, agendas, email, telephone calls, notes home and scheduled parent/teacher conferences. Updates and information are also available on the school website. Our parent center holds many resources and information geared toward encouraging and supporting responsible care giving. We will have special events throughout the year and strongly encourage parents and other caregivers to join us. Our goal is quality interaction between teachers and caregivers to accomplish our vision, “Every Child...Whatever it Takes!”

Many thanks for your cooperation, interest, and involvement. We are working hard to make it a safe, healthy and happy one for your child(ren). We wish you and your family a most successful, healthy year. Together, we can make it all happen!

Tia Smith and the Rena Staff