



*2303 Old Peachtree Road*

*Lawrenceville, GA 30043*

*Phone: 678-377-8955*

*Fax: 678-377-8958*

*<https://www.gcpsk12.org/freemansmilles>*

*Cafeteria: 678-377-8964*

*Clinic: 678-377-8957*

*Transportation: 770-338-4800*

*Angie Pacholke-Principal*

*Josh Farr-Asst. Principal*

*Tameka Strong-Asst. Principal*

*Angela Turner-Asst. Principal*

## *2023-2024 Student Handbook*

### **FREEMAN'S MILL MISSION STATEMENT**

*Freeman's Mill is a safe and nurturing community where challenging and innovative learning happens and all students achieve at high levels.*

## **HOT TOPICS**

Freeman's Mill Student Hours: 8:50 AM – 3:20 PM

Building Opens To Students: 8:20 AM

For safety and security reasons, students must not be on campus before 8:20 AM.

Front Office Hours: 7:30 AM – 4:30 PM

Staff Hours: 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Student Early Check Out:

Students may not be checked out after 2:45 PM.

Late Arrivals: Students arriving to school after 8:45 AM must be accompanied by a parent or guardian to the front office to sign in and get a tardy slip to take to class. Students must attend at least a half-day (arrive before or leave after 12:06 PM) to be counted present for that day.

MASCOT: BEAR

SCHOOL COLORS: BLACK, GOLD, AND RED

**\*\*\*Out of respect for instructional time, PARENTS MUST HAVE AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE TEACHER TO VISIT THE CLASSROOM.\*\*\***

### **2023-24 PTA Co-Presidents**

Mrs. Bagie George

Mr. Mark Mendoza

The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is the formal partnership between the school and its parents. A wide range of committees oversee projects, activities, and provide assistance with instructional programs at Freeman's Mill. Your membership and active participation are invited, encouraged, and greatly appreciated. You will receive communication throughout the year regarding PTA programs and events. Feel free to contact any one of the PTA officers/committee chairpersons for information about how to get involved by calling the school office at 678-377-8955.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **State Law Requirements:**

Students will be **excused** from school under the following circumstances:

1. Personal illness or attendance in school endangering a student's health or the health of others.
2. A serious illness or death in a student's family necessitating absence from school.
3. A court order or an order by a governmental agency, mandating absence from school.
4. Celebrating religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
5. Conditions making attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.

**All other absences are unexcused.**

**In case of a necessary absence from school, students must bring a written note from a parent or guardian stating the reason for the excused absence within 5 days of the absence. Excused absence notes will not be accepted after the last day of the school has ended. Any excused absence that is not explained in writing will be marked as unexcused. Students with excessive absences, tardies or early checkouts may be referred to the GCPS mandated Attendance Review Committee.**

Students who are enrolled for the current school year who do not attend school for 10 consecutive days and the school is not notified of the absence by parent/guardian are considered withdrawn. These students may be dropped from the school's roll after attempting to notify the parent or guardian.

To be counted present for the whole day, students must attend for at least the equivalent of half the school day. Students arriving after 12:05 PM or leaving before 12:05 PM (and not returning) will be counted absent for that day.

**BIRTHDAYS**—The celebration of student birthdays is optional and may be observed using the following options:

***Please note that some classrooms have students with food allergies. All food treats for these classrooms must be approved by the teacher before being sent into school. If a treat is brought in that is not an approved snack, the parent will be notified, and the snack will be sent back home at the end of the school day. Option 2 (Ice Cream Party) is recommended for allergy classrooms.***

Option 1: Parents may provide snacks for the class to eat during regular snack or lunch time. The snack should not include drinks. Birthday favors, gifts, balloons, or prizes are not allowed. Parents are asked to bring the snack to the office in the morning so that the classroom teacher can adjust his/her schedule accordingly. **Birthday party invitations may not be brought to or distributed in school unless there is an invitation for each child in the class.**

Option 2: Parents may purchase an "Ice Cream Party" for their child's class. Parents need to send cash, or a check made payable to "Freeman's Mill Elementary" for the total amount of the ice cream cost (\$1.00 per child). If there are 20 students in a class, the parent would send in cash or check in the amount of \$20.00. Each child in the class will get to pick their ice cream of choice for the birthday celebration. The ice cream will be served to the students at the end of the class lunch time. This option is recommended if your child's class has students with food allergies.

