

# 2025-2026 Student/Parent Handbook

## Harmony Elementary Jaguars



3946 South Bogan Road  
Buford GA, 30519

770-945-7272  
<https://harmonyes.gcpsk12.org/>

The faculty and staff of Harmony Elementary School welcome you as we begin our 102nd year of teaching and learning. We at Harmony Elementary, along with the Gwinnett County Board of Education, recognize that a child's education is a responsibility that is shared by the school and home. Therefore, in order to effectively educate our students, the school and parents must work together as partners in this effort. The purpose of this Student/Parent Handbook is to provide you with valuable information regarding policies and procedures that have been developed as a way to guide our school in the daily business of teaching and learning. You can always locate our handbook on our school's website.

We look forward to building relationships and working together during the 2025-2026 school year!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily Nelson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Dr. Emily Nelson  
Principal

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

# Harmony Elementary School Vision and Mission

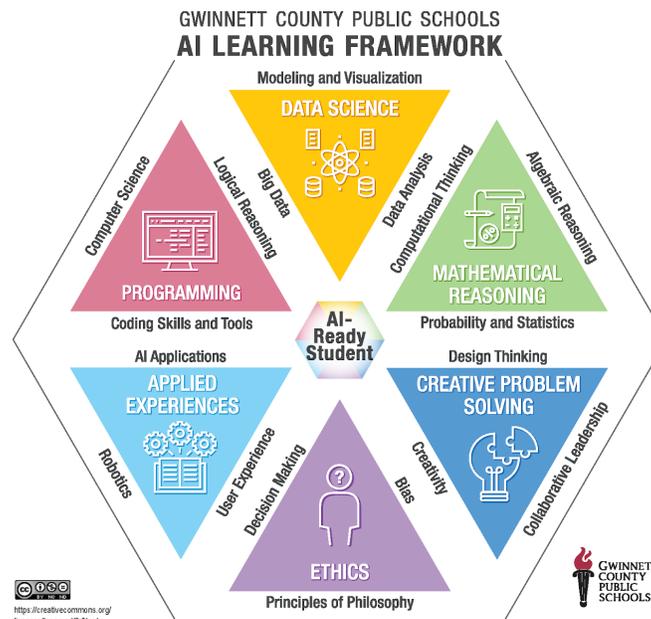
## Harmony ES Vision Statement

We aim to build a positive, safe, and supportive environment where all stakeholders work together to inspire and empower future-ready leaders who will positively impact our community and beyond.

## Harmony ES Mission Statement

The mission of Harmony Elementary School is to cultivate future-ready students by providing high-quality, purposeful instruction within a safe, supportive, and reflective community that prioritizes student development, well-being, and critical thinking.

AI is rapidly changing industries and how we interact. To be prepared for the college and career opportunities of today and the future, students must be AI-Ready. AI-Readiness ensures that students can thrive in their futures. Students are learning to be ethical and responsible users, developers, and decision-makers of AI. As part of the Seckinger Cluster, Harmony Elementary is focused on developing AI-readiness skills to prepare future-ready students.





## Harmony Elementary PTO



The Harmony Elementary PTO encourages all parents, teachers, school officials, grandparents, community leaders, and other interested individuals to join the PTO. Our PTO is strengthened by active participation, and we encourage all not only to belong to the PTO, but also to participate in all PTO sponsored activities. Your support is essential, and our goal this year is to reach 100% membership.

### **PTO Meetings**

PTO General Session meetings occur once each nine weeks and are typically held in conjunction with a school event, performance, or program. A short business meeting is held prior to the beginning of the scheduled activity. We invite and encourage you to attend. The schedule for the meeting dates and special events is posted on the school's website.

### **PTO Officers**

Co-President: Brittany Phan & Kaley Garlock

Vice President: Elizabeth Sedovic

Treasurer: Heather Farhy

Secretary: Puja Dev

### **PTO Volunteer Opportunities**



Our school would not be successful in building strong foundations for our students' success without the commitment and dedication of our volunteers. Volunteers are always needed and welcome throughout the year. Please consider sharing your time by helping in one of the following areas:

- Hospitality
- Room Parent
- Spirit Wear
- Fundraising
- Holiday Shop
- Family Bingo Night
- Business Partners
- Spirit Nights

# Harmony Elementary Student/Parent Handbook

## Attendance Policies and Procedures

School attendance is important because it underscores the significance of learning and the importance of obtaining an education in our society, in addition to helping students develop good work habits that will carry over in life. Good attendance also correlates strongly with improved grades. A minimum level of attendance is required for attainment of the Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) curriculum.

