

SOUTHWEST ELEMENTARY

SUCCESS
WITH
EVERY
STUDENT



AN
ENERGY
BUS
SCHOOL

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2024-2025

Families, come hop on our Energy Bus!

Southwest Elementary is excited to continue our journey on the Energy Bus for the 2024-2025 School year! We are inviting our SWES families to join the ride along with us.

What is the Energy Bus?

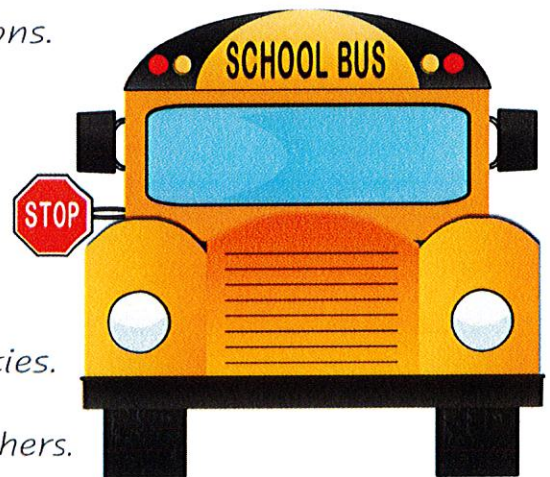
The energy bus journey is inspired by Jon Gordon's book, The Energy Bus for Kids. It is a social and emotional program that teaches students how to be positive and productive members of the school and local community. Research shows that a positive learning environment greatly impacts a student's academic success! Students will learn about the 7 Energy Bus Principles throughout the school year, in order to grow socially and emotionally, and to become a SWES Hero that can successfully drive his/her own "bus" and show compassion for other "passengers".

How can you join the ride?

Southwest Elementary School invites your family to fuel your positive energy journey at home! Talk to your student(s) about the seven principles and how to apply them outside of the school! We all benefit when we learn how to work TOGETHER, to use strategies to overcome challenges, and to model positivity in everyday moments.

What are the 7 Energy Bus Principles?

- 1. You are the Driver!**
I am responsible for my actions and decisions.
- 2. Create a Positive Vision!**
I set and met goals.
- 3. Drive with Purpose!**
I have unique talents and gifts.
- 4. Fuel Your Ride with Positive Energy!**
I can reciprocate positivity.
- 5. Transform Negativity!**
I can turn challenges into great opportunities.
- 6. Love Your Passengers!**
I can find the gift in everyone and serve others.
- 7. Enjoy the Ride!**
I can find ways to live a happy and healthy life.



Be on the lookout for ways that you can be involved with our school's ride on the Energy Bus for the 2024-2025 school year.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is a strong factor in student success! It's important for students to arrive on time and stay the whole day unless they are sick. Following an absence, parents must provide a note written by a doctor or parent/guardian describing the reason for the absence. These notes will be kept on file in the Data Manager's office. If your child is going to be absent for 3 or more days, please contact the school. The following reasons shall be considered acceptable for excusing absences: a.) personal illness or injury b.) certain illness in the home c.) death in immediate family d.) religious observances e.) medical or dental appointment f.) educational opportunity at the discretion of the principal. See board policy for complete listing of excused absences. **Educational opportunity absences MUST be approved by the principal PRIOR to the trip; requests should be submitted in writing to the principal if you would like to have the absence reviewed for consideration as an excused absence.**

The Onslow County Board of Education has adopted the following attendance policy (4400): students with more than 20 absences in a school year shall not be promoted to the next grade except by determination of the principal/designee upon careful review of the student's records. When total absences (excused and unexcused) exceed 10 days per semester, further documentation will be required (doctor's statement, court documentation, etc.). Absences not documented, as well as excessive tardies/early checkouts, will be referred to the appropriate school officials.

