

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

Inspire. Grow. Lead.

Policies, procedures, and events are subject to change based on health and safety guidelines and current conditions.

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Ms. Amanda Wilkins, Director of Gifted Education

Newington Elementary School

Mission: NES will provide meaningful learning opportunities, build relationships, and cultivate a safe and positive community of leaders.

Vision: Newington Elementary School exists to inspire all learners to grow as kind, confident leaders.

Welcome to Newington!

At Newington Elementary, we believe it takes a strong group of stakeholders to help our students achieve his or her optimum level- and we welcome you to that community! To provide the best learning environment for all 900 students at NES, there are policies and procedures that we ask you to review so that we are all working together to ensure safety and a focus on learning throughout the day. This student handbook is not all-inclusive but provides our school policies that are specific to NES. Additional information on all Dorchester District 2 policies is on the district website at <https://www.ddtwo.org> or in the **Dorchester District Two Student Handbook**. Please feel free to contact the school if you have any questions.

Our Philosophy: The primary goal of the Newington Elementary faculty and staff is to facilitate the growth of students' abilities, skills, attitudes, and interests for the benefit of themselves, their community, and their country. As a team, the educators of Newington endeavor to teach the SC College and Career Readiness Standards while developing essential skills, and creative talents that students need to function as responsible, self-sufficient leaders in an ever-changing global society. We acknowledge the importance of a team effort involving parents, administrators, faculty, and staff working together with health services and community agencies, as needed, to provide a positive learning environment for each child.

Important Information

Newington Elementary, 843-871-3230
NES Fax, 843-821-3981
Newington Cafeteria, 843-821-3955
LEAP Afterschool Program, 843-832-7858
Transportation Office, 843-873-6196

Transportation Changes,
nestransportation@dorchester2.k12.sc.us
Website: www.ddtwo.org/nes
Facebook- Newington Elementary School

Stay Connected with



NES Leadership

Rachel Cabbage, Principal
Patrick Magers, Assistant Principal
Tyra Johnson, Assistant Principal
Anna Bennett, Reading Coach/Title I Facilitator
Jasmine Easterlin, Math Coach
Donna Coleman-Barr, School Counselor
Mackenzie Bowen, School Counselor
Miranda Herring, Finance/Principal's Secretary
Christa Dubuque, Attendance/Records
Bethany Thomas, Receptionist
Megan Cook, BIR/Attendance/Business Partners
Alyson Brown, Nurse
Laura Johnson, Café Manager
Renee Ketchel, LEAP Coordinator

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Parent Leadership

The PTA and the School Improvement Council—teachers, parents, administrators, and other concerned community members—meet to assist in the implementation of the school's Strategic Plan, to foster two-way communication between the school and the community, and to collaborate on plans and activities to engage our families. We encourage your participation—please call the school office for information on how to join the SIC and the PTA.

Executive PTA Board Officers

President- Christa Dubuque
Vice President- Laura Kollman
Vice President- Lindsey Patterson
Treasurer- Ashley Butler
Secretary- Valentina Masone
Want to join us? Email worldsbestpta@gmail.com

SIC

Chairperson: Will be elected prior to November 15th
<https://nes.ddtwo.org/families/family-engagement>

Arrival and Dismissal - Safety is our #1 concern.

Transportation Arrangements

Please Note: **For your child's safety, we will not take transportation changes by telephone or text.** You may not email or parentsquare message the teacher with transportation changes. Teachers often do not have a chance to check email prior to dismissal. You may email changes to nestransportation@dorchester2.k12.sc.us from the email address we have on file in PowerSchool by 1:15pm. If your child needs to go home a different way than normal, we must have a written note from you. A student cannot change his or her mode of transportation—car rider, buses, walker, biker, etc. without written permission from a parent or guardian. An administrator must approve changing buses and walkers. Due to safety guidelines, we may not be able to accommodate bus changes. Students may not be signed out from school less than 30 minutes prior to the end of school day (ex. 1:45 is the cutoff when dismissal is 2:15) due to dismissal procedures. Please see the transportation section of the district website for further information.

Arrival Procedures

- Parents are asked to drop off children beginning at 6:50 am.
- Before 6:50 am, no adult supervision is available.
- All car riders should be dropped off in the designated car rider lane at the back of the school. Please do not pull in the exit or bypass the line.
- To ensure student safety, students are not to be dropped off in the bus loop area at the front of the school, along the road in front of the school, or along any neighborhood street.
- Golf carts are not allowed on the NES campus.
- Please respect the private property of our neighbors and refrain from parking, making u-turns, or turning around in their yards and cul de sacs.
- Due to safety guidelines, parents may not walk their children to class nor enter the building unless there is an appointment scheduled.

King Charles Circle is very busy during arrival and dismissal times. Please adhere to the speed limit, refrain from u-turns and sidewalk blocking.

When walking onto campus, please enter at designated crosswalks.

Dismissal Procedures

- Car Riders
 - Car riders must have an ID number issued by the front office.
 - Children are expected to learn their number and respond when a staff member on duty calls their number.
 - Any parent who does not display the car rider tag with the number in the front window will be required to get out of line, park, and produce an ID at the front office before they are allowed to take a child.
 - Parents, please remain in your car. Please follow the instructions of the staff on duty.
 - Children not picked up by the time the car rider line has ended, will be brought to the front office. The parent or guardian must bring identification to sign them out from the office. Any students that remain in the office at 2:40 will be taken to the Extended Day program (Cafeteria) and parents will be responsible for childcare. **Frequent occurrences of late pick up will require a parent conference with an administrator.**

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Dismissal Procedures, continued

• Walkers and Bikers

- Walkers and bikers will be escorted by their teachers to designated areas. These students will be dismissed after the busses have left the campus.
- Transportation changes to "walker" must be approved by admin.
- Parents meeting walkers/bikers will meet their children at the bridge behind the school or the crosswalk at Princess Court or Queen's Court. Parents of walkers should not wait on students in a car.
- **Parents must have the matching dismissal tag for student retrieval for grades 4K-1.** Older siblings may escort younger siblings if an adult is not present at the stop for 4K-1st grade students.
- Please do NOT enter the bus or car rider areas to meet walkers.
- If your child is designated a walker, once dismissed by their teacher to leave, they must leave the campus and are no longer supervised by staff.

ONLY students living in the Newington subdivision and along Luden Drive are recognized as walkers. All other students should be car or bus riders and are expected to follow those procedures.

• Rainy Days

- On rainy days, walkers and bike riders will be dismissed as usual UNLESS thunder and lightning are present. If you wish for your child to be a car rider on rainy days, notify your child's teacher/front office in writing of this exception to their normal dismissal method.

• Bicycle Parking

- Park bicycles only in the bike racks at the school (there are two, one in the front of the building and one in the back of the building). You may retrieve your bicycle only at the end of the day or if you have an excuse to leave early. Students bring bikes at their own risk. All bikes should be locked.

• Buses

- At dismissal, teachers will escort students to their buses.
- *If your child is a regular bus rider, we ask that you not arrive at school to pick up your child after the buses have begun to load (See written transportation changes).*

• Day Care Vans

- Day Care Vans will be loaded in the front of the school. Teachers will escort students to a designated area in the school to wait to board daycare vans. Parents should inform the day care center when a student is absent.

Attendance

No child can be expected to complete required classroom work successfully if his or her attendance is irregular. A student should be in school every day that he or she is physically able to be. Academic achievement is directly correlated to attendance. Please help us establish this important life skill.

Attendance Policy

Please carefully read the following information concerning South Carolina Attendance Laws and the Dorchester School District Two Guidelines for student attendance. The Dorchester School District Two Board believes that attendance is a key factor in student achievement, and any absence from school represents an educational loss to the student. However, the board also recognizes that some absences from school are unavoidable.

SOUTH CAROLINA STATE LAW (R 43-274) ATTENDANCE DEFINITIONS

Chronic Absenteeism

A part of the implementation of Every Student Succeeds Act, districts and schools are required to report to the South Carolina Department of Education the number of students who are chronically absent each year. According to the United States Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR), an absent student is one who misses 50 % of the instructional day for any reason and regardless of whether the absence is excused or unexcused. In other words, students must attend class at least half of the instructional day to be considered present for that day.

Using this new definition, the OCR requires states to report the number of students in each district and school who are absent at least 10% of the time during which they are enrolled in a particular school or district. More specifically, students who are enrolled in the same school for an entire academic year and miss 18 or more days (10 %) will be considered chronically absent. The total number of chronically absent students will be included on district and school report cards and reported to the OCR.

Truant

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A student ages 6 to 17 years of age meets the definition of truant when the student has three (3) consecutive unlawful/unexcused absences or a total of five (5) unlawful/unexcused absences.

Habitual Truant

A student ages 12 to 17 years of age meets the definition of a habitual truant when the student has reached the level of truant, fails to comply with the intervention plan developed by the school, student and parent/guardian, and accumulates two (2) or more additional unlawful/unexcused absences.

