

Diamond Lakes Staff Handbook

2026-2027



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Mission Statement

Empowering ALL learners to GROW with confidence, ENGAGE with purpose, ACHIEVE with excellence, and RISE as responsible, successful, lifelong learners.

Vision Statement

To create a safe, inclusive and respectful learning environment while building relationships to ensure EVERY child is valued and ALL students are empowered to rise to their fullest potential.

Belief Statements

We believe:

1. A growth mindset helps all learners reach their full potential.
2. Independence, responsibility, and reflection are essential for student success.
3. All students have the potential to succeed when provided with high expectations, support and encouragement.
4. Academic growth thrives in a safe and nurturing environment.

GEMS “10” Rules of Responsibility

1. Respond to adults with the following: “Yes/No ma’am”, “Yes/No Sir”, “Thank you” and “Please”
2. Make eye contact when someone is speaking
3. Do not show disrespect with “gestures”
4. Follow the specific school/classroom protocols
5. Keep yourself and the bathrooms clean and germ-free
6. Greet visitors and make them feel welcome
7. If someone bumps into you, say excuse me, even if it was not your fault
8. When walking in line, keep your arms at your side and move quietly
9. Learn from your mistakes and grow
10. Be the best person you can be

Topics	Page #
Absence	5
Personal Leave	5
Accident Reporting	5
Admission/Registration	5-6
Student Withdrawal	6
Appliances	6
Arrival/Dismissal	6
Attendance	6 - 7
Electronic Devices/Cell phones	7
Bomb Threat	7
Books/Textbook/Instructional Materials Records	7
Bullying	8
Cafeteria	8
Calendar	9
Canvas / SeeSaw	9
Contact Log	9
Certification	9
Class Parties	9
Class Schedule	9
Classroom Appearance	10
Clipboards	10
Committees	10
Conferences	10
Discipline	10
Duties and Responsibilities	11
Employee Dress	11
Evaluations	11
Faculty Meetings	11
Field trips	12
Fire Drills	12
Grade Chair/Level Meetings	12
Grades	13
Hallways	13
Homework	14
Honors/Awards	15
Hospital/Homebound	15
Lesson Plans	15
Lockdown	16
Mail/Email	16
Monthly Reports	16
MTSS	16
Office Discipline Referrals	17
Outside Duty	17
PTA	17
Parent Volunteers	17
Permanent Records	17
Promotion/Retention	17 - 18
Professional Learning	18
Restrooms	18

Reporting Child Abuse	18
Sabotage	19
Safety Manual	19
School Funds	19 - 20
Social Worker	20
Setting the Tone	20
Staff Members Children at School	20
Student Confidentiality	21
Supervision	21
Telephone Calls	21
TV/DVD use	21
Tornado Drills	21
Vending machines	22
Workday	22
Work Rooms/Lounges	22
Bell Schedule	22
Leave Requests	23
Diamond Lakes Non-Negotiable	24
Before the First Day of School	25
Open House Expectations	26
Registration	27
Dismissal Plan	28
SMART goals	29
School Map	30

ABSENCE FROM WORK

Any staff member who is unable to attend work either from sickness or other cause **MUST** notify Mrs. Graham a MINIMUM of 2 hours before the school opening hour via email and/or text. Please also notify Mrs. Graham, Ms. Hale, and your grade chair.

- If it is necessary for you to miss work, you are required to input the absence in “Frontline” before 6:00 a.m. the day you are absent. Also, **all** staff members are required to notify your grade/team chair/ supervisor before 6:45 a.m. **Substitutes need careful, detailed plans entered into the Frontline system. Please let them know where plans are located and their direct point of contact for your work assignment.** Any time you will miss 1+ hours, you must put that info in frontline before 6:00 a.m.

PERSONAL LEAVE

Email Mrs. Graham at least a minimum of 5 days in advance requesting permission to take personal leave, submit the appropriate form at least 72 hours prior to requested absence.

Approval for requests for personal leave is at the principal’s discretion. You **MUST** receive permission from administration before taking approved personal leave. **Requests for personal leave prior to or after a holiday, or during pre- or post- planning, field day and the administration of Georgia Milestone must be submitted in writing (signed letter stating reason for request) to the principal who will approve or deny and forward the request to our assigned area superintendent for final approval. This requires a minimum of 10 days advance notice.**

- **Any sick leave before /after a holiday (even part of a day) requires a doctor’s excuse.**
- Substitute requests must be entered in frontline.
- Early in/Early out requests will be approved/denied on an individual basis by the principal. Leave time is charged in 1-hour increments.

Please 📄: *Administration can require a doctor’s excuse at anytime for any absence; except pre -approved personal leave.*

ACCIDENT REPORTING

All student and staff accidents involving injury or possible injury **MUST** be reported in writing. When reporting an accident, be specific and report facts only. Incident forms are in the office. Complete the form the day of the accident. **Do not mention any student names** in the accident report except the name of the injured student. Turn the completed accident report in to the Nurse. You must also call the parent the day of the incident and document in the contact log in infinite campus.

ADMISSION/REGISTRATION

All records should be checked to make sure the information is accurate, emergency phone numbers are working, and those allowed to pick up the student are listed in Infinite Campus. The **School Zone Locator** located on the Richmond County Board of Education web site at <http://www.richmond.k12.ga.us/transportation/addressinput.asp> can be consulted to check any zone discrepancy. **Any exceptions to this for any reason will have to be made by the Superintendent or the Deputy Superintendent.**

The following items are necessary for registration:

1. Certified Birth certificate (original copy with seal)
2. Immunization Certificate

3. Certificate of Eye, Ear, and Dental Exam
4. Social Security Card
5. Proof of grade placement (report card/withdrawal papers)
6. **Proof of residence such as current lease or utility bills (water, electric, gas only) in parent/guardian name with service address listed within the past 30 days.**

Georgia law requires that children must be five years old on or before September 1 to enroll in kindergarten and six years old on or before September 1 to enroll in first grade in the public schools. A child who has lived in another state for at least two years before moving to Georgia and who was legally enrolled in a public kindergarten or first grade in that state may enroll in a Georgia public school kindergarten or first grade, provided the child will be five for kindergarten and six for first grade by December 31. To qualify for Pre-K, children must be four (4) years old by September 1.

