

Mountain Park Elementary  
Student & Family Handbook  
2023-2024



**Administration and Support Staff**

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## **ABSENCES/TARDIES**

- It is important for students to be in school every day. When students are absent for any part of a school day, they miss instruction and activities.
- Teachers take attendance each morning, marking students present or absent by 8:00. Absences, late arrivals and early checkouts are considered unexcused until an excuse note is provided from parents, guardians or healthcare providers. Students with pre-planned absences are entered into IC as absent, until updated by our registrar. Parents/guardians should submit an excuse note for each day the student is absent. Excuse notes must be submitted within 5 days of the absence.
  - Excuse notes can be submitted to MPE in two ways:
    - **Email both the MP attendance mailbox and homeroom teacher.** Parents should email both the homeroom teacher and [mpeattendance@fultonschools.org](mailto:mpeattendance@fultonschools.org)
- OR
- **Submit a paper note.** Submit the note to the front desk or to the homeroom teacher. Paper notes will be processed within 48 hours of receipt.
- Based on HB 1190 guidelines, if a child has five or more unexcused absences, the parent/guardian may be subject to legal consequences.
  - Please be aware that after 5 absences (excused or unexcused) a district generated automatic notification is sent out to families.
- Students must be in attendance until 11:10 a.m. to be counted present for the day. It is the student's responsibility to arrive in the classroom on time each day - by 7:40 a.m.
- Parents must sign students in at the Checkmate Kiosk in the front office when arriving at school after 7:40.
- A student is never considered tardy due to a late bus.
- Ten (10) tardies result in an automatic referral to the School Social Worker.
- **Extended Absence:** If a student is absent for 10 or more "consecutive" school days, the student will be withdrawn, per district policy.
  - If there are extenuating circumstances, please partner with your child's teacher, the social worker or the administrative team.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Birthdays are announced each morning on the WMPE news. If you'd like to share a treat with your child's classmates to celebrate their birthday, you can find a form on the MPE website that allows you to buy cafeteria treats for your child's class. Outside treats (from home or purchased at a store) are not allowed. There are two options in the cafeteria that students will enjoy. Balloons, cupcakes, or other treats may not be dropped off at school.

**Personal party invitations may only be distributed at school if you are inviting your whole class or all of the boys or all of the girls.**

## **CAFETERIA**

- **Expectations:**

Students are expected to remain on the Mustang Trail and exhibit appropriate behaviors while visiting the cafeteria.

Trustworthy	Stay seated while eating your lunch
Respectful	Use kind words and a respectful tone of voice
Accountable	Clean up your space
Involved	Be aware of your noise level
Leader	Think of others and model expected cafeteria behavior

- **If students are eating nut products, they will sit at the opposite end of the table from the peanut safe zone.**

- **Visitors:**

- Parents are welcome to join students for lunch **after Labor Day**.
- Parents must sign in at the office, wear a visitor's badge and meet students outside the cafeteria.
- Parents may take their child only to the Mustang Nook to enjoy lunch together.
- When visiting your child for lunch, please adhere to the following guidelines and schedule. We will monitor lunch visitor numbers closely through the year and adjust if necessary. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we work to ensure a safe and comfortable environment for our students, staff, and families. This will allow enough space for parents to visit comfortably. Exceptions will be made for birthdays!
- Be sure you know your child's exact lunch time.
- Only those listed on the child's Infinite Campus profile will be allowed entry to eat lunch with the student.
- Parents must bring their ID and scan in through our Checkmate visitor system. Your visitor badge must be prominently displayed throughout the lunch visit.
- Parents should wait for their child's class by the doors marked "IN". Parents will then proceed to the Mustang Nook (in the cafeteria, right side corner) to enjoy lunch with their child.
- Keep an eye on the time! Return your child to their classroom table before their teacher picks up the class from lunch.

- **Meal Prices**

- For the 2023-2024 school year, breakfast is \$1.10 and lunch is \$2.45. Lunch meals for adults are \$4.75. Parents should bring cash to pay for their meals. The cafeteria is unable to provide change for large bills. The district does not allow parents to use student accounts to pay for meals. Families meeting specific income requirements may be eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Meals and can apply for this program through an application available at <https://nutrition.fultonschools.org> beginning July 24, 2023. For more information about Free and Reduced-Price Meals or the application process, contact the FCS School Nutrition Program at 470.254.8960.
- You may put money on your student's account for breakfast, lunch and extra snacks available for purchase. Please contact the School Nutrition Manager, Sada Glass at [glasssl@fultonschools.org](mailto:glasssl@fultonschools.org) to place any dietary restrictions on your child's account.

