



# SHAKERAG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2023-2024 Family Handbook

(This handbook is a living document and will be updated as needed to keep our community informed.)

## Welcome

The teachers and staff of Shakerag Elementary School welcome you to another school year. We urge all parents to become involved and support the school, teachers, and programs. Your positive attitude and support make a significant difference. To help your child enjoy experiences at Shakerag, we offer the following suggestions:

- *Get to know your school.* Become familiar with the classroom locations, front office, media center, cafeteria, gymnasium, and playgrounds.
- *Become familiar with the teachers and staff.* Our professional faculty and staff members are one key to Shakerag's success. Each person contributes daily to the strength and character of Shakerag.

- *Study and learn as much as you can.* We are proud of our school, faculty, staff, and students. Students can help us by doing his/her best.

We are delighted and eager to be educating your children and developing a comprehensive school program in cooperation with the community. It's our sincere hope that your child's school years at Shakerag will be filled with happiness and success. This Handbook is comprised of policies and procedures for our school. Parents are encouraged to review the material in this handbook and share appropriately with your child. We will update the handbook as needed to keep the community informed.

## Mission Statement

We are committed to maximizing the social, emotional, and academic potential of every child.

## Moto

Anchored in the S.E.A. (Socially, Emotionally, and Academically)

## School Colors

Blue/Gold

## Mascot

Sharks

## Contact Information

### Shakerag Elementary School

10885 Rogers Circle  
 Johns Creek, GA 30097  
[www.shakeragelementary.com](http://www.shakeragelementary.com)  
[www.fultonschools.org](http://www.fultonschools.org)

Main .....470-254-3880  
 Clinic .....470-254-8834  
 Cafeteria .....470-254-3887  
 Fax .....470-254-3886

### Administration/Support Staff

**Principal:** Christine Lemerond  
**Assistant Principal:**  
**Counselor:** Michelle Paras  
**Curriculum Support Teacher:** Julie Duhe  
**Instructional Support Teacher:** Michelle Wallace

**Principal's Secretary:** Jennie Chang  
**Data Clerk:** Courtney Gatlin Cleary  
**Professional Assistant:** Judy Lozada De Castillo  
**Bilingual Liaison:** Lying Li  
**Clinic:**

## School Calendar

The school system calendar dates are set by the Fulton County School System. You can access Shakerag's school calendar by clicking [here](#).

## Hours

School hours are from 7:40 a.m. to 2:20 p.m. Arrival is between 7:10 a.m. and 7:40 a.m. Students should not be dropped off prior to the bell ringing at 7:10 a.m. as adult supervision is not available. If you and your child arrive after the bell rings at 7:40 a.m., a parent or guardian is required to come in with their child to sign them in. Dismissal begins at 2:20 p.m.

## About Us

Shakerag Elementary School, located in the northeastern tip of Fulton County, opened its doors in August 1997. Our students reside in homes that are situated in the rural setting surrounding the school. The area has grown substantially, predominantly in the development of subdivisions, small shopping centers, churches, and the Johns Creek Technology Center, a vast compilation of technology-centered businesses.

The name, Shakerag, was selected because of its historical significance within the local community. Some speculate that the name refers to the rag one shakes to tell passing trains, and maybe stage coaches, to stop to get the mail. Another famous legend focused on a bobcat that terrorized the community's laundry. The community would do their laundry and hang the clothes to dry out back overnight. During the night, an animal would rip the laundry off the line and, shaking the clothes to rags, scatter the laundry over the backyard. One night, one of the residents saw a bobcat shaking the rags, and then everyone knew who was shaking their rags. They let the bobcat go, and the community got its name.

## Attendance Boundaries

The Shakerag Elementary School district includes homes that are: East of Medlock Bridge Road and Bell Road from the Boles Road intersection and South of McGinnis Ferry Road (Fulton/Forsyth County Line). The following communities are located within the Shakerag Attendance Boundaries:

- Adair Manor
- Amberleigh
- Belcrest
- Bellacree
- Bellemont Farms
- Blackstone
- Brookhaven at Johns Creek
- Brookmere at Johns Creek
- Devonhall
- Easthaven at Johns Creek
- Edgewater Estates
- Gates at Johns Creek
- Homestead
- Huntington
- Jaden Woods
- Johns Creek Station
- Kempston Place
- Laurelwood
- Oaks at Johns Creek
- Old Taylor Farms
- Parkside
- Quail Hollow
- Riverwalk
- Shadow Creek
- Shakerag Manor
- Spring Meadows
- Tavistock

Also, you can check if you're within our school boundary by putting your address in at [www3.fultonschools.org/webm aps/address/desktop.html](http://www3.fultonschools.org/webm aps/address/desktop.html)

## Communication

Open communication between parents and the school is crucial and is a priority for our Shakerag staff. We encourage and expect parents to contact us regarding any questions or concerns you may have during the school year. **For classroom and student concerns, parents/legal guardians should contact the teacher first.**

**Please allow staff 24 business hours to return phone calls and e-mails.** If not satisfied with the response from the teacher, parents may schedule a conference or speak with the Curriculum Support Teacher, Counselor, Assistant Principal or Principal. If not done prior, administrative staff will direct parents to contact the teacher or staff member to discuss the problem prior to intervening.

## Conferences

During the first semester, each parent is given the opportunity to discuss his/her child's progress in an individual conference with the teacher(s). We believe that the educational success of your child is a joint venture between the school and the home, and we want to keep communication lines open. Parent conferences may be initiated at any time by the parent, teacher or administrator and held at a mutually agreeable time. Please be mindful that teachers are responsible for their students from 7:10 a.m. until the last bus leaves. They are not able to conference with parents during this time unless arrangements are made ahead of time. So that instructional time is not interrupted, please understand that classroom visitations are not a time for parent/teacher conferences. Conferences and visitations should be made by appointment.

### E-Mail

Our staff directory, located on our website, provides e-mail addresses for all staff members. E-mail is the easiest form of communication for matters that are not urgent. If you have an **urgent need**, please send in a written note, or contact our front office at 470-254-3880 as the majority of our staff may be in the middle of instruction, or out of the building, and not see your email right away. If you have an unexpected request for early dismissal, please call our front office at 470-254-3880 to ensure a staff member receives your message. All change of dismissal requests must be made in writing. An email request will not be accepted.

### Newsletter

Parents and community members are highly encouraged to read our school newsletter, Shark Bytes, which is distributed by e-mail every Friday. This communication provides important information, key dates and upcoming events. Hardcopies of Shark Bytes are available at the front desk upon request.

### Change of Address, Telephone Number and/or Email

Please notify the teacher and front office of any changes in address, telephone numbers and/or email addresses as soon as possible. Information can be checked and verified in the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. Accurate records are necessary to be able to notify parents in case of an emergency.

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## Curriculum and Instruction

### Instructional Programs

Shakerag is organized to include Pre-Kindergarten through grade five. We follow the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE), the Fulton County Continuous Achievement Guidelines, and differentiate instruction to help meet the needs of each student. Our quest in the classroom is to foster success for all students and to enable them to become self-directed, productive problem solvers and thinkers. In connection with personalized learning, teachers provide specific ways for each individual to learn and master as much content as possible, without assuming one student's road map for learning is identical to anyone else's. Instruction may be presented whole group, and/or in small groups within or outside of the general education setting to help meet each student's maximum potential.

The core curriculum includes the following: language arts (reading, English, listening, speaking, spelling/phonics, and writing), mathematics, social studies, science, and health.

In addition to the core content, we also offer:

- Art, Music and PE
- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
- Media Center
- Talented and Gifted (TAG)
- Advanced Strategies Lab (ASL)
- Early Intervention Program (EIP)
- Special Education/Interrelated Resource (IRR)
- Speech

### Grading Procedures

- **Progress Reports/Report Cards:** Progress Reports are communicated every 4.5 weeks in Infinite Campus. Non-Academic Skills are reported every 9 weeks. Each student will receive a report card at the end of the semester. Each grade uses the following scale:  
*Grades K-2:* **EM** (Exceeding Mastery (90-100)); **M** (Mastering (80-89)); **AM** (Approaching Mastery (70-79)); **NYM** (Not Yet Demonstrating Mastery (69 & Below)); **NG** (No Grade)  
*Grades 3-5:* **A** (90-100); **B** (80-89); **C** (70-79); **F** (0-69); **NG** (Not Graded); **W** (Withdrawn); **P/F** (Pass(P) or Fail (F)); **I** (Incomplete); **CR** (Credit); **NC** (Non-Credit)  
*Grades K-5 – Non-Academic Skills:* **CD** (Consistently Demonstrates); **OD** (Often Demonstrates); **SD** (Sometimes Demonstrates); **RD** (Rarely Demonstrates)
- **Work Samples:** Samples of student work are sent home periodically on Fridays for parents to review. These papers should be signed and returned. Be sure to address any concerns with your child's teacher.