## **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**

We greatly appreciate parent cooperation and support in the area of behavior management. The most important aspect is guiding students to take responsibility for their choices and actions and helping them to act in an appropriate and respectful manner at all times. FMES is a PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support) School and follows PBIS expectations set by the Georgia Department of Education and Gwinnett County Public Schools.

**SCHOOL MOTTO: "RESPECT THE MILL!"**

**SCHOOL GOAL: FMES will work to promote a school climate that increases student attendance, student achievement, and positive behavior. We will provide a safe, caring and respectful environment where students, staff and parents are a part of a community. FMES staff will serve as role models to foster relationships within our school and community.**

**SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS: Respect Myself, Respect Others, Respect School**

**CONSEQUENCES for Minor Behavior Incident: (Minor Behavior Report)**

If a student does not meet the school expectations, the following consequences will be used:

1. Verbal warning with redirection, parent will be notified.  
(1<sup>st</sup> Occurrence – Minor Behavior Report)
2. Verbal warning with redirection and expectation retaught, parent will be notified.  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Occurrence – Minor Behavior Report)
3. Verbal warning with redirection and expectation retaught, parent will be notified.  
(3<sup>rd</sup> Occurrence – Minor Behavior Report)
4. Verbal warning with redirection and expectation retaught, parent will be notified.  
(4<sup>th</sup> Occurrence – Minor Behavior Report)
5. Referral to an administrator - Steps 1-4 may be skipped if the behavior is extreme.  
(5<sup>th</sup> Occurrence – Minor Behavior Report)

If Step #5 is reached, an administrator will investigate and determine the appropriate consequence(s), which may include a discipline referral. **Parents will be notified.**

**CONSEQUENCES for Major Behavior Incident:**

If a student exhibits a major behavior, they will be referred to a school administrator. An administrator will investigate and determine the appropriate consequence(s), which may include a discipline referral. **Parents will be notified.**

Major behavior incident may include but is not limited to the following:

- \*Defiance/Disruption - teaching and learning interrupted or stopped
- \*Teasing
- \*Physical Aggression (including hitting, pushing, slapping, pinching, grabbing, punching, kicking, fighting, and similar behavior that may injure others)
- \*Harassment (racial, ethnic, or sexual name calling or other severe harassment)
- \*Threats (verbal or written)
- \*Major Property damage
- \*Bullying
- \*Stealing
- \*Bringing a weapon to school
- \*Elopement from classroom or school (leaving classroom or school property without permission)
- \*Verbal Aggression (on-going name-calling, insulting, or other behavior that would hurt others' feelings or make them feel bad about themselves) or Systemic Exclusion (including telling others to exclude someone and starting rumors)
- \*Inappropriate language

Local school administrators have broad discretion to determine consequences for student misconduct at the local school level. The range of consequences for misconduct that can be assigned by a local school administrator may include without limitation, student conference, parent conference, before or after school detention, in-school suspension, Saturday School, out-of-school suspension up to ten days, referral to a Student Disciplinary Panel Hearing which may result in long term suspension or expulsion and, depending upon the severity of the offense, safety, and School Resource Officer (SRO) may be contacted for referral to law enforcement officials.

## GCPS ELEMENTARY MODIFIED VERSION OF STUDENT CONDUCT BEHAVIOR CODE

The following rules apply when a student is:

- a. on the school grounds;
  - b. off the school grounds at a school activity, function, or event;
  - c. en route to and from school; or
  - d. off the school grounds while the student is in attendance of any school function or are otherwise subject to the jurisdiction of school authorities.
1. Each student will not interrupt learning and teaching.
  2. Each student will not damage or attempt to damage or take or attempt to take the property of the school.
  3. Each student will not damage or attempt to damage or take or attempt to take the personal property of others.
  4. Each student will not hit, kick, bite, bump, push, pull hair, pinch, hurt, or use disrespectful language with staff (administrators, teachers, bus drivers, etc.).
  5. Each student will not hit, kick, bite, bump, push, pull hair, pinch, hurt, or use disrespectful language with other students or any other person not employed by the school.
  6. Each student will not possess or use weapons, whether assembled or disassembled (guns including toy guns, knives, firecrackers, etc.) whether toy, operational or not operational if a person could reasonably perceive the object to be a weapon or if the object is a destructive device.
  7. Each student will not possess, use, or distribute alcohol or drugs or any substances they represent to be alcohol or drugs.
  8. Each student will not disobey directions or commands of teachers, principals, bus drivers, etc.
  9. Each student will not touch himself, herself, or others inappropriately including private areas of the body.
  10. Each student will not miss school or class without an excused absence.
  11. Each student will not exhibit unsafe and/or inappropriate conduct at any time.
  12. Severe or repeated violations of school rules may result in a parental conference and/or discipline review committee meeting.

