



SOUTHMONT FACULTY HANDBOOK



2026-2027

SOUTHMONT SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Southmont Elementary School's mission is to create positive and caring relationships with our students and community through loving classroom environments and positive communication which will allow our students to grow to their full potential through quality targeted instruction.

VISION

Our vision is for every child to be successful, be well, be kind, and be strong.

MOTTO

I can be well. I can be kind. I can be strong.



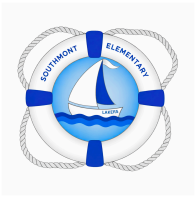
General Schedule

MORNING:

7:30 am	Doors open
7:30-8:00	Breakfast in classroom/Soft Start
8:00 am	Class Begins/Tardy Bell/Announcements

AFTERNOON:

2:30 PM	Afternoon Announcements
2:35	Dismissal



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Working Hours

The workday for Southmont teachers is from 7:25 to 2:55. As we know, the workday may be much longer. We only wish the job of teaching would be complete within a 7 ½ hour period!

The workday for Southmont teacher assistants:

- 8 hr TAs work 7:25-3:25
- 7 ½ hr TAs work 7:25-2:55
- 6 ½ hr TAs work 8:00-2:30
- Part time TAs work the schedule as provided by the principal

It is imperative that everyone is here on time and in your rooms ready to begin the day no later than 7:25.

To adjust hours, make a request to Mrs. Cotter for prior approval.

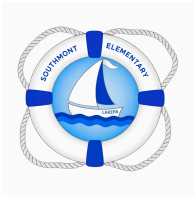
Sign In/Sign Out Procedures

All staff need to sign in upon arrival using TimeKeeper. **All classified employees need to sign in and sign out each day using TimeKeeper. Certified employees need to sign in using TimeKeeper, but do not need to sign out.**

Anyone who has forgotten to sign in will receive an email from Tonya requesting the time that needs to be submitted in timekeeper. It is imperative that teacher assistants sign out at their specified time. Comp. time requires prior approval.

Announcements

Announcements will be made every morning at 8:00. Teachers are responsible for making sure that students are in the room and attentive to announcements.



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Mailboxes and Email

All staff are asked to check mailboxes and email frequently. We will not interrupt classes for phone calls, unless it is an emergency, but will email you messages. Please check mailboxes, email, and Dojo messages before dismissal. If you are expecting an important call that merits your immediate attention, please advise the office in advance, so that you will be notified when the call is received.

Email will be the primary method of communication along with Google calendar.

Leaving School During the Day

If an emergency requires you to leave campus, you **MUST have permission from Mrs. Cotter, Mrs. Cox, or Ms. Strickland.**

Personal or Professional Leave

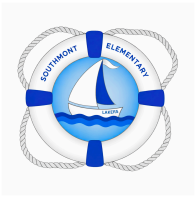
Requests for leave and absences should be made using the Frontline system. Mrs. Cotter **AND** Ms. Strickland should both be notified of any and all leave. When taking personal leave, you must submit a reason in the notes section to avoid a \$50 deduction. If you have secured a sub, it will need to be entered in Frontline; otherwise, another sub may take the job.

Trade Time

Trade time can be earned for certain events. Prior approval is required. Trade time can only be used on optional days and does not carry over to the next school year.

Required Staff Workdays

The Davidson County Schools Central Office has stated that no one can use Vacation/Leave Days, Trade time days, (etc.) on required workdays. Please mark your calendars now and do not make appointments/trips on these days. Required workdays are to include some form of professional development during the day. The staff voted to have **August 17** and **August 21** changed from optional to required days.



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School-aged children are only allowed to be at school on **optional** workdays. If your children come to school on an optional workday, they must stay in your room. If children disturb others, then they will not be allowed to return.

Staff Absenteeism

Davidson County School reviews staff absenteeism. Our children need consistent teaching with few interruptions. Please use your days wisely. If you miss 10 or more days in a school year, you will need to contact Angie Miller at the county office per DCS policy. This is for your protection as well.

Sick leave can only be used for illness of immediate family members, appointments, children's appointments, etc. **Teachers using sick leave for a family trip or vacation day will lose a day of pay.**

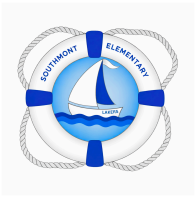
Tardies

In the event you will be late arriving at school, let Mrs. Cotter, Mrs. Cox, or Ms. Strickland know as soon as possible. Let us know an expected time of arrival and communicate with other teachers or assistants for coverage purposes.

Teacher Absences

Teachers who are absent from school are responsible for calling and arranging their substitute teacher. The following procedures should be used when utilizing a substitute teacher:

- Planned absences should be communicated as soon as possible to Mrs. Cotter and Ms. Strickland.
- For illnesses, incidents that occur overnight, teachers should enter in Frontline by 6:25 am and work on obtaining a sub. Notify Mrs. Cotter and Ms. Strickland by 7:00 am either by group text or email.
- If you have a duty or need room coverage, notify your TA and/or designated person for coverage.
- For emergencies or illnesses occurring during the school day, notify Mrs. Cotter or Ms. Strickland and we will assist in getting a sub or coverage.
- When a sub is needed to teach your class, leave the items below:



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- Clear, instructional plans
- Prepared materials and resources
- Daily schedule and class roster
- Duty schedules (if applicable)
- Medical, student needs information, as needed
- Room key for planned absence

Absences for Other Staff

Any staff member who is absent for any reason should notify Mrs. Cotter AND Ms. Strickland by 6:30am unless an emergency occurs after that time. All teacher assistants **MUST** inform their teachers of any absence.

