

RUNNELS

Elementary School



A Guide for Parents and Students

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Runnels Elementary! Whether you are a new member of the Runnels Community or an "old timer," we are glad that your family will be a part of our adventure in education.

We hope you will be involved with as many of the school's activities as possible. You are welcome to join the Booster Club or Corporation, and you are automatically a member of the Runnels Parents' Organization. Why not volunteer to serve on one of the organization's committees? It's never too late to volunteer, and your efforts will be very much appreciated.

There are so many ways to be a part of the life of the school - sharing a talent or information with a class, helping with Hearing and Vision Screenings in our clinic, working in the library, helping to mat and display student artwork, coaching a team, leading a scout troop - the list is endless!

Runnels has the reputation of being a "human school" - a place where people are important. You and your children matter very much to us. I will always have time to discuss a concern or problem with you, and will appreciate the opportunity to work with you toward a happy solution.

Most of all, our faculty and administration strives to create a warm enthusiastic environment where children can be comfortable, develop self confidence, and experience the joy of learning. Please join hands with us as we create this magic!

Sincerely,

Gladys Runnels, Principal

Foreword

A school is successful when its students succeed. When the students succeed in mastering academic skills, in achieving true friendships, and in participating in the total life of the school community, then the parents and faculty join the students in the joy of success.

The purpose of this guide is to help Runnels School students, with the assistance of their parents, realize these successes. A clear understanding of our school's goals and expectations is an important first step toward school success.

No set of rules, however, can ever be either perfect or complete. At Runnels the worth of an individual person has always been held more precious than any set of rules. As Runnels continues to grow and flourish, may it always adhere to this principle.

Runnels Alma Mater

**To thee our Alma Mater,
With grateful hearts we sing.
To Runnels School we lift our voice
And let our praises ring.
Forever let our banner
Wave for all to see,
In blue and silver glory,
In loyalty;
Forever shall our Alma Mater
Stand victoriously.**

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Introduction to Runnels

What is Runnels?

The oldest independent school in Baton Rouge, Runnels was founded in 1965. It began as a preschool, and grew into an elementary school in 1970. The Junior-Senior High School began in 1983.

Runnels School is an independent, non-sectarian, co-educational, nonprofit institution whose purpose is to provide a college preparatory program of studies to students from age 2 through grade 12. The school - its faculty, administration, and curriculum in all programs - is fully accredited by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Our students take part in the fullest kind of learning - the kind that encourages not only academic skill and curiosity, but initiative and responsibility as well. This is the type of education that sets students on a course toward productive lives. Whether in the classroom or on the playing fields, they are made ready for the challenges yet to come.

We believe that what happens to us in youth sets a pattern for the way we choose to live the rest of our lives. At Runnels School, we help young people make the most of this time, and the best of themselves.

Philosophy

The Runnels School is a comprehensive school dedicated to the emotional, intellectual, social and physical growth of the students in our preschool through high school programs. We believe that education is a cooperative effort among students, parents, faculty, administration and staff, designed to stimulate the creativity and academic achievement of the individual.

We believe in the importance of the individual and the value of a personal approach to education. We help each student to develop a realistic and positive self-image. We seek to develop self-discipline by encouraging positive behavioral traits. We respect the dignity of the individual and strive to discipline in a fair, consistent and caring manner.

We believe that a young person learns from his or her total experience in the school setting. Accordingly, we provide opportunities for social and physical growth in both the curriculum offerings and extracurricular activities.

We recognize that increasing in technical academic knowledge, social graces, and physical well-being is not enough for a complete education. We believe that a very important part of a child's growth is developing an appreciation of the arts. We strive to inspire this appreciation in many ways, and also provide an opportunity for self-expression in the arts.

We feel that each young person entrusted to us is important, and we consider it an honor and a privilege to be allowed to be a part of his or her life.

Goals

All of the curricular offerings have certain underlying beliefs and goals which permeate their overall planning and development. Our goal in general is two-fold: first, to ensure that each child realizes his or her potential in every area of the curriculum; second, that the children attain this maximum achievement in a pleasant, safe environment, and that they enjoy learning. We aspire to the following goals for each child:

1. To read with understanding.
2. To write and speak clearly and effectively.
3. To calculate with accuracy
4. To think critically.
5. To be creative.
6. To understand the world around us in general, and America in particular.
7. To be inspired to search for answers.
8. To acquire the skills needed for successful library and internet research.
9. To become proficient and comfortable with technology and the many roles that it plays in the modern world.
10. To develop a sense of responsibility.
11. To appreciate and have the opportunity to find expression in visual and performing arts.
12. To develop the skills of relaxation and recreation that enable people to enjoy life.

Additionally, it is our goal to aid students in becoming happy, knowledgeable, and productive young people who are aware of and considerate of others.

Our concern is not only for what is being taught, but also for whom we are teaching; accordingly, we maintain an environment which recognizes the individuality and needs of our students.

Enrollment

Admission to Runnels Elementary School is based on application supported by interview, examination, and - where applicable - records from previously attended schools.

In addition to the admission requirements that an applicant student must meet, parents of applicants are reminded that enrollment agreements are contracts between the school and the parents. Parents, therefore, must present themselves as both financially responsible and eager to cooperate with school policies, programs and decisions.

Continuing enrollment is based on satisfactory academic progress and acceptable social development of the student, on the parents' fulfillment of financial obligations to the school, and on the school's continuing ability to meet the needs of the student. In matters of judgment on these issues, final responsibility rests with the principal.

Academic Pursuits

Courses and Extras

Curriculum Offerings

Grade 1

Reading
Mathematics
Language Arts
(English Grammar,
Composition,
and Penmanship)
Spelling
Science
Social Studies
Art
Music
Creative Dramatics
Health and P.E.

Grades 2-3

Reading
Mathematics
English
Spelling
Penmanship
Composition
Science
Social Studies
Art
Music
Creative Dramatics
Health and P.E.

