

Laurel Ridge Elementary School



Laurel Ridge A to Z

Laurel Ridge Elementary School
10110 Commonwealth Blvd., Fairfax, VA 22032
Phone: 703-426-3700, Fax: 703-426-3797
<http://www2.fcps.edu/LaurelRidgeES>

Written by:

Laurel Ridge Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

<https://laurelridge.ptboard.com/>

ptaforlres@gmail.com

Facebook: search for our closed group "Laurel Ridge Elementary School PTA (VA)"

This document is provided as an informal introduction to Laurel Ridge and is superseded by the official policies and procedures as outlined in the official school handbook

Activities Fair -

Held the first week of September after the first PTA meeting, Activities Fair showcases the classes, clubs and activities students can join. Parents will also have an opportunity to learn about volunteering, purchase Spirit Wear items and join the PTA.

Advanced Academic Program -

Students in grades 3 through 6 who have been identified as gifted and talented are given the opportunity to participate in a school-based program at Laurel Ridge. Special direct instruction is provided by an AAP resource teacher to extend these students' learning. More information may be found at <https://www.fcps.edu/registration/advanced-academics-identification-and-placement>

Advanced Math -

The advanced math curriculum is a rigorous and condensed program that is designed to meet the needs of exceptional math students. This FCPS initiative identifies fifth and sixth graders who have demonstrated superior achievement on a cumulative grade-level math test, received a positive recommendation from their teacher, and a received a strong score on their Standards of Learning (SOL) spring test.

After School Enrichment Programs -

PTA offers fee-based educational after-school enrichment classes for students throughout the year. Classes take place directly after the final bell rings. More information and registration details will be sent home during the first week of school. Families can learn more at our Activities Fair. Financial aid is available for those who qualify for free or reduced lunch and in special circumstances; please contact the PTA president, a school social worker or counselor, or the school's main office for more information.

Attendance-

If your child(ren) will be absent or tardy, please notify the office by calling or emailing the attendance line or filling in the online attendance form. Absences or tardiness should be reported by 9:15 a.m. Students who are not in their classrooms by 9:10 a.m. are considered tardy and must report to the office before going to their classrooms. Please note: Family vacations are considered an unexcused absence.

Attendance Line Main Office: 703-426-3737, Attendance Line CSS: 703-426-3820

Online form: <https://laurelridgees.fcps.edu/about/attendance-form>

Email Attendance Line: laurelridgees.attendance@fcps.edu

Band -

Fifth and sixth grade students have the opportunity to take band class during the school day. Concerts and performance opportunities are multiple times a year. More information will be provided during the first few weeks of school, along with details about how to rent an instrument.

Birthday Treats -

We celebrate student birthdays in the classroom with **non-edible** treats, please contact your teacher for further information. **Cupcakes, candy, and/or any other edible food items will not be allowed or distributed.** This is a policy for the entire Robinson pyramid. If your child's birthday falls during a time when school is not in session such as the summer, simply coordinate with your classroom teacher for an alternative time to celebrate.

Birthday Party Invitations -

Party invitations may only be distributed at school if all classmates are being invited.

Book Fair -

The Book Fair is held by our librarian to give students and families an opportunity to shop for age-appropriate books and gifts and to raise funds to support our library and reading programs. Volunteers are always welcome! Book Fair is usually held in early December.

Breakfast -

A light breakfast is sold in the cafeteria line every morning beginning at 8:45 a.m. Please refer to the cafeteria menu for each day's offerings.

