

RUSSELL LEE ELEMENTARY

PARENT/CAREGIVER CAMPUS HANDBOOK

2024-2025 School Year



WELCOME TO RUSSELL LEE ELEMENTARY

We strive to support Austin ISD's vision for inclusive learning by ensuring: **high expectations for all children, high outcomes for every student.** The 2024-2025 school year will be our 85th year of educating the next generation of Austin's children and we're excited to continue the tradition of Roadrunner excellence!

THE OFFICE TEAM

Substitute Principal (Fall 2024): Kim Placker /
kimberly.placker@austinisd.org

Principal: Caitlin Sileo / caitlin.sileo@austinisd.org

Asst. Principal: Chandria Ridgeway /
chandria.ridgeway2@austinisd.org

School Counselor: Aaron Peckham /
aaron.peckham@austinisd.org

Bookkeeper: Erica Sanchez / erica.sanchez@austinisd.org

Registrar: Kerry Hull / kerry.hull@austinisd.org

CULTURE OF COLLABORATION & RESPECT

We will work to provide academic excellence, but understand that this is a partnership between school and home. **We cannot do it alone.** Please be prepared to partner with us this school year to ensure your child's success.

All Russell Lee staff are expected to deliver high quality customer service. All staff are expected to listen to concerns and follow proper procedure to ensure that student safety and academic success is being nurtured. **Our focus is high expectations for all children, high outcomes for every student**

All Lee families are expected to engage with the school community. This can look different for everyone depending on schedules but all families should stay up-to-date with school communication, student attendance and academics.

Communication with all teachers and staff should be cordial and school-appropriate. Families should expect the same from our staff. We will work together to build positive and collaborative relationships that support the development of our students.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

The school day begins at 7:40 am and ends at 3:10 pm. Doors open for arrival at 7:15 am and students enter through either the front or side doors. Families are not permitted to accompany their students to their classrooms at arrival time. Doors open for

dismissal at 3:10. It does take time for learning to stop and classes to walk to the exit.

All students need to be picked up by 3:30 pm. Please make arrangements so no child is left behind without adult supervision before or after school. The office is not staffed to monitor students after 3:30pm. Parents will need to come to the front office to sign students out beginning at 3:30pm.

PARKING & TRAFFIC

Our priority during arrival and dismissal is safety. Our historic school does not have a dedicated car or bus lane so traffic can be a challenge. We ask that all families follow the traffic flow patterns described in the graphic below. We ask that all drivers use caution and limit distractions as they are going through the car line.



Should you require parking throughout the school day, street parking off the campus side streets are available. Do not block the fire lane or the crosswalk and pay close attention to street signs related to parking regulations. Handicapped parking spaces need to be left available for those in our community who need them at all times. **Staff parking lots are reserved at all times.**

ATTENDANCE & TARDIES

Daily school attendance is required. Only absences for district-approved reasons will be excused. Documentation is required so the absence may be coded correctly. Absence notes are due within 2 days of returning to school, and must include your student's first and last name, as well as *all* the dates and reason for the absence. Students not in the classroom when the

bell rings at 7:40 am are considered tardy. All absences & tardies are documented. Warning notices and follow up from staff will occur for excessive occurrences. Consistent attendance and on-time arrival supports student learning by providing structures and routines as well as full access to curriculum. All absences should be reported online using www.austinisd.org/attendance/report-absence. Supporting documentation can be uploaded here as well. *Do not email attendance clerk or teacher directly.*

Excused	Unexcused
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Illness with doctor's note up to 5 days, or parent note for 3 days• Observing religious holy days under TEC 25.087.• Temporarily absent during the school day because of a documented appointment for the student, with a healthcare professional.• Other reasons such as family emergencies or attending funerals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vacations• Parent/guardian illness note after 8 instances• Attendance at non-school sponsored events• Tardies, unless the student was at a doctor's appointment and a note is provided.

LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY

To prepare for a smooth and safe campus dismissal, we stop early dismissal at 2:45 pm. To maximize teaching and learning, students will only be called to the front office once an authorized person is physically in the office to pick up.

If a student must leave school before 2:45 pm, the person picking up the student must sign the student out from the office. They must provide identification to verify that the person has authority to pick up the student.

Students will be released only to individuals listed in their file. Any changes to a parent's contact information or authorized pick up list must be done in person by the enrolling parent.

We will not accept changes to child records over the phone. Please make sure your contact information is current with the office and your child's teacher. In case of an emergency, we need to be able to reach you. Maintaining accurate records for all students is a requirement.

CHANGES TO DISMISSAL ROUTINE

Changes in how a student is going home will occur once in a while. It is the family's responsibility to communicate with the classroom teacher regarding this change so that it may be communicated during dismissal.

