



North Columbus Elementary School
Home of the North Columbus Stars

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**STUDENT / PARENT
HANDBOOK
2009-10**

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MCSD Mission: The Muscogee County School District is committed to providing educational experiences that will enable each student to become a lifelong learner, enter the work force with necessary skills, and achieve academic and personal potential.

NCES Mission: North Columbus Elementary School encourages discovery for creative and innovative thinking for children to become lifelong learners empowered with essential life skills.

School-wide Theme: Examining Our World

House Themes:

Yellow: Explorations and Patterns

Red: Systems and Foundations

Blue: Relationships and Changes

WELCOME TO North Columbus Elementary School

The purpose of this booklet is to give you and your child a general overview of North Columbus Elementary School. Your interest and involvement in your child's education is always welcomed and encouraged. We need your support in order to ensure that your child will achieve his/her full potential.

Transportation

Students who attend North Columbus Elementary School may be dropped off and picked up by their parents in lieu of riding the school bus. Children who ride buses are to ride **ONLY** the bus to which they have been assigned and must board and depart at their **assigned stop**. In order for a student to ride another bus (in the event of an emergency or other reasons), parents **MUST** send written notification of this change to the school. The principal or designee must approve the change. The student's classroom teacher must be notified of the change.

Good behavior is expected on the buses at all times. Students who cause disturbances will be suspended from riding the bus. Bus students are to adhere to the Muscogee County School District Behavior Code and Discipline Policy.

Arrival

The designated area for students to be dropped off is the driveway in front of the school. No parking will be allowed in the driveway in order to keep the traffic moving. The driveway is a designated fire lane. Tickets can be issued to anyone parking in the driveway.

Students not allowed to be dropped off in the parking lots. With the safety of children in mind, students are to be escorted by an adult from the parking lot to the school entrance.

Students may arrive at school no earlier than 8:00 a.m. Upon arrival at school, students are to report to the cafeteria. There will be a staff member to supervise children in the cafeteria from 8:00 -8:15 a.m.

Parents may accompany students to class the first few weeks of school, but beginning the Tuesday after Labor Day, all students will be expected to enter the building and walk to their classrooms unescorted. Staff

members and Safety Patrol members are on duty in the halls to ensure student safety.

Only students enrolled in the Parks and Recreation Morning program, may be dropped off before 8:00 a.m. Parents must accompany their child into the building. They are to report immediately to the Parks and Recreation coordinator. There exists a fee for this childcare service payable to Parks and Recreation.

Before and After School Program

Parents may want to utilize the services of the Before and After School Program conducted by the Columbus Parks and Recreation Department at NCE from 7:00 a.m. to 8 a.m. and in the afternoons from 3:15 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The cost of the program is based on family income. Application forms are available at the school from before or after school employees or at the city recreation department.

Dismissal from School

Dismissal procedures have been developed to ensure the safety of all children and to expedite traffic flow. For afternoon pickup, each vehicle, which picks up a student after school, must have a pickup number displayed on the PASSENGER SIDE SUN VISOR. This number helps us locate children quickly and load them into vehicles in a timely manner. Pickup numbers were assigned at registration but can be issued in the office. **Always have a pickup number in your car window.** In the case that a pick up number is not displayed, the driver will be asked to park in the parking lot so as not to block traffic.

Please do not pull around cars or other vehicles unless directed to do so by a school faculty or staff member. Violation of this policy endangers students and adults helping with traffic control and could result in a driver being prohibited from driving on campus.

Parking in the bus loop at dismissal time in order to pick up a child or to enter the building is also prohibited.

Students will not be allowed to walk to a vehicle in the parking lot if not accompanied by an adult. If parents wish to pick up their child in the parking lot, they must park their vehicle in a marked parking space and walk over to their child. Double parking or parking on a yellow curb will not be allowed. Children will then be released to the parent by the NCE staff.

For safety purposes, students' back packs will be used to label their transportation home. Please make sure your child brings his/her back pack each day. If there is any change in the way a student goes home,

written notification is to be sent to the student's classroom teacher in the morning. Please phone if it is an emergency. The principal or designee will then approve the change.