- My Payments Plus is the online system for lunch accounts and can be found on the FCS Nutrition Website: <https://www.mypaymentsplus.com/welcome>
- You may also send a check marked to the cafeteria with your student to school.

### **CLASS LISTS & PLACEMENT/**

All class placements are tentative for the first 10 days of school. Fulton utilizes the Continuous Achievement model to provide an appropriately challenging curriculum for all students. Parents can learn more about Continuous Achievement [here](#). Continuous Achievement data is reviewed at 18 and 36 weeks. Additionally, each spring, at the end of the year, parents will have an opportunity to give feedback to help place them for the next academic year. This district has a waiver policy in place. All waiver requests must be submitted within the first two weeks of each semester.

### **CLINIC/MEDICINE**

Parents will be contacted by the clinic assistant when students are injured or become ill at school. Prescription medications can only be administered with an authorized signature from a physician and parent/guardian. Please complete the [Authorization to Give Medication at School Form](#). This must be done each school year and anytime a change to the dosage occurs. The Authorization form can be faxed directly to the school from the physician's office. Only parents can transport medication.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Each Thursday parents receive the Mustang Flyer, an electronic newsletter from Principal Richardson. This newsletter gives information regarding upcoming events, important dates, etc. Teachers also send home student work samples and progress every Thursday in Thursday Folders. It is the expectation that teachers send home a weekly e-mail covering assignments and activities for the week. Please use email to communicate with teachers about NON-EMERGENCY concerns. Often, teachers are unable to check email during the school day. Please allow 24 hours for an email response.

### **CONDUCT**

We expect all Mountain Park Elementary students to stick to the Mustang TRAIL throughout the building. The TRAIL stands for:

**T**rustworthy  
**R**espectful  
**A**ccountable  
**I**nvolved  
**L**eaders

Throughout the year, our counselor will teach classroom lessons on these characteristics, and students who embody these characteristics will be recognized. Students that remain on the TRAIL can earn a Positive Office Referral and/or a Golden Ticket that can be redeemed for a token to our book vending machine.

Please read the Fulton County Student Code of Conduct. An electronic Code of Conduct is available on the Fulton County website at <https://www.fultonschools.org/studentdiscipline> and it will be emailed. Parents and students will be asked to sign the acknowledgment of receipt form in Infinite Campus.

## **CONFERENCES**

Parent-Teacher conferences will occur at least once during the school year via phone, Teams, or face-to-face based on the parents' preference. The first conference will occur by October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Your child's teacher will reach out to schedule. Additionally, parents can request conferences with teachers throughout the school year.

## **COUNSELOR**

Mountain Park has one full-time counselor. Our school counselor provides individual or small group counseling to children, conducts classroom guidance lessons on a regular schedule, works with school personnel to foster a positive learning environment for students, assist parents in understanding children and developing positive attitudes, techniques, and strategies essential for constructive child rearing, and assists parents and children in obtaining specific school and community services. Our counselor, Suzanne Pannell, is available to talk with students, parents, and teachers. She can be reached at [pannell@fultonschools.org](mailto:pannell@fultonschools.org)

## **DRESS CODE**

Students should dress in a way that does not distract others nor disrupt classroom and school procedures. All graphics and designs must be school appropriate. Shirts should be long enough to prevent showing the stomach when arms are raised. Any shoes worn to school should be acceptable for P.E. and recess. Per the [Fulton County Schools Student Code of Conduct & Discipline Handbook](#), *"Examples of inappropriate dress and grooming include lack of cleanliness in person or dress; shoelessness; "short-short" clothing; bare midriffs; "tank tops"; "see-through" clothing or apparel which designates gangs or similar organizations or any dress that is disruptive to the educational process. Designated dress involving school activities approved by the principal shall be acceptable. The principal or other duly authorized school official shall determine whether any particular mode of dress or grooming results in a violation of the spirit and/or the intent of this rule."*

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Fulton County Schools prohibit elementary students from having cell phones or other communication devices during the school days. If parents would like their student to have a phone for after school, the phone must be powered off and in the backpack. Smart watches that act as phones and can make calls are not allowed.

Each student in grades 2-5 will be issued a district laptop. Students in grades K and 1 will have a class set of ipads. Students must adhere to the district electronic use policy and good digital citizenship practices. A fee will be charged for lost or damaged district issued devices. The device user agreement is found in Infinite Campus and needs to be signed off by parents. Effective beginning the 23-24 school year, students are no longer allowed to bring devices home, per FCS policy.

