

Goshen Parent/Student Handbook 2026-2027



Goshen School
Where We Make Every Minute Count!
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Principal's Welcome

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DISCLAIMER: his handbook is by no means all-inclusive. It is intended to help parents, students, and school personnel work together. Many guiding statements are included, but not all situations and circumstances are addressed.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION FOR STUDENTS

The Richmond County School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities for students. The following person has been designated to investigate any complaint communicated to the Board of Education alleging non-compliance of non-discrimination policies regarding student activities.

*Associate Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction and Technology
864 Broad Street, Augusta, GA 30901 706-826-1000*

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Richmond County School System does not discriminate in employment or services based on race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap.

Inquiries can be directed to:

Chief Human Resources Officer, 864 Broad Street, Augusta, GA 30901, 706-826-1000

Dear Goshen Fam,

We are so excited to kick off the 2026-2027 school year with you! Our schoolwide theme is making “Making Every Minute Count.” Throughout the year, we will encourage our Goshen Dragons to be positive role models, to “see a need, meet a need” and to be a productive Goshen Dragon in our community.

Parents, we want to thank you for your support, feedback, and engagement with every activity! We love our parents’ support!

As Principal, my door is always open, and I want to build a partnership, discuss your feedback, and share ideas to help our kiddos be successful. At Goshen Elementary we want to empower every learner including our students, staff, and parents. Please never hesitate to reach out, ask questions, or schedule a time to connect. Together, we will make this an incredible year of “Making Every Minute Count for our Dragons.”

Thank you for all you do,

Mrs. James

Welcome!

The administration and staff would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to Goshen Elementary School. The information in this handbook has been compiled to help you succeed at Goshen. It is as accurate as possible at the time of printing/posting. If there are changes, you will be given notices via materials at Open House, notes sent home with your child, GES Remind texts, and/or the weekly email from PTO. The entire staff is here to assist you with your child's education. Come and share our vision and excitement!

Here to Serve You

Communication is the key to success. Please feel free to contact us with any problems or concerns you may encounter. We are grateful for the positive attitudes so many of you share regarding our school.

Listed below are the phone numbers to the school and county offices:

- Goshen Elementary Main Office: (706) 796-4646
- Goshen Elementary Fax: (706) 796-4676
- Richmond County Board of Education: (706) 826-1000
- Teaching and Learning: (706) 826-1102
- Transportation: (706) 796-4777
- School Food Services: (706) 826-1122
- School Social Work: (706) 826-1139
- Guidance and Testing: (706) 826-1129

Goshen Mission, Vision, and Beliefs

Our Mission: The mission of Goshen Elementary is to make every minute count!

Our Vision: The vision of Goshen Elementary is to educate students to be lifelong learners and productive citizens.

Our Beliefs:

- We will provide a positive and productive environment.
- We will build strong relationships.

- We believe engaged learners think, wonder, and achieve.
- Lifelong learners never stop growing.

SCHOOL DAY

District Calendars:

[2026-2027 Academic Calendar.pdf](#)

Moment of Silent Reflection

In compliance with Georgia law, all teachers at public schools will conduct a moment of reflection that lasts 60 seconds at the beginning of each school day. According to this policy, this moment of quiet reflection is not intended to be a religious observance or exercise. It is an opportunity to reflect on the anticipated activities of the day. The moment of reflection began at the start of the 1994-1995 school term.

Attendance

Research shows that school attendance is the single greatest factor contributing to student achievement. While an absent student may be able to make up a missed chapter, copy notes, or complete certain written assignments, other important aspects of classroom instruction cannot be recovered. Classroom discussions, listening, note-taking, questions raised by students, explanations, clarifications, and other valuable interactions are among the learning experiences that are irretrievably lost when a student is absent.

Of course, children who are sick should remain at home, as they are not able to fully participate in learning when they are not feeling well. However, there are many times when students are absent for reasons that could have been avoided. Habitual late arrivals and early dismissals also interrupt both the student's learning and the teacher's instruction.

Each month, there are breaks or holidays built into the school calendar. Please make every effort to schedule appointments and doctor's visits during these designated times whenever possible. The RCBOE attendance policy does not allow unexcused absences, tardies, or early dismissals. The attendance policy can be found in the

Code of Conduct and should be read carefully. Please expect your child's teacher to contact you on the second consecutive absence each time your child is not in school. A written excuse is required for every student returning to school after an absence, even if the teacher has already contacted you regarding the absence. The written excuse must be provided by a doctor or an official third party. It is the student's responsibility to make up all assignments, projects, and tests missed during an absence. Classwork missed because of an unexcused absence or early dismissal cannot be made up unless prior arrangements have been made with the teacher.

If your child has an appointment during school hours, we strongly encourage the child to report to school at the regular time and be picked up by a parent later for the appointment. Students who arrive after 12:00 p.m. or leave school before 12:00 p.m. will not be counted as present. A student must attend school and remain for at least one-half of the school day to be counted as present. As partners, we can make a difference in our students' lives by protecting valuable instructional time. Attendance at non-school activities or functions must be authorized by the principal and, in some cases, must also be approved by the superintendent or area superintendent to be considered an excused absence.

- **Attendance Policy**

Regular school attendance is essential to student success. We appreciate the effort families make to ensure that their children are at school all day, every day.

An absence is either excused (lawful) or unexcused (unlawful). Absences that are lawful and therefore excusable shall be governed in accordance with the laws of the State of Georgia, the rules and regulations of the Georgia Department of Education, and Richmond County Board of Education (RCBOE) policy.

- **Excused/Lawful Absences**

Lawful excuses may include personal illness of the student; death and funeral of a family member; medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled outside school hours; attendance at non-school activities or functions authorized by

the Superintendent or designee; special and recognized religious holidays observed by the student's faith; a mandate or order of a government agency; extreme circumstances that cannot be resolved outside school hours when the parent or guardian has requested and received approval from the principal or designee; and other absences deemed by the local Board of Education to have merit based on the circumstances. Students in certain military families may also be granted excused absences, up to five school days per year, for qualifying deployment-related circumstances as provided by RCBOE policy. A foster care student attending court proceedings related to the student's foster care shall be counted as present.