Bus Riding Procedures -

Each family that is registered will receive an email/Keep In Touch (KIT) message indicating their child's bus number and stop or indicating that they are a "walker," meaning that no bus transportation is provided. Please call the school office if you have specific questions about bus transportation. For any concerns after hours, you will need to contact FCPS Safety and Security at (571) 423-2000. Information about bus delays may be found at <https://busdelay.fcps.edu/> or by using the FCPS App. Kindergarten students who ride the bus in the afternoon **MUST** be met at the bus door and asked for by name by a parent, parent designee, guardian, or a responsible seventh grader or older sibling. Children will be returned to school if the driver has concerns for their safety. Additional information on FCPS transportation and safety tips to review with your children can be found at <https://www.fcps.edu/transportation-services/school-bus-eligibility-safety-and-routes>

Bus Loop -

The parking area directly in front of the school is also the Bus Loop. Access to this area is closed from 8:45 - 9:15 am and 3:45 - 4:15 pm. Please do not enter this area in your vehicle during this time. It is also important to note that if you are parked in this area during these times your car will be blocked from leaving until the buses depart. Additionally, we ask that you do not pass buses loading and unloading in the Bus Loop. We appreciate your cooperation to keep our kids safe at arrival and dismissal time.

Cafeteria -

Lunch menus are posted on the school's website and an annual lunch calendar is sent home with students at the beginning of the year. Students may purchase lunch or bring lunch from home. Please remember to send utensils with your student if they are bringing lunch from home as extras are not available in the cafeteria. If your student wishes to purchase food from the cafeteria, breakfast is

available for \$1.75 and lunch is available for \$3.25. There are three ways to pay for your student's meals:

1. www.MySchoolBucks.com - This user-friendly website is free, convenient, private and secure. Once the account is open, parents can check the fund account anytime. You will need your student's FCPS ID number to enroll.
2. Check - Make checks payable to "(School Name) Food Services". The check can be provided to the school's food service manager or mailed to: Food and Nutrition Services, 6840 Industrial Road, Springfield, VA 22151. A local address and phone number are required to be printed or handwritten on the check. The student name and PIN number are required on the check memo line. Student cafeteria account PIN numbers are given out during the first week of school.
3. Cash - Cash may be brought to the food service manager's office for deposit on student's account, or students may pay cash on a daily basis.

If at any time your student forgets or loses their cafeteria PIN, please contact their teacher or our cafeteria personnel. If a student's cafeteria account is empty or they have forgotten their lunch money, lunch will be provided to them and paid for by PTA. A note will be sent home asking parents to replenish the account and reimburse PTA for the meal. If you feel that there is a mistake with charges on your child's lunch account, please call the school and ask to speak with the cafeteria manager.

If your student has a food allergy, it's very important to communicate that to their teacher and the school health room aide. Policies will be put into place in the classroom and the cafeteria depending upon the severity of the allergy.

Parents are welcome to join their student(s) for lunch in the cafeteria after checking in at the front office and obtaining a visitor's badge. Please do not share food with any student other than your own unless arrangements have been made with the teacher. This is to avoid any potential food allergy interactions.

Cafeteria Volunteers -

Parents and adult family members are invited to volunteer in the cafeteria during your child's lunch or a time convenient for you. Please contact us at ptaforlres@gmail.com to sign up. Volunteers assist children with opening difficult items, handing out napkins, condiments and utensils and with providing general assistance to our cafeteria hostesses.

Calendars -

The calendar of events for the school can be found on the LRES website and in the monthly newsletter, The Lion's Tale. The calendar of PTA events can be found on the PTA's website and in our Facebook group. The FCPS calendar is at <https://www.fcps.edu/calendars/2017-2018-calendar>.

Chorus -

Fifth and sixth grade students have the opportunity to take chorus during the school day. More information will be provided to your student during the first few weeks of school

Counseling -

Our school has two full-time counselors who are available to work with students and who also teach guidance lessons during specified periods each month. Our counselors are always available to speak with parents and students who have concerns.

Cultural Celebration Days -

Grade-level specific celebrations highlighting a unit of study may include festive dress, authentic foods, crafts and activities. Student participation in festive dress is optional but encouraged. Examples may

include Native American Day, Mali Market Day, Ancient Cultures Day, Colonial Day, and Renaissance Day. Teachers provide more specific information throughout the school year.

Directory -

PTA publishes a student and family directory. Opting out of these publications is possible through a form sent home during the first few weeks of school. The directory is helpful for communicating with friends and getting in touch with other parents. The directory is available through the PTA webpage (individual log-in with personal password) and is published within the first quarter of the school year.

