

Sugar Hill Elementary

Learn ■ Lead ■ Succeed

Greetings Sugar Hill families!

The purpose of this parent/student handbook is to provide the Sugar Hill school community with our school policies and procedures. Please refer to this throughout the school year to use as a quick reference.

The Gwinnett County Board of Education and the Sugar Hill staff recognize that a child's education is a responsibility shared by the family and the school. To effectively educate students, parents and staff members must work as knowledgeable partners. Parent/family involvement is an ongoing process that assists parents and families in their responsibilities as their child's first teacher and promotes clear, two-way communication between home and school.

In addition to this local school handbook, you will also receive a Gwinnett County Public School (GCPS) Student/Parent Handbook which contains additional information. I look forward to an exciting year of learning!

Respectfully yours,

Chris Godfrey
Principal

Gwinnett County Public Schools

Mission, Vision, Goals and Core Beliefs

Mission Statement

The mission of the Gwinnett County Public Schools is to pursue excellence in academic knowledge, skills, and behavior for each student, resulting in measured improvement against local, national, and world-class standards.

Vision Statement

Gwinnett County Public Schools will be a system of world-class schools where students acquire the knowledge and skills to be successful as they continue their education at the postsecondary and/or enter the workforce.

Board Goals

Gwinnett County Public Schools will ensure a world-class education for all students by focusing on teaching and learning the Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) curriculum.

Gwinnett County Public Schools will ensure a safe, secure, and orderly environment for all.

Gwinnett County Public Schools will optimize student achievement through responsible stewardship of its financial resources and the proactive pursuit of all resources necessary to meet current and future demands.

Gwinnett County Public Schools will recruit, employ, develop, and retain a workforce that achieves the mission and goals of the organization.

Gwinnett County Public Schools will meet the continuing and changing demand for essential information through technological systems and processes that support effective performance and desired results.

Gwinnett County Public Schools will provide and manage the system's facilities and operations in an exemplary manner as determined by programmatic needs and best management practices.

Gwinnett County Public Schools will apply continuous quality improvement strategies and principles as the way the organization does business.

Core Beliefs

- Our core business is teaching and learning.
- All children can learn at or above grade level.
- All children should reach their learning potential.
- The school effect is important and has a profound impact on every child's life.
- A quality instructional program requires a rigorous curriculum, effective teaching, and ongoing assessment.
- All children should be taught in a safe and secure learning environment.

Part 1: General School Information

School Hours

Our school hours are 7:45 AM – 2:45 PM. Students may enter the building between 7:45 – 8:15 AM. To optimize instructional time, our bell system will be as follows:

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|---------|---|
| 7:45 AM | Students may enter the building and go to class |
| 8:05 AM | Morning news program |
| 8:15 AM | Tardy bell rings/School begins |
| 2:40 PM | Students prepare to leave |
| 2:45 PM | Walker/car rider dismissal Bus dismissal |

Arrival/Dismissal

Students are expected to be at school on time. Children who are driven to school should not arrive before 7:45 AM. This is for student safety. There is no one on duty to supervise students prior to this time. Staff members are involved in planning, conferencing, and meetings prior to 7:45 AM.

Our morning news program begins at 8:05 AM. Attendance is taken at 8:15 AM. Students will be marked tardy if they arrive in their classrooms after 8:15 AM. Students may not be dropped off at the building after 8:10 AM. A parent must accompany their child to the front office to sign in and write a note to the teacher explaining the tardiness.

Car Riders

The following car rider guidelines have been established to provide the highest level of safety for our students:

Morning Car Rider Procedures

- Students may enter the school beginning at 7:45 AM. School begins at 8:15 AM.
- Remember – morning announcements go on the air at 8:05 AM.
- Staff members will be present to help students enter the school each morning. Car drivers should remain in their vehicle and refrain from using their cell phone during drop off.

Afternoon Car Rider Procedures

- Cars need a tag number to pick up a student in the afternoon. If you know your child will be a car rider for various after school activities during the school year, please secure a car rider tag. Car rider tags are available in the front office.
- Hang your car rider number from the rear view mirror where it is easily visible.
- Please be courteous and understand the school buses have the right of way.
- Advance forward slowly as you approach the pick-up area where students are entering cars, and pull all the way up in the driveway so several cars can be loaded/unloaded at the same time.
- Please stay in line with the other cars and do not talk on your cell phone while cars are moving. Please do not try to go around the other cars.

