

# DRAYTON MILLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



2024 – 2025 Parent/Student Handbook & Calendar

Drayton Mills Elementary School Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year at Drayton Mills Elementary School.

On behalf of our faculty and staff, it is with excitement and enthusiasm that we welcome you back to a new school year! I am honored to serve as Principal of this outstanding school and look forward to working with each of you! It is my hope to continue the forward momentum of academic success and continuity toward the level of excellence that has always been the hallmark of our district, Spartanburg 7.

In the spirit of inspiring and equipping our school community for success, I am personally motivated to grow our school by growing every child, and every classroom, based on their unique learning needs. It is imperative for me to preserve the successful aspects of our school climate and culture. At Drayton Mills Elementary, our school culture is embraced by all stakeholders. Our priorities will begin with promoting and creating enthusiasm for learning with emphasis placed on building relationships, enriching our instructional practices, and promoting student and staff well-being. I place great value on communication and collaboration with students, parents, school staff, district leaders, and community stakeholders.

Our school community is committed to building a culture of quality learning and excellence. My mission will be to set the foundation for effectuating all student's full potential to become successful, productive, and global citizens. I am unwavering in my commitment to continue to provide positive leadership and encourage professional growth while connecting with our families and community.

Drayton Mills is always at its best when we work together. Please know that my door is always open to you. I welcome your conversation and positive input throughout this year. I also look forward to celebrating our collective successes as we embark on this journey together. Please feel free to contact me at 864-586-7979 or [cbcato@spart7.org](mailto:cbcato@spart7.org) to discuss your concerns, suggestions, or comments you may have to help make this the best year ever for our Dalmatian Nation!

Carla Cato  
Principal, Drayton Mills Elementary School

# *2024 - 2025 Drayton Mills Elementary School Faculty & Staff*

## **Office Personnel**

Carla Cato, Principal  
Adena McDaniel, Assistant Principal  
Thurman Evans, II., Assistant Principal  
Karen Potter, School Receptionist  
Tara Nicholson, PowerSchool Secretary  
Lakeisha Walker, Bookkeeper  
Audrey Huston, Nurse  
Karen Peterson, Nurse  
Deputy Machele Thomas, SRO

## **Kindergarten**

Naomi Bynum/Samantha Diaz-Velasco (4K)  
Brent Hawkins/Cassandra Brewton (4K)  
Chance Armstrong/Dianne Black  
Tiffany Bell/Heather Long  
Rosemary Foux/Pamela Grogan  
Sonja Miller/ Vienna Patterson  
William Neely/ Lisette Tufino  
Laura Woodall/Wanda Skipper

## **1<sup>st</sup> Grade**

Ann Caudle  
Keisha Edgeworth  
Noemi Gallegos  
Kimberly Henerey  
Claudia Hutchins  
Sarah Martin  
Felicia Ratcliffe  
Meredith Robbins

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Grade**

Amanda Chapman  
Amanda Hopkins  
Angela Millwood  
Althea Robinson  
Tia McFadden  
Alexis Howlett  
Lashunda Young

## **3<sup>rd</sup> Grade**

Abby Guy  
Matthew Johnson  
Lauren Partlow  
Marlene Pearson  
Jamie Ryan  
Robin Wyche

## **4<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Melissa Al-Khalil  
Autumn Arnold  
Kenji Littlejohn  
Brandy Lyda  
Patrice Daniel

## **5<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Hope Bennett  
Catherine Davis  
LaGinia Dove  
Summer Hall  
Monica Landrum  
Rachel Snarski

## **Guidance**

Courtney Huffman, Counselor  
Bettina Johnson, Counselor

## **Special Education**

Christina Honeycutt, Resource  
Tiana Robbins/Cara King, Self-Contained  
Marshayla Mayes, Resource  
Sarah Parker, Resource  
Hannah Sorrells, School Psychologist  
Barikia Tate/Cynthia Buckson, Self-Contained  
Bobbi Waddell /, Self-Contained  
Karra Williams, Speech/Language Therapist