Chronic Truant

A student ages 12 to 17 years of age meets the definition of chronic truant when the student has reached the level of habitual truant, has been through the intervention process, has been referred to family court, placed on an order to attend school, and continues to accumulate additional unlawful/unexcused absences.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES:

Chronic Absenteeism Procedure

At the beginning of each month schools will compile a list of students who are considered chronically absent (any student who is absent a minimum of 10% of his/her enrollment period in the current school year for any reason (e.g. illness, suspension, excused or unexcused) is considered chronically absent). Letters will be sent to the parent/guardian notifying them as to the status of the student and explaining the importance of regular school attendance. An administrator may schedule an attendance conference with the parent/guardian when the student has been identified as chronically absent. Research shows that poor attendance can impact student performance. Students who miss too many days in kindergarten and first grade can have trouble mastering reading by the end of the third grade. Chronic absenteeism of middle and high school students is the leading warning indicator for predicting students who dropout.

Truant Procedure

When a student is identified as truant (three (3) consecutive unlawful/unexcused absences or a total of five (5) unlawful/unexcused absences), an administrator will communicate with the student and parent/guardian to identify the reasons for the student's absences. An attendance contract and intervention plan may be developed and signed to address and improve the student's attendance in school.

Habitual Truant Procedure

When a student is identified as habitual truant (fails to comply with the attendance contract and intervention plan and has accumulated two (2) or more additional unlawful/unexcused absences), the administrator may schedule an additional conference to address the continued attendance concerns. The school may also complete the Family Court Referral Packet for court action and send to the appropriate District Director.

Chronic Truant Procedure

If all reasonable alternatives have been exhausted and a student is identified as chronic truant (has been through the intervention process, has been referred to family court, placed on an order to attend school, and continues to accumulate additional unlawful/unexcused absences), the school may file a contempt of court petition with Family Court. The student will appear in court for violating the previously issued court order to attend school.

Missed Work – Lawful absence

When lawful absences occur, immediate attention is to be given by the teacher and student to the work missed by the student. Special efforts must be made by each of the individuals to see that all missed work has been made up, the teacher will specify a reasonable period of time to make up the missed work based on the length of absence and school time missed. An automatic unsatisfactory grade for absences in the category is not permitted. However, after reasonable efforts have been made by school personnel without success, an unsatisfactory grade may be given.

Missed Work – Unlawful absence

When unlawful absences occur, students and or parents are to request information on assignments missed. Teachers will clearly inform students and/or parents of required assignments and give students one week to make up the work missed on their own. If work is not completed satisfactorily in one school week, an unsatisfactory grade may be assigned for the work. The weight of this grade will be no greater than that which the assignments would ordinarily carry.

REQUIRED EXCUSES-

Within three (3) days after returning to school, the student must submit a written excuse explaining his/her absence. If applicable, the student may also submit an excuse from the doctor. If a student does not submit an excuse, his/her absence will be considered unlawful/unexcused.

The excuse should include the following information:

1. Student's Name
2. Date the excuse was written
3. Date(s) of the absence(s)
4. Reason for the absence(s)

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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5. Signature of the parent/legal guardian and telephone number

Lawful/Excused Absences

- The absence is caused by the student's own illness and whose attendance in school would endanger his/her health or the health of others.
- The absence is due to an illness or death in the student's immediate family.
- The absence is due to a recognized religious holiday of the student's faith.
- The absence is due to school activities that are approved in advance by the principal.

Unlawful/Unexcused Absences

- The absence of the student without the knowledge of his/her parent/legal guardian.
- The absence of the student without acceptable cause with the knowledge of his/her parent/legal guardian.

Suspension(s)

- Suspension(s) are not to be counted as an unlawful/unexcused absence for truancy purposes.

Requirements to be Counted Present for the School Day

- Students must attend school for 50% of the instructional day to be counted present.

Explanation/Clarification

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) states that a school year consists of 180 days of instruction. In Dorchester School District Two a day of instruction is 7 hours long. Students must be present for 3½ hours of instruction for the instructional day to count as one of the 180 days required by the SCDE. This includes "Early Release" days. An "Early Release" day only consists of 3¾ hours of instruction. Therefore, even on the "Early Release" days a student needs to be present for 3½ hours of instruction to be counted present for the instructional day.

Tardy to School/Early Dismissal from School

Students who are chronically late to school or who are dismissed early from school often suffer academically from lost instructional time. For this reason, a record will be kept of all tardies to school and early dismissals.

Tardy to School/Early Dismissal Procedures

Elementary School – The parent/guardian of a student who arrives at school late **must bring the student into the school office** to sign the student in and list the reason for the student being late to school.

Elementary/Middle School – If a student is dismissed early, the parent/guardian must come into the school office and sign the student out, listing the reason for the early dismissal. **Please note that if a student is being signed out early, it must be done 30 minutes prior to the scheduled dismissal time (1:45pm).**

All Schools – The administration will determine if the tardy to school and/or early dismissal will be lawful/excused or unlawful/unexcused.

Tardy to School/Early Dismissal Interventions

The following procedures will be followed for dealing with unlawful/unexcused tardies to school/early dismissals:

If a student accumulates a total of five (5) unlawful/unexcused tardies to school and/or unlawful/unexcused early dismissals in a nine-week period, a warning letter will be sent to the student's parent/guardian.

If a student accumulates a total of ten (10) unlawful/unexcused tardies to school and/or unlawful/unexcused early dismissals in a nine-week period, the student's parent/guardian must attend a conference with an administrator to develop and sign an intervention plan.

If a student accumulates fifteen (15) or more unlawful/unexcused tardies to school and/or unlawful/unexcused early dismissals in a nine-week period, the school will explore referrals to other agencies to assist in improving the attendance issue including the Department of Social Services.

IN THE INTEREST OF SAFETY, ONLY THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHOSE NAMES ARE PROVIDED BY A PARENT IN POWERSCHOOL WILL BE PERMITTED TO SIGN A STUDENT OUT OF SCHOOL. ADDITIONALLY, A **PHOTO ID WILL BE REQUIRED** OF THE PERSON SIGNING OUT THE STUDENT. THIS PERTAINS TO ANY POTENTIAL NEED TO HAVE YOUR STUDENT SIGNED OUT OF SCHOOL, INCLUDING BIKERS AND WALKERS ON SEVERE WEATHER DAYS.

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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Other Attendance Procedures-Guardianship

- Individuals attempting to sign a student out of school but who are not indicated by the parent in Powerschool **WILL NOT** be permitted to do so.
- In issues of custody, guardianship, and parental rights, court documented records must be provided to the school. We operate based on the most recent paperwork on file.
- After 1:45 pm, due to the business and wrap-up of the end of the school day, no students will be permitted to be signed out until dismissal concludes.
- NO Student information will be given over the phone, including questions about attendance.

Capturing Kids Hearts

We are excited to share information with you about a priority initiative at our school called Capturing Kids' Hearts (CKH)! If you've been a part of our school community, you have most likely heard us talk about CKH already, but we wanted to send out more detailed information.

In the summer of 2024, Newington Elementary School staff members were trained in this initiative, and it has continued to help us positively improve upon our school culture and climate. Teachers walked away from the training truly inspired and focused on developing the very best relationships with students and each other that they possibly could. Each year we train our new teachers in CKH. Our students are achieving at all-time high levels, and we know that CKH is an important part to the puzzle.

This amazing initiative outlines a process staff can use to help build meaningful connections between staff and students, students and their peers, and between staff and families. The goal is to capture kids' hearts in order to capture their minds. Research shows that when students feel more connected to their school and staff, they achieve higher academic success and are less likely to have attendance, tardy, or behavioral issues. Students thrive when they feel cared for and engaged.

One central piece of CKH is the Social Contract. A Social Contract is built in each classroom to establish the guidelines and expectations for how students and teachers will treat each other. Students work together to develop this contract, and the teacher acts as a facilitator to encourage discussion. The Social Contract is designed to help students internalize and practice character traits and skills that they will use in their future lives (to include in their future employment). It also lets all participants in a classroom know what behavior is acceptable and what is not. The goal is to help each student develop "self-managing" skills. We don't just believe in the Social Contract for our students, each year the NES staff also creates a Staff Social Contract that governs how we treat one another, and we hold each other accountable for this throughout the school year.

The Four Questions help students focus on positive behavior, demonstrate they know what behavior is expected, take responsibility when they are not doing what is expected, and determine what they should be doing instead. School wide, common signals such as Time-Out and Check are useful in maintaining our positive learning environment. Students are taught that the Time-Out signal means to stop, match the signal, and listen. In addition, students are taught that they can be a good friend by helping peers stay on a positive path. If students see rules being violated, they can discreetly "check" their friend as a visual cue to get back on track so that the teacher does not have to get involved. We teach students to check their friend once as a friendly reminder, and then to allow their friend to make his/her choices. A "check" is not a student telling another students they are in trouble, but instead, it is a support to a friend. We help remind each other because we want their success for them.

The following are some additional components of CKH that your students experience at Newington. The EXCEL Model helps to show students that NES teachers and staff care about them.