Note: See principal for detailed version of Student Conduct Behavior Code.

### **CAFETERIA**

A well-balanced, hot lunch is offered for \$2.25 daily. Reduced lunch is \$0.40. Extra milk can be purchased for an additional \$0.40, and an additional entree can be purchased for \$2.00. A lunch menu is posted on the school's website. Breakfast is available between 8:20-8:45 a.m. at a cost of \$1.50 daily. Reduced price student breakfast will be \$0.30. If your child wishes to purchase milk only, the cost is \$.40.

Prices are subject to change. Timely communication will be sent out to parents if there is a change in the cost of meals.

CARBONATED BEVERAGES IN CANS/GLASS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE LUNCHROOM.

**If your child has an allergy to milk and he/she requires a substitute beverage, a doctor's letter to verify the milk allergy must be given to the Cafeteria Manager. If your religion prohibits your child from eating certain foods, please notify the cafeteria manager in writing.**

### **CAR RIDERS**

Due to congestion on Old Peachtree Rd., we encourage you to allow your child to ride the school bus. If your child must be a car rider, please have patience. The process is lengthy, and we suggest that you allow enough time in your schedule to accommodate the wait.

The car rider line is located in the back parking lot beside the gym. Staff members supervise this area during arrival and dismissal. The car rider line will be open from 8:20 – 8:45 a.m. After 8:45 a.m. parents must bring their child to the front of the building and walk them inside. The tardy bell rings at 8:50 a.m. and any student not in the classroom by this time will be marked tardy.

The afternoon car rider line opens at 2:45 p.m. Please do not arrive before this time. Afternoon car riders are

dismissed at 3:15 pm. Parents need to form a single line of cars through the back parking lot.

**PARKING VEHICLES ALONG OLD PEACHTREE ROAD AND WALKING TO GET YOUR CHILD IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.** This creates a dangerous situation for parents, students, and buses. Please note that left hand turns out of the parking lot are prohibited during car rider arrival and dismissal times.

### **CELL PHONES**

Students may bring cell phones to school, but they must be turned off and always placed in the bookbag. Students may only use cell phones if instructed to do so by the teacher for educational reasons or in the event of a school emergency. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged cell phones.

### **CHANGES IN ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBER**

Please notify the office and the classroom teacher immediately of a change of address, telephone number, email address, or person to call in case of emergency. This information is vital in the event of an emergency.

### **CLASS VISITATION/OBSERVATION**

For the protection of your children, all parents and visitors must check-in and check-out at the front office, show picture ID, and receive visitor tags. During these visits, the regular school program must continue. **As a courtesy to the teacher, we require that a prior appointment be made for visitation and conferences.** If a parent wishes to observe in a classroom, they may request to schedule an observation by contacting a school administrator. The maximum observation time is 30 minutes. Anyone not wearing a visitor's tag will be escorted to the office. This is for your child's protection.

### **CLINIC**

The school clinic is staffed by a highly qualified clinic worker. The clinic hours are: 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. First aid is administered in the clinic. Medication can only be given if complete instructions and a signed note from parents accompany the medication, whether it is aspirin or a doctor's prescription. **NO MEDICINE WILL BE ADMINISTERED WITHOUT A SIGNED NOTE FROM PARENTS. Medicine must be brought to the clinic by the parent. Students are not allowed to bring medication to school.** Instructions for medication must include: student's name, name of the medication, time medication is to be given, amount of medication to be given, and a written request signed by the parent to administer medicine. **Medication must be in the original container.** Medicine is NOT to be kept in a student's desk. Medicine will be administered in the clinic. The teacher will not be held responsible for medication. Should it be necessary for a student to have medication for any duration of time, it will be necessary for the parent to complete a standardized form giving the school permission to administer the medication.

