

*Parent and Student Handbook
Renaissance Elementary School
7250 Hall Road
Fairburn, Georgia 30213
School Hours - 7:40-2:20*



Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to Renaissance Elementary School! It is our desire to bond and build effective relationships. In order to become familiar with the school's expectations, please utilize this document to understand our procedures.

Dr. Sandra C. DeShazier, Principal

Mr. Paul Cook, Assistant Principal

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Bus Transportation

All students are encouraged to ride the buses provided by the Fulton County School System. Riding the bus is a privilege and proper bus conduct is expected. Students are subject to disciplinary procedures when bus safety rules are violated. Students must get on and off only at their designated bus stop. In cases of emergency or for childcare reasons only, the Administrative Team and/or South Fulton Transportation may grant permission to ride another bus or change stops. Upon approval, a "change of transportation" form will be given to the bus driver by the student. Permission for a child to ride a different bus and/or to be let off at a different stop is considered only for special circumstances concerning childcare or family emergencies.

Car Transportation (Front of school only)

- Car pool numbers will be given to parents at Sneak Preview. Parents are requested to place the number in the lower right hand side of the windshield. **Students will be dismissed by car pool numbers.** If you are sharing driving with another family, you will want to maintain the same number. This procedure will require patience, cooperation, and caution on the part of everyone.
- Staff members supervise car pool lines 30 minutes before the morning bell & 20 minutes after the afternoon bell. Students picked up after 2:40 will be sent to Primetime and the parent will be charged a \$20.00 fee. Additionally, a social worker referral will be made for students with 3 or more late pick-ups.
- Parents are to follow traffic patterns and staff directions.
- Students may not enter or exit the car until the car has reached the sidewalk.
- Parents are to form a single line in the loading/unloading area.
- Please do not drop off students anywhere on campus other than the car pool area. (including the bus lanes, lower parking lot, or street entrances).
- If parking to drop your child off at school, you must escort your child to the front doors and you must be in an official parking space. Please remember that carpool will be slower the first two weeks of school. Remaining in your car, opposed to parking and walking students to the doors will also speed up the carpool process.

Irregular Departure

- If a student is not to go home in the usual manner, the student must show a "change of transportation" form to the classroom teacher from the student's parent or legal guardian before school begins on the date of the irregular departure. Change of transportation forms are available in the office and may be kept at home to use throughout the year. Change of transportation forms are collected from teachers by 10:30 am each day. Therefore, forms received after 10:30 are at risk of not being communicated effectively to ensure proper dismissal procedures.
- **"Call-in" changes in student dismissal plans are discouraged except for extreme emergencies and you will need to speak with an administrator or school official to have a call-in request honored.**
- If it is necessary for a student to leave school early, discuss this with the student and send a "change of transportation" form to the teacher. Any student leaving before the regular dismissal time must be signed out through the office by a parent, legal guardian or parental designee. Students will not be released from school at any unscheduled time without a written explanation of the reason from a parent or legal guardian.
- **Students are not allowed to be checked out AFTER 2:00.**

ATTENDANCE

Absences

Regular attendance is essential to the learning process. Students who are absent from school are deprived of a variety of educational and social experiences. To maximize instructional opportunities, regular attendance is encouraged.

1. **Excused Absences:** The Georgia Board of Education states that students may be temporarily excused from school for personal illness, serious illness or a death in the immediate family, recognized religious holidays observed by one's faith, absences mandated by government agencies or conditions which render school attendance impossible or hazardous to one's safety. Students must be in attendance at least one-half of the school day (3 hours) to be counted present. Upon return to school, the student must present the teacher with a specific written excuse for the absence.

Written Excuses for an Absence

Any student who has been absent from school shall present a satisfactory written excuse to the principal or designee(s) within three (3) days of returning to school. The excuse must state the reason for

the absence and be signed by the student's parent or guardian. Excuses will be kept on file at the school at least until the beginning of the next school year. Students who have missed ten (10) days of school or more in a school year may be required to provide additional verification including doctors' statements.

The school social worker will monitor absences, both excused and unexcused, after 5 are accumulated.

2. **Unexcused Absences:** An unexcused absence is any absence not covered in the definition above. A student accompanying a family member on a business trip or vacation during the regular school calendar is unexcused. When a student accumulates 3 unexcused absences, the teacher will contact the parent. When 5 are accumulated, a referral will be made to the school social worker.
3. **Make-up work** due to absence: parents may request make-up work on the second day of an absence by calling the school before 9:00am. Requested assignments may be picked up in the school office after 2:30 pm or sent home with another student as designated by the parent. When students are absent for unexcused reasons, the teacher will make a list of all important work missed and give it to the student upon return to school with a deadline for completion. Make-up work submitted after the deadline will be given partial credit to no credit depending on the date submitted.
4. **Tardiness:** The student is responsible for being at school on time, unless the tardy is due to a late bus. When a student is late, the student misses important classroom instruction and creates a distraction to other students when entering the classroom. Parents must accompany tardy students into the office and sign them in; however, no parents will be allowed to escort students to the classroom after the tardy bell. A student who is tardy five times during twenty consecutive school days without a satisfactory excuse will be referred to the school social worker/visiting teacher.