- **Engage:** Administration greets students with a warm hello or welcome back and a smile as they walk through the front doors in the mornings. Teachers personally greet each individual student at the classroom door with a handshake and a smile. Teachers model appropriate handshakes as this is an important life & job skill.
- **X-plore:** Teachers and staff look for opportunities to listen to and interact with students, not just about school events but also about students' lives outside of school. Students enjoy sharing "Good Things" each morning with their peers and teacher. Teachers affirm students' personal experiences and show a genuine interest in their thoughts and feelings.
- **Communicate:** Interactions in classrooms are more of a dialogue between the teacher and students, as well as between students themselves, with the teacher serving as a resource and a facilitator of learning. Frequently, classroom lessons are tied directly to the real world in order to show students the importance of their education. Teachers facilitate classroom meetings and conversations focused on the classroom Social Contract embedding

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those ideals into the daily schedule and lessons.

- **Empower:** Teachers and staff empower students to interact more directly with peers, to self-manage, to problem-solve and peer-manage within a supportive role when appropriate. We want students to develop skills and feel confident in applying them.
- **Launch:** A conscious effort is made to close each school day with a positive thought, an inspirational quote/video/activity, or affirmations. The idea is to inspire students to enjoy their evening at home and to look forward to the next school day.

Capturing Kids' Hearts is a process that involves many components. We have only shared pieces of CKH in this document, but we hope it helps to provide a general understanding of its usefulness and some information about the basic strategies. At Newington, we often ask ourselves and each other, "Are we capturing their hearts today?" This helps to keep us focused on what matters the most—our students. When relationships are positive and meaningful, the sky is the limit for learning!

Kona Ice

Our school hosts a Kona Ice fundraiser each month to support our Dolphin Store for students, special projects, and teacher appreciation events. This is always a fun day for our students, and we appreciate your participation!

Important Guidelines:

- For online ordering only—orders must be placed by 7:00 p.m. two days prior to the event. Late orders cannot be accepted.
- No cash payments may be brought to the office or to school on the day of the event.
- Students must be present at school by 7:30 a.m. on the day of the Kona Ice event to bring in cash to order as teachers have collected all funds and started instruction at that time.

We thank you for your support of this fun and tasty fundraiser!

Behavior and Discipline

Dorchester District Two monitors student behavior in accordance with mandated state law and behavior code, district policy, and individual campus guidelines. All students are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly fashion while at school and/or school-related activities.

Discipline consequences include punishment such as detention, work detail, suspension, and expulsion. In-school suspension (BIR) is also used in schools with appropriate facilities, including Newington. School officials are expected to involve parents in the monitoring of student behavior when possible. Effective self-discipline is promoted by a cooperative effort between home and school.

Discipline & Behavior Expectations:

We want our school to be a safe, orderly, and nurturing environment for all stakeholders. Our goal is to operate as a bully-free community. DD2 has a zero tolerance policy on drugs and weapons violations. Weapons violations include real items and look-a-like items such as toy guns, water pistols, plastic knives, Swiss army knives, shell casings, dummy bullets, etc.. Students violating these policies will be immediately suspended from school and may be recommended to the District's Hearing Officer for expulsion. For more information, review the Dorchester District 2 Handbook.

Behavior Management Plan

The administration and faculty at Newington believe in clear and consistent expectations for students to reach their potential. The following are expectations for creating the optimal environment for learning.

School Rules

1. Respect others and their belongings.
2. Listen to and follow directions.
3. Keep feet, hands, and objects in your personal space.
4. Practice patience and wait your turn.
5. Move quietly throughout our buildings.

When warranted, NES enforces the following consequences for misconduct:

Step 1 — Warning (visual and/or verbal notification that this is an official warning).

Step 2 — Conflict Resolution

- A. Negotiation, Mediation, Reflection and Arbitration, OR,
- B. Buddy Classroom visit

Step 3 — Teacher will contact parents and student will walk at recess or visit the silent lunch table.

Phone call and/or minor behavior referrals should be sent home on the day of occurrence if time permits. If there is no phone and the note is not returned the next day, a copy of the note may be mailed.

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

Inspire. Grow. Lead.

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Step 4 – Parent will be notified and walking at recess or silent lunch table time will increase.

Step 5 — Office Referral

When a student demonstrates a major offense, the teacher completes a major office referral, and the student is seen by admin. After consultation with the student, the following options will be considered:

- A. Develop a plan for his/her change of behavior.
- B. Discussion with teacher and/or parent.
- C. Referral to counseling.
- D. Parent called to pick up student.
- E. Student to remain at home until parent returns for a conference.
- F. Time spent by student in the Behavior Improvement Room.
- G. Parent may be asked to shadow the student for all or part of the day (shared responsibility).
- H. Suspension from school.
- I. Referral to expulsion hearing board.

Severe Clause

(Immediate referral to office). Blatant disrespect or willfully hurting others may result in an immediate suspension from school. All suspensions are followed by a parent conference with an administrator before re-admittance to school.

Expulsion

For severe behavior or major violations of the Code of Conduct (see DDII handbook), students may be recommended for expulsion. This requires parents to appear before the Hearing Board at the District Office. The district hearing officer will determine consequence. **Having alcohol, drugs (real or look alike), and weapons (real or look alike) are examples of expulsion level offenses.**

Bus Transportation

Expectations and Rules for Student Conduct

Please review the health and safety guidelines for buses on the district website. The student school day begins as students board the bus. With the safety of all students in mind, it is essential that students and parents understand and observe the following concepts and safety rules:

1. **Riding the bus is a privilege.** State law requires all passengers to follow the instructions of the bus driver. His or her responsibility is to ensure the safety of all students on the bus. Repeated failures to comply with the rules or driver instructions will result in suspension or revocation of bus privileges.
 - a. **At the Bus Stop:**
 - i. South Carolina law, Section 59-67-415, states parents or guardians are responsible for the safety, conduct, and the timely arrival of their children to, from, and at the designated school bus stop before the arrival of the school bus for pick up and transport to school and the timely departure of the children after the school bus leaves the designated school bus stop after transporting the children from school.
 - ii. Students must be at the designated stop prior to when the bus arrives.
 - iii. When approaching the bus stop, if students must walk along the highway, they should always walk on the shoulder of the left side of the highway, facing traffic.
 - iv. When students need to cross the highway to board the bus, they must wait until the bus driver directs them to cross. They must cross in front of the stopped bus and walk, not run.
 - v. Students should not run to the bus when the bus is moving but should wait until it comes to a complete stop and then walk to the bus entry door.
 - vi. Parents/guardians: do not attempt to board the bus. State law prohibits this in Section 59-67-245, Interference with the Operation of a School Bus.
 - b. **On the Bus:**
 - i. Students should go to their assigned seats, without pushing or crowding, and remain properly seated while the bus is in motion.
 - ii. Keep arms, legs, or head inside the bus doors or windows at all times.
 - iii. Students should not talk to the driver while the bus is in motion, except in an emergency.
 - iv. Eating and drinking on the bus is prohibited. Mobile phones, iPods, or similar electronic devices may not be used on the bus.
 - v. Never tamper with the emergency door or any other bus equipment.
 - vi. Do not mark on or deface the bus. Seat coverings must not be damaged in any manner. Students should report any bus or seat damage to the bus driver as soon as possible. If a student is found to have damaged a

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

Inspire. Grow. Lead.

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school bus, the student will be charged the assessed repair rate set by the State Department of Education. The student responsible for the damage will be suspended from riding the bus until restitution is made in full.

- vii. Only the driver or other authorized person should remove first aid equipment, which is for emergency treatment only.
- viii. Do not tamper with the fire extinguisher. Only the driver should use it for an emergency.
- ix. Do not fight or scuffle on the bus or create any disturbance. The standards of conduct required on the bus are the same as the standards of conduct in the classroom.
- x. Never throw objects from the bus windows.
- xi. Keep books, lunch boxes or other objects away from the aisle or the rear deck of the bus.
- xii. Leave all pencils and school supplies inside your backpack.
- xiii. Sports equipment must remain in appropriate sports equipment bags or backpacks and may not be removed from those bags while on the bus

c. Leaving the Bus:

- i. Students must remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop. Never attempt to leave the seat before the bus comes to a full stop and the driver indicates it is safe to depart.
- ii. Passengers should leave in an orderly manner.
- iii. Do not loiter or play around a stopped or parked bus.
- iv. Do not enter restricted areas or school grounds set aside for bus parking or loading.
- v. Students are permitted to unload only at their regular, designated stops. Any changes must be made by the parent's or designee's written request and approved by the principal.
- vi. After departing the bus, students (if they must cross the highway) must wait at the front of the bus until the bus driver or school bus patrol directs them to cross.
- vii. Students misbehaving on the school bus will be referred to the school's administrator for appropriate disciplinary action.

d. Procedures to deal with misconduct on the buses. Drivers will work directly with students to correct misconduct. When attempted correction does not remedy the situation, the driver is required by South Carolina law to report non-compliance with his/her lawful instructions and/or misconduct on the bus to the school principal.