Student Withdrawal

A parent or guardian is to notify the office staff at least 24 hours in advance of the withdrawal date. Office staff will initiate the withdrawal process by issuing the teacher a copy of the withdrawal report. The teacher should complete the report and return the entire form (all copies) to the office no later than 2:00 p.m. on the date of withdrawal. Be certain the media specialist has cleared the student before submitting the form. If the student receives EIP, 504, GIFTED and/or SPECIAL EDUCATION services or is in the MTSS PROCESS, the report should indicate so.

You are to complete the student's cumulative record within 24 hours of the withdrawal. Update the address and reason for withdrawal in black ink. Record the scholastic records in pencil. See Ms. Thompson for specific details concerning the cumulative record.

APPLIANCES

RCSS does not allow most electrical appliances to be housed in classrooms or offices. You may not have microwaves, refrigerators, or heaters in the classroom. Fans and lamps with energy efficient bulbs (the cork screw type) are permitted. No food or drinks (except water) are to be consumed or visible while students are present unless the entire class is consuming the food item.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

Teachers should allow students to enter the classroom at 7:00 a.m. If a teacher is late or on duty, another staff member will supervise their class until their arrival. Students are tardy if they enter the room after 7:30 a.m. **During morning entry and dismissal, please be at your door to supervise students from 7:00 a.m. until 7:15 a.m.** Guardians are not to pick up students from the classroom. **Teachers do not leave for the afternoon until it is your scheduled time to get off or permission is granted by administration.**

ATTENDANCE

Student Absences- Teachers MUST take attendance in Infinite Campus before 8:00 a.m. daily. Students are to bring a written excuse for absences the day they return, which should be sent to the front office immediately. The registrar will change the attendance record once the excuse is received. Please remind parents/guardians that they are only allowed to write five parent notes for excuses for the year.

Tardy -students are to come by the office before entering class. Anyone leaving early should bring a note and have their guardians sign them out. Students are not to leave the school grounds

without permission during the day.

ELECTRONICS AND CELL PHONES

Cell phones should only be used during school hours in the event of an emergency.

- Teachers should be neither sending nor receiving calls nor text messages during instructional time. Nor should they be posting to social media. If a phone call needs to be made, use the break rooms if children are present in the classroom. Cell phones should not be used in the hallways.
- Students are allowed to bring cell phones to school but they must be turned off and out of sight. Cell phones should also remain off and out of sight on school transportation as well. Teachers are to monitor the use of technology and confiscate items being misused.

BOMB THREAT

Schools can receive bomb threats anytime throughout the year. Notify RCSS at 706-826-1133 of such threats. To minimize disruption of the school day, administrators and public safety will manage the threat by classifying the level of the threat into one of two categories-high level or low level. The response will be determined by the level of the threat. Staff Guidance HIGH-LEVEL THREATS include some or all of the following considerations:

1. Details about the bomb threat; i.e., type of bomb, what will trigger the bomb, placement, time of detonation, political or personal reasons for the bomb placement, or other details.
2. Number of prior threats to the school.
3. Current events surrounding the school.
4. Demeanor of the bomb threat caller.
5. Unless a device is found, the decision to evacuate is left to the principal or designee.

Evacuation Plan for Bomb Threat: Upon exiting the building, students will be directed by their teachers or administrators to a safe area in the front or side parking lot. (same place as Fire Drill) Teachers will take roll and report attendance in the NaviGate App or to the designated personnel.

THE FOLLOWING RESPONSE IS REQUIRED FOR A HIGH-LEVEL THREAT WHEN THE PRINCIPAL OR DESIGNEE CHOOSES TO EVACUATE: • The school will be evacuated using a Directed Evacuation. Do not use the fire evacuation alarm.

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

BOOK/TEXTBOOK / INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS RECORD

During pre-planning teachers will be given instructional materials to use throughout the year. Many of these items are barcoded and must be returned during post-planning. Items that are not barcoded must also be turned in during post-planning if the teacher is leaving Diamond Lakes for the returning year. During post-planning, each teacher shall account for books in the manner prescribed. Any students who have not returned instructional materials checked out to them it is critical that we contact the parent in an effort to inform them of the fines incurred due to lost and damaged items.

BULLYING

“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;
- Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm;
- Any intentional written, verbal or physical act which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate that:
 - Causes another person substantial physical harm or visible bodily harm;
 - Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s education;
 - Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
 - Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Remember to avoid calling any behavior “bullying.” There is a legal definition for bullying, and the accusation takes the incident to the proverbial next level. A thorough investigation by administration is required to determine that behavior is actually “bullying”.

The teacher’s responsibility is to report the behavior (just the facts) to administration. The teacher is also to report any incident in which a student is physically injured on the proper form.

CAFETERIA

Diamond Lakes serves breakfast and lunch at no charge for all students. At times, extra concession items are sold by the cafeteria staff. **Cokes or other drinks in bottles or cans are not permitted in the lunchroom area. Food brought in must be removed from brand label packaging before going into the lunchroom.** This is a federal law that applies to all children and adults eating in the school lunchroom. Teachers may add funds to their personal cafeteria accounts to purchase food items at varying prices.

A \$20.00 charge will be made for each returned check. Checks will not be accepted after a returned check. (This pertains to all school business.)

- Students are permitted to talk quietly during lunch and breakfast, but there should be no excessive noise.
- Encourage good table manners. Each class (1st – 5th) must assign a table washer and sweeper for daily clean-up of their assigned areas.
- All tables and floor area around the tables should be clean before your class leaves the cafeteria.

