

Semmes Elementary School

2016-2017

Student / Parent Handbook



Principal: Mrs. Valerie Johnson



**10100 Blackwell Nursery Road
Semmes, Alabama 36575
251.221.1630**

MISSION STATEMENT MOBILE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

MISSION STATEMENT: The mission of Mobile County Public Schools is to produce a literate, lifelong learner who is visionary and productive, aware of self, accepting of cultural differences, sensitive to others and who applies knowledge to make morally responsible decisions in an ever-changing global society. We will accomplish this by providing a challenging, relevant, multicultural, integrated curriculum taught by caring, competent, motivated, and accountable staff committed to the success of all students in a safe, orderly environment conducive to learning.

MISSION STATEMENT SEMMES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The mission of Semmes Elementary School is to provide all students with a safe, supportive, and stimulating learning environment where each student receives the education necessary to guarantee success in becoming lifelong learners and responsible citizens.

SCHOOL MOTTO

Together we prepare young minds to soar.

SEMMES ELEMENTARY STUDENTS:

*Engaged in learning
Attend school daily
Go the extra mile
Listen to others
Eager to help
Study hard*

SEMMES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLEDGE

I promise to do my best today. I will show pride in Semmes Elementary by doing my part to keep it clean and safe. I will show respect for adults and classmates, so they will respect me. I will listen carefully and follow directions. I will strive for excellence by being the best student I can be.

SCHOOL RULES

FIRST OFFENSE: The student will receive a verbal warning (may give another warning - depending on the offense) and conference with teacher.

SECOND OFFENSE: The parent/guardian will be contacted by the teacher and the student will lose a privilege (not to include food).

THIRD OFFENSE: A teacher/parent conference will occur (may include student).

FOURTH OFFENSE: A teacher/parent/student/administrator conference will occur.

FIFTH OFFENSE: The student will be referred to the school administrator.

***** Note:** *Steps may be omitted, depending on the nature of the offense.*

PHILOSOPHY

The faculty and staff of Semmes Elementary School, support the commitment of educating the whole child. We strive to promote the intellectual, social and physical development of each student. We believe that all children have a right to learn and grow in a safe environment that allows them to develop to their full potential. We assume the responsibility of helping students acquire skills that will develop sound character, responsible citizenship, intellectual competence and personal fulfillment in an ever changing society. Therefore, believing that the child is the product of a total environment, with parents, students and community in developing lifelong learners.

PRINCIPAL'S CREED

- I am a principal.
- I accept the challenge to ensure that every child receives a quality education.
- I care about our country by caring about its children.
- I believe every child should have the opportunity to acquire a solid foundation in reading, writing, mathematics, critical thinking and the values of friendship, compassion, honesty and self-esteem.
- I am committed to instructional excellence and support the aspirations of teachers to give each boy and girl a quality school experience.
- I accept the challenge that quality education in the school depends on the expertise, dedication and leadership of the principal.

Valerie Johnson, M.Ed., NBCT

Our School Day

School officially begins at 8:15 a.m. and ends at 3:00 p.m. Students should arrive early enough to be in their classrooms before the tardy bell rings. The first minutes of the school day are very important for setting the tone for the entire day. Students should know how to go home each day. **If there is a change from the usual dismissal procedures, parents should write a note to the teacher about the change. All changes must be put in writing. Changes made by phone will not be accepted.**

Breakfast begins.....	7:35 a.m.
Classrooms Open for students.....	8:00 a.m.
Tardy bell.....	8:15 a.m.
Car riders dismissed.....	3:00 p.m.
Bus riders dismissed.....	3:00 p.m.



Students are expected to be in classrooms by 8:15 a.m. Students eating breakfast should arrive at school no later than 8:00 a.m. **Please do not drop students off before 7:35 a.m.- there is no one to supervise them.**

Our School Telephone Numbers

Office	221-1630
Office fax	221-1633
Media Center	221-1634
Cafeteria	221-1635



Student Attendance, Absences, and Early Dismissals

- Students are expected to be at school every day, unless too ill to attend or there is a family emergency.
- Any time a student is absent, the parent or guardian must send a written note to school satisfactorily explaining the absence. Any absence not explained with a written note **within 3 school days** of the student's return will be marked as unexcused.

