

Student Handbook



2026-2027

STUDENT HANDBOOK

McCormick Elementary School

A Title I School

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Dr. Shawn Perry, Principal

Mrs. Ashley Bellamy, Assistant Principal

Our Mission:

At McCormick Elementary School, we are preparing all students to work effectively, responsibly, and productively within our society.

Our Vision:

MES Mustangs are EPIC – Educated, Prepared, and Inspired Citizens with all students meeting their stretch growth goals in i-Ready Reading and Math.

Our Beliefs:

- *Our children are the center of all decision making.*
- *All students can become productive members of society.*
- *Education is a partnership among students, families, schools, and community.*
- *Education should prepare students to succeed academically and socially so they can compete for the quality jobs of their dreams and become productive members of society.*

A Message From the Principal, Dr. Shawn Perry:

Dear Parents and Students,

The 2026-27 school year is set to be the most impactful and important school year for our Staff, Students, and Community. This is my fourth year at McCormick, and we have a few new faces, but we are returning as a strong educational team. Our Mission is to Teach, Mentor, and Grow Strong Readers, Writers, Scientists, and Mathematicians. Our Vision is for all Mustangs to be Educated, Prepared, and Inspired Citizens by reaching their Stretch Growth Goals in i-Ready Reading and Math.

This handbook provides key guidelines and expectations, but I want to emphasize ATTENDANCE, RESPECT, & TEAMWORK because Teaching and Learning is an ART. Mustang Family Members, please consider your future and prepare to sacrifice now, sow good work, and reap the harvest later.

You are important, You are Loved, and You are worthy of a GREAT Education, a GREAT life, and a GREAT Career. At McCormick Elementary, we are fully committed to supporting your journey because we know you have a Hope and a Future and a Plan of Prosperity and not of Harm. At MES, You Belong! You are Loved & Appreciated! #GoMustangs

Sincerely,

Dr. Shawn Perry, Principal

Mrs. Ashley Bellamy, Assistant Principal

SCHOOL HOURS:

Student Arrival: 7:00 am- 7:30 am

School Day Begins: 7:45 am

Student Dismissal: 2:30 - 3:00 pm

Please do not drop students off before 7:00 a.m. Supervision will not be provided, and front doors will remain locked for students who arrive before 7:00 a.m.

Children should be picked up no later than 3:00 p.m. after school.

TARDIES:

Students must be at school, in their seats, and ready to learn no later than 7:45 a.m. Any student who arrives after 7:40 am must have a parent walk them into the front office to obtain a tardy slip for admission to class.

EARLY DISMISSAL:

If it is absolutely necessary to get your child out before the end of the school day, please do so before 2:00 pm.

ATTENDANCE:

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

Requirements to be Counted Present for the School Day

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) states that a school year consists of 180 days of instruction. Schools may count students present only when they are actually at school, on medical homebound instruction, or at a school-authorized activity. In MCSD, primary and elementary students must be present for 3½ hours of instruction for the instructional day to count as one present school day.

Required Excuses

Within 5 days after returning to school, a student must submit a written excuse explaining his/her absence, signed by his/her parent/legal guardian and, if applicable, accompanied by a doctor's statement. If a student does not do so, his/her absence will be considered unlawful. An excuse form can be picked up from the attendance office and completed with the appropriate information.

Lawful/Excused Absences

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

Unlawful/Unexcused Absences

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

Suspension(s)

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

Primary/Elementary School Tardy Procedures

Students who are late to school receive consequences if the behavior continues. Students who are continually late may expect the following on a semester basis:

1st tardy - the office/teacher will issue a verbal notification.

2nd tardy - the office/teacher will issue a written notification.

3rd tardy - the office/teacher will issue a second written notification.

4th tardy – the office/teacher will issue a written tardy notice warning.

5th tardy– the school administrator will request a parent/legal guardian tardy conference.

6 th & 7th tardy – the student will be placed on a tardy intervention contract.

8 th & 9th tardy – the student may be assigned In-School Suspension.

10th tardy – the student may be given one day out-of-school suspension for each additional tardy after 10.

Truancy:

The Code of Laws of SC 59-65-10 reads: "All parents or guardians shall cause their children or wards who are in the age group of five to seventeen, inclusive, to regularly attend a public or private school or kindergarten of this state..."

Parents of students with excessive absences or tardies will be called for a Truancy Intervention Plan. Failure to comply with the plan developed may result in a referral to the Truancy Officer of Marion County School District and the Marion County Truancy Officer.