CAFETERIA INFORMATION

School Lunch Program/Free and Reduced-Price Meals

The prices are as follows: reduced (\$.30) full-price breakfast is \$ 1.00 and lunch is reduced (\$.40) full-price \$2.00. Families meeting specific income requirements may be eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Meals and can apply for this program through applications made available during Open House. As of July 1, 2005, the process for completing these applications changed. This means that households no longer need to complete a separate application for each student. Instead, they will complete one application listing all household members and identifying students who attend a Fulton County School (FCS). Students will receive a sack breakfast or lunch if their account is overdue.

New Process:

- Parents/guardians must complete one application per household indicating the school attended for each student.
- The application should be returned to the school cafeteria manager of the youngest student.
- New students to FCS will pay for meals until the household application is approved.
- Returning FCS students will maintain last year's meal status until the application is approved.

The approval process will be completed within 10 days. For more information about Free and Reduced-Price Meals or the new application process, contact the FCS School Nutrition Program at 404-669-8960. Parents are welcome to eat lunch with their child at the

regular scheduled lunchtime. Students are not allowed to eat **fast foods** in the lunchroom.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER OR CONTACT INFORMATION

We must keep accurate records in case of an emergency. Please send a note or request a student information update form and send it to the front office indicating any changes in address, phone numbers (home or office), or emergency contact people as soon as possible.

COMMUNICATION

- All students will be issued agendas. The agendas will go back and forth between home and school daily as an attempt to keep lines of communication open and ongoing.
- Each Thursday, students bring home a "VIP" (very important papers) pack. This pack will include the school weekly newsletter, work samples and other important correspondence. VIP parent signature sheets should be signed and the pack returned to the teacher on Friday.
- Phone calls, school newsletters, email, report cards, the Internet and classroom newsletters will also be used to communicate with parents. Please allow staff 24 hours to return phone calls and emails.
- **All problems should be dealt with closest to the person who can resolve the problem first.** Parents should begin by speaking with or conferencing with the person whom can provide the most information. If not satisfied with the response, parents may schedule a conference or speak with the Curriculum Support Teacher, Counselor, Assistant Principal or Principal. Administrative staff will direct parents to contact the teacher or staff member to discuss the problem prior to intervening.

CLINIC

We have individuals (not necessarily nurses) staffing the clinic. Please note that if your child has a contagious condition, including, but not limited to, diarrhea, vomiting, fever, pink eye or head lice, he/she should remain at home. Children should be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. The school may request that you provide a doctor's note before allowing the child to return to school.

CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are an integral part of reporting student progress. Our reporting system emphasizes a close relationship between the home and school. With parents as school partners, conferences are scheduled to share information and plan a more effective educational program to meet the needs of the student. A parent-teacher conference is scheduled for the first semester of the school year and additional conferences may be scheduled as necessary. Teachers will not be permitted to conference with parents during instructional time.

COUNSELING

Guidance services are available to every student in the school. Guidance counselors promote assistance with educational planning, interpretation of test scores, occupational information, study skills, school and/or social concerns. Counselors provide monthly classroom guidance lessons to each classroom. In addition, counselors provide parent training as well as short-term individual and small group counseling for students.

CURRICULUM SPECIALIST TEACHER (CST)

The CST is an expert teacher selected to assist other teachers in organizing and implementing the curriculum. The CST participates in district-wide activities such as curriculum development and

administers the initial screening and evaluation of students new to the school to ensure appropriate placement. All placement concerns should be discussed with the teacher first. If not satisfied, a conference may be scheduled with the CST.

DISCIPLINE

The Fulton County School System operates on the philosophy that all students have the right to learn. To do so, each student must be in a school climate that is satisfying and productive, without disruptive behavior by any student infringing upon the rights of others. **(THIS INCLUDES BUS SAFETY.)** Infractions of bus rules will impact the school responsibility cycle as well as any additional consequences on the bus. Please refer to the Fulton County Student Discipline Handbook for additional information regarding school discipline.