Students will not be allowed to go home with another student or adult unless written permission is provided. Students who normally ride a vehicle will not be allowed to walk home unless permission is given from a parent.

VISITORS

Parents that wish to visit during the day for a conference or to volunteer are required to make an appointment with the teacher beforehand. For the safety of our students and staff, all visitors are to report to the office where the ID will be checked and a visitor's pass will be given. Visitors, including parents, must show a picture ID before being allowed to visit classrooms or other areas. We will only permit classroom visitors if they have been scheduled through the classroom teacher.

VOLUNTEERS

We encourage parents to volunteer whenever possible. ALL parents and family members wanting to volunteer at the school or attend field trips **MUST HAVE COMPLETED A BACKGROUND CHECK.** Volunteer orientations will be held throughout the year as we develop more opportunities for families to share their time with us. Background checks are conducted through Austin Partners in Education (APIE) for no cost or for an optional donation to the foundation.

CAFETERIA AND LUNCH

Our cafeteria is open for lunch and breakfast daily. Free or reduced lunch applications are available in the front office or benefits can be applied for online. Menus can also be found at www.schoolcafe.com.

Breakfast is served from 7:15am-7:30 am in the cafeteria. Lunch times are scheduled by classroom; please check with your teacher for the exact time. *On Tuesdays and Thursdays Caregivers may come and eat lunch with their child only (they may not bring other students).* There are dedicated tables outside for lunch visitors and we ask that lunch visitors do not join lunch recess activities for monitoring purposes. There will be days which lunch visitors will not be hosted due to campus events, extreme weather, or other needed adjustments. We appreciate everyone's understanding as we work with our smaller cafeteria size.

Teachers and staff are not responsible for lost cash. Parents may add funds/ money onto their child's meals account by visiting online at www.schoolcafe.com or by paying cash in the cafeteria. Envelopes with your student's name may be left in the front office for the cafeteria manager. Cafeteria Manager Loren Wyatt can be reached at leecafe@austinisd.org

Sharing food is not permitted. If a student is caught sharing food, the item will be picked up, wrapped up and sent back home. We ask that families refrain from sending items that are

high in sugar content, such as soft drinks, gum, and candy. Large family-size bags of chips are not permitted.

MEDICATION AND ALLERGIES

Any medication to be given at school must be sent to the School Nurse in its original container along with proper utensils for dispensing the medication. **THIS INCLUDES INHALERS.** A signed permission form (obtained from the Nurse) must also be submitted. Parents of children with food allergies should contact the Nurse for action plans. **Please see your child’s teacher for detailed information about food allergies in the classroom and grade level.**

ILLNESS

Our health room is staffed with partners from Ascension Seton Health Care during the school day. If health room staff are not available, the office staff cares for ill or injured children. Children should be kept home if they do not feel well or are experiencing any type of the following illnesses:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Chicken Pox
- Fever of 100.0 °F or above
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Other communicable illness

PERSONAL STUDENT ELECTRONICS

Personal student electronics, including smart watches and cell phones, should not be utilized during the school day. If devices are brought to school, they must be powered off and placed in the student’s backpack. Smart watches, if worn by students during the school day, are to be kept on airplane mode and not used for communication throughout the school day. Inappropriate use of smartwatches during the school day will lead to their confiscation and communication with students and their family to review expectations.

Lee Elementary and AISD are not responsible for lost or stolen personal items. Please refer to the table below for additional information related to personal electronics below:

Russell Lee ES Student Personal Device Policy	
First Offense	Teacher collects device, teacher turns device into office, administrator discusses policy with student and device returned at the end of the school day when student picks it up from the office. Parent/guardian notified.
Second Offense	Teacher collects device, teacher turns device into the office, administrator

	contacts parent/guardian. Personal devices may be picked up at the end of the school day by an adult parent/guardian.
Third Offense	Teacher collects device, teacher turns device into the office, administrator contacts parent/guardian. Personal devices may be picked up at the end of the school day by an adult parent/guardian with a \$15 fee.

SCHOOL DISTRICT ISSUED ELECTRONICS

All AISD students are issued a device for educational use during the school day. School issued chromebooks are not to be brought home without teacher permission. Students are expected to follow all aspects of the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) for district devices which can be reviewed here: <https://bit.ly/aisdtechexpectations>

FIDGETS, TOYS, BLANKETS, EXTRA ITEMS

If it is not being used for teaching and learning, it should not be brought to school. We understand that some students may need a fidget or stress ball. Simply communicate this need with your classroom teacher for this allowable accommodation. All items outside of the classroom school supply list will be picked up and stored for safekeeping until a parent can come retrieve it. Exceptions to this include show-and-tell, teacher incentives/permission, or special celebrations. All exceptions should be communicated by the classroom teacher.