## **Instructional Support**

Joseph Broadus, Tech Support  
Stacy Camp, Reading Intervention  
Elsa Doyle, ESOL Assistant  
Melissa Dunning, Reading Intervention  
Hillary Jernigan, ESOL  
Holly Hanna, Reading Coach  
Aubrie Lauderdale, STEM Coach  
Emilio Larrier, Behavior Intervention  
Heather LeCroy, ESOL  
Felicia Linder, Parent Involvement Facilitator  
Suzanne McEntire, Continuous Improvement  
Yolanda Moran, ESOL aide  
Reta Ridgeway, ESOL (travelling)  
Mary Watts, RBHS (travelling)  
Tiffany Brooks, Social Worker

## **Special Area**

Denise Arthurs, Music (travelling)  
Scott Andrews, PE  
Ellen Gould, French (travelling)  
Vicki Hogan, Media Assistant  
Kelly Isaman, PE  
Theresa Jenkins-Russ, Strings (travelling)  
TBD, Spanish (travelling)  
Taryn Spires, Music  
Matt McDaniel, Band (travelling)  
Amber Harrison, Art  
Anna Hodge, Art (travelling)  
Myrella Samuels, Music  
Christy Sanford, Media Specialist  
Winston Wingo, Art (travelling)

## **Custodial**

Sergio Sims, Head Custodian  
Cynthia Jennings, Custodian  
Lisa Murray, Custodian

## **Dining Hall**

Tammy Poteat, Manager

The DMES Vision, Mission and Core Beliefs were written by DMES students, parents, faculty and staff in partnership with the Franklin Covey Institute. They are *our* words, and we look forward to achieving them together.

### **DMES Vision**

DMES is a community of empowered leaders and goal achievers striving for their personal best in academic achievement and life success.

### **DMES Mission**

DMES pledges to live our vision statement by:

- fostering a safe and caring environment.
- building high-trust relationships.
- committing to addressing individual needs and cultivating individual interests.
- encouraging and celebrating all stakeholders.

### **DMES Core Values**

- Students come first.
- Accountability starts with me.
- Be the change I want to see.
- Do what's right.
- Appreciate and celebrate all.

## DAILY SCHEDULE

7:00 AM:	Doors open for bus riders and car riders. No children may arrive prior to this time.
7:30 AM:	Teachers take students to classrooms.
7:45 AM:	Tardy bell –children arriving at 7:45 or later should come to the office <u>with their parents</u> to sign in.
10:30 AM:	Lunch by grade level (10:30 am-1:00 pm)
2:30 PM:	Dismissal – all students should be picked up at this time.
4:00:	Office closes

Our after-school program will be open Monday – Friday, 2:30 – 6:00. There will be no after school program on days in the event of school closing (inclement weather, holidays, etc.)

### **Spartanburg County School District Seven's (SCSD7) statement on student rights and responsibilities:**

The board believes that students have rights that should be recognized and respected. It also believes that every right carries with it certain responsibilities.

Students have the right to a quality education and the responsibility to put forth their best efforts during the educational process. Students have the right to expect school personnel to be qualified in providing that education. Students have the responsibility to respect the rights of other students and all persons involved in the educational process.

Students have civil rights, including the right to equal educational opportunity from discrimination. They have the responsibility not to discriminate against others.

Students have the right to attend free public schools. They have the responsibility to attend school as required by law and to observe school rules and regulations essential for permitting others to learn at school.

Students have the right to due process of the law with respect to suspension, expulsion, and unreasonable searches and seizures. They also have the privilege of appealing administrative decisions that they believe have deprived them of their rights.

Students have the right to free inquiry and expression. They have the responsibility to observe reasonable rules regarding these rights.

Students must be made aware of their legal rights and of the legal authority of the board to make, or delegate authority to its staff to make, rules and regulations regarding the orderly operation of the schools.

Students have the right to advocate change of any law, policy or regulation. Students may exercise their right to freedom of expression through speech, approved time for assembly, petition and other lawful means. The exercise of this right may not interfere with the rights of other students. Students may not use this freedom of expression to present material that is obscene or slanderous, or to defame character. They may not use this freedom to advocate violation of federal, state and local laws, or school policies, rules, and regulations.

The district will accord all students privileges and rights without regard to race, religion, sex, creed, disability, national origin, or immigrant status or English-speaking status.

Students may present complaints to teachers or administration officials. The administration will provide adequate opportunities for students to exercise this right through channels established for considering such complaints and grievances.

