



MT. CARMEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2011-2012 STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

2356 Fairburn Road, Douglasville, GA 30135

Phone: 770.651.4200

Fax: 770.920.4471

Website: <http://mtcarmel.dce.schoolinsites.com/>

MISSION STATEMENT THEME

“All Accountable for All Learners”

OUR PURPOSE AT MT. CARMEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

is to focus on learning and achieve success.

PHILOSOPHY OF MT. CARMEL ELEMENTARY

The faculty and parents of Mt. Carmel Elementary believe that a school should provide maximum learning experiences for the child to become a contributing member of a democratic society. The school should provide experiences that meet the general and specific needs, interests, and abilities of each child, while instilling in the child the desire to fulfill higher expectations. Education should be a positive and motivating force in the child's life and create within the child a feeling of accomplishment rather than defeat.

The faculty believes there is a need to provide experiences that will stimulate a child to react favorably and productively to his environment. This child should be accepted at his or her individual level of development and instruction should begin at that level. Encouragement should be given for a child to reach his/her full potential.

We believe that teaching is concerned with every aspect of a child's growth and development, including mental, physical, emotional, and social. Varied teaching procedures based on an organized and sequential curriculum should be used.

We recognize the necessity of positive interaction between parents, community, and school if the child is to gain the maximum benefit from his educational experiences.

2011- 2012 DOUGLAS COUNTY SCHOOL CALENDAR

AUGUST	August 4	First Student Day	
	SEPTEMBER	September 2	Progress Reports Issued
	September 5	Student/Employee Holiday: System Closed	
	September 13	Elementary School 1/2 Day Student Early Release	
	September 15	Middle School 1/2 Day Student Early Release	
OCTOBER	October 4	FTE Count	
	October 6	Grading Period Ends	
	October 10	Student Holiday Furlough Day 3 (190 day employees, over 190 day employees)	
	October 11	Elementary and Middle School Report Cards, High School Mid-Term Reports	
NOVEMBER	November 8	Election Day Student Holiday Furlough Day 5 (190 day employees, over 190 day employees)	
	November 11	Progress Reports Issued	
	November 21-25	Student Holidays/Staff Holidays (Except 240 day employees)	
	November 23-25	Holidays for All: System Closed	
DECEMBER	December 16	Semester Ends (89 Day Semester)	
	December 19-January 2	Student Holidays/Staff Holidays (Except 240 day employees)	
	December 21-January 2	Holidays for All: System Closed	
JANUARY	January 3	Student Holiday/Teachers Work	
	January 4	Semester Begins/Report Cards Issued	
FEBRUARY	January 16	Holiday for All: System Closed	
	February 6	Progress Reports Issued	
	February 8	High School 1/2 Day Student Early Release	
	February 20	Student Holiday/Staff Holiday (Except 240 day employees)	
	February 21-24	Student/Staff Holidays (Except 215 and 240 day employees)	
MARCH	March 1	FTE Count	
	March 6	Elementary School 1/2 Day Student Early Release	
	March 7	Middle School 1/2 Day Student Early Release	
	March 8	High School 1/2 Day Student Early Release	
	March 14	Grading Period Ends	
	March 19	Elementary and Middle School Report Cards, High School Mid-Term Reports	
	March 30	Student Holiday Furlough Day 2 (190 day employees, over 190 day employees)	
	APRIL	April 2-6	Holidays for All: System Closed
		April 23	Progress Reports Issued
	MAY	May 24-25	Early Release for All Students
May 25		Last Student Day (91 Day Second Semester) Elementary Report Cards Issued	
May 28		Holiday for All: System Closed	
May 29		Post Planning	
May 30		Furlough Day 4 (190 day employees)	
May 31		Furlough Day 1 (190 day employees) Furlough Day 4 (over 190 day employees)	
JUNE		June 1	Furlough Day 1 (over 190 day employees)
	June 7	Last Day for 205 Day Employees	
	June 14	Last Day for 210 Day Employees	
	June 15	Last Day for 215 Day Employees	

Any designated Holiday, Holiday Period or Teacher Day may be used as Make-Up Day(s) as needed.
If able to reduce Furlough days to less than 5, elimination is in reverse order.
Ex. Day 5 would not be a Furlough Day if number is reversed to 4 days.