- Staff members on duty will signal you to unload your vehicle in the morning and to load your vehicle in the afternoon. Children must load and unload from the passenger side of the vehicle only.
- No child standing in the car rider lane will be released to anyone who walks up to the line and asks for his/her child(ren).
- If a parent is late picking up their child, the child will be taken to the front office where the parent can pick up the child upon arrival.

Please be aware that cars without numbers will be asked to leave the car rider line and go to the front office to check out the student.

If a note has been written to request that a student be a car rider and no tag number is on the vehicle picking up the student, a staff member will ask to see the driver's I.D. to make sure the driver is the person listed in the note.

Please note: If a student is dropped off in the car rider lane after 8:10 AM, he or she likely will not be able to arrive in his/her classroom prior to the 8:15 AM bell. The best suggestion to avoid tardiness is to allow students to ride the school bus.

A special note: On rainy days, our car riders increase in number – please plan to arrive earlier than your usual time.

School Spirit

Mascot – Longhorn

Colors – Orange, white, black

We encourage everyone to wear spirit wear and/or school colors every Friday!

Visitation Policy

We welcome parents to our school, however, teachers have many responsibilities during the day, so if you would like to meet with your child's teacher, please make an appointment. Upon arriving at school, please sign in at the front office to receive a visitor's badge. Please sign out upon leaving as well.

If you would like to visit your student's classroom, please contact your child's teacher in advance. Again, please sign in at the front office and sign out upon leaving. We ask that while you are here, you only visit your student's classroom(s) and only on the day(s) and time(s) arranged prior to your visit.

Attendance

Attendance at school is an important part of student success and achievement. A pattern of absences may put a student at risk of not achieving the Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) for his/her grade level. Certain absences are considered to be excused according to state guidelines. **Excused** absences include:

- Personal illness or attendance in school endangering a student's health or the health of others
- A serious illness or death in the student's immediate family requiring absence from school
- A court order or an order by a governmental agency mandating absence from school
- Observation of religious holidays, necessitating absence from school
- Conditions making attendance impossible or hazardous to the students' health or safety
- A student, whose parent or legal guardian is in military service of the United States or the National Guard, and such parent or legal guardian has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted excused

absences, up to a maximum of five school days per year, for the day or days missed from school to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian prior to deployment or while on leave

Vacations are **NOT** excused absences. Students who are away from school for ten consecutive days (unexcused) will be withdrawn from school. Upon return, parents can re-enroll students, but placement in the previous classroom cannot be guaranteed.

A state truancy law (O.C.G Section 20-2-690.2) defines truant as “any child subject to compulsory school attendance who during the school calendar year has more than 5 days of unexcused absences.”

Please remember that you **must** send a note to the teacher stating the reason for your child’s absences when he/she returns to school. Should the reason be one noted above, your child’s absence will be marked “excused.”

Important – Student attendance is one factor that determines Sugar Hill’s Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under the *No Child Left Behind* legislation. Gwinnett County School System has a strict attendance protocol which will be followed in situations in which students have high absentee rates.

To be counted present for the whole school day, students who have doctor/dental appointments or emergencies that necessitate their absence for a portion of the school day, must be present for at least the equivalent of half the school day which is 3 ¼ hours.

Changes in Student Information

In order to keep our records current, please notify the office immediately of a change in any of the following:

- Address
- Telephone number
- Employer and phone number of each parent
- Change of guardianship
- Person to call in case of emergency or when the parent cannot be reached
- Medical information

Changes in Student Transportation

It is helpful to students to have consistent transportation plans. It can be very confusing for students as well as teachers to alternate between day care, parent pick-up, and buses. Additionally, accepting changes by telephone does not allow us to provide maximum safety measures for our students. Therefore, should there be a need to change transportation, a written note to the teacher from the child's parent or guardian (with a phone number) indicating the change in his/her transportation home is required on the morning of the change. Students who must ride a different bus in the afternoon, will bring their bus note to the office to obtain a bus pass that will allow them to ride home on a different bus. Bus drivers will not transport students who do not have a bus pass signed by a school representative. In the absence of a note from the parent, the child will be placed on his/her usual mode of transportation.

Note: Please make sure your child knows if there is a change in plans. Changes in transportation, of any kind, will NOT be accepted via email or phone. In an extreme emergency, after talking with a member of the office staff or an administrator, a parent or guardian can FAX a note, along with a copy of his/her license to the office prior to 2:00 PM.

Early Check-Out of Students

If early checkout is necessary, the parent should plan to do so prior to 2:15 PM. This is necessary in order to provide a safe and timely dismissal for all students. A parent wishing to check out his or her child any time prior to 2:15 PM should send a note to the teacher that morning explaining the reason. The parent should then come to the front office to sign out the student. It usually takes 5-10 minutes for a student to arrive after they are called for checkout. If the student is on the playground or in a “special”, it may take a little longer. Please plan accordingly.

