

Simpson Elementary
Student/Parent Handbook
2024-2025



Simpson Elementary

4525 E. Jones Bridge Road
Peachtree Corners, GA 30092
770-417-2400

Greetings Simpson Families!

The purpose of this Student/Parent Handbook is to provide the Simpson School Community with our school rules and procedures. Please refer to this throughout the school year to use as a quick reference.

The Gwinnett County Board of Education and the Simpson Staff recognize that a child's education is a responsibility shared by the family and the school. To effectively educate students, parents and staff members must work as knowledgeable partners. Parent- Community involvement is an ongoing process that assists parents and families in their responsibilities as their child's first teacher and promotes clear, two-way communication between home and school.

In addition to this local school handbook, you will also receive a Gwinnett County Public School (GCPS) Student/Parent Handbook which contains additional information. I look forward to an exciting year of learning!

Respectfully yours,

Dr. Taffeta Connery
Principal

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Gwinnett County Public Schools Mission, Vision, Goals and Core Beliefs

Mission Statement

The mission of the Gwinnett County Public Schools is to pursue excellence in academic knowledge, skills, and behavior for each student, resulting in measured improvement against local, national, and world-class standards.

Vision Statement

Gwinnett County Public Schools will become a system of world-class schools where students acquire the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and careers.

Board Goals

Gwinnett County Public Schools will ensure a world-class education for all students by focusing on teaching and learning the Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) curriculum.

Gwinnett County Public Schools will ensure a safe, secure, and orderly environment for all.

Gwinnett County Public Schools will optimize student achievement through responsible stewardship of its financial resources and the proactive pursuit of all resources necessary to meet current and future demands.

Gwinnett County Public Schools will recruit, employ, develop, and retain a workforce that achieves the mission and goals of the organization.

Gwinnett County Public Schools will meet the continuing and changing demand for essential information through technological systems and processes that support effective performance and desired results.

Gwinnett County Public Schools will provide and manage the system's facilities and operations in an exemplary manner as determined by programmatic needs and best management practices.

Gwinnett County Public Schools will apply continuous quality improvement strategies and principles as the way the organization does business.

Core Beliefs

- Ensure our core business of teaching and learning is built on a rigorous curriculum, effective instruction, and high-value assessments
- Educate every student to world-class standards and individual potential
- Provide a safe and secure learning environment
- Optimize the school effect to have a positive impact on every child
- Govern the district fairly and openly, seeking the engagement of the many stakeholders we serve.

Part I: General School Information

School Hours

Our school hours are 8:50 AM – 3:20 PM.

Students may enter the building between 8:20 – 8:50 AM.

To optimize instructional time, our bell system will be as follows:

8:20 AM	Students may enter the building and go to class
8:45 AM	School begins
8:50 AM	Morning news program and announcements. Tardy bell rings.
3:20 PM	Walker/car rider dismissal
3:25 PM	Bus dismissal

Arrival / Dismissal

Students are expected to be at school on time. Children who are driven to school should not arrive before 8:20 AM. This is for student safety. There is no one on duty to supervise students prior to this time. Staff members are involved in planning, conferencing, and meetings prior to 8:20 AM.

Our morning news program begins at 8:50 AM. Attendance is taken by 8:50 AM. Students will be marked tardy if they arrive in their classrooms after 8:50 AM. Students may not be dropped off at the building after 8:50 AM. If a student arrives after 8:50 AM, a parent must accompany their child to the front office to sign him/her in so a tardy slip admitting the child to class can be generated.

Car Riders

The following car rider guidelines have been established to provide the highest level of safety for our students:

Morning Car Rider Procedures

- Students may enter the school beginning at 8:20 AM. School begins at 8:50 AM.
- Remember – morning announcements go on the air at 8:50 AM.
- Staff members will be present to help students enter the school each morning. Car drivers should remain in their vehicle and refrain from using their cell phone during drop off.

Please note: If a student is dropped off in the car rider lane after 8:45 AM, he or she likely will not be able to arrive in his/her classroom prior to the 8:50 AM bell. The best suggestion to avoid tardiness is to allow students to ride the school bus or drop off in the car rider lane between 8:20 AM – 8:40 AM. The gate to the car rider line will be closed at 8:45 and anyone arriving after that time will need to park and walk their child to the front door via the crosswalk.

Afternoon Car Rider Procedures

- Cars need a tag number to pick up a student in the afternoon. If you know your child will be a car rider for various after school activities during the school year, please secure a car rider tag. Car rider tags are available in the front office.

- Hang your car rider number from the rear-view mirror where it is easily visible.
- Please be courteous and understand the school buses have the right of way.
- Advance forward slowly as you approach the pick-up area where students are entering cars and pull all the way up to the end of the car rider line so several cars can be loaded/unloaded at the same time.
- Please stay in line and do not try to go around the other cars.
- Staff members on duty will signal you to unload your vehicle in the morning and to load your vehicle in the afternoon. Children must load and unload from the passenger side of the vehicle only.
- For safety reasons, no child standing in the car rider lane will be released to anyone who walks up to the line and asks for his/her child(ren).
- If a parent is late picking up their child, the child will be taken to the front office where the parent will be able to sign the child out.

