



2025-2026

Parent/Student Supplemental Handbook Highlights

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"Ready to Rocket!"

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The officers, employees and officials identified in this handbook are charged with using their personal judgment and deliberation in executing the functions and tasks set forth herein and nothing in the handbook should be construed or interpreted to create any ministerial duties on behalf of any officer, employee or official.

Susan O. Stripling Elementary School

Parent/Student Supplemental Handbook HIGHLIGHTS

Attendance

School attendance is important because it underscores the significance of learning and the importance of obtaining an education in our society. Attendance also correlates strongly with improved grades and is required for attainment of the Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) curriculum. The responsibility of school attendance is that of both parents and students. Georgia law requires compulsory attendance for our students. Repeated tardies and absences (excused and unexcused) will result in a Student Attendance Review Committee (SARC) meeting with parent, counselor, and social worker.

Excused Absences

State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.10 defines the following as excused absences:

1. Personal illness or attendance in school endangers a student's health or the health of others. (i) Local boards of education may require students to present appropriate medical documentation upon the return to school for the purpose of validating that the absence is an excused absence.
2. A serious illness or death in the student's immediate family necessitating absence from school. (i) In the event of a serious illness in a student's family, local boards of education may require students to present appropriate medical documentation regarding the family member upon return to school for the purpose of validating that the absence is an excused absence.
3. A court order or an order by a government agency, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces mandating absence from school.
4. Observing religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
5. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to students' health or safety. (For Gwinnett County Public Schools, the closure of schools for hazardous conditions may only be made by the School Superintendent for the purposes of excused absences.)
6. Local boards of education may allow a period not to exceed one day for registering to vote or voting in a public election.
7. Local boards of education shall count students present when they are serving as pages for the Georgia General Assembly.
8. Visiting with a parent or legal guardian prior to or during leave from deployment to combat zone or combat support posting as a member of the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard (maximum of five school days per year).

GCPS Procedures

Parents or guardians are encouraged to notify the school or teacher on the day of the student absence to indicate the reason for the absence. Parents or guardians should also either a) send a signed, 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 and/or b) submit the excuse via ParentVUE. If the parent fails to provide an excuse, the absence will be regarded as unexcused until such time as the parent provides an explanation for the absence. If a student has five excused or unexcused absences, a letter will automatically be generated from the District Office and sent home by the principal. If a student has ten excused or unexcused absences, another letter will be sent home. After fifteen excused or unexcused absences, the social worker will contact the family and a SARC meeting will be scheduled. If attendance does not improve following a SARC meeting, a referral to the Truancy Panel will be initiated by the social worker. To facilitate prompt, appropriate communication between the home and school, parents, guardians, or persons having charge of a student should notify the school immediately when there is a change in the student's address and/or phone number as listed in school records.

School Hours

Our school instructional hours are 8:15 AM-2:45 PM. Buses unload at 7:45 AM.

- Morning announcements will happen at 8:10 AM. Instruction begins promptly at 8:15. Students arriving after 8:10 should be checked in at the front desk, with an adult accompanying the student.
- Students will be dismissed at 2:45. No student checkouts are permitted after 2:00 PM.
- Students must be picked up by 3:00 PM if they are a car rider. Three or more late pickups will result in notification to the GCPS School Resource Officer and/or the Department of Family and Children Services.

School Visits

For the safety of our children, all visitors must check in and out through the front office and wear a visitor's badge while in the building. In order to protect instructional time, please notify the teacher in advance if you would like to make a classroom visit. The teacher will forward the request to the appropriate grade level Assistant Principal who will schedule a time with you to visit. If you want to discuss the progress of your child, you should call or send an email to make a conference appointment with your child's teacher at a time when class is not in session. Staff hours are 7:30 AM-3:30 PM.

Parent Involvement

We welcome and encourage parents to volunteer; however, we ask that parents who are here as volunteers follow our school procedure for requesting to visit a classroom. Please do not bring siblings/small children to class parties/celebrations or field trips. Family participation is encouraged at Title I events and workshops (i.e. Literacy workshop, Math workshop, SEL workshop, MLL workshop), family engagement events (i.e. International Night, Trunk-or-Treat, STEM Night, Family Dance), Holiday Programs (i.e. Candlelight Luncheon), student recognition events (i.e. Spelling Bee, Honor Roll breakfast, promotion ceremonies), Concerts, etc.