- **Unexcused/Unlawful Absences**

Any absence not covered by an approved lawful excuse shall be considered unexcused. It is the policy of the Richmond County Board of Education that no unexcused absences are allowed. Parents may keep their child out of school for other reasons; however, such an absence will be considered unlawful and therefore unexcused.

- **Attendance Interventions and Truancy Prevention**

For purposes of the RCBOE attendance protocol, a student is considered truant when the student has more than five unexcused absences during the academic year. Students with attendance concerns may be referred to the school social worker for attendance interventions and truancy-prevention strategies. When school-based interventions have not been effective and attendance concerns meet the district's established criteria, the school system may refer the student and parent or guardian to Juvenile Court in accordance with RCBOE procedures and Georgia law. Our Goshen Elementary School attendance team will meet weekly to review attendance data, identify students who may need additional support, and implement appropriate attendance interventions.

- **Written Excuses and Absences Beyond Five**

Students who are absent from school are required to bring a written excuse on their first day back at school. For any absence beyond five (5), the parent or guardian shall be required to a

physician's note or another excuse from an acceptable or official third party justifying the absence, consistent with RCBOE policy.

- **Attendance for the School Day**

For a student to be marked present for a full school day, the student must be in attendance for half or more of the school day. Families are encouraged to schedule appointments and other activities outside school hours whenever possible so that students do not miss valuable instructional time.

- **Make-Up Work**

Classwork missed because of an unexcused absence generally cannot be made up, except when otherwise permitted by the principal or designee. Students who miss assignments or tests due to an excused absence shall be allowed the opportunity to make up such work. It is the student's responsibility to obtain missed work from the teacher(s) and complete it within the time specified by the teacher.

- **Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Activities**

The school shall not allow a student to participate in extracurricular or co-curricular activities if the student was not counted present for the school day, or if the student is suspended. For absences after the fifth (5th) unexcused absence, participation in extracurricular activities is subject to RCBOE policy requirements, including a required physician note or other acceptable official third-party excuse, when applicable.

- **Family Partnership**

We appreciate your partnership in helping your child attend school regularly and arrive on time. Protecting instructional time and addressing attendance concerns early can make a meaningful difference in student learning and success. This policy is intended to reflect the Richmond County Board of Education's current attendance requirements. Families should consult the current RCBOE Code of Student Conduct and Discipline for the complete attendance policy and any updates.

- **Bell Schedule**

- 7:50 - Students may enter the building

- 8:20 - Students must be in the classroom (Tardy Bell).
 - 3:10 - Dismissal
- ** Children not in their classroom by 8:20 will be marked tardy.*

When a student is tardy, his/her parent/guardian must come to the school's front office and sign the student in to obtain a late pass to class.

Early dismissals also count as days tardy. Please refer to The Uniform Code of Student Conduct and Discipline, which gives explicit information about days tardy.

PLEASE NOTE: A student will not be recognized for perfect attendance after ten (10) days tardy (even if present each day). Ten unexcused tardies or early dismissals will result in one unexcused absence.

- **Bell Schedule**

7:50 a.m. – Students may enter the building.

8:20 a.m. – Students must be in their classrooms. Tardy Bell

3:10 p.m. – Dismissal

- **Tardiness:**

Students who are not in their classroom by 8:20 a.m. will be marked tardy.

When a student arrives late, a parent or guardian must report to the school's front office to sign the student in and obtain a late pass before the student may report to class.

- **Early Dismissals:**

Early dismissals are also counted as tardies. Please refer to the Uniform Code of Student Conduct and Discipline for specific information regarding tardies and attendance.

A student will not be eligible for Perfect Attendance after accumulating ten (10) tardies, even if the student is present every school day. Additionally, ten (10) unexcused tardies or early dismissals will be equivalent to one (1) unexcused absence.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

- **Arrival**

The earliest your child can be dropped off in the morning is **7:50 a.m.** There is no one to supervise your child before that time, and as you know, it would be unlawful for you to leave your child unsupervised at a public facility. No students are allowed to sit on the benches to wait for the doors to open unless there is a parent with him/her.

Our supervising teachers start their duty at 7:50 every morning, so please wait until they are on duty before you release your child. This rule is solely for the protection of your children.

We have Prime Time, which is provided through the YMCA, available on site for a fee. Should you need to drop your child off earlier than 7:50 am or pick them up later than 3:30 pm. Their phone number is (706) 922-9656.

If you have items that need to go to the classroom, please drop them off at the front office. We will be sure they get to the classroom.

Student Pickup and Transportation

Only the child's legal guardian (or designee as specified on the registration card) will be allowed to sign a student out. We will not release your child to anyone else unless you have given us prior written approval, or it's noted on his/her registration card. Students will not be released to any person whose name does not appear on the registration card. Changes to the registration card cannot be made over the phone. Please make sure we have the names of everyone who is authorized to pick up your child listed on the card. It's important to keep this information updated—particularly your contact numbers.

All changes in transportation must be in writing. No changes will be made over the phone. Students will not be called to the office for dismissal after 2:30 because we are busy making every instructional minute count at Goshen! For the safety of your child, we cannot honor phone requests and MUST have a written request (emailed or faxed). This applies to after-school clubs and activities as well. Pick-up must be determined before a child stays for the activity. Please note

our teachers are providing instruction every minute of the day and may not see a last-minute email or text about a transportation change.

Children are not permitted to ride home on a school bus other than their own with another student.

- Car riders are dismissed at the back of the school in the car rider loop. Car riders are assigned numbers and the number must be visible in the windshield. If you are late picking your child up from the car rider line, you must sign them out in the front office.
- Only school buses and daycare vans are to use the front drive between 2:45-3:30 pm.
- Prime Time children should be picked up from the back of the school at the cafeteria side door (the side near the car rider line).

