

Rocky Mount Elementary School

Parent & Student HANDBOOK



2016-2017

Unlocking the Potential of Tomorrow's Leaders

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Absences: Instructional time in an elementary school is structured sequentially. Family vacations should be planned with the school calendar in mind to prevent children from missing instructional time in the classroom. When a student is absent, he/she must bring in a written and signed excuse upon returning to school. It is the principal's responsibility to monitor student attendance, and excessive absences will be addressed. A letter will be sent home after a student accumulates 7 or more absences. This procedure is required by the school district whether the absences are excused or unexcused. Georgia law allows excused absences for:

- Student's illness
- Family member's illness or death
- Religious holiday recognized by student's faith
- Order from a court or other government agency
- Conditions endangering student's health or safety

Accidents and Illness: The clinic is open daily from 8am – 2pm. Our clinic nurse is trained to treat minor emergencies and to dispense medications as needed. ***No medications will be dispensed in the classroom.*** Refer to the medication policy for more details.

A child who has been ill due to a communicable disease ***must*** provide written permission from a doctor or health officer upon returning to school (ex: head lice, conjunctivitis). ***If a child is suspected of having a communicable disease, parents will be called to pick up the child from school and seek a physician's diagnosis prior to returning the child to class.*** This local school procedure is for the safety and well-being of all our students. ***PLEASE do not send children to school who feel ill or who have had a fever within 24 hours.***

If a child is seriously injured during the day and requires immediate medical attention, he/she will be transported to an emergency room if parents cannot be contacted. Judgment in such cases is at the discretion of school authorities, and parents will assume financial responsibility. **Please keep medical information updated and phone numbers on file in the office and in the clinic.**

Advanced Learning Program ~ ALP: Cobb County provides services for identified gifted students at all levels. The Advanced Learning Program is designed to meet the very specific needs of these students and extend competencies in the areas of cognitive skills, learning skills, research and reference skills, communication skills, and metacognitive skills in addition to the experience of the regular classroom. The Georgia State Department of Education governs the procedures for identifying and placing students in the gifted program. To be eligible for gifted services, the criteria must be met in three of the following areas:

1. Mental Ability: 96th percentile on a national normed test (99th in 1st grade)
2. Achievement: 90th percentile on Total Reading, Total Math, or Composite on a nationally normed test OR
A superior student-generated product or performance
3. Creativity: 90th percentile on a nationally normed test OR
Superior rating on a standardized creativity rating scale OR
A superior student-generated product or performance
4. Motivation: Superior rating on a standardized motivation rating scale OR
A superior student-generated product or performance

A student already participating in an Advanced Learning Program in Georgia will most likely be transferred into our ALP. However, the eligibility committee will review the student's records and test data before a final placement decision is made. Students who transfer from out-of-state must meet Georgia requirements for placement in the Cobb County program. Test data from a previous school will be considered if the test results are less than two years old and if they meet the Georgia eligibility criteria. Referrals for transfer students are available from the Gifted Educational Specialist.

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After School Program: The After School Program (ASP) is an extension of the instructional day and is open to all Rocky Mount students. The program operates every school day from 2:20 - 6:00 p.m. beginning the first day of school. This includes Conference Week and scheduled early dismissals. Parents may pick up children at any time during these hours, but not later than 6:00 p.m. There is a charge of \$1.00 FOR EVERY MINUTE (per student) PAST 6:00 p.m. that the student is in ASP. Parents who are charged for (3) late pickups will have to find alternative after school care for their student. The cost for a full 5 day week is \$35.00 or \$7.00 per individual each day. (Note: All prices are subject to change.) Payment is due the FIRST DAY A CHILD ATTENDS EACH WEEK. Payment should be sent in a school provided envelope. Monthly payments are encouraged.

- Pay online www.mypaymentplus.com or
- Make checks payable to "Rocky Mount After School Program" and include your child's full name, teacher's name, and date of service on the face of the check.
- Do not include any other payments with the ASP check.
- Do not include notes to any teachers in the payment envelope. Attach any such notes to the outside of the envelope.
- A pattern of nonpayment or late payments (\$21 or more) will result in termination from the program.

Behavior expectations and consequences will be consistent with those of the regular school day. Parents will be notified concerning inappropriate behavior on the part of their child, and the resulting discipline action. If a student receives three behavior write ups, parents will have to find alternative after school care.

