

WELCOME

Dear Cartersville Primary School Families,

As the principal of Cartersville Primary School, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2022-2023 school year. I feel extremely fortunate to be working alongside such an exceptional group of outstanding students, involved families and committed community leaders. Our combined efforts make Cartersville Primary School a place where we are *Mission Ready*. *We inspire all students to build the skills and confidence to find their passions and achieve their goals.*

Cartersville Primary School is a Capturing Kids' Hearts National Showcase School and we pride ourselves in providing our students with a safe, nurturing, academically challenging, and engaging learning environment where students feel loved and an important part of our school. We believe that every student is building a legacy and it is our responsibility to embody values that will guide our students to their highest potential.

With parent and community support, we will build effective partnerships that will engage our students and strengthen our community. We value your involvement in your child's education, so please consider joining our wonderful PTC or if that is not an option, donating to our Classroom Adoption Fund is another way to invest in Cartersville Primary School.

Again, I am looking forward to having all of you as a part of Cartersville Primary School this year. Please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments, or concerns you may have throughout the school year.

Go Canes!

Gina Bishop
Principal

Attendance Procedures

In order to receive maximum benefit from instructional activities, students are expected to be in school each day on time unless excused as provided by Georgia law.

To be considered **present**, a student must be in attendance for at least 4 hours of the school day. Students that do not meet this requirement will be **absent** for the day.

A student is **tardy** when the student is not in the classroom ready to learn when the school day begins.

A **check-out** occurs when a student leaves school before the end of the school day.

The following constitute legally **excused absences, tardies, or checkouts** from school, with proper documentation:

1. Personal illness.
2. A serious illness or death in a student's immediate family.
3. Religious holidays that require absence from school.
4. Pre-induction physical examinations for military service.
5. Court order, court subpoena or other required court appearance.
6. Voter registration.
7. Visitation with a parent or legal guardian in the armed services who is called to duty or is on leave from overseas deployment in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-692.1.
8. Conditions rendering school attendance impossible or hazardous to student's health or safety.
9. Any other absence not explicitly defined herein but deemed by the school board to be excused based on circumstances.

An absence, tardy, or check-out for any other reason is **unexcused**. For example, family vacations, traffic, missing the bus, oversleeping, car trouble, personal convenience, or family emergencies without proper documentation are not valid reasons for absences, tardies or check-outs.

Three (3) unexcused tardies, three (3) unexcused check-outs, or any combination of the two shall constitute one (1) unexcused absence.

Very Important – Please Review Carefully!!!!

If a student has more than five (5) unexcused absences in a school year, the parents are subject to the following penalties under Georgia's Compulsory Attendance Law:

- A fine between \$25 and \$100 for each unexcused absence over five (5);
- up to 30 days of jail time for each unexcused absence over five (5);
- community service; or
- any combination of these penalties

Documentation: In order for an absence, tardy or check-out to be excused, proper documentation must be submitted promptly and no more than three (3) days after the student returns to school. An example of proper documentation is a doctor note, dentist note, court order or subpoena, or an obituary.

Parent Notes: A parent may submit parent notes to explain up to four (4) days of student absences each semester. Whether the absence is excused or unexcused will be determined based on this Attendance Procedure. If the student is out for more than two (2) consecutive days due to illness, a medical excuse will be required. All parent notes must be submitted promptly, no more than three (3) days after the student returns to school.

Family Vacations: Family vacations are not excused absences based upon State Board of Education Rules.

Service as Page of the General Assembly: A student who serves as a Page of the General Assembly shall be counted present and not absent on the day of service.

Children in Foster Care: A student who attends court proceedings related to his or her foster care shall be counted present and not absent for any day or portion of the day missed from school.

Field Trips or Other Activities: A student who is participating in a school approved field trip, school approved event, or school approved program shall be counted present and not absent for any day or portion of the day missed from school.

Driver's Permit or License: A student under 18 who wishes to obtain a driver's permit or license must be enrolled and not under suspension from school.

Custodians and Guardians: In this Attendance Procedure, the word "parent" shall also include legal custodians, guardians, or anyone else who has control or charge of a child.

Notification of Absences: When a student has three (3) unexcused absences for any reason, and again when a student has five (5) unexcused absences for any reason, the school will make reasonable attempts to notify the parents. This notification may include notification by first class mail or telephone contact.

Consequences of More Than Five (5) Unexcused Absences: If a student has more than five (5) unexcused absences, the parent and/or student may be required to attend an Attendance Support Team meeting. The parent and/or student may also be subject to referrals to the School Social Worker, Juvenile Court, Magistrate Court and/or the Department of Family and Children Services for truancy and/or educational neglect.