School Checkout

We want to ensure the safety of all students. Only authorized persons listed on student's emergency card and/or in Synergy under emergency contacts may check out the student. Student checkout is completed at our front desk, including use of our school checkout computer database. Appropriate identification will be requested and must be shown at time of checkout. Phone calls and faxes are not accepted to authorize individuals to check out students.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthday Celebrations are not permitted in the cafeteria. Please contact your student's teacher. We are unable to accommodate delivering balloons/gifts to classrooms. Please save those for at-home celebrations. Thank you for understanding.

- Snacks may be provided for the entire class (Please leave at office front desk) – ready to be served/no refrigeration.
- Snacks provided should be pre-packaged and require no cutting.

Technology Devices and Cell Phones

Students will be assigned technology devices (i.e. Chromebooks, laptops) for use within the classroom and/or for Digital Learning needs (i.e. GCPS designated Digital Learning Days). Once a device is checked out to the student, it becomes the student's/parents' responsibility. **Fines for damages or loss will be charged to the student's account.** If parents send personal technological devices with students to school, please be mindful of the following guidelines:

- Cell phones must remain OFF and in the student book bag at all times.
- If a cell phone is taken out during the day without permission or for non-instructional purposes, it will be taken up and the parent will need to come to school to retrieve it.
- No games or other electronic devices should be brought to school at any time.

Clinic/Illness at School

When a student becomes ill at school, the classroom teacher will refer the student to the clinic. The student's temperature will be taken. If the student has a temperature of 100° or higher, a parent will be contacted to pick the child up from school. Parents or Guardians must provide the name and phone number of a friend or relative who can be reached if you are not available. Please be considerate by caring for your sick child at home. Students need to be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. Students should not return to school if vomiting and/or diarrhea has occurred within the previous 12 hours. All medications will be administered through the school clinic. Teachers do not administer medications or allow students to self-administer. Prescription and over the counter medications should be brought to the school by the parent in the original, labeled container. Students may not bring any medication to school in bookbags or on the bus. Please provide the student's name, teacher, and instructions for the time and dosage. The providing of medical care to students is the responsibility of the parent and should not be assumed by the school. Whenever it is absolutely necessary that medication be given to a student during the school day, the following guidelines apply.

1. **Medication needed for short periods of time:** Administration of the medicine for a short period of time is discouraged. Parents should check with their physicians regarding the need for any medication during school hours. Parents must complete the permission form provided by the school system. These forms are available in the clinic.
2. **Medication needed for long periods of time:** Medication needed for long periods of time should have an updated request from the parent/physician yearly.
3. **Head Lice:** Children infested with live lice will be sent home with a letter to parents regarding recommendation for treatment, disinfecting the home and procedures for readmission to school.

Class Parties

We ask that parents who choose to attend communicate their attendance with the homeroom teacher and not bring younger siblings/children to the class parties as it is a special time for our students. We sincerely appreciate your understanding.

School Cancellations/Inclement Weather

In the event of severe weather, the school day opening may be delayed, schools may be closed, or instruction may shift to Digital Learning. Announcements will be made over radio stations, the Atlanta TV stations, on the Gwinnett County Public Schools web site which is www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us, and on ParentSquare. Reports in the morning will be between 6:00 and 6:30 AM. If no report is announced, school will be in session. The same conditions may also necessitate early dismissal.

Communication

ParentSquare and Friday Folders are our primary forms of communication. The Friday Folder is sent home each week with your child. Please make sure you check this folder each week to ensure you do not miss any important information or deadlines. Important updates and announcements will also be sent via ParentSquare. Be sure to download the ParentSquare app to your phone.

