

2025-2026 Title I Communication Student Handbook

Gilbert Elementary School
520 Main Street
Gilbert, South Carolina 29054



Stephen Deyo, Principal
Matthew Duke, Assistant Principal
Mark Garner, Assistant Principal
Ashley LaRoche, Assistant Principal

Phone: 803-821-1600

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Visit us on the web at ges.lexington1.net & X @gilbert_elem

This GES Communication Agenda belongs to:

Lexington County School District One - Nondiscrimination Statement

Lexington County School District One is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for all students, parents/legal guardians, staff, visitors, personnel and community members who participate or seek to participate in its programs or activities. Therefore, the district does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, or any related medical conditions), color, disability, age, genetic information, national origin, or any other applicable status protected by local, state, or federal law. The district will use the grievance procedures set forth in policy to process complaints based on alleged violations of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; the Equal Pay Act of 1963; the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008; and Titles I and II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The district designates specific individuals to handle inquiries or complaints. To find out who to contact and how to contact them, please go to our website at <http://www.lexington1.net/contact-us>.

Lexington County School District One

100 Tarrar Springs Rd., Lexington, SC 29072
803-821-1000

Dr. Keith Price, Superintendent
Mary Gaskins, Chief Academic Officer
Devona Price, Chief Human Resources Officer
Libby Roof, Chief Communications Officer

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A Message from Mr. Stephen Deyo – Principal of Gilbert Elementary School

Welcome to the Gilbert Elementary School family! As Principal, it's truly an honor to lead such a supportive and caring community. Our commitment at GES is to provide every student with world-class academic experiences, all aligned with the Lexington One Graduate Profile. We achieve this by working hand-in-hand with our community, aligning with both our school's unique vision and mission, and the broader strategic plan of Lexington One. We firmly believe that your child's success at GES thrives on the positive partnerships we build together. We warmly invite you to become an active part of our school by visiting and volunteering as often as you can – you are always welcome here! Your engagement is vital, and we encourage you to communicate openly with us. Join us for after-school events, family fun nights, and our Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) and School Improvement Council (SIC) meetings, which are always open to the public.

From the moment your child steps through our doors, they will become familiar with our SCOUT behavior matrix. This acronym stands for Safe, Caring, On-Task, United, and Trustworthy. The SCOUT matrix provides a clear, common language and universal procedures for teaching and responding to student behaviors across our school. You'll frequently hear adults at GES say, "Remember to use your SCOUT behaviors!" To ensure a smooth and successful year for everyone, we respectfully ask that you review all the important information provided in this agenda. Familiarity with both Lexington One's policies (accessible online via the district's website) and Gilbert Elementary's specific procedures is critical for you and your child. If you don't have internet access at home but wish to review district policies, please feel free to use a computer at the school.

Whether you're a returning GES family or new to our wonderful school, I extend a heartfelt welcome to the 2025-2026 school year! Remember – your presence makes a difference. Together, we can build an even better GES!

PRESCHOOL STAFF

Cara Burton, Mandy Drew & Kim Mills
Elizabeth Tisdale, Sharon Desmarais & Doris Holmes

4K STAFF

Amy Butler/Michelle Johns
Angie Crouch/Whitney Baker
Tiffany Seigler/Kristen Shealy
Brittany Summer/Angie Jones

K-5 High Support

Morgan Humphries
Leah Evans
Kelly Beres
Kristy Hutson
Pam Francis
Micaiah Daniels
Miranda Allen
Destiny Neblo
Karen Goss
Tremaine Frazier

KINDERGARTEN STAFF

Anna Williams, Francy Sallings
Mandy Grigsby, Cathy Sciascia
Heather Bradwell/Caycee Kneece
Diane Shealy (5K ELA Immersion)/Lindsay Comer
Fiorella Sancho (5K Spanish Immersion)/Eli Betanzos

1st GRADE STAFF

Christie Gross
Whitaker Johnston
Melissa Crumpton (1st Grade ELA Immersion)
Marxi Cala (1st Grade Spanish Immersion)
Lizbeth Vanbogelen
Taylor Becker
Lisa Yarbrough

2nd GRADE STAFF

Jenna Grace Beiers
Hannah Rutledge
Susan Shoaf
Kody Taylor
Tori Matthews(2nd Grade ELA Immersion)
Adela Rivera (2nd Grade Spanish Immersion)

3rd Grade STAFF

Summer Hedrick
Melissa Clagg
Selena Fischer
Jenn Racey
Alice Wilson (ELA Immersion)
Mireya Otero (Spanish Immersion)
Tina Koon