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Dear Parents and Students,

We welcome you and your family to Mt. Carmel Elementary School. All of our teachers, staff members and PTA are excited to have you as part of our school family. At Mt. Carmel, we believe everyone has a right to learn and that we should all work collaboratively to provide the best possible education for every child.

In order to receive maximum benefit from the instructional activities, students are expected to be in school every day possible. Good attendance habits impact the learning process positively and carry over into the world of work. Students may go into their classrooms at 7:45 a.m. School begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 2:45 p.m. Please make sure your child is here on time each day.

Students whose parents are actively involved in their learning are more successful in school and in life! Parents are always welcome, wanted and needed. However, in order to minimize interruptions in the classrooms, you must make an appointment for a conference or schedule a time to volunteer. You may do this by either sending a note/e-mail to the teacher or calling the school. We thank you for your cooperation in this important matter. Disruptions during instructional time negatively impact children's learning when they become inattentive and distracted. With your help and cooperation, teachers can utilize every possible instructional minute to do what they do best... TEACH!

One section of this handbook contains the policies and procedures that directly affect Mt. Carmel students and their families. The other section consists of the elementary school policies and procedures of the Douglas County School System.

Let's work together to make this year a wonderful learning and growing experience.

Educationally yours,

Dr. John McGill

Principal

OBJECTIVES OF MT CARMEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The following items represent the objectives of Mt. Carmel Elementary School.

1. To develop competencies in the area of math, reading, writing, social studies, science, spelling, listening and speaking.
2. To find each child's learning level and to expose each child to learning situations in the various subject areas to the degree that will be a maximum within their particular realm of comprehension.
3. To provide an environment in which each child will feel a sense of importance and self-value.
4. To provide an environment of security, acquired through mutually developed bond of limits, to which are fairly, firmly, and consistently adhered.
5. To look for the best in each child and to find good in each.
6. To teach children to think, to ask questions, to respect authority, and to become active citizens.
7. To instill an understanding of the role diet and exercise play on health and the role of health on quality of life.
8. To promote an understanding of our national origin and to develop an appreciation for a democratic form of government.
9. To work harmoniously with parents and community in an effort to induce a cooperative learning attitude on the part of students.
10. To develop attitudes in our students which will enable them to be flexible and adaptable to change.

AT MT. CARMEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, WE BELIEVE.....

1. The chief priority of the school is to ensure that learning takes place in a secure environment that encourages independence and exploration.
2. Teachers, administrators, parents, students and the community must cooperate to ensure that individual student needs are met.
3. Individual student needs are the primary focus of all decisions in the school.
4. Students will produce quality work utilizing essential knowledge, problem solving and technology.
5. Instructional practices and curriculum will incorporate varied learning styles to maximize each student's learning.
6. Through character education, students are capable of developing their social skills and accepting responsibility for their learning and actions.

MT. CARMEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL POLICIES

ADMISSION/WITHDRAWAL

ADMISSIONS:

All students new to the Douglas County School System will need to register at the Student Registration Center located in the gym behind the Central Office Annex, 4841 Hwy 5, Douglasville, 770-651-2050. In county transfers will be maintained from school to school. Students seeking admission to a Douglas County School must have withdrawn from their previous school. Withdrawal papers must be presented at the time admission is requested. The following items are required for enrollment and must be placed on file in the school office with your child's enrollment papers:

1. Certificate of Live Birth with a state file number
2. Certificate of Immunization – Georgia Form 3231
3. Social Security Card
4. Withdrawal papers from previous school
5. Vision, hearing and dental screening certificate – Georgia Form 3300

6. Two forms of proof of residence (Deed, lease agreement, and utility bill, etc.)
7. Douglas County Tag Receipt
8. Custody or guardian papers, signed by a judge, if applicable

WITHDRAWAL:

If you are withdrawing your child from Mt. Carmel, please notify our office either by phone or a note at least a day in advance. The office needs time to complete the withdrawal forms and obtain proper signatures. Enrolling parent/guardian must sign the withdrawal form.