Please be aware that cars without numbers will be asked to provide a valid driver's license to a car rider staff member. The front office will have to verify the driver's check out status. This does impact car rider line times, so please only use this process for emergency purposes.

A special note: On inclement weather days, our car riders increase in number – please plan to arrive earlier than your usual time.

School Spirit

Mascot – Sparky the Superstar

Colors – Navy Blue, Silver, and White

We encourage everyone to wear spirit wear and/or school colors every Friday!

Visitation Policy

We welcome parents to our school. Teachers have many responsibilities during the day, so if you would like to meet with your child's teacher, please make an appointment. Upon arriving at school, please sign in at the reception desk and show photo ID to receive a visitor's badge. Please sign out upon leaving as well.

If you would like to volunteer in your student's classroom, please schedule this with your child's teacher. Per school board policy, the principal or designee may, at his/her discretion, grant or deny permission for classroom visits and determine the duration of time. Again, please sign in at the reception desk and show photo ID and sign out upon leaving. We ask that while you are here, you only visit your student's classroom(s) and only on the day(s) and time(s) arranged prior to your visit.

Attendance

Attendance at school is an important part of student success and achievement. A pattern of absences may put a student at risk of not achieving the Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) for his/her grade level. Certain absences are considered to be excused according to state guidelines. Excused absences include:

- Personal illness or attendance in school endangering a student's health or the health of others;
- A serious illness or death in the student's immediate family requiring absence from school;
- A court order or an order by a governmental agency mandating absence from school;
- Observation of religious holidays, necessitating absence from school;
- Conditions making attendance impossible or hazardous to the students' health or safety,
- A student, whose parent or legal guardian is in military service of the United States or the National Guard, and such parent or legal guardian has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted excused absences, up to a maximum of five school days per year, for the day or days missed from school to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian prior to deployment or while on leave.

Vacations are **NOT** excused absences. Students who are away from school for ten consecutive days (unexcused) will be withdrawn from school. Upon return, parents can re-enroll students, but placement in the previous classroom cannot be guaranteed.

Please remember that if your student is absent from school, parents or guardians need to **provide a written note when the student returns to school explaining the reason for the absence, the date(s) of the absence (s), and a daytime phone number** in order for it to be excused.

To be counted present for the whole school day, students who have doctor/dental appointments or emergencies that necessitate their absence for a portion of the school day, must be present for at least the equivalent of half the school day which is 3 ¼ hours.

A state truancy law (O.C.G Section 20-2-690.2) defines truant as "any child subject to compulsory school attendance who during the school calendar year has more than 10 days of unexcused absences."

*After 10 absences without a medical note being submitted, a medical note may be requested to excuse an absence.

*All attendance excuses must be turned in within five days of the absence. The school will not accept late attendance excuses.

*Attendance letters must be returned within 5 days of the absence. It is important for parents to be aware of attendance requirements.

Please read Gwinnett County Public Schools' Student/Parent Handbook, which outlines attendance expectations. In addition, our teachers and school leadership will communicate with you regularly on school attendance issues. An attendance letter will be sent home when their child accumulates 5, 10 and 15 unexcused absences. When a student reaches 10 unexcused absences the parents or guardians

will be invited to attend Student Attendance Review Committee (SARC meeting). When a student accumulates an excessive number of unexcused absences the family may be referred to a community agency for additional support.

Changes in Student Information

In order to keep our records current, please notify the office in writing and your child's teacher immediately of a change in any of the following:

- Address
- Telephone number
- Employer and phone number of each parent
- Change of guardianship
- Person to call in case of emergency or when the parent cannot be reached
- Medical information

Changes in Student Transportation

It is helpful to students to have consistent transportation plans. It can be very confusing for students as well as teachers to alternate between day care, parent pick-up, and buses. Additionally, accepting changes by telephone does not allow us to provide maximum safety measures for our students. Therefore, should there be a need to change transportation, a written note to the teacher from the child's parent or guardian (with a phone number) and the date indicating the change in his/her transportation home is required on the morning of the change. Students, who must ride a different bus in the afternoon, will bring their bus note to the office to obtain a bus pass that will allow them to ride home on a different bus. Bus drivers will not transport students who do not have a bus pass signed by a school representative. In the absence of a note from the parent, the child will be placed on his/her usual mode of transportation.

Note: Please make sure your child knows there is a change in plans. Changes in transportation, of any kind, will NOT be accepted via fax or email. In an extreme emergency, the parent will need to talk with an administrator. Changes must be received by 2:00 PM. Bus passes will NOT be issued for play dates, birthday parties, Girl/Boy Scouts, weekend sleepovers or any other reason except for an emergency as determined by school administration.

Early Check-Out of Students

If early checkout is necessary, the parent should plan to do so prior to 2:45 PM. This is necessary to provide a safe and timely dismissal for all students. A parent wishing to check out his or her child any time prior to 2:45 PM should send a note to the teacher that morning explaining the reason. The parent should then come to the front office, with photo ID, to sign out the student. It usually takes 5-10 minutes for a student to arrive after they are called for checkout. If the student is on the playground or in a connection class, it may take a little longer. Please plan accordingly.