Cafeteria/Lunchroom School Nutrition Program

The goal of the school nutrition program is to provide high quality, nutritious meals to all students in Gwinnett County. Eligible students receive free or reduced-price meals. Applications will be available during registration and online. **Parents must complete a new application each school year for free or reduced-price meals.** While we welcome families to come eat lunch with their children on occasion, please know that space in our cafeteria is limited. Please do not bring take-out lunches for students to school. No take-out lunches will be permitted in the cafeteria. Fast Food is not permitted in the cafeteria. We want to encourage healthy eating for our students.

SY25-26 Breakfast Prices

Student Breakfast – ES	\$1.75
Student Breakfast -MS/HS	\$1.75
Reduced-Price Breakfast – All	\$.30
Adult Breakfast – All	\$2.75
Milk	\$.40

SY25-26 Lunch Prices

Student Lunch – ES	\$2.50
Student Lunch – MS/HS	\$2.75
Reduced-Price Lunch – All	\$.40
Adult Lunch - All	\$4.75
Milk	\$.40

Registration and Records

School officials require the parent or guardian to provide proof of residency in the district and attendance zone at the time a student is initially enrolled in a school. A certified copy of the birth certificate, Georgia Immunization form (GA 3231), and Vision, Hearing and Dental form (GA 3300) will be required for initial registration. A copy of the student's social security number (or waiver form) is required. "Under the Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, parents have several rights. These include: 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 the educational records of their child, the right to complain to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Office about the school's failure to comply with the law, and the right to be informed of these rights as listed above. To obtain a copy of Gwinnett County's policies on their compliance with the law, or request the opportunity to inspect and review your child's records, contact your child's school." "Copies of a student's educational records may be transferred to officials of other schools or school systems in which the student seeks to enroll. Unless parents express, at the time of enrollment in the Gwinnett County Public Schools, a need for additional notice of the transfer of student records, the records transfer to the enrolling school or school system will occur without further notice."

Homeless Children and Youth

The Stewart B. McKinney/Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Act ensures that educational rights are protected 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 he/she needs to have an opportunity to meet the same challenging state student academic achievement standards to which all students are held. Please contact individual schools for further information.

Pictures

Student pictures will be taken twice during the school year. All students are photographed in the fall for the school's yearbook with a schoolwide picture day and make-up day. Ordering school pictures is optional and offered as a service to the students and parents.

Personal Property

Students are asked to bring all found articles to the office. All textbooks should be turned in to the office; library books should be returned to the media center. Students should check the lost and found for lost articles when they are missed. It is requested that large sums of money, expensive jewelry, toys, and articles of clothing not be brought to school. Non-academic electronic items such as cameras, computer games, music players, and other handheld devices should not be brought to school.

Guidance and Counseling

The school counselors provide a preventative/developmental guidance program, including Social Emotional Learning, which focuses on the needs of all children. It is their goal to foster students' academic success through consultations with parents and teachers, classroom guidance activities, small group counseling, and individual counseling for students in crisis or with special concerns. Our counselors are:
Ms. Nikole Gilkes: Grades K-2 & Ms. April West: Grades 3-5

Gifted Education Programs

Gwinnett County Public Schools gifted education program serves students in grades K-12 by providing academic challenges for those who qualify accordingly to district guidelines. The gifted program is called FOCUS at the elementary level. The classes offer accelerated learning and enriched academic curriculum experiences that focus on and extend Gwinnett County Public Schools' Academic Knowledge and Skills. Students are identified and placed in gifted education based on criteria established by the Georgia General Assembly and the Georgia State Board of Education. Students who transfer from gifted education programs within the state of Georgia have reciprocity into the Gwinnett program providing the original placement was correctly completed. Students who transfer from out-of-state must meet Georgia requirements. Parents should notify the school when registering their child that he/ she were identified as a gifted education student in their previous school.

Grading – Reports to Parents

Elementary report cards describing a student's progress are sent to parents/guardians in grades K-5 at the end of each semester. Grades are calculated on a semester basis. **Parents are strongly encouraged to check their child's grades frequently using ParentVUE as grades are updated frequently.** Progress Reports are sent home each six weeks. Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled during early release days for elementary students. Parents will be notified by the teacher regarding the time for these conferences.