For safety reasons, we release students **only** to those persons listed on the student’s card. If anyone not listed attempts to check out a student, the office staff and/or an administrator will verify the person’s I.D. The parent will be contacted at this point (This will take additional time). Anyone picking up a student should be prepared to show photo identification. Students are released only from the front office and only to parents or adults designated by parents. Please do not go to the classroom to check out a student. Teachers are instructed not to release a student to anyone unless the office staff has notified them to do so.

Visitor Check-In

For the safety of our students and staff, **ALL** visitors who enter Sugar Hill Elementary must register in the front office. Visitors must wear a visitor sticker at all times while on school property. Staff members have been instructed to monitor our visitors and to send those without a badge or sticker to the front

office. Visitors will not be allowed in the classrooms without a prearranged appointment. When leaving the school, visitors should return to the front office and check out. We encourage parents to visit the school, but the safety of students and staff is our first priority.

Classroom Visits

As a courtesy to your child's teacher and to protect instructional time, we ask that an appointment be made for visitation and/or conferences. If you need to meet with a teacher, please schedule a time by contacting the teacher directly. Though it may seem convenient or quick to stop by the room before, during or after the school day, our teachers must supervise students at all times.

Please allow your young child to become an independent and responsible student. To do this, we ask that you do not go into the classroom with your child in the mornings or afternoons to help him/her with book bags, etc.

Inclement Weather

If overnight weather conditions make it necessary to cancel school, the announcement will be made by 6:00 AM on WSB Radio (750 AM. 98.5 FM) or Channel 2 News on TV. If no cancellation is announced, school is in session.

Sometimes severe weather moves in during the day. Listen to WSB Radio for early dismissal information. An announcement will always be made before any schools are dismissed early. Please do not call the school as we need to keep phone lines open.

Parents are asked to complete an inclement weather form informing the school of the student's plan in case of an unexpected school closing. It is important to make a family plan and discuss the plan with the student.

New Student Placement

New students who meet eligibility guidelines and attended an accredited school will be placed in the appropriate grade that was recommended by the sending school. Placement for students moving from non-accredited schools will be handled on an individual basis.

School Contributions

The following contributions enable students to receive materials and programs that are not covered by your tax dollars. Below is an explanation of the various items included in our contribution form.

School Contribution: \$10.00 per child – This contribution is used to purchase consumable supplies such as construction paper, paint, etc. to support the curriculum.

Technology: \$10.00 per family (\$25.00 maximum per family) – This contribution is used to purchase ink cartridges, toner, paper and supplies for our computers.

Clinic: \$10.00 per child (\$10.00 maximum per family) – This contribution defrays the cost of the clinic.

School Entrance Requirements

Students entering kindergarten must be age five on or before September 1, and Grade One students must be age six on or before September 1. All students entering Kindergarten or Grade 1 must present:

1. A copy of the birth certificate
2. An official Georgia Department of Human Resources Certificate of Immunization
3. A Georgia Vision, Hearing and Dental Certificate
4. Proof of residency in the district*
5. Student's Social Security number (a waiver can also be signed if a parent is uncomfortable providing the Social Security number).

** Proof of residency requires one utility bill (only gas, water, or electric) and one of the following documents: non-contingent sales contract, current warranty or quick claim deed, current lease/rental agreement, current home purchase statement, most recent income tax return, current homeowner's insurance policy, current paycheck stub, current residential property tax statement or bill, and current Medicaid card.*

All students in second – fifth grades must have items 2-5 in the above list in order to enroll.

Approved residence for school attendance purposes occurs when the student lives with the following person(s) who reside within the county school district and Sugar Hill attendance zone:

- Parent (natural or adopted)

- Legal guardian or other person legally entitled to act on behalf of the student
- Foster parents appointed by a state agency
- Sponsor for approved International Exchange programs

When residing with other individuals in their home or apartment, the parent must submit a notarized affidavit, signed by the individual with whom the student/guardian is residing, verifying that the enrolling parent/guardian is residing in that home or apartment. The individual with whom the student/guardian is residing must also provide proof of residency documentation and a photo ID.

Second-fifth grade students transferring from another Georgia elementary school or from out of state will be given a thirty (30) day extension to obtain records from a previous school.