Examples of Notes Required from Parents/Guardians:

- *Notes to explain an absence
- *Notes to explain tardiness
- *Notes to request early dismissal
- *Notes to excuse the child from recess or physical education class
- *Notes to grant permission to attend field trips
- *Notes to allow the child to ride home in a vehicle with another child
- *Notes to change student's mode of transportation
- *Proper form of taking medication
- *Notes to inform about an allergic reaction (should be accompanied by a doctor's note)

FIELD TRIPS

Students who leave the school for field trips represent McCormick Elementary School, and excellent student behavior is essential! To help maintain McCormick's positive public image, students who have proven they cannot consistently meet expectations for good behavior at school may not be allowed to visit places with less structure. Siblings will not be allowed to attend field trips or field days.

Chaperones may be needed on field trips. The grade level will determine the number of chaperones. A Volunteer Chaperone Form must be completed for approval through the district office before the trip. No parent acting as a chaperone may drive separately from the school bus due to liability issues and to ensure the safety and supervision of our students. All children must ride the school bus. Students who cannot attend a field trip will remain at school in a structured learning environment and will work on a related curriculum. Likewise, students suspended from riding the school bus may be ineligible to participate in field trips if Marion County School District provides transportation for these trips.

Field trip fees must be submitted by the deadline. Each child must have a completed permission form before leaving. Children may not call home for permission slips or forgotten items.

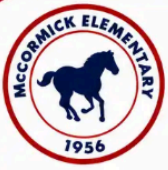
No refunds will be issued for students who become ineligible (i.e., discipline) to attend or cannot attend a field trip due to family illness or family emergencies.

We must have a current phone number for all children attending a field trip.

All children are asked to wear their school uniforms on all field trips for safety and accountability.

SCHOOL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

At McCormick Elementary, we expect every student to be E.P.I.C. Every Day! E.P.I.C. students are Educated, Prepared, Inspired, and responsible Citizens who make positive choices throughout the school day. Our Schoolwide E.P.I.C. Expectations Matrix shows what these expectations look like in the classroom, hallway, cafeteria, restroom, playground, bus, assemblies, and other school settings. Students are expected to learn, practice, and demonstrate these behaviors consistently so that McCormick Elementary remains a safe, respectful, and positive place for everyone to learn and grow.



McCORMICK ELEMENTARY

WHAT DOES E.P.I.C. MEAN?

At McCormick Elementary, we choose to
Be **E.P.I.C.** Every Day!

E

EDUCATED



I am ready to learn.

P

PREPARED



I have what I need.

I

INSPIRED



I encourage others.

C

CITIZENS



I take care of our classroom.

—★ Be **E.P.I.C.** Every Day ★—

<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div> <h2>McCORMICK ELEMENTARY</h2> <h3>Schoolwide Expectations Matrix</h3> </div>  </div>				
AREA	EDUCATED	PREPARED	INSPIRED	CITIZENS
 CLASSROOM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eyes on speaker Raise your hand Stay focused Listen and follow directions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have materials ready Chromebook charged Complete your work Be ready to learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help others Do your best Have a positive attitude Encourage classmates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect others Keep hands and feet to yourself Care for our classroom Take responsibility
 HALLWAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk on the right side Look forward Be aware of surroundings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands to yourself Be ready for the weather Arrive on time to class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage others Model respectful behavior Keep moving forward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect personal space Keep the hallway clean Follow school rules
 BUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sit in your seat Face forward Listen to the driver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep backpack on your lap Keep the aisle clear Be ready at your stop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include others Be kind Use positive behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands to yourself Keep the bus clean Follow driver directions
 RESTROOM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use quickly and quietly Wash your hands Keep it clean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go when needed Return to class promptly Use time wisely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect privacy Keep it clean Set a good example 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect your area Keep hands to yourself Follow adult directions
 PLAYGROUND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know the rules Listen for directions Be aware and safe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear appropriate shoes Dress for the weather Bring what you need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include others Try your best Be a good teammate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play fair Take care of equipment Report unsafe behavior
 CAFETERIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay seated Raise your hand for help Wait your turn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know your lunch number Carry your tray with two hands Get all items then sit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include others Be kind Use good manners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect your area Keep hands to yourself Follow adult directions
 ASSEMBLIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eyes on the speaker Stay seated Listen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent our school Keep area clean Follow adult directions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show school pride Cheer for others Respect performers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent our school Keep area clean Follow adult directions
<h2>★ BE E.P.I.C. EVERY DAY ★</h2>				

CELEBRATING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

Celebrations reward students for appropriate behavior. Students earn these incentives by meeting PBIS criteria and not receiving office referrals.

School rules are taught and practiced during the 1st week of school, constantly reinforced during the school year, and posted in our hallways as visual reminders for our children. Please review these expectations with your child.

- Respect adults and peers
- Respect personal space
- Allow privacy
- Clean up after yourself
- Stay on task
- Wash your hands
- Bring only the materials you need for school. Leave toys and other items at home that would distract you from your work.
- Walk in the classrooms, hallways, and sidewalks.
- Speak politely. Maintain an appropriate voice level at all times.