When your child has a fever, please do not send him/her to school and chance infecting others. Parents will be called if students are too sick to remain at school or are seriously injured. It is very important that each student's registration information includes an emergency contact person and phone number in the event a parent cannot be reached in an emergency. If your child has specific allergic reactions (bee stings, ant bites, severe food allergies, etc.), please notify the clinic and the classroom teacher.

### **CURRICULUM**

The Gwinnett County Public Schools' Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) for each grade level serve as the foundation for our instructional program. Specific information about the AKS will be shared and distributed during Curriculum Night and can be found at the GCPS website ([www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us](http://www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us)).

## **DRESS CODE**

The following clothing guidelines have been established. We greatly appreciate your support in this area. Clothing that interferes with the teaching/learning environment is inappropriate. Part of what students learn in school is appropriate behavior in different situations and dressing properly is part of that learning. Please help your child to dress appropriately for school.

**The following clothing is prohibited: Short shorts, inappropriate short dresses and skirts, halter tops, midriff tops, any top that allows a bra strap to be exposed, clothing advertising alcohol, tobacco, drugs or inappropriate topics, pants or shorts with words printed on the seat, and tennis shoes with retractable wheels.**

When students come to school inappropriately dressed, we will call parents and ask them to bring appropriate clothing to school. If a parent is unable to be reached students will be provided appropriate clothing from our clinic.

Unless a special day has been planned, **hats should not be worn** inside the school building. **Hoodies worn on the head will not be allowed**. Bib overalls must have both buckles fastened. **Excessively baggy pants worn below the waist are a safety hazard and a distraction and are prohibited**. Shoes should be comfortable and safe. **TENNIS SHOES MUST BE WORN IN THE GYM DURING PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES.**

## **EMERGENCIES**

Freeman's Mill Elementary has a trained crisis management team and a thorough crisis management plan in place. Our hope is that we never have to use either!

## **EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL**

In the event of severe weather or a mechanical breakdown, schools may be closed, or hours changed. These decisions are made by the Gwinnett Schools Central Office and not by the local school. Radio Station WSB (AM 750) will announce school closings between 6:00 a.m. and 6:30 a.m. School closing information can also be found on the GCPS cable TV station and on the school system website [www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us](http://www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us). If no report is heard, school will be in session. The same conditions may also necessitate early dismissal.

## **FIRE / TORNADO DRILLS**

Fire and tornado drills are held throughout the school year. Instructions are available in each classroom explaining how to exit the building in case of fire or how to be protected in case of a tornado or other severe weather. Students are to walk quickly and silently to designated areas. All staff members are knowledgeable about plans for these situations.

## **GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Gifted education in the Gwinnett County Public Schools is part of the system's Center for Educational Programs. The procedures for identifying and placing students in the gifted program, which is funded by the state, are governed by the rules and regulations approved by the State Department of Education. Referrals to the gifted program may come from teachers, parents, peers, or as a result of system-wide testing scores. A school's gifted eligibility team reviews referrals at the beginning, middle, and end of each school year to determine which students will be evaluated. The evaluation includes the student's mental aptitude, achievement, creativity, and motivation. Private evaluations and testing may not be substituted for test data generated by the local school.

## **GRADING / REPORTING PROGRESS TO PARENTS**

Elementary report cards describing a student's progress are sent to parents and/or guardians at the end of each 18-week reporting period. Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled school-wide with parents and/or guardians of elementary students twice during the school year (October and February). Parents will be given the opportunity to register online for these conferences. Students may be included in these conferences. Other conferences may be scheduled throughout the year at the teacher's or parent's request. Parents can monitor student progress daily through the parent portal.

**Every Freeman's Mill student will bring home a Friday Folder each Friday.** The folder may contain work samples, conduct reports, and other communication from the teacher and the school. Parents are asked to review the contents of the folder carefully, sign the folder, and return it with the student to school on Monday.

