

SWIFT CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Student & Parent Handbook 2024-2025

SCHOOL HOURS

9:15 am – 3:45 pm

ARRIVAL

Bus and Day Care Van Riders will arrive at the bus loop to the left of the main building. All CCK students are also dropped off in this area. The area is reserved for this traffic only. Students eating breakfast are to report directly to the cafeteria after exiting the bus/day care van.

Car Riders may be dropped in front of the modular buildings between 8:45 am and 9:15 am. For safety, do not drop off students at any other parts of the parking lot or at any time earlier than 8:45 am. Staff members and student safety patrol members will direct students to enter the buildings at 8:45 am. Students must report directly to their classrooms except those going to breakfast. Those students going to breakfast should go directly to the cafeteria.

Students who have not arrived in their classrooms by 9:15 am are tardy and must be signed in by a parent/guardian in the office. The student must obtain a class admission slip before going to class. Punctual attendance is important and we strongly encourage you to have your students here before the bell rings at 9:15 am. After the first week of school, children will need to walk to class without the escort of a parent. During this week, parents will still need to sign in at the front office. This allows teachers to begin the instructional day promptly at 9:15 am and helps to ensure the safety of all students and staff members.

DISMISSAL

Regular dismissal time is 3:45 pm.

Car riders will be dismissed from the main hallway as their carpool number comes up. This is why it is so important for each vehicle picking up a student to have an official SCES carpool tag prominently displayed.

To ensure the safety of all car riders and maintain an orderly dismissal process, all early checkouts for appointments must be prior to 3:15 pm. After this time, we will dismiss students at 3:45 pm in the carpool line. If appointments necessitate checking your child out early, a person whom you have approved and is listed in our system must pick them up in the office and present a valid ID. We value your child's safety and cannot release your child to someone who is not listed or does not have a valid ID.

Students must be picked up by 4:05 pm. If you know that you will be delayed and unable to pick up your child until after that time, please let the office know.

Parents, please register for carpool numbers in the school office prior to the first time you pick up your children from carpool. You can get these tags during Meet the Family Night. If you already have a carpool number from last year, you will use it this year – you do not

need to get another one. It is extremely helpful if you assist your child in remembering their number. If your child uses a booster seat, then please have your child enter your car on the passenger side and teach them to fasten themselves into the seat. This will help the carpool lane move faster. Also, please ensure that this number is displayed in the car that picks up your child. If you do not have your number or the teacher on duty does not know you, you will be asked to park and go to the office to sign your child out. While this may inconvenience you, remember that safety is our primary concern. Thank you in advance for adhering to the rules for carpool pick up.

Please do not ask students to meet you at any place other than the carpool line. This is extremely unsafe. We appreciate you following these procedures carefully.

The carpool lane is a one way flowing lane. Parents and visitors will enter the parking lot through the shopping center using the Timber Drive entrance, and exit through the carpool lane making a left back onto Timber Drive. Carpool drivers should not make a right turn, as this will interfere with bus/vendor/daycare transportation dismissal. There will be five carpool drop off and pick up spots designated by colored cones. Students will be dismissed by a staff member to wait at a colored cone. We ask that you pull forward to the cones slowly and allow your student to exit quickly on the right side of the vehicle. All carpool students should be picked up by 4:05. If you are picking up safety patrol members, arrive at 4:10 pm. If there is a problem with the pick up or drop off of any carpool student, we will ask you to pull forward. We will then direct the traffic around you to exit. Please be patient during the first few weeks of school as we train our students on these procedures and during any inclement weather at arrival or dismissal.

Handicap parking spaces are provided for visitors and parents who are on campus for school business, meetings, etc. Please do not use these spaces to attempt to circumvent carpool procedures.

Bus riders will be released from the cafeteria as buses arrive. Teachers will help students learn these routines.

- All students K-5 will be issued a bus tag with name, address, phone number and bus stop. The bus tag must be attached to the student's bookbag in order to be allowed to ride a bus.
- WCPSS policy requires all Kindergarten and first grade students be met at the bus stop by an adult, unless they are accompanied from the stop by an older sibling.
- Violations of the WCPSS transportation policies may result in the loss of transportation privileges.

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

Any changes in a student's normal transportation pattern should be made by sending a note to the teacher. Otherwise, the teacher will send the student the normal way. Last minute changes can be made by calling the school before 3:00 pm. We ask that you abide by this request, as we want to ensure the prompt delivery of transportation messages to teachers. Students may only ride the bus to which they are assigned and may only get on and off the bus at their assigned stop. Changes to bus routes must be made in advance by placing a Request for Bus Change at www.wcpss.net.