## **LEARNING**

### **After School Program**

The Kids Club Program will be available to DMES students from 2:30-6:00 each regular school day. During this program, students will interact with certified teachers and can engage in special activities. Additionally, participating students will receive snack and supper. This program has limited capacity, and there may be a waiting list to attend. Students who are in in-school or out of school suspension may not attend on the day(s) of their suspension. Participation in the program is contingent upon student behavior during the program and parents meeting the obligations of the program (picking up on time, paying program fees, etc.). Students must be present at school in order to attend.

### **Attendance**

We believe that by working in partnership with you we can offer your child an exceptional education. We will do our part by teaching your child as soon as s/he enters our doors. Please do your part by having your child here and on time every day. Research shows that students who attend often do better in school than those students who more often miss school. There is even research that correlates frequently missing school with higher rates of dropping out of high school. State law requires that all children attend school from ages 5-17, and they may have no more than ten unexcused absences in the 180-day school year. The first ten absences may be excused by a note from the parent. After the tenth excused absence, all excuses must be notes from a medical professional. SC truancy law requires that on the third unexcused consecutive absence or the fifth unexcused absence (non-consecutive), the parent/legal guardian and school

administration must meet to create a formal truancy plan. Failure to meet this plan may result in referral to truancy court or family court.

Excused absences include absences due to...

- 1) illness.
- 2) critical illness or death of a family member.
- 3) religious holidays of the student's observed faith.
- 4) emergencies not specified above if granted by the principal or superintendent.

Unexcused absences include absences...

- 1) the child "skipping" school.
- 2) that are not the result of illness.
- 3) any absence without a written note from a parent/legal guardian or medical professional.
- 4) without a medical professional's note after the tenth absence.

Another part of acceptable attendance is being at school on time and for the entire school day. Each morning, our tardy bell rings at 7:45. Students arriving after that time must be accompanied by a parent to sign them into the office. Excessive tardies or early pick-ups will require parent/legal guardian and school administration to create a formal truancy plan. Students will not receive perfect attendance recognition if they miss school or have five or more tardies during the school year.

## **Communication**

Children achieve best when parents have an active relationship with their school, and communication is the cornerstone of this effort. We will communicate with you, among other ways, via letters sent home, our phone messaging system, a monthly principal's newsletter, Facebook, and our website. We encourage you to attend the PTO/schoolwide events listed on our calendar as well as scheduled meetings with teachers or administration. You are welcome to contact the principal at any time via email ([Cbcato@spart7.org](mailto:Cbcato@spart7.org)) or by calling the school at (864) 586-7979. Please schedule in-person appointments in advance.

To ensure that we can communicate with you, too, please make sure that the school always has your current address and working phone number.

## **Field Trips**

Our students will participate in field trips that have demonstrated educational value. Fees may be charged for these experiences, and all field trips will require written consent from parent/legal guardian at least 24 hours in advance of departure. We are unable to accept verbal permission. Students who do not attend the trip are still bound by attendance policy and will be placed in another location in the school for the duration of the trip. At the discretion of school administration, a child's behavior may prevent the child from attending a field trip or require the presence of a parent/legal guardian. We welcome parent chaperones, and interested parents should indicate their intent to attend on the field trip form. If space is limited, we will only be able to include a certain number of parent chaperones as determined by school administration. All chaperones must be on the SCSD7 approved chaperone list, and the application form is on the SCSD7 website. As background checks may take up to two weeks, please apply for this list well in advance. Parents may ride on district buses if space allows. If there is not space and the location allows it, parents may drive their own cars, but students must ride on the bus. A chaperone's child may be dismissed to that parent after a field trip and ride home with his/her parent, but no other students may do so.

## **Grades**

We will communicate your child's academic progress in several ways. Graded work will go home at least once a week, and you may use our PowerSchool Parent Portal to access your child's grades online. Please contact the office to gain access to Parent Portal. In the middle of each grading period, students in grades 2-5 will receive progress reports, and all students will receive a report card four times a year. The dates for both progress reports and report cards are shown on our calendar.

In K5 and 1<sup>st</sup> grade, grades are skill based, and student progress is shown in these ways:

C – Consistently	4 = Exceeds the Standard
S – Sometimes	3 = Meets the Standard
N – Not Yet	2 = Approaches the Standard
	1 = Does Not Meet the Standard



Blank = Not Yet Assessed

Their reading level will be designated as: Beginning K (BK), Middle K (MK), End K (EK), Beginning 1, (B1), Middle 1 (M1), End 1 (E1), Beginning 2 (B2)

2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> graders are graded on this statewide scale:

A = 90-100	D = 60-69
B = 80 - 89	F = Below 60
C = 70 - 79	

Decisions concerning promotion and retention will be informed by student progress on these grading scales.