LATE ARRIVALS/EARLY CHECK-OUTS

Students are permitted in the building beginning at 8:10 and the tardy bell rings at 8:30 a.m. **Any student arriving to school after 8:30 a.m. must be signed in at the front office by an adult.** Students who are checked out early must be signed out in the front office by an adult. Due to the value placed on instructional time, students will not be called to the office in advance for parent checkout. **Please refrain from signing students out early unless it is absolutely necessary. Students may not be checked out after 3:00 pm.** Time in school is crucial to meeting learning goals. **Excessive tardiness and early checkouts will be referred to the appropriate authorities and may also result in retention in accordance with Onslow County School Board Policy 4400.**

BUS REGULATIONS & TRANSPORTATION CHANGE PROCEDURES

1. Be at the designated pickup area on time.
2. Good conduct is expected while waiting at and departing from the designated bus stop.
3. Remain seated while the bus is moving.
4. Refrain from throwing any objects.
5. Refrain from yelling or loud talking.
6. Keep head and arms inside the bus.
7. Follow directions the first time they are given.

Since the driver is the only supervisor on the bus, it is extremely important that all students understand and follow the above policies set forth by the North Carolina Statutes for the protection and welfare of all students on the bus. Misconduct on the bus may result in suspension of the privilege to ride. Buses are equipped with video cameras to assist in ensuring appropriate student behavior. The Onslow County Student Discipline Handbook contains a complete list of bus rules and regulations. A copy of this handbook is provided to every student annually.

Students are only to ride their assigned bus and get on and off at their assigned stop. If it is necessary for a student to get on or off at a different stop, the parent or guardian should provide a signed note including:

1. The student's first and last name.
2. The student's home address.
3. The student's assigned bus number.
4. A phone number where parent/guardian(s) can be reached.
5. The address of the desired pick up/drop off and the bus number
6. The dates the change will be effective.
7. The reason for the change.

ALL transportation changes must be communicated in writing to the teacher via a handwritten note or via Class Dojo (if emergency last minute change only). We cannot accept transportation changes over the phone. All transportation changes must be requested by 2:30 pm.

The Southwest Area Transportation Director can be reached at 910-455-6489 regarding bus issues

CELL PHONES/SMART WATCHES

OCS BOE Policy 4318: The board recognizes that cell phones and other wireless communication devices have become an important tool through which parents communicate with their children. Therefore, students are permitted to possess such devices on school property so long as the devices are not activated, used, displayed, or visible during the instructional day or as otherwise directed by school rules or school personnel. Wireless communication devices include, but are not limited to, cellular phones, smart watches, electronic devices with internet capability, paging devices, two-way radios, and similar devices.

A. Authorized Use

Administrators may authorize individual students to use wireless communication devices for personal purposes when there is a reasonable need for such communication. Teachers and administrators may authorize individual students to use the devices for instructional purposes, provided that they supervise the students during such use. Although use generally is permitted before and after school, use of cellular phones and other wireless communication devices may be prohibited on school buses when noise from such devices interferes with the safe operation of the buses.

B. Consequences for Unauthorized Use

School employees have the authority to confiscate any wireless communication devices that are on, used, displayed, or visible in violation of this policy. Absent compelling and unusual circumstances, confiscated wireless communication devices will be returned in accordance with the school's code of conduct.

- 1st infraction - students will have their device taken away and returned at the end of the day.
- Additional infractions - students will have their device taken and locked up in the office until a parent can come to school to retrieve it.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES/ILLNESS

Because schools bring a very large number of children into close contact daily, they serve as a focal point for transmission of all sorts of communicable diseases, including lice and scabies. If your child contracts a communicable disease, such as chicken pox, measles, impetigo, flu, COVID, etc., he or she should remain out of school until after the contagious period of the disease has passed. If you are in doubt about when your child can safely return to school, please consult your doctor or the health department. The school is not liable for any medical bills incurred.

Please do not send students to school who have head lice/nits. All students will be screened periodically.

Students with head lice will not be able to return to school until they are "nit free". They must be brought back to school by an adult and checked by the nurse or designee before returning to the classroom.

In case of illness, students should be fever free (less than 100 degrees) without medication and have no vomiting/diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school.

COMMUNICATION

We use **CLASS DOJO** for all students and families at SWE. Please accept the invite when it is shared. It can be linked to your phone number and/or email address. School-wide information will be shared on the School Story for all to see.