ABSENCES AND HEALTH POLICIES

When a student is unable to attend school, please call 919-233-4320 by 9:15 am. State the student's name, teacher's name, and the reason for the absence to office personnel or voice mail. Parents should also send a note or email to the child's teacher regarding the absence.

Absences are excused for the following reasons:

- Illness or injury that makes the student physically unable to attend school
- Isolation ordered by the State or County Board of Health
- Death in the family
- Medical, dental, or other appointment with a health care provider
- Religious observance, as suggested by the religion of the student or the student's parents, with prior approval. (Please get a Request for Excused Absence for Religious Reasons from the office personnel and give it to your child's teacher or the principal's office.)
- Participation in a valid educational opportunity, with prior approval. This must be submitted a week prior to the trip for review by the principal. The primary purpose and intent of the trip should be educational and not a family vacation. (Please get a Request for Excused Absence for Educational Reasons—form # 1710—from office personnel and give it to your child's teacher or the principal's office.)

All other absences are unexcused. If a student reaches three unexcused absences, the teacher will notify the parent. At six unexcused absences, you will receive notice in writing. We value attendance at Swift Creek and set a goal that all students maintain a 95% attendance rate. If a child misses more than nine days for any reason, then they will not meet this goal. Also, excessive tardies are a level 1 offense according to WCPSS policy. Please make every effort to have your child at school on time daily.

MEDICATIONS

Parents must bring any medications to school. Do not send them with your child. You may give it to the bus driver to transport if the proper forms are on file at school. In this case, the driver will give the medication to a staff member on duty.

Prescription medications will not be administered to students without having the proper form on file (Parent Request and Physician's Order Form) signed by the parent and physician, as required by WCPSS policy. This form must be submitted each school year.

A Parent Request and Physician's Order Form, signed by a parent and physician, must also accompany over-the-Counter medications. Elementary students may not self-medicate. This includes over-the-counter drugs.

Short-term prescription medications (two weeks or less) may be administered to students if they are in the original containers with the pharmacist's label attached and accompanied by the Parent Request and Physician's Order Form.

STUDENT HEALTH

The best thing you can do is to keep your children home when sick. This will help stop the spread of illness to other children and staff. Keep them home when they show any of these symptoms:

- fever of 100.4 degrees or higher

- nausea or vomiting
- severe headache
- diarrhea
- red, watery eyes with yellow drainage
- undiagnosed rash

Children should stay home until they have been fever-free without medication for at least 24 hours and free from nausea, vomiting and diarrhea for 12 hours. Do not give children fever-reducing, anti-nausea/vomiting or anti-diarrhea medication and then send them to school. If you are called to pick up a sick child at school, please come quickly. Please ensure that we have an emergency contact person (other than you) listed on your child's office locator card in the event that we cannot get in touch with you.

A Wake County Public Health Nurse will visit our school each week. The Health Department stresses that children learn best when they are well and happy.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

When weather conditions threaten the safety of the students, it may be necessary to close school for the entire day, delay the opening of school, or dismiss school earlier than usual. When the Superintendent makes this decision, local radio and television stations are notified as well as social media outlets. On days we have the potential for inclement weather, listen to local stations often, as they often have the information before we do at school. Please do not call the school office for information, as these lines should be kept open for emergency situations. Please discuss emergency dismissal plans with your child so that he/she will know what to do in the event of early dismissal from school. If school is delayed, the Before Care program will be delayed by the same amount of time. If school closes early due to weather, the After School Care program will not operate and students will need to be picked up. If school is closed due to weather, there will be no Before Care or After School Care program. If your child goes to a daycare provider after school, you will need to check with them directly to see if they are operating. You will be asked by your child's teacher to provide inclement weather information at the beginning of the year so that we can plan proactively for any type of dismissal event that could occur. Parents can also sign up on the WCPSS website to receive inclement weather updates. Please note that for a system-wide closure, we will not use the School Messenger system to send a mass call because it could prevent the lines from being open in an emergency. After a weather event, make-up days will be communicated via school communication and on the wcpss.net website.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND CONDUCT

All students are responsible for complying with and are expected to be familiar with the WCPSS Code of Conduct and school policies governing student behavior and conduct. All Code of Student Conduct policies are contained in the WCPSS Student/Parent Handbook, which is distributed to all students and parents at the beginning of each school year or upon enrollment in the WCPSS. If there is a conflict between the rules expressed in this handbook/agenda/planner and the Code of Student Conduct policies, the WCPSS Code of Conduct policies shall take precedence. Please review the code of conduct with your children each year, noting the code of conduct under WCPSS Board Policy 6410 and the Harassment and Bullying Board Policy 6414. After reviewing the WCPSS handbook, students and parents should sign and return the verification and agreement form in the front of the handbook.