Student Checkout

Students leaving during the day for appointments, or in the case of illness, must be signed out in the office. Identification will be required of persons checking out a student. Students will be released to individuals listed by the parent on the Check Out Authorization Form filled out at registration. Please make changes in our records, if necessary. A child cannot be released to a person not authorized by the parent. Students **may not** be checked out after 2:45 p.m., unless the student has a documented appointment card.

Attendance

Regular attendance is an important part of the teaching-learning process at North Columbus Elementary School. Excused absences are personal illness, serious illness of an immediate family member, death in the immediate family, and observance of a religious holiday. Upon returning to school following an absence, the student must bring a written excuse signed by a parent stating the cause of the absence. Students may be absent, excused or unexcused, only fifteen (15) days per school year. If the child's attendance exceeds 15 absences, regardless of whether these absences are excused or unexcused, the child will be considered for retention the following school year. Parents will be notified by the principal to attend a Retention Committee meeting.

Tardies

Students arriving at school after the tardy bell must report to the office for a late slip and are to be signed in by a parent. Students who are consistently tardy will be referred to the school social worker or support agencies outside the school system which may include the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS), Juvenile Court, Family Connection, or other external agencies.

Withdrawals

If a student is to be withdrawn from North Columbus Elementary School, parents should notify the school office **TWO DAYS IN ADVANCE** in order that records such as grades, textbooks, lunch money, library books, etc. can be completed.

MEDICATION AND SICK STUDENTS

First aid is given in the classroom, school office or by the school clinic worker. The clinic is staffed by a school clinic worker four hours a day.

All medication is administered to students and logged in the office. A release form is included in this handbook and must be filled out and signed by a parent for ALL medication. Medicine will be given only when a release form is signed and sent along with the medication container with the original label (including name, type of medication, physician's name, dosage, and instructions regarding medication to be administered). Students may not self-administer medication (prescription or non-prescription) and no medication will be given to students without the signed form.

Food Allergies

Because of the serious nature of food allergies, any refreshments or snacks that are brought in for student consumption **may not** contain peanuts or peanut products and **may not** contain food that has been processed in a facility that manufactures peanut products. Please check food labels carefully.

PEDICULOSIS (HEAD LICE)

Effective control of pediculosis is dependent upon school personnel and families that support a plan that includes:

1. Education of school personnel, families, and students
2. Screening of students by families and school personnel
3. Prompt treatment of those infested by killing the lice, removing the nits, and cleaning the environment.

When it is discovered that a student has pediculosis, the principal or his/her designee will immediately notify the parent/guardian and make arrangements for the student to be picked up and treatment initiated. The student will be isolated from other students until the parent/guardian arrives. The principal or his/her designee will provide instructions for treatment and nit removal. Upon return, the parent/guardian must accompany the student to school and provide proof of treatment, i.e., empty bottle or box of lice treatment product or a letter from the health department or physician. The principal or designee will inspect the student's head for presence of nits or active lice. The child **will not** be readmitted if either one is present. The principal may require additional documentation of treatment from a health care provider or the health department in cases he/she considers to be problematic

Cell Phones and use of other Electronics

Landline telephones, located in the school clinic and in the front office, are available for student use before and after school and for emergencies during the school day. Students may carry a cell phone in their book bags but are not permitted to use their phones while on campus or at a school function. Cell phones and other electronics may be taken from a

student by a staff member and are then turned into the principal for parents to retrieve at their convenience.

Toys and games (to include electronic devices) may not be brought to school unless the child's teacher and/or the principal has given permission to do so. Please check book bags routinely to avoid having these items and other items inappropriate for school brought into the building.

DRESS CODE

North Columbus Elementary recognizes that the dress and grooming of students, both individually and collectively are significant factors in successful operation of our educational program. North Columbus intends to create awareness within students that appropriate appearance and hygiene are conducive to their personal well-being and the well-being of others.

All students of North Columbus Elementary School shall be required to maintain the level of personal hygiene necessary to ensure a healthy school environment and to refrain from any mode of dress which proves to contribute to any disruption of school functions.