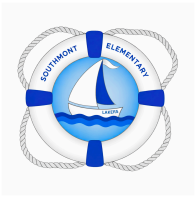
If you know in advance, let Mrs. Cotter know in advance. Teacher assistants should complete their absence using the Frontline system. Get coverage for any duties you may have. You may email the staff by using Southmont-staff@davidson.k12.nc.us.

Inclement Weather

Staff members are expected to report to school at regular time if school is on a delayed schedule due to inclement weather conditions, unless told differently according to DCS Weather Codes. If you need to come in later due to unsafe weather conditions, let Mrs. Cotter know.

On days when students are not to report and teachers have a workday (optional or required) due to weather conditions, teachers should report to work at regular time. However, use your good judgment for safety in traveling to school. You may choose to use a vacation day for an absence on a teacher workday due to weather conditions.

When school is dismissed early due to snow or ice, staff will be expected to stay until we receive notification otherwise from the superintendent. If you feel you need to leave, you may do so, but must take appropriate time.



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Staff Children

There will be children that arrive early or will be staying after dismissal, for many different reasons. We must remember that we must accept responsibility to supervise these children. We cannot allow them the freedom to roam the halls, be in the office, visit the workrooms, to get snacks, hang out in the front of the school, etc. Most of all we cannot allow them to distract us from using our time wisely in dealing with our responsibilities.

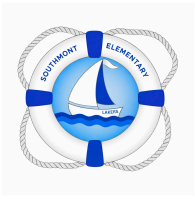
Please take time to talk with your child about what is expected and make sure the rules are followed. Talk with them about their responsibility not to interfere with other staff members as they do their jobs.

- Children of Southmont employees should go directly to their parent's room/area at dismissal.
- **Children should not be in the teacher workrooms, in and out of the office, or up and down the halls.**
- Make plans to take care of their needs (restroom, snacks, etc.) soon after they arrive.
- If you are called out of your room, ask someone to keep an eye on your students/children.

Phone Use

I know that there are times when one has to use the phone. It is preferred that you use the phone in the workroom areas or your classroom phone, especially during the day if needed. Please adhere to the following when making calls:

- Phones may be used for school business, such as calling parents, county offices, etc.
- Phones may be used for **important** personal business. Try to take care of those matters after school unless it is an emergency.
- The office personnel should be notified to take messages or send the call to your voicemail as opposed to interrupting instructional time. If it is an emergency, we will call for you. **Please check your voicemail and email BEFORE dismissal.**
- Please notify the office if you are expecting an incoming call.



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- Please remember that texting and conducting personal email business is no different from making phone calls. This should not be done during the school day except for in the case of an emergency. Staff should not be on their phones in the cafeteria, in the classroom, or on the playground.
- Staff should not be on social media sites while at work. This includes posting, viewing, etc.

Student Attendance

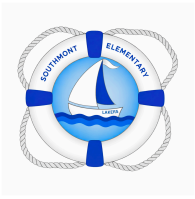
- Teachers are to take attendance on their computer each morning by 8:30.
- Teacher Assistants **ARE NOT** to do any attendance on the computer.
- A tardy bell will ring at 8:00 each morning. Any child arriving after the 8:00 bell should receive a “I’m ready to learn” slip from the office when they are signed in.
- Make sure to look over the daily attendance and email Mary with any corrections/mistakes.
- Send attendance folders to the office by 8:30 am.

If the classroom teacher is absent from school, the substitute or the teacher assistant should complete the Attendance Student List printout located in the Attendance Folder. Mrs. Everhart will enter attendance on the computer when substitutes are present. New Class Rosters will be placed in folders at the beginning of each month.

- **CODES:**
 - 1 – Excused Absence** (sickness, death in family, pre-approved trip)
 - 2 – Unexcused Absence** (trips not pre-approved, missed the bus, mom/dad sick, grandmother sick, no transportation, out of town, etc.)
 - 3 – Suspension** (notification by Principal or Asst. Principal)

Student Absences and Leaving School Early

Students are to bring a written excuse from their parents or guardian when they are absent from school. The excuse should be brought to school by the third day after the student returns to school. If a note is not received,



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then the absence is coded as unexcused. Mrs. Everhart is responsible for notifying the principal when a student has accumulated three unexcused absences and again when he/she has had six unexcused absences.

Please be aware that family trips will not be approved as educational family trips. At the elementary level, there are very few reasons that a child would miss school for an educational reason that would be approved using the waiver.

Students leaving school before 11:15 a.m. or arriving after 11:15 a.m. are marked absent.