For the safety and security of your child, it is imperative that ASP is notified PRIOR to 1:45 p.m. of ANY CHANGE in plans for your child's attendance in ASP that day. To assure that your child is accounted for, please use the following steps:

1. If your child is to attend ASP for the day, send a note to your child's teacher with the child's first and last name on the morning he/she plans to stay in ASP. Instruct your child to give the note directly to their teacher when they arrive to class.
2. If your child stays all week or on certain designated days, such as every Monday and Wednesday, send a note on the days that he/she is scheduled but will not be attending to the homeroom teacher.
3. For days that have special activities, i.e. Skating parties, Girl Scouts, etc., it is imperative that the office be notified of any change in your child's scheduled attendance in the After School Program no later than 1:45pm.

REMEMBER: WHEN SCHOOL CLOSES EARLY DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER; THE AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM DOES NOT OPERATE. We will automatically refer to your child's Emergency/Inclement Weather form to determine their transportation for that day.

Attendance: Regular school attendance is required by law for all children between the ages of six and sixteen. Regular attendance means actual attendance of a pupil during the entire day of school. We solicit your cooperation in planning appointments that do not interrupt school hours. A school calendar with marked holidays is incorporated in the handbook to assist in vacation planning. A student who attends a half day or more of school is counted present (e.g. 7:45 am to 11:00 am is a half day). ***A student arriving at school after 7:45 A.M. is counted tardy.***

Books: Textbooks are provided with county and state funds. In compliance with the textbook policy, all charges for lost or damaged textbooks must be paid in order to issue replacements. Students are responsible for the loss, or damage of all textbooks issued to them. Only **one set** of textbooks is provided per student.

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Buzz-in System: As part of Cobb County School District's expanded efforts to keep our students and staff safe, the District has installed an additional safety feature at all elementary schools. The system includes a box that is to the right of the front door. This box contains a camera and a door bell. Please press the door bell, face the camera, and a staff member in the front office will answer. Please state your name and the purpose of the visit. Identification may be requested. Once inside the building, visitors must still sign in either at the welcome desk or in the office. Please note that this is an added responsibility to an already very busy front office. It would be of great help if you could put some procedures in place at home to help your child remember his/her lunch, assignments, and other belongings delivered each day to school. If we can eliminate/reduce this type of visit, it will certainly have an impact on the number of buzz-ins each day.

Communication: To communicate concerns with the school, contact the teacher by phone, in writing, or e-mail. Phone calls and emails will be returned between 2:30 and 3:30 pm, or during planning if time allows. You can schedule a private conference with your child's teacher any time during the school year. A conference among parent, teacher, and administration is possible if further action is needed. The teacher will be responsible for setting up such a meeting.

Students are not allowed to use cell phones or other electronic communication devices at school during the regular school day.

Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program: The School Counselors incorporate state guidelines into weekly classroom lessons and facilitate small group discussions on pertinent issues such as changing families, anger management, social development, as well as family loss and grief. They also offer activities for newcomers and develop leadership opportunities for students. Our school counselors are always happy to consult with parents, teachers, students, and community organizations. Just call for an appointment.

Discipline: No student will be allowed to interfere with another student's right to learn. Therefore, students are expected to respect one another and all adults, and to behave appropriately in class and while on school property. School property includes, but is not limited to, (a) the land and improvements which constitute the school; (b) any other property or building including school bus stops, wherever located, where any school function or activity is conducted; (c) any bus or other vehicle used in connection with school functions and activities including, but not limited to, school buses, buses leased by the Cobb County School District, and privately-owned vehicles used for transportation to and from school activities. The Cobb County School District Code of Conduct provides uniform discipline guidelines, and each teacher establishes his/her own classroom management strategies within these guidelines.

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Dress: Every child at Rocky Mount is encouraged to observe a standard of grooming and dress consistent with the level of formality of the school situation. Clothing or ornamentation displaying or advertising substances illegal for minors is prohibited. Children may not dress or groom in any manner that detracts or interferes with the instructional process.