4th Grade STAFF

Jordan Carpenter
Katie Larson
Shelley Miller
Chrystie Singleton
Kelly Sharpe
Lisa Bustle (ELA Immersion)
Laura Diaz Gonzalez (Spanish Immersion)

5th Grade STAFF

Sandra Ott
Cindy Williams
Amanda Barker(ELA Immersion)
Cecilia Moreno (Spanish Immersion)
Heidi Bone
Steven Sanders

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM

Debra Dele Crews, Librarian
Jessica McMurray, Literacy Coach
Heather Barahona, Math Coach
Erin McMillan, EAGLES
Christina Hall, ESOL
Wendi Walsh, ESOL
Parker Smith, Technician
Kelly Roberts, Library Assistant

INTERVENTIONISTS

Maggie Williams, Interventionist
Lillian Aleman, Interventionist
Allison Granish-Lee, Interventionist
Michaelann Large, Interventionist
Amy Williams, Interventionist
Elianny Sanchez, Immersion Interventionist

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEAM

Kayla Hall, Psychologist
Heather Morris, Psychologist
Jessica Lindbom, Pre-School Psychologist
Kimberly Burkett, Resource
Tracy Harte, Resource
Carolyn Cooley, Resource
Amber Anderson, Speech
Jennifer Golden, Speech
Cecilia Claytor, Speech
Elise Johnson, Preschool Speech
Emily Marshall, OT
Sophia Wijthoff, PT

ENCORE STAFF

Angie Kelly, Teaching for Artistic Behavior (TAB)
Jessica Ridenhour, STEM/Computer Science
Lisa Baker, General Music
Wade Hasty, Spanish
Coach Mitch Hudson, PE
Coach Ben Duvall, PE
Jennifer Parker, Innovation Design Lab

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Stephen Deyo, Principal
Ashley LaRoche, Assistant Principal (PK-2nd)
Mark Garner, Assistant Principal (3rd-5th)
Matthew Duke, Assistant Principal

OFFICE STAFF

Sherry Hollis, Student Records
Kim Moore, Federal Compliance Specialist
Kristina Harrelson, Attendance
Debra Lawson, Main Office
Wendy Turner, Executive Secretary
Leslie Dodson, Secretarial Assistant
Lucy Ortiz, Title I Project Specialist

COUNSELORS & NURSES

Holly Warren, Counselor 4K, K, 1
Mackenzie Hall, Counselor 4K, 3rd, 4th
Amber McMillan, Counselor 4K, 2nd, 4th Imm, 5th
Rebecca Spell - School Nurse
Carrie DiGieso, Nurse Assistant

CUSTODIAL STAFF

Walter Guzman, Head Custodian
Felix Rangel-Salinas, Assistant Custodian
Dondra Boswell, Housekeeper
Ashley Mullins, Housekeeper
Sharon Brunson, Housekeeper
Bridget Johnson, Housekeeper
Rodney Cain, Housekeeper

CAFETERIA STAFF

Jackie Roof, Manager
Maria Aguilera, Operator
Keisha Norwood, Operator
Debra Meier, Operator
Clayton Roberts, Operator
Angie Kaminer, Operator
Christina Richard, Operator

Gilbert Elementary School Vision

Gilbert Elementary will be a thriving, inclusive school where every child will be empowered to achieve their full academic and personal potential, cultivating a lifelong passion for learning.

Important Notes

For the safety of our students, we require that all parents and visitors report to our secured entrance upon entering the building. Each visitor will be asked to sign in and wear a visitor's badge while on our campus. All visitors will need to have their driver's license available to sign in each time they come to our campus.

If you send money to school for any reason, please send it in an envelope with your child's name, your child's teacher's name, the amount of money, and the reason for the money. Also, please label coats, jackets, sweaters, hoodies, backpacks, lunch boxes, etc. that your child may bring to school.

Gilbert Elementary School, like all schools in Lexington County School District One, is a **smoke-free campus**. Parents, visitors, and staff members are not permitted to smoke on the GES campus, including in parking lots, car line, or bus line. This also **includes electronic devices**.

We will continue to implement the Breakfast in the Classroom program. This means 100% of our students have the opportunity to enjoy a FREE breakfast in their classroom before school begins each day. Breakfast options will be available to students. Students will eat breakfast in their classroom from 7:15 a.m. until 7:30 a.m. Please have your child to school prior to 7:30 a.m. if you want him/her to eat breakfast. At 7:30 a.m., instruction will begin immediately after our news show. Breakfast will not be served in the cafeteria in the morning. Due to breakfast being served in the classrooms, parents will not be able to join their children for breakfast.

