

Minor Elementary School

Parent/Student Handbook 2021-2022

Academic Knowledge & Skills (AKS)

The AKS are the objectives GCPS teachers are expected to teach, and students are expected to learn, at each grade level. In essence, it is the defined curriculum. Parents will learn more about the AKS during Open House and in the grade level newsletters that will be sent home each month, but you may also review these or print a personal copy from the [GCPS website](#).

Attendance

In compliance with Georgia Attendance Law, the following absences will be classified as excused:

- Personal illness endangering a student's health or the health of others
- A serious illness or death in a student's immediate family
- A court order or an order by a governmental agency
- Observing religious holidays or military families on leave
- Conditions making attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety

For each absence, a written excuse explaining the absence must be brought to school within two days of return to school. Prompt and consistent attendance at school is expected. Instilling these behaviors in our students is an important factor in their school success as well as their future success. Student attendance is monitored by the school. Excessive excused and/or unexcused tardiness and/or absences may result in referral to administration, counselors, and/or social workers in addition to parent/guardian receipt of alert letters when certain attendance patterns develop.

Bus Transportation

Parents are strongly encouraged to have their child ride the bus to and from school each day as the Minor campus only affords one entrance and exit, which results in unnecessary delay in dismissal if there is a large car-rider population. Parents are asked to have their child begin riding the bus from the very first day of school, to ensure a routine is established right away and both the teacher and the student are certain how the child will go home from day one.

Riding a school bus is a privilege contingent upon proper conduct. If students choose not to follow the bus rules, then interventions will be put in place. If the interventions do not work, a student may be suspended from the bus. Please be sure to review the GCPS Bus Discipline Guidelines with your child, located in this handbook.

While the local school handles any discipline referrals received from the bus drivers, parent concerns regarding transportation should be directed to the Transportation at: 678-380-7237.

BYOD (Bring Your Own Device)

Minor Elementary is a BYOD environment. Students are permitted to bring personal electronic devices that are Wi-Fi enabled, to use in the classroom under teacher guidance, as learning tools. School owned student laptops and handheld devices are available in each classroom for all students to use.

Car Rider Transportation

If a parent must transport their child to or from school by car, they will need to complete a car rider application during registration to secure a car rider number. The hang-tag issued will need to be displayed on your rear-view mirror to expedite dismissal. Numbers change from year-to-year so these should be destroyed at the end of each school year and parents must reapply for a new number each year. Under no circumstances will children be released to a vehicle without a Minor issued hang-tag. Check-out must occur in the front office if no hang-tag is displayed, and picture ID will be needed before we can release the student.

Morning **car rider drop off starts at 8:20 daily** at the back of the campus and concludes at 8:45

as staff begin their instructional day and the door to enter the building at car-rider drop off is locked. If you arrive after 8:50 your child will be considered tardy and you will need to check them in at the front office. No school supervision is available prior to this time and students may not be left unattended. Afternoon **car-rider dismissal starts at 3:20 daily**. Please display your car rider number and remain in your vehicle. Please exercise caution by driving slowly and moving your vehicle only when motioned to. There is no supervision available for students after dismissal as staff hours end at 3:50 and office personnel at 4:00. If a child is picked up late more than three times in a school year, administrative intervention will occur. If a child is not picked up, and no parent/guardian is reached, the school resource officer will be contacted to guide the school on how to proceed.

Cell Phone Policy

Students are permitted to have a parent owned cell phone at school. The phone must remain off during school hours. Cell phones may not be used for outgoing or incoming calls or texts by students without explicit permission from their teacher or an administrator upon request by the parent/s. The school will not be responsible for lost or stolen equipment.

Clinic

***Phone Number – 678-245-3171**

The clinic is staffed by a trained adult, but NOT a registered nurse. Parents/Guardians will be called if a child is too ill to remain at school. Students with a fever of 100 or higher will be sent home and need to be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. Parents should report to the front office to sign out a child from the clinic if they are contacted within a reasonable amount of time (Approx: 1 hour).

The clinic worker is authorized to administer medications to students when the proper paperwork is completed by the parent. Medications should always be in the original containers when brought to or picked up from school by an adult. These procedures are a safety precaution for your child, both when on the bus and when visiting the clinic. Parents should inform the school if their child has a contagious disease. Please do not send your

child to school when he/she is feeling ill and there is risk of infecting others.

Clubs & Extracurricular Activities

Minor Elementary offers students a variety of clubs, tutoring opportunities, and extracurricular activities for students to engage in. A master list is posted on our website each year. Parents are reminded that participation in these programs often involves the need for students to be dropped off early or picked up late from school. When doing so, the published start and end times must be adhered to. Siblings cannot attend with their participating sibling/s, nor be left unsupervised.