Assignments will be reported across three (3) categories:

- **Major:** An assignment or assessment that is cumulative in nature that measures learning targets from multiple standards/skills.

- **Minor:** An assignment or assessment that measures an individual learning target, standard, or subject of learning targets/standards/skills within a unit.
- **Practice:** Daily assignments, observations, and/or engagement activities given in class or for homework to build pre-requisite skills, measure progress towards mastery of a learning target or standard, enrich and/or remediate skills.

### Homework

On occasion, teachers may assign homework to build upon and/or remediate skills previously taught. Homework may be used to:

- reinforce classroom instruction and learning
- foster good study habits and time management skills
- build responsibility
- provide opportunities for independent practice, creative thinking, and problem-solving skills
- provide a vehicle for parent awareness

Work that has been introduced, taught, and facilitated with guided practice would be appropriate for independent practice at home. Age-appropriate work, which a student may complete with minimal parental assistance, should be outlined in steps so that interval deadlines are implemented and noted in student agendas (grades 2-5) or homework sheets.

On a **weekly basis**, homework **MAY** be assigned Monday – Thursday. **On average, each grade level follows these general guidelines for nightly assignments:**

- Kindergarten – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: 20-30 minutes max
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade: 30 – 40 minutes max
- **Reasonable time expectations.** If your student is consistently spending more time than the general guidelines, you should contact the teacher. Homework is not typically assigned on weekends but work on long term projects may require some weekend work. If your child has trouble with an assignment after a reasonable attempt, please have him/her stop. The parent should send a note to the teacher explaining the situation along with the work he/she completed.
- **Student's Responsibility:** We expect a student to do his/her best. All assignments should be turned in on time. Homework should be neat. Students should do their work independently and ask a parent or teacher for help when needed.
- **Parents' Responsibility:** Parents are instrumental in making homework a positive experience for your child. We ask that parents make homework a top priority, providing a quiet homework environment and a daily homework routine. If your child is struggling with homework, please contact the teacher and request a conference to review your concerns.
- **Teacher's Responsibility:** Homework is an important indicator of a student's understanding of previous instruction. The teacher will review completed assignments to help guide their instruction. We strongly believe that positive support plays an important role in motivating children to develop good study habits.

### Make-Up Policy

It is the combined responsibility of the parents, students, and teachers to request make-up work including tests for any absences. Regardless of whether the absence is excused or unexcused, students will receive the grade earned, without penalty, on any make-up work and tests submitted on time as agreed upon with your child's teacher.

### Physical Education

- **Clothing:** Please provide loose fitting clothes and tennis shoes/sneakers for class participation on the days your child has P.E.
- **Non-Participation:** If your child is not to participate in physical education activities, a written note must be sent to the classroom teacher (for prolonged absences, a doctor's note will be required). The note must also include a date when the student will be able to resume P.E. activities.
- **Special Needs:** Any needs that require specific attention (i.e. asthma, allergies to insects, diabetes, heart problems, nose bleeds, epilepsy, hemophilia, etc.) must be detailed on the Student Information Card and may require a doctor's note in order to excuse a child from gym class for a limited period of time.

**Placement Requests:**

Every spring, we allow parents to submit a Student Support Request form notifying us of any special needs to consider when making placement decisions for the upcoming school year. It is critical that this form is completed and submitted by the deadline. Forms submitted after the deadline may not be considered.

**Twins/Multiples:** It is our practice to separate twins/multiples and place them in different classes in order to promote individuality. If you have twins/multiples and would like them placed in the same class, please complete the Student Support Request form each year as noted above.

**Remote Learning Days**

At varying times, Fulton County Schools will implement Remote Learning Days to accommodate staff professional development, state-wide elections, and/or potential inclement weather days. Remote Learning Days are days where students will complete assignments sent by their teachers AT HOME. When this happens, you can expect to receive an email from your child's homeroom teacher and/or assignments posted in Microsoft TEAMS no later than 8:00 a.m. the morning of the Remote Learning Day. If your child is in Special Ed., ESOL, or EIP, those teachers will review the remote learning plan for your child's grade level and email you directly if they feel any modifications need to be made to the grade level plan. Plans may include synchronous (live) and asynchronous (pre-recorded or independent practice) lessons.

**Retention**

Children grow and progress at different rates. Students are promoted each year based on their mastery of the grade level standards. Some children need more time than others to make satisfactory academic progress. **As a school, we believe that retention in a grade should be the last option.**

Throughout the school year, **all** students are monitored for academic performance. For those students of concern, we develop a preventative continuum based on data analysis to identify student needs, implement interventions and programs, and evaluate effectiveness to ensure that all identified students can be successful.

Parents/guardians of students who are identified to have skill gaps are notified, and a plan of action is developed to support students through the Response to Intervention (RTI) process. Throughout the school year, we will evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions in place and make necessary adjustments as needed. In the Spring, a committee, including the parents/legal guardian(s), will convene to determine promotability. We highly encourage parent participation in the decision-making process as this should be a team decision.

**Standardized Assessments**

Testing is an integral part of our educational system. It helps us assess and meet students' needs. Our testing program is aligned with the State of Georgia and Fulton County Schools. The following standardized tests are administered during the school year:

- Grade K GKIDS Assessment - On-going
- Grades K, 3-5 Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA)
- Grades K-5 ACCESS for English Language Learners (ELLs)
- Grades 2 & 4 NWEA - MAP Assessment
- Grades 3-5 Georgia Milestones End of Grade
- Grades 3 & 5 Georgia Milestones End of Grade Retest

Actual test dates and details will be communicated in Shark Bytes and posted on our school website as details, dates, and times are finalized.

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**Policies and Procedures****Arrival and Dismissal**

- **New Students/First Day of School:** We highly encourage parents to allow students to begin their normal arrival and dismissal routines as soon as possible by allowing their child to ride the bus or drop their child off at carpool. On the first day of school, parents may walk their child to the classroom, but please be prompt with saying your goodbyes at the classroom door so students can get situated and ready for their day. After the first day of school, we ask that your child walk to their classroom on their own. Should they need assistance, staff members will be available to help.
- **Late Check-In:** If your child arrives after 7:40 a.m., the parent or guardian must sign the child in at the front office. *Please review the Attendance policies regarding excessive tardies.*

- **Early Check-Out:** If it is necessary for a student to leave school early, please provide a note to notify your child's teacher. The note should be submitted to the classroom teacher upon arrival to school. Parents/legal guardians should report to the office to initiate an early check-out. **Please do not go directly to your child's room. Students will not be dismissed from the classroom without a request from the front office.** Be prepared to show your driver's license when checking out students. In order to help ensure smooth dismissal procedures, we ask that all early check-outs be completed by 2:00 p.m.
- **Change in Dismissal:** If a student has a need to be dismissed in a manner other than his/her normal routine (i.e. after-school programs, riding home with another student for childcare purposes, etc.) it will be necessary for the student to bring a letter of permission from the student's parent/legal guardian to the classroom teacher the morning the change should occur. This letter should be given to the child's teacher immediately upon arrival to school. No phone or email dismissal changes are allowed. For your convenience, please click [here](#) for a "Dismissal Change Form," visit our school website at [www.shakeragelementary.com](http://www.shakeragelementary.com), or pick-up a form in the front office.

**IMPORTANT: If a note indicating a change in dismissal has not been received, your child will be sent home their regularly scheduled way.**

- **Forgotten Items:** After dismissal, students are not allowed to return to the classrooms for forgotten items. Please help us encourage and reinforce responsibility by NOT bringing your child back to the building for forgotten items. In the event of an emergency, students that return to school must check in at the office to see if their teacher is still in the classroom. For safety reasons, if the teacher is not in the classroom, students will not be permitted into the classroom.
- **Bus Riders:** Parents are highly encouraged to use the bus to transport students to and from school. Bus riders will be dropped off and picked up at the side of the building next to the cafeteria. Bus dismissal will begin at 2:20 p.m.