Grades 4-6

Reading
Mathematics
English (Grammar, Composition, Spelling,
Penmanship)
Science
Social Studies

Electives:
Health and P.E.
Band
Art
Drama
Chorus
Strings
Ballet

Special Requirements and Activities

Library Policies

Students in the school are permitted to check out books from the library. Books may be checked out and taken home for a period of one week. Books may be renewed by the librarian.

Students will be given instructions in using the reference books and they will have many opportunities to use them for research during school hours. Some reference materials may be checked out for a period of one day.

Responsibilities of Students for Books: Library orientation is given to the students at the beginning of the year to instruct them in care of the books and respect for school property. Students are expected to demonstrate such respect throughout the school year. Library books that are lost or damaged must be paid for.

The library schedule will provide specific times during which each class may visit the library and have an opportunity to check out and return books. Teachers and students will be informed of the schedule at the beginning of each school year. Students may also enjoy the library during recess and from 8:00 a.m. until 8:25 a.m. each morning. The library is closed after 3:00 p.m.

The Elementary Librarian is assisted by a volunteer group of parents called “Bookends”. They read the selected book to the class, assist with the circulation desk, assist students taking Accelerated Reader tests, and staff book fairs and other special events throughout the year to expand the library’s holdings. This group is a special committee of the R.P.O. All parents are welcome to join the group.

Teachers accompany their classes to the library and may assist with supervising the check-out and return of books on scheduled “Library Days”. Teachers also assist with Accelerated Reader testing when needed.

Outside Reading Requirements

Home Reading Program for Grades K-2. First and second graders each receive homereader. A portion of this book is to be read aloud daily to a parent or older brother or sister. It would be helpful to make a list of new or troublesome words and review them each day before beginning the next day’s oral reading. When a book has been completed, it should be returned and another will be issued. These books are not read in class; different readers are used for classwork. A certificate stating the number of these “extra books” read will be presented to the student at the end of the school year.

Grades 3-6. Each student in grades 3 through 6 is required to do outside reading. These books can be selected from our school library, the public library, or any other source. To receive credit, books should be approved by the reading teacher, and a satisfactory book report must be turned in upon completion of each book. The requirements for grades 3-6 are: one book report per month (total of nine). Specific requirements, such as the number of books to be selected from each category (fiction, non-fiction, biography, etc.) will be given to the students at the beginning of the school year. Students will also receive guidelines for writing the book reports.

Special Recognition (Grades 3-6). Special recognition will be given those students who read more than the required number of books. This extended reading may be in categories of the child's choice. The books, however, must be on the child's reading level and approved by the reading teacher. Book reports for extended reading may be oral, written, or project-oriented at the discretion of the teacher.

Silver Medallion Requirements: 30 books (including the nine in the basic requirements.)

Gold Medallion Requirements: 50 books (including the nine in the basic requirements.)

Special Reading Award Requirements: 75 or more books (including the nine in the basic requirement.)

“Accelerated Reader” Program

The Accelerated Reader is a computerized reading program available to students in grades 1-12. Special computer equipment and a large collection of books and accompanying software are located in each of our libraries. Students are challenged to read a variety of books, thereby improving reading skills and broadening reading horizons. All books under the umbrella of the program have computerized tests designed to determine the student's understanding of the book. The librarians will meet with each student to familiarize each of them with the procedures - including secret passwords to gain access to the students' personal reading records. Participation in this program is optional, but the reading teachers will record and recognize student effort and progress in the program.

Technology in the Elementary Program

There can be no doubt about the preeminent role that computers and related electronics will play in the lives of our students as they grow to maturity. At school they will have ample opportunity to become comfortable with these tools that will gain them access to almost limitless sources of information, communication and entertainment. As they progress through the elementary curriculum, they will gain this computer literacy through encounters of various kinds: dedicated formal programs such as “Accelerated Reader,” stand-alone classroom computers for enrichment and technology-based instruction in all areas of the curriculum. A full-time technology coordinator schedules exciting and challenging projects for students of all ages to experience in our Elementary Computer Lab.

Students will have the opportunity for hands-on-experience with state-of-the-art equipment for computer-based library data retrieval from compact disk storage. They will also be introduced to the wonders of “on-line” computing and the nearly limitless resources accessible through the school's “Internet” connections.

Social Studies Fair

Students in Grades 5 and 6 are given the opportunity to participate in an annual Social Studies Fair, which is usually held in March. Details about the Fair, explaining expectations and degree of required participation for each grade level, will be distributed to students and parents at the beginning of each year.

Students will do research on topics of their choosing and develop reports on their topics. The social studies teacher will provide guidelines and assistance in the choosing of topics. Both Social Studies and English teachers will guide the students as they develop their formal papers reporting the details of their research.

Math Applications in Science and Social Studies

The material in the mathematics textbooks on measurement is taught in all elementary science classes, and testing on that material will be done in the science class. The science class is a natural place to teach measurement and doing so leaves more time in mathematics to develop accuracy in computation and to expand problem-solving skills.

Similarly, the materials in the mathematics textbooks on telling time and using money are taught and tested in social studies classes in grades 1-3.

Teachers of science and social studies stay in close contact with the mathematics teachers during the planning stages and during the teaching of these concepts to maintain continuity and to assure reasonable and appropriate expectations. There are overlaps of mathematics applications into all subject areas, and during the year Runnels teachers find even more ways to teach and apply mathematics concepts.

Student Art Exhibits

Art has been an integral part of the fiber of Runnels School since its beginning in 1965. The work of our young artists finds its way into the world outside the classroom in many ways. Student work is exhibited in the library and in businesses throughout our community. The art year traditionally concludes with two major art exhibits. One held in our school gym features the work of students in preschool through high school. At this show, visitors are allowed to cast ballots for the Popular Choice Awards, and the three principals will select the Principal's Choice Awards (which are on exhibit year-round in the principal's offices and illustrate to visitors the important role played by the arts in the life of Runnels School.) The other major art exhibit is a juried art show, exhibiting works by Runnels students which are selected by a group of local professional artists. These works of art are framed and placed in the foyer of our Theater for Performing Arts, where they will hang until new pieces are selected the following spring.