If you ever have a question or concern about your child's progress, please set up a meeting with his/her teacher or communicate with an administrator.

## **Instruction**

Our school offers instruction in a wide variety of disciplines: English/language arts (including reading, speaking, and writing), health, math, science, social/emotional health, social studies, technology, and more. Students learn in a variety of ways – individual, small group, and whole group – using a wide variety of methods. Given the complexity of this topic, this section will offer only a broad overview.

All core academic instruction is based on the SC Academic Standards. You can see these at <http://ed.sc.gov/instruction/standards-learning/> , but you may also wish to access a summary of them at <https://expectmoresc.com/what-students-need-to-learn/>.

Most education for most students will occur in a “regular classroom.” Exceptions include...

Odyssey – SCSD7's program for academically gifted and talented students is available for qualifying 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade students. Additional details are available by searching “Odyssey” on our website.

Special Education – SCSD7 offers a variety of services for students with special emotional, mental, or physical needs. These include services that fall under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. For a detailed overview of these services, please see our district's website or contact our school's guidance counselor.

#### Related Arts -

DMES students are fortunate to participate in a variety of related arts. They include Art, Band/Orchestra (participating 5<sup>th</sup> graders only), Foreign Language, Literacy & Research Center, Music and Physical Education.

Medical Homebound – this service is available for students who are unable to attend school for medical reasons. To learn more about this, please contact the SCSD7 Special Education office at (864) 594-4493.

#### **Instructional Materials**

Our students are fortunate to have access to a variety of instructional materials. These include textbooks, Literacy & Research Center materials, iPads, ActivPanels, and MacBooks. It is our expectation that students respect these materials and have them ready to use at school each day. Parents are responsible for lost or damaged materials (including musical instruments), so please join us in helping your children take good care of them.

#### **Internet**

To keep children, systems, and technology safe, the following internet guidelines apply to all students:

- All users are prohibited from attempting to gain unauthorized access to district information systems or data. Students must have permission from a teacher or administrator to use information systems.
- Installing, deleting, attaching, or modifying software, hardware or applications on any information system are prohibited.
- Users vandalizing, modifying or causing damage to information systems will be responsible for the full cost to repair or replace device system. Student may also face disciplinary action. Students in grades 4 and 5 will have the option to purchase insurance for unintentional damage.
- Use of information systems is a privilege-any breach of this privilege may result in the closure of user accounts, cancellation of privileges, and/or disciplinary action in accordance with Board Policy and the District Code of

Conduct.

- All information systems activity is recorded and logged. No file, document, email, or website used, created, or accessed on the network is guaranteed to be private. All files, logs, and activity on district information systems are district property. Students will routinely use the Internet and other web-based resources on Spartanburg School
- District 7 information systems. Students are prohibited from:
  - ❖ accessing, viewing downloading, uploading, or disseminating illegal, commercial, racist, abusive, profane, pornographic, violent, offensive or discriminatory material or messages.
  - ❖ attempting to disable, evade, defeat, or circumvent district information systems filters, controls, and/or restrictions.
  - ❖ knowingly or negligently introducing or disseminating a virus, worm, spyware, malware, or other malignant code into any district information system.
  - ❖ unauthorized access to district information systems, and other users' accounts, files, or resources.
  - ❖ accessing non-district or unauthorized email, IM, SMS, or other communication device not authorized by the teacher.
  - ❖ accessing chat rooms or discussion forums that are not approved by the school staff.
  - ❖ divulging personal or another person's private information with an unauthorized person online.
  - ❖ duplicating, plagiarizing, storing, or transmitting copyrighted material that violates copyright law.
  - ❖ participating in any online behavior or activity that would not be permissible or advisable offline.
  - ❖ Transmitting information in violation of federal, state or municipal laws.

## Parent Involvement

Children thrive when parents and schools partner. *A New Wave of Evidence*, a report from Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (2002) says "When schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more."

The report, a synthesis of research on parent involvement over the past decade, also found that, regardless of family income or background, students with involved parents are more likely to:

- Earn higher grades and test scores, and enroll in higher-level programs
- Be promoted, pass their classes, and earn credits

- Attend school regularly
- Have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school
- Graduate and go on to postsecondary education

You are welcome here! Opportunities include...