Due to allergies and respiratory conditions of some students and staff members, we respectfully ask you to refrain from using fragrances when visiting GES.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

We know that traffic can be a headache and we have organized our arrival and dismissal traffic patterns in a way that best meets the needs of everyone while also ensuring the safety of our students. Our goals are to provide a safe and organized environment for all students, to provide for student accountability, and to conduct arrival and dismissal in an orderly and timely manner. Since many parents choose to drive their children to and from school each day, drivers should expect traffic congestion in the mornings and afternoons.

Morning Car Drop-Off Procedures

Our doors open at 7:00 am and that's the earliest students can be dropped off. Access our front car line by entering the GES campus from our entrance on Main Street. Follow the car line as it travels parallel to Main Street and then loops back toward the school. Please note that our car line has two lanes and cars will be traveling in the same direction in both lanes. This can be confusing to first-time visitors. As you approach the curve that will lead you to the main drop-off point in front of the school, you will see traffic cones and signs on either side of the car line that say "Begin Alternate Merge." **It's very important that your child is ready to depart from the vehicle safely but quickly**

when you pull up to the drop-off point.

Children should exit their vehicle from the **passenger side only** so they can step safely and directly onto the sidewalk. Children should never exit their vehicle from the driver's side, as cars may be passing your vehicle on that side. As soon as your child has safely exited the vehicle onto the sidewalk, please pull forward to keep the traffic moving.

If your child should need extra time or assistance, please park in a parking space while you assist your child and then safely walk with your child to the staff member on duty at the crosswalk.

Please do not use the front parking lot or any other non-designated area to drop children off or pick children up, including the area near the dumpsters, as our top priority is to keep everyone on our campus safe.

Afternoon Car Pick-Up Procedures

Our dismissal process begins at 2:15 pm with afternoon announcements. Cars will line up in both lanes of the car line up to the "Begin Alternate Merge" signs and a single line of cars will continue past the front doors of the school. When dismissal begins, GES staff members will be positioned on duty in the car line. A staff member will help facilitate the alternate merge process by allowing ten cars from one lane to move forward, followed by ten cars from the other lane and so on. **It's very important not to switch lanes in the afternoons, as students are being lined up in the lobby in the same order of cars in the car line.**

Bus Conduct

Riding the bus is a privilege. Students who ride a school bus must observe school bus rules, remain seated and conduct themselves in an orderly manner at all times. Students who break any bus rules are subject to disciplinary action. Depending on the severity of the rule broken, a student may lose their bus privilege, be suspended or expelled from the bus.

Bus Transportation

The District Coordinator of Transportation arranges all bus transportation. Any questions concerning bus numbers, schedules, bus stops, etc. for GES should be referred to the Gilbert Transportation Office (821-1351). If a student wishes to ride home on any bus other than the one he/she normally rides, send a written note to the school or call the office at 821-1600 to make that change.

After School Care

Our after school care provider on campus for the 2025-2026 school year will be AlphaBest. If you choose to use this option for after school care, they will care for your children in our school from dismissal until 6:00 pm each day. You can find details on cost and registration on the AlphaBest website - <https://www.alphabest.org/lexington1sc/>.

Attendance

Students should be present in school each day and on time. **When the tardy bell rings at 7:30 am, students should already be in class in order for optimum learning to take place.** Students will be

excused from school only for the following reasons: illness, medical or dental appointments, death in the immediate family, recognized religious holidays, participation in approved school events or activities or unusual circumstances approved by the principal. **Within three (3) days of an absence, students must bring a written note that explains the reason for the absence and is signed by the parent, guardian, or physician.**

Students are responsible for making-up assignments given to them by their teacher and these need to be made up in a timely manner. For students who will be missing more than three (3) days due to illness and special circumstances, teachers will be glad to assemble make-up work to be completed at home. Parents should call the school office in advance to give the teacher sufficient time to get all of the materials together. Parents should call the school to make sure the materials are in the office and ready for pick-up prior to coming to the school.

After a student has **three (3) consecutive unexcused absences or a total of five (5) unexcused absences**, school officials must develop a plan to improve the student's attendance. Together with the student and the parent/guardian, the school must:

- Discover the reason(s) for the unexcused absences
- Work out methods to resolve the cause(s)
- Determine the action(s) to be taken if the unexcused absences continue
- Show evidence that an attempt was made to involve the parent/guardian

If more than ten (10) unexcused absences are recorded for any student (kindergarten through grade 12), the student must be referred to a truancy prevention program or to Family Court. The South Carolina Compulsory Attendance Law defines this action.