Drama Productions

Plays are regular happenings throughout the year, a natural part of the Creative Dramatics classes in the elementary school curriculum. All students in grades 1-3 participate in drama, and students in grades 4-6 may elect to participate. The Runnels Theater is noted for its great diversity - producing musicals, mysteries, westerns, and comedies, based on literature from Mother Goose to Shakespeare. Parents will be invited to many of these productions, and we hope you will make every effort to attend when your child is involved. These performances are important to the children. They demonstrate progress in this class...and the performances are always a delight to see.

Instrumental and Vocal Music Concerts

Band concerts are performed near the end of each semester, featuring students in the band classes at all levels. Our bands and band students traditionally win numerous performance awards in regional competition during the year.

The String Orchestra also performs near the end of each semester, featuring students in grades 4-12 who are in orchestra classes. Many of these students are selected each year to perform in the Parish Youth Orchestra.

Elementary chorus students traditionally perform near the end of each quarter, featuring a variety of music within concert themes. These performances are always delightful!

All members of the Runnels community are welcome to attend these concerts - to enjoy the music and to encourage and support our young musicians.

The Physical Education Program

Dress - Students participate in a physically active program and should keep this in mind when selecting school clothing and shoes. Students with improper shoes will not be permitted to participate. This rule is not meant to punish the children but to protect their feet.

Participation - Students are required to participate in the day's activities. Non-excused students will be given no credit for the day's activity.

Illness and Excuses - Any day a parent does not wish his/her child to participate, he/she must send a signed, dated note to the Physical Education teacher stating the reason the child may not participate.

Rainy and/or Cold Days - In case of inclement weather, P.E. classes are conducted inside.

Health classes are a part of the Physical Education program.

Homework

Philosophy on Homework

For outside assignments to be meaningful and worthwhile, it is necessary for parents and teachers to work together. Homework serves many purposes, such as continuing a school assignment independently at home, extra practice in reading and mathematics, research on topics studied in the content areas, and others. But perhaps the most important purpose is the development in the student of a sense of responsibility toward his/her studies.

You as a parent have the strongest influence on attitude toward this phase of schoolwork. You can help by encouraging your child, providing a reasonably quiet and comfortable place in which to do homework, helping to organize the work, letting him/her work independently as much as possible and assisting only when necessary. You might, for example, listen to your first or second grader read aloud from a “home reader”, help a student at any level prepare for a test, or show an interest in a project in which your child is involved.

“Understood” standing homework assignments throughout the entire school year for students in grades one and two are daily reading aloud from a “home reader,” and for students in grades one, two and three, daily practice of mathematical (flash cards) computations.

A positive attitude from you is contagious; so is a negative attitude. If for some reason you disagree with a teacher, feel he or she has made an error, or do not understand the purpose in an assignment, do not air such negative responses in your child’s hearing. Make an appointment, or phone to speak to the teacher about your concern. The teacher will be happy to discuss the assignment with you. Work with the teachers, not against them.

Policies on Homework

Policy to Avoid Overloading Students with Homework

We realize that because of our departmentalized system, there is the potential for a class to be “overloaded” with study. To prevent this from happening, we have designed a “Test Schedule Book”, which is actually a plan book for the entire school year. Each teacher checks the book and signs for a date on which he or she chooses to give a test. Students should not have to prepare for more than two tests on the same night. We also want students to learn to prepare regularly for tests and assignments known in advance and not wait until the night before the test, or the due date for the assignment.

Responsibilities of Students, Teachers, and Parents

Each student will receive a notebook or student planner, for assignments. This is not a unique idea, of course, but the manner in which we use the notebooks places specific responsibilities on all three parties: Students, Teachers, and Parents.

The student must be responsible for having this notebook with him in all classes. The teacher will write each assignment on the board for all grades. The teacher will check to see that all students have copied the assignment correctly. The student is responsible for taking the notebook (and books, notes, and other materials needed) home in order to be prepared for class the next day. The student should do each assignment, and check off the assignments as completed. The parent(s) should ask to see this notebook each day, in order to know what is expected of the child on a day-to-day basis - especially in the lower grades.

The teachers understand this procedure, and each assignment given will serve a purpose. The child should be able to complete assignments independently. There will never be new material assigned for homework. It will have been discussed and explained in class - an extension of classwork.

Tests - All test papers are to be brought home, signed by a parent, and returned to the teacher the following school day. Occasionally, other completed work will require your signature to verify that you have seen the work. Tests and other papers needing your signature will usually be sent home on Monday of each week. (If Monday is a holiday, papers will be sent home on the first school day following the holiday.)

Goals - The specific purposes and frequency of assignments vary according to subject and level. There is a “spiral” effect in our overall plan to instill in our students good study habits. The assignments are a little more complex and require a little more responsibility on the part of the student each year. The purpose of this method is to prepare our students gradually for study tasks with which they will be faced in high school and college. We want them to arrive at the next level equipped with a sense of responsibility, the skills to organize their thoughts and work, and the ability to adapt to new situations.

We hope that our students will not only be accomplishing the task at hand (i.e., completing a day’s assignments), but that somewhere along the way something more important will happen: the magic of learning how to study, how to learn, will be implanted. When this happens, our primary goal in assigning homework will have been accomplished. This “magic” does not take place at any particular golden age or grade. But if students, teachers, and parents will work together toward this common goal, it can and will happen.

Consequences of Failure to Complete Homework (Grades 4-6)

Failure to complete homework assignments will result in the student being referred to “Homework Detention” and you will be notified of the referral. Homework Detention is study time monitored by a faculty member and held during the mid-day recess period. The referring teacher determines the work to be done by the student in Homework Detention (usually the work not completed).