School Cancellation

Our superintendent will normally make the decision by 5:30 AM or earlier in order to notify radio and TV stations and post the decision on Richmond County School System's website. Tune to WJBF-TV, WAGT-TV, WRDW-TV news, and WGAC-AM radio, or read the Augusta Chronicle for up-to-date information on school closings. You may also view the school system's website at www.rcboe.org.

Incident Weather

Keep in mind that, even if weather conditions worsen during the day, we are reluctant to reverse our decision or close school early due to the possibility of endangering students. If conditions continue to get worse during the school day, we may need to have an early dismissal. If school is canceled after students have arrived, transportation home will remain the same unless a parent (or person designated on the registration card) comes into the school to sign the child out before their regular transportation arrives. There is no Prime Time when school is canceled, and parents must make arrangements to have their child picked up.

Withdrawals

The school must be notified at least 1 day (24 hours) in advance of a student's impending withdrawal in order for you to pick up withdrawal papers. All textbooks, library books, computers with

chargers, lunch payments, and fines must be cleared before the student secures a transfer record to another school.

Daily Schedule Pre-Kindergarten – Fifth Grade: 8:15 a.m. – 3:10 p.m.

**Please do not bring your child to school before 7:50 am, as there is no supervision prior to this time. Please remember to use only the car rider zone in the back to drop students off, not the front flagpole area or the road by the side of school.*

The daily schedule:

- Instruction - 5 1/2 hours of academics
 - Recess - 15 minutes
 - Lunch - 30 minutes
 - PE - 45 minutes 2 Xs per week
 - Art - 45 minutes 1 X per week
 - Music - 45 minutes 1 X per week
 - Total per day: 7 hours, 10 minutes
-
- 7:50 - Building opens for breakfast
 - 7:50 - 8:15 Students not eating breakfast may go to their classroom
 - 8:15 - 1st bell, students begin entering classrooms
 - 8:15 - Dragon Scoop news (includes Moment of Silence)
 - 8:15 - Dragon Scoop news (includes Moment of Silence)
 - 8:20 - Tardy bell, the school day begins
 - 12:00 - Midpoint for Attendance
 - 3:05 - Dismissal for walkers, car riders, & daycare riders to their zone
 - 3:10 - Students released to buses, day cares, and car line
 - 3:15 – Prime Time students are released to the cafeteria

Safety Plan/Drills

All staff are trained on the procedures to follow in case of emergencies at GES. Fire drills are held once a month and are used as an important safety precaution. Students are taught the expectations during a drill (be quick, quiet, and a good listener). Severe weather drills are facilitated twice yearly as are intruder drills. Safety is a priority and preparation is important for all at GES.

Parties

If students want to have a birthday party and invite all classmates, they will be permitted to pass invitations out at school. If they only want to invite a few, the parent is responsible for getting invitations to those students, but they *cannot* be passed out in the classroom. Birthday cupcakes **MUST** be sent by your child's scheduled lunchtime and eaten in the cafeteria. There will be **NO EXCEPTIONS**. We do not

celebrate students' birthdays in the classroom as we are busy making every instructional minute count.

Two classroom parties are allowed yearly: a December Holiday party and an end-of-the-year celebration. Please *DO NOT* send flowers or balloon bouquets to a child at school. These items cannot be taken on the bus as well as they may be a trigger for allergies for some students.

ACADEMICS

Promotion Policy

You will receive a copy of the RCBOE Elementary Promotion Policy. Briefly, it requires that all students must master state standards (grade 3 must pass the Georgia Milestones reading, Grade 5 must pass the Georgia Milestones reading and math) and local grade-level standards (receive a passing grade in three of the four areas of study, which must include a passing grade in Language Arts and Mathematics). PLEASE READ THE POLICY CAREFULLY. Students may be asked to attend Summer School if they are not proficient on the GMAS.

Language Arts, Science, Health, Social Studies

Our teaching philosophy at Goshen integrates reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills throughout all subject areas in the elementary curriculum.

Language Arts

Our balanced language arts approach teaches phonics, spelling, reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills daily through the use of superior children's literature and meets the needs of all students by ensuring success through a wide variety of assessments. We strive to meet the technological (especially in the science, math, and social studies areas) and character-building needs of our students.

Mathematics

The mathematics standards focus on important concepts vital to growth in mathematics. Students develop grade-appropriate skills needed to solve mathematical problems that occur in real-life situations, using probability, algebra, geometry, measurement, and other mathematical concepts that are integrated throughout the

curriculum. While the traditional memorization of multiplication tables and formulas is still important and necessary, CCGPS also makes sure that students can move beyond the concrete to the abstract and actually put mathematics to use. This change at the elementary level better prepares students for the switch from concrete to abstract concepts used in middle and high school mathematics.

Physical Education

A certified teacher will instruct each student in K-5th grade in physical education weekly. Participation is required and students are expected to take part as they would any other subject. Grades are given each nine-weeks grading period. If a physical problem, whether permanent or temporary, prevents your child's participation, please notify the instructor with a note. Extended illness will require a doctor's statement. It is best to wear clothing to school that is also suitable for PE, especially tennis shoes. Shorts under dresses/skirts/jumpers are a must!

Media

The Media Center is the hub of our school. It provides media and technology services to our students, faculty, staff, and administration. We operate on an open schedule that allows students regular access on both an individual level and a class basis.

Art Program

The art program is an outstanding class for our students. The success of this program has been evident by the fact that Goshen students have received district and local recognition for the past year.

Character Education

Goshen follows the district's comprehensive character education program to increase the safety of our school. It focuses on the students' development of 27-character traits. We will focus on one word each month to explore those character qualities. Students will have opportunities to practice values and character traits that range from role-playing and decision-making exercises to actual community service.