School news and important dates may also be viewed through our website:

www.onslow.k12.nc.us/southwestes

Additional news may be displayed on the teacher's website or sent home by the classroom teacher and/or grade level. **If your phone number changes throughout the school year, please let the classroom teacher and school office know. If your address changes it is imperative that you communicate with the Data Manager and provide proof of residence. If phone or email changes occur, you will need to update Class Dojo as well.**

CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are our most important means of communicating with parents concerning the progress of their child. We hope to develop positive relationships with our parents so you feel free to visit the school and discuss your child's progress and welfare with the teachers. Teacher conferences may be scheduled upon request with your child's teacher and you can expect the teacher to schedule at least two conferences.

DRESS CODE- STUDENTS

It is expected that students will be dressed and groomed appropriately. If not following the dress code the parent will be called to bring a change of clothes. Dress code guidelines are as follows:

1. Hats and hoods are not to be worn in the building.
2. Shorts, skirts, dresses and skorts must be appropriate length (Fingertip length is a good rule of thumb).
3. If leggings are worn then tunic length shirts or appropriate length skirt/dresses should also be worn over the leggings.
4. Shirts must extend past the waist of the pants to avoid display of midriff even when arms are

raised. Crop tops are not permitted. Spaghetti straps, tank tops, and racer backs are not permitted; sleeveless shirts must have at least 2 inches of material on the top of the shoulder.

5. Clothing that encourages the use of tobacco, alcohol or other drugs, or clothing that contains the use of profanity or inappropriate slang/pictures, including weapons, is not permitted.
6. Students should wear shoes that are appropriate for daily recess and physical education activities. Sandals and dress shoes should have heel straps to avoid injury (No flip-flops or high heels greater than one inch). Tennis shoes are recommended for daily wear.
7. Pajamas and slippers are not permitted for normal school wear.

DRESS CODE-VISITORS

It is expected that all visitors on SWE campus will dress appropriately for a school setting and will refrain from any clothing with vulgarities or inappropriate items; parents should also adhere to the student dress code. SWE staff may not allow visitors inside the building if they are not dressed appropriately. We will help you at the door as soon as we are available to do so.

DROP-OFF/PICKUP PROCEDURES

Morning drop-off:

1. Car Riders/AM Drop-off in the designated zone between 8:10 and 8:30. The tardy bell rings at 8:30.
2. Students should exit vehicles on the passenger side with the assistance of school staff. Please do not let students out of the vehicle until directed by school personnel.
3. Students may not arrive to school before 7:45 a.m. If arriving late (tardy bell rings at 8:15 a.m.), parents will have to park and escort your child to the front office for sign in.

Afternoon Pick up Procedure:

Students can't be checked out after 3:00, as this is when classes begin moving towards their dismissal location. Parents picking up students in the Car Rider line must have the matching student card placed in clear view, inside the right front side of car window. School officials will direct traffic. It is essential that students enter vehicles on the passenger side. School officials will dismiss students to cars one by one by pairing student card with parent card in window of vehicle. Again, anyone designated to pick up a child must have the pickup card visible in the right window in order for a child to be dismissed to them. Car riders will be dismissed at 3:05.

If additional cards are needed, please see the receptionist at the front office.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Fire and other emergency drills are held in accordance with state regulations. Please encourage your children to take them seriously. Fire drills are held monthly and lockdown drills will be held four times a year; we will also have one tornado drill and one earthquake drill per year. Law Enforcement may be included in these drills.

FEES AND SUPPLIES

Technology Usage Assessment \$25.00
School Insurance is optional, and a flier will be sent home with current rates.

Board Policy 4600 outlines procedures to request a fee waiver for indigent students. If you need to request a waiver of required fees, please see the administration or office staff for an application-. Parents must provide proof of free/reduced lunch for fees to be waived.

Online Fee Payment: School Cash Online is safe and easy way to pay for your children's school fees. Now, with a few clicks, you can pay for your child's class trips, instructional fees, recorder, and so much more with a credit or debit card. All you have to do is register an account, attach your children with their PowerSchool ID, put fees or items into your cart and then make the payment online. Siblings at different schools can all be attached to one account for your convenience. <https://onslow.schoolcashionline.com/>. Once you register with School Cash Online you can begin receiving emails with field trip reminders, etc.

GUIDANCE SERVICES

The school counselor will work with children on an individual basis, as well as with classes and small groups. Our counselor is willing to work with children who may need someone to talk to about a problem or concern. Our counselor is also a great resource for parents.