For safety reasons, we release students only to those persons listed on enrollment forms. If anyone not listed attempts to check out a student, the office staff and/or an administrator will verify the person's ID. The parent will be contacted at this point (This will take additional time). Anyone picking up a student should be prepared to show photo identification. Students are released only from the front office and only to parents or adults designated by parents. Please do not go to the classroom to check out a student. Teachers are instructed not to release a student to anyone unless the office staff has notified them to do so.

Visitor Check-In

For the safety of our students and staff, ALL visitors who enter Simpson Elementary must register at the reception desk and show photo ID. Visitors must wear a visitor sticker at all times while on school property. Staff members have been instructed to monitor our visitors and to send those without a badge or sticker to the front office. Visitors will not be allowed in the classrooms without a prearranged appointment. When leaving the school, visitors should return to the front office and check out. We encourage parents to visit the school, but the safety of students and staff is our first priority.

Classroom Visits

As a courtesy to your child's teacher and to protect instructional time, we ask that an appointment be made for volunteering and/or conferences. If you need to meet with a teacher, please schedule a time by contacting the teacher directly. Though it may seem convenient or quick to stop by the room before, during or after the school day, our teachers must supervise students at all times.

Please allow your young child to become an independent and responsible student. To do this, we ask that you do not go into the classroom with your child in the mornings or afternoons to help him/her with book bags, etc.

Inclement Weather

If overnight weather conditions make it necessary to cancel school, the announcement will be made by 6:00 AM on WSB Radio (750 AM. 98.5 FM) or Channel 2 News on TV. The school will send out school closings on our school message system. If no cancellation is announced, school is in session.

Sometimes severe weather moves in during the day. Listen to WSB Radio for early dismissal information. An announcement will always be made before any schools are dismissed early. A school message will be sent to parents. Please do not call the school as we need to keep phone lines open.

New Student Placement

New students who meet eligibility guidelines and attended an accredited school will be placed in the appropriate grade that was recommended by the sending school. Placement for students moving from non-accredited schools will be handled on an individual basis.

School Contributions

The following contributions enable students to receive materials and programs that are not covered by your tax dollars. Below is an explanation of the various items included in our contribution form.

School Contribution: \$10.00 per child – This contribution is used to purchase consumable supplies such as construction paper, paint, etc. to support the curriculum.

Technology: \$10.00 per child (\$25.00 maximum per family) – This contribution is used to purchase ink cartridges, toner, paper and supplies for our computers.

Headphones: \$5.00 per child

Car rider Tag: \$2.00 per family

Agenda Books: \$5.00 for 2nd – 5th Graders

School Entrance Requirements

Students entering Kindergarten must be age five on or before September 1, and Grade One students must be age six on or before September 1. All students entering Kindergarten or Grade One must present:

1. A copy of the birth certificate.
2. An official Georgia Department of Human Resources Certificate of Immunization, form #3231.
3. A Georgia Vision, Hearing, Dental and Nutrition Certificate, form #3300.
4. Proof of residency in the district. *
5. Student's Social Security number (a waiver can also be signed if a parent is uncomfortable providing the Social Security number).

**Proof of residency requires one utility bill (only gas, water, or electric) and one of the following documents: non-contingent sales contract, current warranty or quick claim deed, current notarized lease/rental agreement, current home purchase statement, most recent income tax return, current homeowner's insurance policy, current paycheck stub, and current residential property tax statement or bill.*

Approved residence for school attendance purposes occurs when the student lives with the following person(s) who reside within the county school district and Simpson attendance zone:

- Parent (natural or adopted)
- Legal guardian or other person legally entitled to act on behalf of the student
- Foster parents appointed by a state agency
- Sponsor for approved International Exchange programs

When residing with other individuals in their home or apartment, the parent must submit a notarized

affidavit, signed by the individual with whom the student/guardian is residing, verifying that the enrolling parent/guardian is residing in that home or apartment. The individual with whom the student/guardian is residing must also provide proof of residency documentation and a photo ID.

Second-Fifth grade students transferring from another Georgia elementary school or from out of state will be given a thirty (30) day extension to obtain records from a previous school.

Student Records

Under the Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, parents have certain rights:

- The right to inspect and review educational records of their child
- The right to challenge the content of those records
- The right to control the release of education records of their student
- The right to complain to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Office about the school's failure to comply with the law
- The right to be informed of these rights just listed

To obtain a copy of Gwinnett County's policies of compliance with the law, or to request the opportunity to inspect and review your child's records, contact an administrator at Simpson.

Copies of a student's educational record may be transferred to officials of other schools or school systems in which a student seeks to enroll. Unless parents express, at the time of enrollment in Gwinnett County Public Schools, a need for additional notice of the transfer of student records, the records will be transferred to the enrolling school or school system without further notice.