The responsibility of school attendance is that of both parents and students. An up-to-date account of tardies and excused/unexcused absences is found in the ParentVue portal.

### **Definitions**

**Compulsory Attendance** – Official Code of Georgia (O.C.G.A.) 20-2-690.1(a): Every parent, guardian, or other person residing within this state having control or charge of any child or children between their sixth and sixteenth birthdays shall enroll and send such child or children to a public school, a private school, or a home study program that meets the requirements for a public school, a private school, or home study program; and such child shall be responsible for enrolling in and attending a public school, a private school, or a home study program that meets the requirements for a public school, a private school, or a home study program.

**Truant** – Any child subject to compulsory attendance who during the school calendar year has more than ten days of unexcused absences. Parents will receive a letter notification after 5, 7, and 10 unexcused absences.

### **Absences**

Per state guidelines, all absences will be considered "unexcused" except for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness or attendance in school endangers a student's health or the health of others.
2. A serious illness or death in the student's immediate family.
3. Observing religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
4. Absences mandated by court order or by governmental agencies.
5. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.
6. Students serving as pages for Georgia General Assembly
7. Students whose parent or guardian is in military service and who is being sent overseas for active duty or returning from active duty (5 days per school year)

### **Documenting Absences**

Parents or guardians must submit an excuse explaining the reason and date for the absence. Please provide a written note, doctor's note, email or Parent Square message to your child's teacher on the day your child returns to school. The note should include the date of absence and reason for the absence. Should the reason be one noted above, your child's absence will be marked excused. Additionally, parents can now submit information regarding recent absences, such as doctor's notes, in ParentVUE. From the app home screen, students with recent absences will appear with a number above the "Report Absence" button. Notes should be submitted within seven days of an absence. The GCPS website has an instructional guide to support families in submitting absence documentation through ParentVue at the following link:

<https://www.gcpsk12.org/families/parent-vue/report-absences>

A letter will be mailed to the parent, guardian, or person having charge or control of the student to notify them if a student has 5, 7, or 10 **unexcused** absences, and stating the possible consequences. After 10 unexcused absences, you may be asked to present a physician's note to excuse future absences or attend a meeting at the school.

Work missed because of an excused absence must be made up within the length of time the student was absent. For unexcused absences, teachers will work with students to make-up assignments.

### **Tardies**

Students are tardy to school if they arrive after 8:50 AM. The car rider line will close at 8:45 AM to allow students enough time to get to class. Students entering school after 8:50 AM must be walked in by a parent/guardian and receive a tardy slip before going to class. If your student is late due to a doctor's appointment, an excuse note should be provided and the tardy will be marked as excused.

### **Make Up Work**

Assignments missed during a short or long-term absence should be made up upon return. Students have the same number of days to make up work as days missed. Teachers will work with students to support making up assignments.

### **Vacations/Extended Absences**

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

### **Arrival**

Students may arrive at school no earlier than 8:15 AM, with the exception of students who are attending before school clubs or special activities. Prior to that time, staff members are unavailable to supervise students. A bell will ring at 8:15 AM signaling that students may enter the building. If you should arrive before the bell has rung, your child must stay in the car with you. For the safety of your child, please use the entrance off East Maddox Road to enter the car rider line and only drop students off at the car rider curb. Staff assistance for car riders ends at 8:45 AM. Please arrive early enough to allow your child to be on time.

Parents who arrive after 8:45 AM will be asked to park in the front of the school and walk their child into the school. When students arrive late, they are missing valuable instructional time.

### **Behavior Management**

We greatly appreciate parent cooperation and support in the area of behavior management. The most important aspect is guiding students to take responsibility for their choices and actions as well as helping them to act in an appropriate and respectful manner at all times.

We want all students and classrooms to be the best possible places for students to learn. That means everyone must show respect for self and others, and for the school itself. The Gwinnett County Student/Parent Handbook is available on the Harmony Website and includes information regarding discipline policies in the Gwinnett County Public Schools.

The following rules apply when a student is:

- a. on school grounds,
- b. at a school activity, function or event that is held off school grounds, or any place where the student is under the jurisdiction of school authorities; or
- c. on the way to and from school.