Should this become necessary, the principal must notify the parent/guardian and provide him/her a chance to present evidence or information on appeal before the enforcement action is taken. The parent/guardian has three (3) school days from the receipt of this notice to appeal. Meanwhile, the principal will notify the district superintendent (or his/her designee) that enforcement has been initiated.

All absences, whether excused or unexcused, are approved or disapproved by the principal. The principal's decision may be appealed by the superintendent (or his/her designee) and, for final determination, to the school board. Elementary student promotion decisions will be based on consideration broader than attendance alone. If you have any questions regarding school attendance, please contact any of the school administrators.

Gilbert Elementary School

%Present	Days Present	Days Absent	Month(s) Absent	Effect
100%	180 Days of Learning	0 Days Absent	0	Great!
95%	171 Days of Learning	9 Days Absent	½ Month Absent	Great!
90%	162 Days of Learning	18 Days Absent	1 Month Absent	Less time to absorb new content and progress towards goals
85%	153 Days of Learning	27 Days Absent	1 ½ Months Absent	Less time to absorb new content and progress towards goals
80%	144 Days of Learning	36 Days Absent	2 Months Absent	Some content will be missed which inhibits progress towards goals
70%	126 Days of Learning	54 Days Absent	3 Months Absent	Reduced opportunity for interventions to support progress towards goals due to attendance rate
Below 70%	Less than 126 Days of Learning	More than 54 days absent	Over 3 months absent	

Tardy Students

The tardy bell rings at 7:30 am daily. Students must be in their classroom at 7:30 when the tardy bell rings and the teacher calls the roll to take attendance. Students who arrive after the tardy bell rings must be signed in at our secure entrance by a parent or guardian. If you arrive after 7:30, please park in a designated parking space and **walk your child into the school to sign him or her in**. This year you must scan your license when walking them up. Students can not be dropped off and walk in on their own.

Bedtime Guide		WAKE UP TIME							
		6:00	6:15	6:30	6:45	7:00	7:15	7:30	
Recommended Hours of Sleep	AGE		BED TIME						
	11-12	5	6:45	7:00	7:15	7:30	7:45	8:00	8:15
		6	7:00	7:15	7:30	7:45	8:00	8:15	8:30
	At least 10	7	7:15	7:30	7:45	8:00	8:15	8:30	8:45
		8	7:30	7:45	8:00	8:15	8:30	8:45	9:00
		9	7:45	8:00	8:15	8:30	8:45	9:00	9:15
		10	8:00	8:15	8:30	8:45	9:00	9:15	9:30
		11	8:15	8:30	8:45	9:00	9:15	9:30	9:45
		12	8:30	8:45	9:00	9:15	9:30	9:45	10:00
	9-10	13	8:45	9:00	9:15	9:30	9:45	10:00	10:15
		14	9:00	9:15	9:30	9:45	10:00	10:15	10:30
		15	9:15	9:30	9:45	10:00	10:15	10:30	10:45
		16	9:30	9:45	10:00	10:15	10:30	10:45	11:00
		17	9:45	10:00	10:15	10:30	10:45	11:00	11:15

Early Dismissals

Students will be dismissed at 2:20 pm daily and 11:20 am on Collaborative Planning days. Please avoid early dismissals except in emergencies since students who leave early miss valuable instruction and teachers may not be able to stop their instruction to prepare missed assignments or homework. However, if a parent must pick up their child during the school day, they must come to the secured entrance in order to present their drivers license or ID and properly sign the child out of school. No early dismissals will be made after 1:50 p.m. You are your child's first and most important teacher. Please join us by reinforcing the importance of instructional time.

Please note Collaborative Planning days are on the following Wednesdays: Sept. 10, Oct. 1, Nov. 12, Jan. 28, Feb. 25, and Mar. 25. If your child will be going home a different way on collaborative planning days, please communicate this with your child's teacher at least one to two days in advance.

Changes in Transportation

Prior to school beginning, parents will complete an Arrival/Departure form indicating the primary means of transportation. **Changes to transportation need to be made in writing on the day of the change on a separate piece of paper noting the child's full name, the teacher's name, and the complete way home (ex: bus number and address) with parent's signature.** All changes must be made in writing in this format to help us ensure all children arrive safely at home each day.

Change in Family Information

Parents are asked to keep mailing addresses, ALL phone numbers, email addresses, place of employment, legal custody rights, and emergency contact information up to date and accurate at all times. Please notify the school office (803-821-1600) immediately in the event of any changes in these important family information issues. The office has an official document that needs to be

completed and returned to update this information. Due to safety concerns and the potential need to contact a parent in an emergency situation, this updating of information is very important. **Please do this promptly when a change occurs.**

Communication

Effective school-home communication and related family involvement in education contribute to improved student achievement and better learning outcomes. GES has a communication plan in place to communicate with our families.