Visiting for Lunch

Parents are welcome to join their children for lunch. We do ask that parents refrain from eating with their child during the first two weeks of school and during testing week. This is to allow time for teachers to set cafeteria expectations. It is helpful to notify the teacher if you are planning on joining your child for lunch in the event there is a schedule change. In order to ensure we are adhering to safety guidelines (seating capacity) issued by the Fire Marshal; we must limit the amount of visitors for lunch each day.

After signing in and securing a visitor badge in the front lobby, parents should meet their child at the entrance to the cafeteria (benches are provided to wait).

Please sit with your child at one of the designated parent tables rather than with the classroom. Please allow your child to follow his/her normal routine in the cafeteria line and when leaving the cafeteria (parents should not escort students back to the classroom; students must leave the cafeteria when their class leaves). Due to limited space and security concerns students may not bring friends to join them at the parent table. Parents must stop by the front desk in the lobby to sign out before leaving.

Food purchased from an outside source such as a restaurant, deli or fast-food establishment are not permitted in the cafeteria. Soft drinks are also not permitted.

Withdrawal Information

Please notify the teacher at least one week before your child is to be withdrawn from school. A withdrawal form will be sent home on the last day of attendance and this form should be given to the new school upon enrollment. Upon receiving the signed release of records from the transferring school, the student's records will be mailed to the new school.

Part II: General School Policies and Procedures

Birthdays

While birthdays are very special occasions and are recognized, birthday parties are not permitted at school. Parents may send in birthday snacks, but please do not send in drinks, balloons, or favors. Teachers appreciate being notified in advance if you are planning to send in a birthday snack. Do not send in snacks that require cutting. If you would like to purchase ice cream for your child's class as a birthday treat, you may do so for a flat rate of \$25 for the class. Please make checks payable to *Simpson Elementary School*. NO CASH WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR BIRTHDAY ICE CREAM ORDERS.

Due to student confidentiality, we are unable to provide a list of addresses and/or phone numbers of students. We do not distribute birthday invitations at school unless everyone in the class (or every one of the same gender) is receiving one.

Please let the teacher know if:

Your child has a food allergy

You prefer that your child not be given occasional treats, candy, or birthday snacks.

Bringing Food / Drink to School

Students may bring a nutritious snack to school. They may not, however, bring food from "fast food" restaurants for snack or lunch. This includes carbonated soft drinks.

Cafeteria

We are proud of our self-service breakfast and lunch program. This procedure gives students an opportunity to choose foods they like as well as try new ones.

Parents are always welcome to have lunch with their children.

Breakfast	Full Breakfast	\$1.50
	Adult Breakfast	\$2.50
	Side Item	\$.60
	Juice 4 oz.	\$.40
	Milk	\$.40
Lunch	Student Lunch	\$2.25
	Extra Entrée	\$2.00
	Adult Lunch	\$4.00
	Milk	\$.40
	Iced Tea (Adults)	\$.35
	Large Water	\$1.25

****Please note that prices are subject to change****

Breakfast – Served between 8:20 AM – 8:45 AM. Students are not allowed to be in the cafeteria during the breakfast time unless they are eating breakfast.

If your child is allergic to certain foods or has special dietary requirements, please notify your child's teacher and our cafeteria manager.

Breakfast and Lunch payment- Students may pay cash daily, prepay their lunches, or parents may set up an account on-line at <https://www2.mypaymentsplus.com/welcome>. This is the preferred option as it eliminates the child bringing money or checks to school. You can also request an automated email when your child's account is about to run out of money.

The cost would be \$18.75 for breakfast and lunch per week.

Please make checks payable to *Simpson Elementary School*. Students will learn their student ID number to use when paying for meals.

Students who forget their lunch or money may charge their lunch. This privilege is limited to two charges. Parents will be notified of the charge, and payment is expected the following day. After charging lunch two times, students will be provided with water and a sandwich for lunch.

Free/reduced meal applications are available for students meeting state financial guidelines. Applications are available online or may be picked up from the front office or from the cafeteria on Open House/Registration Day.

Clinic

The clinic is available to students who get hurt at school or feel ill during the day. If a child becomes sick during the school day, the clinic worker will attempt to reach the child's parents. If unsuccessful, the other persons listed on the student information sheet will be contacted. It is imperative that we be able to reach a parent/guardian at all times.

The clinic worker will call parents if a student is vomiting, has a fever above 99 degrees, has been injured, or has head lice. In case of serious medical emergencies, paramedics will be called. Students in any of these situations cannot be sent home by bus. Students may not return to school until they are fever free for 24 hours.

The clinic worker dispenses all medications. No medication, including aspirin or Tylenol, can be given unless it is sent in the original container with written instructions from the parent. All medications must be sent to the clinic in the morning. Children are not to have medications in their possession during the school day, including cough drops. For medications given on a long-term basis, a special form must be signed by the child's physician and filed with the clinic worker.

The clinic phone number is 770-417-2505.

eCLASS

Simpson is proud to highly utilize eCLASS, Gwinnett's digital Content, Learning, Assessment and Support System that is providing Simpson an integrated learning management system to enhance

student engagement and the learning process. eCLASS provides students and teachers with the digital tools they need to expand the walls of the classroom, foster collaboration, and nurture creativity.