CALENDAR

Prior planning is vital to the successful and efficient operation of the DLE. Having everyone on the “same page” allows for better communication and a more organized working environment. In order for this goal to be achieved, all school events, functions, and activities must be communicated to the front office in a timely manner in order for the information to be disseminated to the entire staff. **If you have any events to include on our monthly calendar, please notify Mrs. Patterson, the month before you want it published.**

The semester and weekly calendar will be distributed via email to all staff members. It is important that you review and follow the calendar. Should you notice a conflict or error, please immediately share that with administration. It is expected that you will attend to any task or meeting noted on this calendar unless excused by the administration.

CONTACT LOGS

Maintain a record of calls to and from contacts with parents/guardians in Infinite Campus. Homeroom teachers are to call home each time a child is absent after the 2nd absence (NOT consecutive). Those attendance calls should be reflected on your call log in IC. All contact with a student's guardian should be noted in their contact log.

CANVAS

Canvas is the online Learning Management System we are required to utilize. Your canvas site should be updated weekly with announcements and assignments that are essential for your assigned grade. Daily assignments must be posted.

CERTIFICATION

It is the teachers' responsibility to acquire and maintain a valid Georgia Teaching Certificate.

- Everyone (certified and classified) should provide a copy of their current certificate to the office. Please check with Ms. Hale for details.

CLASS PARTIES

There will be a Winter Party and End of Year Party for each class the last hour and a half of the school day. Those are the only two parties approved by RCSS. Other celebrations and school-wide activities are not considered class parties. Birthday parties are not permitted.

Parents/Guardians may bring cupcakes/snacks to lunch for a child to be distributed by the teacher/student as parents are not permitted to attend. Also, no other parties are allowed.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Each teacher is to post CURRENT INSTRUCTIONAL SCHEDULE in the hallway outside their class door on the assigned school template. The schedule should indicate instructional time from 7:25-2:15. The schedule should not include restroom or water breaks, travel time, etc. Teachers should follow the posted schedule at all times unless an exception has been approved by Mrs. Graham.

CLASSROOM APPEARANCE

Teachers are expected to keep classrooms clutter free, neat, and tidy. Rooms should be attractive and should proudly display student work as well as other instructional items. Bulletin boards **MUST** be current and reflect the standards being taught. Each teacher is expected to have current student work displayed (in the room and hallway) with the standard and commentary/rubric to match the task.

Daily reminders:

***Only 20 percent of the room can be consumed**

- Keep windows and doors uncovered
- Be certain door and windows are closed and locked during the day and at the end of each day and lights are turned off. Blinds should be down and closed also.
- Have students pick up anything off the floor each afternoon (paper, books, pencils, etc)

Use the monthly Custodial Checklist to report needed improvements in room cleanliness.

CLIPBOARDS

All teachers are expected to have a clipboard with current student contact information present with the class at all times. The clipboard goes with the class to lunch, PE, Art, Technology, music, recess, etc. Students should never carry or study the information on the clipboard. The clip board contains confidential student contact information that should only be viewed by the adult supervising them.

COMMITTEES

It is necessary for the school to have some committees and assignments in order to function properly. Volunteers will be requested for certain assignments. Please select committees that match your strengths and personal interests. We all need to share the work of the committees, so volunteer when you can.

CONFERENCES

Teachers should plan to meet regularly with guardians during their planning time or before/after school. Additionally, RCSS offers fall and spring early release days to hold conferences with parents/guardians. **Many parents/guardians look to you as the expert!** If you are struggling with a student and need suggestions/support, consider consulting with our MTSS Facilitator and/or Assistant Principal. Anticipate that guardians are also doing the best they can to support their student at home and look to you for suggestions. **If you are out of suggestions, it is time to bring the concern to the MTSS committee for further review.**

DISCIPLINE

The ultimate goal of any school rule or procedure is to achieve student self-discipline. Students are expected to behave in a way that allows them and their classmates to benefit from instructional time. Each teacher has the responsibility to manage his or her own students. Referrals to the office should only be made when other forms of intervention have been attempted or the offense is so serious it warrants immediate attention. **Students should not be sent to sit in the office.** Another “time out” location should be prearranged with administration. Please follow the school-wide discipline management plan.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES with Coordinating TKES Standards

- Reports to work on time (9,10)
- Signs in /out accurately (9)
- Provides adequate plans and materials for substitute (2,9,10)
- Reports to assigned duty station on time (9,10)
- Supervision of students/left class unattended (7,9)
- Follows IEP for SPED students (2,3,4)
- Reports attendance in IC in a timely manner (9)
- Uses flexible grouping (1,2,4)
- Lesson plans submitted on time (1,2,9)
- Stands at door to receive students (9)
- Timely reporting of absence in Frontline (9,10)
- Follows school-wide discipline plan (7,9)
- Reports to collaborative planning (1,2,9,10)
- Adheres to deadlines in a timely manner (9)
- Communicates effectively with parents (9,10)
- Logs all parent contact in IC (9,10)
- Stands at door in the am/pm (9,10)
- Picks students up from Specials/lunch on time (9)
- Attends required meetings on time and prepared (9)
- Bell-to-Bell instruction in accordance with lesson plans and RCBOE expectations (1,2,3,7,8)
- Follows employee dress code (9)
- Follows proper procedures for RTI referral (1,9)
- Adheres to intervention expectations (1,2,3,4,5,6)

EMPLOYEE DRESS

Teachers are expected to be well groomed and to look professional at ALL times (business casual). Exceptions will be made for special circumstances (field day, outdoor/messy field trips, etc). For general guidelines, the following are unacceptable:

- Short skirts
- Shorts of any length
- T-shirts (other than school T-shirts on spirit days)
- Revealing tops
- Denim pants (jeans)- especially with rips
- Sweat suits
- Leggings
- Skorts
- Flip flops

EVALUATIONS

Diamond Lakes teachers are evaluated using TKES. You will receive feedback using the 10 Standards described in the TKES portal. Teachers are responsible for developing a Professional Growth Plan and maintaining documents to support growth and progress. It is imperative that you attend all Professional Learning opportunities offered for support with TKES expectations.