Closing of the School

GCPS schools and facilities may close in the event of hazardous weather or other emergencies which present threats to the safety of students, staff, or school property.

As a rule, the decision to cancel school is made before 6 a.m. The school system immediately notifies all major radio and television stations in metro Atlanta. In addition, the information is announced on GCPS TV, posted on the school system's website, and emails and texts are sent to parents.

Should severe weather move into the area during the day, plans to cancel classes will be announced on metro-Atlanta radio and TV stations and on the school system's web site before school is dismissed.

Communication from/with the school

Student work and parent communication from the teacher or the school will be sent home in Friday Folders each week. Parents should review the folder, remove contents and/or sign and return any documents requiring such and send it back in the folder Monday. Students in grades 2 through 5 will also have agenda books. Teachers and parents are encouraged to send brief notes to one another via this notebook.

Current Student/Parent Information

It is extremely important that you keep the school informed of any changes in your home, work and/or cell phone numbers as well as address. Providing local phone numbers are important to ensure ease when trying to contact you. When

changes occur, you can simply send a note in with your child or email the teacher to let them know and they in turn will let the office know. A change of address requires new proof of residence. The front office needs this information to ensure these changes are reflected on your child's emergency dismissal card, clinic card, and updated in our electronic student records database. You are also encouraged to keep emergency contact names and numbers up to date so your children can be released, in an emergency, to those individuals you have designated.

Dress Code

Students are encouraged to dress in age & weather appropriate, attire. Shoes should preferably be sneakers or sandals that can be fastened to the foot. **Flip-flops are strongly discouraged** as they are not appropriate for Gym or daily recess and can cause unnecessary accidents. Short skirts, short shorts or abdomen bearing shirts (halter tops/crop tops) are not appropriate dress for school. Hats, bandanas, and sweatbands should not be worn. Hair should not obstruct a student's ability to see. Hair coloring or hair highlights, other than those that mimic natural hair tones, is discouraged.

Early Check Out

Early check out by parents or guardians **must take place prior to 2:45 daily**. You will be required to show a picture I.D. prior to having a child released to exit the building. Teachers are not permitted to release students from the classroom, even at parent request. All check-outs must be facilitated from the front office. Parents are encouraged to try and schedule student medical appointments outside of the school day, in an effort to maximize the students' opportunity for learning.

Grade Reporting

Each semester, parents can expect to receive a report card detailing student performance. In addition, the Parent Portal, a tool for parents with Internet access, allows student information to be obtained 24/7 once registration at the local school is completed. If assistance is needed, registration should be directed to our Local School Technology Coordinator at 770-925-9543.

Grade Alerts

You are encouraged to monitor your child's grades via the Parent Portal. Twice yearly, you will also be invited to conference on Early Release days, when you can discuss your child's progress more in-depth. Student promotion to the next grade is determined by GCPS policy and/or and state promotion requirements. More detailed information can be found on the GCPS website or can be requested from your child's teacher or Assistant Principal.

Parents are asked to contact the teacher via e-mail or leave a phone message for them, should they wish to make an appointment for conference at other intervals during the year. The school does not allow 'drop-in' visits as they cause disruption to the instruction of all students when they occur outside of the teacher's daily planning time.

Homeless Children & Youth

The Stewart B. McKinney/Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Act ensures the educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. It provides legal protections for children and youth in homeless situations to enroll in, attend, and succeed in school or pre-school. In accordance with this law, GCPS affords homeless children and youth equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education such as Head Start, Even Start, State Pre-K, and Title I Preschool Programs as provided to other students. Homeless children and youth will have access to education and other services needed to have an opportunity to meet the same challenging state student academic standards to which all students are held. Please contact the registrar at individual schools for further information.

Homework Guidelines

Meaningful homework can be a way for children to practice what they have learned in school, and in doing so, communicate the curriculum to parents. Although homework is primarily the responsibility of the students, there needs to be a partnership with parents so that encouragement and guidance are provided. Homework is assigned Monday through Thursday and should

be approximately 10-50 minutes long, depending on the grade level (e.g., 2nd grade = 20 min., 3rd grade = 30 min.). Homework is reflected in the 'work habits' section of the Progress Report and affects students' rate of progress and retention of information.

Language Translation

Minor Elementary is afforded a full-time staff member who serves as our Title III Parent Liaison. The Parent Liaison's responsibilities include assisting the school with verbal and written translation of Spanish to English, or vice versa. She can provide translation for meetings if you request her assistance in advance, but you are strongly encouraged to bring along someone of your own choosing to support you with translation needs as well. Please understand that translation is a courtesy that is extended when resources are available. To support communication, the county has a database of many GCPS forms that are translated into several languages. Please call the front office if you need assistance with translated materials.