Family Dynamics is a comprehensive personal education program designed to provide information in a structured manner. Mandated

by Georgia law, Family Dynamics includes topics such as the family, peer pressure, the dangers of illegal drug use, and personal safety. You will receive the outline for the unit to be studied at your child's grade level from the Guidance Department. Student Internet Access Policy It is the policy of the Richmond County Board of Education that teachers and students should be furnished educational opportunities and resources to have access to programs and services available for "online" computer services offered by various vendors. In this connection, the Department of Instructional Technology is authorized to provide procedures with various online suppliers to ensure that these online services do not cost the student or the school district any funds; to ensure that there is access limited to instructional and curriculum-related matters; and to provide procedures for other similar matters to ensure that the rights of the online provider and the school district are protected. Particular attention should be given to ensuring that the students are not granted access to anything other than educational and instructional materials and resources.

Richmond County Procedures for Access to the Internet

Access to the Internet provides teachers and students with educational opportunities and resources that are unsurpassed by any other means. It brings worldwide multimedia resources (articles, books, maps, photographs, etc.) to the classroom and provides extensive research tools and methods for global communications. Internet access will increase the information and resources in classrooms, and aid students in becoming more responsible and independent learners.

With this access to computers and information also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in a school setting. The valuable information and interaction available on this worldwide network far outweigh the materials that a user could obtain that are not consistent with the educational goals of Richmond County. This requires efficient, ethical, and legal utilization of all network resources. Proper conduct by the students and adherence to the guidelines stated below are essential.

It is the policy of the Richmond County Schools to: (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via the Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct

electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

Supervision and Monitoring It shall be the responsibility of all educators of the Richmond County Schools, including administrators, instructional supervisors, principals, teachers, media specialists, technology specialists, guidance counselors, instructional paraprofessionals, and any other personnel having access to the online computer network for instructional purposes, to supervise and monitor the usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy and the Children's Internet Protection Act. Procedures for disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of the Director of Educational Media and Technology or designated representatives. (From RCBOE Website, August 2006)

Field Trips

Field trips are a part of the total instructional program and are planned with specific objectives in mind. Funding by parents is voluntary but without financial parent support, field trips may need to be cancelled. When a field trip is to be taken, your child will bring home a permission form giving the destination, date, and times. This form **MUST** be returned with the parent/guardian signature before your child will be allowed to go on the trip. There will be no exceptions! While all field trips are a support to our instructional program, students who miss the trip (due to safety or discipline reasons only) will be given assignments related to the overall theme. Parents who wish to chaperone and are responsible for a group of students must have a valid volunteer card (level 3). We welcome parents and guardians to join our fun. The teachers have complete and ultimate authority over all students while off campus.

Clubs, Teams, and Competitions

There is something for everyone! Attendance and punctual pick up/drop off are imperative. Should a problem arise, the sponsors and administration will meet to determine if continuation in the club is

possible. Club meeting days, times, and frequency will be determined by the sponsors.

Math Club/Team

The Goshen Math Team is composed of fourth and fifth grade students who excel in mathematics. The Math Team competes with other students in the annual Richmond County Elementary Mathematics competition in April.

Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl Team

Students who compete in the Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl are from 4th and 5th grades. Ms. Cross is the coach. Students are required to read assigned novels and will meet to discuss very specific details from each literary piece. Students will compete in February in the district Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl.

Spelling Bee

Students will participate in class "bees" and winners will participate in the school level "bee." The winner and the runner-up will compete and attend the district Spelling Bee.

Art Club

The art club will gather to create and grow in their artistic abilities. Mrs. Fletcher, our art teacher, heads up this engaging club.

Track Team

Students in 3rd-5th grade keep fitness at the forefront of the Track Team. They will assist our PTO volunteers with the Goshen Dash event, and they will rally support for the district track meet.

Dragon Scoop Morning Show Crew

Pre-K -5th grade students will rock it out on our daily morning show.

Student Council

4th and 5th-grade students are elected for various leadership roles. The Student Council is by invitation only.

Homework

This is the student's job - not that of a parent! Students may have homework each day Monday through Thursday. Homework is not required to be sent home. Homework will be an extension or practice

of the work that is being taught in the classroom. It will be checked and returned to the student. Homework for kindergarten-5th grade should take only 15-40 minutes. Fourth and Fifth grade should take about 30-60 minutes. You will receive the RC Homework Position Statement at registration or Open House.

Reporting Grades

Students will receive two progress reports each semester and one report each semester. More detailed information on the District grading policy IHA-R can be found at:

[IHA-R Grading Practices \(1\).pdf](#)

The report card, progress report, and weekly signed papers are the means by which we inform you of your child's progress in school. At Goshen, we have Take Out Tuesday. Each Tuesday, teachers send home important flyers with valuable information as well as signed papers (please review, sign the top sheet, and return the entire stack of graded papers). If you are not receiving weekly updates on Take Home Tuesday, please reach out to your child's teacher to find out why.

Kindergarten-3rd grade use standards-based grading.

The grading system used in 4th and 5th grades is as follows:

A -- 90-100 B -- 80-89 C -- 75-79 D -- 70-74 F -- 69 and below

Textbooks and Devices

Textbooks and devices are on loan and are issued free of charge by the school district. Children and parents are held responsible for their proper care and use. They are to be covered or in a case as soon as possible and remain covered the entire school year. Lost books and devices must be paid for before another textbook or device can be issued. Restitution must be made prior to withdrawal or records cannot be sent to the new school. Refunds will be made if the book or the device is found at a later date and damages will be assessed. The care of books and devices is one of the most important responsibilities that a child has the opportunity to learn in school.

Assessments 2026-2027

Please remember not to schedule appointments or trips and other activities during and immediately before major testing. You should also be reminded that dates are subject to changes that might initiate at the state level.

Our District Assessment Calendar: [2026-27 RCSS Testing Calendar.pdf](#)

Below are the tests given during each school year.

GKIDS: The Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills is a year-long, performance-based assessment aligned to the state mandated content standards. The goal of the assessment program is to provide teachers with information about the level of instructional support needed by individual students entering kindergarten and first grade.

