



**DEMOREST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
STUDENT HANDBOOK  
2016-2017**

**Demorest Elementary School  
3116 Demorest-Mt. Airy Highway  
Demorest, GA 30535**

**School Office - (706) 778-4126  
School Fax - (706) 776-6691  
Office Hours 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM**

**Habersham County Board of Education  
Mr. Matthew Cooper, Superintendent  
Mr. Don Corbett, Chairperson  
Dr. Robert Barron, Vice Chairperson  
Mr. Russ Nelson  
Ms. Patsy Taylor  
Mr. Rick Williams**

**Habersham County Board Policies are available online at  
[www.habershamschools.com](http://www.habershamschools.com)**

**Demorest Elementary Staff**

**2016--2017**

Dr. Connie Yearwood – Principal  
Dr. Susan Davis – Assistant Principal

**Service Area Personnel**

Beth St. Andre – Academic Coach  
Deborah Cooper – Counselor  
Angelia Baker – Media Specialist  
Lisa Short – Secretary/Bookkeeper  
Tammy Teasley – Secretary  
Angela Payne – Nurse

**Pre-K**

Deana Snowden

**Kindergarten**

Jill Batson  
Stephanie Broome  
Christi Brown  
Alison Roland  
Kathy Webb

**First Grade**

Luanne Cunningham  
Cindy Hogsed  
Keylia Patton  
Laura Stephens  
Megan Williams

**Second Grade**

Holly Adams  
Kami Ferguson  
Audrey Kelly  
Christy Ryals  
Carla Smith

**Third Grade**

Wendy Cain  
Kimberly Card  
Selena McKay  
Cathy Nelson  
Kathy Smith

**Fourth Grade**

Mary McDuffie  
Summer Miller  
Renee Ruark  
Melody Strange

**Fifth Grade**

Kellie Cash  
Meghann Holbrook  
Morgan Jenkins  
Meg Thomason

**Special Area Teachers**

Lavona Bridges– Music  
Julie Green– Art  
Erna Dowdy– PE

**Special Education Staff**

Robin Skelton – Dept. Head  
Beth Galloway  
Lacie Gunn  
Alison Rackowski  
Jennifer Satterfield  
Fonda Dodd-Speech

**ESOL**

Linda Jamerson

**Paraprofessional**

Leah Allen - K  
Brandy Anderson - K  
Melissa Ayers - SPED  
Lisa Carr - K  
Kristie Fitzpatrick  
Kelly Freeman – SPED  
Katheryn Hennigan - SPED  
Kecia Holbrook – SPED  
Lecia Murphy - K  
Joanne Mayo - K  
Kimberly Moore - Media Clerk  
Chantley Turner – Computer Lab  
Kayla Wilson - Speech  
Amy Wright - SPED

**Cafeteria**

Christina Cunningham – Manager  
Donna Bramblett  
Nickie Bryson  
Tracy Hammock  
Amy Moon

**Custodians**

Deborah Payne, Lead  
Brenda Yearwood  
Joey Nations  
Taryn Jones

### **Bus Drivers**

#01-17 Dave Christiano  
#03-30 Connie Berry  
#11-79 Brian Brookshire  
#04-35 Billy Patton  
#99-26 Ron Arrendale  
#14-91 Debbie Sowers  
#01-14 Donald Chandler  
#14-90 Janice Robertson  
#15-92 Lecia Murphy  
#12-83 Brittany Loggins

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Welcome to Demorest Elementary! I am so proud that you are a part of our lion pride. This school year will be fantastic. This school handbook will help you know the expectations, procedures, and guidelines for Demorest. We ask that you read this book and stay informed and up to date with our school policies. These policies are put into place in order to maintain order and safety for all our students, teachers, parents, and community. Feel free to contact me by phone or email if you should have any questions about our school. On behalf of our teachers and staff, we welcome you to Demorest Elementary School.

Children first,

Dr. Connie Yearwood  
Principal

### **VISION**

Demorest Elementary will be a warm and inviting school where everyone (students, teachers, staff, parents, volunteers, etc.) feels safe to learn and grow. As leaders of learners and thinkers, teachers will use all tools available to them to create engaging work for the students. Work created will be challenging, interesting, and meaningful. Student progress will be measured using a variety of formal and informal assessments, observation, and data collection. Behavior and discipline will be viewed as learning experiences, and children will learn how to make choices and accept the consequences of those choices. The school and community will work together to develop caring and responsible citizens, our future leaders. Believing in every child's ability to learn and grow, we will do whatever it takes to help make sure that we tap into each child's potential so that every child makes progress and demonstrates growth.

Demorest Elementary School will lead the way in **Achievement**, **Believing in children**, **Community** (both within the school and with the community at large), **Dedication**, and **Engagement** in meaningful work for students.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Demorest Elementary School is to create Caring and Responsible Learners (C.A.R.L.) by:

Developing  
Engaging  
Methods  
Of  
Reaching  
Every  
Student  
Today

### **We Believe:**

Instruction should be

- Rigorous
- Differentiated
- Engaging
- Implemented with fidelity

Teachers should

- Implement best practices
- Manage classrooms effectively
- Provide a safe environment
- Use data to inform instruction

Relationships matter

A great school has high expectations of

- Staff
- Students
- Parents

### **DES CODE OF CONDUCT**

#### **C.A.R.L.'S Kids: Caring And Responsible Learners**

Students who attend Demorest Elementary are citizens of our learning community. In order to create and maintain a climate of learning, achievement, and security, Demorest students need to understand the expectations of a school citizen.

The purpose of this code is to insure that learning is optimal and not disrupted. Our goal remains the desire to see students reaching their greatest potential not only at Demorest, but also throughout life. We firmly believe that such an achievement can be accomplished through practice in being **RESPONSIBLE, RESPECTFUL, AND SUPPORTIVE OF OTHERS.**

#### **C.A.R.L.'S CODE**

- **I will respect others**
- **I will respect property**
- **I will be safe**
- **I will be responsible**
- **I will be prepared**

### **ATTENDANCE**

Punctual and regular attendance is important and expected. Regular attendance in school is the joint responsibility of the student and his/her parents/guardians. While the following procedures indicate the required contacts on behalf of the school, the Principal or his/her designee may, at his/her discretion, contact parents/guardians by phone, mail, or in person, at any time school attendance is a concern.

- At the beginning of the year and upon enrollment, the school will review the attendance procedures, list of excused absences and possible consequences and penalties of excessive absences with the students. This attendance information will be sent home to parents/guardians. Students 10 years old (as of September 1<sup>st</sup>) and older, and parents/guardians will sign their name indicating that they have received the attendance information. After two attempts to obtain signatures, a copy will be sent via first class mail.