Bus riders will be **denied bus privileges** if their behavior is unacceptable or infringes on the rights of other bus riders. It will be the responsibility of the parent or guardian to provide transportation to school during the suspension period.

Bus Referral Procedures

For the safety of all students, school administrators will follow district procedures for addressing referrals for misconduct on the bus:

First Referral: Warning and parent notification of consequences for future incidents

Second Referral: One (1) to five (5) days suspension from bus

Third Referral: Five (5) to ten (10) days suspension from bus

Fourth Referral: Ten (10) to thirty (30) days suspension from bus

Fifth Referral: Loss of bus privileges for the remainder of the school year.

These guidelines apply to cumulative referrals for bus misconduct. That is, consequences will progress in severity as a student accumulates referrals for rules infractions. The sequence will not start over simply because a rules infraction is different than previous infractions.

Students and parents should not attempt to discuss school bus rule violations or disciplinary measures with the school bus driver at a bus stop. Students who attempt to board the bus while suspended or adults who attempt to board or interfere with the operation of the bus, may be prosecuted under applicable South Carolina law.

4K, 5K, and 1st Grade Bus Pick Up Expectations and Procedures

- We realize the need for a safe, secure, and simple process to transfer custody of your child(ren) from the bus back to you. Experience has proven the number matching process to be the simplest and most effective process to transfer custody from the school bus to parents.
- **Changes for the SY 25-26 School Year**
 - o **NEW:** We are returning to the use of a number matching plan this year
 - o Applies to 4K, 5K, and 1st grade; does **NOT** apply to 2nd grade students
 - o **NEW:** Parents of students in this category must use this process to receive bus service for these students
 - o **NEW:** Every student will be assigned a numbered card by the school and must have it attached to the backpack
 - o **NEW:** 4K, 5K, and 1st grade students will sit in the front seats of the bus along with escorting siblings, as

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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applicable

- **Adult must be at the bus stop, displaying matching number to receive any student 4K**
- **Rules for Displaying Matching Number**
 - May be displayed using car hanger, rectangle card, or picture on phone
 - Must be visible and readable by the driver
 - Do not wave from the front door of your house or out the window of your car--be at the bus stop
 - Can be displayed via picture on phone
- **Two Options for 5K & 1st Grade Custody-transfer Process—from Bus to Parent (or Parent's delegate)**
 - **Parent or designated adult at bus stop--this option is REQUIRED for 4K students**
 - Adult must present/display the matching number to the driver (see rules above)
 - Bus driver calls student forward, matches the number and releases student
 - Student scans bus pass and exits bus
 - **3rd, 4th or 5th Grade Sibling Escort (requires parental consent via form provided by school)**
 - Students permitted to be escorted shall have a bright pink sticker on their numbered cards
 - No pink sticker, no escorting allowed; student **WILL NOT** be allowed to exit the bus unless adult is there with matching number--no exceptions
 - Bus driver calls 5K or 1st grader and escort forward
 - Driver verifies pink sticker attached, then matches number of student and escorting sibling
 - If a match, releases escort and younger student
 - Students scan bus passes and exit bus
 - Escort must be on the bus with the younger student
 - Younger student may not get off the bus without the escort
 - If escort leaves bus without younger student, younger student will be returned to the school
 - This is **NOT** an option for 4K students--and adult must receive a 4K student
 - If a student is returned to school, the parent/guardian will be contacted and required to pick up his/her child at the school. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, **the matter may be referred to the Dorchester District Two Safety/Security Coordinator, local law enforcement, or the Dorchester County Department of Social Services (DSS).**

Incidents of the parent/guardian/designee either not being at the bus stop for PM drop-off with the app information, or being there, but not having the app information, will result the following consequences administered by the school:

- **First Incident:** Warning to parent with review of future consequences
- **Second Incident:** 3 days' suspension from the bus
- **Third Incident:** 5 days' suspension from the bus
- **Fourth Incident:** 10 days' suspension from the bus
- **Fifth Incident:** Loss of bus privileges for the remainder of the year

The school administration will implement the schedule above with or without a bus driver referral and notify the Transportation Department of the effective dates of loss of bus transportation services. **Please note the above the consequences and loss of bus privileges is absolute across the district, with no discretion on the part of the school administration.**

We believe this method of exchanging your child from the bus to you is the safest means of delivering your child to your home. The process does allow some flexibility in who parents designate to receive the 4K, 5K, or 1st grade child at the bus stop. This system is in keeping with South Carolina law concerning bus stop safety. Please see the applicable law as follows: South Carolina Law Section 59-67-415

Parents/guardians of a child being transported on a school bus are responsible for the safety and conduct of the child prior to the arrival of the school bus at the child's designated school bus stop for pick up and transport to school, and after the school bus drops off the child and departs the child's designated school bus stop when transporting the children from school. The state's responsibility includes the arrival or departure of the school bus, which is defined as the time that the school bus assigned to the school bus stop activates the required pedestrian safety devices, stops and loads or unloads students, and until the school bus deactivates all pedestrian safety devices.

We expect students to be ready to board the bus upon its arrival at the stop. We recommend being at the stop ten minutes early in the event traffic flows lead to early arrival. Being ready means standing at the bus stop when the bus arrives. Waiting inside the house or inside a vehicle until the bus stops can cause cascading delays that adversely impact thousands of students across the district. This is unacceptable and, therefore, we direct our drivers to wait a reasonable amount of time at stops before closing the doors and proceeding to the next stops. It is extremely dangerous to chase after a bus or run toward a bus that is pulling away from the stop. Please help us ensure

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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the safety of your children by explaining this danger and by having them at the stop as recommended.

Parents/guardians should ensure all contact information at the school is accurate and should update information whenever changes occur.

Cafeteria/Food Service Program

Meal service may be altered due to health and safety requirements. All meal accounts are handled in the cafeteria. Newington participates in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), which means all students eat school meals at no out-of-pocket cost. However, to determine eligibility to receive additional benefits (like a fee waiver or access to special income-based programs) for your child(ren) at the school level, please complete a household income form. Please direct food service questions to the cafeteria manager, Laura Johnson @ 843-821-3955.

Meal Components

Five essential food components must be offered daily: meat/meat alternate, fruit, vegetable, grain/grain equivalent, milk. Students will have choices to meet these requirements. A selection of at least three of the five components, to include fruit or vegetable, must be taken for the school to receive federal reimbursement for each meal.

Communication Plan

At Newington Elementary School we strive to involve, inform, and update all stakeholders in the academic and business operations of the school through a variety of communication tools. These tools include the following:

- Classroom and Grade Level newsletters
- 4K-1st- Daily folders; 2nd-5th- Wednesday folders
- PTA publications
- School Website: nes.ddtwo.org
- District Website: ddtwo.org
- Parent Square (announcements, attendance notification, cafeteria notification, emergency procedures, etc.)
- Brochures and Pamphlets (School, Title I, Technology, and Guidance programs)
- Annual School Report Card (Fall)
- Annual School Summary Report (Spring)
- Parent Conferences (Teacher and student led, attendance, special needs meetings, student support team meetings)
- PTA/School Improvement Council Meetings
- Phone calls
- Special event or news flyers (as needed)
- District Policy Manual (online @ Dorchester District Two Website)
- Early Childhood Pre-registration (March)
- Informational and family events (Parent Workshops, Learning Luau, Literacy Night, etc.)
- Email

For academic and personal concerns, face-to-face conferences are the best means of communication. Please call the school office to arrange.

Handling A Problem

Students, parents, and all staff members have the right to approach the District Two Board of Trustees to seek a solution to a problem or a concern. However, the proper and requested method of resolving problems is to begin with the parties directly involved. If the problem remains unsolved, proceed to the next authority level. If, after meeting with the teacher, principal, the director in that order, the problem is still unresolved, those with a concern should contact the superintendent in writing to request a meeting.

Conferences

Parents are encouraged to schedule conferences with teachers whenever they deem it necessary. To schedule a conference, parents should call their child's teacher at least 24 hours prior to the requested date. We will try to be accommodating with requested times, however, please understand that full staff schedules may require flexible options be provided. It is helpful to state the reason for the conference request and/or the concern (s) to be addressed so that the conference can be productive. **Parents are not to interrupt classes for "walk-in" or "doorway" conferences.** We encourage student led conferences in all grade levels. Ask your child's teacher for more information.

Telephone Calls

Parents are encouraged to call the school to get information and to discuss concerns. Please understand that we will neither call a teacher from the classroom to answer a call, nor will we interrupt instruction, except in an emergency. **Please do not call to relay messages during the last 20 minutes of the school day.** It is best to call and leave a message for the teacher or to call during their planning period. We will respond within 48 hours.

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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Policies, procedures, and events are subject to change based on health and safety guidelines and current conditions.

Facebook

Join the **NES Facebook page** (Newington Elementary @1977Dolphin) for an additional method to receive information. While we will do our best to send information out through a variety of methods, the best way to be 'in the know' is to refer to the monthly **calendar**, checking the school **website** often (nes.ddtwo.org), and by asking your child to share the contents of their **book bag** and **Wednesday Folder**.