ARRIVAL

No student is permitted in the building before 7:15 a.m. This is for your child's safety since staff does not arrive before 7:15 a.m. Students who eat breakfast at school should report to the cafeteria no later than 7:50 a.m. The cafeteria stops serving at 7:50 a.m. Students who are not in their classrooms by 8:00 a.m. will be considered tardy.

CAR RIDERS

If a parent plans to provide transportation from school each day, one note should be sent at the beginning of the school year stating that the child will be picked up every day. The name of the person with whom the child is to ride should be included on the note as well as the emergency card in the office. If an occasion arises to have someone other than the regular person pick a child up, a note must be sent stating the name of that person. A student will not be released to anyone unless that person is listed on the emergency card or is listed on a note from the parent and has proper I.D. in either situation. This is for the safety of your child. Parents need to stay in their cars to keep the line moving.

MORNING DROP OFF

Students are to be dropped off at the lower end of the building by the covered breezeway. Please pull up to the #'s (1-4) on the sidewalk so that students can exit 3-4 cars at one time. School staff monitor car riders from 7:15 a.m. until 8:00 a.m. After 8:00 a.m., the adult must park and bring the student in the front door and go to the office to sign a tardy pass. Do not drop students off in the bus unloading area. Parents need to stay in their cars to keep the line moving.

AFTERNOON PICK UP

Your child's safety is our main concern! You will be given a sign to fill out with your child's name. This sign must be placed in the front window of your vehicle. Any driver without a sign will need to provide I.D. and may be asked to report to the office to sign your child out. Additional signs are available in the office.

Students are picked up at the lower end of the building by the covered breezeway. A school staff member is in the dismissal drive and calls a student(s) when his/her car arrives. The called student leaves his transportation pass in the designated container and reports to the staff member stationed outside the building door. This staff member sends the student to one of the 4 pickup spots marked by a painted sign and cone. Students awaiting are to stand at the cone and back from the curb until their car has come to a full stop at the cone.

Students should load the cars at the curbside. Cars should not pass cars loading children. Parents need to stay in their cars to keep the line moving.

Car riders are dismissed to their area at 2:45 p.m. Please do not come to the office to check out your child after 2:00 p.m. Students who are not picked up in the car rider lane by 3:00 p.m. will be escorted to the office. They will be sent to the After School Program at 3:10 to wait for their parents. When parents come to pick up the child after 3:10 p.m., they must pay the ten-dollar (\$10) registration fee and the eight-dollar (\$8) daily fee to the After School Program staff. If the registration fee has been paid previously, the parent will pay the eight-dollar (\$8) daily fee only. PLEASE DO NOT ASK THE SCHOOL OR THE AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM TO MAKE EXCEPTIONS!

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

All transportation changes must be submitted in writing. We cannot make changes through a phone call or email. This is for the safety of your child!! No exceptions!! You may FAX to 770-920-4471 changes prior to 2:00 p.m. or send a note with your child. Please call to confirm receipt of all FAX changes. All written instructions must include the child's name, teacher's name, specific instructions related to the change (ex: the bus number, the address, who they are riding with, dates this change is effective) and your signature and a phone number where you may be reached for clarification. Please include a picture I.D. with all faxes.

CHILDREN LEFT HOME ALONE: GUIDELINES AS SPECIFIED BY GEORGIA LAW

- Children 8 years or younger are never to be left alone.
- Children between the ages of 9 and 12 years, based on level of maturity, may be left alone for brief (less than two hours) periods of time.
- Children 13 years and older, who are at an adequate level of maturity, may be left alone and may perform the role of babysitter, as authorized by the parent, for up to twelve hours. This may not be permissible if the younger child is a special needs child.

Any school employee having reasonable cause to believe that the listed guidelines for leaving a child at home are not being followed is mandated to report to the appropriate agency.