In order to keep parents informed about their child's homework habits, a homework report will be sent only if their child is having difficulty meeting this responsibility. In this area, then, no news is good news!

Testing and Assessment

Runnels Elementary Grading System

First Grade

The letter grades used for first grade work and report cards are:

- E- Excellent*
- S- Satisfactory*
- L- Limited progress/Needs Improvement*
- U- Unsatisfactory*

Please note that there are no percentages associated with these letter grades.

Grading in Grades 2-6

The following letter grades are used for daily work, unit tests, and on report cards:

- A - Excellent*
- B - Above Average*
- C - Average*
- D - Low passing*
- F - Not passing*
- I - Incomplete work*

For each subject a child takes, two grades are received, one reflecting achievement and the other reflecting conduct. Report cards are issued each quarter. Please report to the office if you do not receive your child's grades.

Explanation of Grades

There are essentially two groups of subjects in our curriculum, with different criteria for grading. In the subjects of Reading, English, Spelling, Composition, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies, the achievement grade is based primarily on accuracy in the mastery of facts and skills.

In the subjects of Art, Band, Orchestra, Drama, Ballet, Chorus, and Physical Education, the achievement grade is based primarily on effort, cooperation, progress, and the development of technique.

For grade one only, the subjects of English grammar, composition, and penmanship are assigned one composite grade and listed on the report card as Language.

When grades are assigned in any category, a student's participation in class, attitude, and diligence in completing assignments are also considered. It is neither possible nor desirable to eliminate a certain amount of subjectivity in the assigning of grades. A teacher's observation and knowledge of a student's progress and level of achievement is a valuable component of the assessment process.

“Honor Students” and “Merit Students”

Students in grades 2-6 are eligible for Honor and Merit Roll. To be on the Merit Roll a student must earn grades no lower than B in all subjects (including conduct).

To be on the Honor Roll a student must meet the requirements for Merit Roll, and also must earn a grade point average of at least 3.8 each quarter of the year.

“Honor Students” and “Merit Students” are recognized at a special program at the end of the year.

Interim Reports

As deemed necessary by the individual teachers, you may receive some reports during the quarter to call your attention to problem areas or areas in which problems are being successfully overcome. The format of such interim reports can vary from an informal note from the teacher, to comments written on a unit test or other class work, to a more formal report. Some of these reports will be mailed to you and others will be given to the student to deliver to you. Notifications delivered by students must be signed by a parent and returned to school the next day so that the teacher can be certain the notice was received.

At the mid-point of each quarter, a formal “Progress Report” will be sent to parents of students in grades 2-6 whose achievement or conduct grade is a D or F at that point. In grade 1, “Progress Reports” will be sent to parents of students whose performance is less than satisfactory. The purpose of such notification is to advise parents about reasons for lack of progress, and to suggest methods for improvement. These reports may (for students at any grade level) be sent for any child about whom a teacher has concerns or who is not progressing as he/she should.

Consequences of Failing Grades

A grade of F in any subject for the fourth quarter will require summer remediation for the student to be promoted to the next grade, the manner of remediation to be approved in advance by the principal. At the principal's discretion, summer remediation may also be required in the event of an F grade for an earlier quarter during the year, or for excessive D grades.

Promotion to the next grade is unlikely for a student receiving two or more Ds or Fs for the fourth quarter of the year. Standardized achievement test scores, and other factors in addition to report card grades will be considered by the principal in such cases to determine if provisional promotion is warranted, subject to satisfactory summer remediation as prescribed by the principal.

Annual Testing Program

A complete battery of standardized tests is administered each year in the spring (grades 1-6), and the test scores are mailed to the parents/guardians of each student, usually in early June. A cumulative record of these test scores remains in each student's folder as part of our permanent records. Nationally standardized tests are important because they provide an indication of a student's achievement and progress.

Behavior Matters

Consequences and Recognitions

We have always been known for our high academic standards. However, our goals include more than academic growth; character development is important also. It is toward upholding all of our standards that our disciplinary procedures have been developed.

School Rules

In order to provide an acceptable quality of education for our students, it is necessary that all students show appropriate respect and cooperation toward faculty, substitute teachers, staff members and each other. With this basic idea in mind, we believe that our general school rules will help accomplish these goals. Specific policies for behavior within the classroom, in addition to the general rules listed here, will be sent to all parents at the beginning of each school year.

General School Rules

- 1. Be kind to each other, treating others as you would like to be treated.*
- 2. Use polite and appropriate language when speaking to staff members and other students. Be respectful at all times.*
- 3. Follow directions given by teachers, substitute teachers and staff members.*
- 4. Get to class on time and be prepared.*
- 5. Be a good listener and use good manners during assembly, as well as in the classroom.*
- 6. Speak softly indoors.*
- 7. Do not eat or chew gum during class time (except during special celebrations or activities approved by the Principal.)*
- 8. Do not run except on designated playground areas.*
- 9. Do not play or loiter in automobile traffic areas, unless the area has been closed to traffic by a teacher.*
- 10. Keep your locker clean and do not store truly valuable items in it.*
- 11. Do your part to keep our school clean and beautiful. Respect school property.*
- 12. Observe boundaries during lunch and recess periods of the day. Students should remain in designated areas on the school grounds. The parking lot is always off-limits during school hours without special permission.*

Policy Statements

1. The Runnels schoolwide discipline program strikes a balance between disciplinary consequences and positive reinforcement. Students learn that they are responsible for their actions, and that if they choose to follow the rules they will enjoy the privileges and rewards that go with being cooperative.

2. Students will be given time in the beginning of each year to learn the details of the discipline program and understand how it works. Parents will receive an overview of the program at the beginning of each school year.

3. It is the policy of Runnels School that corporal punishment in any form will not be used as a disciplinary measure.

4. Use, possession or distribution of illegal drugs or alcohol will be possible grounds for immediate expulsion. Lockers are subject to unannounced inspection.

