



Gunston Elementary School

Gunston Elementary School

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Website
www.fcps.edu/GunstonES

Notes From Gunston

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. Gunston 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 2009-10 school year.

School Hours

Kindergarten through 6th Grade
Monday 8:25am – 12:35 pm
Tuesday – Friday 8:25am – 3:05 pm

Attendance Reminders

- **Early – 8:15 am**
Gunston Elementary will supervise students starting at 8:15am. To keep our students safe, walkers and car riders should arrive at school no earlier than 8:15am.

- **On Time – 8:25 am**
Our classes begin at 8:25am. Students should be in their seats by 8:35am.

- **Absent or Tardy**
If your child is either going to be absent or tardy for any reason, please contact the school at 703-541-3600 by 9:00 am. If the school does not receive a call from a parent, the absence will be considered unexcused. Each student returning from an absence should present a note from a parent or guardian stating the reason for the absence.

Excused Absence and Tardy

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

Unexcused Absence and Tardy

Family trip, child care situation, oversleeping, non-school related activity, traffic or missed bus. **It is critical to your child's success that they are in school and on time daily.**

Family Trips

We encourage family trips during scheduled school vacations. We strongly discourage such trips during the school year because these extended absences interrupt sequential learning in many subject areas. Virginia law requires us to withdraw any student who is absent from school for 15 days or more from our enrollment. Upon the student's return a parent must again officially enroll him or her.

Transportation

Children thrive on the consistency of a routine. You should make changes in transportation only when necessary. If you require a change, such as riding a different bus or, walking home with a friend or

meeting a parent at the Kiss and Ride site, send a note to your child's teacher on the morning of the change. If a student is visiting a friend, **both students must bring permission notes from their parents.** Busses operate at capacity and cannot accommodate extra passengers. Play dates should be arranged after your child has arrived home.

Kindergarteners must be met by a parent or responsible adult at the bus stop.

For the safety of all children, students may not ride skateboards or scooters to school.

Kiss and Ride

8:15 - 8:25 am and 3:00 - 3:19 pm

We will continue to use entrance #3 and ask that you abide by the following:

- Obtain your Kiss and Ride tag from the main office.
- Drop your child off only in the Kiss and Ride traffic pattern.
- Pull your car forward as far as possible in the line.
- Make sure that your child exits your car on the building side.
- Do not pass other cars in line.
- Refrain from using the bus access lane in front of the school.
- Parents please remain in your cars.
- Students are not to be dropped off before 8:15 am.

Note: To minimize traffic in the bus lanes in front of the school, Kiss and Ride remains open until 8:25 am. Afterwards please drop off students in the front of the building. Students are not to be crossed on Gunston Road.

Transportation

Bus Riders and Walkers

FCPS provides bus transportation for students who reside more than a mile from school. Check with the school office for exceptions. Bus riders should follow these guidelines:

- Refrain from crossing or playing on private property.
- Cooperate with the safety patrols and obey the bus drivers.
- Arrive at the bus stop 5 to 10 minutes before the scheduled pick up time.



- Remain seated and talk quietly after boarding the bus.

Walking students must use designated paths or sidewalks where safety patrols are stationed and are not to cross Gunston Road.

Parking and Picking up Children

Virginia state law forbids the passing of a school bus that is loading or unloading children; this law applies on school grounds, too. We do not allow parking in front of the school during arrival and dismissal. To avoid being blocked in by the buses, you should avoid parking in front of the school after 2:29 pm (noon on Mondays).

Field Trips

During the school year, classes may take field trips that relate directly to the regular instructional program. We send permission slips home prior to the trip, and parents must return them to the school no later than the day before the scheduled trip. We cannot accept verbal permission. Gunston often asks parents to help chaperone field trips. For safety and insurance reasons, younger siblings may not accompany chaperoning parents on field trips.

Cafeteria

Breakfast –\$1.50

Lunch – \$2.65

The cafeteria offers a nutritionally balanced meal daily. A menu is sent home monthly. We strongly encourage healthy lunches and discourage students from bringing in fast food, carbonated soft drinks and glass bottles.

How to Pay

Parents have 3 options to pay for school meals:

- **Online**
Using www.myLunchMoney.com This is a convenient and secure service. Once an account is established, parents may also check the fund balance, view 7 days of purchases, and receive an e-mail when the balance gets below \$5.00. There is a convenience fee for making payments.

- **Cash or Check**

Checks should be made out to Gunston

Elementary School Food Services. Be sure to include your child's name and his or her teacher's name in the memo portion of the check or on the envelope. Indicate on the check/envelope if you wish your child to purchase meals only (no a la carte items). When an account has only 3 lunches left, the cashier will send home a notice.