No student should be allowed to leave school with anyone that is not on the student information sheet unless the parent/guardian has sent a note. All students **MUST** be signed out in the office before leaving school.

Professional Dress

Being an educator does carry some expectations of dressing in a professional manner. We believe that a teacher's appearance does affect student attitudes and learning. Dressing professionally does not always necessitate a shirt and tie for the gentlemen or a dress for the ladies. Remember that you represent yourself, Southmont Elementary, and Davidson County Schools. Please adhere to the following DCS policy:

Inappropriate Dress or Appearance-An employee's dress or appearance may not be so unusual, inappropriate or lacking in cleanliness that it clearly disrupts class or learning activities or presents a safety issue. The following attire is considered inappropriate for school employees while performing their assigned duties:

- Jewelry affixed to an employee's nose, tongue, cheek, lip, or eyebrow.
- Clothing that is disruptive, provocative, or revealing, or does not cover an employee's waist or midriff.
- Clothing which promotes alcoholic beverages, tobacco, or the use of controlled substances by words or symbols.
- Clothing that contains profanity, nudity, depicts violence or is sexual in nature by words or symbols.



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- Flip flops or shoes that present a safety or health concern.
- Undergarments that are visible or any see-through clothing.
- Sweatbands, bandanas, or sunglasses inside school buildings.
- NO blue jeans, shorts, workout pants, stretch pants ,or leggings are to be worn on instructional days other than casual days indicated below. This also applies when attending a workshop where you represent this school whether it is in county or out-of-county.
- Leggings may only be worn with a dress or a shirt that comes mid-thigh. Workout leggings/pants are inappropriate to wear to school.
- No low-cut tops or short skirts are to be worn at all.
- **Casual Day will be every Friday.** You may wear appropriate blue jeans on these days. (no holes, tears or rips). Casual day should still promote professionalism.
- Field Trips: You may wear jeans/shorts and a Southmont shirt.

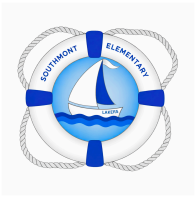
It is hoped that each staff member would dress in a manner to promote themselves and their profession.

Sick Students

If you suspect a child is sick, please call the office to arrange for a temperature check. A decision on whether or not to call the parent will be made once an assessment is made. When in doubt, we should communicate what's going on to the parent and let them determine the course of action. Although we must try to prevent students from using sickness as an excuse to go home, we are not in a position to diagnose. Therefore, we must give the child the benefit of the doubt. Teachers/Teacher Assistants/Office Personnel can administer first aid when a student is injured. Teachers **MUST** complete an accident report to record any accidents **to be placed in the notebook** provided in the clinic.

Medication

The Davidson County School system is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for the children in its schools. This commitment includes a procedure to monitor the distribution of medication(s) as approved by the child's parent and his/her physician. Prior to the distribution of any prescribed/non-prescribed drug, a



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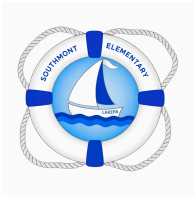
completed medication form **MUST** be given to the office. The child's physician **MUST** complete the medication form for all prescribed medications and the medication **MUST** be administered from the labeled prescription bottle, with information regarding proper dosage. Parents may complete a medication form for all non-prescribed medications. A spoon should be provided if needed. **NO STUDENT SHOULD BE GIVEN ANY MEDICATION WITHOUT A COMPLETED MEDICATION FORM ON FILE.** All student medication **MUST** be kept in the lock boxes in the office. It is the teacher's responsibility to make sure the child reports to the office to receives his/her medication at the appropriate time. **All information should be logged appropriately on the Student Medication Log. Include medical information/medication needs in sub plans.**

Lice Checks

It is necessary to have lice checks periodically throughout the school year. **Please check students out of sight of other children and be sensitive to this situation.** If you have a child with live bugs, please notify the office and follow the Davidson County guidelines. You will need to call for someone to pick up the child from school. The office will provide a packet of information for the child to take home. When a child is being sent home for lice, siblings must also be checked. Teacher assistants will be called to the office to re-check students when they are returned to school (same day or next day). Due to a board policy change, we no longer follow a "No nit" policy.

Student Transportation

Transportation changes should be placed in the attendance folder and sent to the office by 8:30am. Students will not be allowed to ride a different bus and/or be a car rider without a written note from the parent. If a teacher receives a transportation change, please send the note to the office or email it to someone in the office. A child may only ride a different bus if they are actually approved to ride the route. Students may not ride home with other students on the bus or ride to a stop that is not their designated stop. It can take several days to get a student set up for a new bus stop. Please see Mrs. Cox or office staff with any questions.



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Mass Correspondence

Any mass correspondence to be sent home with ALL students of Southmont Elementary must be cleared through the principal's office. This includes anything sent home from school committees, grade levels and PTO. Please make sure that field trip details are provided to Mrs. Cox and approval from Mrs. Cotter has been obtained before communicating to parents.

