2026-2027

Student Handbook

Dr. Duane Wizzard, Principal
Mr. Michael Smith, Assistant Principal
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School Song

We Are the Warriors

We are the Warriors, we stand together
And fight our battles ‘til victory.

We’re representing responsibility and excellence,
professionally.

We use our talents and gain the knowledge
To reach our standards in every way.

We’re moving forward with opportunities to have success
from day to day.
* *
We’re ever-leading, high-achieving
Richards * * * Warriors!

Letter from the Principal:

Dear Warrior Parents and Students,

Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year! I hope you enjoyed a safe, relaxing, and memorable summer. On behalf of the Richards Middle School faculty and staff, I am excited to welcome our returning Warriors and extend a special greeting to the students and families joining our school community for the first time.

At Richards Middle School, we are committed to creating meaningful learning experiences that help every student grow academically, socially, and personally. This year, we will continue our focus on engaging instruction that encourages students to think critically, collaborate, solve problems, and take an active role in their learning. We are equally committed to maintaining a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment where every student feels valued, respected, and ready to learn.

We also look forward to expanding opportunities for career exploration. Through classroom activities, guest speakers, career-based literacy, and other experiences, students will begin connecting their interests and talents to future educational and career possibilities.

Additionally, we pledge to use technology purposefully and responsibly while limiting its overuse. Although technology can be a valuable instructional tool, it should enhance learning—not replace hands-on experiences, meaningful conversations, creativity, collaboration, movement, and personal connections. Our goal is to create a healthy balance that supports both academic achievement and student well-being.

Families are essential partners in our success, and we value your communication, involvement, and support. Together, we can make the 2026–2027 school year a positive, productive, and memorable experience for every Warrior.

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve this wonderful school community and look forward to another outstanding year at Richards Middle School!

Warmest Regards,

Dr. Duane Wizzard
Principal, Richards Middle School

Calendar

July 2026

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

1-24 Summer Break
6 Independence Day Observed
27-31 Teacher Planning/Staff Development Days

August 2026

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

3 1st Day of School/1st Semester Begins

September 2026

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

2 Progress Reports
7 Labor Day
24 Virtual Day
25 Teacher Planning/Staff Development Day

October 2026

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

6 End of Nine Weeks
9-12 Fall Break
13 Report Cards

November 2026

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

10 Progress Reports
11 Veterans Day
23-27 Thanksgiving Break

December 2026

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

18 1st Semester Grading Period Ends
21-31 Winter Break

January 2027

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

1 Winter Break
4 Teacher Planning/Staff Development Day
5 2nd Semester Begins
6 Report Cards
18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

February 2027

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

5 Progress Reports
11 Teacher Planning/Staff Development Day
12-15 Mid-Winter Break

March 2027

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

12 End of 3rd Nine Weeks
17 Report Cards

April 2027

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

5-9 Spring Break
21 Progress Reports

May 2027

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

??? Graduation
21 Last Day/Report Cards (Elementary)
24-25 Teacher Post Planning
25 Report Cards (Secondary)
26-31 Summer Break
31 Memorial Day

June 2027

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

1-30 Summer Break

MUSCOGEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
COLUMBUS, GA

2026-27
School Year Calendar

- Student/Teacher Holiday
- Semester Start Dates
- Teacher Planning/Staff Development/Student Holiday
- Virtual Day
- Last Day for Students

Bell Schedule

Richards Middle School
Bell Schedule

TIME	CLASS PERIOD	AMOUNT OF TIME
7:20-7:40	Teacher PL	20 MIN
7:40-8:10	Breakfast / Move to 1st	30 MIN
8:10-9:30	1st Period / ILT-SEL	80 MIN
9:30-9:35	Staggered Transition to 2nd 5th - 9:27 AM 7th - On Bell 8th - 9:32 AM	5 MIN
9:35-10:30	2nd Period	55 MIN
10:30-10:35	Staggered Transition to 3rd 5th - 10:27 AM 7th - On Bell 8th - 10:32 AM	5 MIN
10:35-11:30	3rd Period	55 MIN
11:30-11:35	Staggered Transition to 4th 5th - 11:27 PM 7th - On Bell 8th - 11:32 PM	5 MIN
11:35-1:10	4th Period A Lunch - 11:35-11:55 B Lunch - 12:00-12:20 C Lunch - 12:25-12:45 D Lunch - 12:50-1:10	95 MIN
1:10-1:15	Staggered Transition to 5th 5th - 1:07 PM 7th - On Bell 8th - 1:12 PM	5 MIN
1:15-2:10	5th Period	55 MIN
2:10-2:15	Staggered Transition to 6th 5th - 2:07 PM 7th - On Bell 8th - 2:12 PM	5 MIN
2:15-3:10	6th Period	55 MIN

General Information

Principal	Duane Wizzard
Assistant Principals	LaTasha Stigger
	Michael Smith
Academic Deans	Kimberly Casleton
	Shawna Hartley
IB Coordinator	Jennifer Delaney
Academic Coach	Ebony McNeill
Media Specialist	Natalie Couch
School Secretary & Bookkeeper	Samantha Kirkland
Front Office Clerk	Gwendolyn Jefferson
Family Service Coordinator	Tammy Caldwell
Student Services Clerk	Cathy Battle
Athletic Director	Joshua Browning
Cafeteria Manager	Qiana Tinsley