## **Progress Reports Use the Following Grading Scales:**

### **KINDERGARTEN & GRADE 1:**

E = Excellent/ Surpasses Standards  
S = Satisfactory  
N = Needs Improvement  
U = Unsatisfactory

### **GRADES 2-5: A = 90 & above Excellent Progress**

B = 80-89 Above Average Progress  
C = 74-79 Average Progress  
D = 70-73 Below Average Progress  
U = Below 70 Unsatisfactory Progress

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE (see GCPS Student and Parent Handbook)**

### **HEAD LICE**

Infested children will be sent home with a letter to parents regarding recommendation for treatment, disinfecting the home, and the procedure for readmission to school. **Children cannot return to school until treatment has been completed and proof of treatment is provided to the school.** Students will be rechecked for three days and then once a week for three weeks following identified infestation. If the child is still infested the above procedure will be repeated.

### **HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

The Stewart B. McKinney/Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Act ensures the educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. It provides legal protections for children and youth in homeless situations to enroll in, attend, and succeed in school and preschool programs. In accordance with this law, Gwinnett County Public Schools affords homeless children and youth equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education such as Head Start, Even Start, State Pre-K, and Title I Preschool programs as provided to other students. Homeless children and youth will have access to education and other services that they need to have an opportunity to meet the same challenging state student academic achievement standards to which all students are held. Please contact the school for further information.

### **HOMEWORK**

Home study is a necessary part of each student's educational program. Each student may be expected to spend some time in home study in addition to scheduled class instruction to achieve satisfactory work. Some assignments may be long range in nature and require planned time for their completion. Student assignment books have been given to students in grades 2-5 to assist them with organization. Assign a specific time and place each day for study at home. Students should utilize study periods and the media center in school, keep a list of assignments in a notebook, and take home all necessary books, papers, and materials available. Students should not attempt to study while conversing or viewing television.

### **HOT LINE**

Confidential Hot Line - HELP KEEP YOUR SCHOOL SAFE! If you think or know that someone is carrying a weapon, drugs or alcohol on school property, please call 770-822-6513. You do not have to give your name.

### **HOURS**

School hours are from 8:50 a.m. – 3:20 p.m. for students. Students may begin entering the building no earlier than 8:20 a.m. Car riders are dismissed at 3:15 p.m. Bus call begins at 3:20 p.m. **Students who arrive late must be signed in at the office by a parent.** A tardy pass will be issued at this time.

### **ICE CREAM**

Students have the option to purchase a variety of ice cream snacks during lunch. Ice cream will be sold daily for \$1.00. Ice cream will be distributed to students near the end of their lunch time. Parents may also purchase an "Ice Cream Party" for their child's birthday (see BIRTHDAY for further information). A variety of ice cream options are available to accommodate students with food allergies.

### **INSURANCE**

Parents are responsible for providing insurance coverage or paying medical expenses in case of an accident or emergency. Information about a student accident insurance policy is available on the GCPS website.



### **LEAVING SCHOOL DURING THE INSTRUCTIONAL DAY**

Parents are urged to make dental, medical, and other appointments for their children after school hours or on student holidays. However, if a child leaves school at any time during the day, the child must be **signed out by the parent in the office**. The parent must come to the office and the secretary will then call for the child. **CHILDREN WILL ONLY BE RELEASED THROUGH THE OFFICE TO PARENTS OR AUTHORIZED NAMES ON THE STUDENT CARD. PLEASE DO NOT GO TO THE CLASSROOM TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD.** Please be prepared to show picture ID when checking out a student. These procedures are for your child's protection. If possible, on the morning of the planned checkout, please send a note to your child's teacher making them aware of the appointment.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Items found in hallways, restrooms, playgrounds, or the cafeteria will be placed in the cafeteria in a designated lost and found area. Students and parents should check this area for lost items. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity organizations periodically throughout the school year.

### **MAKE-UP WORK**

Normally, students who are too ill to attend school are too ill to do work at home; however, if your child is sick and able to do school work at home, you may call the school office (678-377-8955) and request that your child's teacher prepare work to be done at home. Work may be picked up at the school office between 3:00 and 4:00 pm if it is **requested before 10:00 a.m. on the same day. Requests received after 10:00 a.m. will be honored the following day.** Students will be given adequate time to complete make-up work. This work will not be given in advance of absences.