Parent Involvement

Parents are strongly encouraged to attend local school events and volunteer their time at the school. The best way to let us know of your availability is to connect with our Parent Center. Parents can also support the school by volunteering in their child's homeroom class, serving on a PTA committee or the executive board or volunteering to care for our Organic Garden and/or Wildlife Habitat. In order to protect instructional time, we ask that classroom volunteers not bring siblings/small children with them when volunteering.

Parties

Two school-wide parties will be held each year and parent participation is encouraged through volunteering your time or donating items. These parties typically take place in December and May. (See 'Student Birthday Recognition' for more information.)

Patriot Spirit Days

Each Friday all students are encouraged to show their Minor Patriot pride by wearing red, white & blue or Spirit Wear. Minor Spirit Wear is typically on sale at the start of each school year and again after returning from Winter Break.

Phone Messages

Should you wish to contact any staff member for any reason, simply call the main phone line and our receptionists will be happy to either connect you or take a message. Teachers generally cannot come to the phone during instructional hours, so it is best to leave a message. Phone messages are not taken or given to students unless it is an emergency. Parents are encouraged to contact staff via e-mail as well.

School Hours

School hours are 8:50-3:20. Students may begin entering the building at 8:20 a.m. Parents are responsible for supervision prior to this time. All students should be in their rooms, ready to begin learning, by 8:50. Students arriving after 8:50 are considered tardy. Early check out by parents/guardians must take place prior to 2:45 daily. Students will be dismissed at 3:20 each day. Parents can expect that all buses should be loaded by 3:50 or sooner, with the exception of the first few weeks of school.

School Nutrition Program

***Phone Number - 678-245-3165**

The school cafeteria is maintained as a service to students and parents and is a vital part of our health program. To encourage good nutrition, a well-balanced lunch and breakfast are served daily. Free & Reduced meal applications can be obtained during Registration, or from the school cafeteria manager. There is also a link on our school website. Click on the red apple. Meals can be paid for online on the [My Payments Plus website](#).

Adult breakfast: \$2.50

Adult lunch: \$3.75

Ice Cream: \$1.00 – Friday's Only

Student Conduct Behavior Code

Our school is committed to providing a school program that allows all students to achieve; therefore, no student should interfere with the rights of others to learn. Students who do not adhere to the twelve GCPS Rules of Student Conduct, based on board policy JCD, will be disciplined. Minor employs Positive Behavioral Intervention Strategies (PBIS) that align with these rules and focus on building good character and making wise choices. These expectations will be reviewed with all students at the onset of the school year. Classroom behavior management

plans are developed by each individual teacher, in alignment with the school's plan. A copy of this will be provided to you during Open House. As a rule of thumb, the Assistant Principal for each grade level is responsible for handling all school based and bus discipline referrals.

Student Birthday Recognition

Student birthdays are acknowledged on morning announcements each day and students receive a special ribbon and small gift from the school. In an effort to maintain the instructional integrity of the day, additional parent acknowledgements during the school day are discouraged.

Parents that do choose to bring treats for the class are strongly encouraged to notify teachers in advance. Treats must be pre-packaged, or store bought as homemade baked good or treats are not permitted due to unknown food safety standards in home kitchens. Please do not bring balloons, flowers, juice, or goody bags. The school maintains the right to inspect and approve any treats prior to students being offered them.

Teachers will determine if the treats will be distributed during lunch or at the end of the school day. Since not all teachers eat with their students every day, parents cannot be permitted to distribute treats themselves as they are not aware of student food allergies. The only time lunchtime distribution of treats permitted will be if a parent contacts a teacher in advance and the teacher agrees to pass out the treats him/herself. Please keep in mind however that this is a courtesy as teachers would be using their own lunch time to facilitate this.

Parents whose children ride the bus are reminded that students are not permitted to transport food items (like cupcakes or trays of food) on the bus. Likewise, 'leftovers' cannot be sent home with students either.

Support Services

Our school has many supplemental programs and services which enhance the learning experience. These include special area classes, Gifted Education (FOCUS), ELL (English Language Learners), Special Education and EIP

(Early Intervention Program). Eligibility and placement in these programs vary. If a student isn't already receiving support through one or more of these programs, application can be discussed and considered through the RTI and/or SST Process (see below).