School Counselors

Guidance Director 7th Grade A-L & 8th Grade	Tammy Zitzelberger
6th Grade & 7th Grade M-Z	Imani Jackson

Attendance

Attendance Laws and Policies

In accordance with Georgia Law O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1, any student of compulsory school age (15 years old and younger) with **FIVE (5)** unexcused absences will be referred to the school social worker. Georgia Law O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1(b) provides for penalties for any parent, guardian, or person in control of a child or children who shall violate Georgia Law O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1(b). Each day's violation of this law after the School District notifies the parent, guardian, or other person in charge of a child of **FIVE (5)** unexcused days of absence shall constitute a separate offense subjecting the person notified to the following measures:

1. Fine of not less than $25 and not greater than $100
2. Imprisonment not to exceed 30 days
3. Community service
4. Any combination of the above penalties

Excused Absences

In order for students to be successful in school, they must be present. Regular attendance and punctuality are key factors that affect student success and achievement. **School hours are from 8:10 AM-3:10 PM**. Students are marked absent by class period. For those whose attendance exceeds 15 absences, regardless of whether these absences are excused or unexcused, retention for the following school year will be considered. Parents will be notified by the principal to attend a Retention Committee meeting.

Examples of excused absences include:

1. Personal illness
2. Death in the immediate family
3. State- recognized religious holidays
4. Mandates by government agencies
5. Instances where attendance by a pupil would be hazardous
6. Principal approved attendance at school related activities

In order for an absence to be excused, the student must submit a written excuse to include the date, parent signature, telephone number, and a statement of the nature of the absence. Failure to submit a note within 3 days will result in the absence being recorded as unexcused.

Only eight parent notes will be allowed for excused absences. After eight absences, a doctor's note is required in order for absences to be excused.

Make-up Work for Excused Absences

It is the student's responsibility to arrange for make-up work with their teachers. Students must make arrangements for make-up work **within 3 days of returning to school following an absence.** If the student is present when the assignment is assigned, the assignment is due on the originally scheduled due date.

If a student requires an extended absence, parents should contact the appropriate school counselor to determine if the student requires homeschool/homebound services.

Unexcused Absences

When a student returns from an absence without a note, the absence will be considered unexcused and will remain as such until a note is received. If a note is not received within **three (3)** days, the absence will remain unexcused. Unexcused absences include but are not limited to the following:

- Oversleeping
- Missing the bus
- Babysitting
- Family Vacations
- Skipping/Cutting Class
- Car Trouble
- Out-of-School Suspension
- Failure to bring in a Dr./Parent note for an absence within 3 days

Notes:

1. Family Emergencies without explanations and suspensions are considered unexcused absences. Please see an Administrator regarding any family emergency requiring a student to miss school.

2. Students that are absent the day of an extracurricular activity (dance, sporting event, club meeting, etc.) are NOT allowed to attend and/or participate in the extracurricular activity.

Check In/Check Out Procedures

Checking In:

The doors to Richards Middle School open each day at 7:40 AM. All students should be in their assigned classes, seated and ready to begin instruction prior to 8:10 AM. After 8:15 AM, students are considered tardy and must report to the main office to check in and receive a tardy pass. Any student checking in after 10 AM must have a parent or guardian present.

* Traffic in the car rider line does not count as an acceptable tardy. Students must be in their classrooms and in their seats at 8:15 AM.

Tardy to Class

Students that are tardy to class after 1st period will be issued consequences by their respective teachers. Consequences may include but are not limited to phone notification to parent from teacher, detention, referral to Assistant Principal for parent conference, and in-school suspension.

*Students with excessive tardies will not be eligible to receive perfect attendance recognition.

Checking Out

Student Check-Out for appointments, or in the case of illness, takes place in the front office by individuals listed by the parent on the Check-Out Authorization Form. Identification will be required of persons checking out a student. Students who check in after 12 Noon and check out before 12 Noon will be counted as absent for that school day. Phone check-outs are not permitted. Students will not be called out of class until a parent/guardian has arrived at the school and identification has been checked.

***As per MCSD policy, students will only be permitted to check out after 2:10 PM with a documented appointment notice.**

Clinic

Students that become ill during the school day should notify their teacher and the teacher will provide the student with a pass to the school clinic. The clinic worker will assist students and make a determination on if a call should be made to parents. **Students should not use their cell phones to call parents unless given permission by the clinic worker. Any student that is injured at school should immediately notify school personnel.**

The clinic provides first-aid and emergency care only. Medication schedules, when possible, should be arranged so that parents can monitor dosage at home. If medicine must be taken at school, parents must contact the school clinic worker or Student Services. All student medications **must** be kept in the clinic with the proper medication form on file from the parent. All medications should be submitted to the clinic as the student arrives at school and all medications should be in the original container. Students are not allowed to keep medication in their possession except as deemed necessary by medical professionals and cleared with the school clinic worker. **The school does not provide medicine of any kind for students. The Richards clinic worker is on campus from approximately 10:30 AM – 2:30 PM Monday through Thursday and 10:30 AM – 1:30 PM on Friday.**

*If a student is ill with a fever, they must remain fever free, without medication, for 24 hours before returning to school. If a student checks out in the middle of the school day (due to fever) they should not return the next day.