Parents must notify the school immediately in case of any change in residency. If a family moves out of the Sugar Hill attendance district after the school year begins, but remains within Gwinnett County, the student(s) may be able to complete the school year at Sugar Hill if:

- The student receives a permissive transfer
- The parent provides transportation
- The student exhibits good behavior
- The student is punctual for arrival and dismissal

Student Records

Under the Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, parents have certain rights:

- The right to inspect and review educational records of their child
- The right to challenge the content of those records
- The right to control the release of education records of their student
- The right to complain to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Office about the school's failure to comply with the law
- The right to be informed of these rights just listed

To obtain a copy of Gwinnett County's policies of compliance with the law, or to request the opportunity to inspect and review your child's records, contact an administrator at Sugar Hill.

Copies of a student's educational record may be transferred to officials of other schools or school systems in which a student seeks to enroll. Unless parents express, at the time of enrollment in Gwinnett County Public Schools, a need for additional notice of the transfer of student records, the records will be transferred to the enrolling school or school system without further notice.

Visiting for Lunch

Parents are welcome to join their children for lunch. We do ask that parents to refrain from eating with their child during the first and last weeks of school.

After signing in and securing a visitor badge in the front lobby, parents should meet their child at the entrance to the cafeteria. Please allow your child to follow his/her normal routine in the cafeteria line and when leaving the cafeteria (parents should not escort students back to the classroom; students must leave the cafeteria when their class leaves). Due to limited space, students may not bring friends to join them at the parent table. Parents must stop by the front desk in the lobby to sign out before leaving.

Per state law, foods purchased from an outside source such as a restaurant, deli, or fast food establishment are not permitted in the cafeteria. Soft drinks are also not permitted.

Withdrawal Information

Please notify the teacher at least one week before your child is to be withdrawn from school. A Record of Pupil Withdrawal form will be sent home on the last day of attendance and this form should be given to the new school upon enrollment. Upon receiving the signed release of records from the transferring school, the student's records will be mailed to the new school.

Part II: General School Policies and Procedures

Birthdays

While birthdays are very special occasions and are recognized, birthday parties are not permitted at school. Parents may send in birthday snacks, but please do not send in drinks, balloons, or favors. Teachers appreciate being notified in advance if you are planning to send in a birthday snack. Do not send in snacks that require cutting. If you would like to purchase ice cream for your child's class as a birthday treat, you may do so for \$.50 per student. Please make checks payable to *Sugar Hill Elementary School*.

Due to student confidentiality, we are unable to provide a list of addresses and/or phone numbers of students. We do not distribute birthday invitations at school unless everyone in the class (or everyone of the same gender) is receiving one.

Please let the teacher know if:

- Your child has a food allergy
- You prefer that your child **not** be given occasional treats, candy or birthday snacks.

Bringing Food/Drink to School

Students may bring a nutritious snack to school. They may not, however, bring food from “fast food” restaurants for snack or lunch. This includes carbonated soft drinks.

Cafeteria

We are proud of our self-service breakfast and lunch program. This procedure gives students an opportunity to choose foods they like as well as try new ones. Parents are always welcome to have lunch with their children.

Please remember-no “fast foods” or carbonated beverages in the cafeteria!

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|-----------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| Breakfast | Full breakfast | \$1.25 |
| | Side item | \$.40 |
| | Juice 4 oz. | \$.40 |
| Lunch | Student lunch | \$2.00 |
| | Extra entrée | \$1.75 |
| | Adult lunch | \$3.00 |
| | Milk | \$.40 |
| | Iced tea (adults) | \$.35 |
| | Water | \$.40 (small) and \$.60 (large) |

Breakfast – Served between 7:45 AM – 8:10 AM. Students are not allowed to be in the cafeteria during the breakfast time unless they are eating breakfast.

If your child is allergic to certain foods or has special dietary requirements, please notify your child's teacher and our cafeteria manager, Heather Miller.

Breakfast and Lunch payment- Students may pay cash on a daily basis prepay their lunches, or parents may set up an account on-line at www.mealpay.com. This is the preferred option as it eliminates the child bringing money or checks to school. You can also request an automated email when your child's account is about to run out of money.

The cost is:

\$10.00 – one week

\$20.00 – two weeks

\$30.00– three weeks

\$40.00 – four weeks

Please make checks payable to *Sugar Hill Elementary School*. Students will learn their student ID number to use when paying for meals.

Students who forget their lunch or money may charge their lunch. **This privilege is limited to two charges.** Parents will be notified of the charge, and payment is expected the following day. After charging lunch two times, students will be provided with a milk and peanut butter and jelly sandwich for lunch.

Free/reduced meal applications are available for students meeting state financial guidelines. Applications may be picked up from the front office or from the cafeteria on Open House/Registration Day.