Administrators and teachers shall enforce the dress code policy and the principal or designee shall be the final judge as to the appropriateness, neatness and cleanliness of the wearing apparel, or whether or not appearance is disruptive, distracting or in violation of the dress code.

The required standard of dress for students shall be as follows:

- a. Shoes shall be worn. No flip-flops or thong sandals.
- b. For the best foot-protection, only closed-toe shoes are to be worn to PE classes.
- c. No caps, hats or scarves are to be worn in the school building during the school day unless there is a special activity during which they are deemed appropriate by the administration.
- d. Clothing or ornamentation displaying or advertising substances illegal for minors is prohibited. Suggestive phrases, designs, markings, or profanities are also prohibited.
- e. All students shall maintain an acceptable standard of dress. No halters, spaghetti straps, see-through clothing, biker's shorts, sagging pants, and bare midriffs are to be worn.
- f. North Columbus students may wear shorts or skirts that fall two inches above the knee.

Student dress at North Columbus Elementary School is expected to reflect self-pride and pride in our school. The staff of North Columbus Elementary believes it is in the best interests of the students and the instructional program if appropriate guidelines for dress are set for the students.

It is the responsibility of the student and parent to ensure that the dress code is observed. It is the responsibility of the teachers and administrators to ensure that the dress code is enforced.

North Columbus Elementary School has aligned its dress code policy to adhere to the Muscogee County School District dress code.

Safety Patrol

The purpose of the Safety Patrol is to greet and assist parents and students before school by opening car doors to help students out of cars and by making sure they get into the building safely. Members of the Safety Patrol are also responsible in-assisting students getting off the bus and out of daycare vans appropriately and safely.

To be chosen as a Safety Patrol member, students must be in the 5th grade, must be an A/B student, have an A in Conduct, have no discipline record, and be seen as a role model for other students.

Visitors and Volunteers

Visitors to North Columbus Elementary are welcome! To ensure that delivery trucks are able to serve our cafeteria, please refrain from parking by the small playground which blocks entrance to the kitchen. We require that ALL visitors check in through the office and be properly identified before visiting or stopping by a classroom, other locations within the building, or on the grounds. Visitors will be given a temporary pass to visit our school and campus. This pass must be worn at all times while visiting. ***All campus visitors must be dressed appropriately and in compliance with the student dress code.***

Instructional time is valuable; therefore, we ask that parents and other visitors not interrupt the class to speak to the teacher, but set up an appointment instead. In an effort to minimize disruptions to instruction and daily routines and procedures and to preserve student confidentiality, classroom visitations will be limited to 30 minutes. Visitors should seek prior approval for visits from the classroom teacher or administrator. In the case of Celebrations of Learning or other class programs that last longer than 30 minutes, parents are most welcome to stay for the duration. All other exceptions must be approved by the school administration.

Breakfast and Lunch

Breakfast and lunch are offered at North Columbus Elementary School and may be purchased using cash, cashiers checks or by paying through www.mylunchmoney.com. **Personal checks will not be accepted.**

Breakfast is served each morning from 8-8:30 AM in the cafeteria. Students will eat lunch with their class at designated times. Soft drinks/sodas are not to be packed in student lunches. Milk or juice can be purchased in the cafeteria as alternative beverages.

We love having visitors for lunch! If you visit for lunch, please sign-in in the office and receive a visitor's pass.

Care of the Building and Grounds

We are proud of our new facility and each student is expected to help maintain the beautiful, clean appearance of our school and school grounds. Students are expected to pick up paper, keep pencil marks off of walls and bathrooms, and clean their feet before entering the building. Remember that this is your home for about seven hours each day. It is up to you to keep our school clean.

DISCIPLINE PLAN

Do the right thing
Treat people right

The North Columbus Discipline Plan was developed to ensure that each student will have a place to learn and grow that is free from mental and physical threat, to ensure that staff members have schools in which they are safe, and to pursue a course of parental involvement that will make parents partners in achieving goals of safe and well disciplined schools.