School Visitation

MCSD policy states that all visitors to a MCSD School must sign in at the school's front office and provide a valid, state issued, form of identification.

Parents will not interrupt classes or school functions with unannounced visits to meet with teachers. We encourage parents/legal guardians to visit our classrooms to observe their child's learning environment. If you are interested in scheduling a visit, please contact the appropriate School Counselor at least twenty-four hours in advance. Failure to schedule a visit will prevent you from being able to visit your child's classes.

When coming to the school for your scheduled visitation, report to the main office and a staff member will check you in and escort you to your child's classroom. If the class is testing, you will be asked to wait to enter the classroom until testing is completed or you will be asked to reschedule your visitation.

Classroom visitation time is not a time for you to meet with your child's teacher to ask questions or discuss concerns. It is also not a time for you to talk to your child or their peers. If you would like to schedule a conference with your child's teacher after your classroom visitation, email the teacher and a meeting will be scheduled.

***Administration reserves the right to deny visitation if warranted.**

Student Deliveries & Drop Offs

Richards Middle School does not allow outside food to be dropped off and/or brought to school for students unless it is for a class party/function and delivery has been scheduled with a teacher.

The front office will not accept or deliver homework, book bags, instruments, Chromebooks, or any other items that students have left at home. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that they have necessary supplies to have a successful day at school.

Deliveries from outside commercial vendors, such as florists/balloons, are prohibited for students.

***If parents need to drop off items for after-school events, they must drop it off after 2:15 PM.**

Arrival/Dismal

Bus Passes:

MCSD Transportation schedules all bus routes and stops. Bus passes can be requested on the Muscogee County School District Website under Families and Students. Please allow one (1) to seven (7) days for bus passes to be approved.

Riding the Bus:

Riding the bus is a privilege that may be revoked if bus rules are not observed, followed, and respected. All MCSD Policies apply to student behavior at the bus stop and on the bus.

Buses run on a tight schedule and will not be able to wait on students that are late to arrive at their assigned bus stop. Any student that is tardy to school due to late bus pickups will be allowed to eat breakfast and report to class without being marked tardy.

Students must enter and exit the bus only at their assigned bus stop. Students should not report to other bus stops.

If there are issues on the bus, parents should not confront the bus driver at the bus stop. Parents may contact the Transportation Department at 706-748-2876 regarding any issues or concerns that they may have with bus drivers or bus aides. If a parent has an issue with a situation that has occurred on the bus, they should contact an Administrator at Richards Middle School.

Car Riders:

Students who are car riders should not arrive to school prior to 7:40 AM. There is no student supervision available prior to 7:40 AM. Car riders should be dropped off in the front of the school. Car rider drop off is NOT allowed in the bus loop. All students should be picked up by 3:25 PM unless they are staying after school for an after school activity/event. Students, who are transported by car, and are not picked up by 3:25 PM, may be subject to a consequence.

***When lining up for Car Rider drop off/pick up, parents should not block the driveway for through traffic.**

Walkers:

Students who are walkers should not arrive to school prior to 7:40 AM. There is no student supervision available prior to 7:40 AM. Walkers should report directly to Richards Middle School. Students should not hang out on the fields at the back of the school. Loitering and socializing on campus before or after school is not permitted. When school is dismissed, walkers should immediately exit the campus. Students that fail to leave campus are subject to consequences.

After School Supervision

Students are supervised after school only if they are participating in a school sponsored meeting or activity.

Any student staying after school for a school activity (i.e., detention, extra-help, club, athletic practice etc.), must be under the direct supervision of a teacher and should report to the teacher by no later than 3:25 p.m. Students participating in after school activities must report directly to the supervising teacher. If the student is found in the hallway after 3:25, they will be told to leave the building. Students should be picked up within 10 minutes of their activity's dismissal time. Students who are left waiting for transportation after an event has ended may be prohibited from attending future after school functions.

Academics

Richards Middle School is committed to educating each student in our student body. To do this, it will take the support of our highly trained faculty and staff, supportive parents, and students who strive for academic excellence.

Academic Integrity:

Academic dishonesty, in any form, will not be tolerated. Students who commit these acts may receive disciplinary consequences and/or will not be afforded the opportunity to make up the work for the assignment.

Grading Scale:

A = 100-90 (Excellent)
B = 89-80 (Above Average Progress)
C = 79-70 (Average Progress)
F = 69-0 (Unsatisfactory Progress/Failing)

Extra Credit:

Extra credit is assigned at the discretion of the teacher. Extra credit will not be offered to students who have not submitted required assignments.

Missing Assignments:

Failure to submit an assignment by its assigned due date will warrant the student receiving a zero for the assignment. The classroom teacher is given the discretion to allow students who fail to submit an assignment additional time to submit the assignment. If the teacher allows students to submit late work, they may face a penalty of points being deducted from their grade for submitting a late assignment.

If a student is absent, and the absence is excused, the student has three days to make arrangements with their teacher for any missing assignments. If the student fails to make arrangements within the three-day time frame, they may face a point deduction or they may lose the right to submit the missing assignment.

Infinite Campus:

Parents and students can access student's grades, assignments, and attendance online through Infinite Campus (student) and Infinite Campus Parent Portal (parents).