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

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

- A. All students shall be required to maintain the level of personal hygiene necessary to ensure a healthful school environment and to refrain from any mode of dress which proves to contribute to any disruption of school functions.
- B. All students shall maintain the following minimum standard of dress:
 - 1. Appropriate shoes shall be worn. No flip-flops; lace up shoes are preferred.
 - 2. Midriffs shall be covered
 - 3. Appropriate undergarments shall be worn and may not be visible.
 - 4. No strapless or spaghetti strap tops shall be worn.
 - 5. Appropriate shorts must be long enough so that the student can touch the bottom of the shorts when his/her hands are at their sides.
 - 6. No caps, hats, bandannas nor hoods covering the head are to be worn in the school buildings during the school day unless there is a special activity during which they are deemed appropriate by the school administration.
 - 7. Clothing or ornamentation that does any of the following is prohibited:
 - a. Displays or advertises substances illegal to minors.
 - b. Displays suggestive phrases, designs, markings or profanities
 - c. Advocates, promotes, or suggests illegal activity.
- C. Parents or students who have specific questions about a garment's appropriateness should review the list above and/or contact the Rocky Mount administration.

Early Checkout from School: School personnel can only release children to the enrolling adult or persons designated on the enrollment form. All check outs MUST take place in the office. Proper identification is required. *Keep in mind that afternoon dismissal is our most dangerous time of the day as we move our 620 students safely from school to a variety of locations. This makes strict rules and procedures a non-negotiable. All early checkouts must be made prior to 1:45 pm. The front office closes at 1:45 as we begin dismissal and reopens at 2:20.* Parents arriving at/after 1:45 will have to wait in the lobby until 2:20.

Emergency: If an emergency occurs, parents will be notified from the Cobb County School District via text and voice messaging. It is important that all your contact information be current. CCSD also has a Twitter account you may follow. Please see the [CCSD website](#) for more information.

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Field Trips: A field trip is defined as “a planned educational experience directly related to and correlated with a particular unit of study or a specialized function of the school.” Donations are solicited to cover expenses. Failure to receive sufficient donations will result in the cancellation of the trip/program. Students will not be allowed to attend a field trip without written parental permission. In-House field trips **also** require a signed permission form to ensure that parents are aware of the activity.

Instructional Time: The cooperative goal of home and school is to provide the best educational experience possible. Therefore, we solicit your cooperation in guarding valuable instructional time. Do not “drop in” to the classroom to visit or to pick your child up early. Parents who drop in the classroom to visit or check in on a student cause disruption in the learning of all students. Parents must come to the office to pick up their child or to set up an appointment to talk to their child’s teacher. Teachers will be glad to return calls and emails during their planning time or at the close of their instructional day.

Lost And Found: PLEASE label jackets, caps, sweaters, lunchboxes, and water bottles as these are easily lost. The lost and found items will be located on the stage ramp in the cafeteria. Articles not claimed will be sent to local charities at the end of each **month**.

Lunches: Good nutrition plays an extremely important role in your child’s academic success. We offer a healthy and nutritious lunch to your child each day. For current prices and menus, go to <http://www.cobbk12.org/centraloffice/FoodServices/indexMenus.htm> . If a child has a food allergy, parents may discuss his/her needs with the Food and Nutrition Service Manager. Please ensure that you send lunch money each day. Prepayments are accepted each morning in the cafeteria or can be made online at www.mealpay.com. Parents are welcome to have lunch with their children after the first 2 weeks of school. Please sign in and get a visitor’s badge in the lobby when you arrive. Also, please do not bring ‘outside food’ (McDonalds, etc.) in for your lunch or your child’s lunch.

Free and reduced lunches will be provided for those families who qualify and complete the proper federal application form. The applications are given to each student at the beginning of the school year. All applications are confidential. Additional applications are available at any time during the school year and may be obtained either through the café manager or our front office.

Medication: **In order for medication to be administered by the school nurse**, parents **must** complete an "[Authorization to Give Medicine at School](#)" form, available at school **or online**, for **each** medication (prescription or over-the-counter). All medication must be in the original container and labeled. Medications sent in plastic bags or unlabeled containers will not be administered to the student. Please send an extra empty pharmacy bottle to be used for field trips and ASP. Pharmacists will provide two labeled bottles for this purpose. Parents must inform the school of any medication changes. New medication or different doses will not be given unless the parent completes a new [authorization](#) form. The information on the prescription bottle label must match the new authorization form. Medications must be brought to school by parents. Over-the counter medications may be given for up to 10 consecutive days with written parental permission. A doctor's note is required for over-the-counter medication **to be** given for more than 10 consecutive days. The school does not supply over-the-counter medications.

Over-the-counter vitamins and dietary supplements, including minerals and herbs, will not be given. All medications not picked up by parents by the last day of school will be destroyed. Students may carry inhalers, Epipens or insulin with a completed "[Authorization for Student to Carry a Prescription Inhaler, Epipen or Insulin](#)" form on file in the clinic.