Student Support Team (SST) & Response To Intervention (RTI)

While special education students' needs are addressed primarily through the IEP process, regular education students who may be struggling with academics, emotions, social interaction, or behaviors, are referred for support first through the RTI process, which depending on the depth of assistance needed, may eventually transition into the SST process. Please contact the front office if you have any questions. Staff members or parents can initiate a meeting.

Textbooks

GCPS provides textbooks for all students in the county at no cost. Every student is obligated to give his/her books the best care. Textbooks must be paid for if lost or damaged.

In rare circumstances, to support student needs, a second set of textbooks for use at home may be approved if additional books are available. In this case, the parent/s and/or guardian/s must provide the school a deposit for the cost of the books. The full deposit will be refunded when the books are returned to the school, in good condition, after use.

Title IX Notice

If you believe you are being mistreated by school employees on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin or handicap, please tell any school employee in whom you have confidence that you have a complaint about the manner in which you were treated and why. Please contact the school and ask for the title IX coordinator to resolve this issue.

Transportation Changes

If your child's mode of transportation changes, whether permanently, or only for a single day or group of days, **your child must provide your request, in writing**, with your signature, to their teacher when they arrive at school in the morning. The teacher will then send the child to

the office to document the change. No verbal requests from a child will be honored, nor will parent phone calls be accepted as we have no way of verifying ID over a phone. These practices are for the safety and security of your child/ren. No changes should be sent over e-mail for the same reason as well as teachers may not receive it prior to dismissal time. In an emergency, a faxed note with your signature and photo ID will be considered by administration on a case-by-case basis.

Visitation Policy

All visitors must come to the office to sign in and receive a visitor's badge and sign out before leaving. This is a state law that helps ensure the safety of our students, staff, and guests.

Parents should not escort students to the classroom in the morning. In order to protect instructional time, please notify the teacher in advance if you would like to make a classroom visit. If you wish to discuss the progress of your child, you should call, send an email or make a conference appointment at a time when class is not in session. Staff hours are 8:00-3:50.

Only parents and/or legal guardians are allowed access to enrolled students. Parents and/or legal guardians who come in without an appointment will be asked to return at another time, mutually agreed upon by the teacher.

Parents/guardians are welcome to come and have lunch with their child/ren during the scheduled lunch time. For the safety and security of all students however, no other students will be allowed to join you. The "Minor Diner" (our Cafeteria) is an on-site, fully functioning restaurant. Therefore, food from other restaurants is not permitted to be consumed on the premises. This is also discouraged as we want to be sensitive to those students whose families are unable to visit them during lunchtime and/or bring them restaurant meals.

Schoolwide Behavior Management Plan

All teachers will create and communicate a classroom management plan in alignment with our school-wide matrix of expectations (see last two pages of handbook). Students will receive positive reinforcement by all staff members when they exhibit the behaviors noted in the

matrix. Consistent recognition of students by all staff members for expected behaviors will also result in student-selected rewards for a window of time at regular intervals during the year.

Teachers are responsible for handling minor offenses. A menu of possible interventions for inappropriate behaviors that may be assigned when a student misbehaves can be found on the flow-chart. Major offenses (see below) will be referred to administration for immediate attention. Parents will be contacted at the teacher's earliest convenience to relay what occurred, and administrators will be responsible for communicating consequences.

Opportunity Room

The Opportunity Room, or "OR" for short, is a separate location in the building that is staffed full time and serves as an alternative to 'time out' in the classroom. It is also used for in-school suspension. Only administrators are able to place a child in the OR. Upon arrival, a child may need to complete a Student Action Plan, and then engage in working on classroom assignments until their time is served. If a teacher knows in advance that a child is scheduled to be in OR., they are expected to send the student with enough current work to do for the duration.

GCPS Twelve Rules of Student Conduct for Elementary Schools*

The following rules apply when a student(s) is (are):

- on the school grounds
- off the school grounds at a school activity, function, or event
- en route to and from school
- off the school grounds while the student is in attendance of any function, or is otherwise subject to the jurisdiction of school authorities
- off the school grounds when the misconduct is directed at a school's student or employee and is related to the victim's school affiliation, or when the off-campus misconduct directly affects the safety and welfare of the school community or the orderly mission and function of the school.