Students can log on to Infinite Campus by doing the following:

- Go to the MCSD website
- Click "Families"
- Click "Infinite Campus / Parent Portal"
- Select "Campus Student"
- Students log on is their GTID and their pre-selected password

Parents can log on to Infinite Campus by doing the following:

- Go to the MCSD website
- Click "Families"
- Click "Infinite Campus / Parent Portal"
- Select "Campus Parent"
- Enter Parent Portal log on information

If you have forgotten your Parent Portal Username and Password, parents may obtain that information by calling the Richards Middle School Main office. Please be aware that when obtaining your Parent Portal information, you will be asked to verify information that may include but not limited to, the last 5 digits of the student's social security number, telephone numbers on file, students date of birth, etc.

Parent/Teacher Conferences:

Conferences to discuss academic progress or any other matter with teachers may be scheduled by contacting the appropriate teacher with the conference request (via email or you may call the main office and leave a message for the teacher). Parent conferences can be scheduled in person or via Zoom.

Progress Reports/Report Cards:

Progress Reports and Report Cards are posted on Infinite Campus every 4 ½ weeks (progress reports) and 9 weeks (report cards).

The Georgia Milestones Assessment (GMA):

The Georgia Milestones Assessment is one measure of academic achievement required by the State of Georgia. The Georgia Milestone Assessment seeks to assess content mastery via four (4)

levels of performance. The results are shared with parents and act as a guide in student placement for the next school year.

Cafeteria

The Richards cafeteria provides nutritious, well-balanced meals each day. **100% of Richards Middle School students are provided breakfast and lunch at no charge.** Parents may place funds on their student's account to cover the costs of any extra foods that the student may want to purchase from the cafeteria (i.e., chips, drinks, ice cream, etc.).

As a lunch option, students may bring lunch from home. All extra food must be purchased with cash. Competitive food may not be brought for students per Georgia law. Carbonated drinks, chewing gum, and candy are not to be brought to school.

School Nutrition Program (SNP)

The 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**.

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. 41

of our schools are CEP schools. **Please contact your student's school office or call the School Nutrition Office at (706) 748-2386 to see if your student's school is a CEP school.**

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	

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

MCSD School Nutrition will make modifications and substitutions to the regular school meals for a student **with a disability that restricts their diet**. The Special Dietary Needs Prescription Form **must be** completed and signed by a licensed physician or an active 504 Plan 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.

Seamless Summer Option

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.

Discipline

Expectations for Student Behavior Discipline Plan

RICHARDS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Reppin' Richards
#REP50



School-Wide Behavior Expectation Matrix

	Halls	Restrooms	Cafeteria	Bus/Car
RESPONSIBILITY	--Know your destination --Take the shortest route --Know and follow traffic patterns during class changes	--Ask permission to use the restroom --Know procedure for obtaining a pass --Know your target and flush	--Follow given procedures --Stay in your assigned table/seat --Pay for what you purchase	--Know and follow all MCSD bus safety rules --Listen carefully for bus/car riders being called --Go directly to your bus/car
EXCELLENCE	--Walk on the right side of the hallway --Move purposefully --Talk quietly	--Keep restrooms clean --Respect your school's property --Use restroom and leave promptly	--Clean up after yourself and others --Recycle and reuse when possible --Move purposefully when entering or exiting	--Follow the directions an adult gives you the first time --Look for opportunities to assist other students
PROFESSIONALISM	--Arrive on time --Respect others' personal space by keeping hands/feet to self --Monitor tone and use kind words	--Practice good personal hygiene --Be mindful of others waiting --Report problems to an adult	--Respect cafeteria and janitorial staff --Monitor volume of voice and topic of discussion --Respect others' personal space	--Monitor tone and topic of conversations --Report problems to driver/principal

PBIS = Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support

PBIS Acknowledgement System

Each team, including Connections, will choose two Warriors of the Month (1 girl and 1 boy). Administration will select a Teacher of the Month. These individuals will be chosen using the IB Profile characteristics for that month. A different IB Profile characteristic will be used each month to determine these students from each team and from connections classes. Students' pictures will be taken and placed on the Warrior Wall near the front door for all to see, they will receive a certificate signed by the principal, and a gift card or surprise gift.

Definitions of Consequences for Disruptive Behaviors

1. **OSSP**
    - **a.** Students who are suspended out-of-school are prohibited from attending or participating in any extra-curricular sports events, concerts, dances, clubs, etc. This includes practicing for such events. Penalties may include additional ISS or OSS days and possible criminal trespass charges. **Parents of students assigned out-of-school must meet with a school administrator or restorative counselor prior to returning to class.**

2. **ISSP**
    a. Students are assigned to ISSP, in room 401, by the school administration for Level I and II offenses and are to report to the cafeteria before homeroom. Students are supervised by the ISSP technician while they work independently on class assignments. In order for students to return to class, they must (1) fulfill the time in ISSP and (2) complete all assignments. Students assigned to ISSP are considered present and are given every opportunity to complete the same work that their peers are doing in class.

1. **Lunch Detention**
    - **a.** This three-day consequence is assigned by the school administration and is held in the ISSP room, #401. Lunch Detention students receive a 'carry out' lunch, and report to ISSP. The ISSP technician supervises the students for 20 minutes while they eat and returns them to their classes.