- When a student has 5 unexcused absences and is under age 16, the school will send a letter to the parent/guardian to notify them of the law, attendance procedures, and possible consequences and penalties of absences. As the law instructs, after 2 reasonable attempts have been made to contact a parent/guardian with no response, a letter will be sent via first class mail. Parents are to be notified at each occurrence of 5 unexcused absences (5 unexcused absences, 10 unexcused absences, 15, etc.). Documentation of attempts and contacts will be kept by the school.
- When a student has 7 unexcused absences and is under age 16, the school will have an Attendance Support meeting with the parent/guardian and student to develop a contract for improving attendance.
- If there are further unexcused absences following the attendance contract or if a parent/guardian fails two times to respond to attempts to schedule or to attend the attendance meeting, a referral will be made to the School Social Worker. If a student accumulates 10 or more unexcused absences during the school year, truancy charges may be filed in Juvenile Court. Parents/ guardians will be notified by the School Social Worker via first class mail prior to the case being referred to the legal system.
- When a student has 10 absences (excused or unexcused) the school will send a letter to the parent/guardian.

### **BELL SCHEDULE**

7:15 am - Doors Open

7:45 am - Students report to class

7:50 am - Demorest Morning News - live student-led broadcast of announcements and recognitions

Students arriving after 7:50 may miss important announcements including student recognition.

8:00 am - Tardy

2:45 pm - Student dismissal for parent pick up

2:50 pm - Begin parent pickup

3:00 pm - Homework Center

3:25 pm - Student dismissal for bus

### **C.A.R.L.'S (Caring And Responsible Learners)**

#### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

**I will respect others**

**I will respect property**

**I will be safe**

**I will be prepared**

**I will be responsible**

Demorest Elementary School prides itself as an orderly school with a high level of respect among staff and students. As a staff, we feel the need to continue this goal by helping children learn necessary skills for school success. We will work towards helping each child know he or she is capable, connected, and contributing (The 3 C's). To accomplish this goal, we have developed a school-wide plan called C.A.R.L.'s Code. With C.A.R.L. standing for **Caring And Responsible Learners**. Our school mascot is C.A.R.L. the Lion. Our plan makes use of effective preventive measures, positive reinforcement, teaching strategies, and appropriate consequences.

Throughout the school year the students will learn about C.A.R.L.'s Code. Please spend some time discussing this plan with your child. It is especially important that you talk to your child about the key concepts.

Each child has the opportunity to practice the code daily. Students who consistently make good behavioral choices have opportunities to participate in classroom celebrations as well as schoolwide 9 Week Celebrations held after each 9 weeks. Criteria for participation will be sent home after school begins.

With your continued support and involvement, there is no question that Demorest Elementary will continue to be a school where students can learn and grow in a safe, respectful, and cooperative learning environment. If you have any questions, feel free to contact your child's classroom teacher or the principal at your school. We look forward to a great year!

## **BULLYING**

Bullying is against the law and against Habersham County Schools policy!

Bullying is defined as follows: An act which occurs on school property, on school vehicles, at school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system, that is:

1. Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so;
2. Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
3. Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:

1. Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23.1;

2. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
3. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
4. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

### *Consequences:*

Acts of bullying shall be punished by a range of consequences through the progressive discipline process, as stated in the Code of Conduct. However, upon a finding by the disciplinary hearing office, panel or tribunal that a student in grades 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative school.

**If you have reason to believe that bullying is occurring at your school, please contact the principal immediately, or you can refer concerns to the Habersham County Board of Education Office at 706-754-2118.**

## **CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**

Class rules and consequences are up to the teacher. The classes will use C.A.R.L.'s Code to help generate classroom rules and/or procedures.

Each classroom will have a behavior management system, and the teacher will ensure that parents and students receive a copy. Also, each student will have an agenda book that includes a daily color-coded behavior communication tool that will be used to report your child's daily behavior.



## **DRESS CODE**

Students are expected to dress in a manner that is supportive of a positive learning environment free of distractions or disruptions. This determination is made at the discretion of teachers and administrators.

In an effort to maintain a proper atmosphere for learning, we ask our students to refrain from wearing clothing that might be offensive to others.

- Hats are only to be worn outdoors or on special occasions designated by the school.
- All tops worn by boys and girls must be long enough to cover the waist area. Halter tops or spaghetti strap shirts are not allowed.
- Mesh or net design shirts may only be worn with a shirt underneath them.
- Clothing that depicts or symbolizes offensive words or designs is not allowed.
- Any other attention getting apparel/appearance that disrupts the learning environment will not be allowed.

Consequence: Students will call parents and request that appropriate clothing be brought to school.

Please label all book bags, sweaters, coats, and other materials belonging to your child. Check lost and found hallway leading to cafeteria to retrieve lost items.

## **PLAYGROUND EXPECTATIONS: We want students to enjoy their play in a safe environment!**

1. I will use equipment safely.
2. I will play safely with friends.
3. I will play games by the rules.
4. I will not bring toys from home.
5. If there are problems during recess, I will tell a teacher.
6. I will clean the playground area as a good citizen.
7. After recess, I will come into the building quietly.

## **LUNCHROOM PROCEDURES**

1. I will use good manners.
2. I will talk in a quiet voice.
3. I will stay seated.

Teachers will seat their classes and pick them up at the lunchroom door at the allotted time. In the event of any misbehavior, logical consequences will be used when possible. For example, if a student throws food, he/she will clean it up. Parents will be contacted if chronic misbehaviors in lunchroom occur.

## **RESTROOM PROCEDURES**

Students should learn and follow these general rules/procedures:

1. I will respect property by using facilities properly – flush when finished.
2. I will practice cleanliness (wash hands, put trash in receptacle, etc...)
3. I will go in and out quickly - No playing or hanging out.
4. I will use a quiet voice.
5. I will walk quietly to class.

**HALLWAY PROCEDURES:** Students should follow the following rules/procedures when in the hallways:

1. I will walk on the right side (along the colored tile) of the hall in single file.
2. I will show respect for others, by using a quiet/whisper voice.
3. I will keep my hands to myself.

4. I will walk quietly when loading buses or going to recess.

Students who run or talk loudly in the hall should be given an opportunity to practice proper hall behavior during a student free time.

### **STUDENT DISCIPLINE:**

The purpose of the school's code of conduct is to teach students what it means to be respectful, responsible and safe in a school environment. Because it is crucial that students receive a consistent message from parents and school personnel as to what is and what is not considered respectful, responsible and safe at school, we respectfully ask that parents support student discipline decisions.

Discipline will be progressive in nature. The degree of discipline will be specific to individual students and will take into account the student's discipline history, the age of the student and other relevant factors.

The school will adhere to the rules regarding student conduct listed in Habersham County Board Policy JCDA.

The following disciplinary actions may be imposed for any violation of the Code of Conduct:

- Warning and/or Counseling with a School Administrator or Counselor
- Loss of Privileges
- Isolation or Time Out
- Loss of Privileges (including but not limited to field trips or field day)
- Removal from Class or Activity
- Parent Notification
- Parents Conference
- Parent visitation/involvement
- Detention
- In-School-Suspension
- Suspension
- Referral to a Hearing Officer or Tribunal for Long-term Suspension or Expulsion
- Suspension or Expulsion from the School Bus
- Referral to Law Enforcement or Juvenile Court Officials:

Georgia Law requires that certain acts of misconduct be referred to the appropriate law enforcement officials. The School will refer any act of misconduct to law enforcement officials when school officials determine such referral to be necessary or appropriate.