FACULTY MEETINGS

Faculty should reserve the last Tuesday of each month for faculty meetings. All certified staff are expected to be present and on time, unless excused by the principal. Any requests to be absent from a faculty meeting should be made to the principal at least three days prior to the meeting. Additional meetings may be scheduled as necessary.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips must be approved **30 days prior to the event** to allow the lunchroom enough time to prepare for special meals. **Complete the proper forms and prepare paperwork early enough to allow for the 30 days.** [Click here for the link to find all forms and information associated with field trips.](#) You must sign in using your personal school login. All field trips must be instructionally based and directly tied to appropriate grade level standards. Prior instruction and follow-up activities should be included on the field trip request form. If you have students who take medication during the school day, remember to plan accordingly so the child does not miss that prescribed dose.

You must have a cut-off day for permission slips and money. It is not reasonable to be collecting either the day of the trip. You must collect enough money to cover the cost of the bus and the event you are attending, or you will need to cancel the trip. Remember, that you must take every child who submits a signed permission slip, even if they do not pay. You cannot withhold a field trip as a consequence for misbehavior unless you have communicated expectations in advance to parents and notify them immediately when their child is no longer able to attend. Factor that in when you are deciding how much to charge each student. If you collect more than the trip actually costs, you are allowed to use that money later in the year (end of year party, Honor's Day, etc) as long as it is spent on the same class.

Only the students in the class or grade level for whom the trip is planned may attend the field trip. For instance, chaperones cannot take additional children, siblings of students attending DLE may not attend, an attending teacher's child may not attend, etc.

FIRE DRILLS

The Georgia State Fire Code requires fire drills to be performed monthly. Teachers should post conspicuously a copy of the fire drill route for the classroom and clearly explain it to the students. In the event of a fire alarm, all students will proceed in an orderly fashion to the designated exit. Upon exiting the building, students will be directed by their teachers or administrators to a safe area either in the front/side parking lot or behind the school. Teachers will take roll and report attendance in the **NaviGate App on your Launchpad** or to designated personnel. Fire drill procedures and blank forms should be left in your emergency sub plans.

GRADE CHAIR/GRADE LEVEL MEETINGS

Designated chairpersons will be assigned to each grade level to coordinate activities and curriculum/grade level concerns. Grade level meetings will be held every Friday after a leadership team meeting with minutes and sign-in sheets in a binder maintained by the grade chair. Minutes will also be submitted electronically in a one drive folder. Grade chairs will meet with the principal every 2nd Tuesday to discuss/share information and/or concerns.

GRADES

All grades are to be entered online into Infinite Campus within 48 hours of collecting an assignment.

Each teacher is responsible for maintaining an accurate, up-to-date record of grades. Accompanying grades will be dates and a brief description of each activity which precipitated the grade. Though you will not grade each assignment, you should assess everything that is assigned. Assigning grades is one of the most difficult challenges a teacher faces. Keep the following in mind as you determine how to accurately report on student progress:

- **A grade is to reflect a student's progress toward mastery of the standard.**
- Students in grades K-3 will be graded according to the district's standards-based report card guidelines. Students in grades 4 and 5 will use the RCSS Grading Scale described below.
- Behavior/conduct should not be included in any way in a student's academic grade.
- **A student should never receive a zero for misbehaving or cheating on an assignment.**
- **A zero should neither be assigned nor accepted for a missing assignment. The expectation is that all assignments are completed.**
- **There must be sufficient grades upon which to determine a six-week's grade. Two grades per week is a reasonable guide.**
- **It is not accurate to average grades of vastly different assignments (i.e. a 10 question quiz and a 30 question quiz). Carefully consider how you enter grades and weights.**
- **All grades should be analyzed for validity. If many students do poorly, it is appropriate to disregard that grade, determine the problem, and reteach/retest.**
- **Final grades should be entered in Infinite Campus following timelines sent by central office.**

RCSS Grading Scale for Grades 4-5:

90-100 A	80-89 B	75-79 C	70-74 D	Below 70 F
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HALLWAYS

When walking through the halls, keep your class in a single compact line and away from the walls (in the gray assigned areas). Students must not run or talk in the halls. The teacher should be near the line and **able to see all students**. Begin immediately to let your class know that you will not tolerate noise, confusion, and misbehavior.

Remember that adults set the tone, so we must be quiet in the hallways, too.

HOMework POSITION STATEMENT

What are the purposes of homework?

Homework should offer **follow-up practice activities with explicit directions given.**

Homework reinforces, enriches, and expands the student's understanding of concepts taught in the course.

For teachers, homework offers assistance in identifying individual and class needs, and helps the teacher to determine needed lesson plan adjustments.

Homework should not be used as punishment for discipline problems or as "busywork" to be done simply because an authority figure (teacher) has the power to assign. Assignments that are not necessary tend to build within some students, resentment for the subject(s) as well as for the teacher. Homework should serve a real purpose in a subject or subjects, or it should not be assigned.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Daily Minutes Per Child</u>
(Total Amount Assigned by All Teachers if Departmentalized)	
K-3	15-40
4-6	30-60

Who is accountable for homework?

Students should be accountable for homework in three ways. It should be done on time. It should be neatly and completely done in the manner assigned by the teacher. It should be made up if the student is absent.

Teachers should be accountable for homework assigned. Homework (other than reading or math fluency practice) will be collected (or checked) on time, assessed in some manner, and returned promptly.

How should homework be graded?