2. **Teacher Detention**
    a. Every teacher/team has a detention plan for their classes. Parents are to be notified and the contact recorded in Infinite Campus.

Infractions & Consequences

Because students are learning to assume responsibility for their actions, it becomes the duty of the school to discipline the student when inappropriate behaviors occur. The following infractions and consequences mirror the contents of the Muscogee County School District

Behavior Code and Discipline Policy Book, which is distributed to students. A parent and the student must sign that they have received the MCSD handbook.

School administrators will take into account frequency, severity, grade level, and prior disciplinary problems when overseeing student discipline. **This list is not intended to be exclusive, but exemplifies behaviors that will be addressed. Please also note that all consequences, for all infractions, will be at the ultimate discretion of school administration.**

Level III Offenses: Personal and Property Safety	
●Fighting ●Tobacco Use/Possession (including possessing lighters and matches) ●Indecent Exposure (including extreme dress code violations) ●Sexual Misconduct ●Severe AUP Violations ●Gang-related Activity	1st Offense: 3 days OSSP 2nd Offense: 5 days OSSP 3rd Offense: 10 days OSSP **Fights of an extremely violent nature may result in 10-day suspension, tribunal, police charges, or any combination of the three.** **Gang-related activities will be referred to MCSD Discipline Tribunal & a police report will be filed**
●Major Vandalism	1st Offense: 3 days OSSP & restitution 2nd Offenses: 5 days OSSP & restitution 3rd Offense: 10 days OSSP; refer to MCSD Discipline Tribunal, restitution & file a police report
●Weapons (as noted in the MCSD Behavior Code and Discipline Policy Handbook, to include pellet/toy guns) ●Assault of School Employee ●False Fire Alarm ●Bombs/Terroristic Threats ●Arson	1st Offense: 10 days OSSP; refer to MCSD Discipline Tribunal & file a police report
●Bullying (written/verbal/cyber) ●Threat/Intimidation	1st Offense: Bullying Incident Report completed by Admin.; mandatory counselor conference 2nd Offense: 3 days ISSP; mandatory parent conference 3rd Offense:3 days OSSP; 4th Offense - 10 days OSSP and refer to MCSD Discipline Tribunal

●Sexual Harassment (written/verbal)	1st Offense: 1 day ISSP AND mandatory counseling 2nd Offense: 3 days ISSP; mandatory parent conference 3rd Offense: 3 days OSSP 4th Offense - 10 days OSSP and refer to MCSD Discipline Tribunal

Level II Offenses: Misrepresentation Note: Due to the nature of the behaviors that fall under Level II Offenses, conduct points will be	
●Theft	1st Offense: 3 days OSSP & restitution 2nd Offenses: 5 days OSSP & restitution 3rd Offense: 10 days OSSP & restitution
●Forgery/Academic Dishonesty	1st Offense: Contact parent - refer to Honor Council
●Skipping School/Class ●Leaving Campus	1st Offense: Warning / Contact Parent 2nd Offense: 2 days ISSP 3rd Offense: 5 days ISSP 4th Offense: 3 days OSSP
●Selling of Items	1st Offense: Lunch detention 2nd Offense: 1day ISSP 3rd Offense: 3 days ISSP 4th Offense: 5 days ISSP
●Misbehavior in ISSP	1st Offense: Administrative warning 2nd Offense: OSSP remaining days
●Skipping Detentions (3)	Teacher Detention 1st Offense: Lunch detention 2nd Offense: 1 days ISSP 3rd Offense: 3 days ISSP
●Bus Referral	1st Offense: Parent contact / Warning 2nd Offense: 1 days off bus 3rd Offense: 3 days off bus 4th Offense: 5 days off bus 5th Offense: 7 days off bus 6th Offense: 10 days off bus and possible expulsion from bus for the remainder of the semester.

●Tardiness to School	3rd Tardy: Parent called by school Every 5th Tardy: Assignment to lunch detention and/or a referral to the school social worker and /or other support agencies
●Attempting to Fight/Play Fighting	1st Offense: Administrative counseling 2nd Offense: 3 days ISSP 3rd Offense: 5 days ISSP 4th Offense: 3 days OSSP

Level I Offenses: Disruptions	
1. Dress Code Violation 2. Profanity 3. Gum/candy 4. Misconduct (severe class disruption that interferes with the educational process) 5. Blatant Verbal Defiance/Disrespect 6. Tardy to Class ●Inappropriate Display of Affection	● Conference with Student ● Counselor Referral ● Refer to IB Coordinator (if the student is an IB student) ● Parent Contact/Conference ● Detention Assigned ● Grade Level Time-out ● Behavior Contract ● Silent Lunch All majors require administrator consequence, parent contact, and signature. Teachers will make contact with parent, hold a detention, a conference, or other consequences before an office referral is filed.

Cell Phones (Mobile Devices):

Mobile devices, including cell phones, Airpods, earplugs, smart-watches, Meta-glasses are not allowed in school unless they are being used for pre-approved educational purposes or documented medical needs.

No mobile device, to include cell phones, should be visible nor audible upon entering campus. No student cell phone, nor mobile devices, should be seen throughout the school day to include cafeteria, gymnasium, lockers, & common areas.