Electronics / Cell Phones / Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)

Simpson Elementary is a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) School. As we evolve into the 21st Century, we want our students to be producers of technology. Therefore, teaching and learning can be enhanced when students bring their own digital devices (e.g. cell phones, tablets, laptops, eReaders, etc.) to class. As you consider the value of this experience and the opportunity for your child to use a personal device at school, here are some things you need to know:

- Simpson encourages students to take advantage of the school system's BYOD policy, but participation is not required.
- Students should bring devices that they are comfortable using. With the variety of activities for which students might use a device in class, no single device is likely to do it all.
- Some devices are better suited to various instructional activities than others. You may want to look at options based on the age-appropriate level and lesson.
- Please check with your child's teacher for specific device usage, if additional information is needed. However, please keep in mind that the school is NOT liable for any personal devices, including cell phones, brought to school if stolen.
- A BYOD technology agreement must be signed (through Mypaymentsplus) at the beginning of the school year during student registration. BYOD and school-issued devices are to be used for **instructional purposes ONLY**, not for gaming usage, personal phone calls, texting, or internet searching.
- Students may bring cell phones/devices to school; however, they must remain in their book bags in the silent/off position unless a teacher directs its use for instructional purposes. Students are not permitted to use smart watches and/or cell phones for unauthorized purposes during school hours. Cell phones/devices may not be used on the school bus.
- Please discuss our device policy with your child(ren) to ensure that we continue to have a harmonious student-centered learning environment at Simpson Elementary.

Emergency Procedures

Fire, tornado and disaster drills are held each month throughout the school year so that students and staff are familiar with all appropriate safety plans.

If it is necessary for students to be picked up due to an emergency, parents should enter through the main doors to the school only. Your identification will be verified, and school personnel will be responsible for summoning the student. It is imperative that the student data verification form has up-to-date information with at least one other person who is responsible if you cannot be reached.

Field Trips

We make every effort to bring individuals and groups to our school in order to minimize/eliminate cost and travel time for students.

Occasionally, we may offer an opportunity for an off-campus field trip which requires a request for funds from parents for admission and transportation. No student will be denied or penalized for failure to contribute. However, if enough funds are not secured, the field trip will be cancelled.

Ice Cream

Simpson Elementary will sell ice cream daily in the cafeteria for \$1.00. Parents will be able to preview the selections and the nutritional information on the school website. Parents and teachers may purchase ice cream for their child's class (for special occasions) for a flat rate of \$25 for the class. Please make checks payable to *Simpson Elementary School*.

Internet Usage Agreement

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on all electronic devices at school. Access to network services is given to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Any member of the staff may suspend specific user access if this does not occur. Use of the Internet must support educational activities and be consistent with the academic expectations of Simpson Elementary School. Students will access approved "safe" sites only.

Lost & Found

Items found in hallways, the cafeteria, or restrooms, and items found on the playground will be taken to the Lost and Found. Unclaimed articles will be donated to charity every nine weeks. Please write your child's name on all personal property for easy identification.

Media Center

Hours: 8:45 AM - 3:10 PM

Students may visit the media center with permission from their teacher or teachers can sign up to bring the whole class.

Check Out Policies

- Students may check out two books.
- All books are due two weeks after checkout.
- Students are welcome to return their books before the due date to get new materials.
- Students can also renew their books for an additional two weeks if they need more time to read.
- Overdue/lost/damaged book notices are sent to parents and teachers several times throughout the year.

Messages to Students

Only messages of emergency nature can be delivered to students. Please remember that our purpose is to provide an excellent learning environment, free from interruptions. Use of the telephone by students is permitted only in emergency situations.

Newsletters / School Menus

You will be able to access the school newsletter and calendar from our school website. Our newsletter, "Star News", will also be emailed to you monthly and will keep you informed of school events and other information you may need for the upcoming month.

School Pictures

Individual school pictures are taken in the fall each year. Group pictures will be taken in the spring. These are offered as an option for purchase to students and parents.

School Celebrations

The Gwinnett County Board of Education permits two school parties per school year. Simpson Elementary hosts a winter and a spring party for each class. PTA Room Representatives help classroom teachers plan these events. Individual classroom celebrations that occur as part of the Academic Knowledge and Skills are at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

The Board of Education does not allow any parties for personal reasons, such as baby/wedding showers or surprise birthday parties for teachers. These events may be planned outside the school day.

School Communications

Friday folders are sent home by each classroom teacher to provide timely information regarding classroom progress and conduct. Formal parent conferences are scheduled two times during the year. The Parent Portal is available for parents to view their child's grades online. To sign up for the Parent Portal, please fill out an application located in the front office and be prepared to show ID.