For route details, please visit the Fulton County School website at [www.fultonschools.org](http://www.fultonschools.org), click on the Students and Families tab, and then click on Transportation.

Riding a school bus is a privilege contingent upon proper and courteous conduct. The Fulton County Board of Education recognizes that safe school bus operation is only possible with the full cooperation of our parents, students and school staff.

Please note:

- Students are expected to stay in their seats facing forward, speak in a quiet voice using appropriate language, refrain from throwing objects, keep hands, arms, feet, and all belongings to themselves, cooperate with the bus driver, and act in a respectful manner. Students may be subject to disciplinary action when bus rules are violated, including possible suspension from the bus for one or more days.
- There are occasions when a bus may be delayed. Students will remain at the school until the bus arrives. If a bus is late for arrival, students will not be counted as late.
- If a student misses the announcement for the departure of his/her bus, the student will be brought to the front office and we will contact the parent or authorized Emergency contacts listed in Infinite Campus. Arrangements must be made to pick up the child immediately.
- Students must get on and off the bus at their own stop. A student is not allowed to ride another student's bus unless it is necessary for childcare purposes and approved by the Transportation Department for a permanent change. In these cases, the parent must complete a "Dismissal Change Form" and gain permission from the front office. A "Dismissal Change Form" can be printed by clicking [here](#), or visiting our school [website](#).
- If the bus driver is concerned about leaving a child at a bus stop without supervision, the driver will bring the student back to the school and we will call the parent or authorized contacts listed in Infinite Campus. Arrangements must be made to pick up the child immediately. **Shakerag Best Practices Policy: Students under the age of 9 require an adult at the bus stop.**

Please call North Transportation Department (470-254-2970) with questions or concerns regarding bus routes, times and bus supervision.

- **Car Riders:** We encourage you to allow your children to ride the bus if possible. Students being dismissed as car riders on a daily basis will register and be assigned a carpool number. Parents will be given a carpool tag to hang from their rearview mirror. Students will only be dismissed to cars with the appropriate tag. All students should be dropped off and picked up in the carpool lane.

Children may not be dropped off prior to 7:10 a.m. You may begin lining up in the carpool line prior to 7:10 a.m., however, to ensure supervision, please do not send your child into the building prior to the bell ringing. Children arriving inside the building after the bell rings at 7:40 a.m. will be marked tardy. Please adjust your departure time from home to account for the high volume of cars.

Car riders will be dismissed at 2:20 p.m. Car riders will enter and exit the building through the Media Center. Cars should form a single line in front of the school where they will stop for children to enter or exit the car on the passenger side of the vehicle. No parking is allowed in the pick-up or dismissal area along the front curb. All parents **MUST** remain in their vehicles in the carpool line. Children will not be released to parents who walk up to the building. If you walk up to the building during carpool, you will be asked to go to the front desk to sign your student out after dismissal is finished for the day.

**If a student is going to be a car rider with another family, or on an occasional basis, they must provide a written note, dated, and signed by the parent, to the office immediately upon arrival at school.** Students will not be dismissed through carpool to an unregistered car or without a signed note. If you do not have the appropriate carpool number, you may be asked to park and come inside to show your ID and check the child out through the front office.

Please observe the following safety rules:

- We are asking **ALL** parents to remain in the carpool line for morning and afternoon drop-off and pick-up. This will ensure children are dropped off and picked up safely. In the afternoons, students will not be released to parents who walk-up to the doors unless the child/parents are "walkers". If parents are not in their vehicles, they will be asked to go inside and sign their child out at the front desk once dismissal is complete. Please plan accordingly for increased traffic and allow extra time for arrival and dismissal. If there is ever a need to park, please walk your child to and from the building to ensure their safety. Children are not permitted to cross the parking lot without an adult accompanying them. In the mornings, to reduce congestion, no parking will be permitted unless you have an appointment. At no time should vehicles enter and/or park in the bus lanes.
  - Drive slowly, be attentive, and refrain from using your cell phone while driving through the carpool lane.
  - Please do not pass other vehicles.
  - Children are only permitted to exit from car doors on the passenger side. If needed, staff monitors will assist your child from the car. Parents need to stay inside their vehicles.
  - Do not block the parking lot or car rider lane during dismissal. Parking spaces are available at the front and the side parking lots. To prevent accidents, please do not double-park and always park in a marked parking spot.
  - Always display your carpool number on your rearview mirror so it can easily be seen by our staff.
  - Please obey all speed limits and be patient.
- **Day Care Riders:** Day care vehicles will begin loading students at 2:20 p.m. from the carpool lane. **It is the responsibility of parents to notify the day care when their child will not be attending and/or riding day care transportation on any given day.** Parents also need to notify the school when their child will not be attending and/or riding day care transportation by completing a "Dismissal Change Form" found by clicking [here](#), or requesting a form from the front office. If you need bus information, go to [www.fultonschools.org](http://www.fultonschools.org) click on the Students and Families tab, and then click on Transportation.
  - **Walkers:** **Always** use sidewalks, obey safety rules, and promptly enter or leave the school grounds. Morning walkers will enter the building only through the main entrance with our car riders, and afternoon walkers will exit through the Media Center. Please bring your carpool number with you even if walking. This will speed up the dismissal process.



**Attendance**

Regular attendance is essential to the learning process. In addition, students who are absent from school cannot recapture classroom activities or experiences. The state of Georgia has a compulsory attendance law (O.C.G.A. §20-2-690.1) that governs school attendance. The law requires each school system to clearly define student attendance and requirements, particularly tardies, absences, truancy, and notification to parents whose student(s)' attendance is out of compliance. The law also addresses possible legal consequences facing parents whose children habitually miss school.

The Fulton County School System is charged with enforcing the compulsory attendance law and school social workers must investigate, monitor, and follow-up with families experiencing student attendance problems. **If your child needs to be absent, it is imperative that your child's teacher receives a signed, dated excuse stating the reason for the absence as soon as possible, but no later than 5 days following the absence so accurate attendance records can be maintained.**

In addition to attending school regularly, it is critical that students arrive at school on time. School tardiness has a direct, negative effect on student success. Students arriving late miss morning announcements, instruction, academic assignments, and may also feel like they are starting the day behind their classmates and have missed out on something. We ask that all students arrive early enough so that the student is *in the classroom* when the bell rings at **7:40 a.m.** Students who are not physically in the building when the bell rings will be marked tardy and must be accompanied by their parent or legal guardian to sign in at the front office prior to going to class. Parents are encouraged to provide written communication regarding reasons for excused tardies (i.e., doctor's appointment). Students riding Fulton County Board of Education buses will not be counted tardy if the bus arrives late. If using carpool, please make sure you allow plenty of time for increased traffic.

Fulton County Schools (FCS) underwent a policy revision for student attendance (Policy JB Attendance and JBD Absences and Excuses) that now follows a tiered framework which includes an increase in parent/guardian notifications regardless if an absence is excused or unexcused. Preventative strategies and interventions will be put in place to encourage all students to be present and engaged in learning.

**How is attendance determined at the elementary level?**

Elementary School students' attendance is taken within the first hour of the instructional day to record who is physically present. Students must be present for half of the instructional day to be marked present for the day.

**What should I do if I think my child is going to be absent?**

Notify your child's teacher as soon as possible. Upon your child's return, please send in a note/email explaining why your child was absent. All notes should be submitted as soon as possible or **within 5 days** of the absence.