Students found in possession a cell phone or mobile device will be referred to Student Services for parent notification, device pick up, & possible consequence.

Students may ask to use the telephone in the main office if parent contact needs to be made**.**

*Richards Middle School assumes no liability for the loss, damage, misuse, or theft of personal electronic devices**.**

Cell Phone/ Mobile Device Infractions:

No mobile device, to include cell phones, should be seen upon entering campus.
Cell phone procedures are designed to provide a learning environment that is conducive to teacher and learning without interference. Cell phone use during the course of the instructional day is not allowed in areas such as, but not limited to, hallways, cafeterias, bathrooms, and locker rooms.

1st offense: Parent notified for device pick up. A parent, or approved adult, must pick up (no exceptions). Devices will not be returned to student.
2nd offense: Mandatory parent conference with school administration, parents must pick up (no exceptions).
3rd offense: Device held in office for 4 school days, mandatory parent conference with Admin, parents must pick up (no exceptions).
4th offense: Device held in office for 7 school days, ISS for two days, letter sent home to parent, parent pick up
5th offense: Device held in office for 10 school days, OSS for two days, parent conference

***Richards Middle School asks parents to stand united with us on these consequences. For any offense where the student's cell phone is held in the office, if the parent/guardian does not want the cell phone held for the above listed duration, then the parent/guardian chooses for his/her child to accept in school suspension in lieu of the phone being held.**

Dress Code

Richards Middle School follows the Muscogee County School District dress code guidelines. The school dress code is designed (1) to ensure safety; (2) to refrain from any mode of dress which distracts from the learning environment; and (3) to reflect self-pride and pride in our school. The dress code must be followed at all school functions on and off campus. The Richards Middle School faculty and staff will work diligently to address all dress code violations as soon as they are noticed to limit the disruption of learning.

In addition to the MCSD policy, the following is a summary of Richard Middle School's dress code:

Shirts:

1. No undergarments are to be worn as outer garments
2. No midriffs should be exposed

3. No see-through shirts/blouses (layering is acceptable)
4. No tank tops, spaghetti straps, tube tops, or cut-off tops

Pants, Dresses, Skirts, & Shorts:

1. Pants are to be worn on or above the waist; NO SAGGING
2. **Leggings are not permitted.**
3. If pants can be worn properly on or above the waist, no belt is required.
4. No pajama bottoms
5. **No Leggings.**
6. No see-through pants are allowed or sheer panels in pants above the knee
7. Holes may be worn in pants below the knee. Any additional holes must be covered with fabric behind them or tape. **No skin should ever be visible above the knee.**
8. No PE/athletic shorts are allowed except for in PE
9. **Leggings are not permitted.**
10. Dresses, skirts, and shorts may be no shorter than three (3) inches above knee (even if worn over leggings). Splits in dresses or skirts may be no higher than the top of the knee even if leggings are worn underneath

Purses, Satchels, & Handbags

To support a safe and orderly learning environment, purses, satchels, and large handbags must be kept in students' lockers during the school day. These items may not be brought into classrooms or other instructional areas.

Students who need personal hygiene products may request them from Student Services, the Main Office, the Attendance Office, or the school clinic. Students may also access their lockers to retrieve personal hygiene products. Before returning to class, students must place all personal hygiene products, purses, satchels, and large handbags in their lockers.

Other:

1. **No Leggings**.
2. No head or face coverings may be worn (examples include, but are not limited to bandanas, hoods, do rags, sweat bands, knitted hats) with the exception of medical purposes or religious attire. [8.8.23]
3. Items such as chains on a belt, wallet, etc. and items with spikes are not allowed
4. No excessively oversized clothing is allowed
5. Crocs may be worn but they must be worn in sport mode with the strap around the heel
6. Flip flops, rubber slides, bedroom slippers and shower shoes are not allowed. Shoes with heels higher than two (2) inches are not allowed
7. Students are not allowed to wear clothing that contains offensive or obscene symbols, signs, slogans or words degrading any gender or any cultural, religious, or ethnic values. Clothing which contains language or symbols oriented toward violence, sex, drugs,

alcohol, hate, profanity, or tobacco may not be worn on campus. “Fake” alcohol or drug advertisement is also disallowed.

***The Richards Middle School Administration reserves the right to determine proper dress and may take necessary action at any time.**

Dress Code Consequences:

The following consequences will be issued for repeated dress code infractions:

1st offense: Warning to student- Parent contact and student must change
2nd offense: Lunch Detention- Parent contact and student must change
3rd offense: Parent Conference with Admin-Lunch Detention and student must change
4th offense: Office Referral: ISS for 2 days
5th offense: Office Referral: OSS for 1 day
6th offense: Office Referral: OSS for 2 days
7th offense or more: Office Referral: OSS for 3 days, referral to Tribunal for chronic misbehavior.