### **Student Reporting of Acts of Sexual Abuse or Sexual Misconduct:**

(a) Any student (*or parent or friend of a student*) who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a teacher, administrator or other school system employee is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her school.

(b) Any teacher, counselor or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of a student by a teacher, administrator or other employee shall make an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the school principal or principal's designee, and shall submit a written report of the incident to the school principal or principal's designee within 24 hours. *If the principal is the person accused of the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the oral and written reports should be made to the superintendent or the superintendent's designee.*

(c) Any school principal or principal's designee receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 shall make an oral report immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report in writing, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.

Reports of acts of sexual misconduct against a student by a teacher, administrator or other employee not covered by O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 or 20-2-1184 shall be investigated immediately by school or system personnel. If the investigation of the allegation of sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the school principal or principal's designee shall make an immediate written report to the superintendent and the Professional Standards Commission Ethics Division.

### **Guidance / Counseling Services**

Demorest Elementary offers guidance and counseling services. The door is open to all students and parents. The purpose of the guidance program is to be of assistance to students, families, and teachers and to assist in making the educational process as effective as possible. Guidance/counseling services include classroom guidance, individual/group counseling, parent/teacher consultation, and referrals/coordination with agencies/professionals outside the school setting. Please feel free to contact the guidance counselor at any time.

### **The DeBug System**

The purpose of the DeBug System is to equip children with a series of steps they can use to solve problems when others are "bugging" them. It helps children to learn to be assertive and encourages self-management. It also helps define the adult's role as one of assisting children after they have attempted to resolve the difficulty themselves.

The five steps of the DeBug System are simple. The children are taught that if someone is bugging them, they should try the following:

1. **Ignore.** If that doesn't work ...
2. **Move away.** If that doesn't work ...
3. **Talk friendly.** If that doesn't work ...
4. **Talk firmly.** If that doesn't work ...
5. **Get adult help.**

### **EXTRA CHANGE OF CLOTHING**

Kindergarten and first grade students need an extra change of clothing in their backpacks at all times. This practice is highly recommended for 2nd grade students, too. An extra change of clothes will prevent parents from being called to bring a change of clothing in the event of a spill or bathroom accident.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are taken at the discretion of the teacher in conjunction with the curriculum and upon approval of the principal. PTO or other contributors sponsor some field trips and others require students to provide a minimum fee.

### **FINE ARTS**

Students at Demorest Elementary participate in Fine Arts education through our art and music programs. Through these programs students have an opportunity to develop their own talents and skills while learning to appreciate and critically think about the artistic and musical contributions of others.

### **HABERSHAM COUNTY BUS RULES**

**Safety of your child and others is our number one priority.**

**Conduct required on the bus:**

1. Obey the bus driver.
2. Do not disturb the driver while he/she is driving.
3. Respect the driver's right to assign seats.
4. Stay in your seat and do not change seats.
5. Sit down while bus is in motion.
6. Keep voices low.
7. No pushing, fighting, or throwing objects.
8. Vulgar signs, gestures, and words are prohibited.
9. Do not open or close windows without permission.
10. Keep all parts of your body inside.
11. Keep the bus clean, sanitary, and orderly.
12. Students shouldn't operate the door or stand in the forward part of the bus.

**Bus Conduct Procedures:**

**First Bus Conduct Report** = Call parents and/or write up warning with a copy to parents.

**Second Bus Conduct Report** = Call parent and discipline student in accordance with the school's developmental discipline plan. Parent and student will be warned that with the next incident the student may be off the bus for 3 days

**Third Bus Conduct Report** = Student may be off bus for 3 days. Infractions thereafter will be dealt with in a progressive fashion.

Fighting will result in 3 days suspension from the bus.

**Transportation Safety**

Every school bus used to transport children to and from school shall comply with the State Board of Education bus specifications.

All bus drivers shall participate in annual mandatory training activities on traffic laws pertaining to the operation of school buses and safety as established by State Board of Education rules and comply with procedures or regulations promulgated by the Superintendent and/or designees related to school bus operations and safety. If you have additional questions, contact Tim Dockery, 706-754-2110 ext. 11 or ext. 59

**EMERGENCY / SAFETY PLAN**

Our school has an emergency / safety plan in place that covers various emergencies including bomb threats, chemical accidents/hazardous materials, civil disturbances, earthquakes, explosives, fires, floods, injuries/illnesses, loss of utilities, nuclear attack, severe storms / tornadoes/ hurricanes, terrorist acts, and winter storms.

In the event of an emergency, we ask that parents listen to WCON 99.3FM for further instructions and/or check the county website: [www.habershamschools.com](http://www.habershamschools.com), as it may be impossible to get a phone call through to the school. Your help in this matter is greatly appreciated.

**Grading**

Kindergarten Grade Scale E = Emerging

P = Progressing

M = Meets

EX = Exceeds

NYD = Not Yet Demonstrated NYA = Not Yet Assessed

1st and 2nd Grade Scale

S+ = Outstanding (Exceeds Expectations) S = Satisfactory (Meets Expectations)

I = Improving

E = Emerging

3rd through 5th Grade Scale A = 90 – 100

B = 80 – 89

C = 75 – 79

D = 70 – 74

F = Below 70 – Not Passing

### **System-wide Elementary Art Grades:**

Students in 1st through 5th grades will receive numerical grades for art each quarter based on class participation and project effort. Expectations are:

**100 – 80:** Student is prepared for class. Student consistently participates in satisfactory manner and completes assignments/projects that exhibit quality craftsmanship with an understanding of the art standards.

**79 – 60:** Student is often unprepared for class. Student shows very little interest in class and participates only occasionally. Artwork is often not completed or satisfactory, with an insufficient level of craftsmanship, and shows little understanding of the standards.

**59 – below:** Student is consistently not prepared for art class, shows no interest and does not participate in class discussions. Most assignments/ projects are not completed and have no evidence of craftsmanship. Artwork shows very little understanding of the standards.

Based on the above criteria, students' grades will be adjusted accordingly: 1st time – warning

Additional times – 5 points deducted from grade

Student in Kindergarten will receive Satisfactory, Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory as grades for art.

### **Conduct Grades:**

Art conduct grades are designated by an S, N, or U for grades K through 5th.

Conduct grades for progress report and report card grades for 1st through 5th grades indicate a student's grade based on the individual elementary art classroom rules and school-wide behavior plans. All rules are reviewed with students on the first day of class and are displayed in the art classroom. These rules are also communicated to parents in a letter sent home at the beginning of the school year.