### **MESSAGES FOR STAFF MEMBERS**

The school telephone will be answered from 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. each school day. Messages for teachers will be taken from 8:15 - 3:30 by the front office staff so that teachers are not interrupted during instructional time. Teachers will return calls as soon as possible.

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Parent are encouraged to be actively involved at Freeman's Mill Elementary! The PTA is always looking for volunteers to help with school events. If you are interested in volunteering, please reach out to the school and/or your child's teacher.

### **PARKING**

Parents are asked to use the side and back parking lots when visiting the school during normal school hours. **It is a violation of fire code to park along a yellow painted curb. PLEASE DO NOT PARK ALONG THE YELLOW CURB IN FRONT OF THE SCHOOL AND/OR IN RESERVED PARKING SPOTS.**

**PARTIES** - The PTA will sponsor two classroom parties. Room parents will coordinate these parties.

### **PICTURES**

Individual student pictures will be taken in the fall. Group and individual pictures will be taken in the spring. These are offered as an option to students.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION/TEACHER DIRECTED PE**

Each child has PE regularly unless the parent sends a note stating a reason for nonparticipation. Tennis shoes are recommended. Jeans/shorts are suggested for girls. No student will be allowed to miss PE time unless the teacher has a note from the parent requesting that the child be excused. We will insist that each student take an active part in school activities unless we have a note from a parent or medical excuse from a physician. Teacher directed PE is a free time for students to release energy and socialize with peers. Efforts will be made by teachers and administrators to insure that your child receives this time.

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

All visitors to the school must request entry by being “buzzed” in using the visitor management system which is located on the brick column near the main front doors facing the side parking lot. All visitors will be required to show a picture ID in the front office, sign-in, and wear a visitor’s badge. Any visitor who is not wearing a visitor’s badge will be escorted to the main office. Visitors need to check-out from the front office/lobby before leaving. Thank you for carefully following these procedures so we can ensure the safety of our students and staff.

## **SCHOOL ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS**

**1) Birth Certificate:** All students entering school for the first time must present an official copy of the birth certificate at the time of registration. Children must be 5 years old on or before September 1 to enroll in the Kindergarten program. Students must be 6 years old on or before September 1 to participate in the First Grade program.

**2) Immunization and 3) Vision, Hearing and Dental Certificates:** All students enrolling in a Georgia school must have on file an official Georgia Department of Human Resources Certificate of Immunization and Certificate of Vision, Hearing and Dental. These certificates can be secured from the County Health Department or from a private physician and/or dentist.

**4) Proof of Residency:** The parent must provide proof of residency in the district and attendance zone at the time a student is initially enrolled in a school. The proof must be a house contract or lease/rental agreement **and** a utility bill that include the parent’s or legal guardian’s name and address (within the Freeman’s Mill attendance area).

**5) Parent Photo ID:** The parents must provide a state issued photo ID or passport.

**6) Social Security Card (Student’s):** The state requests that schools ask for a social security number for all students; however, this is voluntary.

## **SCHOOL BUS RULES:**

**These rules are posted on all GCPS school buses.**

1. Students will follow directions of the driver.
2. Students should be at the bus stop 5 minutes before the bus arrives, waiting in a safe place, clear of traffic and 10 feet from where the bus stops.
3. Students will wait in an orderly line and avoid playing.
4. Students will cross the roadway in front of the bus after the bus has stopped, they have looked at the driver for a hand signal, and they have looked in both directions for traffic; left, right, left.
5. Students will signal the driver with a waving motion if something is dropped and wait for the driver to give a signal before picking up the object.
6. Students will go directly to assigned seat when entering the bus. Keep the aisles and exits clear.
7. Students will remain properly seated, back against the back of the seat, bottom against the bottom of the seat, and keep hands to themselves.
8. Students will not eat, drink, chew gum, or bring tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or any controlled substances on the bus.
9. Students will not carry animals, glass objects, nuisance items, hazardous materials, or weapons onto the bus.  
Students may carry only objects that can be held in their laps.
10. Students will refrain from using loud voices, profanity, and/or obscene gestures, and respect the rights and safety of others.
11. Students will not extend head, arms, or objects out of the bus windows.
12. Students will be totally silent at railroad crossings.
13. Students will stay seated until time to get off the bus. The open door is the signal to get up from the bus seat.
14. Students must provide a written note, signed by a parent/guardian, and a school official will provide a bus pass to get on or off at a different bus stop location. In the event of an emergency a parent may request (preferably in writing) for the student to ride a different bus home from school. A school administrator must approve this request and then the school will provide the bus pass to the student.
15. Students will keep their bus clean and in good, safe condition.
16. Students shall be prohibited from using any electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to cell phones, pagers, radios, tape or compact disc players; or any other electronic device in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communication equipment or the school bus driver’s operation of the school bus. The bus driver may allow the wearing of headphones with an audio system on a case-by-case basis as long as it is in accordance with the local school rules.
17. Students shall be prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver’s operation of the school bus.