Student Rights and Parental Notification

A student always has the right to a conference with the Principal or Guidance Counselor before any out-of-class disciplinary action is taken. We hope that these conferences will help children verbalize and evaluate misbehavior, make specific plans for improvement, and make commitment to positive change.

In all cases, the disciplinary action will be explained to the child as a consequence of his actions, toward the goal of helping her/him assume responsibility for her/his own actions.

When a student is sent to the office, the teacher will complete a Conduct Referral (referred to by the children as a “pink slip”) explaining the problem. The Principal or Guidance Counselor will make a note on the Conduct Referral of the manner in which the situation was handled. A copy of this report will be sent (via your child) to you, the parents, and a copy retained in the office files. The reason for sending this form to you is simply to keep you informed. Please sign and return the form the following day. It does not necessarily imply that your child is a serious behavior problem. We believe that addressing small problems in a positive and constructive way prevents serious problems from developing. It would help very much if, when you receive a “pink slip” informing you of minor misconduct, you would let your child know that you, too, expect improvement in behavior.

When a student is sent to the office for misconduct, the Guidance Counselor or Principal will always counsel with the student, and may administer punish work, withdraw recess privileges, or take any other appropriate disciplinary action. Action will be taken after conferences with the student and the teacher (or other students) involved. In cases of serious misconduct, the Principal will assign punishment after consultation with the Guidance Counselor and/or Headmaster. One approach to helping children improve behavior is a day of “in-house suspension”. This means doing all classwork in the office; having no interaction with friends at recess, lunch, etc. The principal will explain to the student and his parents the reasons for this consequence of his behavior. Counseling with the student will encourage more acceptable positive behavior and a positive attitude.

Temporary suspension from school or expulsion are other possible consequences of serious misconduct, although rarely necessary.

Awards and Special Recognition

Students are recognized for outstanding achievement throughout the year in a number of ways. They are encouraged to demonstrate their skills through Spelling Bees, Creative Writing Events, Art Displays and Competition, the Social Studies Fair, Science Explorium, participation in drama productions, and music concerts, setting personal reading goals to earn Reading Medallions, and other activities.

The “Raider Star Program” is designed to recognize and encourage a wide variety of positive behaviors and attitudes. “Raider Stars of the Week” are selected by teachers for such actions as excellent or improved classroom performance, acts of kindness, demonstrated school pride, or good citizenship. These “Raider Stars” enjoy weekly honors and are eligible for periodic drawings for special prizes.

At the end of the school year, students receive certificates of award in various subjects for outstanding achievement. Some awards are presented in an assembly and others are awarded in the classrooms. Among the awards given are: Honor Roll, Merit Roll, Reading Medallions, Reading Certificates, The Presidential Award for Academic Fitness, The Presidential Award for Physical Fitness, Drama, and Citizenship Awards.

Citizenship awards (“Raider Stars of the Year”) are given in the spring to recognize students who excel in courtesy, cooperation, kindness and overall good citizenship. Recipients of these awards are selected by the faculty.

School Life

Supporting programs, activities and rules

Transportation

Shuttle bus from Jefferson Highway campus

Available, for a fee, to students on the Harrell's Ferry road campus is shuttle bus service from the Jefferson Highway campus in the morning, and to the Jefferson Highway campus in the afternoon. Spaces are usually limited and registration is on a first come basis. Continued registration in the shuttle bus program is conditional on acceptable behavior on the bus and timely arrival for the departure of the bus, or buses. Bus departure cannot be delayed for the convenience of the few to the detriment of the many. Departure schedules and other rules will be announced at the beginning of the school year.

Carpools

Every child in K-6th will be assigned a carpool number, except for those who ride the afternoon bus every day and those who attend After-School Care every day. (Even single riders will be considered a "carpool.")

Each afternoon driver will be given a carpool number to place in the car as directed. Please remember to have your carpool number prominently displayed. Your cooperation will be appreciated and will result in smoother, safer and more pleasant dismissals. If you need additional numbers for extra drivers in your carpool, just let us know and we will be happy to issue them.

Traffic Flow

Parents should at all times follow the traffic plan (explained in detail and mailed to each family before the start of school each year). Not following this traffic plan causes unnecessary delays and can also cause great danger. Please do not allow students to get in or out of cars at any points not designated for student arrival or pick-up.

Drivers should remain in their cars. A teacher will open car doors for students in kindergarten and grades 1-3 in the mornings. For afternoon dismissal, teachers will open car doors at all (K - 6) dismissal points. This saves time and helps the traffic flow more smoothly. We cannot hold up traffic for children who "forget" wraps, lunch boxes, etc. If your rider gets to the car with this problem, please drive on, park out of the way of traffic, then return with the child to search for the missing item(s). Holding up traffic would inconvenience all of the cars waiting in line behind you.

Please do not ask a teacher about your child's behavior or progress at dismissal time. There is not time for an extended discussion. Attempts at such "mini-conferences" usually result in both inadequate responses and blocking of traffic.

In the morning, students should arrive at school between 8:00 and 8:25 a.m. Students are not permitted to enter the building before morning classes begin - except in the case of severe weather, in which case they should report to their homerooms.

In the afternoon, classes will be dismissed at 3:00 and teachers will assist with student dismissal until 3:30. Please be prompt in picking up your child between 3:00 and 3:30.

On occasion, for a variety of reasons, parents need to be late picking up their children. Whenever that occurs, the following procedure will provide for their safety: Any children remaining on Harrell's Ferry Road campus after 3:30 p.m. will be conveyed to the After-School Care personnel for safekeeping. Parents will be billed, at the end of the month, for the days their children utilized this service. Whenever possible, we ask that you telephone the school if you determine that you will need this service.

Health and School Attendance

Attendance Policies

Any student missing more than twenty days during the school year will not be given credit for the courses taken. Exception can be made in the event of extended personal illness, verified by a physician. Unusual circumstances may be discussed with the principal.