Student Support Team Meetings (SSTs)

Student Support Team meetings may be held if a student is demonstrating a lack of mastery of AKS or demonstrating behavior that impedes the learning of themselves or others. SSTs participants may include the teacher(s) that work with the student, parents/guardians, school psychologist, counselor, GCPS nurse (if appropriate), and school administrator(s). No third-party representatives (i.e. tutors, advocates, attorneys, health officials, etc.) are permitted at SST meetings.

Make Up Work Policy

Student work missed due to an excused or unexcused absence will be given to the student upon return to school. Please do not call the school on the day your child is absent and ask to pick up work for them to do that night. We believe if a child is too sick to come to school, they should be resting at home. This also applies to absences due to vacations.

Student Dress Code

Student dress should not cause any distraction from the instructional program.

- Students are encouraged to dress appropriately for the school setting, suitable to weather conditions.
- Short skirts, short shorts, or halter tops/crop shirts/spaghetti straps are not considered appropriate dress for school. Sagging pants, hats, bandanas, and sweatbands should not be worn in school. Hoods on hooded sweatshirts and hats are not to be allowed in the building. Students should not wear any clothing that advertises alcoholic beverages, drugs, or violence.
- Students should wear shoes that allow for safe play at outside time and PE class.

Emergency Preparation Drills

Fire drills, severe weather drills (tornado), and intruder drills (soft lock-down and hard lock-down) are held at intervals throughout the school year. Instructions are posted in the classroom indicating how to leave the building in case of a fire and where to go in case of a tornado/intruder. Children will practice walking quickly and quietly to the designated area during a drill.

Testing

Please note that our school wide lunch schedule may be revised for K-5 grades during testing. No lunch visitors are permitted during the testing window. Parents will receive the GCPS Testing Calendar on Curriculum Night. This will include the scheduled dates and testing times.

Title IX
Gwinnett County Policies and/or School Laws
***Notice to Students and Employees**

If you believe you are being mistreated by school employees on the basis of your race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin or handicap, you have a complaint and a remedy. Our Local Title IX Coordinator is **Albert Gresens, Assistant Principal**, our Local Title IX Investigator is **Lamieshea Smith, Assistant Principal**, and our Local Title IX Decision-Maker is **Dr. Molly McAuliffe, Principal**. Please contact any of these administrators immediately if you have a complaint about the manner in which you are being treated and why.

Transportation Procedures

- **BUS** - Riding a school bus is a privilege contingent upon proper conduct. If students choose not to follow the bus rules, then interventions will be put in place. If the interventions do not work, a student will be suspended from the bus. We must maintain safe transportation for all students.
- **CAR RIDER** - Students should be dropped off and picked up only through the Car Rider/Parent Pick-Up line located on the side of the building.
 - *Morning* – Morning Drop Off will be from 7:45 -8:10 AM. Students arriving after 8:10 should be checked in at the front desk, with an adult accompanying the student.
 - *Afternoon* – Afternoon car rider and daycare dismissal begins at 2:45 PM. After 3:00 PM, students are brought to front office for late pick-up.
 - Remember to always have your car rider number displayed in your vehicle window. Please wait for a staff member to signal that it is safe for your child to enter or exit your vehicle from the passenger side only.
- **TRANSPORTATION CHANGES** - If transportation arrangements for students need to change on any given day, you must send a written note to your child's teacher. In this note, you need to include the following information: your child's name, your name, his/her usual transportation home, the new arrangements home and your signature. We cannot accept requests by phone or e-mail to alter arrangements. (If you send a note with your child, it is a good idea to also e-mail to let the teacher know the note has been sent.) A transportation change form must be issued from the school office in order for a student to ride a different bus. Students will not be permitted to board another bus unless they have a transportation change form.

PBIS Student Conduct

Students learn best in a safe, positive, and orderly environment. In our school environment, all students are capable, with support and encouragement, of being responsible for their own behavior. Parents and educators must work as partners in teaching students to make decisions about behaviors and to understand the consequences of that behavior. The goal of the Stripling Elementary School discipline program is to develop responsibility within our students and to create a safe and respectful learning environment for ALL students. We have school rules that are reinforced and held constant in all areas of our building. Stripling implements a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) program in order to enhance the school climate and maximize academic success; positive behaviors are recognized and rewarded. Please review the expectations and consequences carefully with your children.