1. Each student will not interrupt learning and teaching.

2. Each student will not damage or attempt to damage or take or attempt to take the property of the school.
3. Each student will not damage or attempt to damage or take or attempt to take the personal property of others.
4. Each student will not abuse, threaten, intimidate, assault, or battery on a school employee.
5. Each student will not abuse, threaten, intimidate, assault, or battery on other students or any other person not employed by the school.
6. Each student will not possess or use weapons, whether assembled or disassembled (guns-including toy guns, knives, firecrackers, etc.) whether toy, operational or not operational if a person could reasonably perceive the object to be a weapon or if the object is a destructive device.
7. Each student will not possess, use, or distribute alcohol or drugs or any substances they represent to be alcohol or drugs.
8. Each student will not disregard directions or commands of teachers, principals, bus drivers, etc.
9. Each student will not expose or touch himself/herself or other inappropriately including private areas of the body.
10. Each student will not miss school or class without an excused absence.
11. Each student will not exhibit unsafe and/or inappropriate conduct at any time including use of any electronic device or mirror, laser, flash camera or any other light or reflective device during the operation of a school bus or during school hours except as permitted.
12. Severe or repeated violations of school rules may result in a parental conference and/or discipline review committee meeting.

**Based on Policy JCD Student Conduct Behavior Code adopted by the Gwinnett County Board of Education*

GCPS Bus Rules

1. Students will follow directions of the driver.

2. Students should be at the bus stop 5 minutes before the bus arrives, waiting in a safe place, clear of traffic and 12 feet from where the bus stops.
3. Students will wait in an orderly line and avoid playing.
4. Students will cross the roadway in front of the bus after the bus has stopped, they have looked at the driver for a hand signal, and they have looked in both directions for traffic; left, right, left.
5. Students will signal the driver with a waving motion if something is dropped and wait for the driver to give a signal before picking up object.
6. Students will go directly to assigned seat when entering the bus. Keep the aisles and exits clear.
7. Students will remain properly seated, back against the back of the seat, bottom against the bottom of the seat, and keep hands to themselves.
8. Students will not eat, drink, chew gum, or bring tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or any controlled substances on the bus.
9. Students will not carry animals, glass objects, nuisance items, hazardous materials, or weapons onto the bus. Students may carry only objects that can be held in their laps.
10. Students will refrain from using loud voices, profanity, and/or obscene gestures, and respect the rights and safety of others.
11. Students will not extend head, arms, or objects out of the bus windows.
12. Students will be totally silent at railroad crossings.
13. Students will stay seated until time to get off the bus. The open door is the signal to get up from the bus seat.
14. Students are expected to ride the bus to which they have been assigned and to get off at their assigned bus stop. Only in the event of an emergency, as determined by the principal or their representative, will a student be allowed to ride a different bus. Notification of this emergency must be sent to the school in a written note signed by the

parent/guardian. The school administrator may provide a bus pass granting permission.

15. Students will keep their bus clean and in good, safe condition.
16. Students are allowed to "Bring Your Own Device" (BYOD), but shall be prohibited from using such device during the operation of the school bus in a manner that interferes with the communication equipment or the bus manager's/driver's operation of the school bus. The bus manager/ driver may allow wearing of headphones with an audio system on a case- by-case basis as long as it is in accord with the local school rules.
17. Students shall be prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.

Student Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Expectations

- Students will leave devices in their book bags, turned off, until the teacher determined time for use. Afterward, devices will be placed back in book bags, turned off.
- Students may not share or borrow other student's personally owned devices.
- Student devices may only be charged at home.
- Students may only use teacher directed programs, sites, and/or apps.
- Students may only use devices at teacher determined times during the instructional day.
- Use on school buses is not permitted
- Use during TDPE and/or Lunch is at the discretion of the teacher
- Students are only permitted to access web based programs through the GCPS Wi-Fi environment which requires student login & password authentication.
- While some devices may have personal data plans that include external Wi-Fi access, use is not permitted.
- Students and/or parents are responsible for adjusting any needed settings on the device for them to work properly with GCPS Wi-Fi.
- Troubleshooting assistance, other than

simple verbal directions, is not provided by the school.

Note: Inappropriate use of devices, or accessing inappropriate or unapproved content, to include violating any of the content outlined in the BYOD application or GCPS Acceptable Use Policy for Technology, will be addressed through the administrative discipline referral process as opposed to the process above.

Digital Learning Expectations

Students will receive quality instruction on all grade-level standards, learning the district's Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) curriculum.

- Instruction and support will be provided by teachers and staff from the student's local school.
- Students will access assignments through eCLASS C&I course pages, but teachers also may use digital resources such as Google Classroom, SAFARI Montage, etc.
- Students will attend synchronous (live) online sessions with teachers through Zoom, Google Meet, and/or Teams Meet.
- Schools and/or clusters will have standardized processes for where and how assignments are posted and accessed by students.
- Teachers will provide schedules detailing which lessons will be done in synchronous sessions. Synchronous sessions will be recorded. This will allow students and parents to review the sessions and will make them available to students who occasionally cannot attend a live session.