ATTENDANCE AND TARDIES

The Georgia Compulsory Attendance Law holds parents responsible for making sure that their children attend school. According to this attendance law, the only legal excuses for absences are:

1. Personal illness
2. Death in the immediate family
3. Religious holidays

The homeroom teacher takes attendance each day at 8:00 a.m. All attendance regulations, including age entering and leaving school, absences, tardiness, exemptions from school, and appropriate use of visiting teacher services, will be in accordance of Georgia School Attendance Law. All students with attendance issues must be reported to the Douglas County Board of Education. See Board Policies with descriptive code: JBA & JBD.

Although attendance at school is very important, students with a contagious illness or fever should be kept at home. Upon returning to school after an absence, a written excuse, signed by the parent or guardian, should be given to the teacher within 3 days. Any failure to explain an absence will result in the absence being marked as unexcused. Students who are absent miss instruction that cannot always be made up. The fact that an absence is excused does not mean that the student will automatically receive credit for work that is missed. It is his/her responsibility to find out what work was missed and to make it up under teacher direction.

Please make sure your child is here everyday, on time and try not to check them out early, except in the case of extreme emergency, such as illness, essential doctor appointments and deaths in the family. Remember our students are dismissed from their bus hall area at 7:45 a.m. to go to their classrooms. Our instructional day begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 2:45 p.m. Your child misses valuable instruction if he/she arrives after 7:50 a.m. or leaves before 2:45 p.m.

ATTENDANCE AWARDS

We are trying to instill in our students the importance of punctuality and doing quality work. We have high expectations for our students in academics and work habits. We believe the habits they develop today will be the same habits they have as adults. At the end of the school year, students will receive awards based on the following criteria. "Perfect Attendance": 0 absences, 3 tardies. These students will receive a trophy and certificate.

CHARGES

All charges incurred by your child must be paid in a timely manner. This includes charges for breakfast / lunch, lost library or textbooks, After School Program, PTA, pictures, Relay for Life, etc. Report cards will be held until all charges are paid.

CLUBS

STUDENT COUNCIL

The Student Council is made up two representatives from each 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade homeroom. These representatives are elected by their classmates. All members of the student council must be of excellent character and maintain grades of 2 or better. They cannot have any type of disciplinary action.

There are four officers: President (5th grader), Vice President (4th or 5th grader), Secretary (5th grader) and Treasurer (4th or 5th grader). The officers are elected prior to the homeroom elections. They must complete an application to run for office, conduct an election campaign and make a campaign speech before a school assembly.

These officers act as official hosts for the school and conduct the Student Council meetings. The School Counselor is the sponsor for the Student Council.

DELIVERIES

Deliveries for students, such as balloons, flowers or stuffed animals must remain in the office. The student will be called to the office to view the item and instructed to pick it up at the end of the day. Balloons and flowers are not allowed to be taken on the bus, so an adult must come and pick the item up.

DISCIPLINE

STUDENT BEHAVIOR:

Students are expected to follow basic rules to promote school safety and learning. Specific rules for each school area are explained and enforced by administration and staff. Students who choose not to follow the rules will face consequences determined by the teachers and administrators. Minor problems will be handled within the classroom setting. Major or repetitive behavior problems will be addressed through school/district policies. Please see section II of the handbook for more information.

OPPORTUNITY ROOM (O.R.):

When a student has chosen to behave in a manner that is considered to be a major offense, he or she will leave the instructional setting and go to the opportunity room (O.R.). The student's teacher will complete an O.R. form that describes the child's behavior. The student will present the form to the O.R. supervisor and be given the opportunity to reconsider their choice of behavior and its impact on themselves as well as their classmates. They will complete an action plan to help them make more appropriate choices when they find themselves in a similar situation. The O.R. supervisor will be available to assist students as needed. A specific time period has been assigned for each visit to O.R. If a student has completed his or her action plan before the time period expires, he or she will be given assignments provided by the homeroom teacher. When the specific time has expired, the student will return to class with a copy of the O.R. form. The student must take this form home for parent review and signature, and then return it to the office the following day.

DRESS CODE

Tennis shoes must be worn during P.E. No sagging, bagging or dragging of pants or shorts.