If you would like to speak with a teacher regarding your child's progress, please email the teacher directly, or call the school and leave a message for the teacher to call you back. Phone calls will be received by our office staff between 7:30 AM and 4:00 PM. Messages will be taken for teachers to return calls. We cannot interrupt teachers during instructional time. Teachers make every effort to return phone messages within 24 hours of receipt. We encourage parents to write a note or send an email as other means of communication. Please be aware, however, that teachers respond to notes and emails outside instructional time.

School Dress Code

It is essential that students respect the learning environment by being appropriately dressed for school. The purpose of a student dress code is not to inhibit any person's taste in attire, but rather to ensure a positive environment for learning, to promote safety, and to prevent disruptions. Any student dress or appearance, not specifically stated, which the faculty or staff deems distracting will not be permitted. Students may call home for a change of clothes or be asked to wear school-issued apparel.

Students are expected to dress appropriately and suitable to weather conditions. Since students are involved in some type of movement every day, we recommend that students wear tennis shoes or other closed-toe shoes. Flip-flops, sandals and platform heels can be extremely dangerous in the school setting.

Clothing and hair styles which are not appropriate include:

- Tank tops, spaghetti strap shirts, muscle shirts, bare midriff, or see-through clothing may not be worn. Blouses and shirts must cover the tops of the shoulders. Blouses and shirts that expose any portion of the waist, hips, or midriff are not permitted. If you raise your arms to shoulder level and the stomach shows, the top is not permissible. Other blouses and shirts that are not

appropriate for school include but are not limited to low-cut, backless, or tube tops. No undergarments should be visible.

- No student clothing shall display words or symbols that advocate, suggest, or depict violence, drugs, alcohol, inappropriate sexual content, illegal gang affiliation, or other illegal activity expressed or implied.
- Long baggy shorts/pants which drag the floor or are lower than the waist
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses need to be of reasonable, responsible length. As a reasonable measure, the length of shorts/skirts must reach below your fingertips when arms are extended straight down by your side. In addition, the waistline of shorts, skirts, and pants must be on or above the hips with no undergarments showing.
- Clothing must not have holes that would attract attention and cause a distraction. Rips or holes are not allowed in shirts or tops. No undergarments should be visible. There should be no rips, holes, or frayed patches above fingertip length on any clothing.
- Change of hair color (bright blue, green, yellow, orange, etc.)
- Hoodies can be worn on your head, but removed upon entering the building.
- Hats, visors, durags/bonnets, & sunglasses are not allowed. Grooming tools are not to be worn in the hair. The principal may grant exceptions for religious or medical reasons.
- Headphones and earbuds must be stored in a pocket or bag and must not be visible unless directed by the teacher.

A good rule to follow is that if you have doubts, don't wear it to school. Thank you for helping us focus on teaching and learning.

Please note that any attire deemed inappropriate and detrimental to the learning environment by a school employee, but not specifically listed above, constitutes a violation of the SES dress code. This dress code is a guide for what is considered appropriate school dress.

Repeated violations will result in administrative action.

Students are encouraged to wear school spirit wear every Friday. Spirit wear can be purchased from the PTA.

Dress for Physical Education (PE)

Students should wear lace or Velcro rubber soled tennis shoes on PE days. For safety reasons, please pay close attention to the days in which your child participates in physical education activities. If they are wearing the following: Crocs, clogs, sandals, flip flops, "wheelies", dress shoes, boots, or slip-on shoes including slip-on tennis shoes they may be inclined to injury.

Textbooks

The school district provides textbooks for all students. Textbooks are scanned out to individual students and every student is obligated to take good care of the materials in his/her care. Any textbooks/learning materials must be paid for if lost or damaged. Online versions of textbooks are also available.

Toys and Electronics

In order to provide the best learning environment for students, please do not allow your child to bring

the following items on the bus or to school. Additionally, students may not buy or trade items at school:

- Toys (including toy or water guns, lighters, or knives of any kind)
- Items that make distracting noises
- Laser lights (pens, etc.) which can cause visual distractions

Part III: Student Academic Information

Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS)

The Gwinnett County Public Schools Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) are the adopted curriculum. The AKS represent the standards for academic excellence for all students in our school system. Parents will receive an AKS booklet for their child's grade level at the beginning of the school year. This allows parents to know what their child is expected to learn.

Curriculum and instruction are designed for mastery of the AKS for all students. Each teacher has his/her own teaching style, and each student has his/her own learning style. Teachers will use AKS resources, national standards, textbooks, trade books, and other educational materials as resources for instruction.

Counseling

The goal of school counseling is to remove barriers to student learning. The school counselors serve as a resource for all students and staff.

The counselors offer support for new students, assist students who are affected by grief, anxiety and peer issues. They also work with all students on study skills, homework completion and test taking skills. Parent education is an additional component of their program. The counselors work with students through classroom guidance lessons. With parent permission, our counselors also work with students individually and in small groups.

Gifted Education Program

Students who meet state guidelines are served through our school's gifted education program in an interdisciplinary approach. Referrals to the gifted program may come from teachers, parents, administrators or as a result of system-wide testing. A student may be referred by a parent once during Grades K-2, once in Grades 3-5, once in middle school and once during high school. The evaluation includes the student's mental aptitude, achievement, creativity and motivation.