The following must be included:

- Student Name
- Student FCS ID Number (lunch number)
- Parent/Guardian Name
- Parent/Guardian Email & Phone Number
- Reason for excuse

<p><b>What Absences are Excused? (State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1.10 and Georgia State Code, O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal illness or when attendance in school would be detrimental to the health of the student or others (Please notify the clinic if your child had a contagious disease or an extended illness.).</li> <li>• A serious illness in the student's immediate family necessitating absence from school</li> <li>• A death in the student's family necessitating absence from school.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Students are excused for up to 4 days due to a death in the immediate family (parent, sibling, grandparent, or anyone else living in the student's household).</li> <li>○ Students are excused for up to 2 days due to a death in the non-immediate family (any family member not included in the definition of immediate family).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Observance of religious holidays necessitating absence from school.</li> <li>• Compliance with a court order or an order issued by a governmental agency mandating an absence from school.</li> <li>• Visitation with an immediate family member who is on leave from or is being deployed to military service.</li> <li>• Important family events/celebrations for an immediate family member (graduation, wedding, religious ceremony, etc.) .</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance with an order for a pre-induction physical examination for service in the armed forces.</li> <li>• An absence for registering to vote or participating as an active voter in a local, state, or federal election.</li> <li>• A verified interview for college admission or a documented college visit.</li> <li>• A specialized, supplemental, or extracurricular program/event.</li> <li>• Other absences pre-approved by the assistant principal (All preapproved absences must be submitted to the assistant principal in writing at least five school days prior to the absence. Student's complete attendance record including excused, unexcused, disciplinary, or other absence types will be considered prior to approval.)</li> </ul> <p>It is the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian to provide a note to the child's classroom teacher within five days following an absence.</p>
<b>What Absences are Unexcused?</b>	An absence that is not categorized as an excused absence above, or where a signed note was not provided to the child's teacher within five days, will be marked as unexcused. The following, non-exhaustive, list includes examples of unexcused absences: Bad weather, Missing the school bus, Car trouble, Shopping, Babysitting, Oversleeping, Vacations.
<b>Late Arrivals &amp; Early Checkouts</b>	Students are considered tardy if they are not inside the building when the bell rings at 7:40 a.m. Both excused and unexcused late arrivals hold the same weight.  An early checkout is noted for any student who leaves school prior to the end of the school day, 2:20 p.m.
<b>Participating Remotely</b>	Students can substitute up to 5 absences per semester (a max of 10 per year) with a remote learning day by meeting asynchronous remote learning participation criteria as defined by the teacher. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be marked present, work must be submitted within 2 days of the absence.</li> <li>• Students may not use a remote learning day on a test day.</li> </ul> Parent/Guardian or student must notify the teacher in advance of the start of the instructional day in order to utilize a remote learning day. We ask parents to make this request at least 5 days in advance, when possible, but not less than 24 hours, so teachers can provide students with assignments. Teachers may not see requests made the morning of instruction causing a delay in communication of assignments.
<b>Assigned Remote</b>	Students can be designated as Assigned Remote by the district based on guidance from state/local health officials if they need to be placed in medical quarantine. These absences will not count against a student's attendance. Parents should communicate with teachers regarding assignments.
<b>International Travel</b>	If a student will be absent for 10 or more consecutive days due to international travel, the student should be withdrawn from their school and then re-enrolled upon their return. Students will be coded with the appropriate withdrawal code.
<b>When will additional documentation be required?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After 3 consecutive absences, late arrivals, or early checkouts, a doctor's note may be required.</li> <li>• After 7 cumulative absences and/or 10 cumulative late arrivals or early checkouts, a doctor's note may be required for any subsequent illness-related absences, late arrivals, or early checkouts (This excludes days accumulated during an Assigned Remote designation).</li> <li>• If there is an on-going medical circumstance that requires a student to be absent, late, or checkout early from school frequently or intermittently, a doctor's note will be required to address medical concerns and need for absences.</li> <li>• In the event of a serious illness in the student's immediate family, schools may require students to present medical documentation regarding the family member upon return to school for validating the excused absence, tardy, or early checkout.</li> <li>• Preapproval of absences due to family events or other reasons must be sent 5 days in advance.</li> </ul>
<b>Parent Communication</b>	Families will notice an increase in parent notifications regarding student attendance, regardless of reasons for absences and communications with the school. This increase in communication is to ensure parents are aware of their child's cumulative attendance over time.

<b>Make-up Work</b>	<p>Should you need to pick up work for your child due to a one- or two-day absence, you are asked to call the front office before 10:00 a.m. each morning. This gives the teacher adequate time during the school day to organize needed materials. Materials may be sent home with another student or you may pick them up at the end of the school day at the front office before 3:30 p.m.</p> <p>For extended excused absences, your child's assignments may be collected before, during, or after the absence. For anticipated and/or extended absences, please notify the teacher in writing several days in advance to allow time to organize and collect the assignments. Timeline for completion of work missed during an excused or approved absence is determined by the teacher's discretion and the needs of the student. In general, the student has as many days to make-up the work as he/she was absent. (i.e., If a student is absent for three days, their assignments will be due three days after their return.).</p>
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**Pre-Kindergarten:** In accordance with the Georgia Pre-Kindergarten Program, children who do not attend on a regular basis, are routinely late, or routinely leave the program early may be withdrawn. In addition, children who are late, leave early, or are absent for ten consecutive days without medical or other reasonable explanation must be withdrawn from the program.

If you need any additional information regarding the Fulton County attendance policy and procedures, please do not hesitate to contact our school social worker or our assistant principal.

**Board Policy JBD:** The Board supports the enforcement of Georgia's Compulsory School Attendance Law which makes school attendance the responsibility of the parent and the student. Parents should avoid scheduling or arranging activities that require absences during the school day due to the detrimental impact on the student's access to, and progress in, their educational program. Any child in the state of Georgia subject to compulsory attendance who during the school calendar year has more than five (5) days of unexcused absences is considered truant (Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.10). Board Policy JD, Student Discipline, outlines consequences for failure to comply with this law.

**Supervision Guidelines from the Department of Family and Child Services:**

Children under the age of 8 may never be left alone in self-care for any period of time, including walking home alone from the bus stop. Children between the ages of 9 and 12 may be left alone for brief periods of time (less than 2 hours). However, they may NOT be responsible for the care of younger siblings.

**Birthdays**

**Individual birthday party invitations may not be distributed at school.** Student contact information is located in the school directory provided by the PTO and may not be provided by school staff. Parents may purchase birthday treats from the café to provide for the students in their child's class. If there are multiple children with the same birthday, only one birthday treat will be served on that day. **(No outside food, goody bags, or class gifts are permitted for distribution to students).**

**Cafeteria**

The cafeteria will serve breakfast and lunch for those who wish to participate. Breakfast will be served from 7:10 - 7:40 a.m. All students are invited to **purchase** food at school, as it is a well-balanced meal.

- **Accounts:** Parents are highly encouraged to prepay online for breakfast and/or lunch purchases. Parents may also submit payment in an envelope with your child's legal first and last name and teacher name written on the front. The cost of a breakfast and/or lunch will be deducted from the student's account balance with each purchase. Extra purchases (e.g., cookies, ice cream) will not be deducted unless permission has been given on the Student Profile (see extras below).

Notices will be sent home to the parents when an account shows a negative balance. If you receive such notice, we ask that you pay the past due balance the following day and include additional funds for future purchases.

Charging on an account with a zero balance is discouraged and parents are asked to keep a pre-paid balance in the account so that it remains current. Students who forget their lunch money may request a charge to be placed on his/her account. Payment for that charge should be paid the following school day. Contact our cafeteria manager at 470-254-3887 with any questions regarding your account.

Breakfast		Lunch	
Elementary School Student	\$1.10	Elementary School Student	\$2.45
Middle School Student	\$1.25	Middle School Student	\$2.70
High School Student	\$1.25	High School Student	\$2.70

Reduced Price	\$0.30	Reduced Price	\$0.40
All Adults	\$2.75	All Adults	\$4.75
Milk	\$0.75	Milk	\$0.75

*\*Students may purchase extra milk for \$0.75.*

- At Elementary and Middle Schools, the meal price includes up to 1 entrée, 1 fruit side, up to 2 vegetable sides, and 1 milk choice. (All students can decline food groups, as long as there is at least a ½ cup of fruit or vegetable plus 2 other food groups on the tray. For the same price, students may select 3, 4, or all 5 food groups for a complete meal!)
- **Extras:** Parents can request that their child not be able to get extra sales. This will be noted on the student's account.
- **Free & Reduced Meal Applications for the 2023-2024 School Year:** The Free & Reduced Meal Benefits Program is a part of the National Child Nutrition Program. This program makes Free or Reduced priced meals available to qualifying households. Qualifications are based on the gross income of all household members and the number of persons living in the house. A **new** application must be completed every school year. If there is an interruption in benefits or the household does not reapply, the household is responsible for payment of meals until the Free and Reduced Application is approved. **Free & Reduced Meal Applications are available in the cafeteria and online beginning July 24, 2023. Visit [www.fulton.schoollunchapp.com](http://www.fulton.schoollunchapp.com) to begin the online application process.**  
Fulton County receives funding from a variety of federal grants based on the number of children in the district that QUALIFY for Free or Reduced priced meals, regardless if they choose to participate in the meal program. Many federal grant awards are allocated nationally to public school districts based on Free and Reduced percentages such as Title-1, E-RATE, and The National Direct Teacher Loan Cancellation Program.
- **Menu:** A monthly menu is available on our [website](#). The menu will list the items available to purchase for lunch each day.
- **Rules for Appropriate Cafeteria Behavior:**
  - Follow procedures for entering and exiting the cafeteria and **ALWAYS WALK.**
  - Clean your area before leaving.
  - Sit at assigned tables. Students are not permitted to get up once seated and should raise his/her hand if assistance is needed.
  - Show respect for ALL staff and students.
  - Students are not permitted to share food.
- **Lunch/Forgotten Items:** It is critical that students make sure they have all belongings in their backpacks prior to coming to school. Only critical items, such as forgotten eyeglasses, should be brought to school.