When a student refuses to follow school rules or cooperate with the teacher, disciplinary actions may include the following:

Classroom Actions

- Verbal warnings
- Loss of privileges
- Opportunity for a break
- Time out
- Notes home
- Parent contact/Conferences
- Office referrals**

Administrative Actions

- Student conferences
- Guidance referrals
- Parent conferences
- Suspension
- Mediation

**In all cases of office referrals, a written report of the student's misconduct is submitted by the teacher to the assistant principal/principal. School administration

will follow the MCSD 2026-27 Code of Conduct (found online at <https://www.marion.k12.sc.us/our-district/mcsd-code-of-student-conduct>). A copy of the school report is sent home with the student for parents to review, sign, and return to school the following day. Parents will also be contacted by phone.

Bullying

Bullying will not be tolerated at McCormick. We take reports of bullying very seriously. Children are encouraged to report bullying incidents to staff members. Records of all reported incidents are kept on file by our guidance counselor.

DRESS CODE

McCormick Elementary School Uniform Policy

Shirts: Long- or short-sleeve style polo shirts will be worn. Color is based on grade level.

3rd grade: Black

4th grade: Red

5th grade: Royal Blue

T-shirts (long or short sleeve) worn under the polo must be white or the color of the polo shirt.

Pants/Capris: Solid khaki color or Solid Black

Skirts/dresses/shorts/skorts: Solid khaki color or black and no shorter than 4 inches above the knee. If leggings/tights are worn, they must be the color of the polo shirt, black, or white. They may not be worn as pants.

Belts: Belts must be worn within the belt loops if clothing items were manufactured with belt loops.

Shoes/footwear: Closed-toe shoes with heels 1 inch or less must be worn. Shoe strings must be tied; straps must be around the back of the heel. No bedroom shoes. No shoes with wheels.

Headwear: Hair bows and ribbons are acceptable headwear for girls. No hats—including hoods—may be worn inside the building; sweatbands, bandanas, picks, do-rags, or sunglasses may not be worn. Picks with metal prongs are not allowed.

Jackets/hoodies: We prefer jackets or hoodies worn inside the building to match the polo shirt color when worn in common areas.

ALL students are expected to wear uniforms when on school campus.

STUDENT CELL PHONE USE

We understand the need some students have for cell phones after school. Cell phones are not needed during the school day, and if they are seen or heard, they will be taken and must be picked up by a parent. Photos, videos, and messaging during school hours are not permitted and violate the district technology agreement.

TOYS AND ELECTRONICS

Collector's cards (i.e., sports, Pokémon), video games, iPods/MP3 players, and other toy-like items are prohibited at school or on the school bus. These items will be confiscated and returned when a parent comes to claim the item.

CONTACT WITH TEACHERS

Building a positive relationship with your child's teacher is important.

Communication is key! You may contact teachers by sending a note, email, or calling the school office. Please remember to call before or after school hours to protect instructional time. Please allow 24 hours for faculty/staff to respond.

STUDENT INTERIMS & REPORT CARDS

Interim reports will be issued at the midpoint of each nine weeks via email. Interim conferences will also be scheduled during this time, where parents/students can discuss student progress. Report cards will be sent home quarterly via email. Notify the teacher or school office if you do not receive a report.

PROMOTION/RETENTION POLICY

Students must achieve passing grades and demonstrate mastery of grade-appropriate S.C. State Standards to be promoted to the next grade. The following shall be considered when determining promotion/retention:

- available standardized or criterion-referenced test results
- documented progress on the academic assistance plan
- teacher judgment
- grades, work samples, parent input
- Grade 3: State Read to Succeed guidelines

Parents will be invited to conferences frequently throughout the school year. Retention will be discussed at one or more of these conferences. A letter from the teacher and principal will notify the parent of retention and the appeals process.

The MTSS team will determine if alternatives to the promotion/retention policy are required for each student with a disability. The alternatives will be described in the Individual Education Program (IEP).

GRADING SCALE

Marion County School District

Grading Scale A-F

100 – 90 A

89 – 80 B

79 – 70 C

69 – 60 D

59 – 0 F

WF

GRADING POLICY

Late Work

- All assigned work must be completed. It will be accepted with no penalty for up to a full week.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please provide current contact information. We must have a working telephone number to reach a parent or guardian in case of an emergency. Please remember to update student records when phone numbers or addresses change.

TEXTBOOKS/WORKBOOKS/TECHNOLOGY

As part of the educational program, students are provided the textbooks and workbooks needed for their grade level. All students will be issued a laptop. Students are expected to use all books and technology carefully to minimize wear. If textbooks, workbooks, or laptops are lost or damaged, an assessment fee will be charged. Separate technology guidelines and permission forms will be sent home.