Doctor's Appointments -

Please notify your child's teacher that he or she will have a doctor's appointment and come to the main office to sign them out. The office staff will call down to the teacher and the child will come meet you in the office. Upon returning from your appointment, you must sign your child back in.

Doors -

The front door is Door #1, when looking at the building the door to the left is #2, and that numbering continues around the building. Large blue signs above the doors indicate its number. Kindergartners will enter and exit from Door #2 at the beginning/end of the school day. Kindergartners riding FCPS buses will be escorted to and from their bus by safety patrol.

Drills -

The school will periodically conduct safety drills including fire drills, lockdown drills and shelter-in-place drills. Safety drills are led by a school administrator. Teachers make every effort to explain the necessity of each drill to students in age-appropriate language. If you have any questions about safety drills, please contact your child's teacher.

If you are in the school building during a safety drill, it is important to understand what action to take. During a fire drill, you should exit the building through the nearest door and move away from the building. During a lockdown drill, you do not leave the building. You should follow the instructions of the staff member nearest you, or go directly into an open classroom and follow the instructions.

During a safety drill, you will not be able to enter the building through any door. If you are arriving to pick up a child for an appointment, you will need to wait until the drill is over before you will be let in.

Drop Off/Pick Up Procedures -

There are several ways for students to arrive and depart from school. The main front door (Door #1) and the door to the far right of the ramp/top of the steps (Door #11) do not open until 9:00 a.m., so if students arrive before then, they may wait at the door. If there is bad weather, students may enter at door #2 (to the left of the main door as you are facing the building), which opens at 8:45 a.m., and wait in the cafeteria until being dismissed to classrooms at 9:00 a.m. Students may also come to door #6 at the back side of the school if they are walking from the neighborhoods north of Commonwealth and take one of the trails through the back fields. Kindergartners may be dropped off at door #2 to go into the cafeteria until 9:00 a.m. Please do not drop your children off before 8:45 a.m.

If you are driving your child and wish to drop them off in our **Kiss and Ride** drop-off loop, it is located in the parking lot to the left of the building. Students may be dropped off beginning at 8:45 a.m. Follow the loop around slowly and please do not drop off your child until you reach the designated area. A staff member will help them out of the car, and they will enter the cafeteria where they will sit with others in their grade level. Students will be dismissed to their classrooms beginning at 9:00 a.m. Please be patient for the first several days of school as everyone is getting use to the system, and please be

aware of children and pedestrians at all times. At the entrance to Kiss and Ride, a staff member will periodically stop traffic to allow children to cross.

At pick-up time, students are dismissed from their classroom as follows: students who ride buses or private transportation vans are called down as their buses or vans arrive; walkers or students who are picked up by parents in front of the school are dismissed to the front of the school; kindergartners who are picked up by walk-up parents will be escorted to the area just inside Door 2; students who are enrolled in the School Age Child Care (SACC) program are dismissed to the SACC classrooms; and students who are picked up by vehicle in the Kiss and Ride loop are dismissed down to the Gym. Your teacher will confirm with you the option you want to use for your child. Kindergartners must be met by someone that is at least in seventh grade.

Kiss and Ride numbers and additional information will be given to parents at Open House and you can always ask your teacher or the main office if you have not received one. Upon arriving at Kiss and Ride to pick up your child, please display your number on the dash of your car so our staff can call it in to the Gym, where your child is waiting. By the time you work your way through the loop, your child will be called up and escorted outside to their awaiting adult. It is recommended you register for a Kiss and Ride number if at any time during the school year you think you may use the Kiss and Ride option. You do not need to display a Kiss and Ride number during morning drop-off.

FCPS App -

Fairfax County Public Schools has an app that you might find helpful for locating important information including a calendar, lunch menus, school closures/delays, and bus delays.

Field Trips -

Students at every grade level go on field trips throughout the year. Please be sure to fill out the permission slip in a timely manner and send it back to your child's teacher. If chaperones are needed, your teacher will let all parents know.

Financial Assistance -

Financial Assistance to pay for PTA-sponsored activities is available for those who qualify for free or reduced lunch and in special circumstances. Please contact the PTA president, the school social worker or counselor, or the school's main office to discuss the ways we can help.

