

Dawson Elementary

180 Northstar Drive, Columbus, GA 31907
706-683-8732



Student/Parent Handbook

Updated July 2019

Welcome to Dawson Elementary!

Please use this handbook as a guide for procedures at our school. You will receive additional notices from the school as changes occur throughout the school year. Thank you for sharing your family with our Dawson family!

School hours: 8:00 AM – 2:30 PM

Arrival Procedures

Breakfast is served in the cafeteria from 7:15 AM – 7:45 AM. Students who arrive between 7:45 and 8:00 AM should report directly to classrooms. Class begins at 8:00 AM. Students who are tardy miss critical instructional time. Please make it a priority for your child to arrive at school on time. If students arrive after 8:00 AM, a parent or guardian must accompany them to the office to sign-in. The student must have a pass to enter the classroom.

Dismissal Procedures

Students are dismissed at 2:30 PM based on the manner designated on the student registration form. If departure is to be different, parents should send a written note to the teacher indicating the change (even if temporary). Verbal instructions from students are not permitted. Walkers will exit through the side cafeteria door by the front sidewalk. Car riders will be dismissed through the front door.

When dropping off or picking up your child, please remain in one lane of traffic as you drive through the parking lot. The pick-up lane is for the continuous flow of traffic and not for parking. Staff will help load students in cards. Safety is our priority.

After-School Program

Columbus Parks and Recreation operates the after-school program at our school. Please contact (706) 225-4510 for more information.

Early Check-out

Students who leave early are to be checked out through the office by a parent/guardian or other authorized person listed on the registration form. Office staff will ask for photo identification and verify with forms on file. Please do not tell your child to report to the office at a specific time. The office will call for the student after the verification process is complete. Students should not be checked out during the last 30 minutes of the school day.

Absences

If your child must be absent, please send a written excuse within three days of an absence. If students are tardy or absent excessively, parents will be notified by office staff. A referral will be made to the school social worker if additional support is needed.

Dress Code

Students are expected to adhere to the dress code detailed in the MCS D Handbook and Code of Conduct. Cleanliness, good grooming, and appropriate clothing help to create a positive, healthy, and safe learning environment. Clothing, including shoes, should be appropriate for P.E. and recess. Attire of students, parents, and other visitors should not cause disruption, distraction, or interference with the normal operation of the school. If appropriateness of attire is questioned, administration will make a determination and make corrective actions.

Inappropriate attire includes, but is not limited to:

- Halter-tops, bare midriff, see-through, sleeveless, and backless clothing
- Dresses, skirts or shorts shorter than 3 inches above the top of the knee
- Pajamas
- Sagging pants – Pants must be worn at the waist with no underwear showing
- Clothing with holes
- Hats, caps, sunglasses, rollers, picks, combs, bandanas, and any other head coverings
- Anything with inappropriate advertising such as alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or gangs
- Unsafe shoes such as heels, shoes without backs, house slippers, and cleats

Medication

Student medication (prescription and non-prescription), must be sent to the office in the original labeled container. Parents/guardians must complete a Medical Authorization Form in the office prior to any student being dispensed medication at school.

Illness

A parent or other authorized person must pick up a student who is too ill to remain in class. For your child's safety, it is important to notify the school any time there are changes in emergency contact information.

Phones

Students are not permitted to use cell phones at school. If this occurs, the phone will be given to administration and a parent will be contacted to pick it up. Students are not permitted to come to the office to take a phone call. If there is an emergency, please notify the office staff to get the message to your child's teacher.

School Visitors

Please enter through the front door and sign in through the office system. Your help is needed to ensure that classroom instruction is not disrupted. Please limit your observation in the classroom to no more than 15 minutes unless otherwise coordinated with the teacher. Teachers are not permitted to leave class to take a phone call or conference with parents. Parent/teacher conferences are encouraged, but they must be scheduled to take place during non-instructional time.

Parties

Birthday parties are not allowed in classrooms. A parent may coordinate with the teacher to bring in snacks for students. There may be restrictions due to allergies or meal modifications.

Behavior Expectations & Procedures

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports or PBIS at Dawson means that teachers provide strategies for teaching and supporting appropriate student behaviors in order to create a positive school environment. All students are expected to follow school-wide and classroom expectations. Minor behavior offenses are handled by the teacher. The teacher may communicate with you by phone, Dojo, written note, or in person. Because our students are in the learning process and may make mistakes, teachers will offer multiple opportunities to re-teach and re-direct students as needed. Teachers and parents must work together to help our students be successful. If students continue to demonstrate inappropriate behaviors, further action will need to be taken by school personnel. Any major behavior offense will be referred to administration for disciplinary action.