1. **ParentSquare** is a comprehensive communication platform that engages every family with school communications and communications based services from the district office and the classroom teacher, all in one location.
2. **The Sunday Afternoon Message** is a combination phone, email, and text message that is sent to all families, faculty, and staff on Sundays at 4:00 pm. The message is usually no more than 2-3 minutes and includes news, events, and reminders about the upcoming week. A text message is included to remind families to check their voicemail and email.
3. Gilbert Elementary School employees can be reached by dialing the school's main **telephone number** or by entering an employee's specific extension. The school's main number is (803) 821-1600. Teachers cannot answer the phone during instruction, but will return communication within 24 hours.
4. All employees of Lexington County School District One have a professional **email** account that allows them to send and receive messages.
5. Gilbert Elementary School is able to send and receive **faxes** when necessary. The school's fax number is (803) 821-1603.
6. Gilbert Elementary School's **mailing address** is 520 Main Street, Gilbert, South Carolina 29054.
7. Visitors are welcome! If you drop by without an **appointment**, there's a chance we may be available to meet with you. It's always better to schedule an appointment so we can devote the appropriate amount of time and attention to you. If you would like to observe your student during class, you must do so in advance and observe with an administrator present.
8. Parents and guardians can log directly into **PowerSchool** to view grades and other student information. PowerSchool is a web-based application. If you need help with PowerSchool, contact Student Data Specialist, Sherry Hollis.
9. Lexington One uses **Peachjar**, a web-based flier management system, to send flyers for the school, PTO, and others who are approved through the district. Information from the district office on each of these is available on the district's website. You may also contact the school if you have any questions.
10. Regular **conferences** and/or conversations between parents/guardians and teachers provide an

excellent opportunity to discuss the many details about the child's school experiences that cannot be conveyed on the nine weeks progress report. Parents are encouraged to schedule conferences with teachers to share information about their child and to gain a better understanding of how their child is performing at school. In addition to regular contact between home and school, the district designates a day for parent-teacher conferences each fall and spring. This year the conferences will be held in October and February.

Contacting Your Child's Teacher

If you have any concerns (major or minor), please contact your child's teacher. Your child's teacher wants to know your concerns so they can be addressed. It is important that we work together to ensure the best year for your child. Please contact your child's teacher with a written note, phone call, or email. Your child's teacher will share his/her email address with you. Due to the fast pace of the instructional day and the need to provide active supervision, your child's teacher will respond to your email or phone call during a time when he/she is not instructing students. Depending on the time and nature of the contact, it may be the following day before the teacher can respond. Our goal is to have a 24-hour response time.

Dress

We understand that choosing school clothes can sometimes be a challenge, and we want to partner with you to ensure a great learning environment for everyone. Our dress code is in place to help all students feel comfortable, safe, and focused throughout the school day.

We ask that you help us by making sure your child's clothing is suitable for all school activities, including recess and P.E (No Flip Flops). This means ensuring clothes are a proper length and fit, and that they don't feature any inappropriate images or messages. We also ask that students wear shoes that are secure on their feet and have appropriate undergarments. To keep everyone safe, we do not allow shoes with wheels or backpacks with wheels. In addition, hats and hoods are not to be worn inside the building, except on special school-designated "Hat Days."

If a student's attire becomes distracting to others or doesn't meet these guidelines, we'll reach out to you to bring a change of clothes. Your help in monitoring your child's clothing before school is greatly appreciated and helps us avoid disruptions to their learning.

Bullying

Bullying is the ongoing intentional misuse of power through verbal, physical, and/or social behavior with intent to cause harm. Bullying disrupts a school's ability to educate students and threatens public safety. We believe all students have a right to learn in a safe, supportive environment that is free from harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Reports of being OR witnessing bullying **should be reported to an adult immediately.**

Discipline

Our school must be a place where safe, effective learning can occur. We maintain standards of conduct and discipline because students and staff have a right to a safe and orderly learning environment. Students are expected to conduct themselves properly at all times within the school, on the playground or any school site, while going to and from school or on any school related outing.

Students will be taught and expected to use SCOUT behaviors. The acronym SCOUT stands for **Safe, Caring, On-Task, United, and Trustworthy.**

While positive reinforcements will be in place for appropriate/desired behaviors, there will be times that consequences for infractions require verbal reminders, verbal reprimands and/or removal from group/reassign seating or line order, participation in formal practice session, conference with parent, or referral to an administrator for other consequences.