Money Collection/Valuables

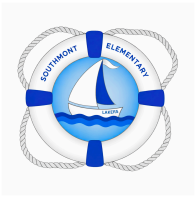
Parents will be required to pay for school fees (\$12), technology fee (\$35), field trips, etc using the SchoolCash online system. Encourage your parents to sign up for SchoolCash online and send reminders when fees have not been paid. Due to the use of SchoolCash online, teachers will rarely collect money from parents. If and when you do collect money, it must be turned in to Ms. Strickland daily. Money or valuables should never be left unattended or in an unlocked desk drawer, or unlocked filing cabinet. Teachers are encouraged to secure personal items or money by locking them in cabinets or desks or keeping them with you.

Grade Level Planning

Each grade level will plan together weekly. All grade level members are required to attend. Assessments and data will be used to drive instruction. Lesson plans should follow the DCS Curriculum guidebook located in Google Drive.

Lesson Plans

One of the keys to being a successful teacher lies in the area of planning and preparation. This is very time consuming, but there is no substitute for effective planning. The lesson plan book is for your personal use; however, it should be kept in such a manner that a substitute or the administration could determine not only the lessons for the day, but also where you have been and where you are going.



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Daily preparation of teaching plans, schedules, procedures of instruction, and subject material should be carried out by all teachers. Be sure you have at least one week of plans in advance, in case a substitute teacher has to be called. **If a substitute teacher notifies the office that there are no plans, you will be called at home for this information.** A copy of the week's lesson plans will NOT be turned in to the principal; however, plans are expected to always be complete. The principal has the right to request that plans be turned in if she feels that proper planning is not taking place. Plans should always be kept in a location where the principal and assistant principal can see them when conducting walkthroughs in your room. Logins should be available to Mrs. Cotter, Mrs. Cox, Ms. Strickland, and your TA.

Substitute Folder

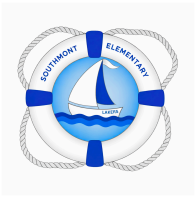
Please provide a detailed folder in the event you would be absent. The folder should include class roster, seating charts, lunch schedules, procedures for dismissal, medication for students, drill information and any other pertinent information that a substitute may need. Please share this information with your teacher assistant and keep your folder updated with any changes

Use of Multimedia Clips/Videos

The key to effective teaching is direct interaction with students. In order to be a successful teacher, planning and classroom preparation is a must. Each clip should have an instructional purpose and an activity to follow. Videos should not be used for entertainment purposes or to give teachers planning time. Clips/videos should not exceed twenty minutes as instructional time is extremely valuable. The teacher should be interactive with the students as clips/videos are being utilized. They should truly be a teaching tool.

Informal Classroom Observations

It is the goal of the administration to be in and out of classrooms on a daily basis. On a regular basis the principal and assistant principal will make informal walkthroughs and observe actual instruction for a brief moment. As instructional leaders of the school, we will be looking for effective instructional lessons in all components of the five standards of authentic instruction. It is critically important to grow and develop students



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in reading, writing and math proficiency. These visits are not to play “gotcha” but to assist in supporting teachers as they implement **best practices**. The digital walkthrough form will be used during formal walkthroughs monthly.

Classified Employee Evaluations

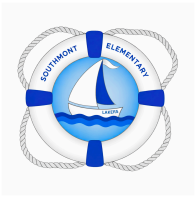
All support personnel including instructional assistants, cafeteria staff, bus drivers, office staff, and custodians will be evaluated once a year. If problems arise during the year, administrators may do a mid-year evaluation to give ample time to correct the problem(s). If problems are not resolved, then termination in employment can result. Teachers will be evaluating instructional assistants this year.

Classroom Management

Classroom management/discipline is one of the most crucial and complex issues in education. The fact is that some teachers have very few discipline problems, and others consistently seem to have many. Establish positive relationships with all of your students. This is key to successful classroom management. The more nurturing a teacher is, the more effective that teacher’s discipline techniques are likely to be. Teaching is decision-making, as is establishing good discipline in your classroom.

Establish classroom rules and procedures at the very beginning of the school year. Plan work and tasks that are at appropriate levels. MODEL effective time-on-task and good use of time. Monitor constantly both classroom behavior and classroom work. **Use more praise than criticism.** Ridiculing and humiliating students is just as inappropriate for teachers as misbehavior is for students. Each teacher should provide a “time out” or “cool down” area in the classroom. Sometimes students merely need a brief moment to get it back together.

Respect the rights of others to learn by expecting your students to move throughout the building without talking and without disruptions from 8:00 to 2:35. All staff members are responsible for the maintenance of the proper disciplinary climate throughout the entire school. It is the responsibility of any authorized staff member, teacher, teacher assistant, principal, etc. to correct acts of misbehavior by any student that occur anywhere at



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school. If we ignore inappropriate behavior, we are showing that it is acceptable. Classroom discipline is essentially a matter for the teacher. He/She is the one who is accountable for the general behavior of the students assigned to him/her.

