

Minor Elementary School

Parent/Student Handbook 2023-2024

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 emailed or brought to school within two days of return to school. Prompt and consistent attendance at school is expected. Attendance 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 encouraged to have their child ride the bus to and from school each day. 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 where both the teacher and the student are certain how the child will go home each day.

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. A student may be suspended from the bus if the rules are not followed. 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 GCPS Transportation Dept. at: 678-380-7237.

Car Rider Transportation

If a parent chooses to 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. Parents must reapply for a new number each year. Check-out must occur in the front office if no hang-tag is displayed, and a picture identification 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. Do not drop off a student in the front when buses are present. 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.

Cell Phone Policy

Students are permitted to have a 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°F 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 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. A 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 after school hours. Please arrive on time to the published drop-off/pick-up times. 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 website 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 communicate using 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 a valid phone number is important to ensure ease when trying to contact you. When changes occur, please 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 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 should 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 PE or daily recess and can cause injury. 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.

Early Check Out

Early check out by parents or guardians **must take place prior to 2:45 daily**. You will be required to show picture identification prior to having a child being 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, unless approved by administration. Parents are encouraged to schedule student medical appointments outside of the school day in an effort to maximize their child's opportunity for learning.

Grade Reporting

Each semester, parents can expect to receive a report card detailing student performance. In addition, the Parent Portal allows student information to be obtained at any time once registration at the local school is completed. If assistance is needed, with the Parent Portal contact the front office at 770-925-9543.

Parent Conferences

You are encouraged to monitor your child's grades via the Parent Portal. Twice yearly, you will also be invited to conferences 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.

If you would like to schedule a conference, please contact the teacher via email or leave a phone message for them, should they wish to make an appointment at any time during the year. We ask that the appointments be scheduled to avoid any 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 front office for further information.

Homework Guidelines

Meaningful homework can be a way for students 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.

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. Translation may be available for meetings if you request assistance in advance, but you are welcome to bring along someone of your own choosing to support you with translation needs as well. 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

School-wide parties may be held during the 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.)

Phone Messages

Should you wish to contact any staff member for any reason, simply call the main phone line and our front office staff will be happy to either connect you or take a message. Teachers 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 welcome to contact staff via email or other communication methods provided by the teacher.

School Hours

School hours are 8:50 am-3:20pm. Students may begin entering the building at 8:20 am. Parents are responsible for supervision prior to this time. All students should be in their classrooms, ready to begin learning, by 8:50 am. Students arriving after 8:50 am are considered tardy. Early check out by parents/guardians must take place prior to 2:45 pm daily. Students will be dismissed at 3:20 pm 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. Meals can be paid for online on

the [My Payments Plus website](#). If parents want to join their child for lunch, meals are available for purchase.

Adult breakfast: \$3.00

Adult lunch: \$4.00

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 GCPS Rules of Student Conduct will receive support/consequences based on board policy. Minor employs Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (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 beginning of the school year. Classroom behavior management plans are developed by each individual teacher in alignment with the school's plan. The Assistant Principal for each grade level is responsible for handling all school based and bus behavior concerns.

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 must notify teachers in advance. Treats must be pre-packaged, or store bought as homemade baked goods 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 is permitted will be

if a parent contacts a teacher in advance and the teacher agrees to pass out the treats. 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.

Support Services

Our school has many supplemental programs and services which enhance the learning experience. These include special area classes, Gifted Education, ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages), Special Education and EIP (Early Intervention Program). Eligibility and placement in these programs vary. Please contact your child's teacher if you have concerns about your student's progress.

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

Regular education students who may need academic, social emotional, or other supports may be provided these through the RTI process. A Student Support Team (SST) meeting will be held to discuss the needs of individual students. Staff members or parents can initiate an SST meeting. Please contact the front office if you have any questions.

Textbooks

GCPS provides necessary 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.

Title IX Notice

If you believe you or your child is being mistreated by school employees on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin or handicap, please contact the front office and ask for the Title IX Coordinator. This administrator will work with you to resolve the issue.

Transportation Changes

If your child's mode of transportation changes, whether permanently, or only for a single day or group of days, please provide your child's teacher with written notice. The teacher will then send the child to the office to document the change.

Visiting the school

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

Parents cannot 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 7:50-3:50.

Parents/guardians are welcome to come and have lunch with their child during their scheduled lunch time. For the safety and security of all students, no other students will be allowed to join you. Please note that food from other restaurants is not permitted to be consumed on the premises.

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 is:

- on the school grounds at any time
- off the school grounds at a school activity, function, or event
- en route to and from school on a GCPS school bus
- 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 commit battery on a school employee.
5. Each student will not abuse, threaten, intimidate, assault, or commit 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 the object.
6. Students will go directly to their 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 their head, arms, or objects out of the bus windows.

12. Students will be totally silent at railroad crossings.

13. Students will stay seated until it is 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 driver's operation of the school bus.

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.