



Columbia Elementary School

6720 Alpine Drive
Annandale, VA 22003

Attendance Line
703-916-2525

Health Room
703-916-2510

Direct Line
703-916-2500

Website
www.fcps.edu/ColumbiaES

Notes From Columbia

Each year, FCPS produces a *Handbook* for its FCPS families. It contains valuable information you may need throughout the year, including calendars, services and special programs, the instructional program, and information about starting school. Columbia Elementary has produced this handout that includes some additional notes that are important for our school community. Keep this in a safe place, as it will be a handy resource for you and your family and will help us get off to a great start for the 2011-12 school year.



Columbia Elementary School

SCHOOL HOURS

Grades K – 5

Monday
9:10 a.m. – 1:20 p.m.

Tuesday – Friday
9:10 a.m. – 3:50 p.m.

Preschool

Monday
Morning 9:10 a.m. – 11:10 a.m.
Afternoon 11:10 a.m. – 1:10 p.m.

Tuesday – Friday
Morning 9:10 a.m. – 12:25 p.m.
Afternoon 12:25 p.m. – 3:40 p.m.

Arrival - 8:55 a.m.

Children will be supervised starting at 8:55 a.m. To keep our children safe, walkers and car riders should arrive at school no earlier than 8:55 a.m. Children report to the cafeteria.

School Starts - 9:10

School starts promptly at 9:10. A child arriving after 9:10 is recorded as tardy and reports to the office for notation on the attendance record and to receive a tardy slip.

ATTENDANCE

Absent

If your child is either going to be absent for the entire day, or late for any reason, call the school attendance line at 703-916-2525 before 8:55 a.m. During after-school hours, a 24 hour answering machine will record your message. If the school does not receive a call from the parent, the absence will be considered unverified.

Excused absences

Illness of the student, death in the family, doctor's or dentist's appointments and observance of a religious holiday.

Unexcused absences

Family trips, childcare situations, non-school related activities, or missed school bus.

Any child who is absent from school for 15 days or more must be withdrawn from our enrollment. Upon the child's return, the

parent must again officially enroll him/her.

HEALTH ROOM

Children with symptoms such as rashes, watery and inflamed eyes, fever, sore throat, vomiting, or diarrhea should stay home until a doctor evaluates their symptoms and determines whether or not they are contagious. The Fairfax County Health Department recommends that a child remain home fever-free for 24 hours after an illness prior to returning to school.

We will call you if your child exhibits symptoms of illness, so you may pick them up in the health room.

A physician's note

Some rashes, pink eye, impetigo, ringworm and scabies can be passed from one student to another. To protect all of our children, we require a note from the physician for any child with symptoms of these illnesses. The note must state that the child is not contagious before the child can return to school.

TO LIMIT THE SPREAD OF ILLNESSES, NOTIFY THE SCHOOL OFFICE IF YOUR CHILD GETS HEAD LICE, STREP THROAT, CHICKEN POX, OR OTHER CONTAGIOUS ILLNESSES.

Medication at School

Prescription and over-the-counter medications require strict adult supervision. Call the school clinic for more information at 703-916-2510. Forms to authorize school staff to administer medication are available in the school office or online at www.fcps.edu/forms.

Medication guidelines

- Any medication taken in school or SACC must have a signed authorization.
- Medication must be kept in the school health room or other school-approved location during the school day.
- The parent or guardian must bring the medication to and from school.
- The first dose of any new medication



must be given at home.

- The parent or guardian must personally collect any unused portion of the medication.
- Medication not claimed will be destroyed.
- The parent or guardian is responsible for submitting a new form to the school each time there is change in the dosage or in the time at which the medication is to be taken.

FOOD SERVICES

Breakfast - \$1.50

Lunch - \$2.65

Milk Only - \$.60

How to pay

To open or add to a meal account, send a check or cash to the cafeteria manager with your child in the morning. Make checks payable to Columbia Elementary School and put the child's name and teacher on check. When a lunch account has only three (3) lunches left, the cashier will remind your student it is time to send in lunch money. Parents can access www.mylunchmoney.com to use online service for lunch money. It is encouraged that money be placed on the account in the event your student forgets their lunch at home. Lunches may be dropped off in the school office before your student's scheduled lunch period.

Join your child for lunch. No advance notice is needed; just check-in at the office and meet your child's class in the lobby.

BIRTHDAY TREATS

At Columbia Elementary School we ask parents to keep it simple and try to provide small, simple and healthy treats if possible.

Parents who want to provide a class treat, please do the following:

- Notify your child's classroom teacher in advance. The teacher knows of food allergies and will be able to monitor all children's health and safety.
- Treats should be proportioned finger foods that do not require adult assistance to cut or to distribute, such as fruit, cookies and packaged snacks.

- Deliver the treats to the office before 9:00 a.m.

As you can understand, party invitations will not be distributed at school. Social arrangements should be made from home to avoid hurt feelings and to limit distraction from the school's academic focus.

TRANSPORTATION

Changes in transportation should be made **only when necessary**. If a change is required, such as walking home with a friend or meeting a parent at Kiss and Ride, send a note to your child's teacher the morning of the change. Transportation requests made via telephone will not be honored except in emergency situations.

Buses operate usually at capacity but may, at times accommodate extra passengers. If your child is going home with a bus rider please send in a note. Remember, the bus rider's parent must also send a note. Play dates should be arranged after your child has arrived at home.

Kiss and Ride rules

- Drop off child only in Kiss and Ride area
- Pull your car forward as far as possible in the line.
- Make sure that your child exits your car on the building side only.
- No passing other cars in line.
- Look for direction from adult staff members on duty.

Traffic patterns

- If accompanying your child into the building, please park your car in a designated parking space and enter through the front of the school to check-in.
- The road in front of the school is one way and is for buses only.
- Drive slowly!

The rules regarding our traffic patterns are in place to help ensure the safety of our students. Remember, our little ones do not always pay attention to traffic; therefore, it is your responsibility to follow our safety rules.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Take Home Tuesday folders are used to share student progress and samples of student work.
- Teachers and parents are encouraged to communicate via e-mail.
- FCPS 24-7 (Blackboard) located at <http://fcps.blackboard.com> provides specific classroom information through your child's login and password. This information includes class newsletters, homework, FCPS internet resources, etc.

Your emergency contact information is a key piece of paper in our office. The information is vital to us and to you. Phone numbers, addresses, and those adults you permit to take your child from school should be kept current. Call the office (703-916-2500) and we'll update it, or if you are registered through Parent Portal (Blackboard), you can update essential information on a regular basis through WeCare@School.

VOLUNTEERS

Columbia enjoys the support of an extensive volunteer program. Contact the classroom teacher, the school office, or a PTA officer to participate.

2011 – 2012 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Sept. 6	School Begins
Oct. 10	Columbus Day Holiday
Nov. 7 - 8	Student Holidays
Nov. 23	Students Released Two Hours Early
Nov. 24 - 25	Thanksgiving Holidays
Dec. 23 – Jan. 2	Winter Vacation
Jan. 16	Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday Holiday
Jan. 30 - 31	Student Holidays
Feb. 20	President's Day Holiday
April 2 - 6	Spring Vacation
April 19	Student Holiday
May 28	Memorial Day Holiday
June 19	Last Day of School