As part of our PBIS and SEL plan, incorporate the following regulatory strategies that focus on the body and mind:

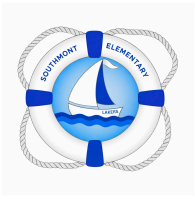
- Movement breaks - Breaks have the potential to help students maintain appropriate behaviors and stimulate the flow of blood and oxygen to the brain.
- Breathing exercises, mindful moments and meditation help students regulate their mind and settle their thoughts to shift them back to a place of calm.
- Individual interventions are important for students who need extra support to maintain and balance their regulation throughout the school day. These interventions include, but are not limited to: nourishment, rest, movement, differentiated seating, calming corner, calming kit, and breaks from the classroom.

Fire Drills

Regardless of the attitude that students have developed –fire drills are serious. Please let the students see your concern and they will respond accordingly.

When the signal is given, everyone must leave the building. The teacher should make sure that everyone has left the room before leaving and closing the door. Upon reaching the outside grounds, keep students in line and a safe distance from the building.

- Keep a fire drill exit diagram posted in your room at all times.
- Make sure all doors are closed.
- Keep children quiet while leaving the building and while outside.
- Count to ensure that all children are with you.
- Take an emergency bag outside with you.
- Be prepared to hold up your green/red cards.



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The first fire drill of the year will be announced before the drill takes place. Teachers should practice drill procedures with his/her students before the first school drill. Two (2) fire drills are now required during the first two weeks of school. There will be one fire drill each month thereafter.

Tornado Drills

From time to time there is a tornado watch or warning in this area. Please refer to the tornado action maps for best protected areas and see that students know what to do.

An announcement will be made in case of a tornado alert. Stay away from windows. As you leave the room, close the door and assume a safety position.

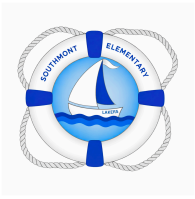
Students and teachers are to treat tornado drills as if they were real. Students will not exhibit proper drill behavior unless teachers model them.

Teachers should:

- Teach the drill procedure to their class just as if teaching an important lesson

Expectations to Teach:

- No talking
- No noise
- Move quickly to the designated area
- Move only in single file line
- Sit on your knees facing the wall with head down in tuck position. Hands behind head to cover head for protection.
- Rehearse the drill on your own.
- Speak to students in low tones during the drill.
- Deal with misbehavior after the drill. If disciplinary action is required during the drill, speak softly with the student who is misbehaving.
- Monitor students closely for compliance.



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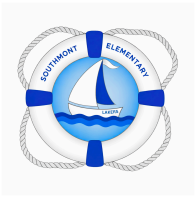


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- Model appropriate behaviors. Do not converse with colleagues, yell, complain loudly about student behavior, etc.
- Process the drill with students afterward to analyze weaknesses and strategies to overcome them.

General Evacuation Guidelines

1. Notification of an EVACUATE will be made over the announcement.
2. Make every effort to stay calm and alert.
3. Immediately get your students with you in your classroom.
 - If your whole class is elsewhere, go get them.
 - Teachers with pullout students, take them back to class.
4. Get items you will/may need:
 - Student Information List (Crisis Bookbag)
 - Coats
 - Medicine
 - Pocketbook
 - Cell Phone (**DO NOT use in the building**)
5. **BE READY TO MOVE AND WAIT FOR INSTRUCTIONS.**
 - When told, classes should go to the back gate area as addressed in the Crisis Plan.
 - If loading buses, load three students to a seat.
 - All teachers/teacher assistants **should stay** with their students at all times.
 - Staff without homerooms will stand ready to help at any time as needed.
 - Teacher Assistants with bus driver certification may be pulled to drive the buses, if needed.
 - The Assistant Principal will be the administrator on site at the safe location.
 - Principal, secretaries, and custodians will remain at school to handle media, parents, and work with the Sheriff's Department on building search.



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- Parents may pick up their children at the safe location, but **be sure you record the pick up of each student.**
- It is vital that **students be kept quiet at all times** so we can communicate for information, directions, student pickups, etc.

Serious Situation Alert Policy

Recent concerns regarding terrorists' threats have caused institutions such as ours to be more safety conscious. We should not be alarmists; however, we should be alert to the issues surrounding the safety of school children while they are in our care. Please observe the following policies when dealing with visitors and parents:

1. ALL visitors should report to the office for a visitor's pass. If you see someone in the hallway without a visitor's pass, please ask him or her to report to the office to sign in and get a visitor's pass. Be sure to call the office and make us aware as well.
2. "Lockdown" – If a dangerous intruder should ever enter the building and there is a serious concern for the safety of you and your students, you will hear the words "Lockdown" over the intercom. Upon hearing the alert, go immediately to your classroom and lock the door. Cut off your room lights, instruct your students to immediately get in a corner of the room out of sight from the windows and door, and be very quiet. An administrator will come to your room to unlock the door, when we have all cleared. NEVER open the door if someone knocks. An all clear announcement will not be made. If you should ever encounter an intruder in the building, about whom you may have serious doubts concerning the legitimacy of their visit, call the office immediately. We will react to the situation and issue directives if necessary.
3. "Secure or Hold" – If a less serious situation arises which requires a quick check of the school grounds, you will hear the words "Secure or Hold" over the intercom. Upon hearing the alert, go immediately to your classroom, lock the classroom door and continue with instruction. When the check is complete, an "ALL Clear" will be voiced over the intercom.