In the event a medication needs to be brought to school for administration by a parent/guardian (or designee with parental permission), the student will be called to the clinic and the medication will be administered in the clinic. This is for the health and safety of all Rocky Mount students.

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Parking: There are 9 identified bus lanes on the side of the school. *Parents or visitors cannot use this area between the hours of 7 A.M. and 2:45P.M.*

Personal Items: **Students** are not to bring any personal playthings, novelties, pets or equipment to school unless given prior permission by a school staff member. **Personal cell phones must remain in student book bags unless** the teacher is directing an activity in which they can be used. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in an administrative referral.

Physical Education: Participation in physical education is required by law. Absence from P.E. necessitates a note from the parent or a physician explaining the reason for and expected duration of the absence. Everyday school dress is accepted for participation in P.E. ***All activities require flat, rubber-soled shoes.*** The shoe requirement is strictly enforced to avoid ankle injuries.

Policies: All Cobb County policies can be found on the district website at <http://www.cobbk12.org/centraloffice/policyplanning> .You may wish to refer to sections governing areas of specific interest, such as Attendance, Student Behavior, Suspensions, Weapons, and Sexual Harassment. Should you need clarification of any policy, please contact an administrator.

Private Invitations Or Correspondence: Invitations to private parties or other personal correspondence cannot be distributed at school. The practice of passing out invitations at school can cause both hurt feelings and class disruptions. Gift items, such as balloons or flower arrangements, singing telegrams, candy, etc., cannot be delivered to students while at school.

Progress Reports: Progress reports are distributed at the half way mark of the grading period at the teacher's discretion. Typically they are used for students struggling with academic or behavioral goals.

Report Cards: Report cards are distributed every nine weeks. Parents will receive regular communication regarding student progress throughout the nine week period. Progress reports are issued only as needed at the midpoint of each grading period.

Safety Plans: Throughout the school year, we are required to conduct a certain number of fire, tornado and Code Red/Yellow drills to prepare students for potential emergencies that could occur. Two fires drills and one Code Red drill will be conducted during the first two weeks of school. The following is a description of drills and plans.

Code Yellow is a term used to alert staff and students that an emergency/crisis exists at or near a CCSD facility. It requires all students to be accounted for and remain under supervision. The doors leading into our buildings will remain locked and office staff will closely monitor the security cameras before allowing new visitors into the building. Visitors already in the building will be allowed to leave. Classes will continue as usual if it is deemed safe to proceed with our normally scheduled programs.

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Code Red is a term used to describe an emergency/crisis at a CCSD facility alerting staff that imminent danger exists inside or outside of the building. This will require moving to an immediate lockdown mode. Teachers are instructed to move students away from windows or doors and to huddle together quietly until they are told the dangerous situation no longer exists.

Parent/Child Reunification Plan is a term used to describe the procedure for re-uniting parents and their child(ren) if students need to remain at school beyond the school day. Reunification sites will be announced through all available communication mediums (call out, eblasts, etc). Please follow school district personnel directions upon arrival at the site. You or anyone you designate on your emergency sheet will be allowed to pick up your child(ren). You **MUST** have a picture ID to pick up your child(ren). If the emergency requires that we must leave our campus, parents will be notified by District personnel and public safety officials via the callout system as to the parent/child reunification location.

School Closings: Cobb County posts information about inclement weather closings at www.cobbk12.org and notifies radio and TV stations by 6 A.M. The media will also be notified if school must close early due to weather. Parents are required to complete, sign and return an Emergency/Inclement Weather form in August, which gives directions should school close before normal dismissal. If school closes, there is no After School Program.

School Council: The A+ Education Reform Act (House Bill 1187) established school councils in Georgia to “bring communities and schools closer together in a spirit of cooperation to solve difficult education problems, improve academic achievement, provide support for teachers and administrators, and bring parents into the school-based decision-making process.” Rocky Mount School Council is comprised of parent representatives at each grade level, teacher representatives and school administrators.