HEALTH SERVICES

Our school nurse screens for vision, hearing difficulties and communicable diseases. She provides a variety of services to ensure that student health needs are met. The nurse will inform parents if further screening and/or treatment is necessary.

HONOR ROLL & PRINCIPAL'S LIST

Any student in grades 3-5 who attains all A's (90-100) on their report card during the nine weeks grading period will be placed on the principal's list for that grading period.

Any student in grades 3-5 who attains all A's and B's (80-100) on the report card during the nine weeks grading

period will be placed on the honor roll for that grading period.

IMMUNIZATIONS (REQUIRED)

North Carolina state law requires every child attending public school to have the following immunizations:

- a) DTP - 4 doses with last dose administered on or after the 4th birthday.
- b) Polio - 3 doses with last dose administered on or after the 4th birthday.
- c) MMR - 2 doses with last dose administered on or after the 4th birthday.
- d) Hib - 1 dose administered after 15 months of age unless the child has reached age 5. Then no Hib is required.
- e) Hepatitis B - 3 doses required of all students born after July 1, 1994.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of an emergency or inclement weather, parents should listen to local radio and TV stations for information regarding school closings. We will also utilize the School Messenger notification system to provide you with essential information via telephone. Please make sure that you inform the office of any changes in contact information. You may contact the Board of Education at 910-989-2211 and choose option 5 for updates; they will also be updated on the OCS App that you can download on your phone. In the event of a two-hour delay, students should report to the bus stop two hours later than normal.

LOST AND FOUND

Clothing and other belongings should be permanently marked with the student's name. Lost items will be kept for a maximum of thirty days before being donated to charity or discarded.

MEALS (BREAKFAST AND LUNCH)

Breakfast begins each morning at 8:10 a.m. Onslow County Schools provides nutritious breakfast and lunch meals designed to meet the USDA federal guidelines and nutrition standards for school meals. These guidelines limit the amount of fat, sodium, and sugar in meal selections and encourage increased consumption of fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, and calcium rich foods. Well-balanced breakfasts and lunches contribute to the success in the classroom and students' academic performance. Menus are available on the Onslow County Schools website at www.onslow.k12.nc.us and in local media.

Meal prices are \$1.25 for breakfast and \$2.50 for lunch. Reduced price lunch cost is \$.40 and those who qualify for reduced lunch automatically qualify for free

breakfast. Supplemental a la carte items that meet the Smart Snack guidelines are available for additional purchase. Parents/Guardians may request restrictions for students with a written note sent to the cafeteria. Students in grades K-8 with no money will be fed and charged for a meal only. No a la carte items will be charged. Families are responsible for all meal costs for food eaten by the student until the new meal application has been approved and any charges accrued until that approval. A parent/guardian may request a copy of their student's account. For any information, contact the school cafeteria manager at 910-989-2056.

Payment for purchases in the cafeteria may be made by cash or check to the school cafeteria; however, **the preferred payment is by debit/credit card online at www.k12paymentcenter.com** . You can also check your child's balance on this website.

Meal applications for free or reduced meals can be found online at www.lunchapplication.com. This is the quickest method. Only one application per household should be completed. Return meal applications to the school cafeteria or the school nutrition central office. If you do not receive notification for all (each individual child) students in the household, please notify the school nutrition central office immediately. Lunch charges will not be reversed for failure to fill out the form, so please ensure this is done promptly when school starts.

MEDICATION

Onslow County Schools Department of Health Services has in effect a policy for the administration of medications to students during the school day. **If your child must take a prescription medicine while at school, a physician and parent must complete and sign the appropriate form prior to the medication being administered.** No over-the-counter medications may be given to students by school personnel unless prescribed by a doctor and appropriate paperwork is on file with the nurse. Students are not permitted to transport medicines.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

The Onslow County Board of Education has adopted the following policy for all schools: "A moment of silence shall be observed at the beginning of each day in all grades in the school system. The moment of silence may not exceed one minute in length, must be completely unstructured, free of any influence from any source, and no other activity shall be allowed during the time."

PERFECT ATTENDANCE

It is important that your child attend school regularly. Students who have not been absent, tardy, or checked out early will be recognized each grading period.