Chaperoning – see more about this in the “Field Trips” section of this document.

Classroom visits – you are encouraged to visit your child’s classroom. Please be mindful that you may only observe. If you need to speak with the teacher, you’ll need to do so by appointment so that you don’t interrupt teaching and supervision.

Conferences – whether by phone, email, app, or during a scheduled in-person meeting, communicating with your child’s teacher is encouraged.

Lunch visits – any custodial parent/legal guardian is welcome to eat lunch with his/her child.

PTO – our Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO) supports your students by organizing and funding schoolwide initiatives that make our school a better place. If you are willing to be involved, please contact our PTO at [dmespto21@gmail.com](mailto:dmespto21@gmail.com).

SIC – mandated by state law, School Improvement Council (SIC) is comprised of parents, teachers, and community members and has the goal of school improvement. Serving in an advisory role, this group is elected by the school community. If you are interested in serving or nominating someone, please contact school administration.

Volunteering – we are always grateful for your support. If you’d be willing to volunteer, please stop by the school office for a list of opportunities. As with anyone who comes in contact with our students, volunteers must be cleared via a background check. This is done at no cost to the potential volunteer and every effort will be made to keep the process and results confidential.

## **Personal Electronic Communication Devices**

Possession/Use of Personal Electronic Communication Devices in School (Mobile Phones, Smartwatches, Headphones, etc.)

- To comply with state proviso, all school districts are required to implement a policy adopted by the State Board of Education that prohibits students from accessing personal electronic communication devices during the school day.

- From the time school begins at the tardy bell until dismissal at the end of the instructional day, all student personal electronic devices must be powered off and stored out of sight (in backpacks, pockets, etc.). Exceptions may be granted in the following cases:
  - medical necessity
  - IEP or 504 plan requirements
  - students who are volunteer firefighters or members of emergency organizations
  - accessing a suicide/crisis/mental health text line or hotline, or school safety tip line
  - emergency situations that threaten the safety and/or well-being of an individual student, other students, or a school staff member or
  - authorized classroom use approved by the Superintendent in writing
  - “Personal electronic communication devices” are defined as any unauthorized telecommunications devices used to access the Internet, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, or cellular telephone signals. They include but are not limited to:
    - cell phones
    - wearable technology, such as smartwatches that have the capability to interact with wireless technology
    - AirPods/earbuds/headphones
    - personal laptops or tablets
    - mp3 players
    - any other current and future similarly utilized device that emits an audible signal; vibrates; displays a message; records; and/or live streams.
- Spartanburg School District 7 assumes no responsibility for the safety and security, loss, recovery, repair, or replacement of a personal electronic device when carried onto district premises.
- The principal will determine appropriate disciplinary action for students who violate these guidelines.

## **Placement of Students**

It is our goal to have a school in which all teachers are of exceptional quality, experts in teaching your children, consistently kind, and capable of running well-managed classrooms. Though we will be unable to place students with certain teachers based on parent requests, you can be assured that your child will have a high-quality teacher. As with all

things pertaining to our school, you are welcome to discuss your child's needs with school administration so that we can make a well-informed placement.

## **Responsive Classroom**

As stated on [www.responsiveclassroom.org](http://www.responsiveclassroom.org), "Responsive Classroom is an evidence-based approach to elementary and middle school teaching that focuses on the strong link between academic success and social-emotional learning. Independent research has found the Responsive Classroom approach is associated with higher academic achievement in math and reading, improved school climate, and higher-quality instruction. It has been described by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning as one of the most "well-designed evidence-based social and emotional learning programs."

## **School Supplies**

A school supply list is posted on our school's website, and we ask that your child always have these materials at school. We will try to keep required supplies to a minimum. If you are having difficulty purchasing supplies, please contact our guidance counselor, and we will seek to equip your child with donated supplies if they are available.

## **STUDENT SAFETY AND WELLNESS**

### **Birthday Parties/School Celebrations**

We hope that you will feel welcome to join your child for lunch on his/her birthday. If you choose to bring a whole class treat on this day, it must be on the district's approved food list, and the teacher must know at least one day in advance. **Please do not bring or send cake, ice cream, cupcakes or pizza for the whole class.** Should you choose to issue at school invitations to an out-of-school birthday party, all students (or all boys or girls) must receive an invitation.