CLASSROOM INTERRUPTIONS POLICY

In an effort to make the most of the instructional time, WCPSS has adopted a policy to reduce interruptions during the regular class time. Students can learn best and teachers can teach best when announcements, unexpected visitors, or messages from the school's main office do not interrupt instructional time.

You are always welcome at Swift Creek Elementary School. We value your assistance at special learning experiences, PTA events, or field trips and encourage you to register as a volunteer so you can participate. You may eat with your child in the cafeteria, but we ask that you abide by the cafeteria, grade level, and teacher guidelines about when to begin café visits each year, as some students have difficulty transitioning at the beginning of the year. Please notify your child's teacher so he or she will be expecting your visit.

Please notify your child's teacher at least one day in advance (except in an emergency) if you will need to pick up your child early for a doctor's appointment or other excused absence. If you will need to check out your student prior to the end of the day for appointments prior to 3:15 pm, please note that we will call the student to the office for you when you arrive on campus. Because we value their learning, we do not want them to miss any activities or lessons by waiting in the front office. Students will not be checked out between 3:15 pm and 3:45 pm.

Except in an emergency, telephone messages to students and teachers will be delivered during lunch or at the end of the instructional day.

If you need to speak with a teacher, please make an appointment.

All visitors or volunteers must sign in at the front office before going to the classrooms.

During special assemblies or programs that parents may attend during the school day, siblings may not be removed from classrooms and instruction to attend the programs with you. We will grant an exception for the fifth grade end of year promotion ceremony if you deem it appropriate for the sibling.

ASSESSMENTS

Students at all grade levels have various assessments that measure performance and guide teachers in making instructional decisions. Students in grades K-5 will be assessed three times a year on literacy and math skills. Teachers also use a variety of other materials and work products to measure student performance. Teachers will explain these assessment tools at Parent-Teacher conferences, which occur at least twice per year. The assessments also document above, at, or below grade level performance and are important when making promotion or retention decisions.

State reading and math tests take place at the end of the school year for all third through fifth grade students. Third graders take a Beginning of Grade Test (BOG) for English/Language Arts during the first weeks of school. Fifth graders also take a Science EOG in June. Scoring a Level III, IV, or V is essential for meeting promotion standards. According to North Carolina law; all eligible students must be tested. The testing window for EOGs is during the last ten days of school, so it is imperative that all students attend school through the last day and complete the EOGs for which they are eligible.

SCES DRESS CODE

Appropriate dress is necessary in order to maintain an atmosphere that is conducive to learning and safety. In support of the Board of Education's adopted dress code, Swift Creek Elementary School is implementing the following dress code for all students:

Presenting a bodily appearance or wearing clothing which is disruptive, provocative, revealing, profane, vulgar, offensive or obscene, or which endangers the health and safety of students or others is strictly prohibited.

Examples of prohibited dress or appearance include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Exposed undergarments
- Sagging pants
- Shoes with wheels (wheels must be removed)
- Excessively short or tight garments - check that shorts reach fingertip length
- Bare midriff shirts
- Strapless shirts
- Bathing suits
- Attire with messages or illustrations that are lewd, distracting, indecent or vulgar or that advertise any product or service not permitted by law to minors
- Head covering of any kind (other than for religious reasons)
- See-through clothing
- Attire that exposes cleavage
- Any adornment, such as chains or spikes, that reasonably could be perceived as or used as a weapon
- Any gang affiliated or related clothing
- Any symbols, styles, or attire frequently associated with intimidation, violence or violent groups about which students at Swift Creek Elementary have been notified
- Slippers or bedroom shoes

CAFETERIA

Breakfast

- Full Price, K-5 \$1.75
- Free & Reduced Price, K-5 \$0.00
- Milk \$0.50
- Adults a la carte

Lunch

- Full Price, K-5 \$3.50
- Free & Reduced Price, K-5 \$0.00
- Milk \$0.50
- Adults a la carte

Your child's school identification number is their lunch number. Students must use the keypad at the cash register to enter their number. Incoming kindergarten students will be assisted with this until they have memorized their numbers.