RECORDING IN THE CLASSROOM

Any video, audio, or photographic recording in classrooms or other areas designated for student learning without prior consent from the teacher and/or school administration is strictly prohibited. Any video, audio, or photographic recording in restrooms, or any other areas where privacy is an expectation is impermissible. Violations of this rule may result in criminal charges.

REPORT CARDS/POWERSCHOOL

Report cards are issued to students each nine weeks. Interim reports are sent home halfway through each grading period. Each of those dates are identified on the OCS school calendar on the back of this handbook. Parents are encouraged to sign up for Parent Portal, which is real time access to a student's current grades. Pick up a form from your child's teacher or the front office to get signed up for Parent Portal access in PowerSchool; the form must be accompanied with a copy of parent's picture ID and does not have to be renewed each year.

SCHOOL RULES AND DISCIPLINE

SWE behavior management protocols include strategies for defining, supporting and teaching appropriate behaviors to create positive learning environments. As a school, we have developed expectations and rules which are displayed in our Behavior Matrix (see back of handbook). Students are recognized for positive behaviors that go above and beyond. Celebrations to recognize students will occur routinely.

Most inappropriate behavior will be taken care of by the classroom teacher in accordance with the classroom management plan. For persistent discipline problems, inappropriate behavior that results in the interruption of instruction or presents a safety issue, students may be referred to the administration.

SNACKS/BIRTHDAY TREATS

Students are encouraged to bring a snack to school each day. In response to health and safety concerns, all snacks and treats brought to share, such as for birthdays, class snacks and/or holidays, must be purchased from a store within the expiration period and should include a list of ingredients. Homemade goods are not permitted to be distributed to students. Treats that don't require preparation to serve are preferred. Please let your child's teacher know 24 hours in advance before sending in special birthday snacks.

SUPPLIES

Students are given a school supply list at the beginning of the year and should make every effort to bring necessary supplies to school daily. If there is a hardship, please contact our school social worker. From time to time, we receive donations that we can share with families.

TITLE IX

Onslow County Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or disability in its programs or activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding Title IX: Mr. Cameron Custy, Onslow County Schools, PO Box 99, Jacksonville, NC 28541, (910) 455-2211.

VISITORS ON CAMPUS

In order to ensure the safety and protection of the children and members of our staff, all visitors must ring the doorbell and show a photo ID for entry and then sign in at the front office when they arrive and sign out prior to leaving campus. Parents are not permitted to go directly to their child's room to drop off or pick up students or to make any deliveries. If you join your student for lunch, please sign out in the front office when the class leaves the cafeteria. Persons checking out students will be required to present proper identification before a child is released to them. **Please see Dress Code for Visitors.**

VOLUNTEERS

If you would like to volunteer or chaperone a field trip, pick up a Volunteer Form in the office. You must take the completed form (with principal signature) to the district office on a designated fingerprinting day.



Onslow County Schools Promotion and Retention FAQs

What are the promotion requirements for students in grades K-5?

Onslow County Schools believes that students should progress to the next grade level only after they are proficient in their knowledge and application of current grade level curriculum. Your child's progress and readiness for the next grade level is determined by multiple indicators, including performance on classwork, tests, assigned learning tasks, diagnostic assessments, standardized tests (EOGs), as well as report card grades.

Additional information on promotion and retention of students can be found on the district's Parents' Bill of Rights page (<https://www.onslow.k12.nc.us/Page/55448>).

How can I monitor my child's academic progress?

There are multiple ways to monitor your child's progress, including:

- Report Cards and Interim Reports
- Diagnostic parent reports/letters, Individual Reading Plans, Individual Math Plans, etc.
- PowerSchool Parent Portal (<https://www.onslow.k12.nc.us/Page/23423>)
- Regular communication with your child's teacher (conferences, phone, email, Class Dojo, etc.)
- Daily/weekly folder
- Talk with your child about school daily. Ask them what they have learned. Review their homework. Ask them to read to you, show you how to do a math problem, etc.

How will I know if my child is a candidate for retention?

If your child is not making adequate progress, you will receive notification from the teacher/school in multiple forms, which may include report card comments, conference requests, phone calls, electronic messages, letters, etc.