We ask that parents send their children to school with their lunches. Lunches should not be dropped off daily.

- **Lunch Visitors:** We will not be accepting lunch visitors until after Labor Day so we can help the students get into their normal lunch routines. Please feel free to begin visiting for lunch during your child's regular lunch time the week of **September 4**. The following guidelines should be observed when visiting for lunch:
  - Please make sure you arrive on time and sign-in at the front desk to receive a visitor's badge. Visitor's badges must be worn and visible at all times. If you are early, please wait in the atrium for your child to arrive for lunch.
  - If a child does not have a lunch when the class enters the cafeteria, the child will be directed to go through the lunch line so they can purchase a meal. Once a meal is purchased, it cannot be returned. Students should not wait for their parents to bring a lunch for them in the event the parents are unable to make it.
  - Visitors and their child will sit at the visitor's table in the cafeteria near the stage. Students may not bring a friend(s) to sit with them at the visitor's table.
  - When the lunch period is over, please say goodbye in the cafeteria and proceed to the front office to sign-out. **Please do not accompany your child to the classroom unless it has been pre-arranged with the teacher** so instructional time can continue.
  - Due to safety concerns, all strollers must be left in the atrium outside the cafeteria.

- Visitors must adhere to the cafeteria rules and model respect towards school personnel. Should you need assistance, please contact a staff member in the cafeteria.
- We have many students who have a variety of allergies. Please **do not share or purchase any food or drinks for any child other than your own.**
- We support our school nutrition program and thereby discourage **all outside vendor food from being brought in during lunchtime.** (I.e., Chick-fil-A, McDonald's, etc....)
- Out of respect for student privacy, please refrain from taking pictures or videos in the cafeteria.

Please be mindful that lunchtime is not a time to talk with the teacher about your child's progress. Please be sure to contact your child's teacher to set-up a conference.

### **Citizenship and Code of Conduct**

Establishing a good climate for learning is an important focus at Shakerag. We want our school to be a place where each child feels safe, respected, and cared for, and where there are high expectations for appropriate student behavior. An effective discipline program is necessary to accomplish these objectives.

It is each student's responsibility to display qualities of good citizenship and appropriate conduct in all areas on campus, to and from school, and at all Fulton County bus stops. Shakerag promotes the ideal of each student working towards self-management and taking ownership for his or her own actions.

Promoting positive behavior requires a concerted effort of effective classroom management techniques and behavior management strategies reinforced by *teachers* and *parents*. Shakerag Elementary's staff seeks to implement parental involvement processes designed to enable parents, teachers, and school administrators to work collaboratively to improve and enhance student behavior and academic performance.

The Fulton County School System takes its responsibility seriously to provide a safe learning and working environment for students and teachers. Part of that responsibility involves establishing clear, fair, and effective discipline procedures. The **Fulton County Student Code of Conduct and Discipline Handbook** details our expectations for student behavior and outlines what may happen when rules are violated. The handbook includes:

- School Board Policy on Student Discipline
- Code of Conduct Rules
- Bus Conduct Disciplinary Procedures

In an attempt to provide buildings where learning can take place and where teachers can teach, every parent and student must review the **Fulton County Code of Conduct and Discipline Handbook**, and then sign and return the necessary forms included in your parent information packet. Please discuss the need for appropriate school behavior and consequences for misbehavior with your child.

In addition to following the Fulton County Code of Conduct, we implement a school-wide discipline plan called Positive Behavior Intervention & Supports (PBIS). PBIS focuses on improving a school's ability to teach and support positive behavior for all students. Research indicates that, "establishing a positive, proactive school-wide discipline plan is a necessary first step for enabling schools to achieve their goals and responsibilities." PBIS is an evidence-based framework supported by the state of Georgia proven to reduce the number of disciplinary incidents, improve positive school climate, and support academic outcomes for all students.

We have centered our expectations on our Sharks showing LEADERSHIP, KINDNESS, and RESPECT. Our matrix outlines expectations for the hallway, restrooms, cafeteria, and playground. Please help your child(ren) become familiar with the school-wide expectations that were included in your welcome packets. We ask that you review these expectations with your child(ren).

In addition to the school-wide expectations, each teacher will develop a positive classroom management plan that fits their style and aligns with the school-wide expectations.

One of the primary focuses of our program is to increase the recognition of students. As our Sharks model our school-wide expectations, they can work towards earning PBIS points that are tracked in the PBIS Rewards app. Each week, teachers use these points to award a variety of classroom rewards and incentives.

As we continue to seek opportunities to honor more students, we will have a "Shark of the Month" program based on positive character traits. Recognition will occur with their grade level peers at the end of each month.

It is our hope that a clear focus on a positive school climate will create a supportive environment that promotes personal, social and academic growth for both students and staff.

When a student has a discipline issue in class that might need some attention, they may be asked to reflect on how they can make better choices in the future using a Reflect and Refocus form. The Shakerag Reflect and Refocus form allows the student to take some ownership for his/her actions and gives the student a time to reflect privately. There is also a space for the teacher to provide some comments. A copy of this form will come home and we ask that you partner with us and review our expectations with your child so they can learn and grow. After reviewing the form, please sign and return it to your child's teacher the next day. If a student receives three of these forms in a 9 - week calendar period for the same offense, it may result in an office referral. The goal of the form is to teach the student how we can make changes for the future and react in positive ways.

#### *Minor Offenses:*

Consequences for minor offenses are generally as follows:

- Verbal reminder
- Reteach expectations
- Apply the intervention/expectation taught in reteach
- Reflect and Refocus Form
- Parent Contact

Frequent repetition of minor misbehaviors, when interventions are ineffective, may lead to a referral to the office. You can expect your child's teacher to be in contact with you if your child's behavior is of concern. In these cases, parental support and cooperation are extremely valuable. Working together as partners can greatly benefit your child.

#### *Major Offenses:*

Major offenses that may lead to an automatic office referral include:

- Hitting or physical altercations with another person
- Throwing objects
- Defiance of authority
- Disrespectful/abusive language
- Continuous disruptive behavior (minor offenses)
- Destruction of school facility or property

When a student is sent to the office, we follow the Fulton County Discipline Cycle. Consequences may include time-out in the office, community service (used with parental consent), parent conferences, out-of-school suspension, etc. Students may also be referred to the school counselor and/or school social worker when appropriate. Referral to a disciplinary tribunal may occur with severe misbehavior. A parent will be informed when the child has been sent to the office for inappropriate behavior.

#### **Cell Phones/Other Electronic Devices**

A student shall not use, display, or turn on a tablet, cellular telephone or other personal electronic communication device (i.e. smart watches) on school property, except for **middle and high school students** who may use such devices on school grounds before or after the regular school day. **Elementary students are prohibited from using or displaying cellular telephones on school property at any time.** No such devices may be used at any time on school system operated vehicles, or during an emergency drill or evacuation. These limits on the use of personal communication devices do not apply to students whose special needs require the use of such a device to enhance speech or hearing. Students who are found with such devices in the "on" position, in use or displayed except as permitted above, shall have the device confiscated by a school administrator. Please refer to the Student Code of Conduct & Discipline Handbook for specific rules relating to the use of electronic equipment.

Items such as smart watches, iPods, iPads, Kindles or other tablets, electronic games, CD players/headphones etc., should not be brought to school. These items will be collected by the teacher and the parent will be asked to pick them up.