COGAT: Cognitive Abilities Test is provided to assess students' abilities in reasoning and problem-solving using verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal (spatial) symbols. 1st and 4th.

GMAS: The Georgia Milestones: 3rd, 4th, and 5th Grade students are tested.

Gifted Program Richmond County provides programs for all qualifying system students in grades K-12 who exhibit superior performance, and advanced learning needs and demonstrate higher-level motivation and creativity. The identification process uses multiple criteria as mandated by the Georgia Board of Education. Students may qualify on mental abilities and achievement or on three (3) of four (4) components, which include mental abilities, academic achievement, creativity, and motivation or mental abilities alone for grades K-2. An automatic referral process requires all schools to screen intelligence and achievement test scores on their students twice annually for referral purposes. Parents, peers, teachers, principals, or counselors of the student may also refer students. Referrals are solicited in May for August testing and in November for testing in January. Gifted Program personnel notify parents of students referred to test dates two or more weeks in advance. Students entering the system who had a prior placement in a gifted program will be placed at once if they meet Georgia Department of Education eligibility.

Gifted Program staff will evaluate those who do not have the required eligibility documentation. Written parental consent must be on file before students are evaluated. Parents receive a written report of evaluation results and are offered an opportunity to discuss the results with program personnel. Written parental consent for placement must be on file in the gifted program office before students are allowed to participate. Qualifying students in K-8 are enrolled in a five-hour per week resource program that provides thematic units of study. Parents receive a progress report twice a year. Parents are invited to an annual review to evaluate the student's progress in the program and are provided with curriculum information for the coming year. Continuation in the program will be dependent upon the maintenance of an overall 3.5 GPA in academic classes, satisfactory performance in both regular and gifted classes, motivation and behavior, attendance, attitude, and completion of all assigned tasks. Students who meet these conditions will automatically continue in the program.

Students who do not meet these terms at any time during the school year will be allowed a six weeks probationary period. If satisfactory improvement is not shown, the student will be removed from the program. Parents will be notified by letter at the beginning and end of the probationary period. Students who leave the program will be reassessed and must meet current criteria for re-entry. For further information, you may call the Gifted Program Consultant at 826-1132.

Student Awards (Yearly) Honors and Awards

Honors Day programs will be held for pre-k - 5th grade in a large group setting. Honors Day programs will be held in the lunchroom. Invitations will be sent home.

The following awards are presented during Honors Day:

- Enrichment Awards (pre-k – 5th grade)
 - Art, Music, Physical Education
- Academic Awards (pre-k – 5th grade)
 - Most Improved Overall – one student in each homeroom who has shown tremendous improvement in all areas

Conduct Awards (pre-k – 5th grade)

- Perfect Attendance – no absences all year long
- Citizenship – two students who display good, kindhearted leadership characteristics

- Dragon of the Year - one student who meets and exceeds ROAR expectations
- iReady Awards (kindergarten – 5th grade)
 - iReady Stretch growth – Students who meet their stretch growth.
 - iReady Scholar - The one student in each homeroom with the most growth in reading and math
- Academic Awards (4th and 5th grade students)
 - A Honor Roll - Students who earned no less than a 90% in each subject area.
 - A/B Honor Roll – Students who earned 80% in each subject area all year long.
- Club Awards
 - 4H
 - All American (Flag) Award
 - Art Club
 - Chorus/All County Chorus
 - Helen Ruffin Bowl
 - Spelling Bee
 - Strings/Orchestra
 - Student Council
 - Track Team

Cafeteria Information

All menus are standardized for the entire school system and will be given to students at the beginning of each month.

Prices:

- Student Breakfast FREE
- Student Lunch FREE
- Extra milk \$.50
- Adult Breakfast \$2.25
- Adults/children not enrolled at GES \$3.75
- Cups of ice \$0.25 Breakfast
- Breakfast is served daily from 7:00 – 7:20 a.m.

Lunch

Students will be asked to remember their personal numbers and enter them into the computer as they travel through the line at breakfast and lunch.

For sanitary conditions, the Georgia School Food Service prohibits the students from giving or accepting food in the cafeteria from classmates.

It will be assumed that a child can drink milk unless the school has a note signed by a doctor stating the medical reason why the child cannot drink milk and it is listed on the Health Card. No soft drink containers are allowed. However, students who cannot drink milk may bring something to drink in a thermos. Water will be available at all times.

Please do not bring fast food lunches to your child in the original packaging. A fast food lunch must be placed in a brown paper bag prior to entering the lunchroom.

Goshen Diner

We welcome guests to join students at lunchtime in the Goshen Diner. Please be sure to check in at the front office to receive a pass. We ask that you adhere to the following agreements when you eat lunch with your child:

- arrive several minutes prior to your child's lunchtime
- only eat lunch with your child; no relatives or friends may join
- soft drink cans and fast-food bags are not allowed in the cafeteria. We ask that you place the items in another packaging to conceal the marketing on the outside, in accordance with District policy.
- cell phones should be on silent in order to communicate and bond with your child during this special visit.
- We appreciate your cleaning up and pushing chairs under the table prior to the end of your visit.

Thank you for your compliance as our focus is always to make sure all students feel comfortable and included.

School Menus

The menu is posted on the school website each month. The menu is also announced during the Daily Goshen Morning Show each day.

Each child is offered the choice of main entrees and either hot or cold choices for breakfast.

Cafeteria Rules-Essential Agreements

- Students wishing to purchase a second lunch may do so but must pay adult lunch price (lunch \$3.75; breakfast \$2.25; cup of ice \$.25).
- Cans and glass bottles are not permitted.
- We cannot warm up any student's food. This is a liability issue.
- Please do not swap food or take food from lunchroom.
- Each person is responsible for keeping our cafeteria clean and tidy. This means that each person must help by removing the food or paper around his/her area and seat and putting all trash in the trash cans when directed.
- Children are to be in an orderly line entering and exiting the lunchroom.
- Children returning from appointments should not bring fast food into the lunchroom in its original packaging.
- Goshen Diner Guests may eat with their child only. Friends are not to be invited to leave the table and join guests without prior approval from the Principal.