- Only 8 parent notes can be used to excuse absences. A student who is absent 8 or more times must present a doctor's excuse to the school in order for the absence to be marked as excused.
- **Chronic illness letters-** Parents or guardians of a student who has a chronic ailment that may cause the child to miss school during the year are required to provide the school with a doctor's statement verifying the child's condition and that the condition may cause excessive absences from school. Chronic illness letters must be updated each school year. Please call the school if additional information is needed.
- The principal or designee will monitor for excessive absences or tardies, report these to the attendance officer, and telephone parents as needed. The Central Office computers in the Division of Student Services monitor daily student attendance.
- Parents or guardians of students with excessive absences, tardies, and early dismissals, will be sent warning letters with future referrals to the District Attorney's office.
- One day for each day of excused absences is allotted for completing make-up work. **The teacher is not required to give make-up work for unexcused absences. Make-up work should not be requested in advance of such absences.**
- Absences for trips/family vacations are strongly discouraged and will be marked as unexcused unless a written request is submitted to the principal prior to student being absent. It is within the principal's discretion to excuse such absences.
- Students are allowed three excused absences for each occurrence of head lice; however, excused absences for head lice will be considered part of the eight absences that may be excused by parent note.
- Students must be at school for one-half day (3 ½ hours) to be counted present.
- Students under age 7 who accumulate more than eight (8) consecutive or fifteen (15) days total unexcused absences during a single semester may be withdrawn from school. Parents will be notified of pending withdrawal and given one week to appear before the principal or attendance officer to show cause as to why the students should not be withdrawn from school.

PLEASE NOTE: Absences in excess of 8 days, without a doctor's excuse will be marked unexcused. When five (5) unexcused absences have been accumulated, your child may be referred to the Early Warning Truancy Prevention Program at the Strickland Youth Center.

- Any student who is tardy (after 8:15 a.m.) must be accompanied by a parent to check in at the **office** and receive a tardy slip prior to going to his/her classroom. The parent does not need to walk the child to the classroom.



Computer Access

All classroom and lab computers are Internet accessible. Because of this, we ask that you carefully read the Internet Use section of the Mobile County Registration card and talk with your child about what not to view or to access on the Internet. All of our computers have a block for inappropriate materials and teachers closely supervise Internet use and will quickly turn off the monitor if something unforeseen should occur.

Discipline and General Conduct

No student has the right to interfere with another student's right to learn. Each student is expected to observe a code of personal conduct that will not interfere with anyone's education. The principal and faculty will make and enforce necessary rules to ensure a good instructional program and learning climate for all students. **According to the State of Alabama statutes, parents have the primary responsibility for the conduct of their children.** Please feel free to call the school if you see a problem developing. Our goal is to ensure a safe and orderly environment conducive to learning. If discipline measures become necessary, the STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT of Mobile County Public School System will be followed.

Semmes School Wide Rules

OUR STUDENTS WILL:

- Respect themselves, teachers, and others.
- Listen to and obey teachers and other adults.
- Use good manners at all times.
- Take care of school property and keep it clean.
- Do their best at all times.
- Walk quietly in the halls.



Hall Rules

- Walk at all times.
- Use inside voice.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
- Stay in line.





Cafeteria Rules

- Sit and stay where directed.
- Use soft voice.
- Eat your own food.
- Clean up your area.
- Raise your hand for help.
- Keep tables and floor clean.

Emergency Closing of School

To determine whether school is going to be in session on days when the weather is questionable **listen to the radio or television or check the MPCSS Facebook page**. This is where official notification is received. The school has an emergency alert system with battery backup which notifies us of severe weather or other emergency as identified by the National Weather Service. It is not necessary to call the school to confirm what you heard on the radio. The phones will not accommodate a large number of calls, or they may be out of order. Talk with your child about how he/she is to get home in case of an emergency closing of school (severe weather, snow, etc.). **We will send the students home the same way that they are sent home on other days unless we receive written instructions to do otherwise.**

Fees

There is an Elementary Fee of \$5.00 per student to cover postage (report card, parent letters, etc.) first aid and other supplies. Check or cash are acceptable.