**The webpage and/or Parent Square will be used to communicate emergency notifications.

Confidentiality

Valuable information regarding students' rights under the Family Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) is provided by DD2 in several locations. Please visit the district web site at ddtwo.org and check "Parent Notifications" in the Parent Information section to view full copies of both regulations. Be aware that school staff will only discuss educational or discipline issues with the parent or guardian of that student. Any individual attempting to access information regarding another student will be informed of the law and subsequent attempts will result in the denial of school visits.

Internet

Families will want to stay informed by visiting our web site and teacher pages at nes.ddtwo.org. Sign up for a school account on our website by clicking on the Parent Registration tab. You will need the student ID provided at registration. DDII requires that all families be provided with our internet acceptable use policy. Please refer to the DDII student handbook and/or the district website for the entire policy. **Please refrain from posting photos on social media of students other than your own child without the consent of the student's parent or guardian.**

Dress Code

To provide an atmosphere that is conducive to learning, instills discipline, and avoids safety hazards, Dorchester District Two has established the following guidelines for all students:

- **SMART Watches:** Smart watches may not be worn inside the building due to texting and videoing capabilities.
- **Heelies:** **Wheel**-soled shoes, a.k.a. "heelies," are **NOT** permitted.
- **Shorts:** Short pants are appropriate for school in the elementary grades (K-5). The standard for wearing shorts is that, when standing with arms hanging to the side, the area of the leg where fingers touch should be the hemline of the shorts. **"Short-shorts" are not acceptable school attire.**
- **Sunglasses:** Sunglasses may not be worn inside the building, except for prescription sunglasses.
- **Head Gear:** Hats, head stockings, sweatbands, scarves, bandannas, and any gang related bandannas may not be worn inside the building. If there is a medical reason to wear any of the above, a physician's letter to the principal will be required.
- **Hoods:** Hoods from a jacket or sweatshirt are not permitted inside of the building.
- **Tops and Skirts:** Tank tops, halter tops, tube tops, bathing suits, spaghetti straps, midriiffs, see-through tops, fishnet shirts or cut-off shirts may not be worn. Tennis skirts and miniskirts are not allowed. The length of shorts also applies to the length of skirts and dresses.
- **Shirts and Blouses:** Shirts and blouses must be buttoned appropriately.
- **Pants:** 'Sagging' is not acceptable. Pants must be worn at the natural waistline and may not be made of any see-through material. Ripped or cut pants must not show skin above where an appropriate length skirt or shorts hemline would fall. Undergarments must be completely covered.
- **Belts:** If belts are worn, they must be worn at the appropriate level, buckled, and tucked into loops.
- **Suspenders** must be hooked and on the shoulder in the proper location.
- **Gloves:** Gloves may not be worn inside the building.
- **Shoes:** heels are a safety issue for elementary age girls and should be avoided whenever possible.

Students may not wear any apparel, attire, colors, or insignia that is obscene, vulgar, libelous, slanderous; incites, expresses, or advocates racial, ethnic, sexual, or religious prejudices; brings attention to a student's involvement/membership in gang-related groups; or promotes alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs or firearms. Consult the district policy manual for more detail.

Dress Code Violation Consequences

1st offense – The student will be sent to the office to conference with an administrator. The parent/guardian will be contacted and requested to bring a change of clothing. The student will make the appropriate change before being allowed to receive further classroom instruction.

2nd offense -The student will be placed in BIR, parent will be notified. The student will wear a loaner shirt/pants during the day.

Subsequent offenses may result in Out of School Suspension.

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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Policies, procedures, and events are subject to change based on health and safety guidelines and current conditions.

Miscellaneous Distractions

Please leave these at home:

· Skateboards, balls, and other toys and diversions

Any item causing a distraction at school or on the bus may be confiscated and retrieved only by the student's parent. Failure to retrieve the devices within 30 days of the end of the school year will result in the disposal of the device. Neither the school nor the district will be responsible for any lost or stolen items brought to school.

USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN SCHOOL

The District has established rules and regulations regarding the use of personal electronic devices including but not limited to cell phones and smart watches in order to ensure the learning environment remains free of distractions and to protect the privacy of students. Board Policy JICJ and JICJ-R which are located here:

<https://boardpolicyonline.com/?b=dorchester> or are available for viewing at your student's school and the [Student Device Handbook](#) contains information regarding the use of personal devices. By sending a personal electronic device to school/school-sponsored events with your student you and your student consent that the District is not responsible for the loss or damage of any personal electronic device.

Should a student violate Board Policy JICJ and JICJ-R or school practices related to implementation of these policies, disciplinary consequences may be enforced. The below discipline matrixes will be used consistently across grade levels; however, Principals reserve the right to enact additional disciplinary consequences should the personal electronic device be used in connection with recording, photographing, or posting information about staff or students; academic dishonesty; or bullying/harassment.

Elementary Schools

Elementary school students (pre-K through fifth grade) may possess personal electronic devices on campus and on school-sponsored transportation provided such devices are not visible, used, or activated and are kept in the "off" position throughout the instructional school day. Students must keep such devices stored in a backpack or other non-visible secure location during the instructional school day. Times of authorized use for elementary school are as follows: after the dismissal bell at the end of the instructional school day. Please see district policy handbook for any further questions.

Emergency Procedures/Closing

Safety management plans are in place at NES and at the district office. To respond efficiently and effectively to any crisis that may occur, our plans include:

- Guidelines for collaborating with emergency officials.
- Identification of members of the crisis management team, their roles, and responsibilities; and
- Steps for communicating effectively with emergency officials, news media, school staff, students, and parents.

Please keep in mind that if we have a real emergency, we will need the telephone lines to communicate with the proper officials.

We conduct emergency drills throughout the school year so that all personnel and students are prepared should an emergency arise.

If a decision is made to alter the start or dismissal times or to cancel school, the Public Information Office and school will notify students, parents, and employees through a variety of methods including:

- Parent Square alerts and telephone calls
- School and district website postings
- Facebook messages
- Local media outlets

Please note: Phone messages, texts and email notices will only work if the information on file is correct. It is imperative that your child's emergency contact information and phone numbers provided to the school are current. Please be sure to notify

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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Policies, procedures, and events are subject to change based on health and safety guidelines and current conditions. the office, in addition to your child's teacher, if your contact information changes. It is best to provide those changes in writing.

Weather Monitoring

Safety of students and staff is the first concern when decisions are made to delay, close, or dismiss school early in response to hazardous weather conditions. The Superintendent and the district leadership team monitor weather forecasts and road conditions through coordination with the National Weather Service, Dorchester County Emergency Management Department, local utility companies, SC Highway Patrol, and local law enforcement. The Superintendent will also consult with Superintendents of surrounding school districts. If conditions warrant a change to the regular schedule to close early, cancel school or have a delayed opening, the district strives to make those decisions as soon as possible.

Delay of School Start Times, Early Dismissal, or Cancellation

When possible, the decision to **close schools** due to hazardous conditions will be made the evening before to allow parents and employees as much advance notice as possible.

If early morning weather conditions warrant a **delayed start time**, schools may open on a one-, two-, or three-hour delay from the normal schedule. The length of the delay would depend on existing weather conditions and the weather forecast for the day.

There are times when forecasts of rapidly deteriorating weather conditions require **early dismissal times** for schools to transport students safely home and get vehicles off the roads. If possible, the established early dismissal schedule will be followed: elementary schools at 11:00 a.m., middle schools at 12:00 p.m., and high schools and RISE Alternative Program at 1:00 p.m. Parents and staff will be notified of the change as quickly as the decision is made. When there is school cancellation or early dismissal, after school events, half-day programs, and elementary extended day childcare will be cancelled unless otherwise announced.

Additional Considerations

Decisions made in response to hazardous weather conditions are district wide, affecting all schools and district sites. There are times some areas of the county are not as impacted as others by inclement weather, but decisions must be based on road conditions in all areas that school buses must travel. In addition, many teachers and staff members live in surrounding areas that may be unsafe for travel.

Preparation For Inclement Weather

In cases of extreme cold, bus drivers, maintenance workers and other district/school staff report to work early to prepare the buses and facilities for students. The Dorchester School District Two Transportation Office works closely with the State Department of Education's bus mechanics to address any mechanical issues quickly. School staff will arrive early to receive students as they are dropped off, minimizing the time children are exposed to weather conditions.

Making Up For Lost School Time For Students And Staff

Three make-up days are included on the district master calendar as required by state law. These days are listed on the district calendar. Designated make up day(s) in the event of school closures will be announced as soon as possible.

Tips For Students and Parents Regarding Weather

Stay informed: Check the district website regularly and local media for updates on school delays and/or closings. **It is important to remember the decision to alter the school day is made by the district office staff not individual schools. The district requests that parents not call schools to keep the phone lines open in case of emergency situations.**

1. Students should dress appropriately for the weather and alter their time for arriving at bus stops based on the school start time. If a delay is scheduled, students should delay their arrival time at the bus stop to match the delay.
2. Parents are encouraged to have a plan in place if school closes early or if there is a delayed start time. The plan should avoid leaving young children at home unsupervised.