Cell Phones

Students are discouraged from bringing cell phones to school. If it is necessary for a student to bring a phone to school, it must be turned off and remain in his/her backpack while on school property and on the bus. Please notify the teacher if your student is to have a cellphone at school.

Clinic

Our clinic worker is Jan Hill. The clinic is available to students who get hurt at school or feel ill during the day. The clinic is funded by parent donations and local school funds. If a child becomes sick during the school day, the clinic worker will attempt to reach the child's parents. If unsuccessful, the other persons listed on the student information sheet will be contacted. It is imperative that we be able to reach a parent/guardian at all times.

The clinic worker will call parents if a student is vomiting, has a fever in excess of 99 degrees, has been injured, or has head lice. In case of serious medical emergencies, paramedics will be called. Students in any of these situations cannot be sent home by bus. **Students may not return to school until they are fever free for 24 hours.**

The clinic worker dispenses all medications. No medication, including aspirin or Tylenol, can be given unless it is sent in the original container with written instructions from the parent. All medications must be sent to the clinic in the morning. Children are not to have medications in their possession during the school day, including cough drops. For medications given on a long-term basis, a special form must be signed by the child's physician and filed with the clinic worker. The clinic phone number is 770-271-5051.

Emergency Procedures

Fire, tornado and disaster drills are held throughout the school year. While no such events are expected, we want students and staff to be familiar with all appropriate safety plans.

If it is necessary for students to be picked up due to an emergency, parents should enter through the main doors to the school only. Your identification will be verified and school personnel will be responsible for summoning the student. It is imperative that the student data verification form has up-to-date information with at least one other person who is responsible if you cannot be reached.

Field Trips

We make every effort to bring individuals and groups to our school in order to minimize/eliminate cost and travel time for students. Occasionally, we may offer an opportunity for an off-campus field trip which requires a request for funds from parents for admission and transportation. No student will be denied or penalized for failure to contribute. However, if enough funds are not secured, the field trip will be cancelled.

Ice Cream

Sugar Hill Elementary will sell ice cream daily in the cafeteria for \$1.00. You will be able to preview the selections and the nutritional information on the school website. Parents and teachers may purchase ice cream for their child's class (for special occasions) at a discount of \$.50 per ice cream.

Internet User Agreement

Students are responsible for good behavior on the school computer networks. Access to network services is given to students who agree to act in a considerate

and responsible manner. Any member of the staff may suspend specific user access. Use of the Internet must support education and be consistent with the academic expectations of Sugar Hill Elementary School. Students will access approved “safe” sites only.

Lost & Found

Items found in hallways, playground, cafeteria or restrooms will be taken to the Lost & Found. **Unclaimed articles will be donated to charity every nine weeks.** Please write your child’s name on all personal property for easy identification.

Messages to Students

Only messages of emergency nature can be delivered to students. Please remember that our purpose is to provide an excellent learning environment, free from interruptions. Use of the telephone by students is permitted only in emergency situations.

Newsletters/School Menus

You will be able to access the school newsletter and calendar from our school website. Our newsletter will keep you informed of school events and other information you may need for the upcoming month. Additionally, each month you will be able to access a menu noting the meals planned. We will provide hard copies to households that do not have internet capability. Please let your classroom teacher if you need a paper copy of these items.

School Pictures

Individual school pictures are taken in the early part of the school year. Group pictures will be taken in the spring. These are offered as an option for purchase to students and parents.

School Celebrations

The Gwinnett County Board of Education permits two school parties per school year. Sugar Hill Elementary hosts a winter and a spring party for each class. PTA Room Representatives help classroom teachers plan these events. Individual classroom celebrations that occur as part of the Academic Knowledge and Skills are at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

The Board of Education does not allow any parties for personal reasons, such as baby/wedding showers or surprise birthday parties for teachers. These events may be planned outside the school day.

School Communications

Friday folders are sent home by each classroom teacher to provide timely information regarding classroom progress and conduct. Formal parent conferences are scheduled two times during the year. The Parent Portal is available for parents to view their child's grades online. To sign up for the parent Portal, please fill out an application located in the front office.

If you would like to speak with a teacher regarding your child's progress, please email the teacher directly, or call the school and leave a message for the teacher to call you back. Phone calls will be received by our office staff between 7:30 AM and 4:00 PM. Messages will be taken for teachers to return calls. We do not

interrupt teachers during instructional time. Teachers make every effort to return phone messages within 24 hours of receipt. We encourage parents to write a note or send an email (if the teacher has given his/her email address) as other means of communication. Please be aware, however, that teachers respond to notes and emails outside instructional time.