Honor Roll Guidelines

- A Honor Roll students must have an A (90 or above) in every subject area AND an A (90 or above) in Conduct and Study Skills in order to be recognized as an A Honor Roll recipient.
- A/B Honor Roll students must an A (90 or above) or B (80-89) in every subject area AND an A (90 or above) or B (80-89) in Conduct and Study Skills in order to be recognized as an A Honor Roll recipient.
- B Honor Roll students must have a B (80-89) in every subject area AND a B (80-89) in Conduct and Study Skills in order to be recognized as a B Honor Roll student.
- Students receiving Excellent Citizenship are selected by their teachers for exhibiting noteworthy citizenship through their display of the Six Pillars of Character—trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship.
- Students receiving Perfect Attendance must be present at school each day, with NO tardies and NO early dismissals.

Field Trips

Properly planned field trips are an important part of the curriculum. Please support these trips by being a chaperone. Chaperones help the teacher with all the rules of behavior. **Only students enrolled at our school are allowed on trips** per school system rules; no siblings will be allowed. **Chaperones must ride on the approved mode of transportation with students and teachers.** Field trip money is nonrefundable. All field trip permissions must be done in writing. The principal has the final say regarding any field trip questions.

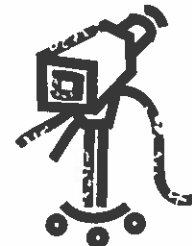


Head Lice

Head checks will be made on a regular basis. Children with lice or nits will be sent home and must clear with the office staff before returning to class. The student will be given up to three (3) days of excused absence to return to school clear of lice and nits. Please remember, students are allowed three excused absences for each occurrence of head lice; however, excused absences for head lice will be considered part of the eight absences that may be excused by parent note.

Lost and Found

Our lost and found items are generally placed in the gym. Parents are urged to see that **all personal items are marked with, at least, the child's last name.** Each year we have many unmarked items that are donated to charity or reserved for needy students. Please enable us to return your child's possessions when found!



Media Notice

NOTICE TO PARENTS WITH CHILDREN IN MOBILE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS:

Occasionally representatives of the news media seek access to public schools within the Mobile County Public School System. Many times these visits involve filming, taping and interviewing students. Additionally, students are sometimes filmed, taped or interviewed in the production of educational or promotional material for use by the Mobile County Public School System. If you object to your child or children being filmed, taped or interviewed, you must notify the principal of your school in writing prior to the opening of school. Be advised, while every effort will be made to honor your written request, it is necessary for parents to ensure their children understand that they are not to be filmed, taped or interviewed and that they should make teachers and administrators aware of their objections when the need arises.

Medication



If it is necessary for a student to take medication while at school, the medication must be taken to the first aid room, by the parent. The child's name and physician's directions must be clearly printed on the prescription bottle. No prescribed medication can be administered without a parent signature on a school permission form. No over-the-counter medications can be administered unless it is accompanied by a prescription from a physician. The health information card should be filled out promptly and completely. A local emergency number must be recorded on each student's card.

Non-Discrimination Statement

The Mobile County Public School System Does not discriminate in its education and employment programs on the basis of religion, age, race, color, national origin, gender, marital or parental status, and disability. This district complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination. Inquiries regarding compliance and/or grievance procedures may be directed as follows.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) at Semmes Elementary is very active. Membership in the PTO is encouraged and recommended. By joining PTO you will be able to vote at PTO meetings and have a voice in how PTO funds are spent and what activities are supported. The PTO coordinates many of the areas in which parents can get involved. All parents can help our school by volunteering to serve in a variety of ways.

Parent Volunteers

Parent volunteers are needed on a daily basis. Call the school and get involved!

Parent Tips

- **Write your child's name on all lunch boxes, books, sweaters, coats, etc.**
- **Please do not send more money to school than is needed each day.** Teachers cannot be responsible for money or other items not needed for schoolwork.
- **Please write your child's name, the teacher's name, amount of money, and what the money is for, on a baggie or sealed envelope!**
- **Personal party invitations cannot be distributed at school unless there is an invitation for each child in the class.** Instructional time cannot be used for birthday parties, but treats for snack time are allowed.