Inappropriate behaviors include, but are not limited to, verbal or physical disrespect, drugs or weapons at school, bullying, gang affiliation, disruption of school environment, damage or theft, and leaving school without permission. Parents, your support is needed as we work together to continue to teach our children appropriate behaviors for school.

Your child’s teacher will provide classroom expectations. School-wide expectations are taught through our PBIS matrix (below). Please review these expectations with your child to help him/her to be a role model for others.

DAWSON TIGERS	Hallways	Cafeteria	Restroom
R espectful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be silent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk quietly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be silent • Respect others’ privacy
O n Task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go directly to your destination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Touch and eat your own food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go • Flush • Wash • Leave
A ct Safely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk on right side of hallway • Keep hands and feet to yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk • Keep all four chair legs on the floor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep your feet on the floor
R esponsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry a hall pass if not with class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep your area clean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep it clean

Money & Valuables

Students should not keep money or valuables at school. Please inspect your child’s book bag and belongings before sending to school. MCS D personnel will not be responsible for the value of an item in the event of damage, loss or theft while at school. Money for school-related costs, such as PTO, pictures, t-shirts, etc., should be in an envelope and marked with the student’s name, teacher, amount, and purpose of money.

Evening Events

Students must be accompanied by a parent/guardian at all times for evening school events. During performances, students are to sit with their parent/guardian. They should not be allowed to wander in or around the building. It is your responsibility to provide supervision unless your child is with the sponsoring teacher of the performance. During the performances, insist that your child show respect for the performers.

Withdrawal

Please notify the school secretary at least 48 hours in advance if you plan to withdraw your child from school. Fees for lost or damaged textbooks, library books, or cafeteria charges should to be addressed with the secretary.

School Nutrition Program (SNP)

Mission Statement of the Muscogee County School Nutrition Program is to provide a nutrition program that will maintain and improve the health of school children and the educational community and encourage the development of sound nutritional habits that will foster academic success.

USDA has regulations that the School Nutrition Program (SNP) has to meet to be in compliance with their guidelines. Caloric and nutrient requirements are based on age and grade. Also, MCSD Board Approved Wellness Program (EEE and EE-R) encourages and promotes healthy guidelines to be followed including, but not limited to, elimination of the consumption of fried foods, foods containing > 35 % sugar by weight, and FDA standards for portion sizes. School lunches also offer a variety of foods, whole grains, and fat free and low fat milk choices. Muscogee County School District shall abide by nutrient standards of the School Nutrition Program for all foods sold and served on campus during the school day. The sale of foods or beverages to students on school premises other than through SNP is prohibited from 12:01 a.m. until 30 minutes after the end of the school day. Food shall not be used as a reward or punishment and shall prohibit the use of candy and other food rewards for academic performance or good behavior. **Fundraising efforts** shall be supportive of healthy eating, encouraging the sale of non-food items or nutrient dense foods. USDA regulations ban the sale of foods of minimal nutritional value.

School Nutrition Program provides a healthy breakfast and lunch choice for students every day. Students may bring their own lunches from home. **Restaurant containers are not allowed in the cafeteria.** Parents are encouraged to have lunch with their children. School lunch may be purchased to eat in the cafeteria with the students.

School meals are captured using palm scanners for identification, capturing only the image of the veins in their hand. If the parent opts out on their children being scanned, the meal will be rung up under the name.

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) was established by Congress through the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, which reauthorized the Child Nutrition Programs. CEP aims to increase access to the School Meal Programs by offering breakfast and lunch at no charge to all students, without the need to process or collect individual free and reduced meal applications. Several of our schools are CEP schools. **Please contact your student's school office or call the School Nutrition Office at (706) 748-2389 to see if your student's school is a CEP school.**

Free and Reduced Meal Priced Meal Applications (Non-CEP Schools Only):

MCSD currently has 41 schools that operate under the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) where all students eat at no charge. An online application is available to apply for free and reduced price meal benefits for the other 12 schools that are not operating under CEP.