If a student fails to take corrective steps, the following procedures will be followed. First, the student will receive at least one verbal warning unless it is a major discipline incident. Second, the student will have 5 points deducted from their nine weeks grade. Third, the student will be referred to the office.

### **System-Wide Elementary Music Grades:**

Students in 1st through 5th grades will receive numerical grades for music each quarter based on class participation and effort. Expectations are:

**100 – 80:** Student is prepared for class. Student consistently participates in a satisfactory manner, displays a positive attitude, and exhibits effort with an understanding of the music standards.

**79 – 60:** Student is often unprepared for class. Student shows very little interest in class and participates only occasionally. Participation in class is at an insufficient level of effort, attitude detracts from the learning process and student shows little understanding of the standards.

**59 – below:** Student is consistently not prepared for class, shows no interest and does not participate in class discussions and/or music activities. A negative attitude impacts the student's learning. Student shows very little understanding of the standards.

Based on the above criteria, students' grades will be adjusted accordingly: 1st time – warning  
Additional times – 5 points deducted from grade

Student in Kindergarten will receive Satisfactory, Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory as grades for music.

### **Conduct Grades:**

Music conduct grades are designated by an S, N, or U for grades K through 5th.

Conduct grades for progress report and report card grades for 1st through 5th grades indicate a student's grade based on the individual elementary music classroom rules and school-wide behavior plans. All rules are reviewed with students on the first day of class and are displayed in the music classroom.

If a student fails to take corrective steps, the following procedures will be followed. First, the student will receive at least one verbal warning unless it is a major discipline incident. Second, the student will have 5 points deducted from their nine weeks grade. Third, the student will be referred to the office.

### **Physical Education (P.E.):**

This class is designed to develop students' performance in motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of activities, to develop concepts of physical fitness, to demonstrate respectful behavior among self and others, and to help the students understand the significance of lifestyle on one's health and fitness.

**Each student begins the week in P.E. with a 100. The student will maintain the 100 for the week if they demonstrate effort in all activities, follow the dress code for P.E., and display appropriate behavior. A student will lose points if they do not meet these three requirements.**

Students will also receive a conduct grade. This grade will be affected by the participation grade, (effort, appropriate dress code, and behavior).

If a child's participation grade is 90-100, the conduct grade will be an S.

If a child's participation grade is 80-89, the conduct grade will be an N.

If a child's participation grade is below an 80, then the conduct grade will be a U.

### **HOMEWORK POLICY**

Class guidelines will be sent home by grade level and determined by the classroom teachers. These assignments will vary in length and time required for completion based on the appropriateness for grade level and subject matter.

Parents can help with the homework process by:

- Showing an interest in assignments
- Encouraging child to work independently
- Encouraging child to "show and tell" completed homework
- Helping child when it becomes necessary
- Providing a quiet place and structured time daily
- Being aware of the frequency of assignments – checking the agenda book daily
- Encouraging and praising students for working on homework

## **HOMEWORK CENTER**

Habersham County Homework Center, Inc., is an after school program independent of the school that provides students a quiet, positive atmosphere for completing homework with adult supervision and assistance. Homework Center opens at 3:00 P.M. and closes at 5:30 P.M. Monday-Friday. The center is available to all students. There is a fee which is payable by the day, week, or month. Contracts stating the rules and regulations of the center may be picked up in the front office and must be signed by parents who wish for their children to participate. For any questions related to Homework Center, contact Carl Reddish at 706-754-2110.

## **HONOR ROLL**

Students at Demorest Elementary in grades 4-5 who achieve an average of 90 for subject area grades (language arts, math, science, social studies) for the 9 week period will be named to the Honor Roll. The county office will publish these names in the Northeast Georgian.

## **INAPPROPRIATE ITEMS**

Items not necessary to the instructional program should be left at home. Inappropriate items will be confiscated and returned only to a parent or guardian.

No student shall be permitted to carry a pocket pager or electronic communication device in school except for health or other unusual reasons approved by the Habersham County Board of Education (BOE Policy JCDA, Rule 1).

## **COMPUTER LAB**

Students should provide an inexpensive pair of headphones for their child's personal use.

## **LIBRARY / MEDIA CENTER**

### **Philosophy**

The Demorest Elementary School Library Media Center provides materials to promote the love of reading and to support the curriculum and Georgia Performance Standards (GPS). We provide resources for students and faculty in the form of print, non-print and electronic materials. This allows our patrons to complete assignments, explore ideas, and find a wide variety of recreational reading on many levels and topics. Our desire is that our students will become lovers of reading who are informed users of information and life-long learners.

### **Student Visits**

The Library Media Center (LMC) is accessible to students from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily. Scheduling is flexible to allow for optimum use and access to materials and resources.

Many teachers prefer to allow students to visit the library media center independently or in small groups for book return and check out. Some teachers also bring their classes as a whole group periodically for this purpose. Teachers also sign up for time slots that are flexibly scheduled depending upon the skills being taught and classroom research assignments.

### **Student Check Out :**

Students in grades 1-5 may have two library books checked out at a time, and students in Kindergarten may have one.

- Books may be checked out for a period of one week
- Books may be renewed up to two additional times

- By written consent, parents may request that their child not be allowed to check out certain books. When these requests are received at the school, they will be entered in the media automation system that will block this student from checking this book out.

### **Overdue & Damaged and Lost Book Policies**

We do not charge a fine for overdue books. If a student has books overdue we reserve the right to suspend borrowing privileges or limit the number of books out at any time until the overdue items are returned.

Students who have chronic overdues may have borrowing privileges revoked or limited, or they may have books they need for assignments signed out to their teacher so they may complete an assignment. They will receive a bill for lost books if the items are not returned.

If a book page accidentally rips, please do not attempt to repair it at home. We use special book tapes and glue. Return the book with a note and we will repair it.

If a book becomes damaged beyond repair, the student will be billed for the replacement cost.

When a student returns a book that has been damaged beyond use, borrowing privileges will be withheld until the book has been paid for.

Students who transfer to another school within the district without clearing their media account will have check out privileges suspended in the new school until the account is cleared. This is a countywide procedure.

### **Student Selection**

Media Specialists in Habersham County adhere to the belief that students should be free to select books on items of interest to them. If a student wishes to learn about a subject of his/her choice, we will attempt to guide him/her to find such a book. Time is spent in the classroom as well as in the Media Center discussing ways to choose books.

### **LOST OR DAMAGED PROPERTY**

Students are responsible for all materials they are issued which belong to the school or the Habersham County Board of Education. According to Habersham County Board Policy DFJ, a school has the authority to impose reasonable fines for lost or damaged property, which includes textbooks and library books. The fine for a book lost or damaged beyond use is the list price the school would pay to replace the book. Damaged books or property will be assessed as to the amount of damage and a fine determined based on teacher, media specialist or principal judgment. Lost and found is located in lunchroom entrance hallway.