STUDENT RIGHTS

Students have a right to:

1. Discuss educational concerns with teachers and other school staff.
2. Receive fair discipline without discrimination in every aspect of the education system.
3. Study and learn in a positive atmosphere free from verbal and physical threats and abuse.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students have a responsibility to:

- Attend school regularly, arrive on time, be prepared, bring appropriate materials, participate in class and do homework.
- Strive for academic growth.
- Respect the rights, feelings and property of fellow students, parents, school personnel, visitors, guests and school neighbors.
- Conduct themselves properly on school grounds, en route to and from school, on school buses, at bus stops, at any school-related activity, and in the classroom so as not to interfere with the right of another student to learn.
- Accept the consequences for failure to follow discipline guidelines adopted by the school and district.

DRESS CODE

All students are expected to be in school uniform Monday through Thursday. Fridays will be considered “dress down” days for students who earn this privilege. As always, students will be expected to tuck in their shirts and boys will be expected to wear a belt everyday. The principal or other authorized school personnel shall determine whether any particular mode of dress or grooming results in a violation. On Fridays, students are prohibited from wearing the following: tank tops with straps more narrow than 3 inches, spaghetti straps, shirts revealing midriffs, short-shorts, flip-flops etc. Parents may be contacted to bring a change of clothes to school or the school may provide an alternative set of clothing, if an administrator deems clothing as inappropriate.

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL

Radio station WSB (750 am) is the official Fulton County Board of Education news channel. It is vital that students and parents have a plan should the school close during the day! Please discuss emergency plans so students will know what to do in case of an emergency. Parents should complete an emergency/inclement weather form for each child at sneak preview.

GRADING PROCEDURES

Each student will receive a Report of Student Progress every nine weeks with mid semester skills checklists to inform parents of student progress. At the end of each semester, a cumulative grade will be given. Individual parent-teacher conferences are scheduled with the

parents or guardian of every child during the first semester in order to discuss pupil progress. Additional conferences are held as needs arise. The grading scale for each grade is listed below:

<u>Kindergarten and 1st Grade</u>		<u>Grades 2-5</u>	
S	Satisfactory	A	90 & above
NI	Needs Improvement	B	80-89
U	Unsatisfactory	C	70-79
NG	Not Graded	D	69 & below
		NG	Not graded

HEALTHY KIDS SMART KIDS (THROUGH NUTRITION AND EXERCISE)

We believe that healthier eating habits and consistent exercise have a positive impact on our children’s learning and ultimately their test scores. We use alternate rewards in our classrooms and provide items with the lowest or minimum sugar on our breakfast and lunch menu, but still maintain a balanced, nutritionally sound diet. If packing a home breakfast or lunch for your child, please remember that we are a “Healthy Alliance” school. Do not send soft drinks, fruit drinks with processed sugar, candy, cookies, ice cream, cupcakes, cake, hot fries, hot cheetos, gum and/or sugary snacks in your child’s home lunches, his/her snacks or for the two Fulton County School System authorized parties. Please note these products may be held until the parent picks them up from the classroom teachers or the Front Office. Substitute healthier eating items such as fruits, chips, vegetables, granola bars, animal crackers and/or 100% fruit juice instead.

HOMEWORK

Each student may be expected to spend a reasonable amount of time on homework. Some assignments require planned study time at home for completion. Homework assignments reinforce skills taught in the classroom and give students an opportunity for additional skill practice, parent involvement and responsibility opportunities. Please encourage your child to complete homework and assigned tasks. This may help to build a strong work ethic and acceptable work/study habits. General guidelines for homework are as follows: K-1 (30 minutes), 2-3 (45 minutes), 4-5 (1 hour). Individual rates of completion may vary. Homework will not count for more than 10% of the student’s overall grade. In the event your child is absent, you can request homework from the teacher. **Contact the office by 9:00 AM to make a request.** Materials may be sent home with another child or you may pick them up at the end of the school day in the front office. This allows the teacher adequate time to organize needed materials. If your child forgets homework/books, they will be placed in the teacher’s mailbox. This procedure is in place to limit the number of interruptions during classroom instruction time. Once school is dismissed, students will not be allowed to re-enter the classroom to get any forgotten homework, textbooks, supplies, or other personal items.

LOCAL SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL (LSAC)

The LSAC committee provides input and recommendations to the principal on school programs and services. The committee also identifies needs and evaluates the success of efforts. Council members include parents, staff and business partners.

MEDIA CENTER

The Media Specialist is available to work with classes and individual students. All students are encouraged to take full advantage of the materials in the Media Center. Materials are checked out to students as follows:

Grades K and 1:	1 item
Grade 2:	2 items
Grades 3-5:	3 items

All books are checked out for a two week time period. If a student has exceeded this time limit, he/she will not be allowed to check out any more materials until they are either returned or the amount of the item has been paid by the parent. All students are responsible for the materials they check out. Damaged materials must be paid for so they can be replaced. Please be aware that report cards will be held at the end of the school year or at the time of withdrawal if materials are not returned to the media center.