What should I do if I receive a letter indicating my child is not making adequate progress towards grade level proficiency and is a candidate for retention?

If you receive a letter indicating your child is a candidate for retention, please follow any guidance and/or procedures included in the letter to schedule a conference with your child's teacher(s). Be sure to ask how you can support your child's learning at home, as well as for any resources that may be available. Other ways to support your child include:

- Ensuring your child attends school daily unless he/she is sick, or an emergency arises.
- Avoiding tardies and early checkouts, as missed learning time adds up quickly.
- Ensuring your child attends tutoring sessions for which he/she may have been invited to participate.
- Monitoring your child's homework, assignments, classwork, test, etc. In grades 3-5, Parent Portal can assist you in monitoring your child's grades, missing assignments, etc.
- Maintaining regular communication with the teacher.

What happens at the end of the year if my child has not made adequate progress towards grade level proficiency by the end of the year?

If your child has not made adequate progress by the end of the year, the teacher/school will notify you to inform you of the intent to promote or retain your child. Your child may also be recommended to participate in summer learning opportunities to allow additional opportunities to demonstrate academic growth and readiness for the next grade level.

Summer learning opportunities are by invitation only and may include:

- Summer School (June 18-25)
- RTA Reading Camp for grade 2 and 3 (July 8-25)

What impact does my child's attendance have on the decision to promote or retain?

Because class attendance and participation are critical elements of the educational process, any absences, tardies, or early checkouts, whether excused or unexcused, can have a negative impact on a student's academic achievement. In accordance with OCS Board Policy, students with at least 10 absences in both the first and last 90 days of the school year and at least 21 absences total in the school year shall not be promoted to the next grade except by determination of the principal/designee upon careful review of the student's records. When total absences (excused and unexcused) exceed 10 days per semester, or 20 total absences, further documentation will be required (doctor's statement, court documentation, etc.).

Who makes the final decision if my child is promoted or retained?

Under North Carolina General Statute 115C-288, principals are granted the legal authority to grade and place students. The only exception to this is 3rd grade, which, under the Read to Achieve legislation, requires all students not proficient in reading or qualifying for an exemption to be retained in reading.

What do I do if I disagree with the decision to promote or retain my child?

The first step would be to contact the principal to share and discuss your concerns, the child's academic progress, readiness for the next grade level, etc. You will receive written notification of the decision to retain. If you still disagree, you have the right to appeal the retention to the superintendent. If you disagree with the decision of the superintendent, you also have the right to appeal to the local Board of Education. Please note, as stated above, the principal has the legal authority to grade and place. The principal's decision can only be overturned if it was found by the superintendent or board of education to be arbitrary and capricious (without a rational basis) or was determined to be an abuse of discretion.

Additional information on the appeals process can be found on the district's Parents' Bill of Rights page (<https://www.onslow.k12.nc.us/Page/55448>).

	Classroom	Walkways	Restroom	Cafeteria	Playground	Dismissal
P Positive Attitude	Be supportive of yourself, others, and their ideas	Take pride in your school- keep walls and floors clean	Wait your turn patiently and quietly	Use good manners	Include others Be a good sport	Wait patiently for directions
O Own Your Actions	Listen and follow directions Complete tasks Use appropriate voice level as directed Have supplies ready	Choose the most efficient route Return to class promptly Walk- do not run Maintain personal space Voice level zero	Use the restroom quickly and quietly Maintain privacy Voice level zero	Always walk Get everything you need the first time through the line Voice level zero in line Voice level no louder than two at tables Leave your area clean for the next class	Be a problem solver Keep all body parts to yourself Use equipment correctly Play by the rules Line up quickly when recess is over	Walk directly to your location Keep your belongings together Voice level zero in the building
N Never Give Up	Give your best effort Try new strategies Actively participate Persevere Ask questions Share your ideas	Be courteous and mindful of your surroundings	Maintain proper hygiene and cleanliness	Eat first Try new foods	Keep trying new things Invite others-make new friends	Show patience
Y You Are Limitless		Be a positive role model for others	Set a positive example for others	Inclusive Table Talk	Have fun!	Be respectful to everyone you encounter

Southwest Elementary School Behavior Expectations