School Dress

Students are expected to dress appropriately, suitable to weather conditions, and in good taste. Since students are involved in some type of movement everyday (recess and/or PE), we recommend that all students wear tennis shoes or other closed-toe shoes. Flip-flops, sandals and platform heels are extremely dangerous. Please be aware that “Heeleys” damage our floors and are not permitted.

Clothing and hair styles which are not appropriate include:

- Halter tops, tube tops, tank tops, “spaghetti” straps
- Clothing with offensive language and/or language that promotes drug/alcohol use
- Long baggy shorts/pants which drag the floor or are lower than the waist
- Short-shorts above the mid thigh
- Shorts with imprinted words or phrases on the seat
- Tops that expose the midriff area
- Change of hair color (bright blue, green, yellow, orange, etc. Head coverings can only be worn inside the building on announced special days or for medical/religious reasons

When a student’s appearance is believed to be a distraction to learning, a teacher or administrator will contact the parent so appropriate changes can be made.

Students are encouraged to wear school spirit wear every Friday. Spirit wear can be purchased from the PTA on Registration Day or by contacting a member of our office staff.

Textbooks

The school district provides textbooks for all students. Textbooks are scanned out to individual students and every student is obligated to take good care of the materials in his/her care. Any textbooks/learning materials must be paid for if lost or damaged. Online versions of textbooks are available on our school website.

Toys and Electronics

In order to provide the best learning environment for students, please do not allow your child to bring the following items on the bus or to school. Additionally, students may not buy or trade items at school:

- Toys (including toy or water guns or a knife of any kind)
- Electronic devices/toys (ie MP3 players, gaming devices, etc.)
- Items that make distracting noises

Part III: Student Academic Information

Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS)

The Gwinnett County Public Schools Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) are the adopted curriculum. The AKS represent the standards for academic excellence for all students in our school system. Parents will receive an AKS

booklet for their child's grade level at the beginning of the school year. This allows parents to know what their child is expected to learn.

Curriculum and instruction are designed for mastery of the AKS for all students. Each teacher has his/her own teaching style and each student has his/her own learning style. Teachers will use AKS resources, national standards, textbooks, trade books, and other educational materials as resources for instruction.

Academic Contracts

Anytime a student is not achieving his/her AKS curriculum goals, an academic contract may be written between the teacher, student and parent. Academic contracts target the student's weakness(es) in the AKS, and list interventions to be done at school and home to help the student succeed. Progress is noted on the academic contract throughout the year and shared at parent-teacher conferences.

Counseling

The goal of school counseling is to remove barriers to student learning. The school counselors serve as a resource for all students and staff. The counselors offer support for new students, assist students who are affected by grief, anxiety and peer issues. They also work with all students on study skills, homework completion and test taking skills. Parent education is an additional component of their program. The counselors work with students through classroom guidance lessons. With parent permission, our counselors also work with students individually and in small groups. Our school counselors are Kathy Bond and Erik Schmitt.

Gifted Education Program

Students who meet state guidelines are served through our school's gifted education program (FOCUS) in an interdisciplinary approach. Referrals to the gifted program may come from teachers, parents, administrators or as a result of system-wide testing. A student may be referred once during Grades K-2, once in Grades 3-5, once in middle school and once during high school. The evaluation includes the student's mental aptitude, achievement, creativity and motivation.

Private evaluation and testing may not be substituted for test data generated by the local school. Sugar Hills's gifted eligibility team reviews referrals at the beginning, middle and end of each school year to determine which students qualify for the program.

Grading

Kindergarten: The Kindergarten Progress Report is designed to assist teachers in evaluating the on-going growth and development of their students, as defined by the AKS. Each indicator on the Progress Report is marked at the appropriate level of progress. Indicators are signals of development as well as the level of progress toward specific objectives. The major purpose of the reporting instrument is to inform parents about the growth, development and academic progress of their child every nine weeks as defined by the AKS.

E - Excellent

S – Satisfactory Progress

N – Needs to Improve

U – Unsatisfactory Progress

First Grade: First graders are assessed on progress toward the AKS by the following scale:

E - Surpasses Standards

- S - Satisfactory
- N - Needs Improvement
- U - Unsatisfactory

Grades 2 – 5: The grade mark is a report of the individual student’s progress to his/her parents, and to others who are concerned with the student’s progress in education. The following scale is used:

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|------------------|-------------------------|
| A = 90 and above | Excellent Progress |
| B = 80 – 89 | Above Average Progress |
| C = 74 – 79 | Average Progress |
| D = 70 – 73 | Below Average Progress |
| U = Below 70 | Unsatisfactory Progress |

When reporting progress (positive attitude, participation, completion of tasks) for special areas such as art, music, physical education, Math Enrichment, Technology, Media, the following scale is used:

- E = Excellent Progress
- S = Satisfactory
- N = Needs to Improve
- U = Unsatisfactory

Please note, if behavior interferes with learning and/or teaching in the Special Area classes, it may affect the student’s participation, thus lowering the grade.