PRESCRIPTION/NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

If your child needs prescription medication administered during school hours, we must have a signed authorization form from your doctor. This form, available in the Front Office or Clinic, must be updated at the beginning of each school year.

If your child uses an "Epi-Pen," we must have specific information provided by your doctor for emergency use. The school clinic does not supply any medication (prescription or non-prescription). This includes items such as Tylenol, Advil, Neosporin, Benadryl, etc. If you desire your child to keep any medication at school, please send in a supply in the original container (bubble packs are not acceptable), along with written authorization and dosage amounts. The authorization form is available in the front office or clinic.

SECURITY

Exterior doors to the building are locked once the school day begins. Visitors are requested to enter the building using the front doors. All adults in our building must wear a nametag. Fulton County employees wear a printed nametag or photo I.D. Parents, volunteers, or other guests obtain nametags when signing in at the front office. All visitors are required to check **in and out** through the office when on the campus. Student release information, listing parent-authorized persons able to pick up and sign out children, is kept on file in the front office. School personnel will ask for the required official identification before releasing a student.

STUDENT RECORDS

The parent or legal guardian may examine the student's records and have the records explained. If needed, please contact the school to set up an appointment for record review. Principals, counselors, teachers or other authorized personnel who have responsibility for supervising, instructing or helping a student shall have access to that student's records. When parents are requesting student records and/or applications to be completed for private schools, all requests should be delivered to the school office for processing. **Records/transcripts will be mailed via U.S. Mail and not hand-delivered by parent.** Records for recommendation status from teachers will be mailed from this school to the requesting institution.

TOYS, GAMES, VALUABLES

Students are not to bring toys, games, trading or playing cards, portable CD players, radios, or any other such item to school at any time. Additionally, students are requested not to bring anything considered "valuable" to school and be put at risk of losing or misplacing the item. School personnel cannot be responsible for lost or broken personal items. School staff may take inappropriate items away from students and may require a parent to retrieve the item from school at a later date.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

As a courtesy to the teacher, an appointment should be made for all classroom visitations/observations. Contacting the teacher by note, telephone, or e-mail at least one day in advance is required. Classroom visitation/observation, lunch visits or contact in the halls during the school day are not times for teacher-parent conferences.

Parents should not expect teachers to conference with them at these times. The regular school program must continue during such visits. Classroom observations should be limited to 20 minutes. Children who are not enrolled at Renaissance Elementary are not permitted to visit friends or relatives during the school day, without prior approval from the principal or assistant principal. Visitors are welcome to eat lunch with their children. To eat with your child, please sign in at the front office, obtain a visitor pass and meet your child in the cafeteria. Parents should not go to the classroom to meet students for lunch.

PHONE USAGE

Students are not allowed to use the school phone unless the teacher or principal deems the request an emergency. Requesting forgotten items such as books, homework, signed papers, agendas, instruments, field trip permission forms, contracts etc. are not permissible. Our goal is to develop responsibility.

PARTIES/FOOD IN CLASSROOM

There are only two (2) approved parties during the year, one for the Winter Break and End of the Year. You will be contacted to provide support for these parties. Individual student birthdays are not celebrated in the classrooms; therefore, please do not bring balloons, gifts, food, etc. to school on your child's birthday. Healthy snacks are permissible when requested by the classroom teacher. Please go on our school website to learn more about our wellness program. Each month a special cake will be prepared by the cafeteria staff to celebrate birthdays.

VOLUNTEERS

Parents are encouraged to volunteer at Renaissance Elementary and are considered dedicated and committed workers. Upon entry to the building, please report to the front office, sign in, and obtain your volunteer badge.

As expected, confidentiality regarding students you are working with or have observed during your volunteer services is required.

- **Chaperoning** - When acting as a Chaperone on a field trip or school-sponsored activity, you will be responsible for a group of children.
- **Parking** - Please do not park in the fire lanes or obstruct traffic flow in any manner.
- **Student Discipline** - Volunteers are not permitted to discipline the students. Please notify a teacher for assistance.
- **Siblings** - Volunteers are not to bring a sibling to school when performing duties at the school.

*It is the policy of the Fulton County School System not to discriminate on the basis of race color, sex, religion, national origin, age or disability in any employment practice, educational program or any other program, activity or service. If you wish to make a complaint or request accommodation or modification due to discrimination in any program, activity, or service, contact the Compliance Coordinator, 786 Cleveland Avenue, SW, Atlanta, Georgia 30315, or phone 404-763-4585.
TTY 1-800-255-0135.*