Social & Academic Opportunities

Social and Academic Opportunities for students to explore special talents or interests are available throughout the school year. Some of the clubs and organizations offered at Richards are:

Academic Bowl Team	National Junior Honor Society*
Art Club	Orchestra
Band	Peer Helpers**
Broadcast Team	Reading Bowl
Builders Club	Science Fair
Chorus	Science Olympiad
Drama	Social Studies Fair
Green Club	Spanish Club
Math Team	Student Council
Model United Nations	Warriors for Christ
Movie Maker	Writers Club
National History Day	Yearbook Staff

* Students must meet eligibility requirements for National Junior Honor Society
** Peer helper requirements below

PEER HELPERS:

Peer Helpers are chosen by our school counselors from student applications. Selection is based on the application, the interview, 1st nine week progress report, and teacher evaluations. Students must not have an “F” on report cards prior to the application. Peer helpers are expected

to demonstrate good behavior and respectful attitudes both with peers and with adults. They are also expected to fully participate in all meetings and scheduled activities. Peer helpers must also adhere to the following requirements:

- Grades must not fall below a "C" average in any class per nine weeks. If this occurs, the peer helper will be suspended and possibly terminated from the program.
- If a Peer Helper receives an "NI" or "U" in conduct for a nine week term, or receives administration detention, he/she will be placed on probation. If given ISSP, he/she will be given probation and possibly expelled from membership. If given OSS, he/she will be expelled from membership.

Additional Information

Activity Fee

The mandatory Walter Richards Student Activity Fee is **$25 per student**. The purpose of this fee is to support a variety of resources and experiences that directly benefit our students and school community. Specifically, the Activity Fee will cover:

- **Student lockers, t-shirts, and agendas**
- **School-wide student and faculty celebrations**
- **Transportation support for instructional-based trips**, when not covered by other available resources.

The Student **Activity Fee payment** can be made through the following option:

- **Online via the MyPaymentsPlus Application**
  - **Link:** https://www.mypaymentsplus.com/welcome
    - ***Please note:***
      - ***You will need your student's GTID number to set up a MyPayments Plus account.***

Book Bags:

Students will not be allowed to carry bookbags to class each day. They may bring one to school each day but it must be placed in their locker each morning.

Chromebooks:

All students have been issued a Chromebook (to include Case and Charger) to use during the school day. Students must be responsible for their Chromebook/Case/Charger at all times. In an effort to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars, students must be responsible for the care of their Chromebook and not damage it in any way. Chromebooks are to be carried in a case at all times when not in use. Students who damage Chromebooks and/or accessories can be assessed a replacement fee as per Board (see MCSD Board Policy JS: Student Fees, Fines, and Charges).

- **Personal Student Logins:**

Students are provided login information that may be used anywhere in the school where students use a computer. This Login information (username and password) gives each student specific access to computer software and is not to be shared with any other student. **Students are responsible for ALL activities committed under their student Login**. Consequences for misuse will be issued.

Awards & Honors Eligbility

- **Edward Reed Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society -** Selection to the Edward Reed Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society will be based on Scholarship, Character, Leadership, Citizenship and Service. Students must be in the 7th or 8th grade. Students who have attained an overall scholastic average of 94 or above will then be evaluated on: Scholarship, Character, Leadership, Citizenship and Service. The students who were found to have the scholastic GPA as well as meet the 5 requirements of NJHS will be invited to join the Edward Reed chapter of the National Junior Honor Society. This invitation will be given to the student in the Spring. Scholastic average is only ONE of the criteria for selection. **At any time a student is placed in OSS or ISS, that student will be ineligible for induction.**

- **Grade Level Athletic Awards** - Athletic Awards in Basketball, Cheerleading, Football, Soccer, Track & Field, Volleyball, and Wrestling are presented at the end of the year to student-athletes who exemplify excellence on and off the field. Criteria include:

    - Demonstrated outstanding athletic performance and skill development
    - Consistent sportsmanship, teamwork, and leadership
    - Positive attitude and effort during practices and competitions
    - Academic eligibility and good standing with coaches and school expectations

  Coaches will select award recipients based on overall contribution to the team and the RMS athletic program.

- **Grade Level CTAE & Fine Arts Awards -** Students in Career Exploration, Computer Science, Public Safety, Junior Leadership, Band, Chorus, Orchestra, and Visual Arts may be selected to receive a Grade Level CTAE or Fine Arts Award at the end of the year. To be considered, students must:

    - Demonstrate exceptional skill, growth, and creativity in their fine arts discipline
    - Maintain a consistently positive attitude and work ethic
    - Exhibit teamwork, leadership, and respect during rehearsals, performances, or studio time
    - Participate fully in all required concerts, exhibits, or events

  Recipients are selected by fine arts teachers based on overall contribution and commitment to the program.

- **Grade Level Team Academic & Citizenship Awards -** Each academic team will recognize outstanding achievement in Math, English, Science, and Social Studies at the end of each semester. To be eligible for a Team Academic & Citizenship Award, students must meet the following criteria:

    - Maintain a 90 or above average in the subject area for the entire semester
    - Demonstrate consistent class participation, responsibility, and effort
    - Exhibit a positive attitude and leadership in class
    - Have no major disciplinary referrals

  One student per subject will be selected by the content area teacher to receive this recognition.