At the elementary and middle school levels, the following guidelines will be used in grading homework:

- Routine homework will not be assigned a letter grade or numerical grade.
- Students may be allowed to check or recheck his/her own homework as it is being discussed and make necessary corrections so that it may be used as a study reference when appropriate.
- Book reports, special assignments, and other detailed or more involved projects will be graded by the teacher. The teacher will allow a few students to report to the class so those students can learn from each other. The grade will reflect the extent of the assignment.

In summary- the grade communicates how close the student's performance is to the stated academic standard.

HONORS/AWARDS

All awards are based on information from the first semester to the second semester's 12-week progress report grade of the school year.

Awards given for all grades, including K

- Citizenship (2 per class)
- iReady highest Growth (Reading and Math) – excluding PK
- iReady highest Score (Reading and Math) – excluding PK
- iReady typical growth (Reading and Math) – excluding PK
- iReady stretch growth (Reading and Math) – excluding PK
- iReady performance (on/above grade level Reading and Math) – excluding PK
- Most Improved
- Perfect Attendance (0 absences, fewer than 10 tardies)- **excused and unexcused are counted**
- Art
- Music
- Physical Education

Awards given for grades 4-5

- A/B Honor Roll- every grade on the report card is an A or a B, excludes conduct grades
- A Honor Roll- every grade on the report cards is an A, excludes conduct grades
- Distinguished Scholars- every grade on the report card is an A, including conduct
- Principal's award- Highest overall content average for the grade level
- Highest Content Average Award- after finding the highest average in each homeroom on the grade level, select the one student with the highest GPA for the grade level, per content.

Optional Awards

Jump Rope for Heart	Spelling Bee Participants
Student Council	School Safety
Orchestra	Peer Mediators
Math Team	Track Team
Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl	Science Fair Winners
Elks Hoop	GEM Ambassadors

HOSPITAL/HOMEBOUND

We have several students who have medical conditions that require them to miss multiple days of school. Please see the counselor for paperwork that is required for these students to receive hospital/homebound services.

LESSON PLANS

Every teacher is expected to always have current lesson plans on the Diamond Lakes template available. Lesson plans should be current and accessible located by the door in the blue folder provided for visitors completing classroom observations. The weekly plan should include small group and whole group instruction daily, with evidence of assessments. Each teacher is responsible for writing their own plans and having them available at the start of the week.

Lesson Plans are due for the following week and must be submitted to the DLE Gems Group Lesson Plan folder every Friday by 8:00 a.m.

LOCK DOWN PROCEDURES

Detailed information about our lock down procedures can be found in our School Site Safety Manual. It is important that you read the manual, learn your responsibility in an emergency, and teach the proper procedures to your students.

If you hear we are moving into a lockdown:

- Quickly check the hallway to see if there are students you need to move into your room.
- Turn off all lights and sounds.
- Move students to corners or locations less visible from the door and windows.
- Lock all doors and use the Red Emergency Lock located next to all doors.
- Keep everyone out of sight and quiet. Do not answer the door.
- Record student attendance in the **NaviGate App on your phone or Launchpad.**

The difference between the lockdowns are as follows:

- If we come onto the intercom as say, “We are in a lockdown. There should not be any movement in the hallways.” This means no one should be in the hallway due to a medical emergency or any other incident requiring students to not be present to witness.
- If we come onto the intercom to say, “We are in a lockdown. There should not be any movement outside of the school.” This means the threat is outside of the school and there should not be any outside activity at that time; however, you may move freely throughout the building.
- If we do not come onto the intercom and you see the scrobe lights on and you hear anything other than an announcement, follow the steps above for the intruder lockdown.

E-MAIL/MAIL

Be sure to check your email at least 3 times a day at a minimum (at least once before 9:00 a.m., between 11:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m., and before leaving each day) as things are added that may need your attention. Personal mailboxes should be checked twice a day. **Do not send a student to get your personal mail.** Whether you check your email or not, you are still responsible for the information it contains. Staff members should not send out mass emails unless they are approved by Mrs. Graham.

MONTHLY REPORTS

RCSS requires a variety of monthly and quarterly reports. Much of the information comes directly from the classroom teacher. Monthly monitoring through common assessments, benchmark results, grade reports, etc. are included in that data. Teachers are expected to be accurate, thorough, and punctual in the submission of such reports.

MTSS

Struggling students should be participating in interventions for either attendance, academics and/or behavior. If a student in intervention continues to struggle and you are

unable to determine the probable cause, please let Ms. Gibson know. IF you find the Tier 2 intervention is not sufficient, notify Admin/Mrs. Graham to request a Tier 3 meeting. You will be given a date and time for the meeting. You should then notify the parent of the scheduled meeting and call a day before the meeting as a reminder. Data you should bring to each meeting:

- a. Grade book or record of progress
- b. Work samples to support academic concerns (not officially analyzed)
- c. Discipline and attendance records
- d. Tier 2 data (behavior charts, etc)
- e. iReady reports

If it is determined by the MTSS team that a child should be tested, a collection of current data is required.

OFFICE DISCIPLINE REFERRALS

Diamond Lakes has a school wide discipline plan. The plan is to be shared with guardians and explained to students. Should it become necessary to refer a child to the office for discipline, notes from the plan should be submitted with the discipline referral. Extreme offenses will not require the steps of the plan for interventions.

OUTSIDE DUTY

Teachers monitoring classes must be walking around and actively observing student behavior.

All teachers and paraprofessionals are to go to recess with their class unless you are keeping a student or students inside with you. Students are not denied recess as a punishment.

Teachers should neither be sitting together talking nor engaging with their cell phone during recess- supervision is critical!

PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION

All staff members are expected to join the PTA and Diamond Lakes Sunshine Club. You are also required to attend "Parent Nights" at school or off campus. If you need to be excused from a scheduled activity, please see Mrs. Graham.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

We encourage guardians to volunteer at the school. Due to laws regarding confidentiality of and access to records, **volunteers cannot be used to grade papers, record grades, fill in report cards**, etc. However, there are many tasks they can take on to lighten the classroom load. Please share the RCSS Volunteer Training Dates with guardians regularly.