Homework

Homework is an extension of the classroom learning process. It is one method to help students establish self-discipline and study skills. Homework also is a way to keep parents informed and involved with their child’s schoolwork. Assignments may be brief or may include long-range projects. Assignments may be

individualized for remediation or enrichment. Time spent on homework should promote productive and positive experiences.

Parents can help by encouraging their children to establish effective study habits and by reviewing homework with their child. It is very helpful for parents to establish set times to work. If your child has no current assignment, he/she should be encouraged to read. Homework is assigned to be done at home; class work is designed to be done at school. If you have questions or concerns about your child's homework, please contact your child's teacher directly.

Make-Up Work

Assignments missed during a short term absence (1-2 days) will be given upon the child's return. If the absence is longer than 2 days, the parent should contact the teacher to create a plan for missed work. Students who miss ten days or more due to serious illness may be eligible for homebound instruction.

Please do not call the office to ask that a teacher prepare missed work by the end of the day. Often times, teachers do not have planning time to pull together the work. One day's notice is necessary.

Promotion Requirements

Gwinnett County Public Schools measure student learning of the school system's curriculum (AKS) in a number of ways to ensure students have learned enough of the AKS to be successful in the next grade.

Promotion for kindergarten-2nd grade students requires demonstration of proficiency of the grade level AKS.

Grade 3 Promotion Requirements: In addition to mastery of the AKS, the state requires all Georgia 3rd grade students to meet grade-level expectations in reading on the CRCT to earn promotion to 4th grade. (Levels 2 or 3)

Grade 4 Promotion Requirements: To be promoted to the 5th grade, Gwinnett students must earn a passing score (Level 2 or 3) on the CRCT in Reading, Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies.

Grade 5 Promotion Requirements: To be promoted to 6th grade, Gwinnett students must meet grade-level expectations on the CRCT in Reading and Math. (Levels 2 or 3) and earn a passing the State of Georgia Writing Exam.

**Promotion for students who are served through the Special Education Program will be determined by their Individualized Education Plan (IEP).*

Special Education

Special education services are available for those students who qualify for an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Student Placement

We are very proud of our outstanding teachers. Each year, we make every effort to place each child with a teacher that best meets his or her needs. Parents are given the opportunity each spring to submit in writing any concerns regarding medical, emotional, or social issues affecting placement before class lists are formed for the next year. After class lists are published, if a parent has a serious concern regarding placement, they should put the concern in writing to the assistant principal for that particular grade level. The assistant principal will set up a conference to work with the parent and teacher to resolve whatever issues are involved. All cases are handled on an individual basis.

Student Progress Reports

Elementary progress reports are sent home every nine week grading period. Parent conferences are held every November and February. Teachers will contact parents to schedule these conferences.

Student Support Services

Our school has programs that enhance the learning experience for all students. Our counseling program provides a support system by working with individual students, small groups, entire classes, and parents. Students will attend art, music, physical education, science, technology and media (combinations of these areas are offered as a “special” at different grade levels). Our Media Center operates under an open policy to allow students to come individually, in small groups or with their entire class.

Student Support Team (SST)

Like all Gwinnett County Public Schools, Sugar Hill has a Student Support Team. The purpose of the Student Support Team (SST) is to allow teachers, parents and other educators to work in a collaborative manner to develop an intervention plan to address the needs of individual students. This group meets regularly to provide suggestions, recommendations, and/or interventions to help students be successful in the classroom.

Teacher-Parent Communication

Communication between parents and teachers is an essential component of student success. We encourage you to communicate regularly with your child's teacher. If you have a concern about your child, please do not hesitate to contact your child's classroom teacher. After talking with the teacher, if you continue to have a concern, please contact the assistant principal for your child's grade level for further assistance in resolving the matter.

Part IV: Student Conduct

Students learn best in a safe, positive and orderly environment. All students are capable, with support and encouragement, of being responsible for their own behavior. Parents and educators must work together as partners in teaching students to make good decisions about their behavior, and to understand there are consequences for making poor decisions.

The following behaviors are expected of all students at Sugar Hill Elementary. In addition to the information provided below, parents will also receive a copy of the GCPS Elementary Student/Parent Handbook at the beginning of each school year. These GCPS handbook can also be accessed from our website.