We will have class parties prior to Winter Holiday and on Valentine's Day. We welcome you to join us on these days, too. Please know that all food served to our students must be store-bought and in the original container with a nutrition label. This helps us to protect our children with allergies.

## **Bullying**

Bullying is harmful to students and school culture. It will not be tolerated. As board policy defines it, bullying is “a gesture, electronic communication, or a written, verbal, physical, or sexual act reasonably perceived to have the effect of either of the following: 1) harming a student physically or emotionally or damaging a student’s property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of personal harm or property damage, or 2) insulting or demeaning a student or group of students causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.” Bullying is generally understood to occur more than once rather than as an isolated incident. Students should immediately report any bullying to school faculty/staff.

## **Buses**

The school bus is an extension of our school, and students are expected to behave as they would in our building. The bus driver supervises the bus and may stop the bus if student behavior is a threat to safety. School administration may then suspend or deny bus transportation to a student whose conduct is consistently unsafe. Buses are equipped with cameras, and video may be used as evidence in a student disciplinary proceeding arising from misbehavior on the bus. Bus behavior and consequences of misbehavior are discussed in more detail in our district’s *Elementary Behavior Code*.

Parents/legal guardians and other adult volunteers may ride buses if they are approved to do as part of a special program sponsored by the district. However, as written in SC law, no person may interfere with the operations of a school bus by boarding it, restricting its movements, or by using verbal or physical threats to the driver or any passenger while the bus is transporting students. State law provides for the punishment of anyone using, “threatening, obscene or profane language, addressed to the driver or any passenger entering, leaving, or waiting for a school bus.”

## **Conduct**

From the time that your child enters our school or boards a school bus to the time s/he leaves school property or the school bus, s/he is expected to comply with our code of conduct. SCSD7 Board policy states, “The board expects students to conduct themselves in an orderly, courteous, dignified, and respectful manner. This requirement refers to their actions towards other students and teachers, their language, their dress, and their manners.” The policy goes on to say that students not meeting these expectations may be punished, suspended, or expelled. A complete copy of the SCSD7 *Elementary Behavior Code* can be obtained on the district’s website.

Our expectation is that, working in partnership with you, students will behave in a way that fosters learning and promotes the emotional and physical health of others in our building. We will set clear and reasonable expectations for our students and make every effort to view behavior, too, as a learning opportunity. Most students will meet our expectation most of the time. When a student does not, however, punishment, in accordance with district policy, will occur at the classroom level, and in rare instances, via school administration. We will communicate behaviors and consequences with parents/legal guardians so that, together, we can help your child be successful.

We have three schoolwide expectations for behavior:

1. Use kind words.
2. Keep your hands, feet, and other objects to yourself.
3. Act and speak in a way that respects learning and others.

In the event a child is absent on the day of an in-school suspension (ISS), s/he will serve in ISS upon return. Students serving out of school suspension (OSS) will not be penalized with missed grades and may make-up work missed as the result of OSS. Before a student may return to school from OSS, a parent/legal guardian must schedule and attend a meeting with school administration and/or Guidance/RBHS. Students are not eligible to attend the after-school program on days that they have OSS.

Our school's **dress code** requires that students wear clothing that is appropriate and not disruptive to the learning environment. Examples of appropriate dress include...

- leg coverings that are at least fingertip length when the child is standing.
- clothing that is appropriately sized for the child.
- shirts that fully cover the midriff.
- clothing that fully covers undergarments.
- shoes and other clothing that will allow the child to actively participate in PE and recess. Flip-flops, slides, and bedroom shoes are not appropriate for school.

Examples of inappropriate dress include...

- clothing that is transparent or torn.
- especially tight-fitting clothing like tube tops, biker shorts, or tights worn as pants.
- muscle shirts or tank tops that aren't covered by a jacket or sweater.



- any clothing portraying or suggesting violence, the use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs, or that is insulting or demeaning to other people.
- hats, bandanas, or sunglasses worn inside the building.
- masks, face paint, or temporary tattoos on the face, head, or neck.

School administration will determine whether attire is appropriate.

Students may not sell or trade items before or during school, in the after-school program, or on the bus. School faculty/staff will not settle disputes that arise from selling or trading items on school grounds or during school sponsored activities.