Local school administrators have broad discretion to determine consequences for student misconduct at the local school level. The range of consequences for misconduct that can be assigned by a local school administrator may include without limitation:

- \*Verbal Reprimand
- \*Parent/Teacher Conference
- \*Parent/Teacher/Administrator Conference
- \*Time-Out within/outside of the classroom
- \*In-School Suspension
- \*Out-of-School Suspension
- \*Disciplinary Tribunal
- \*Expulsion from School

Students are not allowed to bring toys or games to school or on the bus unless their teacher has directed them to do so. (Example: Special incentive days such as Game Day, etc.). Electronic battery-operated games, collector's cards, discs, or cartridges are not allowed. Gaming devices do not fall under the umbrella of "Bring Your Own Device" registration. These items are distracting for your child and others. Cell phones must be always kept in the student's book bag, unless they are being used for instructional purposes.

### **Backpacks**

Students are required to have their backpacks daily. Transportation tags should not be removed. Due to safety concerns in classrooms and hallways, students are strongly encouraged to only use backpacks without wheels. Rolling backpacks are not recommended.

### **Before/After School Activities**

Harmony offers a variety of before/after school activities. Clubs begin and end at different times throughout the year and may involve specific grades. Please be on the lookout, via the Harmony Website and Parent Newsletter, for important information inviting students to participate. Parents must be prompt for the drop off and pickup of your child.

The Right At School program provides after school care for students. If parents are interested in more information about this after school program, visit their website at <https://www.rightatschool.com/>

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays will be recognized at Harmony on the morning announcements. The celebration of student birthdays is optional and may be observed using the following options:

Birthday treats should be a small sweet treat distributed during lunch. A parent may bring a **store-bought ready-to-serve** treat to the cafeteria during lunch. Parents can also choose to purchase ice cream for the class through the school. Birthday treats should be delivered to the front desk and parents should notify the teacher via email or Parent Square. Parents may check-in to have lunch with their child and help distribute the birthday treat at lunch. Due to allergies, the child's teacher must be present in the cafeteria to pass out treats. Parents of

students with allergies may provide alternate treats for their student to his/her teacher if needed.

Birthday parties are not allowed at school. Birthday favors, gifts, balloons, flowers, or prizes are not allowed. Birthday party invitations cannot be given out at school unless every child in the class receives one.

### **Bus Riders**

To prevent congestion in the parking lot and car rider line, parents are strongly encouraged to have their children ride the bus to and from school on the first day and every day of the school year.

In the morning and afternoon, our school buses **always** have “right of way” when arriving and leaving school grounds. Please do not pull into or park in the bus lanes during arrival or dismissal. This is in direct violation of Georgia Law.

We encourage parents to meet their child at the bus stop in the afternoon. Parents of Kindergarten students must be present at the bus stop or they will not be dismissed from their bus and will be returned to the school.

### **Bus Manager Interventions**

Bus drivers work to ensure the safety of students coming to and from school. As part of our PBIS framework, bus managers recognize students who demonstrate positive behavior choices on the bus. Students should communicate problems regarding transportation to the bus driver. Bus drivers and bus managers may use the interventions listed below for students who do not follow bus rules. A minor offense is considered inappropriate or unsafe student behavior that may be improved with minor assistance from the driver.

**Mandatory Seat Assignment:** Every student will be assigned a seat and the bus driver will maintain those seat assignments on a seating chart.

**Verbal Reminder:** Bus managers will remind the student of bus rule(s) not being followed.

**Talk privately with the student:** Bus managers will let the student know inappropriate behavior and what is expected from them.

**Reassign bus seat:** Bus managers will separate the students involved in the inappropriate behavior.

**Parent/Guardian Courtesy Call:** Bus managers will call the parent/guardian to notify them of students' inappropriate behavior, with a request for help to achieve appropriate behavior. This may be followed up in writing on a Parent Notification Form to alert parents of inappropriate behavior.

All the above steps may be bypassed depending on the severity of the inappropriate behavior.

### **Consequences**

When student behavior on the bus escalates beyond a driver's control or is not improved after using the appropriate intervention steps, the bus manager will submit a Bus Discipline Form to the school office. Consequences including parent conferences and/or bus suspension may be enforced at the discretion of the local school administrators according to the severity of the offense. Safely transporting children to and from school will not be compromised.

### **Cafeteria**

We strongly encourage students to either eat a well-balanced, hot lunch in the cafeteria or to

bring their own lunch. Student lunches may not contain carbonated beverages in cans or food in glass containers or items that would require the use of a microwave. Students who bring food from home should bring it in non-breakable containers that they can open easily on their own. Parents may not drop off fast food or use food delivery services for students during lunch.