Parents/Guardians are invited to have lunch with their children. There is a designated table in the cafeteria for you to enjoy this time with your child and no more than two

students from the class that your child may choose. We also have picnic tables available just outside the cafeteria door. Only your child is allowed to eat outside with you at the picnic tables.

HEALTHY SNACKS/CELEBRATIONS

We recommend that birthday celebrations focus on the child rather than food. We suggest that you purchase specialty items like pencils or erasers; or celebrate with healthy foods like fruits and vegetables. It is WCPSS policy that if you bring in any snacks or food for any type of learning experience or celebration, the items must be store bought and in original packaging. Balloons and flowers will not be delivered to students.

Birthday party invitations may not be distributed at school. If you wish to bring in store bought cupcakes or cookies for a child's birthday, they will be provided to all students at lunch. There should be one for each student and students with allergies should be taken into consideration. Please make sure these arrangements have been made in a timely manner and between the corresponding adults.

HOMEWORK

Homework is intended to enrich, reinforce, and extend the curriculum as well as to emphasize responsibility and good study habits. Homework will be given for skills that have been explained and practiced in class, as well as for enrichment. It may be included as part of a student's work habits grade.

Students in kindergarten and first grade should expect no more than 20 minutes of homework per day. Students in third, fourth, and fifth grades should expect no more than 50 minutes of homework per day.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

Swift Creek parents and teachers are encouraged to join and actively participate in the PTA. Membership is only \$10 per person and when you join, you automatically become a member of both the North Carolina PTA and the National PTA. Checks may be made payable to Swift Creek PTA, and sent to the attention of PTA Membership at school.

Meetings are generally held on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm. In the case of special events or performances, the PTA meeting will be held prior to the performance and prior to 7:00 pm.

The PTA sponsors many activities throughout the school year including the annual fundraiser--The Cougar Fun Run, two book fairs with family nights, Science Fair, and other fun events. Please join the PTA and come fellowship with other Swift Creek families. The committees who coordinate these fun events would love to have your help, so please consider donating your time. Information about upcoming events and volunteer opportunities can be found on the school website under the PTA link.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Teachers will initiate at least two conferences per school year to share work and information about how your child is progressing. However, parents may also initiate conferences. Conferences should be scheduled before or after school hours or during

teacher planning times. Please remember that teachers supervise students during arrival (8:45 am-9:15 am) and dismissal (3:45 pm-4:15 pm) and are unable to conference with you during these time frames.

VOLUNTEERS

Parent volunteers are a very special resource at Swift Creek. We value the many ways parents contribute to our learning community. Many parents volunteer in classrooms, attend field trips, help with programs, or provide extra activities for students. Please contact your child's homeroom teacher, the school office, or the PTA Volunteer Coordinator if you would like to donate your time and talents to educating our students.

When volunteering, please remember to sign in at the kiosk in the office. The PTA records the number of volunteer hours served each year as part of its record keeping responsibilities and signing in ensures the safety of all of our students on a daily basis.

All WCPSS parent and community volunteers are required to register through the MyVolunteer system.

On the MyVolunteer site, you will find disclosure and authorization forms, the WCPSS Volunteer Agreement, as well as a summary of rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act. You must review these documents and provide the requested information.

Make sure you include your name and contact information when you begin the registration process. If you leave the CRC background site before completing your contact information, you will have to begin the process again.

You must include your social security number to register to volunteer. If you do not have a social security number, please contact volunteers@wcpss.net or call 919-694-8233.

You will be notified by the MyVolunteer system if you are approved to volunteer. Click the link below to start your volunteer registration:

<https://myvolunteer.com/wcpss/volunteer/login>

PROMOTION/RETENTION

WCPSS Board Policy 5530 notes:

Promotion standards are based on the belief that students should meet grade level proficiency and graduation requirements in order to be promoted to the next grade level or to graduate from school. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that appropriate intervention is provided as early as possible for students who are identified as unlikely to meet the promotion standards. Students are required to meet local and state standards for promotions in grades K-8 that include demonstrated proficiency on local assessments, standardized tests, and final progress reports/report cards. In determining the best educational interests of a pupil, appropriate grade level decisions shall be based upon the mastery of critical knowledge and skills including reading, writing, and mathematics in consideration of social, emotional, and physical needs. The educational program shall provide for the continuous progress of students.