- **If a student needs to be excused from PE activities, a note should be sent from home.** If an excuse is necessary for a period of more than three days, a note from the doctor will be required.
- **At least two parent-teacher-student conferences must be held during the school year.**
- **Stay Involved!!**



Parent Visits and Conferences

Parents are always welcome at Semmes Elementary School. Parental involvement plays a major role in your child's education. Children need to see that school is important to their parents and, as a parent, your time spent helping with school functions and projects will send a strong, positive message to your child. We know that your time is valuable and we want to utilize it in the most effective way. Parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled as often as needed or requested. **At least two parent-teacher-student conferences must be held during the school year.** If you would like to schedule a conference with your child's teacher, please make the request through a note to the teacher or a call to the school office. Conferences may not be held during class time but may be conducted before school, after school, or during the teacher's planning time. **PLEASE DO NOT EXPECT THE TEACHER TO TALK TO YOU WHILE RESPONSIBLE FOR STUDENTS.** You are encouraged to request conferences quarterly with your child's teacher.

School Parties

According to Board Policy, we are allowed to have only 2 parties per year; Christmas and End of the Year.

Snacks

The school will sell snacks each day. Prices vary according to the items. Students may bring a snack from home however, candy and soft drinks are prohibited. When sending in snack money, **please write your child's name, the teacher's name, amount of money, and what the money is for, on a baggie or sealed envelope.**

Teacher Requests

Parent requests for a specific teacher for their child will not be accepted. Every teacher at our school is certified and Highly Qualified.

Tentative Class Assignments

Please remember that a student's class assignment is tentative. Within the first few weeks of school, changes in assignments may be needed to equalize class size. Parents will be notified if a change is to be made. Please discuss this with your child so that a change will not surprise him/her.



Textbooks

- Textbooks are furnished for students. Parents are expected to encourage their children to take good care of their books. Lost books, damaged books, or books worn through bad treatment will have to be paid for by the parents or child. Charges will be based on the condition of the book at the time of issue, which will be judged by the media specialist.
- Students who owe for damaged or lost books from a previous year will not be issued books until this matter is resolved.
- Library books issued to students are the responsibility of the parent and child. Any book lost or damaged must be paid for before the student is allowed to check out additional books. (This carries over from year to year.)

Title I Services (Federal Programs)

Semmes Elementary School qualifies for federal funding under the Title I of the "No Child Left Behind" Act, which is based on the percentage of students receiving free and/or reduced lunches. These funds are dedicated to helping improve student achievement for all our students. A copy of the ASSIST-Continuous Improvement Plan is available for parent review in the office. Semmes Elementary School is also proud to have all classroom teachers meet Highly Qualified status.

Transportation

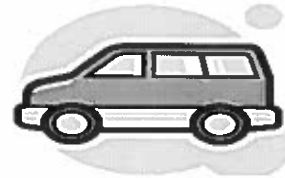
A student is expected to travel the same way to and from school each day. **If a change is needed, parents must send written request/permission to the teacher.** This is to ensure safety of the students. Changes by phone are not acceptable.



School Bus

Each student should ride his/her assigned bus, loading and unloading at the designated bus stop. Only students who reside within the Semmes school district may ride public school buses. **If a change of a bus stop site is needed, contact the MCPSS transportation department. Students may not ride a bus other than the one assigned to him/her.** Please do not send a note or call the school requesting your child ride a different bus. Students who ride buses should be aware that the Student Code of Conduct also applies to school buses. Students will be held accountable for their actions while riding the bus and may be suspended from riding the bus if the behavior poses a threat to the safety of the driver and/or other students. Rules for the bus are designed to insure the safety of the bus riders. **STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO REMAIN SEATED WHILE THE BUS IS IN MOTION AND TO SPEAK AT A LEVEL THAT WILL NOT DISTRACT THE DRIVER.**

A three-step bus behavior management process is in place. Bus drivers may remind students of appropriate behavior as many times as they deem appropriate. Upon the first written report to the office, students usually receive a warning from the administrator. A second report involves informing parents of the previous and current reports and informing them that a third report will result in a suspension of bus service. Particular offenses may result in skipping any of these steps, as deemed appropriate by the principal. Repeat offenses may result in the student being dismissed from the bus for the remainder of the year.



Private Vehicles

All students transported by private vehicles must load/unload from the front of the school. Students will board vehicles at the covered walkway on the side of the building. **For students' safety, parents should park in the driveway, two lanes, place vehicle engines in *park* and remain in the vehicles. Do not stand on the walkway waiting for students nor go to classrooms to pick up students.** Teachers will be on duty to help children find their rides. All children should be picked up by 3:20 p.m.