## Classroom

- **Classroom Visitations:** We love to have parents and community members involved in the classroom. As a courtesy to the teacher, please make an appointment for all classroom visitations. So that instructional time is not interrupted, please understand that classroom visitations are not a time for parent/teacher conferences. Conferences should be made by appointment. Please be reminded that all classroom volunteers must be approved through the volunteer registration process and volunteers must wear a volunteer badge at all times while interacting with students.
- **Early Check-out:** Parents/legal guardians should report to the office to initiate an early check-out, even if volunteering in the classroom. A note indicating the early check-out should be given to the teacher upon the student's arrival to school. Students will not be dismissed from the classroom without a request from the front office.
- **Interruptions:** To reduce interruptions to instructional time, parents are asked to refrain from visiting the classroom unless the visit has been pre-arranged with the teacher. If a student has forgotten an item that they absolutely must have, such as glasses, please bring the item to the front office. The office will email the teacher that the item is available for pick-up at an appropriate time.
- **Placement Changes:** Much time and effort is put into placing children in the appropriate classroom to meet their instructional needs. At times, parents may feel that the chosen classroom is not meeting the needs of their child. All placement concerns should be discussed with the teacher first. If not satisfied, a conference may be scheduled with the Curriculum Support Teacher (CST) where the following procedures will be implemented in determining if a change in placement is warranted. At the beginning of the school year, we ask all families to give a child's placement at least 10 days prior to making a request for a change.
  - The parent will meet and conference with the teacher.
  - If the parent is still not satisfied, he or she will meet with the Curriculum Support Teacher (CST) to discuss their concerns and if needed, complete the "Change of Class" form. The form is available upon request.
  - The Student Support Committee will review the parent request and if needed, schedule a conference. This committee may consist of the Curriculum Support Teacher (CST), counselor, and the principal and/or assistant principal.
  - The committee will make the final determination and communicate the decision to the parents.
- **School Parties:** Two class parties are planned for each class during the year and are organized by the teacher and the PTO volunteers. No other parties, including individual birthdays, are held to comply with mandated instructional hours.
- **Snacks:** Students are encouraged to bring nutritious snacks for break time (i.e. granola bars, fresh fruit, cheese and crackers). Students may not bring soft drinks or soda. We encourage parents to be mindful of potential allergies (i.e., peanuts) of peers in the classroom when packing snacks.
- **Student Observations:** If a parent is requesting to observe their child in the classroom setting, a 20-minute appointment must be scheduled in advance with the Curriculum Support Teacher (CST) or Instructional Support Teacher (IST).
- **Volunteers:** Volunteers are encouraged not to bring siblings to school when performing volunteer duties, especially when in the classroom. Please refer to the Visitors/Volunteers section for more information.

## Clinic/Medication

Parents may be contacted from the clinic (470-254-8834) when students are injured or become ill during the school day. Students who are ill should be kept at home. When your child is well enough to return to school, please send in a note to excuse the absence due to illness. Please notify the clinic if your child has a contagious disease or an extended illness.

- **Emergency Information:** Our clinic is not staffed or equipped for serious injury or illness. When a student requires more than first aid, we will contact the parent/legal guardian by using the contact information provided in our Student Information System. If a parent or legal guardian cannot be reached, we will contact the Emergency Contacts listed. When called to pick-up a sick child, we ask that you come immediately.

- **Medication:** If possible, all medications should be taken at home rather than at school. However, if medications must be taken at school, authorization and instruction forms entitled "Authorization to Give Medication at School" must be completed. These forms are available on our website (under "Students & Families", click "Clinic").

Parents are responsible for providing all medications. The medicine, in the original container, along with the instructions and authorization form, must be taken to the clinic by the parent for central storage. Under no circumstances should medication, prescription or non-prescription (including over-the-counter medications), be kept by a student or shown to other students. All medications, both prescription and over-the-counter, must be administered by a Shakerag staff member. An authorization form must be completed and returned to the school before **any** medication can be administered to a student on a regular basis. In order to maintain accurate records, if a parent/legal guardian chooses to administer medicine to their child during school hours, the medication must be administered in the clinic so that the time, dosage, and name of medication can be documented.

Per Fulton County policy, all medication not picked up by **3:00 p.m. on the last day of school** will be discarded.

- **Permission to Treat Minor Injuries/Rashes:** Minor cuts and scrapes will be treated with soap and water.
- **Student Illness:** Please help us guard against the spread of germs by encouraging your child to thoroughly wash his/her hands, properly dispose of used tissues, and keep all students who are not fever free without medication home until fever free for 24 hours. Students who are contagious and/or have a fever greater than 100.4 are not permitted to attend school.

In the event that a student becomes ill before leaving for school, parents should make appropriate arrangements for care of the student at home rather than sending a sick child to school. A parent should wait until all possibility of contagion has passed before sending a recovering student back to school.

**IMPORTANT: A child must be fever-free for 24 hours without medication prior to returning to school. For example, if your child has a fever at 10:00 a.m. on Monday but is fever-free by 12:30 p.m. that same day, your child may return to school on Tuesday AFTER 12:30 p.m.**

If a parent is notified by school personnel that his/her child is sick, the parent must make arrangements for the child to be taken home or to another appropriate location.

### Dress Code

Students should come to school dressed and groomed in such a way as to reflect neatness, cleanliness, and good taste. All students should be modestly dressed and groomed so as to not distract, interrupt, or interfere with the educational process. Any student arriving to school inappropriately dressed will be sent to the front office and/or clinic and the parent will be contacted.

- **Appropriate Attire:** Appropriate jackets, gloves, and hats should be provided for students so that they may participate in outdoor P.E. and recess activities.
- **Hats/Hoodies:** Hats should only be worn on designated days. When worn, hats/hoodies should not cover a student's face indoors.
- **Physical Education Classes:** Tennis shoes are required on P.E. days.
- **Shoes:** The wearing of shoes that are appropriate for recess are encouraged. Please refrain from wearing flip-flops for safety reasons. Not Allowed: Shoes with rollers (i.e. "Heelys" or "wheelies") are NOT permitted on school premises.
- **Allowed Length of Shorts/Skirts:** Students may wear shorts or skirts; providing the clothing hem reaches the tips of the student's fingers while standing straight.
- **Shirts:** Shirts should have sleeves that are at least the width of two fingers. "Spaghetti straps" are not permitted. Graphic Tees with offensive/adult images and/or inappropriate language are not permitted.



## Emergency and Safety Procedures

The safety of our students and staff remains a top priority. Please know that our entire staff is committed to providing all of our students with a safe environment in which to learn. In the event that school must be closed, or afterschool activities are cancelled, the most up-to-date information will be provided on local radio/TV stations and on the Fulton County website. In the event that students will be dismissed early from school for any reason and the announcement is made after the school day has started, we will dismiss students in the manner in which you identified on your child's Early Release Form at the start of the year. If the announcement occurs prior to the start of the school day, all students will be sent home their normal way unless a Dismissal Change Form is provided.

In the event of other emergency situations, school telephones and personnel will be utilized in order to follow emergency procedures to ensure the safety of the children. Shakerag Elementary has developed a detailed emergency evacuation plan, which will be reviewed annually, updated, and practiced. This plan will be followed should any emergency occur during the school day. In case of an emergency requiring the evacuation of the building, students will be relocated to an off-site location. For the safety of all concerned, parents are discouraged from coming to the school during any type of emergency until communicated. Please make sure your child's emergency contacts are listed and kept up to date in our Student Information System. Without permission, we are not permitted to release a child to anyone other than their parents and/or legal guardians or listed emergency contacts.

- **Emergency Communication:** Preparation and parent communication are key to the safety of our school. In an emergency situation, the Shakerag staff will work diligently to make appropriate contact with parents after seeing to the safety of all students and staff. We ask that all parents remain calm and wait patiently for the school to contact you with further directions. This will allow our phone lines to remain open so we can communicate with emergency personnel and make any other necessary arrangements. Communication with parents may occur in multiple formats, but often times we will utilize our mass communication platform. It is critical that your contact information remain up to date so you can be reached in an emergency situation. **Please ensure the information included in our Student Information System is current at all times. Send any changes that may occur during the year (i.e. a new cell phone number) in writing to your child's teacher, and/or our school data clerk so we can maintain up to date records.** It is important to have at least two other Emergency Contacts listed if possible.
- **Emergency Dismissal:** In an emergency situation, it is imperative that all students are accounted for and remain with their classroom teacher until dismissed. Teachers are instructed to not permit students to leave with any adult without written permission from the office. If we have evacuated the building, you must sign your child out with the office prior to taking them home. Your cooperation with this ensures that we account for all children in a safe and timely manner.