Private evaluation and testing may not be substituted for test data generated by the local school.

Simpson's gifted eligibility team reviews referrals at the beginning, middle and end of each school year to determine which students qualify for the program.

Grading

Kindergarten and First Grade: Students are assessed on progress toward the AKS by the following scale:

- E - Excellent
- S – Satisfactory Progress
- N – Needs to Improve
- U – Unsatisfactory Progress

Grades 2 – 5: The grade mark is a report of the individual student’s progress to his/her parents, and to others who are concerned with the student’s progress in education. The following scale is used:

A = 90 and 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

When reporting progress (positive attitude, effort, participation, completion of tasks) for connection areas such as Art, Music, Physical Education, Technology, and Media, the following scale is used:

E = Excellent Progress
S = Satisfactory
N = Needs to Improve
U = Unsatisfactory

Please note, if behavior interferes with learning and/or teaching in the Connections classes, it may affect the student’s participation, thus lowering the grade.

Homework

Homework is an extension of the classroom learning process. It is one method to help students establish self-discipline and study skills. Homework also is a way to keep parents informed and involved with their child’s schoolwork. Assignments may be brief or may include long-range projects. Assignments may be individualized for remediation or enrichment. Time spent on homework should promote productive and positive experiences.

Parents can help by encouraging their children to establish effective study habits and by reviewing homework with their child. It is very helpful for parents to establish set times to work. If your child has no current assignment, he/she should be encouraged to read.

Homework is assigned to be done at home; class work is designed to be done at school. If you have questions or concerns about your child’s homework, please contact your child’s teacher directly.

Make-Up Work

Assignments missed during a short-term absence (1-2 days) will be given upon the child’s return. If the absence is longer than 2 days, the parent should contact the teacher to create a plan for missed work.

Students who miss ten days or more due to serious illness may be eligible for homebound instruction. Please do not call the office to ask that a teacher prepare missed work by the end of the day. Often times, teachers do not have planning time to pull together the work. One day’s notice is necessary.

Student Placement

We are very proud of our outstanding teachers. Each year, we make every effort to place each child with a teacher that best meets his or her needs. Parents are given the opportunity each spring to submit in

writing any concerns regarding medical, emotional, or social issues affecting placement before class lists are formed for the next year.

After class lists are published, if a parent has a serious concern regarding placement, they should put the concern in writing to the assistant principal for that particular grade level. The assistant principal will set up a conference to work with the parent and teacher to resolve whatever issues are involved. All cases are handled on an individual basis.

Grades / Parent Portal

Grades can also be viewed through the Parent Portal. Parents may request a conference with a teacher any time during the year, and early release conferences are held twice a year.

Teachers will contact parents to schedule these conferences.

Student Support Services

Our school has programs that enhance the learning experience for all students. Our counseling program provides a support system by working with individual students, small groups, entire classes, and parents. Students will attend art, music, physical education, Spanish, Computer Science, health, technology, and media (combinations of these areas are offered as a connection at different grade levels). Our Media Center operates under an open policy to allow students to come individually, in small groups or with their entire class.

Student Support Team (SST)

Like all Gwinnett County Public Schools, Simpson has a Student Support Team. The purpose of the Student Support Team (SST) is to allow teachers, parents, and other educators to work in a collaborative manner to develop an intervention plan to address the needs of individual students. This group meets to provide suggestions, recommendations, and/or interventions to help students be successful in the classroom.

Teacher-Parent Communication

Communication between parents and teachers is an essential component of student success. We encourage you to communicate regularly with your child's teacher. If you have a concern about your child, please do not hesitate to contact your child's classroom teacher. After talking with the teacher, if you continue to have a concern, please contact the assistant principal for your child's grade level for further assistance in resolving the matter.

Part IV: Student Conduct

Students learn best in a safe, positive and orderly environment. All students are capable, with support and encouragement, of being responsible for their own behavior. Parents and educators must work together as partners in teaching students to make good decisions about their behavior, and to understand there are consequences for making poor decisions.

The following behaviors are expected of all students at Simpson Elementary. In addition to the information provided below, the GCPS handbook can also be accessed from the GCPS website.

General Expectations

- Listen when others are speaking
- Follow directions
- Obey all school rules
- Dress in a safe and appropriate manner
- Solve problems without fighting
- Show respect to each other and to all adults
- Keep the building clean
- Take care of furniture and materials

Hallway Expectations

- Walk in a single file line
- Walk quietly
- Do not step in front of other students
- Follow the directions of all adults

Restroom Expectations

- Use the facilities appropriately (no playing)
- Keep the restroom clean

Playground Expectations

- Wear tennis shoes or other proper footwear
- Use the equipment safely
- Do not jump from the equipment
- Do not play roughly
- Do not throw objects such as rocks, dirt, sticks, etc.
- Use good sportsmanship
- Use appropriate language

Cafeteria Expectations

- Enter and leave the cafeteria without talking
- Stay seated and raise hand for assistance
- Use proper table manners and language
- Listen and respect the cafeteria monitors
- Talk in quiet voices to classmates who are seated next to or across from you when the music is not playing
- Do not trade or swap food
- Clean up area before leaving

Each classroom of students, with their teacher, will develop personalized expectations for their classroom.