Display of Student Work



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Displaying student work is extremely important to the students and parents. **All student work should be changed frequently; at least every 3 to 4 weeks (including the hall bulletin boards and cork strips).**

Students should feel pride in their work when it is recognized as being of good quality. They enjoy reading and seeing one another's work. Student work should reflect what is being taught in each classroom at the current time. It's also a great idea to post the standards or learning objectives with the displayed work. Every room should have many examples of student writing displayed. Every classroom should be RICH in literacy!

Worksheets or anything copied from a copier should NOT be displayed. Grades should never be on any paper that is displayed.

ITEMS TO BE DISPLAYED IN EVERY CLASSROOM

- Daily Schedule posted outside the classroom
- Performance Based Learning Objectives in SWBAT...ITO format
- Evidence of Literacy instruction
- Southmont Drill Map

Parent Conferences

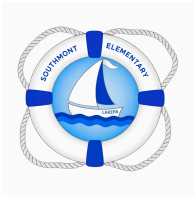
Parent conferences are an extremely important and necessary aspect of education. Conferences develop good rapport with parents, keep lines of communication open, and help to establish the school as an open, caring, and professional organization. Please remember that the purpose of the conference is to inform the parent of the student's progress. It is inappropriate for teachers to "diagnose" learning problems. **Parent conferences should be offered to all parents during the 1st and 3rd nine weeks.** Parent conferences are on an as needed basis at all other times during the school year. We will follow the schedule below for reporting to parents:

MID-TERM REPORTS SENT

September 18
November 13
February 5
April 16

ISSUE REPORT CARDS

October 30
January 15
March 25
June 15 (mailed)



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Fall Conferences - November 3 from 8am-7pm

Student Led Conferences - TBD

Communication with Parents / Progress Reports

Communicate and be in touch with the parents of your students in the same manner you would like to have teachers communicate with you about your own children or about your teaching. When writing notes and conferencing in person or over the telephone, be careful, be courteous, and make contact before problems become too large. **Classroom teachers are expected to send home newsletters or post them (monthly, weekly, bi-weekly, etc.).**

Be courteous about sending communications whereby you “instruct” parents about what they should be doing. Notes sent when you are angry or exasperated tend to sometimes create further problems. At all times, reread and proofread carefully. Try to remove the possibility of being misinterpreted. If a parent expresses through a note, email or message that they are upset about something, do not respond back through writing. Please call the parent, so you can easily clear up the issue.

In conferencing or in written communication, emphasize the collective pronouns “our concern, what “we” can or should do, etc. Do not set up the “I, You” conflict or the “Us, Them” battles.

All classroom teachers will reach out to parents/guardians before Meet the Teacher to welcome the child and family to your class. All certified staff should have positive contacts with the parents of all of their students whether it be a good news call, positive note, etc within the first month of school.

Report cards are issued at the end of every nine weeks. The schedule is shared.

In addition, you are expected to use the “Mid-Term Progress Report” to inform parents about unsatisfactory work during the grading period or to recognize significant improvement in the quality of work being done.



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The numerical scale for progress reports:

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59 and below

Grades are tentatively scheduled to be due on October 19, January 4, March 12, and May 17.

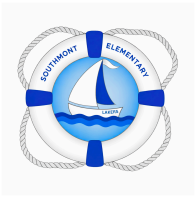
Confidentiality

All staff members are expected to refrain from discussing the status of students with people other than parents, the principal and other teachers who work directly with the child. Even when discussing with other teachers, it should be on a “need to know” basis. It is suggested that students’ progress be discussed only at school. Be careful what you say and when and where you say it!

Grading and Homework

Research has shown that homework has little value unless it is used for the purpose of reinforcing a previously learned skill; however, the matter of homework will be left to the discretion of the teacher. In assigning homework, please try to establish the length of time it would take students to do the task in class. Teachers should take into consideration the differences in financial, education, and technological resources of students and their parents/guardians when making assignments. Homework assignments should not require materials that are not readily accessible to the student.

Please refer to Davidson County School Board Policy 6.16.



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Criteria For Homework Assignments

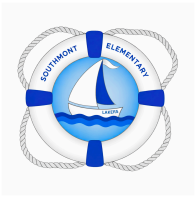
- Does the homework serve a valid purpose and is it basically a review or extra practice?
- Is the assignment actually homework and not classroom assignments that were incomplete?
- Is the length of the assignment within the school expectations?
- Are students clear about what they are to do?
- Can they do the work without the help of parents or others?
- **No grades should come from homework.** Only completes and incompletes.

Maximum Homework Time Allowed:

The grade level of a student should help be a general guide to the amount of homework assigned each night. While realizing that time may vary for an individual student that works at a slower or faster pace than classmates, research and best practices suggest that the total amount of homework assigned to an individual student each night should generally follow the “10-Minute Rule.” This rule conveys to students and parents the expectation that homework assignments combined last about as long as 10 minutes multiplied by the student’s grade level. For example, first graders could expect 10 minutes per night, second graders could expect 20 minutes, third graders 30 minutes, etc.