Being a trained volunteer takes time (GCIC report, Mandated Reporter assessment, etc). If you want guardians to attend a field trip, please let them know they should attend a training at least a month in advance of the trip. Volunteers must get approval from administration to volunteer. A volunteer request form will be available for you to complete to request volunteer services. Ms. Patterson will secure volunteers for your request.

PERMANENT RECORDS

A homeroom teacher is responsible for maintaining a permanent record for each student in the homeroom. The cards should be legible and neat, completed in **black ink** (except “part year” grades for a withdrawal).

Every student in your room should have an up-to-date permanent record within 2 weeks of being assigned to your class. Please work with the registrar and counselor if you have a student transfer into your room and you are unable to locate the permanent record.

PROMOTION/RETENTION DECISIONS

If a student is in danger of failing, parent conferences must be held as soon as possible. **This needs to be noted on the report jacket each grading period.** Each teacher should keep a log of conferences on an Appendix C and send home an Appendix B with each progress report, if a student is in danger of failing. You will meet with the parent and principal in May/June to make final promotion/retention decisions. You are never to tell a parent or child that the student will be retained. That is a decision only the principal can make and, if made, will be conveyed to the parent at the May meeting, with the support of the retention team and data presented.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

All staff members should participate in on-going professional learning. This includes collaborative planning, PL offered through our school district, research, web-based learning, and seeking outside PL opportunities.

Professional Learning will be REQUIRED monthly for all teachers. Teachers should bring computer and data notebook to all professional learning sessions. Make sure you are on time for each of the sessions. Teachers will be notified prior via the Weekly Calendar. If you are absent on PL day, please schedule a time to meet with the Instructional Specialist to receive the information missed. We expect our students to seek understanding and to continue to want to learn. It is critical that we model this behavior and become better educators. When we know better, we do better. Please consider organizing PL opportunities for your colleagues when you have knowledge, we should all have.

RESTROOMS-4th and 5th grade

Establish a restroom time that avoids conflicts. No solo trips when possible and select a reliable, responsible student as your restroom monitor. Since your class uses a hallway restroom, you are to supervise from just outside the restrooms so the monitors may report anything missed to you. **Only 4th and 5th grade students are to use the bathrooms in the hallways. Grades K – 3 should take their students to the restroom before lunch and specials.**

REPORT OF CHILD ABUSE

Georgia Law requires that all persons who suspect child abuse/neglect to report it to the proper authority, which is the Department of Family and Children Services.

As the law relates to school institutions, it requires the observer to report it directly or cause it to be reported.

1. Notify the principal.

2. **Complete the report form**-two options and **give a copy to the principal**. The individual making the report needs to describe specifically the injuries seen. The severity of the injury is very important in setting the appropriate response time of DFACS and the local Law Enforcement Agency. **However, the severity does not change the requirements for the school district to immediately make such report.**
3. Either call (email) to report your suspicion or be present when the call is made by the principal, school counselor, or school social worker.

Department of Family and Children Services (DFACS) (706-541-4777)

In any incident where a teacher is not sure whether his or her observance is accurate or promotes reasonable cause to suspect child abuse/neglect, the individual should understand that it is the primary obligation of the individual to report the allegation, not to decide the validity of the allegation.

SABOTAGE

We are often our own worst enemies. Choose your words carefully, even if you must pause before you speak. **It should not be about getting “blame” off of you and onto someone else.** It is about explaining the facts and helping others understand our purpose. If you do not know, it is incumbent upon you to ask. **It is your responsibility to know what is going on and why!** Do not use words that excite guardians or students or intentionally incite fear or anger. Examples include but are far from limited to:

Your child was “jumped” today.
He punched him over and over.
I couldn’t even get to him he was hitting so fast.
Your child didn’t do anything wrong. The other kid just started punching him.
If your child isn’t going to try, then neither am I.
There’s nothing I can do with him when you don’t give him his medicine.
I can’t even teach when he’s in the room.
All he does is disrupt the class.
This wasn’t my idea. You’ll have to talk to
I don’t know what’s going on either. I don’t even know why we are doing this.
I have a lot of behavior problems in my room.
I have all the special ed kids this year.
Your child’s not the only one. This kid messes with everybody.
I keep writing him up but nothing happens.
The whole class is just acting crazy lately.
He just got what he deserved. Someone finally paid him back.
Well.....your child hits people, too.

SAFETY MANUAL

Georgia Law requires each school to develop and implement an emergency preparedness plan. The plan is an ongoing process of assessment and revision and updates are made periodically. Safety is everyone’s responsibility so input from all staff into the development of the safety manual is encouraged. The site safety committee will address safety concerns in monthly

meetings and collaborate on making Diamond Lakes Elementary the safest possible school environment for all staff and students.

SCHOOL FUNDS

Teachers and other professional employees receiving school funds shall keep accurate records and turn in funds to the school bookkeeper. All disbursements of such funds must be by the school. Any selling in the school shall be confined to school projects. Remember that we cannot reimburse for taxes paid.

- All fundraisers must be approved by the principal before selling begins. See the bookkeeper for the proper pre-approval form.
- Please fill out appropriate forms when turning in money.
- Check requests must be made at least one day before needed and submitted on the *Check Request Form*.
- All money should be turned in before noon each day it is collected. County policy requires all money to be deposited the same day it is turned in. Please fill out the *Cash Receipts Form* when turning in money.
- Never keep money in your room when you are not there.

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK SERVICES

This department strives to assist as many individual students as possible. Teachers should complete a referral form when deemed necessary. When in doubt – complete a SWARM Report ([Click Link for SWARM Quick Guide](#)). Emma Simmons serves Diamond Lakes Elementary as School Social Worker, along with a number of other schools. It is important that the online form is completed in its entirety, especially the section covering the efforts made up until this point. Emma Simmons also responds to referrals sent via email. If you need help submitting a referral, please see Mrs. Simmons.