The district wants to ensure students, parents and employees are prepared for any situation caused by extreme temperatures or inclement weather. If you have questions about procedures related to extreme temperatures and/or inclement weather, contact the public information officer, at 843-873-2901.

Volunteering at Newington

We welcome and value volunteers as an important part of our school community! Whether you are helping in classrooms, attending field trips, assisting with school events, or supporting in any other capacity, your involvement makes a positive difference for our students.

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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Volunteer Requirements:

- All volunteers must complete an application and background check prior to volunteering. Please use the following link to begin this process: <https://nes.ddtwo.org/school/volunteers>
- Attendance at a volunteer orientation session is required for all volunteers. This ensures that everyone is familiar with our school procedures, expectations, and safety protocols.
- These steps are required for *all types of school volunteers*, regardless of the frequency or nature of your involvement.

We appreciate your time and commitment to supporting our students and staff. Thank you for partnering with us to create a safe and positive learning environment!

Field Trips

In Dorchester District Two, it is our goal to maximize educational opportunities of each individual child. We believe that one way to achieve this goal is through carefully planned field trips. All field trips must be for educational purposes and related to the grade level curriculum. Teachers take every reasonable precaution to ensure the safety of the children while on a field trip. Chaperones will be determined by the availability of slots allotted by the field trip company. Unfortunately, we are not always able to accommodate the number of parents wishing to attend field trips. Your child's teacher will let parents know of the need and available slots for chaperones. **No student may be transported to or from a field trip by any means other than the transportation provided by the school. No children other than students in the class are allowed on a field trip. Chaperones must be transported to and from the field trip location by the same transportation as the students unless approved by an administrator for extenuating circumstances. There will be no refunds issued if the student is unable to attend the field trip.**

Grading Policies

Kindergarten, First, and Second Grades

Newington's grading policy is in alignment with the policy of Dorchester School District Two. K-2nd grade students are assessed based on their performance on grade level standards. It is important to remember that early childhood students (K-2), as well as all students, progress at different rates of cognitive development. Should you have questions or concerns about your student's progress, please schedule a conference with the teacher.

K-2 Progress Report Performance ratings are as follows:

E	<u>Consistently and independently</u> mastering grade level standards
M	Meeting grade level standards with minimal teacher support
P	Making progress toward meeting grade level standard with teacher support
I	Lacking adequate progress and not meeting grade level indicators

In addition to standards-based reports, **Foundational Skills Assessments** are given to K-2 students regularly throughout the year. Our goal is for students to be reading on grade level by the end of second grade. The FSS assesses for reading fluency, as well as decoding and reading strategies.

****SC Law indicates that beginning in 2017-2018, any 3rd grade student not reading on grade level must be retained.**

Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grades

Grades 3-5 utilize the state grading scale as follows:

A = Shows excellent work	A = 100-90
B = Shows good work	B = 89-80
C = Shows satisfactory work	C = 79-70
D = Unsatisfactory progress	D = 69-60
F = Failing	F = Below 60

Teachers will explain grading methods at Open House and during conferences. Progress reports are sent home regularly. Unless otherwise noted, any progress report, report card, or tests sent home to the parent or guardian should be returned within 2 school days with a parent or guardian's signature. Weekly **"Dolphin Folders"** with graded papers and announcements go home each Wednesday with every student. Please have your child take responsibility of giving you

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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Policies, procedures, and events are subject to change based on health and safety guidelines and current conditions.
their folder each Wednesday.

Honor Roll

Students in grades 3-5 are eligible for the Honor Roll each nine-weeks. Honor roll is based on nine-week averages and not on semester or yearly averages.

1. "A" Honor Roll (grades 3-5) requires grades of A or S in all subjects.
2. "A/B" Honor Roll requires at least a B in all subjects.

*Only students in grades 3-5 are eligible for the Honor Roll.

Health & Wellness, Music, and Art Grades

Grades in Fine Arts will be reported as E (excellent), S (satisfactory), N (needs improvement), or U (unsatisfactory).

Fine Arts and Health & Wellness grades will be calculated into 3rd-5th grade honor roll status with a grade of E or S, qualifying for "A" Honor Roll. A student receiving a U cannot receive Honor Roll.

The Fine Arts/Health & Wellness curriculum in Dorchester District Two is standards-based and sequential, with specific content that is to be taught and learned at each grade level.

School Counselors

School counselors at Newington are caring professionals who provide services and programs for all students and parents. Our goal is to prepare students for the future by helping them realize their maximum potential. Structured developmental experiences are the core of the elementary guidance curriculum, which is presented through classroom and group activities. Our purpose of this curriculum is to establish rapport with students while providing them with information that will assist in their development of important life and leadership skills. Our program includes monthly classroom guidance, group counseling, individual counseling, crisis counseling, parent education, and community relations. To schedule an appointment with a counselor, please call the school or email the counselor. Further information is found on the NES guidance website.

Grades K, 2, 4 Mackenzie Bowen

Grades 4K, 1, 3, 5 Donna Coleman-Barr



Health and Wellness

The main objective of the Dorchester County School District Two Health Program is to assist each student in achieving and maintaining optimal health so that maximal physical, social, emotional, and academic growth can occur.

School Health Room Operations

The Health Room is operated daily under the supervision of a registered nurse or principal's designee. The school nurse is responsible for maintaining a health record on all students. Parents can update their child's health information during annual online student registration. If changes happen during the year, please notify the School Nurse. Schools should be made aware of any chronic illness or condition that may affect a student while at school. The Health Room is designed to be an emergency clinic to care for minor illnesses or injuries that occur at school. Injuries or health concerns that occur outside of school should be treated at home or by your child's health care provider. The School Nurse cannot diagnose or prescribe treatment. This is the responsibility of your family physician or other health care provider.

ILLNESS & SCHOOL EXCLUSION

There are times when a student should remain at home for his/her own wellbeing and for the wellbeing of others. Individuals attending and working in schools and childcare facilities in South Carolina must follow the DHEC School and Childcare Exclusion List. This list is updated annually and provides information on student & staff exclusion due to illness and outlines the requirements to return to school/work after being ill.

Exclusion List - <https://scdhec.gov/health/child-teen-health/school-exclusion>

In the event that a student becomes ill or injured and needs to go home, the parent/guardian or emergency contact listed during registration will be contacted and expected to come for the child. Students determined to need to go home by the school cannot remain in the health room and must be picked up by a parent, guardian, or other contact in a timely manner. Also, there are times when it is necessary to contact a parent/guardian by phone about a student's health. For this reason, please make sure the school has up-to-date phone numbers for those to contact in case of emergency.

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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STUDENT HEALTH SCREENINGS

Dorchester District Two recognizes that good physical health goes hand in hand with good academic performance. Health problems, including problems seeing and hearing, may prevent a child from achieving his/her fullest potential. Unfortunately, many such difficulties go undetected for years. School Nurses are trained to screen students for vision, hearing, and other concerns. To provide access to health screenings for as many students as possible, DD2 also partners with several outside agencies. If any school-based screening opportunities detect a problem, parents will be notified for further follow-up. Parents/guardians can opt their students out of school-based health screenings by providing this request in writing directly to the School Nurse.

HEAD LICE

If a student is suspected of having lice at school, they will be checked by the Nurse or trained delegate. Per DHEC, if live lice are observed, the student must be excluded from school until evidence of treatment. Depending on the age of the student, the exclusion may be immediate (if head-to-head contact cannot be avoided) or at the end of the school day. Evidence of treatment is then assessed by the Nurse or HRA upon return to school prior to their return to class/normal activities. Assuming no live lice or viable (closer than ¼ inch to the scalp) nits are observed, the student may return to class. If evidence of treatment is not seen, the student must remain excluded. Treatment for lice is defined as any method that is successful in removing a live lice infestation, including viable nits (eggs), and can include prescription treatment, OTC treatment, professional treatment at a lice facility, or a thorough and complete combing. The student should be re-checked in 7-10 days to ensure re-infestation has not occurred and if necessary, treatment should be repeated.

Dorchester District Two follows evidence-based practices related to lice in schools. If a student is identified as having lice at school, we do not conduct whole class head checks, nor do we send letters home to parents advising them of the presence of a student with lice. The best way to handle lice concerns is through consistent community education and thorough & effective treatment when lice are identified.