Student Support

Illness or Injury

Instruct your child to report to the teacher any injuries that occur at school or on the way to and from school. If your child is injured at school, we will clean and bandage. If the injury is major or there is any doubt in our minds, we will call the parent, guardian or other designated person for consultation. This makes it very important that we have numbers listed where we may reach you in case of an injury.

There will be no dispensing of over-the-counter drugs such as aspirin, Tylenol, etc., although we do provide for minor injuries and first aid.

All students who are injured or become ill must check out through the office before leaving school. If a serious injury should occur, and the parent cannot be reached, an ambulance will be summoned, and the child sent to a hospital. If your child is subject to occasional and/or unpredictable medical conditions such as asthma attacks, , anaphylaxis, seizures or fainting for which a doctor prescribed medicine, we require a medical documentation form to be completed and that you leave such medication with the name of the

child and the prescribed dosage with the school nurse where it will be available for emergency use.

If you feel that your child is suffering from a temporary disability but could attend school except for the physical exertion required for P.E. and/or recess, please send a note to the teacher requesting the child be temporarily excused from such activity. Under those circumstances, the child will be required to go outside with his/her class but will not be required to participate in any physical activity. If your doctor feels that your child has a temporary condition under which the child could attend school but should not be allowed to go outside, please ask the doctor to write a note for the child to give to the teacher in which he indicates the duration of such condition. Only then will the child be allowed to sit in another supervised area in the building when the class goes outside for physical activity.

Medicines/Medications Policy

The Richmond County Board of Education has a written policy for the administration of medications in schools. Due to the large amount of medication given in school, we request that medications be given at home, if possible. This includes medicines given three times a day or less. Remember, it is necessary that we know where to reach you at all times at home and at work. Please give as many emergency numbers as possible. If your child will need medication during the school day, please help us by complying by completing the medical documentation form and following these guidelines:

LONG TERM OR DAILY MEDICATIONS:

Parents are asked to bring a bottle of medication to keep at school, correctly labeled by the pharmacy, with student's name, medication name, dosage, frequency of medication along with a completed medical documentation form with parent and physician's signature. Any change in the dosage of medication during the school year needs to be in writing by the physician and sent to the office. Fax number: (706) 796-4676.

Refills need to be brought to school by a parent/guardian --please do not send them with your child or on the school bus.

SHORT TERM MEDICATION (10 DAYS OR LESS):

Requirements are the same as above except medication forms or notes from parents, signed by a parent will be accepted.

OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATIONS: All medications must be in the original container with a note from the parent giving the dosage and

times to be given. *All medications will be kept in the clinic. Medical documentation forms are available in the office and from the school nurse.

Student Insurance

Students injured at school as a result of general accidents are not covered by any medical payment plan through the school or system. Parents have the opportunity to purchase school accident insurance for their children. School time and twenty-four hour coverage will be available. An information sheet explaining the program will be sent home at the beginning of the year or given at the open house.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports and Response to Intervention (RTI)

Goshen Elementary utilizes a student support team to help parents and teachers meet the needs of individual students. This is a regular education function. The RTI is composed of professionals and the student's parents to identify, plan, and recommend instructional strategies to help the student be successful in the school setting. All students are in Tier I of RTI. Tier II provided support in areas where a need is determined. Tier III occurs after 6-9 weeks of documenting interventions and no improvement is noted. Parents will be informed if a student moves from one Tier to the next and the team will convene to determine effective support.

Elementary School Counseling Program

The school counselor implements the American School Counselor Association's comprehensive model for the benefit of all students. The counselor, Shari Hooper, seeks to understand each child as a person and student. She strives to assist children to move through his/her various developmental phases of life but primarily focuses on school-related issues that may be barriers to school success. The counselor may address in individual and/or group counseling the following concerns: academic issues/study skills, conduct problems and behavior support, relationship/social issues, grief and/or loss, family issues or changes, helping students manage a personal illness or disability, and/or building self-esteem and self-regulation.

A school counselor does not work with students as a therapist. If a student's needs go beyond the training and/or time limits of the school counselor, parents will be encouraged to seek therapy support within the community. The school counselor has access to all students as needed just like the school nurse or any other school employee. However, the counselor will obtain parent permission if the teacher or student wishes to visit the school counselor regularly. Small groups related to special topics will also require parent permission. These groups are carefully scheduled during non-academic times as much as possible.

These are some of the ways the School Counselor will provide support this school year:

- Implement the comprehensive developmental elementary guidance and counseling program through structured groups and classroom lessons.
- Serve individuals and groups of students with individual counseling related to the development of academic and career plans, personal development, emotional growth, and school success.
- Consult with and train teachers, parents, and staff regarding children's needs and or current relevant information about children.
- Provide parenting tips and info through monthly newsletters, and/or consultations.
- Refer children and their families to special programs, specialists, and community agencies when appropriate.
- Respond to the immediate concerns of students.
- Students (grades 3-5) can request help from the counselor anonymously by submitting an "I Need Help" form to her mailbox. Younger students (grades PreK-2) can discuss problems with their teacher and then the teacher will solicit my assistance if needed.

ROAR Expectations/Positive Learning Environment

Goshen has developed school-wide policies and procedures for all common areas called ROAR Expectations. Our goal is to provide a safe and orderly environment with clear expectations for all students and staff. Our policy will be firm, consistent, persistent, positive, and fair. Students are responsible for the behaviors they exhibit at school. Please help us by instilling in your child the need for appropriate behavior in school and respect for teachers and classmates. Having an atmosphere that is conducive to a desirable learning situation is necessary if we are to relate to our students. From time to time some students behave in such a manner in the classroom and other areas

as to be a direct hindrance to the learning process and, therefore, prevent the other students from the benefits or experiences that they might have received. They will be sent to the principal when stronger measures are warranted.