School personnel commit to maintaining close communication with parents regarding disciplinary issues involving their children. Parents are asked to support the school's efforts to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment by enforcing all disciplinary policies. Staff members and parents will work together to correct any disciplinary problems that may develop. Corporal punishment will not be administered by anyone at Gilbert Elementary School.

Weapons

Please talk with your child to make sure he/she understands that weapons (including pocket knives or anything sharp such as knives, fish hooks) and look-alike weapons (water guns, toy knives, etc.) cannot be brought to school for any reason. **Any student who brings a weapon, component of a weapon, or look-alike weapon, to school faces disciplinary action, which could include suspension and/or a recommendation for expulsion from school.** Also, please talk with your child about what he/she should do if he/she sees another student with such a weapon. Let your child know to tell an adult immediately.

Student Behavior Matrix and SCOUT Behaviors

We have a school-wide student behavior matrix in place that allows our students to learn expectations for behavior as well as being good leaders. While developing power skills and being responsible, students are expected to be **safe, caring, on-task, united, and trustworthy** in the various areas of the school. Students are expected to monitor their own behavior by making good choices and accepting consequences for poor choices. The behavior matrix guides decisions for consequences of improper behaviors.

Classroom Visitation by Parents

You are an essential part of your child's education. Please contact your child's teacher and/or the appropriate grade level assistant principal at a minimum of 2 days prior to your classroom visit. The visit will be for a set amount of time with an administrator present.

Pledge of Allegiance

During GES Live, our morning news show, students and staff will recite the Pledge of Allegiance in English and in Spanish and then observe a moment of silence. South Carolina law requires this. We ask that if you are visiting campus during this time that you stand quietly in the hallway, office, or classroom where you are located when this is happening.

Emergency School Closings

Emergency closings are announced by ParentSquare, Social Media (Facebook and X), school and district websites and television stations. Please listen to the radio or television for announcements. Do not call the school to obtain this information. Gilbert Elementary School is located in Lexington County School District One.

Lost and Found

Please label your child's coats, sweaters, lunch boxes, and book bags with their first and last name, so they can be returned to your child if found. If an item is found at school and is not labeled, it is placed in the lost and found area located near our gym. Students may check the cart when they discover they are missing an item. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity at the end of each semester.

Forgotten Items

Forgotten assignments, books, or other items brought to the secure entrance will be placed in the teacher's box. Parents will not be allowed to deliver the items to the classroom. Due to the interruption it would cause to instruction in the classroom, students will not be called to the office. Lunch boxes brought to the secure entrance should have the student's name and teacher's name taped to the lunch box.

Class Parties

Birthday parties may not be held in class. Invitations to private parties may not be distributed at school unless the entire class is invited. Store bought sealed treats may be shared with class during lunch.

Birthday Book Club

In honor of your child's birthday, parents and guardians may purchase a book for our school library. Parents pay a set fee and the student or parent selects a book to be donated from a collection of books in the library. The child's name and birthdate are placed on the bookplate in the front of the donated book. The child is allowed to be the first to check out the donated book. Once the book is returned, it becomes part of the regular collection for everyone to enjoy. The child's name and picture will be displayed in the library. Contact our school librarian, Debra Dele Crews, if you are interested in participating in this wonderful program. Thank you for supporting literacy at GES!

Cafeteria

The Gilbert Elementary School cafeteria stresses good nutrition and follows the patterns for meals as advised by the United States Department of Agriculture. Each meal is prepared to fit the guidelines established. Extra sale items also meet these criteria.

Student Meal Prices for 2025-2026:

Elementary Breakfast \$1.90* Lunch \$3.40

Middle/High Breakfast \$1.90 Lunch \$3.40

Reduced Price Breakfast \$0.40 Lunch \$0.50



Free and Reduced
Student Lunch Sign Up

Adult Meal Prices for 2025-2026:

Breakfast: \$3.10

Lunch: \$5.27

**All students at GES eat breakfast at no charge with our Breakfast in the Classroom Program.*

Meal prices are set based on guidance from the United States Department of Agriculture's Paid Lunch Equity Program.

No variations from the school menu will be allowed unless a written prescription from a doctor is provided to the food service manager. Menus will be available each month on the school's web page. Sometimes failed shipments or other emergencies may necessitate changes in daily menus. Whenever possible, the school will notify parents and students of such changes in advance. If a parent brings a forgotten lunch box to school, it should be dropped off in the secure entrance with the child's name and teacher's name taped to the lunchbox. All students must eat during the lunch period. If a meal is not brought from home, a school meal will be provided to the child. Our cafeteria sends written notice of meal charges weekly. Please be prompt in paying these charges. If you have a special circumstance or need assistance, please contact Jackie Roof, cafeteria manager, at 821-1600.