All members of the school council must:

- Maintain a school-wide perspective on issues
- Regularly participate in council meetings
- Participate in information and training programs
- Act as a link between the school council and the community
- Encourage the participation of parents and others within the school community
- Work to improve student achievement and performance

School Hours/Tardiness: School hours are 7:45 a.m. to 2:10 p.m. For the safety of our students, please do not drop your child off before 7:15 a.m. as the doors to the building are locked and there is no adult supervision available. Any student arriving after 7:50 a.m. will be considered tardy and must report to the office to be signed in **by a parent** and receive a tardy slip. Please instill the importance of punctuality in your child. Tardy students disrupt instruction. It is strongly recommended that car riders arrive by 7:40 a.m. to allow adequate time for the student to get to their classroom.

School Parties: In compliance with school board policy, Rocky Mount permits one class party per year, which is during the last week before winter holidays.

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Transportation:

Bus: Bus Transportation is provided to all students who live more than one half (1/2) mile from Rocky Mount Elementary. Bus stop locations may be found at <http://www.cobbk12.org/busroutes.aspx> Students under the age of 9 must have a parent or adult guardian meet them at the bus stop, otherwise the students will be brought back to school.

Bus Conduct:

1. Students must show proper respect to the driver and obey all driver instructions.
2. Students may not use any electronic devices/cell phones on the school bus.
3. Large toy, glass bottles, animals, plastic bags, straight or safety pins, skateboards or objectionable and dangerous items are not permitted.
4. Students must keep their arms and heads inside the bus at all times.
5. Nothing is to be thrown in, out, or from the bus.
6. The use of obscene language or gestures is prohibited.
7. Destruction or defacing of school property is prohibited.
8. Food, gum, or drinks cannot be consumed on the bus.
9. Students must remain seated in their assigned seats.
10. Students must be quiet at railroad crossings.
11. If crossing a street is necessary, students wait for the driver to signal to cross and then cross in front of the bus
12. The emergency door, windows and hatches are to be used only at the direction of the driver.
13. Students are to be at the bus stop five minutes prior to the scheduled time. The bus is not considered late until five minutes past the scheduled time.
14. Students may be allowed to disembark at a bus stop other than that assigned provided the parent/guardian submits a request in writing to the principal for approval.
15. Any other disruptive behavior will be referred to the principal as deemed necessary to ensure safe transportation of students.

Car Riders: Parents may drop off their children from 7:15 until 7:45. Please drop off at the front entrance. Parents, who pick up their children in the afternoon, must have a car tag. Each family may pick up a car tag at Sneak A Peek or from the front office prior to 1:45 pm. Replacement or additional car tags are \$2.00.

Walkers: Students who walk home in the afternoon will be dismissed to the covered play area. All walkers will walk together to Rocky Mountain Road and cross with the crossing guard. Students in grades K-2 must be picked up by a parent or adult guardian at the crosswalk.

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Transportation Change for Dismissal: All dismissal changes must be made prior to 1:45. Parents must provide a note or call the front office prior to 1:45 when wishing to change their student's normal dismissal routine. For safety reasons, *facsimiles and e-mails cannot be accepted.*

Tobacco Policy From The Board Of Education: No tobacco products may be used at any time on any school system property.

Traffic Safety: All precautions are taken at the school to ensure safe crossings. There is a crossing officer at the school entrance. All student crossings must occur at this point. **For the safety of your children, please do not allow your child to enter or exit your car on Rocky Mountain Road or in the staff parking lot. All student drop-offs and pick ups must occur at the front entrance where staff supervision is provided.** If your child is eligible for bus transportation, we encourage you to use this service.

Toys, Electronics and Personal Items: Students are not to bring playing cards, toys, novelties, pets, sports equipment, radios, electronic games, etc. to school unless given prior permission by a member of the school's staff.

Visitor Badge: It is important to us at Rocky Mount to provide a safe and secure environment for all students and to ensure that students have the uninterrupted instructional time to which they are entitled. To help us achieve these two goals we ask that each visitor obtain a visitor badge before entering the classroom or dining area. "Drop In" visits to the classrooms are not allowed. We ***DO ENCOURAGE*** scheduled conferences and welcome your role as a Rocky Mount volunteer! We believe that home/school communication helps create a positive educational environment. This can best be accomplished during non-instructional time. **We appreciate and thank our many volunteers!**

Weapons Policy Unless specifically authorized or exempted by Georgia Law, no person may possess, carry or have within their control any weapon or explosive compound of any kind as defined by Georgia Law O.C.G.A 16-11-127.1 while on school property, in a building attending a school function or on a school bus. Any instructional activity in which weapons or look-alike weapons are being used by instructors or by students in designated curriculum areas or activities must be approved by the principal, **in writing**, prior to the activity.

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