### **MEDICINES**

Every effort is made to assist you in administering any medications needed by your child. Before medication can be administered, the parent/guardian must obtain and sign a form from the school requesting that the School System administer medication to their child. Conditions requiring long-term medication (for a period of time exceeding two weeks) will require a physician's signature.

**All medication must upon student's entry into the school, be presented to the school office** in a labeled prescription bottle which will include the student's name, date, instructions for administering, name of drug, and name of issuing physician. This includes inhalers & epi pens; however, the child may keep the inhaler or epi pen with him/her during the school day.



This practice is governed by Habersham County Board of Education Policy JGCD. A copy is available at school for your review.

Contact the school nurse, Angela Payne at 706-778-4126 if you have any questions.

### **“ONE CALL NOW”**

We send important information to parents using this automated system. Contact information is pulled directly from PowerSchool, our student information system. Please make sure we have your current phone number and email address.

## **PARENT COMMUNICATION**

### **Parent Communication**

The faculty and staff at Demorest Elementary believe that communication between the school and families is important to building community and this communication helps to foster high expectations. **Please notify your child’s teacher promptly with address and/or phone number changes.** We employ the following methods to provide parents with timely information about opportunities at Demorest Elementary along with keeping parents updated about the academic and behavioral performances of their children.

- **Demorest Elementary Web Page-**  
<http://demorest.ga.hce.schoolinsites.com>  
The web page allows parents to quickly access information about the school and get vital information that is posted. School information is continually updated on the web page.
- **Parent E-mail Updates-** Regular e-mails are sent to parents informing them of school happenings and achievements of the school. Sign up to receive these emails by clicking on the “Notify Me” link on the school’s web page.
- **Monday Folders** – Folders are sent home every Monday to the parents. The teachers use these folders to keep parents informed of student academic progress and other pertinent information.
- **Agenda Books** – The students’ agenda books are sent home daily. This serves as a communication tool between the parents and teachers. Students also write their homework assignments in their agenda books.
- **Classroom Newsletters** – The teachers send home a classroom or grade level newsletter weekly or monthly. The newsletters provide parents with assignment information and information relative to school wide issues.
- **PowerSchool** – Parents have access via the Internet to information pertaining to their child’s grades and attendance. The school will provide information about how to access this tool.

### **Parent Conferences**

A conference with your child’s teacher may be easily scheduled during the teacher’s planning time or before/after school by calling the teacher or sending the teacher a note and/or email requesting a conference. Every attempt will be made to meet at a time convenient for all involved.

School-wide parent conferences will be held during the year. Information will be sent home with details.

Parents are also encouraged become actively involved by volunteering in the classrooms and media center on a regular basis. Arrangements can be made through the office, media center, or the teacher.

**PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT** - See Pgs. 24-28

### **PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)**

Please show your support by joining our P.T.O. this year!

The Parent Teacher Organization (P.T.O.) is an organization of parents and teachers at Demorest Elementary. Membership is on a voluntary basis, but all parents and teachers are encouraged to participate. P.T.O. participation helps enrich the education of our students and is a rewarding experience for the parents.

The P.T.O. assists the school in many ways during the school year much to our school's appreciation. The Demorest P.T.O. assists the school by using resources of time, talents, and finances throughout the year.

Some financial ways P.T.O. helps is by providing teachers with funds to purchase classroom items, purchasing leveled reading books to enhance the school's reading program, providing computers, playground equipment and other resources for the school. Also, PTO provides field trip assistance, and funds such as those used for the 9 Week Celebrations to enhance the educational experience of our students.

The P.T.O. meetings usually begin at 6:30 P.M. in the gym with a business meeting and conclude with a program by or for students. Notices are sent home prior to meetings.

### **PARTNERS IN EDUCATION**

Demorest Elementary's Partners in Education are Windstream Communications, United Community Bank, and Horace Mann. Our partners team with us to educate our children and make our school excellent. They provide monetary contributions, supplies, classroom resources, etc. to support our goals.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Physical education programs are provided to all students as an integral phase of his/her growth and development. All elementary pupils in the State of Georgia are required to complete a minimum of 90 hours of physical education and health per year. A physician's statement is required for a restricted physical education program. If a child cannot participate because of a temporary restricted program, a note will excuse him/her that day. A note (excuse) for physical education will also apply to recess activities for the date(s) specified. Comfortable clothing and well fitting sneakers are a must for a child to participate in any physical education activity. In the gymnasium it is sometimes found that some footwear can pose a problem. These include:

- Slip-on sneakers with no backs (They do not always stay on when participating in running, jumping, landing, tumbling and kicking activities).
- The zip up sneaker or those with no laces to tighten. (These also can slip off when participating in physical activity).
- Crocs (Although they are comfortable, they do not offer support for activities where agility is required).

### **REQUIRED STUDENT RECORDS**

Every child must have the following on file at the school:

- A valid birth certificate (containing the seal, file number and signature of the registrar)
- A certificate of immunization recorded on the Department of Human Resources form
- A certificate of ear, eye and dental examinations recorded on the Department of Human Resources form
- A social security number

The proper forms may be obtained from the county health department.

### **SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT COMPLIANCE**

Any student or parent or guardian (“grievant”) may request an impartial hearing due to the school system’s actions or inactions regarding your child’s identification, evaluation, or educational placement under Section 504. Requests for an impartial hearing must be in writing to the school system’s Section 504 Coordinator; however, a grievant’s failure to request a hearing in writing does not alleviate the school system’s obligation to provide an impartial hearing if the grievant orally requests an impartial hearing through the school system’s Section 504 Coordinator. The school system’s Section 504 Coordinator will assist the grievant in completing the written Request for Hearing. The Section 504 Coordinator may be contacted through the school system’s central office. Copies of the 504 Procedural Safeguards and Notice of Rights of Students and Parents Under Section 504 may be found at the system website or may be picked up at the central office or at any of the school offices.

*Section 504 Contact:*

Jill Maxwell, Special Education Director, P.O. Box 70, Clarkesville, GA 30523 Phone-754-2913

**SCHOOL COUNCIL**

The Demorest Elementary School Council is comprised of parents and community members. The council meets four times a year. Dates and times of these meetings are posted at the entrance to the school. Meetings are open to the public. Parents are encouraged to attend.

**SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

Information regarding school closings will be available on radio stations WCON, 99.3FM in Cornelia and WCHM, 1490 AM in Clarkesville Also it will be posted on the county website [www.habershamschools.com](http://www.habershamschools.com). Announcement will be made by 6:30 AM.

**SCHOOL CLUBS**

Carl’s Chorus – Demorest Elementary’s fourth & fifth grade chorus is a non-auditioned choral group open to any fourth or fifth grade student.

**4-H** – 4-H meetings are held once each month, and they are led by the County Extension Agent. All Habersham County 5th graders are members. Officers are elected from each homeroom to help conduct the meetings, which develop skills in public speaking and communication, reasoning and decision-making, and leadership. Students have opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities through 4-H. They are encouraged to participate in community service competitions and in summer 4H camp.

**SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAM**

The food service staff strives to prepare delicious and well-balanced meals. The menus are planned by the Food Nutrition Supervisor and are sent home each month with students and posted on the website. We encourage your child to participate in the school meal program.

Breakfast is served each morning beginning at 7:15 A.M. Students who wish to eat breakfast at schools should arrive before 7:45 to prevent being tardy to class.

School meals may be paid for in advance or at the time of purchase. Meals may be paid for daily, weekly, or monthly. Those paying weekly or monthly may pay online (<https://www02.mypaymentsplus.com/default.aspx>) or send payment in an envelope. If using an envelope, please send it on MONDAY with the child’s name, the teacher’s name, and the amount of the payment on the outside of the envelope. Meals may be purchased with checks or cash. Checks should be made to Demorest Elementary. Students with outstanding accounts will not be permitted to purchase snacks, participate in field trips, receive report cards, or purchase items from the book fair.

All students in all grades may charge five days of meals only, both breakfast and lunch. Students may not charge a la carte or extra items. The day that the first charge occurs, parents will be notified by a note given to the student by his/her SNP cashier. This same process will be repeated for every day that the student charges up to the fifth day. After the fifth day of charges, the student will be provided with a courtesy meal. The courtesy meal will consist of a cheese sandwich and fruit. Water is available in all lunchrooms.

If a drink is brought with lunch from home, it must be **non-carbonated** and be placed in a thermos or plastic container. Glass containers and canned drinks are not allowed. Juice boxes or the like are allowed. Also, microwaves are not available, so please make arrangements for other sack lunch options.

**Eligibility forms for reduced and free priced meals** are sent home with each student at the beginning of the school year. Should you need one at any time, please call the school office, and we'll be glad to send one home. They are also available online at <http://www.schoolnutritionandfitness.com/index.php?page=lunchapps&sid=1107122129582115>.

**Please fill out and return ASAP for fastest processing.**

### **Meal Prices 2016-2017**

Elementary Student Breakfast - Free / Visitor Breakfast \$2.00

Elementary Student Lunch \$1.75 / Reduced Lunch .40 / Visitor Lunch \$3.50

### **Lunchroom Procedures**

Parents are welcome to have lunch with their children. Guidelines that regulate the school lunch program prohibit food from outside restaurants being brought into the cafeteria. If parents bring food from a restaurant for lunch, we will provide a place outside the cafeteria so they can have lunch with their child. Please do not invite other students to eat with you unless their parents have given written permission. Sack lunches from home will be allowed in the lunchroom, or parents may purchase a meal from the cafeteria.

### **SNACKS**

Students may purchase nutritious snacks from the vending machine **after their designated lunchtime**. No purchases may be made prior to student's lunchtime. Purchasing snacks is a privilege and up to the discretion of the school staff. Ice cream will also be available for students to purchase as snack. Students may purchase an ice cream ticket for .50 from 7:35-7:55. The tickets will be redeemed **before recess**. No tickets may be redeemed prior to student's lunchtime. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with the ticket. No refunds will be given for lost tickets.

### **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

The Habersham County School System offers a comprehensive program for all areas of exceptionality through its special-education program. Programs included are those for mildly to profoundly handicapped, speech impaired, hearing impaired, vision impaired, health impaired, and the intellectually gifted. Support services are provided in the areas of physical and occupational therapy.

### **STUDENT ACCOUNTS**

Students with outstanding accounts in the lunchroom or media center will be prohibited from:

- Purchasing items from the book fair
- Attending field trips

Parents will be required to pick up report cards in the office and resolve outstanding student accounts.

### **STUDENT AGENDAS**

Important information is included in the front of the agenda for parents' reference. Students will use their agendas for recording assignments. Teachers will use the agendas for communicating with parents about student behavior, upcoming events, etc. Please check the agenda nightly and sign or initial. Parents are encouraged to use the agenda for communicating with teachers.

### **STUDENT INFORMATION UPDATES**

**Please promptly report any change of address, transportation information, or telephone numbers to your child's teacher. This will allow us to contact you should an emergency occur.** Please include at least 2 additional emergency contacts on enrollment forms and update as needed.

If you are transferring to another school, please come by the school office and complete the proper form. Your child's records will then be sent directly to your new school once a request for records has been received.

### **STUDENT PROGRESS and REPORTS**

PowerSchool is our Student Information System for Habersham County. This system will allow you to access your child's grades or attendance at anytime via the internet. Because PowerSchool offers many excellent features which offer you updated and quick feedback regarding your child's progress and status, please email [parentaccess@habersham.k12.ga.us](mailto:parentaccess@habersham.k12.ga.us) to obtain a user name and password.

Parents will be notified of deficiencies in academic progress by the middle of the report period. A formal notice will be presented to the parents by mid-year informing them of unsatisfactory progress that could prevent the student from meeting the promotion criteria. A parent conference will be requested whenever a deficiency notice is required.

Report cards will be sent home with students on the fifth school day for students after the end of each nine weeks. If that day is a Friday or just before a holiday for students, the report cards will be sent home on the next day students attend school.

Take-home folders will be issued to each student. Folders will be sent home each Monday (unless a holiday).

Progress reports and report cards should be signed and returned the following day. Test papers and other significant work by students will be sent home periodically. Students are expected to return these papers signed by the parent. Since we view this as a part of teaching students to be responsible, students who consistently "forget" signed papers or other documentation may have consequences. Please help your child by asking for important school notes, agenda books, and papers each day.

Grading is based on Habersham County Board of Education Policy IHA. The information below reflects Policy IHA.

### **TELEPHONE USE**

Students are not allowed to use the phone during the school day. In cases of sickness/emergency, the nurse or a school secretary will contact a parent. Students will not be called out of class to come to the phone except in extreme emergencies. If parents need to get in touch with their child, a message may be left with the secretary, and we will see that the child receives the message.

### **TESTING**

Georgia schools are required to participate in the Georgia Milestones assessment program.

### **TEXTBOOKS**

Textbooks are free to all school children and are the property of the State of Georgia. The student is responsible for paying for such loss or damage as determined by a schedule supplied by the State Board of Education (Board of Education Policy IFA).

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **Bus Riders:**

Bus transportation is provided for your convenience. Rules for riding the school bus have been established at the system level in an effort to provide safe transportation for all riders. Please discuss the importance of obeying these rules with your child. See the Habersham County Bus Rules page 12 in this handbook for additional information. You can also see Board Policy JCDAD or EDCB.

**Pre-K through 3rd grade** students must be met at the afternoon bus stop by an adult or accompanied by a middle school or high school aged sibling.

Fourth and fifth grade parents may request that the bus driver not let fourth and fifth graders off the bus without an adult or middle school/high school aged sibling at the bus stop. In this case, a parent needs to submit a written request to the principal.