A student missing two or more periods in any half-day will be considered absent for that half-day. Arrival time will be posted form morning tardies. If more than two periods (total time) are missed due to late arrivals, then the child will not be eligible for a "Perfect Attendance" certificate for the year.

On any day that a student is absent from school, that student may not participate in an athletic event or other after-school activity without prior permission of the principal.

Appointments During School Hours

Parents should call the office or send a note stating the time they expect to pick their child up and the reason for leaving before the regular dismissal time.

Any time a child must leave school or return to school in the middle of the day, he or she must report first to the office to sign in or out of school. If a child is tardy for any class (arriving in the morning, after recess, returning from doctor's appointment, etc.) he/she must visit the office first.

Authorized Drivers

We will not allow unauthorized persons to pick up your child. Please call the school or send a note to

indicate that a different identified driver has your permission to pick up your child. If that substitute driver is not known to us, we will require identification to be shown before we allow your child to leave.

Importance of Promptness

Have your student at school before the 8:25 bell rings. A “get-ready” bell will ring at 8:25 so that students can be ready to begin classes at 8:30. We feel that every class in the curriculum is important. First period is important. Have your child at school on time so that she/he can receive full benefit from the class as planned by the teacher.

Tardiness

The “tardy bell” rings at 8:30 a.m. Any student arriving at school after 8:30 must report to the office accompanied by a parent (or other adult) or with a note from the parent to explain the reason for being tardy. An “admit slip” will be issued by the office to permit the student to enter class late.

After School Activities

All students who are not attending a scheduled activity must leave the school grounds when dismissed at 3:00 p.m. Elementary students not enrolled in an after-school program are not permitted to remain on the school grounds after classes are dismissed for any reason, including waiting for others in their carpools that are attending after-school meetings, athletic practice or other extracurricular activities.

Evening Events and Activities

Students in preschool through sixth grade should attend sports or other evening events only when accompanied by an adult.

Health

The obvious general rule is that the child must be well and completely recovered from any illness before returning to school. It is not fair to the other children or the teachers to expose them to contagious disease. Sometimes a disease can be far more serious than it appears, to some children if not to others

Some reasons to keep your child at home

1. A temperature of 100.5 or greater within a 24 hour period. A child with this kind of temperature is considered to be ill and may be contagious. For the child’s comfort and to prevent spreading illness, children will not be permitted in school with a temperature 100.5 or higher. Children must be free of fever for 24 hours (without the use of medication) before returning to school.

2. Persistent/Disruptive cough. This type of cough may not only be contagious but is also disruptive to other students in the classroom.

3. Lice/Nits. If a child is known to have a head lice infestation he or she will not be permitted in school until the child is nit free. Any child with lice must be treated along with their environment and be nit free before returning to the classroom. The school nurse will check the student's head upon his/her return.

4. Chicken Pox. A student with chicken pox may return to school after all lesions are scabbed over and all coughing has subsided.

5. Untreated strep throat. A beefy red swollen throat with white patches or ulcerations characterizes strep throat and is usually accompanied by a temperature. These symptoms are usually present but not always. Strep is very contagious and potentially can cause serious complications. IF your child complains of a sore throat, these complaints may warrant a throat culture at your doctor's office. If your child is found to have strep throat he or she may return to school after being treated for 24 hours and is afebrile (no temperature).

6. Unexplained or undiagnosed rashes. It is difficult to determine whether or not rashes are contagious. For this reason, we must have a note from your physician stating that your child is noncontagious before being permitted to attend school.

7. Vomiting and/or diarrhea. Obviously, any child should be kept home if vomiting or actively having diarrhea. Diarrhea is defined as frequent liquid stools that can be uncontrollable. For the child's comfort and to prevent spreading illness, the student should be free of these symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school.

8. Conjunctivitis or "pink eye". Conjunctivitis is very contagious. The sclera or the white of the eye is pink and glassy in appearance with purulent drainage. In the morning the eye is typically glued closed. The student will be permitted to return to school after being on appropriate antibiotic eye drops for 24 hours.

9. Very young children, especially those children in preschool, with green nasal drainage can be very contagious because they are not able to effectively remove this drainage. They wipe their secretions with their little hands and pass on those germs to the other children via the toys and other handled objects in their environment. Keep them home until their nasal drainage is clear in color. Otherwise, a note from your physician stating that your child is not contagious will be required for return to school.

Your cooperation will be appreciated. This policy applies to all students and protects all of the children. If you have any questions regarding your child's particular illness, please call the clinic at 756-5837.

Medication Policy

Only medication prescribed by a physician and medication listed on the *Authorization for First Aid Treatment* form will be administered during school hours by the staff at Runnels Schools. Prescription medication must be brought to the school by the parent in a current container that meets pharmaceutical standards. Parental and physician authorization must be documented on the *Physician and Parental Authorization* forms before medication will be administered, without expectation. Over-the-Counter (OTC) medication cannot be administered by Runnels School staff other than the medication listed on the *First Aid Treatment Authorization* form. A parent must administer any other OTC medication to their own child and report this medication administration to the appropriate office personnel or school nurse. ***Children shall not carry medication on their person, in lockers, book bags or lunch boxes on school grounds unless ordered by the physician and O.K.'d by the school nurse (i.e., inhalers, Epipens).***

TLC Clinic

A nurse will be available to the students on most days. Services provided in the clinic are as follows:

- Basic first aid for injuries that occur during school hours.
- Treatment of illnesses that occur during school hours.
- Medication administration in compliance with our medication policy.
- Student screenings.
- Health maintenance for those students with chronic illnesses.

If your child is seen in the clinic for anything more than minor cuts/scrapes or minor bumps you will be notified. For this reason it is imperative to provide us with up-to-date phone numbers for both parents and emergency contact persons.

Our main goal is to keep healthy children in school, keep them safe and healthy while they are at school, and to identify those children needing medical referral. Nurses practice under strict guidelines and are not allowed to make medical diagnoses. Therefore, any symptoms exhibited at home need to be addressed by your child's physician.