## **GRADING**

- The Infinite Campus parent portal, Campus Parent, is available to monitor progress and to see progress reports and report cards. Grade reports are available in the Campus Parent every 4.5 weeks.
- The district grading and reporting policy here: <https://www.fultonschools.org/gradingandreporting>
- Non-academic skills give feedback to students and/or parents/guardians in areas beyond academic mastery. They are assessed at each report card. Please see the [Non-Academic Skills Fact Sheet](#).

**Kindergarten- Second Grade**

EM	Exceeding Mastery	90-100
M	Mastery	80-89
AM	Approaching Mastery	70-79
NYM	Not Yet Demonstrating Mastery	69 and below
NG		No Grade

**Third- Fifth Grade**

A	90 and Above
B	80-89
C	70-79
F	69 and Below
W (1-100)	Withdrawn
P/F	Pass or Fail
NG	No Grade
I	Incomplete
CR	Credit
NC	Non-Credit

**HOMEWORK**

Homework may be assigned as additional practice opportunities for students. Homework may be assigned up to four nights per week. Having a quiet place to work and establishing a regular time to do homework will help support learning. Most homework assignments are due the following school day. Periodically, students may have long-range homework assignments, such as reading a book, doing research or completing a project.

**INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**

MPE instructs students using the [GSE \(Georgia Standards of Excellence\)](#) in grades K-5. The curriculum includes the following: language arts (reading, writing composition, English, phonics/morphology), mathematics, social studies, science, health, music, physical education, art, media (K-1) and construction (2-5). Children learn at different rates, so delivery of instruction may be paced accordingly. If you have any questions about instruction, you may reach out to the CST (Curriculum Support Teacher, [Kristen Reittenbach](#)).

**LOST AND FOUND**

**PLEASE** label belongings with first and last name. If an item is misplaced, you may check the Lost and Found. Unclaimed items left in Lost and Found are periodically washed and donated to North Fulton Community Charities.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & MOMENT OF SILENCE**

We begin each school day with an opportunity for students to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and to observe a moment of silent reflection during our WMPE school news broadcast.

### **REMOTE LEARNING DAYS/PRE-APPROVED ABSENCES**

Our district attendance policy allows for each student to participate remotely in school up to 5 days per semester. Some families use these days when they have a planned vacation or family event. To have your child's remote days approved and accurately recorded, please follow the steps below. Please note, the request must be received at least 5 school days before the first day of absence.

- Download the request for pre-arranged remote learning found at the MPE website <https://www.fultonschools.org/domain/8802>
- Complete the form, save and email to Assistant Principal, Michelle Gantenbein. [gantenbeinm@fultonschools.org](mailto:gantenbeinm@fultonschools.org) . You may also print the form and send it in with your student.
- Parent will receive an email confirming receipt of the request and approval/denial of days.
- Students must complete all assignments and turn them in within two days of return. The students' absences will be marked 'unexcused', then updated to 'participated remotely' once all assignments are completed and turned in within the appropriate timeframe.

### **SCHOOL COLORS AND MASCOT**

The Mountain Park school mascot is the Mustang. The Mountain Park Mustang is named Spirit. Our school colors are blue, white and green. Fridays are Spirit Days; wear your MPE shirt or colors.

### **SCHOOL HOURS**

- Arrival 7:10-7:40 a.m.
- Classroom Instruction 7:40a.m.-2:20p.m.
- Dismissal 2:20p.m.

\*Please do not arrive at school before 7:10 a.m., as supervision is not available.

\*Students may not be checked-out from 2:00p.m.-2:20p.m.

### **SCHOOL PICTURES**

Individual pictures are taken in the fall and spring. Class and individual pictures are taken in the spring. Reminders and flyers will be sent to families. Please refer to the school calendar for Picture Day dates.

### **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

Required materials will be provided by Fulton County. However, a supply list is provided by your teacher for additional, recommended items. [Supply lists](#) are posted on the Mountain Park website. Supplies can also be ordered through School Tool Box:

<https://www.schooltoolbox.com/school-supplies/school/list-boxes/?schoolId=27452>

### **SNACK**

You may bring a nutritious snack to eat during class. If you are in a nut safe class, a nut free snack is required. Students are able to bring a water bottle to school each day.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

It is critically important that your child and your child's teacher know how they are getting home each day. A regular mode of transportation should be communicated to your child's teacher at Open House.