## **SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973** (see GCPS Parent and Student Handbook)

### **SCHOOL COUNCIL**

The School Council is an advisory board whose responsibilities are to maintain a school-wide perspective on issues, participate in information and training programs, act as a link with the community, encourage the participation of parents and others within the school community, and work to improve student achievement and performance. Each Georgia Public School has a School Council that operates according to State guidelines. The Council will meet a minimum of four times during the school year. Meetings are open to all Freeman's Mill community members. Meeting dates will be published on the school's website.

**SMOKING**—Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the school campus.

**SPEED LIMIT**—The speed limit on school grounds is 10 miles per hour!

### **SUPPORT SERVICES**

Freeman's Mill Elementary has the following instructional programs which support the classroom teacher:

**ACADEMIC INTERVENTION:** Designated students will receive additional support by a certified teacher.

**COUNSELING:** Services include classroom guidance, small group counseling, and individual conferences. Individual and small group service can be initiated by a student, staff member, or parent.

**ELL SERVICES:** (English Language Learners) Students for whom English is a second language and who qualify for services will receive support in learning the English language.

**MEDIA CENTER:** Books, magazines, software, reference materials, audio-visual materials and computers are available for student use during the entire school day. A certified Media Specialist and Media Clerk are available for assistance to students and staff. Students are encouraged to check out a wide variety of media materials for assigned study and for personal enjoyment. Books may be checked out for two weeks. If books are lost, or damaged, students are required to pay for replacement.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION:** Services include speech and language therapy, services for the learning disabled, intellectually disabled, emotionally handicapped, emotional / behavior disorders, and Other Health Impaired. It is the practice of the Gwinnett County Public Schools to provide a free appropriate public education for individuals with documented disabilities. Individuals may contact their local school for information regarding such services.

**STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM (SST):** This team, made up of administrators, teachers, and support personnel helps determine alternative strategies for students having difficulty in the school setting. Parents of the student referred to the Student Support Team will be invited to participate as part of the team.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

All students are routed for a GCPS bus. Students are assigned to the bus stop closest to their home address. Bus route information will be provided at Open House and is posted in the Parent Portal under Student Info. The safety of a child while walking to, from, and waiting at the bus stop is the parent's responsibility.

If your student is going to be a car rider or attend day care at least 3 days per week, an Alternate Transportation form must be completed and submitted to the front office.

All students will be issued a transportation tag, and this tag must be always on the child's book-bag. The school must be notified in writing to request a transportation change. Notification must be made by 11:00 a.m. on the day of the requested change. **Bus Passes can NOT be issued for play dates, birthdays, Girl/Boy Scouts meetings, weekend sleepovers, or any other reason except for an emergency as determined by a school official.**

Students attending Freeman's Mill on a permissive transfer, will not be permitted to ride a GCPS bus to/from school. Transportation is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

### **VACATIONS / EXTENDED ABSENCES**

If your child will be absent from school due to a family vacation or trip, daily work and assignments will be saved to be completed after your child returns to school. Teachers will not be able to provide work packets or assignments prior to the absence. If your child will be absent for an extended period due to illness, please contact your child's teacher or the assistant principal for your grade level. Your child may qualify for homebound instruction.

**Freeman's Mill Elementary**  
**Student/Parent Handbook Acknowledgment Form**

I acknowledge receipt of the Freeman's Mill Elementary 2023-24 Student/Parent Handbook for my student.  
I have reviewed the contents of the handbook with my student and consent to the terms of the handbook.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_