Students will utilize their 9-digit student ID number when purchasing food. This number is available at registration or by calling the cafeteria office at 770-271-4898. Log into your child's account by going to [www.mypaymentsplus.com](http://www.mypaymentsplus.com) to pay for meals in advance and to set up low-balance reminders and auto-payments.

You may apply for free or reduced meals by visiting <http://gwinnett.schoollunchapp.com>. The school system uses a family application for free and reduced benefits, so please be sure that all students in your household are listed on the application. To check the status of your application visit: <http://gwinnett.schoollunchstatus.com>. Please allow 10 processing days. To expedite application processing, it is very important that you provide all required information on the application. The application process is easy, quick, and confidential. Students receiving reduced price meals should prepay to protect their identity. Only the cash register can tell if the meal is full-price, reduced, or free.

Menus and Prices are available by visiting <http://www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us/gcsnp.nsf> or by downloading the Nutri-Slice app that is available for Apple and Android devices.

Student Breakfast: \$1.75  
Student Breakfast (reduced): \$ 0.30  
Student Lunch (Elementary): \$2.50  
Student Lunch (reduced): \$ 0.40  
Adult Breakfast: \$2.50  
Adult Lunch: \$4.00

### **Allergies/Dietary Restrictions**

Harmony takes care to ensure your child receives a healthy, safe, and delicious meal. We are happy to adjust the meals we serve for children who have special medical needs. To accommodate these children, parents/guardians need to complete a Health Management Plan explaining the adjustments that need to be made.

### **Cafeteria Visitors**

We encourage our parents to join their children for lunch. Please check with your student's teacher regarding their lunch schedule in the event of a schedule change. Please enter the building at the front office, sign in and obtain a visitor badge. Parents or guests who wish to eat lunch with their children in the cafeteria must sign in at the front desk. Parents/guests must be listed in Synergy to be able to join a student for lunch. Guests for lunch may wait on the benches outside the cafeteria to join students for lunch.

Special tables are designated for parents to eat lunch with their child. **Due to limited seating, parents should not sit at the classroom lunch tables and only their child may join them at the parent table.** Parents may select food from the teacher or student line and sit with their child at the parent table or bring in their own lunch. In an effort to establish and maintain student cafeteria norms, parents are asked to refrain from eating with students during the first two weeks of school.

### **Car Riders**

Parents who provide transportation for their children will enter and exit using the driveway

north of the building on East Maddox Road. No cars are permitted in the bus driveway. Car riders line up and wait their turn as cars pull up and stop at the designated area. Rules and procedures for car riders will be provided when you are issued your car rider number at Open House. For the safety of all students, the rules and procedures must be followed.

Parents must not drop their children off or pick them up anywhere but the car rider lane during the designated car rider times. The bus lane in the front of the building is for buses only. State law prevents passenger cars in this area. If you are walking your child in, please use the lower parking lot (north side of the school) and walk on the sidewalk in front of the building to go to the front office for check-in.

**Arrival Time: 8:15 a.m. to 8:45 a.m.**

At 8:45 a.m., car rider doors will be locked to allow students enough time to get to class. A parent/guardian must accompany car riders who arrive after 8:45 to the front office for check-in.

**Dismissal Time: 3:20 p.m. to 3:40 p.m.**

Each car rider will be issued a number to display on the rear-view mirror of their car when picking up children. Students will not be released to enter a vehicle unless the Harmony issued car rider number is displayed on the rearview mirror. Numbers and procedure information are provided during Open House. If you do not have a number displayed, you will be asked to park and go to the front office to show ID and check your student out.

To keep our car rider line moving efficiently:

- Pull up to the next available cone in the line when dropping off or picking up your child. In the afternoon, student(s) will meet you at that cone. Students should not leave the cone until your vehicle has come to a complete stop.
- Once inside the unloading zone and after coming to a complete stop, your child is to exit/enter your vehicle on the right hand passenger side on his/her own and then shut the door to your vehicle. For safety, the driver side may not be used.
- Please help your student(s) be ready to quickly exit the car in the morning. In the afternoon, if your child needs assistance buckling, please pull to the lower lot and assist your child there.
- Help your student learn their car rider number as they need to know it for afternoon pick up.
- Duty personnel will be standing along the loading/unloading zone for safety. It is your child's responsibility to open and close your vehicle door. Please do not get out of your car to help your child in or out of the car.

**Change of Address or Phone**

For emergency purposes, we require updated information for each student. Please update any changes to phone numbers, address, email, or emergency contact information in your ParentVue account. You can access the ParentVue portal through the district website.