Temperature Guidelines for Outside Activities

When the temperature rises to the upper 90s with high humidity and the heat index is at 100 degrees Fahrenheit and above, students should not participate in outdoor activities. When the temperature drops to 32 degrees Fahrenheit and below or with a wind chill temperature of 32 degrees and below, students should not participate in outdoor activities.

Health Services

Gilbert Elementary School is fortunate to have a full-time registered nurse and health room assistant working together to care for our students. The school nurse coordinates our health program, including vision and hearing screenings, child welfare, and serves as a liaison between school personnel and community organizations.

If your child must take any medication at school (including over the counter medications such as Tylenol, Ibuprofen, cold medicine, etc.), you should get a medical order from your healthcare provider for that medication. All prescriptions and over the counter medications must be kept in the health room and administered by the school nurse. **Parents must transport all medication to and from school. Children may not transport medication under any circumstances.**

If a child becomes ill at school or if an injury occurs that needs medical attention by a physician, a parent or legal guardian will be contacted and will be responsible for taking the child home. Having other emergency contacts listed at school will be part of the registration process (online with Infosnap). It is very important that this information is up-to-date and accurate. Please make sure we **always** have the most current contact information for you. Please contact the school nurse immediately if your child is diagnosed with problems such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, heart or kidney problems, head lice, etc.

Textbooks

Textbooks are provided by the South Carolina State Department of Education and are issued to students at no cost. Students are responsible for the books and must pay to replace any lost book.. Textbooks should be cared for properly.

Instructional Organization

Gilbert Elementary School has Special Education preschool classes that serve children three and four years old who meet certain criteria for placement. We also serve four-year-olds in four full day 4K programs. Children must be four on or before September 1 to be eligible and must be screened as part of the eligibility.

Five-year-old kindergarten (5K) serves children who turn five on or before September 1. State kindergarten standards are taught through active learning experiences involving all subject areas.

Students in kindergarten, first, second, third, fourth, and fifth grade are grouped heterogeneously and classes are self-contained. This means there is one teacher for each class and students do not change classes. The state curriculum standards are the foundation for all core subjects (reading, language arts, math, science, social studies, and health).

Immersion classes are departmentalized from kindergarten through 5th grade. This means Immersion students have two teachers – one who teaches reading, language arts, and social studies in English and one who teaches math and science in Spanish.

Encore classes include Instructional Design Lab, Teaching for Artistic Behavior (TAB), General Music, Spanish, and Physical Education (PE). These classes enhance the instructional day for students and support our school-wide arts integration initiative.

Special Education teachers provide instruction for students who qualify for and have an Individualized Education Plan/Program (IEP). These students may qualify for speech and/or language services, visual and hearing assistance, specialized academic instruction, and occupational or physical therapy.

Profile of a Lexington One Graduate

The Lexington County School District One and community stakeholders identified nine characteristics of a Lexington One Graduate. Students need these skills in order to be successful in school and

beyond, they include: Knowledgeable, Creative Thinker and Problem Solver, Independent Learner, Communicator, Collaborator, Future-ready Literate, Personally and Socially Responsible, Kind, Resilient.

Monitoring Student Progress

Teachers will monitor student progress regularly and will communicate with parents on a consistent basis. Student progress will be assessed regularly to include at the end of units and at the end of each nine weeks. Progress reports will be sent home at the end of each nine weeks.

Typically, information from the school office, PTO, graded work, etc., will be included in the MONDAY take-home folders. Much of the information from school will be sent through ParentSquare to you. Please let your child's teacher know if you do not have Internet access. We will use ParentSquare and Peachjar on a regular basis.

School Counseling Program

The Gilbert Elementary School Counseling Program is a comprehensive, developmental school counseling program for all students. The school counseling core curriculum consists of structured developmental experiences that are presented systematically through classroom and group activities. The purpose of the school counseling curriculum is to provide parents and students at all levels with the knowledge of typical growth and development, to promote their positive mental health, and to assist them in acquiring and using life skills. Topics such as personal safety, friendship, feelings, conflict resolution, peer pressure, school success strategies, career awareness, acceptance of others, and interpersonal relationships will be explored.

Service Learning

Throughout the year, students will have opportunities to participate in service learning activities that support the betterment of our school, community, and country. Examples of service learning projects include winter coat drives and canned food drives.

Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)

Gilbert Elementary School has an active and supportive PTO. This organization of parents and staff members is designed to support the programs of the school. General meetings for all parents will be held throughout the year. These meeting dates and times will be communicated to families through the school newsletter, school calendar, and social media. Google Meet links will be shared through ParentSquare for families that would like to attend virtually. Meetings will promote pertinent information and family fun opportunities. Fundraising efforts will support the needs of the school. We would like to encourage you to join our PTO and become an active member of our school family.

2025-2026 PTO Board

President- Brandi Keefer Vice President- Melissa Price
Secretary- Taylor Phillips Treasurer- Delaine Barefoot
Volunteer Coordinator- Allie Juarez
Special Events Coordinator- Megan Kyzer
Communications- Julie Jeffcoat

School Improvement Council (SIC)

All South Carolina public schools are mandated by state law to have an SIC. This group consists of elected and appointed members who work together to monitor the operation of the school. Information regarding the school's attainment of its goals will be studied and suggestions for improvement will be made. The SIC meets monthly, at least 8 times per year, and meeting dates will be communicated well in advance. Any and all parents are welcome to attend.

Title I

Gilbert Elementary School is a Title I school. Title I, which is a provision of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) passed in 1965, is a program created by the United States Department of Education to distribute funding to schools and school districts with a high percentage of students from low-income families. The supplemental funds are used to assist in meeting students' educational goals.

Title I Planning Committee

The Title I Planning Committee assists with Title I related tasks such as conducting needs assessments and providing input on the school's Title I plan. The Title I Planning Committee typically meets immediately after a SIC meeting.

GES Classroom Goals

- ✓ Conduct daily small group reading instruction
- ✓ Read aloud each day to students
- ✓ Provide take-home materials for students such as leveled books, math and reading tips in classroom newsletters, Blowfish Reading Program, and books for summer reading
- ✓ Keep families informed of their child's reading and math progress through progress reports, report cards, take-home folders, phone messages, conferences, and emails
- ✓ Schedule conferences at a variety of times to accommodate the needs of parents
- ✓ Provide homework that supports topics learned at school

GES Goals for Student Achievement and Compact with Parents/Students

Student Goals:

- ✓ Live our SCOUT behaviors at school and at home
- ✓ Bring home class newsletters and notices regarding family nights
- ✓ Come to school ready to learn
- ✓ Take responsibility for my learning and behavior
- ✓ Read every day outside of school
- ✓ Try your best on all homework assignments
- ✓ Respect other students, adults, and their property
- ✓ Cooperate, listen, follow directions and ask for help when I need it

Family Goals:

- ✓ Ensure our children attend school regularly
- ✓ Make sure our children will arrive at school on time
- ✓ Promote positive use of our children's extra-curricular time at home and in the community
- ✓ Volunteer at school when possible and/or allowable
- ✓ Monitor homework assignments
- ✓ Monitor the amount of television our children watch
- ✓ Participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of our children

Parent's Right to Know

You have the right, as a parent, to be kept informed of your child's assessment results. Assessments provide valuable information both to the school and to parents. They show the growth your child has made in a particular area. We will:

1. Notify you of the dates of our state required tests
2. Send home information you may need to help prepare your child for the state tests
3. Share test results for participating students
4. Send home classroom assessments in the take-home folder
5. Explain what the results of these tests indicate regarding your child's learning
6. Schedule an appointment with you if you would like to have a more detailed explanation of the results and activities you can do at home to further your child's academic growth

This information is available online (from our website), outside of each teacher's classroom and also in our front office. As a parent of a student in a Title I school, you have the right to ask for the following information regarding your child's classroom teacher:

1. Whether the teacher meets the state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade(s) and subject(s) he/she teaches
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or professional status because of special circumstances
3. The undergraduate major of the teacher and the area of study and any certificates for any graduate degrees earned

You have the right to request information regarding the qualifications of the paraprofessional(s) assisting your child's teacher(s):

1. Whether the paraprofessional has completed at least two years of study at an institution of higher education
2. Whether the paraprofessional has completed an associate's degree (or higher)
3. Whether the paraprofessional has met a rigorous standard of quality through our state's certification procedure for determining the quality of paraprofessional staff
4. Whether the paraprofessional has: (a) the knowledge of and ability to assist in instructing reading, writing, and mathematics or (b) the knowledge of and ability to assist in learning activities, such as homework, reading readiness, writing, mathematics and other support as appropriate

The content in this agenda insert was developed in July 2025 based on the most up-to-date information available at that time. The school procedures and guidelines described in this insert may have to change based on guidance and information we receive from our Central Services office and/or the South Carolina State Department of Education. We will do our best to inform you of these changes as soon as possible. Thank you for your patience, flexibility, and understanding.