Food Allergies -

Many of our students have food allergies, some are very severe. If your student has a food allergy, it is very important to let the school health room aide and your child's teacher know as soon as possible. For parents whose children do not have food allergies, it is helpful to know the allergies in your child's classroom, if needed.

Forgotten Items from Home-

In an effort to minimize disruption to instruction, the office does not call into classrooms to inform students that parents have dropped off forgotten items with the exception of lunches. You may email your teacher to let them know that you are dropping off a forgotten item, but it is possible that the teacher will not see the email in time.

Going Home with a Friend -

If your child's after school transportation will change from the normal routine, a note must be provided to the teacher **and** the front office attendance desk (see "Absences" for contact information). If a child will be riding a bus home with a friend, both parents need to contact the respective classroom teachers and attendance desk. Please provide this information as early in the school day as possible.

Handbook -

The official Laurel Ridge Elementary Handbook can be found at the school's website by the first day of school or by requesting a copy from the main office.

Health Room Aide –

Children who need to take medication during school hours must have a signed Medication Authorization Form, which can be found at laurelridgees.fcps.edu/resources/clinic. Prescription medications require the signature of both the parent and the physician. Inhalers and EpiPens require specific authorization forms, also available at the above site or from the Health Room Aide. The Health Room is in the main lobby, the second door on the right.

Keep In Touch (KIT) Messages -

Email messages sent from the school to parents who entered an email address when registering their child.

Kiss and Ride-

Please see “Drop Off/Pick Up Procedures.”

Library -

Our library is located just inside the main doors at the top of the inner stairs. Library procedures will be explained to the students during the first few weeks of school and include how many books they may check out at one time. Books are due two weeks after they are checked out. Volunteering in the library is encouraged and can be arranged by contacting our librarian or PTA.

Lightning Lions -

The Lightning Lions is the LRES jump rope team that performs at events all over Fairfax County. Tryouts are held in the fall for boys and girls in grades 4 through 6 with the purpose of determining a commitment to jump roping, not to determine skill level. Practices are scheduled after tryouts with the performance season being in the late fall through spring. There is a nominal fee to participate in this unique and exciting program. Information will be sent home in early September and the Lightning Lions will have a table at Activities Fair in the first week of September.

Lion's Tale Newsletter -

A monthly email newsletter from LRES about upcoming events and items of interest. To subscribe to this email, the front office will need to have a current email on file.

Lost and Found -

Our Lost and Found is located at the top of the left set of steps off of the main lobby. It is always open and students as well as parents can visit to look for their lost items. Everyone is encouraged to please straighten up the Lost and Found, re-hang items and pick things up off the floor! Volunteers are always needed to help manage the area. Items not claimed are donated to charity in December and June.

Lucky the Lion -

Lucky the Lion is our Mascot (see right).

Medications-

Please see “Health Room Aide.”

Memorials -

There are several memorial areas at Laurel Ridge, where we remember students that we have lost over the years. Ladybug Corner is a reading nook built and donated by friends and family of former LRES student Sadie Murata, who passed away from cancer in the Fall of 2017. Students are invited to choose from one of many donated books and read quietly with their teacher's permission.

There is a bench and memorial placard near the playground for Viam Faggioni.

The library houses a section of books in memory of Sarah Valentine Sherer.

Military Family Group -

Military connected students and families are invited to get together through our Military Family Group, organized by our counselor, Mrs. Waring. The group plans service activities for the kids and social activities for the families, like a potluck dinner and Military Appreciation Breakfast. Please contact Mrs. Waring at sgwaring@fcps.edu for more information. Please contact your classroom teacher and Mrs. Waring if a parent is preparing for a deployment or a remote tour.

News You Choose -

This subscription-based, email communication tool is used for the distribution of non-critical communications, such as newsletters, events, news updates, and other topics. Be sure to sign up and choose what you'd like to receive so you don't miss anything! More information is available at www.fcps.edu/index.php/resources/parent-communication-overview

Nurse -

Please see "Health Room Aide."