SETTING THE TONE

Public Praise; Private Discipline

Teachers should not lecture students in public places when other people can hear what is being said. Use a quick and respectful technique for immediate correction and save the longer discussion for a private meeting. Children do not hear lectures- think about Charlie Brown's teacher.

When an administrator walks in the room, please do not use that time to publicly discuss a behavior problem. This is humiliating, and the child will usually make you pay later.

STAFF MEMBERS CHILDREN AT SCHOOL

The children of DLE STAFF MEMBERS, as well as all DLE students, are not permitted access at any time to the Teachers' Workroom or any other areas marked "Employees Only" at Diamond Lakes Elementary.

- A. Diamond Lakes elementary staff members children may accompany their guardians into school building upon arrival, remain with them UNTIL DUTY TIME, and return to their parent's classroom AFTER DISMISSAL.

- B. Children must stay visibly with their guardians in their parent's assigned work areas. They may not "roam" the school unattended. DLE staff should provide specific instructions for their children as to exactly what those children must do before and after school to comply with this directive.
- C. The administration may redirect the children of staff members when deemed necessary, whether or not those children are DLE students.
- D. The administration may require school employees to make alternate care arrangements for their children before and after school if the presence of those children adversely affects the productivity of the parent and/or the school.
- E. Staff members children are NOT PERMITTED to come and stay with their guardians on the job during any workday.
- F. Staff members must make alternate arrangements for their children during faculty and leadership team meetings. Students are NOT PERMITTED to attend.

STUDENT CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality laws prohibit students being used to transport materials containing grades or other information about other students. It is a violation of a student's right to confidentiality to share with other students or guardians of other children anything concerning that child.

Guardians often want to know what punishment was used when a problem occurs at school. You may only discuss the punishment handed to the parent/guardian's own child.... **do not share any consequences for other children, even those involved in the same incident.**

SUPERVISION

It is imperative that students are supervised at all times when they are in school. **Do not leave students unattended for any reason, including recess. Teachers should not leave children in the classroom unattended. Placing students in the hallway leaves them unsupervised and this is not an acceptable practice. Asking another teacher to supervise your class (and theirs) should be a strategy only in an extreme emergency.** Poor planning on your part should not negatively impact colleagues or students.

During standardized testing- pick up your tests EARLY! Students are to enter the classrooms at 7:00 a.m. under the supervision of their homeroom teacher. You should not then need to leave the classroom.

TELEPHONE CALLS

School phones are to be used for business and emergency calls only. Teachers will only be called to the office in the case of an emergency. A message will be taken and placed in your mailbox in the event that guardians wish to speak to you or you receive a personal phone call.

TELEVISION/MEDIA USE

Only videos from the media center are pre-approved for classroom use. **Other videos must be approved by the media specialist before being shown to students.** Please see the media specialist for details on obtaining that approval. All videos used during instructional time must be directly

tied to the current standards being taught. **Students should have a viewing guide and a focus for viewing/listening.** Guided questions or something similar are a good start.

TORNADO DRILLS

In the event of a tornado, all students will, upon direction of the classroom teacher, exit the classroom to the hallways directly outside of the classroom. Upon entering the hallway, all students will line up along the wall, kneel down and place their head down with their hands covering their heads and remain in this position without talking until the all clear is given. Record student attendance in **NaviGate App on your phone or Launchpad immediately following the drill.**

VENDING MACHINES

Drink and snack machines are in the office area for adult use only. Children are NOT ALLOWED to use machines to purchase items for themselves or their teacher. Nor should adults purchase drinks or snacks from the machines for students. Doing so violates the RCSS/BOE policy concerning the use of the vending machines.

WORK DAY/SIGNING IN/OUT

The minimum work day for teachers is 8 hours and 7.25 hours for paraprofessionals.

- **Punctuality is important for staff members as well as students. Teachers are to be at work at 7:00 a.m. and at their classroom doors greeting students by 7: 00 a.m.** Teachers are released daily at **3:00 p.m.** with the exception of required meetings.
- Teachers are required to sign in upon entering the building and sign out each day in the office.
- Any staff member who wishes to leave school early or arrive late to school for any reason must check with the administration and **fill out the appropriate request form.**

WORK ROOMS/TEACHER LOUNGES

Students are not allowed in the teacher work rooms. CHILDREN should not be sent to make a phone call, get your lunch from the refrigerator, or pick up papers from the printer.

BELL SCHEDULE

7:00	Students enter and go to breakfast or class
7:30	Instruction begins
7:30	Tardy
2:10	Afternoon announcements
2:10	Prepare for student dismissal
2:15	Begin dismissing all students

Diamond Lakes Elementary School

Diamond Lakes Leave Request

Today's Date: _____

NAME: _____

Requester(s) Requested _____

<u>One Half Day (AM or PM)</u>	<u>One Half Day (AM or PM)</u>	<u>Whole Day</u>
☐ Sick Leave	☐ Sick Leave	☐ Sick Leave
☐ Personal Leave	☐ Personal	☐ Personal
☐ Professional Leave	☐ Professional Leave	☐ Professional Leave

SUBSTITUTE (IF KNOWN) _____

____ Approved _____ See Me

____ Disapproved _____ Signature _____

____ te Copy to Bookkeeper _____ Yellow Copy to Staff Member _____

Diamond Lakes #3 (New 10-06)

Diamond Lakes Elementary 2025-2026 Non-Negotiables

The Diamond Lakes Elementary Staff is committed to increasing student achievement and using effective instructional strategies and digital resources in our classrooms every day. Every lesson will be standards-based and taught with rigor and relevance. All instructional decisions will be based on what is best for our students.