### **Parent Drop-Off & Pick-Up**

Students should only be dropped off and picked up at the school's main entrance. The entrance will be unlocked at **7:15 a.m.** For students' safety, please do not drop students off before 7:15 a.m. **Please remember that any child arriving after 8:00 a.m. will be counted tardy, and a parent must sign him/her in at the office.** Please help us keep all students safe remaining in the traffic line during student drop off and pick up. Please don't pass or go around cars who are dropping off or picking up students. Please allow students to exit and enter cars only on the passenger side. This will eliminate any possibility of them being hit by a car passing in the traffic line.

### **Changes in After School Plans**

Write a note in your child's agenda to inform the teacher of changes in transportation.

**In the event an emergency change needs to be made in mode of transportation, parents must call the office before 1:00 p.m. We cannot guarantee that request for changes to transportation made after 1:00 p.m. will be met.**

Changes in transportation will not be made without prior written or verbal parental consent.

Dismissal time for car riders is 2:45 p.m. Actual loading of cars will begin at 2:50 p.m. Teachers and staff will be there to help children get to the appropriate car. All parents should wait in cars until students are released for parent pick up. Students will not be called to the office for parent pick up.

Those who will be riding in parent pickup will be issued 2 name/number hangtags that **must** be used for verification when coming through the parent pick up line. For additional hangtags, you may purchase each for \$1.

Anyone without a hangtag will need to show identification and wait for verification that he/she has permission to pick up the child.

Students picked up prior to 2:50 p.m. will be counted as tardy (leave early). When unavoidable circumstances require early pick up, please notify the school. Those students not picked up by 3:15 p.m. will report to Homework Center. A fee will be charged.

### **UNSTRUCTURED BREAK TIME**

The Habersham County Board of Education allows the scheduling of unstructured break time for students in kindergarten and grades 1 through 8. The school principal is authorized to determine the length, frequency, timing, and location of breaks at each school. Refer to Board Policy IEDA for more details. Recess is a privilege and can be lost as warranted by student conduct.

### **VISITORS**

In the interest of **safety** for all our **students** we do require that **ALL** parents and visitors check-in at the office upon entering the building. Parents and visitors are then given a hall pass that notifies the Faculty and Staff that the office is aware of your presence in the building. Thank you for your cooperation in this as we try to make our school safe as well as inviting. Board Policy KM

In order to protect instructional time, we ask that all class/teacher visits be scheduled in advance. Teachers will not be able to visit with parents during instructional time. Please call or email your child's teacher or leave a message with the secretaries to schedule a meeting or speak with your child's teacher.

### **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY FOR TITLE I**

Demorest Elementary recognizes that family involvement is crucial if our students are to learn more, to achieve higher academic standards, and to succeed in school and life. It shall be the intent of all parent involvement activities at Demorest Elementary to encourage and support the efforts of home, school, and community in improving the educational opportunities of all children.

Each Title I eligible school has a parent involvement policy, which aligns with the system policy and adheres to the guidelines specified in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001.

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LEA PLAN UNDER SECTION 1112 AND SECTION 1116**

Parents were involved in the joint development of the Title 1 plan and in the process of school review and improvement through the use of parent surveys, membership on committees, school wide planning teams, school councils, membership on school improvement teams, and school based SACS process.

### **PROVIDE COORDINATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

The Federal Programs Director provides: program supervision; technical assistance; instructional support in collaboration with the principal; staff development coordination; assistance in purchasing necessary materials; and otherwise securing resources as needed in order to provide our school with the means to plan, implement, and evaluate effective parent involvement programs.

### **BUILD STRONG CAPACITY FOR PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

The school has planned programs designed to provide high quality parent involvement. The school has a Title I Parent Involvement Task Force, Literacy Team, Leadership Team, and School Council which work to involve parents in their students' education by planning activities and workshops aimed toward increasing parental involvement. Parent involvement strategies are included in school Title I plans and in our school SACS plans.

### **COORDINATION WITH OTHER PROGRAMS**

Parental involvement programs and activities will be coordinated in conjunction with all programs containing a parent involvement component. These programs are EIP, ESOL, and Title 1.

## **ANNUAL EVALUATION**

Annually an evaluation of the Title I program will be conducted. The school surveys parents to ascertain the effectiveness and appropriateness of the entire program, which includes the parent involvement component. Areas to be evaluated will include examination of participation levels and identifying barriers to parent participation, particularly for families who are from lower socioeconomic groups, racial or ethnic minorities, and other disadvantaged populations. The findings of this evaluation will be used to design strategies for school improvement or to redesign the plan and policy. A goal of the Title I program is to increase student achievement through parental involvement.

## **INVOLVE PARENTS IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

Demorest Elementary involves parents in school activities in a variety of ways. Some examples include parent workshops providing materials to help with academic areas, distribution of newsletters, and websites, which include tips for working with children at home. Parents serve on school improvement plan teams, PTO committees, and the Demorest Elementary School Council.

## **ALLOCATION**

Fund allocation will be based on guidelines detailed in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. The NCLB Act specifies that not less than 1% of the total system allocation shall be reserved for parent involvement and not less than 95% of this amount shall be distributed to eligible schools.

## **PARENTAL INPUT**

Parent input is welcome concerning parenting activities and school improvement. Expenditure of parent involvement funds is based on established needs identified in needs assessments.

## **AMENDMENT**

The parental involvement policy may be reviewed and amended based on the changing needs of Title I eligible schools and the needs of parents.

## **PARENTAL COMMENTS**

If the parental involvement plan is not satisfactory to parents of participating children, dissenting parent comments will be submitted to the system.

Parental comments are kept on file in the Federal Programs Director's office.

## **ANNUAL MEETING**

In the fall of each year, our school will have an annual meeting at a convenient time for parents, to which all parents of participating children will be invited and encouraged to attend. Parents will be informed of the nature of the Title I Program and the right of the parents to be involved in their children's education.

## **FLEXIBLE MEETINGS**

A flexible number and times of parent meetings will be planned for parent involvement purposes. If available, funds may be provided for transportation, child care, and/or home visits to involve parents in the education of their children.

## **INVOLVING PARENTS IN PLANNING AND REVIEW**

Parents serve on planning teams to help in the planning, review, and improvement of program and policy. Parent input is obtained through surveys and input during meetings. The policy is disseminated to parents and is updated and reviewed as needed.



### **TIMELY INFORMATION TO PARENTS**

Parents will be provided timely information about school programs, a description and explanation of the curriculum, forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress and proficiency levels students are expected to meet. If requested, opportunities will be provided for parents to meet with school personnel to formulate suggestions, participate in discussions and decisions relating to the education of their children. Parent comments, satisfactory and non-satisfactory, regarding the plan and/or policy will be documented and reviewed.

### **DESCRIPTION AND EXPLANATION OF THE CURRICULUM**

A description and explanation of the curriculum is explained to parents at the annual meeting, during parent meetings, and during parent-teacher conferences throughout the school year. This information is also provided on the school district's website, in parent handbooks, and in parent guides.