## Field Trips

Field trips may be planned throughout the year at a reasonable fee to complement classroom curriculum. No child will be denied permission to attend field trips due to an inability to pay. For students to participate, permission forms must be signed by a parent or legal guardian before attending. Siblings are not permitted to accompany chaperones on field trips.

## Forgotten Items

Please help your child be prepared for school each day. We try to teach our students to be organized and responsible. All homework, snacks, projects, lunches, jackets, forms, and other school related items should come in with your child each morning. After school has been dismissed for the day, students may not return to their classroom for any forgotten items.

## Hearing/Vision Screening

Currently mass vision screenings are administered for students in grades 3 and 5. Occasionally, with parent approval, individual screenings may need to be administered to provide helpful information to assist with your child's academic performance. You reserve the right to review the completed screening results.

## Insurance

Group accident insurance is available for students. Student insurance may be purchased at a low cost through a private company approved each year by the Board of Education. Information on this insurance is given to parents during registration or in our Welcome packets.

### Internet Access

Your child may be involved in multiple internet projects throughout the year. Currently, on-site internet access is available for specific curriculum projects. We are pleased to have this access in our school and believe the internet offers vast, diverse, and unique resources. Our goal is to promote educational excellence by facilitating communications for resource sharing and innovation. Parent and/or legal guardians must grant permission for students to access the internet while on campus. Without approval, your child will not be able to access the internet in school for classroom projects during school hours. Please click [here](#) for the Agreement Form that was also sent home at the start of each school year. Students will have access privileges only under the guidance of the teacher. Your child will be instructed by school personnel concerning the following:

- The primary purpose of the Shakerag Elementary School internet connection is educational ONLY.
- "Surfing" on the internet or accessing sites not directed by the teacher is not allowed.
- The use of the internet is a privilege. Inappropriate behavior may lead to that privilege being revoked and/or disciplinary action taken based on the Fulton County Code of Conduct.

### Lost and Found

Personal items (clothing, lunch boxes, etc.) should be **marked with your child's First and Last name**. Lost articles may be claimed in the Lost and Found closet. Periodically throughout the school year, unclaimed items will be donated to charitable organizations.

### Parking

Parents and visitors are asked to park in designated areas only. Parking in the bus lanes or in the fire lanes is not permitted at any time. Vehicles parked in these areas may be towed at the owner's expense. All visitors should only enter through the main entrance in the front of the building.

### Publicity and Photographs

We follow the publicity guidelines as outlined in the FCS Student Code of Conduct and Discipline Handbook. If you do not wish for your child to be included in any form of publicity, you will need to request a form from the Assistant Principal in order to place your objection in writing no later than August 31 or within 10 calendar days of the student's enrollment. Objections must be renewed each school year.

- **Personal Videos and Photographs:** Out of respect and privacy for children, we ask that parents and/or volunteers not take pictures and/or videos of other students.

### Records

Parents or legal guardians have the right to examine their student's records and to have them explained. Administrators, counselors, teachers and other authorized personnel who work directly with a student shall have access to that student's records.

In the event you would like for us to share any information with a Third Party (i.e. private counselor, private school, doctor, etc.), we must have an FCS Third Party Release form on file. Please reach out to our school counselor to complete this process. Please allow a minimum of 2 weeks for all requests to be completed.

### Shark Sharing Community Program

Our students work collaboratively with our PTO in selecting charity and community outreach programs that we will participate in each year. We believe this program fosters good-will and assists our students in recognizing the value of helping others in need.

### Student Directory

Our Student Directory is online. This directory is only shared with other Shakerag parents who are PTO members. Each PTO member will have access to the directory contacts as well as "subscription" settings to choose your privacy and communication options. The use of the Student Directory for anything other than personal use, such as mailing lists, is strictly prohibited.

### Student Information Card

An online Student Information Card is required for each student. The contact and special needs information listed on the Student Information Card will be used by the teacher, the clinic, and other staff members as necessary. We rely on the information provided on the Student Information Card in the event of an emergency or early dismissal. Please help us keep this information up to date throughout the year by submitting changes or additions to your child's Student Information Card to the classroom teacher or school data clerk.

### Student Recognition

The most enduring rewards for hard work are intrinsic. When students have given their best effort and achieve success in learning, they receive inner satisfaction from that knowledge. Teachers enhance the feeling of accomplishment by giving praise when it is earned. On a daily basis, all teachers of students in Pre-K – 5<sup>th</sup> grade watch for examples of excellent student work and reward the students with verbal or written comments. Sharing with other students and displaying work are excellent ways of recognizing student achievement.

### Telephone Use

Students may use the office telephone only after receiving written permission from their teacher. Telephone use by students is discouraged and will be limited to matters such as emergencies, transportation or forgotten eyeglasses/medication. **Students are not to use the telephone for matters such as forgotten homework.** We ask that parents help us by making sure students are prepared for school and understand after-school arrangements before leaving home.

### Toys, Games, Valuables

Toys, games, trading or playing cards, electronic devices, or any other items of value should not be brought to school at any time. Students are requested not to bring anything considered “valuable” to school and be put at risk of losing or misplacing the item. Parents are asked to be aware of what students put in their book bags and the items that they bring to school. If ever in doubt as to the acceptability, contact the teacher. Our staff is not responsible for lost or broken personal items, including electronic devices. In addition, our staff has the discretion to take away inappropriate items from a student.

### Visitors/Volunteers

As we welcome visitors and value our volunteers, we also want to continue to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all students and staff. With safety being of utmost importance on our campus, Fulton County Board of Education uses an electronic security system.

**All first-time visitors/volunteers** are required to present our front desk receptionist with their valid driver's license or another form of government photo identification and complete an initial registration process. You will then be entered into our system. Visitors must sign in at the front desk each time with a valid ID. Volunteers who have completed the volunteer registration process can sign in through the kiosk in the front office.

A computerized visitor/volunteer management system has been implemented throughout the school district. It has numerous benefits and application, including the ability to maintain a log of volunteer hours and offer the capability to produce a list of all visitors in a facility during an emergency situation.

Visitors will need to sign-in at the front desk with a state issued photo ID to receive a printed visitor/volunteer badge throughout the day. Per Board Policy IFCD, all volunteers who will be working with students at the school must complete a Volunteer Registration Application. Furthermore, school volunteers are mandated reporters of abuse pursuant to OCGA 19-7-5. The district has a plan in place as written on the district website to purge all volunteers on a bi-annual basis (every 2 years). To keep in compliance with State Law and best practices, we will require everyone to re-register/register **every two years based on the following volunteer service period: June 2022 – May 2024.**

For the 2023-2024 school year, **if you did not complete the volunteer registration after June 1, 2022**, you will be required to register by completing the online volunteer registration/application process at least 24-48 hours PRIOR to volunteering at Shakerag. We recommend that you complete this process on a desktop or laptop computer, not a tablet device or phone. The registration process can be found on the FCS District Website under Community/Register as a Volunteer. Applicants should be prepared to spend about 10-15 minutes for the training and application process. In accordance with State Law, all volunteers must be current with the Child Abuse Reporting Protocol Training before being allowed to volunteer in our schools. It is very important that volunteers enter their full legal name as it appears on their government issued ID (please do not use nicknames or “goes by” names on the application). If a volunteer reports to a school and the school cannot find their application/name, they must fill out the application again. Calling Safety and Security will not change this process. **If you have not completed the registration process, you will not be allowed to volunteer!**

The time and commitment from our volunteers is very important to us. As a volunteer, the school depends on your services and dedication. In the event that you must be absent, please leave a message in the office or notify the appropriate teacher or committee person who is expecting you. As expected, confidentiality regarding students you are working with or have observed during your volunteer services is required. A few more items to be aware of when volunteering at Shakerag:

- When acting as a chaperone on a field trip or school-sponsored activity, you will be responsible for a group of children.
- Volunteers are not permitted to discipline the students. Please notify a staff member for assistance.
- Volunteers are encouraged not to bring siblings when performing volunteer duties. This is especially important when in the classroom.
- **Security:** For the safety of students and staff, all parents and visitors are required to:
  - Enter/exit the building from the front entrance (DO NOT exit/enter from side entrances)
  - Sign in/out at the front office
  - Wear a Visitor/Volunteer badge in a visible location at all times while in the buildingPlease note, staff members have been instructed to ask all visitors in the building that do not have a visitor/volunteer badge to return to the front office to sign-in and obtain a badge.
- Please do not park in the fire lanes or obstruct traffic flow in any manner.