- This year, we will be using a system called [PickUp Patrol](#) to help us track dismissals. PickUp Patrol will save us a great deal of time in the office, reduce classroom interruptions and provide you with a convenient way to make changes to your dismissal plan.
- All transportation changes **must** entered in the PickUp Patrol App. When you register with the app, your normal transportation plan will be entered, and any changes will be communicated through the system.
- **Changes will be cut off every day at 1:30 through Pickup Patrol. Only in an emergency will phone calls be allowed after that time.**

## **BUS RIDERS**

It is important that students follow safety guidelines while riding the bus to and from school. The district assigns bus numbers and routes.

- Bus assignments will be available at Open House.
- Parents can find a wealth of information on the Fulton County Schools [Transportation](#) website.
- Parents are encouraged to download the [Here Comes The Bus](#) app.

**Please note:** It is against Fulton County Schools policy to ride a bus home other than the student's assigned bus.

### **Student's Behavior Expectations While Riding Bus:**

- Students are expected to remain on the Mustang Trail and exhibit appropriate behaviors while on the bus. They must adhere to these expectations each day.

<b>Trustworthy</b>	Can we trust you to do what you are supposed to do no matter who is watching?
<b>Respectful</b>	Keep your hands to yourself.
<b>Accountable</b>	Stay in your seat.
<b>Involved</b>	If a situation occurs, communicate with the bus driver, teacher and/or administrator.
<b>Leader</b>	Be a role model.

## **CAR RIDERS**

To ensure student safety, the process for car riders is changing for the 23-24 school year.

- Each family will be issued a dedicated carpool number. Carpool hang tags with numbers will be issued during Open House for families.
  - Each family will receive 3 hang tags for their mirrors and 3 backpack tags for each student. (Backpack tags will be given to students on the first day of school.)
  - Numbers will be matched as students enter the vehicle each day.
  - Students must have a transportation change note through the Pick Up Patrol App to ride home with another student.
- The carpool lane is on the side of the building. Students should not be dropped off at any other location. If parents would like to park, children must be walked to the front doors, due to the bus traffic near our main entrance.
- **The carpool line closes at 7:40 am sharp. When the bell rings, parents must drive to the main entrance to check children at the Checkmate system in the vestibule CheckMate system.**

- Always use child safety seats and/or seat belts correctly.
- Make sure your child enters and leaves the car on the sidewalk side where we have adult supervision.
- Remember that the back seat is the safest place for children of any age to ride.
- Drivers are not allowed to use cell phones in the carpool lane.
- **DAY CARE**
  - Day care vans pick up after school. If your student takes a daycare van, please note it in the transportation app.
- **EARLY CHECKOUT**
  - All early student dismissals must be completed by 2:00 p.m. Be prepared to show photo ID when checking students out. Check outs are made through the CheckMate system in the vestibule.
- **WALKERS/BIKE RIDERS**
  - To ensure student safety, the process for walkers is changing for the 23-24 school year.
  - Walkers will be issued Walker Identification Numbers (**WIN**) at Open House.
    - At dismissal, walkers will gather and be grouped by last name to be walked to the upper parking lot by staff members.
    - Parents will meet at the designated area (look for staff with signs) each day until the WIN is matched to the parent/guardian and the student is released by an MPE staff member.
    - We realize this process will be longer than previous experiences, but believe it is an important step to ensure safe dismissal for our students.
  - When walking to and from school, please follow these important safety rules:
    - Parents should not park at the Wildwood Springs/Mountain Park School intersection.
    - Children under the age of 10 should walk with an adult or older child every day because they do not have the necessary skills to judge the speed or distance of oncoming traffic and their peripheral vision is one-third less than that of adults.
    - Always look to the left, to the right and to the left again for moving vehicles before crossing the street.
    - Only cross at crosswalks. Use the newly installed push button lights to alert oncoming traffic.
    - Follow all directions from the crossing guard.
    - Student safety is very important to us. Remember to walk only on the sidewalk, respect the property of your neighbors, and learn the safety rules for walking.
  - Students who ride their bicycles to school must carefully follow bike safety rules, including wearing a helmet. Bicycles may be parked in the rack in the front of the school. Once students reach school property, students should get off of the bike and walk to the bike rack.

### **VISITORS**

For everyone's safety, all parents and visitors are required to sign in at the office and wear a visitor's badge while in the building. Visitors to classrooms are not allowed during school hours without an appointment. School hours are 7:10 a.m. to 2:40 p.m.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

We encourage your parents to volunteer at school. Volunteers will In order to volunteer, your parents need to visit <https://www.fultonschools.org/volunteer> and follow the process to register.