At Swift Creek Elementary, we believe that appropriate intervention for students is key when data and student performance indicate that retention is a possibility. We will never make the decision hastily and will utilize a variety of data to assess student performance

frequently. All board policies regarding promotion and retention will be followed. Parents are notified by the mid point of the third quarter if their student is a possible candidate for retention. If retention is considered we will work collaboratively to prepare a plan for assisting the student to gain necessary skills to meet grade level benchmarks.

Read to Achieve is legislation enacted in 2012 as part of the Excellent Public Schools Act that outlined new promotion standards for third graders. The goal of Read to Achieve is to have every student reading at or above grade level by the end of third grade. At the end of third grade, if students are not reading proficiently as measured by the End of Grade (EOG) tests, they will be invited to attend a district sponsored reading camp. Assessments are used to measure student progress towards the goal during the year. Teachers provide interventions for students deemed at risk as measured by the assessments. More information will be shared throughout the year for parents of third grade students. If you have any questions about this legislation, please call your child's teacher or an administrator for clarification.

At Swift Creek, the goal is for every student at every grade level to read at or above grade level. We will work to this end to provide differentiated learning opportunities to enrich and remediate learning. Appropriate reading instruction will include fluency, accuracy, vocabulary, and comprehension strategies and will be monitored with mCLASS data throughout the year. We will also collaborate with you to promote reading proficiency and keep you informed of your child's progress.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Please use email, phone, notes, or district apps and programs to contact Swift Creek Elementary staff, rather than social media. WCPSS has guidelines in place for all staff regarding social media and those guidelines have been communicated with staff. However, we do encourage you to follow and interact with Swift Creek Elementary School's Instagram and Twitter accounts, at username SCESRoars.

TUESDAY FOLDERS

Please be sure to look for your child's folder each Tuesday. Sign and return the folder to the teacher. Important school information is inside each week and we will make every effort to include special announcements or bulletins in this folder. When there is no school on Tuesday, folders will come home on the next school day.

ART/MUSIC/PHYSICAL EDUCATION

All students receive specialized instruction in the visual arts at least once a week. Due to the nature of artwork, students are asked to wear clothes that can easily be laundered. Students receive instruction in physical education weekly from our PE Specialist, supplemented by daily recess. Students should wear comfortable clothing and athletic shoes on PE days. In addition, students also receive weekly instruction in music and the opportunity to experience various instruments and musical performances.

TECHNOLOGY

Swift Creek Elementary staff believe that technology should be used to enrich and enhance learning. We have a variety of technology tools on our campus. School-issued computers will be used in each classroom. All are networked and have internet access.

We may also use iPads in small group lessons. All students must have a signed acceptable use agreement to access technology.

FIELD TRIPS

Current educational philosophy recognizes the desirability of using the total community environment as a learning laboratory. To this end, teachers may schedule field trips for their classes. These trips are arranged for their educational value and serve to broaden the student's total educational experience. Every effort will be made to assure both the suitability of any trip away from school and the reasonableness of any cost involved in the trip. For this reason, all field trips must have the approval of the school administration and the area superintendent. Before a student can go on a field trip, a signed permission form from the parent must be on file in the office. Verbal permissions are not accepted. A field trip is defined as any planned activity that necessitates the student leaving the school grounds on an instructional day. Some trips may use coach buses and extend outside the normal school hours. Parent chaperones are not permitted to ride school transportation for the field trips. For the safety of our students, refrain from bringing siblings on Wake County sponsored field trips. Individuals who wish to chaperone must participate in the WCPSS volunteer registration process and be cleared as a volunteer. No individual may chaperone until the principal's designee has received notification of the volunteer's approval status for the current school year.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION SUPPORT

Swift Creek utilizes the PBIS system to positively recognize students for adhering to clear expectations in all aspects of the school setting. While we use consequences for behavior not consistent with the WCPSS Code of Conduct, we first choose to focus on the positive aspects of a child's behavior rather than the negative. Students receive various types of positive recognition and earn rewards agreed upon by each classroom/grade level when the class earns a set amount of compliments. Students are expected to demonstrate **ROAR** across all settings—**R**espect, **O**n the Path to Success, **A**ct Responsibly, and **R**emember Self Control.