- **Edward Reed Award –** Given in honor of Mr. Reed, Richards' third principal. This award is given to a student who excels in academics and exemplifies school spirit.
- **Michael T. Johnson Servant Leadership Award -** Servant Leadership Award given in honor of Mr. Michael Johnson, Richards' fifth principal. It is given to a student who demonstrates kindness, compassion and willingness to help others. This student is respectful and displays humility in all things.
- **W.W. Arrington Most Improved Student Award –** Given in honor of Mr. Arrington, Richards' fourth principal. It is given to the student who has shown the most improvement this school year.
- **Dawn L. Grantham Beacon Award -** Beacon Award given in honor of Ms. Dawn Grantham, Richards' sixth principal. It is given to a student who serves as a guiding light within a team.
- **Lance B. Henderson Kindness Award -** Given in honor of Mr. Lance B. Henderson, Richards' seventh principal. It is given to the student who exhibits kindness consistently and makes an impact in the world by doing so.
- **Herman Dollar Award –** In honor of Mr. Herman Dollar, Richards' first principal. This award goes to the 8th grade student athlete with the highest GPA who participates in two or more sports in the current school year.
- **Dewey Renfroe Award -** Given in honor of Mr. Renfroe, Richards' second principal. This award goes to the 8th grade student with excellent academic achievement, scholastic dedication, leadership, character and involvement in extracurricular activities.
- **Honor Roll Recognition -** Recipients of this award have made A's and B's for the first three of the four nine week periods
- **Principal's Cup -** The Principal's Cup is the highest award of the evening, given to two deserving students. Recipients exemplify the following qualities: academic success, character, leadership, involvement in extracurricular activities, and positive contribution to others.
- **Principal's List -** Recipients of this award have must have made all A's the first 3 out of 4 nine weeks.

Fees

Students will be held responsible for the proper care of all books, supplies, Chromebooks, and accessories or equipment furnished to them by the school. A student who defaces, damages, or loses school property shall be required to pay for the damage or loss (see MCSD Board Policy JS: Student Fees, Fines, and Charges).

A Parent/Student must pay all fees and fines owed to the school in a timely fashion. Parent/Student must clear all fines or fees during the year the fines are assessed. Fines must be paid/cleared where they were assessed and before moving to the next level in school.

Guidance Services

Guidance services provide interventions for behavior, academic or personal issues through (1) teacher/parent referral; (2) classroom guidance. Appointments are made by emailing the designated counselor, consulting with the counselor in person, or submitting a referral form.

Hall Passes

Hall passes are required for a student to leave the classroom. Students are expected to remain in class for maximum learning opportunities; thus, restroom and water breaks should not interfere with instruction. Halls will be monitored during the school day. Any student caught in the hallway without a pass will be considered skipping and will be issued a consequence accordingly.

Hallway Safety:

All students are expected to remember to do their part to see that our school is safe and orderly.

a) All adults at Richards Middle School are to be treated as if they are your teacher
b) Walk to all destinations
c) Keep to the right in the hallway at all times
d) Be mindful of other classes while in the hallway (use your quiet voice)
e) Treat every student, faculty, and staff member and their personal property with **RESPECT**.

REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE ALWAYS REPPIN' RICHARDS

Lockers:

Hall lockers will be used this school year. Students will have assigned times to go to their locker. Any student at their locker outside of their assigned time will be issued consequences. It is each student's responsibility to ensure that they have all supplies needed for each class. Passes to lockers during class will not be issued.

Media Center:

Media Center hours are from 8:15 AM until 3:10 PM. Books may be checked out, with the required school ID card, during this time. Periodicals may be checked out with special

permission from the librarian. The person to whom the item is checked out is responsible for its delivery back to the media center and for any damage to the item unless otherwise reported. **Always inspect a book before you check it out.**

MyPaymentsPlus:

All RMS related events will be cashless this school year. All parents are encouraged to create a FREE MyPaymentsPlus account. MyPaymentsPlus is an online payment system that provides families the convenience and information needed to pay and manage your student accounts at any time. To sign up, simply visit: www.MyPaymentsPlus.com and click on "Register Now". You will need your student's ID number to complete registration. If you do not know your child's student's ID, please contact RMS to obtain this information. Once you finish registration, you may login to begin managing your student's account instantly.

PE Requirements:

PE course grades include participation and appropriate dress. Although there is no required uniform for any PE class, t-shirts, shorts, and sneakers are expected to be worn. PE shorts should fall three inches above the knee. Health classes will be scheduled intermittently.

PTA:

Richards Middle School has an active, thriving, and extremely involved PTA. Membership dues are $10. All parents are encouraged to join. If you need additional information or are interested in joining the PTA, visit their website at https://jointotem.com/ga/columbus/richards-ms-ptsa/join/register .

Student Accident Insurance:

Student Accident Insurance is offered to all students in the Muscogee County School District. This insurance is available to you at a nominal fee. If you are interested, please contact the school office.

If you do not wish to take out Student Accident Insurance, your child's health insurance is your responsibility. The Muscogee County School District does not carry health coverage on students.

Student ID Cards:

Student ID cards with each student's picture are required for checking out library books, issuing PBIS points and for admission to dances. Lost ID cards ($5), lanyards ($2), and ID cases ($1) can be replaced in the media center.

The Warrior Weekly Newsletter:

Emails are sent each Sunday evening during the school year to update stakeholders on Richards news. Telephone numbers and emails are acquired from Infinite Campus, the MCSD student information system. If you do not receive this weekly correspondence via phone or email, please update your contact information with our school office**.**

ANNOUNCEMENT: From The Business Affairs Office Muscogee County School District: The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) Management Plan is available for scrutiny in the principal's office of each school.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.