Uniform Policy

School Board policy authorized by State Law mandates the wearing of uniforms in all public schools in Mobile County. A committee of parents, teachers, and an administrator has adopted the following as the uniform and dress code for Semmes Elementary School students:

Bottoms: Pants and Shorts

- They **MUST** be STANDARD UNIFORM STYLE
- Color: Khaki
- NOT Allowed: corduroy, denim, cargo, carpenter, baggy leg styles, loops, leg pockets, unhemmed styles, split legs, any visible logos or rivets (studs on uniforms), etc.

Skirts, Skorts, Jumpers

- They **MUST** be STANDARD UNIFORM STYLE
- Colors: Khaki

Shoes: Tennis shoes

Prefer: solid color

Prefer: Velcro in kindergarten

Must be below the ankle

No characters, wheelies, light-ups, etc.

Tops: Long or Short Sleeves

- They **MUST** be STANDARD UNIFORM STYLE
- Colors: Red, Navy
- Styles: Polo, button down oxford, turtleneck, and Peter Pan collar, school shirts

Socks/Tights/Leggings

- Colors: red, white or navy
- NOT Allowed: lace socks

Belt: Solid Brown Leather

- NO studs

Undershirts

Red, white, navy

Outerwear

- Color: red, navy (solid colors)
- Heavy coats, sweatshirts, sweaters, lightweight jackets
- These are the **ONLY** acceptable outerwear colors
- NOT Allowed: visible logos, rivets, graphics, etc.

General Rules

- For safety reasons, students may wear stud earrings only.
- Students may wear school spirit shirts with uniform bottoms.
- All shirts **MUST** be tucked in.
- All jumpers, shorts, skirts, skorts must be no shorter than 3 inches from the knees.
- If in doubt about any item, you may bring it to school for approval before removing tags.
- No unnatural hair color, artificial nails, tattoos, make-up etc.

Compliance with Uniform Policy:

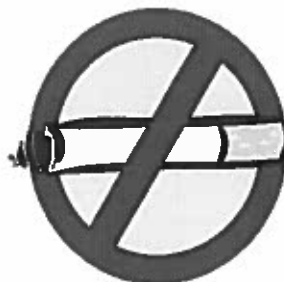
Students must wear school uniform attire according to the Mobile County Public School Board policy and in accordance with the intent of the State Legislature. Disciplinary action may range from Administrator/Student Conference to a uniform violation letter to suspension from school (for repeated offenders.) Students that are not in uniform will be sent to the office to change.

Visitors

Visitors are welcome at Semmes Elementary School. To keep our school safe and secure for the students and staff, **all parents and other visitors must enter the building by the front entrance, sign in, and get a Visitor's pass from the front office before proceeding to any place on campus.** Any person on school property who has not registered with the school office is illegally on school property and will be asked to identify himself/herself properly or to leave school grounds. If the visitor refuses to leave or creates any disturbance, the principal has the authority to request assistance from a Law Enforcement Agency. We appreciate your cooperation in implementing these safety guidelines.

Please remember that **NO SMOKING / TOBACCO USE IS ALLOWED ON CAMPUS** or any school sponsored events (field trips), according to MCPSS policy.

This includes vehicles waiting in the car line.



- A parent picking up a child early must sign out and pick up the student at the office. Parents **may not** pick up the student from the classroom.
- Early dismissals are discouraged and will be granted only when absolutely necessary. Please remember that school time is used for learning and that students need to be here for the entire day. For the safety of all students, **NO early dismissals will be granted after 2:30 without the approval of the principal or in the case of a true emergency.**
- Students will be dismissed only to adults on the student’s contact list. A picture I.D. is required. List any individual whom you might request to pick up your child during the school year. The custodial parent is responsible for keeping the contact list current.
- The Attendance Officer will investigate cases of continuous early dismissals and frequent tardies, which may result in referral to the Early Warning Truancy Program.



Child Nutrition Program

Semmes Elementary serves well-balanced, nutritional breakfasts and lunches daily. All students will receive breakfast and lunch free of charge.

	<u>Breakfast</u>	<u>Lunch</u>
Adult Staff	\$1.50	\$3.25
Visitor (children 10 yrs. or less)	\$1.25	\$2.75
Visitor (adult)	\$1.75	\$3.75
Holiday Meals – Adult Visitors		\$5.00
Holiday Meals Visitor (10 yrs. Or less)		\$3.50
Milk purchased separately		\$.50