**Checkout of Students**

The instructional day is from 8:50 AM until 3:20 PM. Check-outs before 12:06 PM and check-ins after 12:05 PM will count as a school absence for that day as students must be present for 3 ¼ hours to be considered present for the day.

Students checked out early miss important instruction. Early checkouts are recorded on progress reports and monitored by the Attendance Assistant Principal. All students must be

checked out through the front office prior to 3:00 PM. No students will be released to parents from the classroom or a school activity (i.e. Field Day). For the safety of your child, teachers have been instructed not to release students directly to parents at any time. Only those previously authorized by the enrolling parent will be able to check out a student. A photo ID is required to check out a student.

## **Clinic**

If your child has any specific medical needs (such as allergies, asthma, diabetes, etc.), you must have a health management plan completed and on file in the clinic that allows us to address their specific needs.

We make every effort to keep the students in class; therefore, teachers are provided with bandages in their classrooms. For issues that cannot be taken care of in the classroom, first aid will be administered in the clinic. Should your child need medication at school, parents/guardians will need to provide the medication to the clinic in the original container.

**No medications should be in the possession of a child at any time. A Gwinnett County Medication Administration Request Form must be completed and on file for all prescriptions and over the counter medications of any kind.**

If a child becomes sick at school, we will attempt to contact the parents immediately. It is in your child's best interest to have an alternate plan in place in the event we are unable to reach you, or you are unable to pick up your child. **It is imperative that we always have current contact numbers for parents, as well as emergency contacts in the event we are unable to reach you.**

Students will be sent home for a fever over 100.4 degrees and more than one episode of diarrhea or vomiting. Students must be fever free without the use of fever reducing medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

**In the event of an emergency involving your child, and you or the emergency contact person cannot be reached, 911 will be called.**

## **Closing of School**

If inclement weather causes school to be canceled, delayed, or dismissed early, public announcements will be made on GCPS Television, Parent Square, on the school district's website, and via metro-Atlanta radio and television stations. Full-day cancellations usually are announced by 6:00 AM.

## **Communication**

Good communication between home and school is extremely important in providing the best education for our children. Harmony Elementary will use the Parent Square software and email correspondence to send reminders of upcoming school events and/or alerts to any school changes, updates or closings. The school publishes a weekly parent newsletter every Friday. Grade level newsletters are linked to the school newsletter.

## **Messages to Teachers**

Calls will be received by the school between 7:30 AM and 4:15 PM. Messages will be taken for teachers to return the call within 24 hours. Parents can also send messages to teachers via the Parent Square tool. Please note that teachers will not respond to Parent Square messages

during instructional time. If the message is important to be seen within a certain time frame, it is best to call the front office.

### **Parent Visitations**

Our parents are always welcome in our building as we work to promote home/school partnerships. However, parents wishing to visit a classroom for an observation should contact their child's grade level assistant principal to schedule an appointment. Classroom visits may last up to 30 minutes. Advance notice is important as schedules can change. An administrator must be present during the observation. This cooperation will minimize disruptions to all students' instructional programs and activities.

### **Parent Conferences**

The Georgia State Board of Education requires a minimum of two parent teacher conferences per year. These are scheduled for the fall and spring of each year. However, any time you feel the need for a conference with your child's teacher, please do not hesitate to schedule one. Student Support Team Meetings may also be scheduled at parent request.

As a courtesy to the teacher and the other students, please notify the teacher in advance to arrange a mutually convenient time for individual conferences to avoid disrupting the instructional day. Parents may write, email, or call the school to request a teacher conference. Parents may email school employees by using the teacher's name and the Gwinnett suffix. (Ex: FirstName.LastName@[gcpsk12.org](mailto:gcpsk12.org)) Note: Some teachers' email may contain a middle initial. Email addresses are found on the Harmony website. All parents must check-in with the office before going to the classroom.

### **Communication Resources**

There are several communication resources established by Harmony to support home/school communication. Information about signing up for these communications are found on the Harmony website.

Parent Square- District and school information will be sent to your computer or phone via email and/or text via ParentSquare. For even more convenience, download the ParentSquare app (available for free for iOS and Android devices).

Parent Newsletter- Our weekly newsletter is sent out by Dr. Nelson every Friday at 3:00 to communicate important information to parents. This newsletter includes links to grade level weekly newsletters.

ParentVue - The ParentVue portal is how you access your child's attendance, test, course, and discipline history, as well as grades and class notes. You also can update contact information through this portal.