See Douglas County Board Policy: Descriptive Code: JCDB-R

EMERGENCY DRILLS

State law requires that schools conduct drills for emergencies such as fire, severe weather, and lock down procedures. Fire drills are held each month on "good" weather days. Some months are not as cooperative and students must go out in the cold. Students will return to the building as quickly as possible.

EMERGENCY STUDENT INFORMATION

Every child should have current emergency information on file in the school office. We should know how to locate a parent at all times in the event of illness or accident. If a phone number or address change occurs during the school year, please notify the office in writing or the enrolling parent may change the card when they visit the school. Only the enrolling parent may add, delete or make any changes to the emergency card.

FIELD TRIPS

At various times during the year, students may take educational field trips. Field trips are special activities that enhance our curriculum. Trips will be made according to Douglas County policy and guidelines. Parents will be notified before any field trip so that written permission can be obtained. Students with inappropriate behavior may not be invited to attend if their behavior jeopardizes the safety of others or themselves.

Each field trip can accommodate a certain number of chaperones. The number of chaperones will depend on the number of students as well as space available on the bus. Younger siblings are not allowed on school system buses.

FOOD SERVICES

Students are encouraged to participate in the school nutrition program. Nutritionally balanced breakfasts and lunches are available to all students. A registered dietician plans the menus. Breakfasts are designed to meet one-fourth of the recommended daily allowance (RDA) of nutrients for Americans. Lunches meet one-third RDA. Several choices in menu offerings are available. No candy or gum is allowed at school. No canned or glass-bottled drinks.

School lunches are \$1.65 per day for students. Breakfast is \$1.00. You may pay for your child's lunches by the week or by the month. A policy has been established throughout the school system that restricts the amount of meal charges a student or adult can accumulate. No one will be allowed to accumulate more than \$5.00 in charges. Additionally, students who accumulate more than \$5.00 in charges will not be allowed to purchase ice cream, additional entrees or desserts. Once that amount has been reached, students who are unable to pay will be offered a sandwich and beverage. Free or reduced priced meal programs are available to students who qualify. www.ParentOnline.net is a prepayment system that allows you to make deposits into your school meal accounts via the internet.

Parents may eat lunch with their child at any time. Adult price lunch is \$2.80 and adult breakfast price is \$1.60. Parents must check in at the school office and wear a visitors badge before going to the cafeteria. No restaurant meals are to be taken to the cafeteria. You may eat in the cafeteria or at the outside picnic tables, weather permitting. If you choose to eat inside with your child, please observe our quiet Music Time, a time when students are encouraged to be silent, eat their lunch and practice their best table manners. If you choose to eat outside, you may not take other students with you. This is a special time for you and your child.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICES

In Douglas County, the elementary school guidance program is designed to help students by assisting them in making decisions and changing behavior. The purpose of guidance and counseling is to impact specific skills and learning opportunities in a productive and preventive manner which ensures that all students can achieve school success through academic, career, and personal/social development.

Guidance is defined as the help all students receive to assist them in making appropriate educational and career choices. Guidance is provided through classroom lessons and participation in small groups. Counseling is defined as the help some students receive from a professionally trained counselor to help them overcome personal and social problems, which may interfere with learning. Counseling is provided individually and in small groups. Students may be referred for counseling by parents, teachers, or themselves.

The lessons taught in classroom or small group guidance provide a link to define student competencies. These standards are included in the guidance curriculum. Counselors coordinate and implement delivery of guidance lessons in the areas of academic, personal/social and career development. Lessons can incorporate study skills, test taking skills, problem solving, decision-making, self-knowledge, life skills, personal safety, and career planning. All of which will help facilitate your child's academic achievement.

Small group counseling may address specific needs such as understanding-self and interpersonal skills or may help students who are coping with crisis situations, such as divorce or death. Students may participate in these small groups as a result of referrals from parents, teachers or themselves. The counseling relationship with students will be treated as confidential except when a student poses an imminent danger to himself or others, or when the student reveals matters that by state law must be reported. The Douglas County Board of Education provides all students the opportunity of counseling services.