### **Custody Issues**

Unless specified in writing by a legal parent/guardian, only a legal parent/ guardian may receive information from the school about a child's academic progress, check out a child from school, alter any educational decisions, or make any changes to a child's transportation. Custodial parents/legal guardians have the right to know a child's attendance history, discipline information, and grades. Even in the event of a divorce, these rights remain unless specifically stated by a court of law. We respectfully ask that, for the safety and well-being of your child, you do not place the school in a position to arbiter between custodial adults. For instance, unless sole custody has been specifically designated to one parent, we are unable to honor a request by one parent to deny the other parent the right to have lunch with their child.

### **Emergency Drills**

Keeping your child safe is our number one priority. Our school maintains and regularly reviews a safety plan, and practicing for possible emergencies is an important part of it. Each month, we will have a schoolwide fire drill, and we will also schedule drills for earthquakes, intruders, and tornadoes.

### **Enrollment**

Children who are 5 or older on or before September 1 are required to attend school. Children may only be registered by a parent/legal custodian residing in our school's attendance area. Registration must be done in person at the school, and requires 1) two proofs of residence including either a current lease that includes child's name, deed to property or property tax receipt in the name of the parent/legal guardian, or an affidavit verified by a school official AND a utility bill for a landline phone, power, water, or cable, 2) the child's birth certificate, and 3) proof of up-to-date immunizations, 4)

completion of all information/paperwork requested at the school. Continued enrollment is contingent upon maintaining the above, and a student may be officially dropped from our rolls if s/he is absent without excuse for ten consecutive days. Should you need to withdraw your student, please let the office know, and we will provide records when his/her new school requests them as a result of you beginning the enrollment process at the new school.

### **Food**

Per SCSD7's Wellness Policy, all food provided by and served in the school must conform to certain standards. This applies to food brought for birthdays or school celebrations. All food must be store bought and in the original packaging that contains the food's nutrition label. At our teachers' discretion, students may bring one nutritious snack per day, and the teacher will designate a time it may be eaten. Students may bring water bottles, but they must be clear and may not contain carbonated beverages. Students may not bring candy to school, nor may they bring large bags of chips or snack food. Due to student allergies, students are not permitted to share food with one another.

### **Health Room**

As a commitment to your child's health, SCSD7 provides full time-registered nurses to our school. Our nurses will conduct screenings (such as vision and hearing), provide first aid, treat illness, and dispense doctor prescribed medication and over the counter medication with written permission from a parent/legal guardian. A copy of this permission form can be obtained on the district's website. All medicine – prescribed and over the counter – must be in its original bottle and kept in the health room. In the event of fever, the school nurses will require that your child remain home for 24 hours in the absence of fever reducing medication. Students who are vomiting may not return to school until they have gone 24 hours without further vomiting. The nurses may also exclude children from school for other communicable illness, lice, or expired immunizations. Students sent home for lice must be cleared by our nurses in order to return to school. For further information on this topic, please see SC DHEC's Exclusion list at <https://scdhec.gov/health/child-teen-health/school-exclusion>.

Please be sure that you provide us with updated contact information so that the nurses can contact you quickly if there is an emergency. Our nurses are authorized to call an ambulance for your child as deemed it appropriate.

### **Inclement Weather**

At the discretion of the superintendent, school days may be delayed, ended early, or cancelled due to bad weather. If school is closed, after school activities are cancelled, too. Please watch local media for closings and delays. This

information will also be posted on the district website and the school Facebook page. In the event of a delay, parents may not drop children off early because there will be nobody there to supervise them. In the event of an early closing, please get your child immediately so that faculty/staff can make it home safely as well. School days cancelled due to inclement weather will be “made up” in accordance with district policy or may be addressed via “eLearning.”

## **Lost and Found**

We maintain a lost and found for clothing, jewelry, and other allowed personal items. If your child is missing something, this is the first place to check. Students should only remove their own items from lost and found. When possible, please write your child’s first and last name in clothing (jackets, hats, gloves, etc.) or other items that might get lost so that we can return them as soon as possible. Before Winter Break and Summer Break, we will donate any items that remain in lost and found.