Parent Information Phone Lines (FCPS) -

FCPS language lines are available in eight different languages to assist parents who do not speak English as their first language. A school system employee will respond to your call in your preferred language within 24 hours, Monday through Friday. The caller will provide you with the requested information, arrange for you to speak with the appropriate school employee, or connect you with the resource that you are looking to find.

Parking -

Parking at our events and activities can be challenging as we are a large school. Please be courteous to our neighbors and **do not** park within 10-15 feet on either side of a driveway. Please do not block driveways or park on the corners of two streets. Our neighbors have been forced to call Fairfax County Police due to cars parked in front of and too close to their driveway entrance. Please do not pull into the entrance or the exit of the front Bus Loop to drop off students.

In front of the school there is a limited number of 10-minute parking spots for when you are making a quick stop at school. Please be aware that the front curb of the school is designated as a fire lane and cannot be used as a waiting zone to pick up students

PE (Physical Education)-

Your student's teacher will let you know when your child has PE during the week. Please be sure to send your child in athletic shoes on PE days.

Picture Day -

Fall picture day for students is usually held in October. These pictures will be used in the yearbook. Please remember to return your order form with your student before or on picture day. Picture day is again held in the spring as a bonus opportunity to purchase professional photos of your child and to take class photos. Volunteers are always needed to help with picture day.

PTA and PTA Meetings-

The Laurel Ridge Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is a membership organization comprised of families, teachers, administrators, and community members working together for the benefit of our children. We plan fun and educational events, advocate on behalf of all students, and provide funding for important programs and teacher supplies. We ask every parent to join us when you receive the membership form or email. More information and a sign-up list of volunteer opportunities is available on our website.

Red Zones -

Throughout the school Red Zone signs are posted to remind students if they are in a no-talking area of the school.

SACC (School Aged Child Care) -

School Aged Child Care (SACC) is the before and after school child care program at Laurel Ridge and other schools provided by Fairfax County Office for Children. More information is available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc/school-age-child-care/

Safety Patrol -

Students may join Safety Patrol in fifth or sixth grade and serve to keep the school a safer place for everyone. Patrols are assigned to positions within and outside of the school building, on school buses, and at school crossings. They also assist kindergartners to and from class each day and raise and lower the flags. Information about joining Safety Patrol is made available before the end of each school year. For more information, contact our PE teacher, Mr. Philip Krum.

School Supply Lists -

School supply lists can be found at laurelridgees.fcps.edu/academics/school-supply-lists

Sixth Grade Send Off Party –

Parents and teachers of our sixth graders plan and fundraise all year long to put on a huge send-off for our sixth graders during the last week of school. Please contact your child's sixth grade teacher if you'd like to help.

Standards of Learning (SOL) Tests -

Students in grades 3 through 6 take Standards of Learning (SOL) tests each spring, as required by Virginia state law. Test results are generally distributed to parents and guardians about three months after the test was taken. For more information: www.fcps.edu/node/35021

SCA- Student Council Association -

The SCA is Laurel Ridge's Student Government. The Laurel Ridge SCA is led by five officers and committee chairpersons who are supervised by Mrs. Waring. There are also two representatives from each class in grades 3 through 6. The SCA conducts service projects and promotes school spirit. Elections are held in the fall.

SIS Accounts/FCPS 24/7 Learning & “Blackboard” -

The Student Information System (SIS) Parent Account is the FCPS secure solution for accessing information about your child's attendance, class performance, demographic data, and links to FCPS 24-7 information. It provides an additional conduit for communication with your child's school. More information can be found at www.fcps.edu/student-information-system-sis

FCPS 24-7 Learning, sometimes referred to as “Blackboard” (the vendor's name), is the online resource that allows Fairfax County Public Schools students to extend learning beyond the traditional school day

and beyond school facilities. For more information please visit www.fcps.edu/resources/technology/fcps-24-7-learning

Snacks -

Unless otherwise specified by the teacher, students may bring in a snack for themselves every day. They are also encouraged to bring in a refillable water bottle. There is a designated time within each classroom for snack.