MEDICATIONS & TREATMENTS

Dorchester District Two requires that the parents of all students who need medication during school hours, while on school-sponsored trips, or while on campus for District-sponsored activities adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Parent/legal guardian must complete and submit a Dorchester School District Two Medication Request Form for each medication being requested to take or store at school, including medications approved for self-carry or self-administration. This form requires both the signature of the physician and the parent/legal guardian. Annual forms are available on the District website.
2. All requests for medication to be given at school must be submitted via this form and approval is at the discretion of the District after a review of both completeness of documentation and appropriateness of administration within the school setting.
 - a. All prescription and over-the-counter medications, including but not limited to acetaminophen/ibuprofen, cough medicine, vitamins, supplements, cough drops, and lotions/ointments will not be given at school without this form completed by a legal prescriber and medication submitted in a properly labeled container by a registered pharmacist as prescribed by law.
 - b. Herbals, food supplements, alternative medicinal products, and other items that do not have FDA approval will not be given at school without a medication permission request form completed by a legal prescriber and in a properly labeled prescription container by a registered pharmacist as prescribed by law. Items prescribed for off-label use may require District approval before they can be accepted for administration in school.
 - c. Students may never take the first dose of a medication at school to ensure proper home monitoring for side effects.
3. After approval, medications must be submitted to the School Nurse following all District guidelines for medications.
 - a. Medication must be brought in by the parent/guardian or other responsible adult, **NOT THE STUDENT**.
 - b. Medication must be in the current prescription bottle/package and must be properly labeled by a registered pharmacist as prescribed by law (ask your pharmacist to prepare a separate labeled bottle for school use).
 - c. Only a 31-day supply may be delivered to school.
4. All medicine not registered with the School Nurse will be in direct violation of district policy.
5. Students may not share any prescription or over-the-counter medication with another student. Violations may result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to suspension or expulsion.
6. All medicine not registered with the School Nurse will be in direct violation of district policy and dealt with accordingly.
7. Parents/guardians will be contacted at the end of the year to pick up any remaining medication and school personnel will dispose of medication not claimed at the end of the school year.

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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In addition to prescription or over-the-counter medications, procedures are in place for students who may need other medical assistance at school such as nutritional supplements, respiratory care, tube feedings, and diabetic care, among others. These treatments also require written orders from a healthcare provider and these forms can be accessed on the DDTwo Health & Nursing Services web page.

Please note, students requiring the use of crutches, wheelchairs/scooters, or other assistive mobility devices in school on a short-term basis after injury or surgery are required to submit a note from a healthcare provider outlining appropriate use of this equipment in school. All students must provide and maintain their own equipment.

REQUIRED STANDARDS OF IMMUNIZATION FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Pursuant to Section 44-29-180, South Carolina Code of Laws, and South Carolina Regulation 61-8, "no superintendent of an institution of learning, no school board or principal of a school...may...enroll or retain a child or person who cannot produce satisfactory evidence of having been vaccinated or immunized so often as directed by the Department of Health and Environmental Control.... Records of vaccinations or immunizations must be maintained by the institution, school or day care facility to which the child or person has been admitted."

The minimum requirements necessary for childcare and any public, private, or parochial school grades 5K-12, including preschool attendance for 4K programs and younger are set by DHEC annually. These requirements will be effective as of July 1, 2024. A SC Certificate of Immunization with an expiration date is acceptable to allow for age-appropriate completion of vaccination series. No child can attend for more than 30 days past the expiration date of the certificate.

Note: Grade level requirements apply to all students entering or retained in the grades specified.

Immunization Requirements - <https://scdhec.gov/health/vaccinations/childcare-school-vaccine-requirements>

Birthday Parties

- Check with your child's teacher regarding when and how class birthdays will be celebrated.
- Many students have food allergies, therefore always check with your child's teacher prior to sending food items to school. To promote health and wellness, we encourage healthy snack alternatives to sweets and/or suggest that classroom birthdays be celebrated on one day per month. Please make sure the item is store bought and prefer individually wrapped items.
- Visitors are not permitted to deliver items to classrooms.
- It is not permitted to bring balloons to school as they pose a safety hazard on the bus, and we have students who are allergic to latex.

Water Policy

We are devoted to making drinking water the easy choice. Cool, clean water is readily available in each pod throughout our school and unlimited for children and teachers throughout the day. We allow children to carry a clear, capped, non-glass container to drink in areas of the classrooms that are free of computers and electronics. Sodas or caffeinated beverages should not be sent to school with children.

Lost and Found

Each school year, jackets, sweaters, hats, and coats find their way to our Lost and Found Department. **Parents, please, write your child's first and last name in their garments so we may return them to their rightful owner and save you some money!** Quarterly, unclaimed items are donated to local charities.

Transferring/Withdrawal

To avoid loss of time and problems when transferring, we ask that the school be given at least one week's notice of your student's last day. This time is needed to collect and process records. A parent or legal guardian must come to the office and sign proper forms to hand carry school records to the new school.

Visitors

All visitors MUST report to the office for a Visitor's Pass. A photo ID will be required to receive a pass.

Additional visitor information:

- For our children's safety, we lock our doors at all times. Please go to the front entrance and press the buzzer button for entry.
- Parents cannot enter the multi-purpose room for activities from the back of the school. All visitors must enter through the front office.
- Parents are not allowed to walk their children to class.
- Parents will leave birthday snacks at the front office to be delivered.
- If you wish to visit and observe classroom instruction in your child's room or conference with the teacher, please contact the school office **at least 24 hours in advance** of your desired visit. These observations must be scheduled

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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with an administrator and an agreement form must be signed.

- Business deliveries are not permitted for students (ex. Door Dash, flowers, etc)
- When observing, the parent will schedule a maximum 30 minute time period with admin.
- Please keep in mind that the classrooms are not the place for family time visitations or impromptu conferences.
- During special events where guest attendance is large, visitors will be asked sign in on our Raptor visitor management system. Please make sure you allow for time to complete this process and the possibility of lines in order to be at an event on time.
- **Noncustodial parents** must have specific paperwork on file in the office indicating that they may attend school functions and/or pick up their child at the school. School personnel will operate by following the most recent paperwork on file at the school. Should a conflict arise, **the principal will have the final say at the school level.**

August 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Health Habit: Begin practicing a good "wake up" routine NOW!!					1 Staff Day	2
3	4 Meet the Teacher Kinder- 5-6:30 4K, 1st-5th- 6-7:30 Staff Day	5 Staff Day	6 First Day of School!	7	8	9
10 MAP Testing Window 8/13-9/5	11	12	13	14 Kinder Meet & Greet, 12pm MAP Reading Test for all 1-5 students	15 Merit Celebration	16
17	18	19 MAP Math Test for all 1-5 Students	20	21 Fall Pictures	22	23
24	25	26	27 Early Release Day 11:00 am Terrific Kid, 8am	28	29	30

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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September 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Labor Day No School	2	3	4 Grandparents Day Event, 6pm	5 Kona Ice Day	6
7 We love our grandparen ts! Grandparen ts Day ♥	8	9	10 Early Release Day 11:00 am Q1 Interims Sent Home via email Merit Celebration	11	12	13
14	15	16 IT Prof Day Tuesday Talks with Mom, 6:55am	17	18	19	20
21	22	23 SIC Meeting, 8am	24 Early Release Day 11:00 am Terrific Kids Ceremony	25 HR Workers Day Boosterthon Kickoff!	26 Boosterthon Fundraiser	27
28	29	30	Health Habit: Specific sleep needs vary, but children and teenagers need more than adults do. Some general guidelines are: ages 3 to 10: 10 to 12 hours each day and ages 11 to 12: about 10 hours each day.	Hispanic Heritage Month Kicks off on 9/15. It celebrates the history, culture, and contributions of the U.S. Latino and Hispanic communities, who are from or have ancestors from countries where Spanish is spoken.		

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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October 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<i>Hispanic Heritage Month: It lasts from September 15 to October 15, coinciding with the independence days of several Latin American countries.</i>		Healthy Habit: Without breakfast our bodies don't get the jumpstart they need to operate at their fullest potential throughout the day.	1 Boosterthon Fundraiser	2 Custodian Appreciation Day ♥ Boosterthon Fundraiser	3 Kona Ice Day Boosterthon Fun Run!	4
5	6 2 nd Grade CoGat Testing	7 2 nd Grade CoGat Testing	8 2 nd Grade CoGat Testing	9 End of 1st Quarter PJs & Pancakes with Student Led Conferences, 6pm Merit Celebration	10 Staff Day, No School	11
12 School Lunch week: We love our cafe staff!	13 FALL BREAK No School	14 FALL BREAK No School	15 FALL BREAK No School	16 IA Testing for 2 nd grade	17 IA Testing for 2 nd grade	18
19 School Bus Safety Week: We love our bus drivers!	20	21 All Pro Dads, 6:55am	22 Quarter 1 Report Cards go home	23	24 1st Quarter Awards: 7:45am- 3rd 8:30- 4th 9:15am- 5th	25
26 Red Ribbon Week	27 Book Fair	28 Book Fair SIC Meeting, 8am	29 Early Release Day 11:00 am FES/NES Storybook Character Parade Book Fair	30 Book Fair	31 Terrific Kids, 8am Book Fair	Physical Therapists Month: We love Ms. Collier & Ms. Reeves!