Our Teachers will:

- Report to work and duty on time
- Establish, practice and reinforce rituals and routines
- Be consistent with enforcement of classroom rules, rewards and consequences
- Follow the school wide discipline management plan
- Supervise students at all times
- Call parents about student absences (each absence after a total of two)
- **Not** place students in the hall at **ANY TIME** for **ANY REASON** without supervision
- Demonstrate evidence of daily planning and differentiation in their instruction
- Have learning plans available in a binder for classroom visitors
- Implement the Instructional Framework (Plan, Instruct, Assess, Reflect)
- Ensure students are able to communicate the following:
 - What am I learning? (learning target)
 - Why am I learning it? (relevance)
 - How will I know I have learned it? (Criteria for Success)
- Reference the learning target at multiple points throughout the lesson
- Have a clip board or folder with current student information at all times
- Respond to parents within 24 hours
- Support the initiatives of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- Teach key vocabulary and academic language
- Disaggregate data to adjust and reteach instruction as well as reassess learning
- Display exemplary student work that includes standards-based teacher commentary
- Utilize digital resources daily to enhance student learning
- Conference with students at least once a month
- Keep an updated data notebook
- Participate in data chats at various points throughout the year
- Document **ALL** parent communication in infinite campus for each individual student
- Set up and utilize class dojo and spotlight
- Support ALL school initiatives

Before the First Day of School:

Roster updated and posted outside your door

Plan in place to teach children how you expect them to line up, travel in the hallway, turn in homework, go to the restroom, work in groups, behave when the intercom comes on, behave when someone comes to the door, share ideas and answers, etc. Plan to teach everything you want them to know.

Make sure you have instructional materials for students

Plan with your grade level;

- What you will do if/when lunch backs up?
- How you will share the restrooms?
- How you will divide the playground at recess?
- Who will keep the grade level webpage updated?
- When/where you will meet?
- Who will keep grade level minutes and how you will share them?
- Grade level dismissal plan (car riders, bus riders, day cares, primetime)
- Possibility of sharing intervention students
- Classroom schedules (following RCSS guidelines)

Open House Expectations

Place a check in the boxes beside any tasks that are complete

- ☐ Rooms clean, orderly, and inviting
- ☐ Your name posted as a “room tag” by your classroom door
- ☐ Roster printed and posted by your classroom door
- ☐ Classroom expectations/policies posted and/or discussed
- ☐ **Dismissal plan (bus list, car rider list, day care list, Prime Time list) posted and verified by guardians**
- ☐ Information concerning Volunteer Training available

And as you talk to guardians during Open House (and all other times), remember these guidelines:

- Guardians and students should be made to feel welcome and excited about being in your classroom
- It should be obvious in your conversation that you reward effort and success more than you punish the lack of those things
- It should be obvious to guardians that you are ready and know what you are doing
- Conversations should not include any negative information about other students or your class as a whole
- Remind guardians about information available on your grade level webpage
- Remind guardians to use Infinite Campus- share how to find the link

Warning: Do not share how many behavior problems are in your class, how many SWD students you will have, how rough last year was, how many math books you are missing, etc. Set a positive tone.

Registration

- Only New and transfer students are expected to register
- Parents will rotate through stations that have been set up in the cafeteria
- **Get LOTS and LOTS of contact numbers!!**
- We will tell children their homeroom teacher's name. You may not move a child to another room. If there is a problem, please send the parent to an administrator.

Any registration document that is missing must be documented on a waiver and submitted within 30 days.

Dismissal Plan

All car riders will be dismissed from the cafeteria

All remaining car riders (after “last car” is called) are returned to their homeroom teachers in the classrooms. **Teachers should not leave campus until all of their students have left for the day.** No students are allowed to leave with guardians from the classroom or hallway unless the office has notified you.

The first two weeks we need car riders seated in their dismissal area by 2:10.

Day care will be dismissed from the gymnasium.

Bus riders and prime time will remain in their classrooms until their bus is called.

Your grade level/hallway may decide how to cover all dismissal duties:

- Rotate duties or keep one assignment all year

- 1 person walks all car riders to the lunchroom and stays to supervise

- 1 person walk all bus riders or each teacher escort a different bus line

- 1 classroom hold all day care riders or divide them among all rooms

- 2 grade levels on the same hall pair students to provide more options

All students must be supervised at all times. All day care riders will get in line and be escorted by assigned personnel.

Even during dismissal, students are to travel quietly and in an orderly fashion in the hallway.

Students should not be sent to the office during dismissal unless called. The office is VERY BUSY!! Please keep your students in the designated dismissal spot during the dismissal process. Students should not be released from classrooms until the teacher dismisses them! Call the child's name to have him/her move to the hallway. **Teach students that when their bus is called, YOU will call them to the hallway. EVERY teacher should be at their door during dismissal unless in the lunchroom with car riders or walking students to a bus.**

Teacher's Name: _____

Writing SMART goals for your TKES Professional Learning Goal

SMART Goals are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-based, and Time-bound.

- **Specific:** Not just “read better” or “perform better”. Be specific about what you want to attain or see students attain.
- **Measurable:** How many or what percent, not “most”
- **Attainable:** ALL is often unreasonable, consider what can be achieved with great teaching
- **Results-based:** What will be your evidence or what “proof” will you have of the result
- **Time-bound:** By when, what date

Specific: Students will move one “band” on the iReady middle of year diagnostic in math (2+ years below move to 1 year below, 1 year below move to on grade level, on grade level move to above level.)

Measurable: 60% of my class

Attainable: According to the research, all students should show growth. However, not all students will grow enough to move up a “band” by the middle of the year. 60% may be reasonable after reviewing my EOY data from 2022

Results-bound: I am using my middle of year data to show results of my instruction from first semester.

Time-bound: By the middle of the year diagnostic window

Example Professional Goal: By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, 70% of my students will be score on or above grade level on the iReady reading EOY diagnostic assessment.

By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, 70% of my students will be score on or above grade level on the iReady math EOY diagnostic assessment.