General Expectations

- Listen when others are speaking
- Follow directions
- Obey all school rules
- Cell phones must be kept in bookbags and turned off while at school
- Dress in a safe and appropriate manner
- Hats may only be worn in the building on designated/special occasions
- Do not chew gum in the building

- Solve problems without fighting
- Travel with a buddy when leaving the classroom
- Show respect to each other and to all adults
- Keep the building clean
- Take care of furniture and materials

Hallway Expectations

- Walk in a single file line
- Walk quietly
- Do not step in front of other students
- Follow the directions of all adults

Restroom Expectations

- Use the facilities appropriately (no playing)
- Keep the restroom clean

Playground Expectations

- Wear tennis shoes or other proper footwear
- Use the equipment safely
- Do not jump from the equipment
- Do not play roughly
- Do not throw objects such as rocks, dirt, sticks, etc.
- Use good sportsmanship
- Use appropriate language

Cafeteria Expectations

- Enter and leave the cafeteria without talking
- Stay seated and raise hand for assistance
- Use proper table manners and language
- Listen and respect the cafeteria monitors

- Observe the 10 minutes of silence while cafeteria music is playing
- Talk in quiet voices to classmates who are seated next to or across from you when the music is not playing
- Do not trade or swap food
- Clean up area before leaving

Each classroom of students, with their teacher, will develop personalized expectations for their classroom.

Discipline Steps

The consequences for minor behavior offenses include a hierarchy of steps.

Step 1 – Verbal warning

Step 2 – Teacher follows his/her classroom plan, including communication with the parent

Step 3 – Visit with the administration depending on the severity/frequency of the occurrence

The consequences for major behavior offenses which include fighting, destroying school or private property, or defying authority receive immediate attention from an administrator.

Bus Rider Information

Riding the bus is a privilege and is offered to all Gwinnett County elementary students. Improper conduct on the bus will result in the privilege being denied. Bus drivers share the Bus Guidelines and Safety Procedures on the first day of school, with monthly reviews to enhance the safety of children being transported. Students will:

- Be at the bus stop five minutes before pick-up time.
- Stand back 10 ft. from where the bus stops.

- Safely wait for, board and exit the bus only at their assigned bus stop.
- Follow the directions of the driver at all times.
- Look for traffic and wait for driver's signal to cross the road in front of the bus.
- Look in both directions for traffic – LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT.
- Look at the driver – if you can see the driver, the driver can see you.
- Signal the driver with a waving motion if you drop something. Wait for the driver to give you a signal before picking up what you have dropped.
- Use the handrail to go up or down the bus steps.
- Go directly to assigned seat, keeping aisles and exits clear.
- Sit the safe way – back against the back of the seat, bottom against the bottom of the seat.
- Stay seated until time to get off the bus. The open bus door is your signal to get up from your seat.
- Talk with a quiet voice. Do not distract the driver at any time.
- Be totally silent at railroad crossings.
- Talk quietly. Loud voices, inappropriate language and gestures are not allowed.
- Respect the rights and safety of others.
- Not eat, drink or chew gum on the bus.
- Not carry animals, glass objects, nuisance items, hazardous materials, or weapons (including toy weapons) onto the bus.
- Not use any electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to cell phones, MP3 players, gaming devices or any other electronic device that might interfere with the school bus communication equipment or the driver's operation of the school bus.
(The bus driver may allow the wearing of headphones with an audio system on a case-by-case basis and in agreement with an administrator.)

- Not use mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the driver's operation of the school bus.
- Keep their bus clean and in good, safe condition.

Should a student fail to comply with the expectations listed above, parents will be contacted and school administrators will be notified. After an investigation, appropriate consequences will be issued by the school.

Sugar Hill Elementary School Council

With the passage of the A+ Education Reform Act (HB 1187), the State of Georgia requires advisory committees, School Councils, to bring communities and schools closer together in a spirit of cooperation.

School Councils are comprised of at least seven council members who serve two-year terms: the principal (serves as chair), two certified teachers (volunteer or elected), two parents (volunteer or elected), and two business representatives. Our school council will meet four times per year. Minutes from School Council meetings will be available on our school website.

All members of the School Council must:

- Maintain a school-wide perspective on issues
- Regularly participate in Council meetings
- Participate in information and training programs
- Act as a link between the school and the community

- Encourage the participation of parents and others within the school community
- Work to improve student achievement

The purpose of the School Council is to:

- Advise
- Assist
- Represent
- Recommend

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Bus Rider Information

Sugar Hill Elementary School Council