Richmond County Code of Student Conduct and Discipline

The Code of Student Conduct and Discipline handbook will be reviewed with all students within the first ten days of school. It will also be available online or at parent/guardian request. Please keep this booklet as a reference so that you and your child will fully understand its contents as it relates to student behavior (see rules regarding knives, beepers, fighting, etc.). Your child is expected to follow these policies and the school is expected to enforce them.

Electronic Devices, Toys, etc. - No student shall bring to school any electronic device that would disrupt or interfere with any lawful mission, process, or function of the school including: wifi-enabled devices (ex. watches), cell phones, toys, tape/disc players, radios, other electronic device/games, laser devices, fidget spinners, tracking devices. See the Code of Student Conduct and Discipline for specific details.

GES Behavior Plan -

Bullying

A student shall not BULLY any person on or off the school grounds at any time or on the way to and from school. Bullying is defined as any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so or any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or to perceive or expect immediate bodily harm over periods of time. If the office receives a report of bullying, a bullying investigation will begin, and the Code of Conduct followed for the consequences if the child is found to be guilty of bullying. All parents will be contacted during this process. NO BULLYING, IT'S THE LAW!

Richmond County Dress Code

Students are expected to dress in an appropriate manner while attending school or other related school functions. The teacher or principal may counsel students about wearing apparel that is

unacceptable for school. The RCBOE Dress Code Policy will be enforced for all Goshen students as it appears in the Student Code of Conduct Handbook (any changes will be given to all parents in writing).

Lost and Found Articles

Lost or Found should be reported to the homeroom teacher or the office and may be claimed by proper identification. Large sums of money and expensive items should not be brought to school. A clothes rack in the office will display unclaimed articles and all students and parents are invited to search for any missing possessions.

On the 1st day of each quarter, unclaimed clothing is given to a charitable organization.

It is a good idea to clearly mark all removable clothing, lunch boxes, textbook covers, etc. with the owner's name so they can be returned without delay. This also discourages unauthorized borrowing. Please label all items with your child's name.

Student Records

Legal Custody Rights Schools need proof of legal custody and visitation rights. In cases where parents are separated or divorced and one parent has legal custody, the school must have proof of the court order that spells out both custody and visitation rights as part of the permanent record. Schools must have on file appropriate legal documentation in order to assure compliance with any limiting court order. We will not become involved in a custody battle. Parents cannot be legally denied access to their children without a copy of a court order specifying no contact is permitted. We will, however, work closely with you to ensure your child's safety and welfare.

Student Records-Parent Rights

In the case of divorced parents, either or both natural parents, custodial and noncustodial, must be provided access to the child's records, unless there is a legally binding document to the contrary.

Registration

Please update information ONLINE (All children must have proof of residence on file. We will ask for updates periodically.)

There is documentation to be completed at Open House that will remain on file in the front office. An updated Health Card is required with at least two different phone numbers listed. If you wish for your child to be exempt from photos or videos, please inform your child's teacher so you may complete the appropriate form.

Parents or guardians wishing to register their child should provide the following:

- Certified Birth Certificate
- Immunization Certificate* (GA Form 3231 which includes hepatitis B vaccination)
- Certificate of Eye, Ear, and Dental Exam* (GA Form 3300)
- Social Security Card
- Proof of grade placement (report card/withdrawal papers)
- 2 Proofs of Residence within Goshen School Zone**

We are legally bound to require the following for each NEW student:

- Certified birth certificate (PK4, kindergarten and first grade)
- Immunization certificate* (GA Form 3231 which includes hepatitis B vaccination)
- Certificate of Eye, Ear, and Dental Exam* (GA Form 3300)
- Social Security Card
- 2 Proofs of Residence within Goshen School Zone**

All students entering a Georgia school for the first time must produce the records listed above to complete the registration process.

**These are available through the Health Department, Eisenhower Army Medical Center, or your pediatrician.*

***The only proofs of residency accepted: current lease-official notarized copy and utility bills (water, electric, gas only) within the last two MONTHS including parent/guardian name with service address listed.*

Registration Requirements for Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and First Grade Students

- Pre-Kindergarten: Students must be (4) four years of age on or before September 1.

- Kindergarten: Students must be (5) five years of age on or before September 1.
- First Grade: Students must be (6) six years of age on or before September 1. Birth Certificate--A student registering for school for Pre-K, Kindergarten, or First Grade must present a CERTIFIED COPY (not the one issued by the hospital) of his/her birth certificate. (A copy will be made for the permanent record and the original returned to you).

Students needing records may go to:

Richmond County Health Department 1916 North Leg Augusta, GA 30909 Phone: 667-4335 (Birth Certificates)

Richmond County Health Department 9th/Laney Walker Blvd. Augusta, GA 30901 Phone: 706-721-5806 (Immunizations only)

*Any parent who cannot get a birth certificate at the local level for a child born in the state of Georgia should send the child's full name at birth, place of birth, father's full name and mother's maiden name along with a money order for \$10.00 to: The Vital Records Unit Room 217-H 47 Trinity Ave. S.W. Atlanta, GA 30334

Change of Address or Phone Number

In an effort to maintain current and accurate information, parents are requested to submit to the office any change of address or telephone number. Parents should have an operable telephone number where they can be reached during the school day or the number of someone who can be reached in case of an emergency.

Transportation

Bus Information

School bus transportation is a PRIVILEGE – NOT A RIGHT. Students who misbehave on the bus may be denied transportation privileges. A student is to ride the bus to which s/he is assigned. Any emergency request to ride a different bus must be requested in writing by the parent/guardian and submitted to the office. Requests are made through the school office and are approved by the school principal in advance by 9:30 on the day of the change. Students will be allowed off the bus only at school, assigned bus stops, home, and locations requested in writing by parents and agreed upon by the Transportation Department.