The elementary school counselor consults and collaborates with parents, guardians, teachers, and significant others such as school psychologists, special education personnel, school social workers, and medical professionals in the community. Counselors are also involved with classroom performance and behavior, childhood growth and development, a positive school climate, identification of exceptional children, interpretations of test results, psychological reports and other relevant data and communication between home and school.

Students in first and third grades are taught the GOOD-TOUCH/BAD-TOUCH program. GOOD-TOUCH/BAD-TOUCH is a body safety program, which teaches children in a very comfortable way to talk about a very sensitive problem. Unfortunately, every year more than 100,000 children are sexually abused in our country. Informing children of the following concepts helps to lessen their vulnerability to abuse.

1. Touch can be good, bad, and/or confusing.
2. Children are special and have the right to know all the safety rules.
3. Children can say no to inappropriate touches.
4. Children should tell a trusted adult if they ever have a problem with bad or confusing touches.
5. Sexual abuse is never the child's fault.

Professionals from the University of Georgia have validated this program as being effective. It has been approved by the Douglas County Board of Education. Our school counselor has received special training from the publisher and will be teaching this program. Parents or guardians may request to view materials in this program by contacting the school counselor.

If you have questions or concerns about your child's involvement in any guidance or counseling group activity, please contact your school counselor, Annella Branan, Ed.S.

FOCUS ON LEARNING

We encourage students to have a "carry style" book bag. Not only are the students' storage cubbies not large enough for the book bags on wheels, these also can become a safety hazard.

Toys, CD players, iPods, electronic games, beepers, cell phones, and/or similar electronic devices are not to be brought to school. Items will be confiscated and released only to the parent. See Board Policy in Section II.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Please see the System Policies for information regarding homework policies.

HOMEWORK REPORT FOLDERS

Work samples, teachers' notes, school newsletters and other school information are sent home the first day of each school week in the Home Report Folders. Parents sign the folders, write any needed responses and return them the following school day. Consistent communication between home and school is essential to student success.

ILLNESS/ACCIDENTS

If a student is hurt on the bus or at school, he or she should report the accident immediately to the supervising adult. First aid for minor accidents will be handled at school. Parents or guardians will be contacted in the event of a serious accident.

Students with a contagious illness, including the flu or bad colds, should not come to school. On the first day of return, students are expected to turn in a written excuse from a parent or guardian to their teacher.

Students who become ill during the school day should tell their teacher. These students can only be dismissed from school to go home if the school is able to contact by phone either a parent or guardian who will agree to come and pick up the students. **THE SCHOOL MUST HAVE A CURRENT EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER ON EVERY CHILD.**

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Radio station WSB (750AM) and other major Atlanta radio and TV stations will be contacted concerning school closings. Closing will be announced as close to 6:00 a.m. as possible. Please listen to these stations for information. Calling the Board of Education or the school ties up emergency phone lines.

LOST AND FOUND

Most articles of clothing that are found are turned into the office and/or placed in a designated area. Please label all articles of clothing with your child's name so lost articles may be returned. If items are not claimed within a reasonable length of time, they will be donated to a charitable organization.

MEDIA CENTER

The Media Center at Mt. Carmel is a resource to meet the information needs of students and teachers. Students are invited and encouraged to come to the media center regularly for story time, research, computer use, and self-selection of books. The Media Center is open from 7:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. The following guidelines are followed:

1. Students in grades K-1 may check out one book at a time.
2. Students in grades 2-5 may check out two books at a time.
3. The check out period is one week, but students may renew their books if a longer time is needed. Students may come to the Media Center as often as their teacher allows.
4. Overdue fines are not charged, but students are expected to pay for lost or damaged books. Overdue notices will be sent home at the end of each nine week period. Report cards will be held for students with overdue books.
5. Students should not lend library books to each other. Any book checked out in a student's name is the responsibility of that student.

MEDICINE

Medication should be administered at home. If medicine must be given at school, the following rules apply. Board policy does not allow the school to give prescription or over the counter medication unless it is in the original packaging or bottle. Cough drops must also be administered through the office. Medication forms must be completed for any medication and may be requested in the office. All medications must be turned into the office. Notify the teacher that the student is to be given medicine and the times. An adult must pick up all medicines.