Rewards/Recognition: Through our Positive Behavioral Support System, students are rewarded and/or provided recognition for displaying expected behaviors that align to our school wide behavior matrix, which is posted throughout the school. The rewards/recognition vary in forms such as PBIS tickets to cash in prizes in their classroom or to enter into a lottery for Game Day Friday and/or verbal or written compliments.

Response to Behaviors & Interventions: Teachers will keep updated conduct documentation on each student and will indicate interventions used with the dates infractions occurred, consequences, and parent communication. Students that repeatedly violate classroom rules/procedures will receive an administrative referral. Before an administrative referral is written, teachers must provide documentation of an attempt to make parent contact and the result of that contact. Each teacher will develop personalized expectations for their classroom. Continued discipline incidents may result in a behavior management plan and/or Student Support Team meeting.

Minor Offenses (Managed in the Classroom)

- **1st time observed** – verbal redirection and reteach expectation; conference with student; classroom intervention; student completes behavior action plan
- **2nd time observed** – Teacher chooses different classroom intervention; reteach expectation; enter as minor in Synergy; phone call to parent; student completes behavior action plan/conference with student
- **3rd Time observed** – Phone call to parent & enter as a minor in Synergy; implement different intervention; student completes behavior action plan/conference with student create behavior chart
- **4th time observed** – Follow steps for an administrative referral

Major Offenses (Managed by an Administrator)

- Teachers will notify administration of major infractions and the student will be picked up/removed from the classroom for a period of time.
- Administrator has a conference with the student. Reteach/Reflect/Rehearse expected behavior. Administrator determines the consequences based on local school/county discipline guidance. Consequences vary based on severity of behavior.
 - Ex. Admin. Warning, Timeout, or In/Out of School Suspension.
- Administration follows up with Teacher/Staff Member. Once a student has 3 office referrals, Tier II support is recommended.

Administrative referral consequences may range from a phone call to out of school suspension, following the Gwinnett County Administrator's Discipline Handbook. Serious or repeated offenses may result in referral to a disciplinary hearing at the county level. Some discipline rule violations require the local school to notify the School Resources Officer (SRO), who is the law enforcement officer for the school district.

Intervention Examples:

- Redirect/Re-teach expectations-SEL lessons
- Remove distractions/Identify and eliminate triggers
- Change seating/Close proximity
- Provide choice
- Private student/parent conference
- Verbal praise/non-verbal cue reminders
- Provide stress ball
- Calm corner
- Ignore/Attend/Praise
- Give Me Ten (calmly counting 10-0)
- Student break to refocus
- Assign task for redirection (run an errand, pass out papers)
- Break work into chunks

Our Stripling students and staff will stay **RED-dy to Rocket** by being **Responsible (Safe), Empathetic (Respectful), and Driven (Showing Effort)** by following:

Hallway Expectations

- Walking feet/Walk on the right-hand side of the hallway
- Hands and feet to yourself/Give others space in line
- Stay in line Silently/Face Forward
- Use volume level 1- Whisper voice

Cafeteria Expectations

- Stay seated with feet under table/Walking feet
- Use hand sanitizer/Clean up your area
- Raise hand for help/Use good manners/Follow your class color
- Eat your food only
- Use volume level 2- Conversation/talking voice

Restroom Expectations

- Wash your hands/Keep it Clean
- Use equipment properly
- Hands and feet to yourself
- Do your business, flush, and wash hands
- Wait your turn/Give others privacy and space
- Use volume level 1- Whisper voice

Playground Expectations

- Stay in assigned area/Include others and take turns
- Play safely on the equipment/Hands and feet to yourself
- Line up quickly and quietly
- Keep it Clean/Bring in all your items
- Use volume level 3- Loud/Celebration voice

Bus/Car Rider Expectation

- Stay in your seat/Hands and feet to yourself
- Follow bus/car rider safety rules
- Walk to your bus/car/Bookbag on the front
- Listen for your bus/car number or daycare
- Listen to your bus driver/safety patrol/monitor
- Use volume level 2-Conversation/talking voice