Spanish Immersion -

Laurel Ridge Elementary School has a partial Spanish Immersion Program for students in kindergarten through sixth grade. In the immersion program, students spend approximately half of each day learning mathematics, science, and health in Spanish. The other half of the day is spent learning social studies, language arts, and reading in English. There are no formal criteria for enrollment, but the program is only open to residents of Fairfax County. To learn more about how to join this program and other FCPS immersion programs, visit: www.fcps.edu/index.php/academics/world-languages-immersion-programs

Special Education Family Committee -

A PTA sub-committee of parents of children in Special Education programs that meets for social events and hosts speakers. For more information, please email the PTA President at ptaforlres@gmail.com.

Specials -

General classes in music, art, STEAM and physical education are referred to as “Specials” in the student’s weekly schedule.

Spirit Wear -

Spirit Wear is Laurel Ridge themed clothing sold by PTA. Students are encouraged to wear Spirit Wear several times during the year for themed weeks. To purchase Spirit Wear items, look for the PTA at school events or purchase online (delivered to your child’s classroom): <http://bit.ly/LRESspiritwear> after the start of the school year.

Spirit Week -

Spirit Weeks are held periodically throughout the year to celebrate specific themes like Inclusion Week or Read Across America Week.

Staff Directory -

A staff directory is available on the school’s website at laurelridgees.fcps.edu/staff-directory

STEAM -

STEAM is a specials class where students explore a lesson in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math. It is in addition to regularly scheduled lessons in science, art and math.

Strings-

Fourth, fifth and sixth grade students have the opportunity to learn to play a string instrument during the school day. More information will be provided to your student during the first few weeks of school, along with details about how to rent an instrument.

Tardy -

If you are dropping your student off to school late, they are considered “tardy” and must come to the office to check in and get a pass to their classroom.

Thunder Cubs -

An extension of the Lightning Lions jump rope team, the Thunder Cubs program is offered in the spring for grades 3-4 to experience the thrill of being a part of a jump rope team.

Text Messaging for Parents -

Parent cell phone numbers that are listed in the SIS are automatically enrolled to receive text messages. Text messaging is an additional way to quickly and efficiently contact parents when your child's school or district needs to notify you in cases of emergency.

Visiting the School -

Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit the school for volunteering, lunch with your student, or to meet with a teacher, etc. **A valid ID is required, and you will not be permitted into the school without an ID.** All visitors must stop in the main office and check in on the computer system. An ID label will print out and you should wear it while in the building. Please check in every time you come to the building during school hours. Upon leaving the school, you will sign out by scanning the ID label that was worn while in the building.

Volunteering-

Volunteers are at the heart of our school community! There are several ways to get involved at LRES. First, check with your teacher and find out what they could use help with. Next, check in with PTA (ptaforlres@gmail.com) and see what events and ongoing projects could use help. Volunteers are always needed in our library year-round and our cafeteria for the first few weeks of school. Also see our page for additional information on sign-ups that are available: bit.ly/LRESvolunteering

Yearbook-

The LRES Yearbook is organized by our staff and a committee of dedicated student volunteers. Order forms are sent out from the main office and yearbooks are distributed during the last week of school.

Watch D.O.G.S –

Watch D.O.G.S (Dads of Great Students) is a male engagement volunteer program at LRES modeled after a highly successful national program. Fathers and father-figures are encouraged to sign up for a full day volunteering at school with students. More information to come in the first several weeks of school.

Websites –

School - <https://laurelridgees.fcps.edu/>

PTA - <https://laurelridge.ptboard.com/home>

FCPS – <https://www.fcps.edu/>

Wednesday Folder –

Flyers, information and school papers will be sent home with your child in a folder on Wednesdays. You should sign the outside of the folder and return it with your child the next day along with any additional forms/payments requested by the teacher/school.

WLRS -

WLRS ("Window on Laurel Ridge School") is the daily morning news program that airs in the classrooms at Laurel Ridge. Sixth graders may apply for positions on WLRS and new crew and cast members are selected each grading period.