- **Free or Reduced Meals**

FCPS provides free or reduced price meals to students in need of assistance to help meet their nutritional needs. Food and Nutrition Services mails application forms to every family in August. **Parents must complete the forms to renew this program each year. Translated copies are available in the school office.**

Note: Occasionally a student will not have a lunch or lunch money. In this event, the PTA will provide cereal for your child and an envelope will be sent home for you to cover the cost of the cereal. **The funding for this PTA program is limited so please return the envelope with the payment promptly so that this program may remain solvent and no child will go without food at lunch.**

Clinic

Keep us in the Loop!

Your emergency contact information is very important. It accompanies your child everywhere he or she goes, even on field trips. The information is vital to us and to you. Phone numbers, addresses, and the names of the adults you permit to take your child from school should all be kept current.

You can input, access and update your child's emergency information via the FCPS program, **weCare@school**, which is available through the Parent View account for parents and guardians on FCPS 24-7. It is fast, easy and safe. The paper version is still available if you choose to use that method.

When to Stay Home

Students with symptoms, such as rashes, watery & 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. Students should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.

A Doctor's Note

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

Taking your Child Home

The clinic may need to call you to pick up your child if they exhibit symptoms of illness such as:

- Fever over 100 degrees
- Persistent abdominal pain
- Vomiting
- Unexplained rash
- Diarrhea
- Head lice
- Inflamed eyes with discharge
- Persistent cough

We ask that you make arrangements to pick up your child as soon as possible. It is important to have emergency numbers up to date in case we must contact you. Parents will be notified immediately if 911 is called for their child.

Medication at School

Prescription and most over-the-counter medications require strict adult supervision. Forms to authorize school staff members to administer medications are available in the school office and online at www.fcps.edu/forms.

Note:

Please notify the school about any medical conditions your child has. Call the school clinic at 703-541-3610 with any questions you may have.



General Information

Discipline

Gunston ES Staff is committed to the success of all students and implements a PBS program in which students are recognized for demonstrating appropriate behavior. We expect students to respect the rights and privileges of others and accept responsibility for their own actions and the consequences of their behavior. If your child is removed from class for disciplinary reasons, a referral will be sent home, for your signature explaining the incident and the actions taken. The principal and assistant principal will review the FCPS Regulation 2610 and the Student Responsibilities and Rights booklet with all students during the first week of school. **It is essential that you support your child by taking time to carefully review these regulations and guidelines with them. When you receive your copy, sign and return the SR&R form, (located in the front of the book) to school as soon as possible.**

Homework

Homework is a key point of contact between home and school. Homework is assigned to reinforce skills taught in school. Teachers decide on the amount and type of work considering the level, maturity and ability of the child. The responsibility for homework gradually increases for students in grades 1 through 6. Your child is expected to read daily (or be read to) for an amount of time determined by the teacher. Each student is given an assignment book and is responsible for recording assignments and bringing it daily.

Parties

Room parents and your child's classroom teacher make the arrangements for the class parties, which are limited to 2 per year (end of year and 1 additional one). Room parents may request a one-time donation from families to help defray costs.

Personal Property

FCPS does not assume responsibility for the personal property of students and does not purchase insurance for their property. We encourage parents and students to carefully consider the types and value of property taken to school, especially items with monetary or sentimental value. Electronic games, music devices, cell phones etc. are not allowed at school. Our lost and found is located in the cafeteria.

School Clothes

We expect students to come to school dressed in proper attire for school activities. Clothing should fit, be neat and clean and conform to standards of decency. We do not permit:

- Clothing with improper language or images.
- Sagging or low cut pants.
- Tank tops, midriff tops, low cut necklines, tube tops, halter tops, backless blouses, shirts with see through material or short shorts.
- Head coverings, such as scarves, bandannas, unless required for religious or medical reasons.
- Flip Flops are discouraged.
- Tennis shoes or shoes with rubber soles are necessary for physical education classes and active recess play. To prevent scarring the floor, white soul shoes are preferred.

Student Progress Reports

The school year is divided into 4 nine week grading periods. At the end of the 1st nine week period, your child's teacher will schedule a conference with you to discuss your child's progress. Shortly after each grading period, you will receive a printed Progress Report.

Visitors and Security

Gunston welcomes parents at all times during the school day. Everyone entering the building is required to stop at the main office to sign and receive a badge. Prior notice is strongly encouraged in efforts to maximize instructional time without distractions.

Volunteers

Gunston enjoys the support of an extensive volunteer program. Typically, volunteers work with students, assist in the library, help with art projects, prepare instructional materials, or work on PTA projects. You may sign up at Back to School Night or contact your child's teacher or a PTA officer for ways to be involved in your child's education.

Your Participation Counts!

- Attend your child's Parent Teacher Conference to discuss your child's progress with his or her teacher.
- Join the PTA.
- Volunteer in your child's classroom or with the PTA.
- Join your child in all of the special events and activities our school sponsors each year; such as Halloween and Valentine Bingo, International Night, Fun Fair etc.

Welcome to Gunston Elementary School!

July 2009

The information in this attachment is current as of the publication date. Visit www.fcps.edu/GunstonES for the most up-to-date information.