STUDENT BIRTHDAYS

Flowers or balloons for a student’s birthday are NOT allowed in the classroom. Students may share snacks with classmates on their birthday at the end of the day (no earlier than 2:40 pm). **Please notify the teacher beforehand that you will be sending snacks so as to reduce distractions to learning time.** We cannot accommodate a day of notification. Check with your child’s teacher for detailed information about food allergies in the classroom and/or grade level.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE ON CAMPUS

On campus aftercare is provided through Austin ISD’s Third Base program. Third Base provides care in an environment where children can learn, thrive, relax and have fun. All activities are conducted indoors and outdoors in spaces that are organized, safe, fun and challenging for students.

Third Base After-School Care is open to students enrolled in Lee. Admission is on a first-come first-served basis, fee assistance is available for qualifying families. All Third Base sites are licensed

by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. All staff are trained in CPR/First Aid and receive training in child care–related fields. Questions related to Third Base can be directed to our Licensed Site Supervisor, Mr. Carlos Tijerina at carlos.tijerina@austinisd.org

CAMPUS COMMUNICATION

For time sensitive announcements or emergencies, notifications will be sent out through robocall, text message, and email which uses contact information that is on file through our AISD systems. Emails must be current in our system. To update your email addresses or phone numbers, please talk to our front office staff and to ensure that all information is up to date and timely notification can be provided.

Konstella is the communication platform used by all grade levels and staff as well as our PTA to share news, post sign-ups for volunteering or conferences, and celebrations for the school.

CLASSROOM COMMUNICATION

All teachers are expected to establish a mode of communication with families. **Graded assignments, test scores, behavior notes, and other academic updates should be going home weekly.** Please contact your child's teacher for more information for grade level specific practices. There will be opportunities in both Fall and Spring for all caregivers to meet with their child's classroom teacher for a conference. Families also have the ability to request a parent conference throughout the school year. Conferences must be scheduled during an agreed upon time with the classroom teacher. They should be scheduled with 72 hours advance notice as staff have a variety of commitments during the week for team planning, ARD/504 meetings and required professional development.

PRINCIPALS COFFEES

This is a monthly forum where families can communicate directly with school administration about issues, concerns, and provide feedback. These meetings are usually held on a Friday morning in the library monthly.

CAC & PTA

The Campus Advisory Council (CAC) is a council of parents, staff, and community representatives who stay involved in the planning, budgeting, curriculum, staffing and organization of Russell Lee.

The Parent and Teacher Association (PTA) is an organization dedicated to parents and teachers working together to improve the school.

RECESS

Every student receives a 30 minute recess or active movement daily, weather permitting. In the event of inclement weather or extreme heat or cold, indoor recess options are provided to give students an opportunity to have a movement break.

EXTREME WEATHER GUIDELINES (HOT OR COLD)

Whenever possible, we strive to have students participate in outdoor activities for recess or PE. There are instances of extreme hot or cold weather during which it becomes necessary for us to adjust our schedules for the safety of our students and staff. We follow AISD guidelines for decision making related to going outside and these policies are outlined in detail here: [AISD Temperature Guidelines](#)

DRESS CODE

Russell Lee Elementary follows the AISD dress code adopted by the Austin ISD Board of Trustees. Students should wear clothes and shoes that they can run, jump, climb, sit on the floor, and play in for daily recess. Flip flops, slippers and slides should not be worn to school as it can result in injuries during PE or Recess. Please refer to AISD guidelines for more details. <https://www.austinisd.org/family-support/dress-code>

LIBRARY BOOKS

All students have access to library books. Please be responsible and care for our library books. We are fortunate to have a wonderful collection of books in our school library. When library books are lost or damaged, the parents are responsible for the cost. Notices will be sent home by the librarian.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

We will follow our campus Culture and Climate plan. The School-wide Culture and Climate Plan has been written so that students and family members know what behavior is expected daily. It is helpful when families are aware of schoolwide expectations so they can help support our school from home. Please sit down and talk about these expectations with your child(ren). The climate and culture plan is our campus based document, and we follow district policy outlined in the [Austin ISD Student Success Guide](#).

We keep it simple. At Russell Lee Elementary, all Roadrunners are Responsible, Reflective, and Ready to Learn!

This campus specific handbook was developed to aid in assisting families with understanding policies at Russell Lee. If you have feedback for material that could be added or clarified, please reach out to a member of the Leadership team. We appreciate your partnership!