Volunteers

During our mass screenings we will need assistance getting children from classes and/or performing the actual screenings themselves. Volunteers will be asked to attend classes that will teach the appropriate screening process.

Health Form and Authorizations for Emergency Medical Treatment and First Aid Treatment

It is important every year that your child have on file at school a current and complete immunization record. This card (which is available from your doctor) **MUST BE AT SCHOOL BEFORE THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL**. First graders who were given immunizations and forms for kindergarten need to be re-checked and have a current form, signed by a doctor. It is also necessary that the “Authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment” form and the “Authorization for First Aid Treatment” form mailed to each parent in July, **BE COMPLETE AND ON FILE AT SCHOOL BEFORE THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL**.

We are required by the State Department of Health and Human Resources to report on the immunization records of our students. We must have on file an up-to-date Health Form on each student **BEFORE THE OPENING DAY OF SCHOOL**.

Recess and Lunch

Students in grades 1-3 are given a recess-snack period each morning. It is advisable to send a snack since students without one often each lunch at snack period and are left with nothing to eat for lunch. These snacks should be nutritious, not candy or sweets.

School Milk Policy

The school provides milk for lunch at parents’ request, paid in advance at the beginning of each year. Parents not wishing to participate in the milk program, should send the child’s drink from home (in unbreakable containers). No milk is provided during recess.

Lunch Delivery Policy

Most of our students bring their lunches to school with them in the morning. However, some parents prefer delivering the lunches at noon. If you enjoy doing this for your child often or occasionally, it is permissible as long as it does not interfere with the schedule of classes. Please refer to your child’s schedule, because the various grades have different lunch periods. Deliver the lunch to his lunch classroom or to the office before the lunch period.

Announcements will be made to all school families of any hot lunch options available. Participation in any program, whether sponsored by the school or an organization affiliated with the school, will be strictly optional. Complete details of any program will be sent to you for your consideration.

School Life Outside School Hours

Elementary Sports Program

Grades K-5

Runnels offers an after-school sports program in several seasonal sports. While the program is

organized and supervised by faculty members serving as Elementary Athletic Director, the coaching staff consists of volunteer parent coaches. The teams formed each season depend on the number of students interested in playing and on the availability of volunteer coaches. The children sincerely appreciate the efforts of these mothers and fathers who make the program possible.

Our school strives for three major objectives in our sports program, listed in their order of importance:

1. To help young people develop (a) physically, by learning sports skills, improving physical conditioning, developing good health habits, and avoiding injuries. (b) psychologically, by learning to control their emotions and to develop feelings of self-worth. (c) socially, by learning how to cooperate in a competitive context and by learning appropriate standards of behavior (sportsmanship).

2. To help them have fun in practices and games.

3. To have winning teams.

In order words, athletes come first, winning last.

Grade 6

Runnels Junior High athletics offers participation in after-school programs throughout the year for students in the sixth, seventh and eighth grades. Sports currently offered (for students in these grades) at Runnels include boys and girls swimming, boys and girls basketball, and boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and volleyball.

It is in the sixth, seventh and eighth grades that our students are exposed to competition and that we must acknowledge the vital role of competition in athletics. It is our goal to introduce competitiveness as neither bad nor good, but rather as a part of our daily lives that needs to be handled properly, maturely, and in a fair and consistent manner. We believe that teamwork provides the best means of succeeding in a competitive atmosphere. As a result, more leeway is granted to our junior high coaches to make decisions with regard to playing time in the interest of team success.

In the junior high, special consideration is given to the formation of small teams that are equally competitive to ensure ample playing opportunities for all participants whenever possible. Our interest in developing young athletes stems from our desire to help each student realize his/her athletic potential and at the same time ensure the continuation of our strong athletic tradition here at Runnels by maintaining a successful junior high program.

Before-School Care

Supervision from 7:30 - 8:00 in the gym is provided for students enrolled in the Before-School Care program. There are no snacks, but the cost is low.

Extended After-School Care

Extended After-School Care (held at both school campuses) is available as an optional service each regular school day for the convenience of parents and students (for a monthly fee billed by Runnels School Services). This service, available from 3:00 - 6:00 p.m., includes activities appropriate for the students' ages and with due regard to weather conditions. Supervised play outdoors and indoors, a

snack period and study time are part of each afternoon's daily schedule. Study time, in particular, affords the opportunity and surroundings for students from the Harrell's Ferry Road campus to do their homework assignments, although after-school staff are not responsible for seeing that homework is completed and no private tutoring by the aftercare staff is done during this time period. For additional enrollment information and program details, call the main office and ask to speak with someone in the business office.

“Adventures” and Scout Groups

Various after-school classes are offered from time to time for instruction in such areas as keyboard music and studio art. Each year's offerings, called “Adventures in Visual and Performing Arts,” or Adventures for short, depend on the availability of space, instructors and interested students. Numerous Scout groups are also based at Runnels each year, with meetings after school. Odyssey of the Mind, Indian Guides and Indian Princesses sometimes have groups meeting after school as well. On occasion, special tutoring services are also available. Details will be available near the start of school each year.

Communication and Organizations for Parents

Parent-teacher conferences are not scheduled on a regular basis. Instead, they are planned for times when either a parent or a teacher feels the need of such a meeting. If you have any questions about school in general, any class in particular, or have a concern, please call the school office during regular school hours and ask to speak with the principal. She will be happy to speak with you, or return your call if she is not available when you call. If you need to speak to a teacher about your child, office personnel will ask the teacher to return your call, or they will help arrange a conference if that is your preference.

Please understand that during school hours the teachers are responsible for instructing and supervising the children in the classrooms or on the playground, and will not be able to hold an impromptu conference with you.

The headmaster, principal, or guidance counselor are also available for conferences at your request. We do want to work with you on any problems which may arise, and we want to make certain that any questions you have are answered. Any matter which causes you or your child concern is important to us.