DISCIPLINE PROGRAM – All teacher and administrative interventions will take in to consideration the age and circumstances of each individual child and situation. **Parents are a vital part of the process of working toward improving student conduct and will be included in all levels of consequences as often as possible.**

LEVEL ONE VIOLATIONS – The following are violations handled by the teacher and include but are not limited to:

1. Horseplay, wrestling, clowning, acting out

2. Verbal exchanges or name calling not involving profanity or threats
3. Excessive talking
4. Throwing objects in class (other than those which could cause injury)
5. Pencil pops, spitballs
6. Minor hall disruptions, out of class without a pass
7. Possession of unauthorized objects (other than drugs or weapons)
8. Inappropriate behavior in the lunchroom (loud talking, playing in the food, cutting in line, etc.) or bathroom
9. Continuous lack of instructional materials
10. Bullying non physical first offense

INTERVENTIONS - (Handled by the teacher as appropriate for the age and individual needs of a child)

1. Verbal warning
2. Low profile intervention
3. Change in student seating
4. Private conference with the teacher
5. Telephone call/conference/written communication with parents
6. Formulation of a behavioral contract/action plan
7. Referral to the counselor
8. After school detention with the teacher
9. Time out period in another classroom/silent lunch table

MAJOR AND CRITICAL VIOLATIONS – The following are violations which have consequences specified in the Muscogee County School District Student Behavior Code or which cause serious disruptions and require more serious consequences.

LEVEL TWO VIOLATIONS –

1. Major disruptive behavior
2. Failure to serve detention
3. Fighting, bullying
4. Forgery or altering school forms/documents or providing false information
5. Leaving school grounds/designated area without permission
6. Obscene or inappropriate language, gestures, or acts
7. Theft, attempted theft, or possession of stolen property
8. Refusing to appropriately participate in fire drills, weather drills, or other crisis practices
9. Willful or dangerous acts such as possession/use of firecrackers, smoke bombs, etc.
10. Insubordination, disrespect or defiant actions to adults
11. Refusal to follow directions or school rules

12. Vandalism
13. Trespassing
14. Dress code violations
15. Unauthorized possession of dangerous instruments
16. Sexual harassment
17. Verbal abuse

INTERVENTIONS – (Handled by the principal, assistant principal, or designees as appropriate for the age and individual needs of a child)

1. Referral to counselor
2. Parent contact and/or conference
3. Detention
4. Work detail and/or loss of privileges
5. Out of School Suspension
6. Referral to Discipline Tribunal

LEVEL THREE VIOLATIONS – These are the most serious misbehaviors and may result in a ten day suspension and an automatic referral to the Disciplinary Tribunal at any time:

1. Possession of a firearm or deadly weapon
2. Possession/use of drugs, alcohol, controlled substances, tobacco, or related products or paraphernalia
3. Verbal threats or physical assaults of staff members
4. Use of a dangerous weapon/instrument to intimidate or injure
5. Substantial damage to personal or school property
6. Issuance of a bomb threat
7. Arson
8. Sale, attempted sale or distribution of alcohol, tobacco, or controlled substances

MUSCOGEE COUNTY SCHOOL BUS POLICY

The Muscogee County School District Board of Education has made a commitment to ensure students are safe when riding the bus to and from school. Behavior of students on school buses is considered an extension of classroom behavior. Students who fail to respond to the direction of the bus driver shall be reported to the school principal who may deny the student transportation. The following rules will be strictly enforced.

1. Appropriate behavior is expected at the bus stop and on the bus.
2. Keep hands and objects inside the bus and remain seated.

3. Talk in low tones.
4. Respect the bus driver and the rights of others.
5. The following are prohibited:
 - a. Fighting
 - b. Weapons of any kind
 - c. Drugs and Alcohol
 - d. Profanity
6. Follow directions of the bus driver.

All rules as indicated in the Student Behavior Code and Discipline Policy Handbook.

Punishment for violation of any of the above rules will result in your student being removed from the bus.

First Offense: Parent conference and one day suspension from the bus

Second Offense: Parent conference and one week (5 day) suspension from the bus.

Third Offense: Parent conference and expulsion from the bus for remainder of school year.

Possession of weapons, drugs, and/or alcohol will result in an automatic suspension from school and referral to the Student Discipline Tribunal.

Parents must appeal to the principal before making an appeal to the school board by notice given to the superintendent within ten (10) days of the bus expulsion.