### **Counseling**

The purpose of the Counseling Program is to help promote each student's social-emotional, academic, and career development throughout the year in the following ways:

1. Conducting individual counseling sessions with students when requested by teachers, parents, or students. The counselor may also conference with a student when he/she feels it is necessary.
2. Teaching classroom lessons (10 -12 per year) to all grade levels. The lessons cover Gwinnett County's Office of Advisement and Counseling's Standards and Competencies in academic, career and personal/social development.

3. Conducting small group sessions with students who need academic, social or attendance support (pending parent permission).
4. Consulting with teachers, parents, and administrators about a student's social-emotional, behavior, or academic concerns in order to promote his/her success.
5. Monitoring student attendance and meeting with students and/or parents regarding attendance issues when necessary.
6. Facilitating and supporting student leadership programs.

### **Daycare**

If your child is absent from school, please call your daycare provider to inform them that your child will not be transported that day.

### **Dismissal**

The dismissal bell rings at 3:20 PM to release car riders. We will dismiss students from two different locations. Students riding the bus will be dismissed from the doors in the front of the building in bus loads. Car riders will be dismissed from the exit doors on the north side of the building. Students will not be allowed to re-enter the building after 4:15 PM to pick up forgotten items such as books, lunch boxes, coats, and water bottles. We encourage students to learn responsibility in remembering items when leaving for the day.

### **Late Pick Up/Returned Students**

Students may be returned to the school on the bus because no one is at home to meet them or students are not picked up on time as a car rider. The school will manage the situation by contacting parent(s), guardian or emergency contact for pick up. Repeated incidents of late pick-up/returned bus students may warrant a referral to DFACS.

### **Early Release**

Students will be dismissed at 12:45 PM on the four Early Release days (see calendar for dates) for Parent/Teacher Conferences.

### **Dress Code for Students**

Students are expected to dress in a manner appropriate for the school setting and activities. Clothing should set the tone for learning. Any appearance, which distracts from a proper learning environment is considered inappropriate. Clothing advertising drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, and/or depicting violence or inappropriate language is not permissible. No hats, bandanas, or hoods are to be worn in the building unless it is a planned school activity or fundraising event. For safety reasons, roller shoes are not permitted. Shirts and pants/jeans should fit properly so that inappropriate exposure does not occur. Clothing and shoes must be appropriate for outside recess and PE class. Students are encouraged to wear their school spiritwear on Fridays. If students do not follow the school dress code, they will be sent to the clinic for a change of clothing OR a parent will be called to bring a change of clothes.

### **Field Trips**

Each grade level may participate in field trips which are linked to classroom learning and the AKS curriculum. Expenses (if applicable) are requested to cover class sponsored field trips. No child is denied the opportunity to participate for not being able to contribute toward the trip cost. However, if sufficient funds are not collected, it may be necessary to cancel a planned field trip.

### **Homework**

Home study is essential to each student's educational program. Parents are advised to plan and supervise daily study time at home. It is a way to keep parents informed and involved with the

child's school work, along with being a method for helping students establish self-discipline and study skills. The primary homework assigned to students is an expectation of nightly reading at home. Every child should spend at least 20 minutes reading nightly. Research recommends that students should read for 90 minutes a day to maintain their reading abilities. Classroom teachers will set expectations for daily reading and provide students with materials. Additionally, classroom teachers may send home study guides or other assignments that can help students review for upcoming assessments.

### **Ice Cream and Snack**

Students will have an opportunity for a daily snack break. Please send in a nutritious, hand-held snack. Some examples are cheese and crackers, fruit, granola bar, etc.

In accordance with the GCPS Board Policy, only ice cream may be sold to elementary students. Ice cream is \$1.00 and may be purchased in the cafeteria during your child's lunchtime on Friday.

### **Lost and Found**

Lost items are taken to the front desk for lost and found. The front office takes pictures of lost and found items which are posted on our school newsletter. Students should go to the front office to check in the lost and found closet to claim lost items. Unclaimed items will be donated quarterly to charitable organizations. Please help us with lost and found by labeling items such as coats, sweatshirts, lunch boxes, and water bottles.

### **Media Center**

The media center has books for assigned study and recreational reading. It is open for use the entire school day.

Students are responsible for returning the books they check out within two weeks. Students who lose or damage a library book (beyond use) are required to pay \$15.00 to replace a hardcover book and \$5.00 to replace a paperback book. Parents are able to see the books that are checked out to their child through ParentVue.

Students who have an overdue book or need to pay for a damaged / lost book will not be able to check out another book until the previous book is returned or paid for in full.

Students are encouraged to use the media center for research. Gwinnett County provides research databases that can be accessed from school and from home through the student portal.