Physical Education

The NC “Healthy Active Children” legislation **REQUIRES** that all children have at least 125 minutes of physical education each week. Each teacher has a designated time for outside physical education (Recess). Please take your students outside to play during your scheduled time. **It is imperative that structured activities be planned to minimize the number of student accidents on the playground. ALL AREAS of the playground, including the equipment MUST BE SUPERVISED AT ALL TIMES.** Outside physical education **IS NOT** a time to socialize with other staff members. You are legally liable if there is an accident and your students were not being properly supervised. Teachers are expected to be involved with their children



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during recess. It is an expectation that teachers take advantage of this time to play with and get to know their students.

Recess or physical education MUST NEVER be taken away from a student for punishment or to complete work. Students may be given options or alternate recess opportunities but cannot be required to walk laps. Be sure you are consistent on your grade level with punishment on the playground.

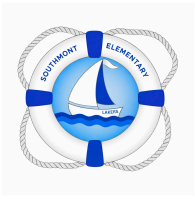
Cafeteria

Breakfast will be served in the cafeteria starting at 7:30 a.m. Students will take their food to the classroom to eat. Teach your students procedures and proper meal time manners. Use the big trash can for trash and pour leftover milk into the sink. DO NOT leave unopened milk/food in the classroom. Students should begin wrapping up once announcements start. Monitor students while eating and when throwing away trash. This will help eliminate spills.

Students will eat lunch in the cafeteria. There should be NO glass or can drinks brought to school. No commercial food items are to be brought to the cafeteria (McDonald's, Burger King, Subway, etc.). No student lunches will be heated in the microwave. It is for staff use only.

As a result of our Title I status, both breakfast and lunch will be provided to all students this year, free of charge.

Proper behavior is expected of all students. Students **ARE NOT** allowed to talk in the serving lines. Staff must monitor the entrances to the serving line. Students are to respect cafeteria rules, follow directions, talk quietly after eating, walk, clean, and pick up their own trash off the tables and floor. Please teach students how to wipe food off the tables into a container rather than on the floor. Each classroom should assign students to wipe down your tables daily after lunch. Staff **MUST** enforce appropriate behavior in the cafeteria. Staff members are expected to sit with the students that they are monitoring. This is a great time to get to know things about your students that you would never know from the classroom setting.



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Duty Free Lunch Option

Duty free lunch scheduling will be provided periodically throughout the school year. There is no set schedule for this to occur.

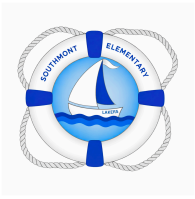
Class Parties

Each class may have two (2) parties per year, one at Christmas and one by teacher choice. Parties should not exceed one hour. Please remember that food products and drinks brought to school must be commercially prepared and packaged. No birthday parties are to be allowed. Snacks may be purchased and brought for this event. Birthday party invitations can be sent home only when they are provided for all students and given to the teacher for distribution at dismissal time.

Room Responsibilities

Each of us wants to work in a clean, well-kept school. This takes teamwork and will require the effort, concern, and cooperation of all. Please remember to be energy conscious and make sure we turn off all lights, electrical equipment, etc. when not in use.

- Keep desks, cabinets, storage areas neat and orderly.
- Report repair needs to the head custodian.
- Help students learn to accept their role in keeping the school clean.
- Place all chairs on the desks/tables and have students pick up crayons, pencils, and large pieces of paper before going to lunch and at the end of the day, so your classroom can be vacuumed or mopped efficiently.
- Be well organized and clutter free.
- Offer flexible seating.
- Create a calm corner.



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School Maintenance Items

- Do not deface walls.
- Do not use outside chemicals, soaps, and sprays. We must use what the county maintenance department provides.
- Do not hang anything from the ceiling.
- The general rule is that 30% of the wall space may be covered. This includes what is taken up by bulletin boards.
- Do not piggyback any electrical cords.
- Keep hallways clear at all times; no chairs, tables, children's work on the floor in the hallways.
- Do not hang curtains in doorways.
- Do not leave lights on overnight or when leaving the room.
- No drop cords of any kind are to be used; only power strips may be used.
- All materials, such as curtains, cloth bulletin boards, tablecloths, etc. **MUST** have a flame retardant tag on them. You may dip material for bulletin board use. Keep documentation. Lamps may be used as long as the tag is still in place on the cord.
- No upholstered furniture.
- No microwaves, toaster ovens, plug-ins, refrigerators or coffee pots in classrooms or closets.

Field Trips

Field Trips should be an outgrowth of the curriculum and an educational experience from which students can grow academically. Teachers who wish to take students on field trips need to follow these procedures:

- Trips should be well planned and approved by Mrs. Cotter before scheduling. Submit field trip requests to Mrs. Cotter in an email at least four (4) weeks prior to the trip. She will respond to the email either approving or denying the trip. Once approved, the teacher will be responsible for entering the trip into Travel Tracker.
- Use the Travel Tracker Trip Permission Form to personalize your classroom, charges, etc.