### **Withdrawal Procedures**

Parents/legal guardians should notify the teacher and the data clerk at least one week prior to a student being withdrawn from school by completing a withdrawal form. In order to clear all records, all textbooks, devices, and library books are to be returned and lunch fees paid before a student is withdrawn.

## **Support Services and Personnel**

### **Advanced Strategies Lab (ASL)**

Our students in grade K-5 will participate one time a week in our Advanced Strategies Lab (ASL). ASL is a STEM class that allows students to engage in activities such as engineering challenges, robotics, LEGO engineering, and coding. The lab will provide our students with an avenue to think critically, problem solve, create, and take academic risks.

### **Counseling and Guidance**

A school counselor is available to provide a comprehensive school counseling plan with a focus on academic, personal/social and career domains on a regular basis through individual, small group, and classroom guidance lessons. They work with school personnel to foster a positive learning environment for children. The counselor assists parents in understanding children and in developing positive attitudes, techniques, and strategies essential for constructive child development.

### **Curriculum Support Teacher (CST)**

The Curriculum Support Teacher is responsible for helping to implement the Georgia Standards of Excellence and Fulton County curriculum by assisting teachers in translating the requirements, standards, and benchmarks into meaningful experiences for students in the school. The CST serves as a coach, model, and trainer for best practices across the curriculum, in addition to actively monitoring student placement and assessing students as needed. Parents with questions involving curriculum, classroom procedures, and placement are encouraged to contact the CST.

### **Early Intervention Program (EIP)**

The Early Intervention Program is designed to serve students in kindergarten through fifth grade who are at risk of not reaching or maintaining grade level standards in reading and/or math, as defined in the state's "Early Intervention Program Guidelines." The purpose of EIP is to help students reach grade level/subject area performance. EIP is not always offered at every grade level/subject area.

### **Exceptional Children Services**

Exceptional Children Services are provided for exceptional students who meet State criteria. All program placements are based on a referral process, individual evaluation, and parent consent (some examples may include behavior disorders, learning disabilities, speech, hearing and/or vision impairments).

### **Instructional Support Teacher (IST)**

The Instructional Support Teacher coordinates programs and services for students requiring special education supports and assists staff in developing Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) used to implement specially designed instruction aligned with the Georgia Standards of Excellence. The IST also coordinates educational testing for students who are referred from the Student Support Team (SST) through the Response to Intervention (RTI) process. Parents with questions about special education services and supports or Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) should contact the IST for additional information.

### **Media Center**

The Media Center's mission is to ensure that students and staff are effective users of ideas, information and technology. The Media Center provides access to materials in many formats, including print and online. The Media & Educational Technology Instructor (METI) offers collaborative, standards-based, technology-rich

instruction to students and professional development opportunities to staff to foster competence and stimulate interest in reading, viewing and using information, ideas and technology.

The Media Center operates on a flexible schedule with children visiting the library with their classes and also independently. The Media Center is open from 7:10 a.m. to 2:20 p.m. each day and students are encouraged to visit often! Pre-K students can check-out one book at a time. Kindergarten through fifth grade students can check-out two books at a time. We also invite parents to open an account whereby they can check-out 10 books at a time. All books are checked out for two weeks. Fines are not incurred for overdue books. However, replacement cost is charged for lost or damaged materials/devices.

### **Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)**

The PTO is an active and integral part of the Shakerag community. All parents and staff are encouraged to become members. Yearly donations are requested from each family for the purpose of enhancing and enriching the total school program by fostering a sense of community that enriches the students' academic experiences, shows teacher appreciation, and provides additional activities, and capital not otherwise funded. Please contact the PTO president(s) at [ShakeragPTO@gmail.com](mailto:ShakeragPTO@gmail.com) if you wish to volunteer your time, expertise and/or services to the school. To learn more about our PTO, please visit our school website and click on the PTO link under Students & Families.

### **School Governance Council (SGC)**

The purpose of the School Governance Council is to provide parents, school staff, and community members with a leadership role in school-based decisions. The School Governance Council is a governing body that is representative of the community and the school, but operates under the control and management of the Board of Education. The Council is responsible for making decisions regarding the strategic direction of the school including:

- Approval of the school strategic plan and updates
- Approval of the annual budget and annual resource allocations
- Manage the Value Added Flexibility process
- Participate in hiring the principal (in the case of a vacancy)
- Provide annual feedback on principal performance

Additional School Governance Council information is available on our school website.

### **School Psychologist**

Shakerag Elementary has a part-time school psychologist. The school psychologist regularly conducts psychoeducational evaluations in order to determine eligibility in special education then shares the results of the evaluations with parents, teachers, and other school personnel. In addition, the school psychologist actively supports the Response to Intervention (RTI) process and Student Support Team as an academic and behavioral consultant, provides crisis response and intervention, and participates in the CARE team as needed.

### **School Social Worker**

A school social worker is available to assist with situations that may involve the home (i.e. attendance, homelessness, resources, and family concerns). The social worker provides social and emotional support to students and families dealing with traumatic events, crisis, and grief/loss among other areas. If you are ever in need of support from our school social worker, please contact the front office.

### **Shakerag Foundation**

The Shakerag Foundation is a non-profit organization whose sole purpose is to enhance and enrich the educational experiences of the students at Shakerag Elementary School.

### **Student Support Team (SST)**

The Student Support Team (SST) is an interdisciplinary group that uses a systematic problem-solving process to address learning and/or behavior problems of K-12 students in a school. Per Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.32, every Georgia school must have a support team in place. The Student Support Team (SST) is in Tier 3 of a Response to Intervention (RTI) instructional framework. Each school's designated team participates in problem-solving and monitoring of students who are identified as having significant skill weaknesses and/or who do not respond to Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction and intervention(s).

An initial meeting takes place when the teacher requests strategies to help a particular student who may be struggling academically or behaviorally. In an initial meeting, the teacher will discuss and explain the concerns, strategies that have been implemented, and their effectiveness. Subsequent meetings will review

the effectiveness of any new strategies recommended by the committee and determine the best plan of action to help the student.

RTI is designed to meet the following objectives.

- Focus on general classroom instructional practices within the core curricula and develop a data collection process that monitors the success and progress of a student who is experiencing academic and/or behavioral difficulties (behavioral may include social and/or emotional difficulties).
- Identify a research-based targeted intervention to support the student in the area in which they are struggling.
- Gather classroom data and document a student's progress towards strategies and interventions that are targeted.
- Enhance the skills, knowledge, and opportunities that allow classroom teachers and staff to use a consultation service delivery model and to be mutual resources regarding students at-risk of not meeting grade level expectations.
- Enhance communication and collaboration between parents and school personnel.

The SST process precedes any referrals for further evaluation.

### **Talented and Gifted (TAG)**

Fulton County's Talented and Gifted (TAG) program is a full-day enrichment program for students who are eligible. TAG provides avenues for intellectually advanced and exceptionally creative students to enrich and expand upon the core curriculum through challenging activities and educational experiences that address the diverse needs of these individuals. Every student at Shakerag is screened twice a year to determine if further testing is warranted for TAG eligibility. Please visit the Shakerag website, Academics, Gifted Program for more information.

### **Technology**

Shakerag works diligently to ensure our students are advancing in their use of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. Our goal is to integrate technology into the curriculum through regular use of interactive white boards, laptops, and iPads. Students are expected to use technology for educational purposes only. Misuse of technology could result in loss of privileges or other consequences in accordance with the Fulton County School Code of Conduct.

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### **Equal Opportunity**

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 practices, educational programs, or activity or service. Parents are always welcome to discuss problems and concerns with the Fulton County Schools official who is responsible for the activity in question. However, if the parent or student still feels there is a denial of basic right, they should telephone and/or outline in writing the alleged denial to the Superintendent of Schools.