Students can also read eBooks from home. They can be found in the Online Research Library and Media Catalog on the student's portal.

### **Mobility Impaired/Handicapped Accessibility**

Harmony Elementary School wishes to meet the needs of all of our students and families. If any member of your family needs assistance or has any questions regarding mobility impairment issues or handicapped access, please contact the school at 770-945-7272.

### **Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**

Harmony uses PBIS to support our school climate and establish expectations for students. Our focus is to be a school that fosters and maximizes learning time by acknowledging and

encouraging positive behaviors throughout the school day. By modeling, teaching, and displaying positive behaviors in the classroom and at home, teachers, parents, and students can work together harmoniously for success. We put our students first, to teach and model positive attitudes, behaviors, creative thinking, responsibility for learning, and compassion for others. As Harmony Jaguars learn to be respectful, responsible, and role models, they will have multiple opportunities to be recognized for displaying these expectations throughout different areas in the building and school day.

Teachers use Synergy Behavior points to recognize students for demonstrating expected behaviors in the classroom and throughout the school. Every two weeks students can cash in behavior points at the PBIS Online Store. Harmony provides students with feedback and acknowledgement in several ways. Each month, teachers nominate a student as Jag of the Month for demonstrating the focused character trait. Harmony hosts Jag of the Month celebrations where parents and students are invited to celebrate this recognition. Additionally, classes earn compliments from staff throughout the common school-wide locations for demonstrating our expectations of being respectful, responsible and role models. Each month a Class of the Month is recognized for earning compliments and receives a trophy for the month.

### **Phone Protocol**

The Gwinnett County Board of Education (BOE) permits students to have in their possession an electronic communication device on a limited basis. However, it is not permitted for students to use a personal electronic communications device during school hours or on a school bus. Students may use school phones in the front office to call home when necessary, with the permission of their teacher or an administrator. We do not permit students to receive phone calls during the day, as this distracts from the learning environment. All student phones should be turned off and kept in the child's bookbag.

### **Physical Education**

Any student not able to participate in PE should bring a statement from the doctor stating the reason for not participating. Make sure your child is dressed appropriately and wears the appropriate athletic shoes (no crocs, flip flops, boots, high-heeled shoes, or open sandals). Safe play and sportsmanship are expected during PE class and Teacher-Directed PE.

### **Report Cards**

Students will be graded on a semester system. Report Cards will be issued after the first semester (Winter Break) and second semester. Progress reports will be provided throughout the year, and grades may also be checked via ParentVue.

#### **Kindergarten & First Grading Scale:**

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

#### **2nd - 5th Grading Scale:**

|               |     |   |
|---------------|-----|---|
| 90% and above | A   | shall indicate excellent progress                                     |
| 80%-89%       | B   | shall indicate above average progress                                 |
| 70%-79%       | C   | shall indicate average progress                                       |
| 0%-69%        | U/F | shall indicate unsatisfactory progress/failure of acceptable progress |

### **Student Recognition**

Students on the Principal's Honor Roll, Honor Roll, Jaguar Citizen Award List, and Perfect Attendance will be recognized at the end of each semester.

#### Principal's Honor Roll

Grades 2-5: All As

Grades K-1: All Es

Effort and Conduct grades not considered.

#### Honor Roll

Grades 2-5: All As or Bs

K-1: All Es or Ss

Effort and Conduct grades not considered.

#### Perfect Attendance Award

Students who had perfect attendance for the semester. Tardies are not counted for this award.

#### Jaguar Citizenship Award

Each teacher selects students who show exemplary citizenship in class for this award.

### **Safety and Security**

All doors at Harmony are locked. All visitors to the school must request entry by being "buzzed" in using the visitor management system which is located on the brick wall near the main front doors. Our Visitor Management System is intended to enhance the safety and security of both students and staff by establishing greater door control at the primary entrance to the school. Visitors and guests will need to press the button on the entry device outside. Our front office team will respond via phone to one visitor at a time. Please do not hold the door open for other visitors. Once the guest/visitor states their business, they will be buzzed into the vestibule (the second layer of security). Once inside, the visitor/guest will place their ID into our Raptor device and if appropriate, they will be buzzed into the school lobby. Please make sure you have your ID out and ready to ensure efficient entry. Our front office team will assist one visitor at a time.