## **McKinney-Vento Act**

This federal law offers protections and rights to children who lack “fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.” This includes children who have lost their housing or are sharing housing with others due to loss of housing or economic hardship. If the district determines that a family meets the appropriate criteria, the student has the right to immediately enroll in school in the absence of generally required documentation, remain in his/her school of origin if that is in the child’s best interest, have access to all programs and services for which they are eligible, and be provided transportation.

## **Meals**

All DMES students receive breakfast and lunch at no charge. Students may bring lunch from home. If you would like your child to have breakfast other than the breakfast we serve at school, they must consume it prior to arriving. Students participating in Kids Club also receive supper at no charge. Our Dining Hall abides by all applicable laws regarding nutrition and school food service. As such, students may be required to take certain items as part of their meal. We are unable to heat, microwave, or otherwise prepare any food that children bring from home.

## **Media**

Our school will maintain an active website and Facebook page on which student pictures and videos will often be included. Additionally, special events may be covered by local press (newspaper, television radio) or by SCSD7. *If you*

would like for your child to be excluded from media, please fill out a media exclusion form available from the office.

Otherwise, it will be assumed for the purposes listed above and all others deemed reasonable by school administration, that you consent to your child's participation.

## **Money**

On occasion, students may be asked to bring money to school, and the school will always provide a receipt for money collected over \$5.00. This includes money collected for lost/damaged textbooks, Literacy & Research Center materials, field trips, etc. To protect your child's safety, we will never ask that your child participate in door-to-door sales for fundraising.

## **Prohibited Items**

Any item that may be a hazard to the emotional or physical safety of children or that may interfere with learning may not be brought to school. This includes cell phones, game systems, toys, trading/collectible cards, and weapons of any kind. Prohibited food items are listed in the "Food" section.

Please help us to ensure that all student cell phones stay at home since they can be a significant disruption to learning. In the event of an emergency, individual cell phones could hamper efforts to keep your children safe. As with all prohibited items, if your child has a cell phone at school, faculty/staff will confiscate it, and a parent or legal guardian may retrieve it at the school. Repeated offenses may result in additional loss of privileges.

## **Student Welfare**

Both SSD7 policy and SC state law mandate school faculty and staff to report any suspected abuse or neglect to DSS or local law enforcement. The State of South Carolina provides both civil and criminal immunity to those reporting suspected child abuse or neglect, and any faculty/staff who knowingly fails to do so may be guilty of a misdemeanor.

## **Tobacco Free School Policy**

SSD7 policy prohibits the use and/or possession of all tobacco products or paraphernalia including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco, snuff and all alternative nicotine products such as e-cigarettes by all students, staff, contract and other workers and visitors.

## **Transportation Changes (Dismissal)**

While we understand that families must make occasional changes to what a student does at dismissal, it is important to the safety of your child that s/he have a routine to follow on most days. *As specified in advance by a legal guardian*, students may stay for the after-school program (if their parents have previously enrolled them), ride the bus, be a car rider, ride a bike, or walk. If you must make a transportation change, we require that it be made by the parent/legal guardian in writing and received by the classroom teacher in the morning. Written notes should be in legible handwriting and include: the child's name, how the child should get home, the dates changed (for instance, "today only," "for the next week," "from now on," etc.), and your printed name. If an emergency arises and you must make a transportation change over the phone, this must be done by calling our office prior to 2:00 pm, and we may ask for identifying information to make sure that a parent/legal guardian is the one requesting the change. For safety reasons, we are unable to take transportation changes by electronic communication (email, text, Facebook messenger, etc.). If there were to be confusion about a child's transportation, for the sake of safety, we will keep him/her at school rather than bus/walk/bike, and we will never put a child in a car with anyone who hasn't been cleared in writing from a parent/legal guardian. Thank you for supporting us in these efforts to keep your child safe.

## **Visitors**

You are welcome and encouraged to visit our school, and we hope you will!

All visitors must report to the school office to check in, and all visitors to the school must pass through metal detectors and be cleared for entrance. Visits may not interfere with instruction or supervision. All conferences must be scheduled in advance. Only parents/legal guardians or those granted permission by parents/legal guardians are permitted to visit. State law and board policy authorize school administration to prevent unauthorized persons from accessing the building or school grounds, and disturbing school is a misdemeanor.

This school year, for a period designated by school administration, parents may walk their children to the school doors but not to class. We apologize for this safety measure and will resume normal procedures as soon as possible. When we return to normal schedule, those attending a school program will be granted entrance to the school in the absence of a typical office check in.