### **OPPORTUNITIES FOR REGULAR PARENT MEETINGS**

Inclusion of parents in all educational areas that affect their children is a goal of Title I. Interested parents will be assisted in obtaining literacy skills and parenting skills in order to help their children. Parents are surveyed to determine the most appropriate times and days for parent meetings.

### **SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES FOR HIGH STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

Plans will address the school's commitment to provide high quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective environment so that children can meet the state's student academic achievement standards. Our school has a school-parent compact on file in the Title I office. The school-parent compact provides opportunities for positive and meaningful communication between parents and school personnel. The compact is learning oriented and consists of a plan of action that details responsibilities by the school, the student, and the parent for the purpose of achieving high student achievement.

### **COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL AND FREQUENT REPORTS TO PARENTS ABOUT PROGRESS**

Parents will be informed of school activities through a variety of ways. These ways may include newsletters, letters, agenda books, telephone contact, mailings, and conferences. Frequent reports will be made to parents through progress reports, report cards, and computer generated reports, etc. to inform parents of student progress. Parents will be given reasonable access to school staff by use of conferences, school visits, opportunities to volunteer, and opportunities to observe and participate in classroom activities.

### **WAYS PARENTS CAN MONITOR THEIR CHILDREN'S PROGRESS AND WORK WITH EDUCATORS TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR CHILDREN**

Parents will be encouraged to attend meetings, workshops and conferences to learn how they can help their children improve their academic performance. Parents are encouraged to visit the school, volunteer at the school, and participate in school activities. Parents can monitor and support their child's learning by keeping abreast of school procedures, accessing PowerSchool, by reviewing their child's agenda book daily and weekly folder, by reviewing progress reports, by reviewing report cards, by being aware of homework/classwork requirements, and working with schools to schedule conferences to help children improve academically.

### **WAYS PARENTS CAN PARTICIPATE IN DECISIONS RELATING TO THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN**

Parents can participate in decisions relating to the education of their children by serving on school planning teams, attending PTO, attending parent meetings, and participation in parent-teacher conferences. Other opportunities exist for parent participation in decision making by serving on the school council and by responding to surveys.

### **CONTENT STANDARDS AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

Assistance will be provided to participating parents in understanding current relevant aspects of their child's education and development such as:

- National Education Goals,
- Georgia's content and student performance standards
- School improvement and corrective action process if applicable
- Components of a school wide program
- State and local assessments
- Requirements of Title I, Part A
- Ways parents can monitor their children's progress and work with educators to improve the performance of their children
- Ways parents can become active participants in their children's education

### **STATE AND LOCAL ASSESSMENTS**

In a timely manner, parents will be provided information concerning the results of the annual review including school performance profiles, individual student assessment results and interpretation of those results, a description and explanation of the school curriculum and the assessments used to measure student progress and the proficiency levels the students are expected to meet.

### **ACCESSIBILITY**

To the extent possible, information related to the school, meetings, and other activities will be sent to the homes of participating children in the language used in such homes. In carrying out the parent involvement requirements, we will to the extent practicable, provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency or with disabilities, including providing information and school profiles in a language and form parents understand.

### **NOTICE ON STATUS OF THE SCHOOL**

The school will provide written notice regarding its AYP status to parents of each student. If applicable, the notice will specify the process for school choice and supplemental service. To the extent practicable, the notice will be written in a language that the parents can understand.

### **REVIEW**

The school's policies and practices will be reviewed to determine if they meet specified requirements. An annual audit is held to meet this requirement.

### **Complaint Procedures for Federal Programs under the No Child Left Behind Act**

As part of its Assurances within NCLB program grant applications and pursuant to Section 9306 of the No Child Left Behind Act, a local educational agency (LEA) accepting federal funds also agrees to adopt local written procedures for the receipt and resolution of complaints alleging violations of law in the administration of covered programs. Habersham County School System has established the following avenues for managing such complaints. Every effort is made to resolve issues and to answer inquiries at the most direct and immediate level. This resolution is facilitated through regular contact between district staff and participating school representatives. If an issue cannot be satisfactorily resolved in this manner, a formal complaint procedure may be implemented. Any public or nonpublic school parent or teacher, other interested person, or agency may file a formal complaint.

### **Procedures for Filing Formal Complaints/Appeals:**

Level One-Formal Complaint to the Title I Director

If the complaint is not resolved informally, the complainant may file a complaint with the Title I Director.

All complaints must be submitted in writing;

- include the name and address of the person submitting the complaint;

- be signed by the person or agency representative filing the complaint;
- specify the requirement of law or regulation being violated and the related issue, problem, and/or the concern;
- contain information/evidence supporting the complaint; and
- state the nature of the corrective action desired.
- be sent to Habersham County Schools

Title I Director

PO Box 70 Clarkesville, GA 30523

The LEA has a thirty (30) business day period in which to resolve a complaint and notify the complainant. The Title I Director shall notify the complainant in writing of the decision. A copy of such written notification shall be mailed to the complainant.

#### *Level Two-Appeal to the Superintendent of Schools*

An appeal must be requested and postmarked within 20 business days of receipt of the LEA's response to the original complaint.

An appeal must contain:

- a copy of the original signed complaint
- a copy of the Title I Director's response to the original complaint or a statement that the Title I Director failed to respond in 30 business days.

The Superintendent of Schools shall within a ten (10)-day period following the appeal, do one or more of the following as deemed appropriate:

- Review written decision at level one together with any and all other documentary evidence that may be submitted
- Conduct a hearing with all persons whom he/she may choose to invite including the principal parties.
- Designate such person or persons as deemed appropriate to investigate the complaint and to offer recommendations prior to making a final decision.

The Superintendent, after initiating one or more of the options listed above, shall within seven (7) days make a final decision on the appeal and notify the complainant in writing of the decision. A copy of such written notification shall be mailed to the complainant.

#### *Level Three-Appeal to the Board of Education*

Within ten (10) days after the receipt of the decision at level two, the complainant may appeal to the local Board of Education. The Board shall conduct a hearing at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board. The hearing may be an open or closed session as requested by the complainant. The Board shall reach a decision concerning the complaint within ten (10) days after the hearing and shall convey the decision to the complainant within two (2) days after reaching a decision.

#### *Level Four-Appeal to the Georgia Department of Education*

The decision of the Board of Education shall be final unless the complainant decides to appeal to the Georgia Department of Education. The complainant may obtain instructions for filing a complaint with the Georgia Department of Education from the Title I Director.

### **Nondiscrimination Statement**

It is the policy of the Habersham County School System not to discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, national origin, marital status, religion, veteran status, or disability in its educational programs and activities. The Director of Federal Programs is Dr. Renee Pryor, and the Special Education Director is Jill Maxwell. Both may be reached at P.O. Box 70, Clarkesville, GA, 30523 or by calling (706) 754-2110.