The bus driver is in complete charge of the bus and its occupants at all times. Students riding the bus must comply with the request of the driver. Bus drivers have specific rules and will send them home for parent/guardian signature. Please go over the rules with your child. This is very important because the consequences for violating any of these rules are very strict.

- 1st offense: Verbal warning by bus driver
- 1st write-up: written warning to parent from Principal/Designee
- 2nd write-up 1-day suspension from bus.
- 3rd write-up: 1-week suspension from bus.
- 4th write-up: suspension for the remainder of the school year

Fighting/other serious offenses:

Automatic 3-day suspension (if no other referrals)

*Be sure to sign up for the StopFinder App found on the District website.

Car Line

Keeping students, parents, and faculty safe from injury is first priority. The carpool process runs like a well-oiled machine when everyone adheres to the following guidelines. During carpool, all drivers need to be considerate and aware of all persons on the school property. The faculty members on duty during carpool are there to protect and help. Please share the following procedures with all persons (grandparents, neighbors) that may drop off or pick up any student. As a reminder, public school property is tobacco-free.

Morning Carpool

- Your child must remain in the car until the school is open should you arrive prior to 7:50.
- Students should be ready to exit the vehicle on the curbside only - bookbags and lunchboxes should be readily available for promptly exiting the vehicle safely.
- Do NOT pass cars unloading in front of you. This is to ensure the safety of ALL of our students and staff.
- School staff are present to open and close car doors and to assist students onto the sidewalk in the rear car line.
- Students should never exit from the left side of the car.

**If you have the foreknowledge that your child must exit on the left side (i.e. multiple children in the car or car seat location), please keep your child in their safety harness/seat as you are asked to move forward to the safety zone for unloading.*

Afternoon Carpool

There are 3 lanes that will be directed to move forward once all students are safely loaded into vehicles. Afternoon carpool begins at 3:00 and ends at 3:30. All carpool riders are picked up in designated carpool area at the rear of the building (not in the side teacher's parking lot, nor in the front of the school) by 3:30.

- Remain in your vehicle patiently.
- Please provide your child's name and grade level to the faculty member when they approach your vehicle, along with having your carpool tag posted in a visible area on the dashboard.
- Pull your vehicle forward as close to the next car to create ample space for those behind you and follow directions given by school staff. Remain in the line and wait until directed to move forward.
- Please remove the Goshen Tag from the windshield once your child is loaded
- Remember that the speed limit on Goshen Drive is only 5mph.

School Community

Visiting Classrooms

We are happy to welcome visitors to Goshen and ask that all visitors who enter make a photo ID available, sign in, and receive a pass that will be worn during their visit. We ask that you turn off your cell phone and do not take pictures. When visiting your child's classroom, please make sure you are purposeful in your actions and interactions so instructional time is not disrupted. Classroom visits must be pre-arranged with the teacher/principal. Visitors will not be permitted to loiter on the school campus or in the school building.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

If the teacher or parent desires a conference, indicate on the "comment" space on the report card where you sign it each grading period, or call the office (706-796-4646) for an appointment. These conferences should be scheduled in advance at times convenient to

both teachers and parents. Conferences will be scheduled at such times that they do not interrupt or interfere with a teacher's class.

School Council

School Councils were established by the A+ Education Reform Act to bring communities and schools closer together in a spirit of cooperation to solve difficult education problems, improve academic achievement, provide support for teachers and administrators, and bring parents into the school-based decision-making process. Our council members meet quarterly at the school at 4:00 p.m. We welcome your attendance at these meetings and will share meeting dates on our website and social media pages for your convenience.

Parent Teacher Organization

PTO membership is vital because the support and commitment of our wonderfully active PTO contribute much to the success of GES. Your membership, attendance, interest, and personal contributions are valuable components when it comes to the education of all children and especially your child. You will be provided with a PTO handbook for all needed information when you join. The date and times of meetings, along with events and areas needing volunteers will be posted on our school website.

PTO news in the Dragon Digest and on social media

PTO will provide announcements of activities in our school periodically during the school year. The Dragon Digest will come home with your child monthly in their "Take Home Tuesday" folder. We hope this will provide insight into "what's happening" and what is coming up. Be sure to connect on social media to always "be in the KNOW"!

Volunteers

Parental involvement is one of the most important aspects of Goshen. Any parent who wishes to be a new volunteer worker in our school in various capacities, such as readers, event helpers, teacher helpers, etc., should sign up during registration, or contact the office. Your time and involvement will be greatly appreciated!

Volunteers who have supervision over students and or may be working in small groups or one on one will be required to attend a two-hour, school-system-sponsored volunteer basic training. This training is required every two years. Volunteer basic training will be

available at the school periodically. Please let Mrs. Tara Williams know that you are interested in attending a training.

General suggestions to parents

1. Please do not phone your child during school hours unless there is an emergency. Students will not be allowed to take calls. Messages will be relayed immediately if there is an emergency.
2. Your child is not to bring dangerous or distracting articles to school such as guns, play guns, water guns, laser guns, pocket knives, kitchen knives, matches, toys, game boys, i-pods, CDs, cell phones, (or other electronics) or expensive jewelry. Your child should not bring large amounts of money to school.
3. Place names on all articles of outer clothing – coats, gloves, hats, caps, sweaters, raincoats, etc. We donate a large amount of clothing to charities each year that is not marked. The school maintains a lost and found department. Please feel free to investigate if your child loses or misplaces something.
4. Your child must have plenty of sleep each night for him/her to do their best work.
5. If there is something you want to know about school, if something has happened at school that worries you or your child, if you feel there has been a misunderstanding, or if you need more information for any reason, call or make an appointment to see the teacher and/or principal.
6. If you wish to confer with a teacher, please call the school and make an appointment. Appointments are during the teacher's planning time. You cannot take student class time to discuss an individual problem, but our teachers will get back to you within 24 hours.

We welcome you to Goshen Elementary and look forward to an excellent school year!