Discipline Steps

Ongoing teaching and encouraging of expectations and building of relationships will occur throughout the school year. The consequences for minor behavior offenses include a hierarchy of supports. Supports may include redirection, conferences with students, conferences with parents, completion of a leadership improvement plan and/or administrative support if behavior continues. The consequences for major behavior offenses that include severe physical aggression, destroying school or private property, harassment, or defying authority receive immediate attention from an administrator.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

The purpose of PBIS is to establish a climate in which appropriate behavior is the norm. PBIS is a broad range of systemic and individualized strategies for achieving important social and learning outcomes while preventing problem behaviors with all students.

Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) at Simpson Elementary is to have a positive behavioral expectation schoolwide. PBIS is an approach schools use to promote school safety and good behavior. With PBIS, schools teach kids about behavior expectations, strategies, and with a primary focus on having a positive prevention, not consequences.

What is PBIS at our school?

A unified set of school wide expectations for behavior in our school. We are Simpson Superstars, so to ensure that students can easily comprehend our expectations, we have established a 5-star approach for appropriate behaviors posted throughout the school. Your child has been learning these expectations since the first few days of school.

What are the 5-Star Expectations at Simpson Elementary?

1. Be Respectful
2. Be Responsible
3. Be Ready to Learn
4. Be Safe
5. Be Kind

As part of our PBIS process, teachers and other staff members use evidence-based practices to increase student learning and decrease classroom disruptions. To keep students on the rules in a positive manner, we do the following when teaching academics and behavior:

- Constantly teach and refer to our school-wide expectations.
- Provide students with more praise than correction.
- Talk to students with respect using positive voice tone.
- Actively engage everyone in the class during instruction.
- Use pre-correcting, prompting, and redirecting as we teach.
- Look for the positive first and provide positive, immediate, frequent, and explicit feedback.

The PBIS School store has buying days throughout the year! Grade level buying days occur during morning arrival: 8:20-8:55 AM. PBIS Grade Level Incentive Days take place throughout the week and will have designated dates at the start of every school year for students to receive incentives

Bike Rider Information

Fourth and fifth-grade students are permitted to ride a bicycle to school. An annual bike safety training is sponsored to support safety and security. Bikes should be placed in the bicycle rack located in front of the building. Students should lock their bikes and secure their helmets. Supervision will be provided during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal to encourage student safety. Skateboards, roller blades, and skate shoes are prohibited on school grounds. Simpson Elementary School is not responsible for a bike if stolen.

Bus Rider Information

Riding the bus is a privilege and is offered to all Gwinnett County elementary students. Improper conduct on the bus will result in the privilege being denied. Bus drivers share the Bus Guidelines and Safety Procedures on the first day of school, with monthly reviews to enhance the safety of children being transported. Students will:

- Be at the bus stop five minutes before pick-up time.
- Stand back 10 ft. from where the bus stops.
- Safely wait for, board and exit the bus only at their assigned bus stop.
- Always follow the directions of the driver.
- Look for traffic and wait for driver's signal to cross the road in front of the bus.
- Look in both directions for traffic – LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT.
- Look at the driver – if you can see the driver, the driver can see you.
- Signal the driver with a waving motion if you drop something. Wait for the driver to give you a signal before picking up what you have dropped.
- Use the handrail to go up or down the bus steps.
- Go directly to assigned seat, keeping aisles and exits clear.
- Sit the safe way – back against the back of the seat, bottom against the bottom of the seat.
- Stay seated until time to get off the bus. The open bus door is your signal to get up from your seat.
- Talk with a quiet voice. Do not distract the driver at any time.
- Be totally silent at railroad crossings.
- Talk quietly. Loud voices, inappropriate language and gestures are not allowed.
- Respect the rights and safety of others.
- Not eat, drink or chew gum on the bus.
- Not carry animals, glass objects, nuisance items, hazardous materials, or weapons (including toy weapons) onto the bus.
- Not use any electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to cell phones, MP3 players, gaming devices or any other electronic device that might interfere with the school bus communication equipment or the 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 and in agreement with an administrator.)
- Not use mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the driver's operation of the school bus.
- Keep their bus clean and in good, safe condition.

Should a student fail to comply with the expectations listed above, parents will be contacted, and school administrators will be notified. After an investigation, appropriate consequences will be issued by the school.

Simpson Elementary School Council

With the passage of the A+ Education Reform Act (HB 1187), the State of Georgia requires advisory committees, School Councils, to bring communities and schools closer together in a spirit of cooperation.

School Councils are comprised of at least seven council members who serve two-year terms: the principal, two certified teachers, two parents, and two business representatives. Our school council will meet at least four times per year. Minutes from School Council meetings will be available on our school website.

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 and the community
- Encourage the participation of parents and others within the school community
- Work to improve student achievement

The purpose of the School Council is to:

- Advise
- Assist
- Represent
- Recommend