The Runnels Newsletter

The school publishes and mails a newsletter to parents. The purpose of this publication is to keep you in touch with what is going on in the various programs of our school. It contains announcements of general interest as well as reports from different age groups about special activities. Parents and teachers are encouraged to contribute articles or announcements which would be of interest to others in the school family. Please direct articles or information for articles to the Newsletter Editor. We feel that *The Runnels Reporter* is an important vehicle of communication and hope that you enjoy reading it.

School Pictures and the School Yearbook

Pictures of individual students are taken by a professional photographer, and you will have the option to buy them. Each year we prepare a yearbook containing individual pictures of all students attending The Runnels Schools, as well as a variety of candid snapshots to capture the year's events and the people in our school family. It is a wonderful book of memories for students of all ages. Orders are taken for the yearbooks in the fall.

Information on the Runnels Schools

The staff of the main office at the Elementary, Junior High and High School location (17255 South Harrell's Ferry Road) is here to serve you. If you'd like a guided tour of our facility, or would like to speak with the principal or headmaster, please call for an appointment. You are welcome to call or visit our campus if you would like to learn more about the other divisions of our school, or just get acquainted.

Our school maintains two websites, one, for information to the general public. You might enjoy visiting this website (www.runnels.org) to learn more about all of the programs offered at Runnels. Another website, **STAR** — "School Talk At Runnels, (www.runnelsstar.com) was created to serve those within our school family. This website includes more specific information about things going on during the year and is updated frequently.

Open House

Each fall you will be invited to attend Open House. We hope you will take this opportunity to meet your child's teachers. The exact date, time and details will be announced in the Newsletter.

Organizations for Parents

Several organizations foster greater parental participation in school affairs. The Runnels Parents Organization (R.P.O.) is involved in a wide variety of activities to serve the school. All parents are welcome to participate in projects of the R.P.O. There are no dues. There are many ways you can be involved, and the school newsletter will inform you of meetings and events of this organization.

The Booster Club focuses on events to further the athletic programs of the school. Any Runnels parent is welcome to join, but there are membership dues. The newsletter will announce meetings, events and projects sponsored by this parent organization, also.

The Runnels Schools, Inc., is the non-profit corporation responsible for the policies and direction of the school; membership is open to all friends of the school. Costs include an initial membership contribution and annual dues set by the corporation members at their annual dinner meeting. Corporation members elect the Board of Trustees, responsible for the business affairs of the school, including

tuition costs and faculty salary schedules.

For further information on any of these organizations, call the school office (751-5712), and ask to speak with Dr. or Mrs. Runnels.

Personal Belongings

To prevent the loss of sweaters and coats, these wraps must be labeled with the student's name before being brought to school. All other belongings, such as lunch boxes, book bags, etc., should be labeled also. **STUDENTS SHOULD NOT BRING TOYS OF ANY KIND OR ELECTRONIC DEVICES TO SCHOOL.** (Exceptions to this rule are items brought to share with a class as part of a class assignment.)

Lost and Found

Inquire about lost articles in the office. Please also turn in unidentified articles to the office. Articles not claimed in a reasonable time will be donated to the needy.

Student Lockers

A locker is assigned to each student. Your child will be informed on the first day of school by the homeroom teacher of the locker number. These lockers are used to store personal belongings, book bags, etc. during the school day. Students are asked not to store truly valuable items in their lockers. Items of value brought to school to share with a class, for classroom demonstrations, etc., should be checked in at the office and left there until it is needed. After the demonstration or sharing time, the article can be returned to the office for safekeeping until the end of the school day. Lockers may be checked by school personnel without warning.

Bookbags

We have a policy that largely restricts the use of back pack to home-to-school transport of materials. At-school storage of books, folders, etc., should be the function of the student lockers. The reasons for the policy are rooted in health and safety, appearances and use-of-space, and practice in organizational skills.

Health and safety heads the list of reasons for minimizing back pack usage. Numerous recent studies have raised serious concerns about spine and muscle damage caused by heavily loaded back packs. Sudden turns, swinging a heavy school bag, have been known to injure bystanders. Finally, a large number of bags on the classroom floor, walkways, or hallways represents a tripping hazard for

students and adults alike.

We constantly strive to be as efficient as possible with our use of space and also to maintain a cheerful, attractive campus. Neither of these goals is served by large numbers of bookbags needlessly scattered around.

“Needlessly” is a key word, because we have provided lockers, and our teachers will demonstrate to the students how they can effectively use their lockers to store their books and belongings. Actually, many of us feel that an important indirect benefit of our concern for safety and appearances is a gentle nudge toward the development of better organizational skills. While it may be easier at the moment to stuff everything in the back pack than it is to plan and sort materials, the benefits of greater organizational habits will last a lifetime. That lesson may be as important as some we teach in the class.

We will explain to the children the rules concerning bookbags. Please encourage them to understand that the rules are not designed to make their lives difficult. Please encourage a positive attitude and help your child realize the benefits of our plan.

Telephone Regulations

Students may use the office telephone only with permission of a teacher or staff member, and only for important reasons. Social arrangements should be made at home rather than on the school telephone. Please explain to your child the importance of making these plans in advance and at home.

Messages to Students

If you wish to relay a message to your child, we will deliver it during the last period of the day. Emergency messages, of course, will be handled immediately. It is very difficult to deliver messages received after 2:30, so please make every effort to call before this time.

School Records

If there is a change of address, phone number, emergency number, or any other data on your Family Information Form, please notify the office.

Emergency Procedures

When there is a severe weather emergency threatening our area, we will conform to any early-morning (or night-before) decisions of the East Baton Rouge Parish School system to close schools for that day. We reserve the right, however, to exercise our own judgment to cancel classes even if the public school classes remain open, to remain open for the remainder of a school day even if the public schools close, or to re-open sooner than the public schools following a closing.

If you are unsure of the situation, please attempt to call the school office, listen to radio and television, or check our STAR website.

In the event of a forced school closing, all school extra-curricular activities for that day will also be cancelled.