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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November 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Month of the Military Family: The annual proclamation honors the commitments and sacrifices made by the families of our nation's service members.		Healthy Habit: Keep track of your screen time each day. When you've reached two hours, replace your screen time with a healthy activity. If you've had plenty of exercise already, read a book, make artwork or crafts, or even just have a conversation with other family members.				1
2 School Psychology Week: We love Mrs. Hutchinson!	3 2 nd Grade Swim Field Trip, 2B, 2D, 2F	4 ELECTION DAY- go vote!	5 Fall Make Up Photos 2 nd Grade Swim Field Trip, 2B, 2D, 2F	6 2 nd Grade Swim Field Trip, 2B, 2D, 2F	7 2 nd Grade Swim Field Trip, 2B, 2D, 2F Kona Ice Day	8
9	10 2 nd Grade Swim Field Trip, 2A, 2C, 2E	11 2 nd Grade Swim Field Trip, 2A, 2C, 2E We are so thankful for our Veterans ♥	12 Early Release Day 11:00 am Veteran's Day Ceremony, 8am	13 2 nd Grade Swim Field Trip, 2A, 2C, 2E	14 2 nd Grade Swim Field Trip, 2A, 2C, 2E Terrific Kids Ceremony	15
16 American Education Week	17	18 Tuesday Talks with Mom, 6:55am	19 Q2 Interims go home via email Ed. Support App Day ♥ Merit Celebration	20 4K-2 Field Day 3-5 Around the World Day	21 3-5 Field Day 4K-2 Around the World Day	22
23	24 THANKSGIVING BREAK No School	25 THANKSGIVING BREAK No School	26 THANKSGIVING BREAK No School	27 THANKSGIVING BREAK No School	28 THANKSGIVING BREAK No School	29
30						

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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December 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
MAP Testing window 12/1-1/9	1	2	3	4	5 PTA Movie Night! Kona Ice Day	6
7 MAP Testing, 12/8-12/19	8 PTA Holiday Shop	9 PTA Holiday Shop All Pro Dads, 6:55am	10 Early Release Day 11:00 am Merit Celebration	11 PTA Holiday Shop Holiday Showcase, 2 nd & 3 rd , 6pm PTA General Assembly Mtg	12 PTA Holiday Shop	13
14	15	16 SIC Meeting, 8am	17 PTA Teacher Luncheon Terrific Kids Ceremony	18 MAP Growth Celebration	19 End of the 2 nd Qtr Early Release Day	20
21	22 Winter Break No School	23 Winter Break No School	24 Winter Break No School	25 Winter Break No School	26 Winter Break No School	27
28	29 Winter Break No School	30 Winter Break No School	31	Healthy Habit: Hand-washing is easy to do. It's one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of many types of germs in all settings—from your home and workplace to schools and more. Clean hands can stop germs from spreading from one person to another.		

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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January 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>Healthy Habit: How you breathe can make a difference in how you feel. When you are stressed, nervous, frightened, worried or angry, you may notice that your breathing gets low and fast. In calmer times, your breathing will be slower and deeper. You can learn to slow down your breathing, making each breath longer and deeper, calming the rest of your body and your mind. If you practice doing this, you can become good at staying calm or return to feeling calm quickly in stressful situations.</p>				1 Winter Break No School	2 Winter Break No School	3
4	5 Teacher workday, No School	6 Students return to school	7	8	9 Kona Ice Day Quarter 2 Report Cards go home	10
11	12	13 Tuesday Talks with Mom, 6:55am	14 Early Release Day 11:00 am Merit Celebration	15	16 Q2 Awards: 7:45am- 3 rd 8:30am- 4 th 9:15am- 5 th	17
18	19 Martin Luther King, Jr Day No School	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27 SIC Meeting, 8am	28 Early Release Day 11:00 am Terrific Kids	29 State of the District & Business Partner Appreciation Breakfast	30	31 School Board Appreciation Month: We love our DD2 Board!

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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February 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Black History month became a month-long celebration in 1976. February was chosen to coincide with the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.					Healthy Habit: Active habits help keep or develop a healthy heart!	
1 National School Counseling Week: We love Ms. Barr & Ms. Bowen ♥	2	3	4	5	6 School counselor's day: We love Ms. Barr and Ms. Bowen! Kona Ice Day	7 PTA Apple of My Eye Dance
8	9	10 All Pro Dads, 6:55am	11 Early Release Day 11:00 am Merit Celebration Q3 Interims go home via email	12	13	14
15 SRO Day: We love Officer Lipsey!	16 No School President's Day	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24 Class Photos SIC Meeting, 8am	25 Early Release Day 11:00 am Terrific Kids Ceremony	26 1 st & 4 th Grades Fine Arts Showcases PTA General Assembly Meeting	27	28

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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March 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Women's History Month- First held in 1909 as a day celebration. In 1978 it became a week long celebration and in 1987 was changed to a month celebration of women's history.					Healthy Habit: Skin health and skin care will always be an important part of our lives. Make sure to apply sunscreen regularly when outdoors!	
1 School Social Workers Week We love Ms. Chirillo!	2 Spring Book Fair NWEA Read Across America Week	3 Spring Book Fair	4 Spring Book Fair	5 Spring Book Fair Learning Luau, 6pm	6 Spring Book Fair Kona Ice Day	7
8	9	10 Tuesday Talks with Mom, 6:55am	11 Early Release Day 11:00 am Merit Celebration	12	13 End of Quarter 3	14 DD2 Foundation "The Big Event"
15	16 Staff Day, No School	17	18	19	20 Spring Pictures	21
22 MAP Testing Window, 3/23-4/17	23	24 SIC Meeting, 8am	25 District PTA Reflections Awards Ceremony Q3 Report Cards go home	26 Dorchester 2 Star Performer Celebration 3rd Quarter Awards: 3rd- 7:45, 4th- 8:30, 5th - 9:15	27 Terrific Kids Ceremony	28
29	30 Spring Break	31 Spring Break	Youth Art Month: During this month, aims to celebrate visual arts education for children and youth, emphasizing its importance in fostering creativity, critical thinking, and well-rounded development. It encourages community engagement, expands art programs, and advocates for increased support for art education at all levels. Music in Our Schools Month: This month is designated to raise awareness about the vital importance of music education for all students and to highlight the value that school music programs bring to students of all ages. It's a time for schools and communities to celebrate music programs, showcase student achievements, and advocate for continued support of music education.			

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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April 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Month of the Military Child- there are over 1.6 children with unique challenges due to their parent's service.	Volunteer Appreciation Month: We could not do this without you! Thanks just doesn't seem enough!	Occupational Therapists Month: We love Ms. Franco and Ms. Lopez!	1 Spring Break	2 Spring Break	3 Spring Break	4
5 Ast. Principals' Week: We love Mr. Magers & Ms. Johnson!	6 Staff Day, No School	7	8	9 Spring Musical, 6pm	10 Kona Ice Day Spring Musical, 6pm	11
12	13	14	15 Early Release Day 11:00 am Merit Celebration	16	17 MAP Growth Goals Celebration	18
19 Volunteer & Afterschool Professionals App. Week ♥ Library Week: We love Ms. Johnston & Ms. Gilpin! ♥	20 District PTA Spring Awards	21 All Pro Dads, 6:55am	22 Q3 Interims go home in email Admin. Prof App Day	23 DD2 Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast	24 Mother-Son Event	25
26	27	28 SIC Meeting, 8am School Bus Driver Appreciation Day ♥	29 Early Release Day 11:00 am Terrific Kids Ceremony	30 Kinder & 5 th grades Fine Arts Showcase	Healthy Habit: Get your kids involved in the shopping process. Take them to a local farmers' market, and let them pick out the fruits and veggies they'd like.	

Newington Elementary School Parent Handbook

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May 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>Mental Health Awareness Month: It has been said by different people in different ways that we see things not based on the way they are, but on how we are. Mental remix helps us see the world in new and more hopeful ways, thus helping us be the very best, and happiest, we can be.</p>			<p>Healthy Habit: When you want your kids to try something new, make sure they've first had a day of fresh air and exercise – so they're hungry at mealtime. When it's time to eat, serve just a small sample of new food.</p>	1 Kona Ice Day	2	State Testing window opens for 3 rd -5 th grades
3 Staffully Appreciation Week- Join us to celebrate our fabulous staff May 4-8	4	5	6 School Nurse Day- We love Nurse Brown!	7 DD2 TOY Celebration	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18 Speech Pathologist Day We love Ms. West, Ms. Mattingly, and Ms. Riggs!	19	20 Kona Ice Day	21 DD2 Retiree Ceremony Academic Carnival	22 Terrific Kids Ceremony 5 th Grade Dance, 2:45-4:45 5 th Grade Awards, 5pm	23 Dorchester 2 Graduation Ceremonies SHS, 9:00am FDHS, 2:00pm ARHS, 7:00pm
24	25 Memorial Day, No School	26 4K Awards, 7:45am Kinder Awards, 8:30am 1 st Grade Awards, 9:15am	27 2 nd Grade Awards, 7:45am 3 rd Grade Awards, 8:30am 4 th Grade Awards, 9:15am	28 Last Day of School for students Previous Seniors report to school - 7:45 am 5 th grade Clap out Parade – 8:00 am Early Release Day – 11:00 am	29 Staff Day, No School	30
31	June 1 Summer office hours are Monday through Thursday, 8:00am-5:00pm	June 2 All offices are closed the week of 4 th of July	June 3 Please continue reading and playing board games with your child over the summer!	June 4	June 5	June 6