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

Please advise the teacher in writing if your child's regular transportation home changes. Do not email teachers; they do not always check their email throughout the day as they are busy teaching. Call the school if you need to change your child's transportation after the school day begins. If no notification is received, your child will follow his/her regular transportation method.

VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS/PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

You are encouraged to visit our school for observations, conferences, or as a volunteer. As a visitor, you must inform our office personnel of your presence on campus. Visitors must wear a visitor's badge at all times during their visit. Visitors are not permitted on our playgrounds during the school day. Parents and friends are welcome to attend all school functions and programs noted on the school calendar.

Please make an appointment to confer with teachers and administrators. We cannot permit parents or visitors to interrupt class to speak to the teacher or drop off items. Every minute is valuable learning time!

We invite parents and community residents to support our instructional programs by volunteering their time in classrooms, the media center, and the office. All visitors must sign in at the front office and receive a visitor or volunteer badge.

SCHOOL LUNCH AND BREAKFAST PROGRAM

The McCormick Elementary cafeteria provides nourishing and well-balanced meals for students, visitors, and staff. While students are encouraged to eat the school lunch provided, they may also bring lunches from home. Glass containers, candy, and sodas are discouraged. Microwaves are not available for student use.

Breakfast is served in the cafeteria from 7:00 to 7:30 each morning.

CELEBRATIONS (BIRTHDAYS OR HOLIDAYS)

All food items for any celebration must be STORE-BOUGHT due to the increasing number of students with food allergies. Please do not send party invitations to the school for birthdays for distribution. Please contact your child's teacher if you plan to bring treats. Birthday parties cannot take place during the school day.

HEALTH ROOM SERVICES

McCormick Elementary has a Registered Nurse assigned to the school. She coordinates the school health program and liaises between school personnel, community organizations, and medical resources. We have a well-equipped Health Room staffed by the school nurse. The Health Room is set up to assist students with minor first aid and minor illnesses. The nurse reports students' illnesses to parents and follows the school district policies and the DHEC exclusion policies for South Carolina schools and daycares regarding whether a student should go home due to illness or injury. Students with a temperature of 100° or above will be sent home. Before returning to school, all students must be fever-free for 24 hours without Tylenol, Motrin, etc. In addition, any student who is vomiting will be sent home.

For student safety, we must have your current address, phone number(s), and another emergency number on file. The health room is also where any medication that needs to be taken during the school day is stored. The school nurse/health room assistant is trained to assist students with medication during the school day in accordance with the school district's policy for assisting students with medications.

A parent/guardian must complete the school district medication permission form, and the physician's signature is required for all medications taken to school. This includes all medications (over-the-counter and prescription). All medications (prescription and over-the-counter, including cough drops/lozenges) must be in the original pharmacy-labeled container and must be brought in by an adult. Please do not send any medication with students. The parent/guardian must be responsible for informing school personnel of any changes in the medication routine or the student's health status.

TRANSPORTATION

- CAR RIDERS

- ARRIVAL PROCEDURES - All students must come through the car rider line. When exiting the car, students must exit from the right side of the vehicle closest to the school building. The front parking lot will not be used for arrival before 7:40 am.
- DISMISSAL PROCEDURES - All parents must remain in their car during afternoon dismissal. The parking lot will not be used for pick-up. Failure to follow this procedure could result in being placed on school trespass. Students will only be loaded on the right side of the car. ALL CARS MUST HAVE A CAR SIGN visible in the front window with the names of all children being picked up. Cars without signs will be directed to the front parking lot so an adult can enter the front office to sign out their child(ren).

- BUS

- School bus transportation is a privilege that may be withdrawn for inappropriate behavior. We have excellent drivers who work with students before a referral is made to the school's administration for assistance. If discipline problems occur on the bus, the driver will complete a disciplinary report and submit it to the school for appropriate action in accordance with the Marion County School Bus Discipline Code. A copy of the school bus referral will be sent to the parents via the student or mail, and/or the parents may be phoned regarding the incident. If the problem persists, students may be suspended from riding a bus. If your child is suspended from the school bus, you must send a change-of-transportation note indicating how your child will go home and with whom.
- Rules for Safe Bus Riding
 1. PBIS/School rules are enforced on the bus.
 2. Board the bus in an orderly manner and remain seated. If seats are assigned, sit in your assigned seat.
 3. Remain seated while the bus is in motion.
 4. Keep arms, hands, feet, and other body parts inside the bus and to yourself.
 5. Do not throw things on the bus or from a bus window. Keep the bus clean and sanitary.

6. Keep books, packages, coats, and other objects in your lap and free from the aisle.
7. Be on time at your designated bus stop. Buses cannot wait for children.
8. Do not bring onto the bus large objects (i.e., science fair projects) or any other items prohibited by district policy.

(Please note this is a guide, and information is subject to change.)