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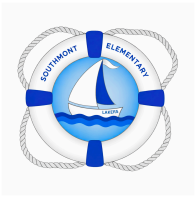
- All students should have the DCS Parental Permission/Insurance Form completed. Even so, remember that a signed permission form is not a legal waiver that relieves the teacher of responsibility.
- Items/ forms included in the Southmont Field Trip Checklist will need to be completed prior to departure and given to the assistant principal.
- No Field Trips are to be taken in cars.
- Field trips should be taken by April 30, 2027.
- Activity buses will be scheduled by Mrs. Cox after the Field Trip Request has been submitted and approved through Travel Tracker.
- **Keep costs to a minimum.**
- Field trips will be paid for through SchoolCash online. Each grade level chairperson will be expected to complete a Request for Payment/Disbursement Form at least 3 days prior to the field trip.
- You must give the cafeteria manager three (3) weeks notice if you will not be eating lunch in the cafeteria. They will be glad to pack bag lunches for field trips. Just give them ample notice.
- Students must return from a field trip no later than 2:00. Remember to plan to leave the site early enough so that drivers have time (30 minutes) to return the buses and return to drive their regular afternoon route.
- Teachers/Teacher Assistants are to closely supervise students on the trip. Parents are not allowed to ride activity buses.
- Teacher Assistants are to go on field trips with the classes with which they work.
- Field trips should not be taken from a student as a means of punishment without prior Administrator's approval and discussion with the student and parents.

Arrival/Dismissal Duty

Students arriving at school before 8:00 should report to their classroom. Any student who wants breakfast may pick it up from the cafeteria to take to their room to eat.

Classroom Coverage (AM)

- TA's will assist with their grade level teams and alternate days in the cafeteria



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- TA's can also alternate hallway coverage

Car Rider Door Duty (AM)

- Be on time (7:30).
- Greet students and parents. SMILE!!!
- Direct children toward the gym door where they will go to their designated location.

Car Rider Loading (Afternoon)

- Be on time at the car rider line (2:35).
- Monitors will observe student behaviors while students sit in designated areas.
- Car loading staff will stand at the numbers and assist students into the cars.
- One staff member will stand in the parking lot and call student names to a numbered area as cars arrive.
- Parents should have student identification cards so that staff will know who is to be called.
- Those students not picked up when the line is over will be taken to the office and parents will be called.
Teachers should assist in contacting parents.

- **Car Rider Waiting Areas:**

Reinard's Room: Grade K

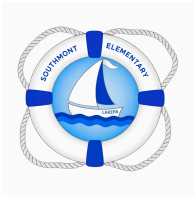
Ogle's Room: Prek/Grade 1/Nelson

Mininni's room: Grades 2/3

Front Entrance Hallway: Grades 4/5

Tobacco Policy for Employees

The board prohibits employees from possessing, using, selling, delivering, manufacturing, or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, anabolic steroid, alcohol, stimulants, synthetic cannabinoids, counterfeit substance, or any other controlled substance as defined in (1) Schedules I through VI of the North Carolina Controlled Substances Act or in (2) Schedules I through V of section 202 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812) and further defined by regulation at 21



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C.F.R.1300.01 through 1300.04 and 21 C.F.R. 1308.11 through 1308.15 at any time this policy is applicable.

Employees are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, delivering, manufacturing, or being under the influence of a substance containing cannabidiol (CBD) or tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) at any time this policy is applicable, regardless of whether it constitutes a controlled substance under state or federal law.

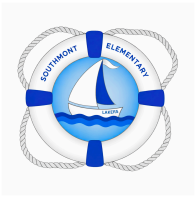
Employees must not, at any time this policy is applicable, be impaired by the use of substances intended to induce exhilaration or euphoria or alter mood or behavior or be impaired by the excessive use of prescription or nonprescription drugs. This policy is not violated by an individual's proper use of a drug lawfully prescribed for that individual by a licensed healthcare provider.

Board Policies

Employees who desire to review current Davidson County Board Policies can view a complete policy manual online at www.davidson.k12.nc.us.

Davidson County Schools Grievance Procedures

1. Employees who desire to file a grievance concerning the decision of a principal or supervisor or report illegal or improper behavior including any form of illegal discrimination or harassment should follow policy 4.13 in the Teachers' Policy Manual. This is available in the school office or the personnel division of the central office.
2. Students who desire to file a grievance or report of illegal discrimination or harassment should report the concern, in writing, to the school principal. If the student finds it inappropriate to file the grievance with the principal, he/she may submit the concern in writing to the Office of the Superintendent, Davidson County Schools, P.O. Box 2057, Lexington, NC 27293-2057.
3. *This is to meet compliance with Title IX, Section 86(B) and Section 106.8; Section 504, 104.7 and 104.8.



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Hiring Employment and Student Placement Practices

The Davidson County Schools do not engage in any employment practice that discriminates against any employee or applicant for employment based on sex or disability. The Davidson County Schools do not engage in any employment or placement practice that discriminates on the basis of race, color, or national origin if such discrimination tends to result in segregation, exclusion, or discrimination against students. Anyone who feels their rights as a citizen, student, or employee have been violated in relation to the above statement should contact:

Davidson County Schools
P.O. Box 2057
Lexington, NC 27293-2057