“NO NIT” POLICY (HEAD LICE)

At the recommendation of the Douglas County Board of Health, the Douglas County School System has implemented a “no nit” policy for head lice. Children who have live lice or nits will be sent home. Students may return to school when they have been treated and are nit free. Parents/guardians must accompany students to school when they return. Proof of treatment will be required, and the student will be checked before being readmitted to school. This more stringent policy has led to a decrease in the number of head lice infestations in the schools.

OFFICE

The school office is open each day between 7:15 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

PARENT CONFERENCES, VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

All parents, visitors and volunteers must sign in at the office. For the safety of your child, we ask that EVERYONE use the front entrance, wear a visitor identification badge while in our building, and then return to the office before exiting the building. All visits to a classroom must have a meaningful purpose such as volunteering, pre-arranged conferencing with teachers, prearranged observations and/or serving as a guest speaker. Students are distracted from instruction by visitors in the classroom, so all prearranged visits should be brief. Because we are accountable for using instructional time appropriately, we will be unable to allow drop-in visits to speak briefly to the teacher.

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to come to school to talk with their child’s teacher(s). Appointments may be scheduled during the teacher’s planning period, before school, or after school. Conference days are also scheduled during the year. A minimum of two conferences per child will be scheduled during the year. Parents will be notified if additional conferences are needed. Preschool children should not accompany parents during a conference. Conferences can be set up by calling the teacher’s voice mail extension, or preferably by e-mailing the teacher. All teacher e-mail addresses are posted on the school website and e-mail is the easiest and fastest way to communicate with your child’s teacher.

PARTIES AND BIRTHDAYS

Douglas County Board of Education policy allows two parties each year in the classroom. These parties are: winter party on the last day before winter holidays and the scheduled grade level Field Day. All planned activities must be approved by the teacher.

Students may want to share store bought cupcakes/cookies with their classmates on their birthday. Any treat should be served during the regular lunch period. No invitations to birthday parties should be sent to school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education is a very important part of the student’s school day. For safety reasons, students are encouraged to wear rubber sole shoes (tennis shoes) and appropriate clothing (shorts should be worn under skirts and dresses) on designated Physical Education days. If a child cannot take P.E. due to illness or injury, we must have a note from the parent or doctor.

POLICIES

There are many policies and procedures that directly affect Mt. Carmel Elementary School students and parents or guardians. For the complete set of Douglas County System Policies and Procedures visit the Douglas County School System website located at www.douglas.k12.ga.us.

PROPERTY/TEXTBOOKS

The buildings, the furniture, and the equipment therein, are provided at great expense by the taxpayers of Douglas County. Students at Mt. Carmel Elementary should refrain from defacing school property. Students will pay for damage to buildings and equipment when it is determined that such was caused by carelessness or neglect. Everyone should develop pride in keeping the building clean and the furniture in good condition.

Students are furnished textbooks. The books are issued by the classroom teacher who keeps a record of the condition of each book. Students are responsible for the care of their issued textbooks. Lost or damaged books or library books must be paid for before report cards can be issued.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Testing will be administered according to state and local guidelines. Parents will be notified of testing dates and procedures. See Section II for further information

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM / TIER III

All schools in Georgia mandate the use of Student Support Teams (SST) to identify and offer alternative strategies for students struggling socially or academically. SST is also referred to as Tier III. As teachers develop concerns with a child’s academics, behavior or speech/language skills, he/she will begin interventions and monitor progress at Tiers I and II. The Tier III team may consist of the teachers who work with the student, along with the assistant principal, counselor, school psychologist, education evaluator, special education teachers and/or parents. Every effort is made to provide for academic and social success in school. The referral of a student for special education is initiated through the Tier III process. This team also serves as a placement committee when retention is considered.

TELEPHONES

Students are not allowed to receive calls during the school day. In a case of EXTREME EMERGENCY, the office will deliver a message to your child. Transportation changes are not to be made over the phone or email. You must FAX or hand deliver any transportation changes before 2:00 p.m. We cannot guarantee that the change will be made after 2:00 p.m. You must call and verify that all fax changes have been received.