If your student is **not** enrolled in a CEP school, a new application has to be completed and approved every school year before your child can qualify for free or reduced price meal benefits. For quicker processing, an online application is available at www.myschoolapps.com. If you prefer, a paper application is available upon request at your child's school or at the School Nutrition Office at 2960 Macon Road. If completing a paper application, we must receive an original since these applications are scanned. We cannot accept a faxed or copied application. **ONLY ONE** application needs to be completed for your entire household. If someone receives SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) OR TANF, you must include the current CASE number on the application (NOT the EBT or food stamp card number) and indicate whether the program is SNAP or TANF. We receive thousands of applications every year. Completed applications are processed within 10 days. A letter will be sent home from school with your child stating if you have been approved or denied. Applications **CANNOT** be approved if they are not completely filled out so please **COMPLETE ALL REQUIRED FIELDS** on the application. ***Until your application is approved, please provide your child(ren) with money to purchase meals.***

If you have an approved MCSD 2018-2019 application on file, then benefits will be extended for the first 30 days of the 2019-2020 school year (or until a new eligibility determination is made, whichever comes first). After that, your child's status will change to PAID and they will be charged for meals until a new application is approved. If your application has been denied or is incomplete, please call our office if you have any questions: 706-748-2389. Applications can be submitted at any time throughout the year, especially if your income goes down, you lose your job, your family qualifies for SNAP or TANF benefits, or there is a change in your family size. **For quicker processing of meal benefit applications, the Family Meal Application is available online at <https://www.MySchoolApps.com/>. If you prefer, you may complete a paper application at your child's school or at the School Nutrition Office located at the Muscogee County Public Education Center, 2960 Macon Road.**

Paying for School Lunch

Muscogee County SNP no longer accepts personal checks as payment for meals in our cafeterias. Payments may be made by cash, money order, cashier's check, traveler's check, or on-line via **our online payment system, My School Bucks**, using your credit or debit card.

Pre-pay for your child's school breakfast, lunch and a la carte food items. On-line payments include a transaction fee per school site. You must know your child's birthdate and/or PersonID Number from Infinite Campus (available at the school office). Allow 24 hours for payments to be posted to your child's account. From the Muscogee County School District web site, on the home page, click on the Families tab, then click on the **My School Bucks** link to access our online payment system.

School Meal Prices:

BREAKFAST PRICES	
Elementary, Paid	1.00
Middle/High, Paid	1.25
Reduced	.30
Adult, MCSD Staff	1.50
Adult, Outside MCSD	2.00
LUNCH PRICES	
Elementary, Paid	2.45
Middle/High, Paid	2.70
Reduced	.40
Adult, MCSD Staff	3.75
Adult, Outside MCSD	4.50
Free and reduced priced meals for breakfast and lunch are available for eligible students. Applications can be picked up at the School Nutrition Office, or parents may contact the School Nutrition Manager at any school.	

Food Purchases

Only students purchasing a reimbursable meal may also purchase extra foods from the menu. Students bringing a lunch from home may purchase milk, juice, water, or ice cream.

Charging Meals

Charging meals is discouraged, but may be necessary in certain cases. Elementary students will be allowed to charge a total of three breakfasts and three lunches. Middle and high school students will be allowed to charge a total of one breakfast and one lunch. If your child reaches his/her charge limit and does not have money in his/her account, and does not have cash with which to purchase their meal, an alternative meal will be provided. **There is no provision for adults to charge.** No charges will be accepted for a la carte items. **Students will not be able to charge any meal after May 1st through the duration of the school year.** It is necessary that all outstanding charges be paid to the cafeteria Manager prior to the last day of school. Please respond promptly to messages that you receive, both written and phone calls regarding charges on your student's account.

Menus

Monthly menus can be found on the MCSD website. Menus may change on a very short notice due to market conditions, deliveries, or special school activities.

Special Dietary Needs

School Nutrition will accommodate food allergies and special dietary needs when documentation from a doctor is provided. MCSD SNP will make modifications and substitutions to the regular school meals for a student **with a disability that restricts their diet**. Special Dietary Needs Prescription Form **must be** completed and signed by a physician for a student with a disability before the school cafeteria can provide any modifications or substitutions.

The completed form must be provided to the school cafeteria Manager, the clinic worker, and the special needs dietitian. A form and instructions can be found on the School Nutrition page of the MCSD web site, or at the school clinic or cafeteria. Nutrition analysis chart for menu items is available on the website.

Please be aware that there are factors that may affect a product's actual nutritional value and/or ingredient composition at any given time: Manufacturers' formulations may change without notice. USDA donated products may become available at any time during the year and may replace a purchased item. Product brands may change during the year as new bids are approved. Schools may be using inventory from a previous bid or manufacturer. Our recipes may change during the school year. A la carte snack items vary from school to school so check with the Nutrition Manager at your student's school for specific information.

Summer Lunch

SNP provides breakfast and lunch at various schools throughout the district during the summer. Please check the web site or call 706-748-2386 for locations. All children up to 18 years of age receive a free meal. Adults may purchase a lunch.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Updated 5/28/19