To ensure a smooth-running and safe school, anyone entering the building for any reason must report to the office and sign-in. When visiting a classroom, eating lunch with a student, checking-in/checking-out a student, or attending a meeting during school hours, picture ID is required. We will also check to verify if the visitor's name is on the list of parent approved contacts. If a visitor's name is not on the list, then a school staff member will contact the parent for verbal permission. All visitors must wear a visitor's badge while in the building. Any visitor who is not wearing a visitor's badge will be escorted to the front office. Parents should not return to the classrooms with students after visiting for lunch. Visitors need to check-out from the front office/lobby before leaving.

We welcome and encourage consistent parent communication with the teacher; however, parents are not able to visit the classroom in the morning or during the day to talk with the teacher or drop something off. Appointments must be scheduled in advance with the teacher. When appointments are scheduled, the teacher will notify the front office he/she is expecting a parent. If you want to discuss the progress of your child, you should call, send an email, or make a conference appointment at a time when class is not in session. Staff hours are 8:00 - 4:00. If there is an immediate concern, please ask to speak with the grade level assistant principal. Thank you for carefully following these procedures for the safety of our students and

staff.

## **School Council**

School Councils were established in all Georgia schools as part of The A+Reform Act of 2000. The intent of School Councils “is to bring communities and schools closer together in a spirit of cooperation...and bring parents into the school-based decision-making process.” The role of the School Council will be to provide “advice, recommendations, assistance, and represent the community of parents and businesses.” We believe this shared decision-making council can arouse citizen interest in educational affairs, involve citizens in making decisions confronting their schools, and develop better understanding among school, home, and staff, which will ultimately result in the improvement of education.

This council is made up of the principal, two teachers, two parents, and two business partners. All meetings are open and will be posted. Everyone is invited to attend and offer his or her comments and concerns. Check Harmony’s website for School Council meeting dates/times.

## **Student Records**

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 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 the rights just listed. To obtain a copy of Gwinnett County’s policies on their compliance with the law, or to request the opportunity to inspect and review your child’s records, contact the school.

## **Technology**

Students have many opportunities to use technology to enhance the curriculum. Students have access to computer software and the Internet connectivity in their classrooms and media center. At Harmony, the Internet is used for academic purposes only. All students who have access to the Internet will be required to have on file an updated (yearly) AUP (Acceptable Use Policy) form. Safeguards are in place to help prevent access to inappropriate information and pictures on the Internet. Students may go to sites designated by the teacher and are responsible for following the teacher’s instructions. Failure to use the Internet properly may result in the loss of privileges with technology.

For the 2025-2026 school year, students will be issued a GCPS Chromebook for instructional use. When not in use, students will place it in the classroom cart or in their bookbag at home. The Chromebook is property of Gwinnett County Public Schools and is on loan to any child for the purpose of accessing school resources. Students are responsible for caring for their Chromebook and should take precautions to keep the equipment in good working condition. Students should not eat/drink near the Chromebook and not place stickers on it. Students should not let anyone else use their Chromebook, nor share GCPS usernames and/or passwords. Students are expected to follow the Student Conduct Behavior Code and Responsible Use of Technology and Electronic Media found within the GCPS Handbook when using the Chromebook at school and at home.

## **Transportation**

State Law provides two ways students can be brought to and from school. One is by school bus, which we recommend. The other is for parents to bring their children to and from school by car. In doing so, parents must follow the car rider plan that is established by Harmony.

The safety of a child while walking to, from and waiting at the bus stop is the parent's responsibility. Students are assigned to the bus stop closest to their home address. All students will be issued a transportation tag that shows the child's primary mode of transportation for dismissal. This tag must be on the child's book bag at all times. The school must be notified in writing to request a transportation change different from the original agreement made at the time of enrollment.

## **Visitor Parking**

Visitor parking is available in both the front of the school and side lot of the school building. The side lot may be accessed off of East Maddox Road. Handicapped parking is located at the front parking lot as well as the parking lot behind the school. Parked cars must be in designated spaces. Please do not park in the front bus lane. We also ask that you not park in the "Reserved" spots.

Efforts are made to ensure parking lot security; however, Harmony Elementary School and Gwinnett County Public schools assume no responsibility for damages, loss, or theft. If a car accident occurs on campus, it is up to the individuals involved to report the accident to school officials and the police to settle damages.

## **Withdrawal Procedures**

Contact Leslie Preveaux, Harmony's Student Data Management Clerk, to help complete the GCPS Elementary withdrawal form. Students are responsible for the return of library books, and any outstanding charges (cafeteria, lost books, etc.) at this time. You will be given a copy of the withdrawal form to take to the new school.

Upon receiving a signed "Release of Record" form from the transferring school, the student's records will be released to the new school.