Acknowledgement of Receipt: All students 10 years or older by September 1 and all parents shall sign the Acknowledgement Form at the end of this handbook which verifies that they have received a copy of this Attendance Procedure and are aware of the possible consequences and penalties for violating the Georgia Compulsory Attendance Law.

For Additional Information: If you have any questions about the Attendance Procedures, please contact your student's school. You may also review O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1 through O.C.G.A. § 20-2-694, Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.10, and the Attendance Protocol adopted by the Cartersville-Bartow County Student Attendance Protocol Committee.

SCHOOL SOCIAL SERVICES

Cartersville City School System is dedicated to the goal of helping every student experience success in the school setting. In keeping with this goal, the school social workers provide non-instructional services to students and their families. The primary role of the School Social Workers is to enhance the district's ability to meet its academic mission by serving as a liaison between the school, the home, and the community. Parents are encouraged to assume an active role in their child's education.

The School Social Workers are available to meet with parents and students within the school or at home to provide support, crisis intervention counseling and referral services. The

School Social Workers collaborate with all concerned parties to determine the cause of school-related problems and assist in meeting the student and parent needs.

The school social workers are the designated persons to enforce the Compulsory School Attendance Law. The Cartersville City Schools firmly believes that school attendance and performance are closely related. It is extremely important that your children come to school every day. The School Social Workers can also be contacted for child needs such as dental/medical care, eyeglasses, shoes, clothing, food and shelter.

MORNING CARPOOL INFORMATION

The school hours at Cartersville Primary School are from **7:30a.m. until 2:15 p.m.** All car pool students should be dropped off at designated car pool areas between 7:00 and 7:30 am. **NO PARKING and walking students in or to the front doors.** Exceptions of this rule include: nurse visit/medicine drop off, change of transportation or address, Character Breakfast or scheduled meetings with a staff member. **Children must not be dropped off prior to 7:00 a.m.** After 7:30 a.m., ALL students and parents must use the Main Entrance. We encourage parents and guardians to have students on time to school. We begin morning routines and instructional activities in the classroom beginning at 7:35 AM.

LATE ARRIVALS

Students arriving after 7:30 a.m. will be counted tardy, and for school safety reasons must be signed in by the parent. The office will issue a tardy slip. Please be advised that when children are late, it disrupts the class, it interferes with learning, and it is often difficult for a child to settle into the daily routine. A referral to the School Social Worker will be made when a pattern of tardiness develops. Please refer to the school (**Attendance Procedures**) included in this handbook.

EARLY PICK-UP

If a student must leave before the end of the school day, a note should be sent to the classroom teacher. This should be done only when absolutely necessary. It is important for your child to be here all day every day if at all possible. Please note that unexcused early dismissals will count towards truancy.

It is our policy to release children **ONLY** to a parent or guardian unless otherwise notified by the parent in writing. Parents needing to pick up their child prior to the regular dismissal time must report to the office and sign for the child. Children will be called to the office. Parents/guardian and any other individual authorized to pick up your child must be prepared to show a picture ID. **In order to ensure the safety and security of the children at CPS, early dismissal for students will be stopped each day at 1:45 pm. After this time, we will not accept any transportation changes, and all students will continue with their scheduled route of dismissal.**

Parents must not take a child off a bus while it is loading. Please come to the office and let us help you reach your child. Again, any child leaving early for any reason must be signed out in the office.

AFTERNOON CARPOOL INFORMATION

Please view the carpool map for grade level pick-up areas. Afternoon carpool begins at 2:15 and ends by 2:40 pm. After 2:40 pm, a phone call will be made to the parents and students will be placed in the office or afterschool. All car riders must be registered and have a school issued car tag hanging from the car's rear view mirror during dismissal. Please remain in your vehicle at all times. Your child will be called once we begin dismissal and school staff will walk students to the appropriate car. All students will be issued two car tags at the beginning of the school year. If you misplace or lose your tag you will need to visit the office prior to dismissal to get a replacement. Students will not be released to vehicles which do not have the appropriate car tag. In the event that you forget your tag, you will need to park your vehicle and check out your student from the front office; proper identification will be required. If you have more than 1 child in the building, please hang BOTH tags on your rearview mirror. You will pick up your children at the younger sibling's carpool area. (Example: pick up your kindergarten and 2nd grader in the kindergarten area. Pick up a 1st and 2nd grader in the 1st grade area.)

AFTERNOON VAN RIDER/DAYCARE PROCEDURES

Students who ride day care vans will dismiss to the cafeteria at 2:15 pm and will await their day care van. Students will be loaded on vans by teachers.

CHANGE OF TRANSPORTATION

Parents must make certain their child and their child's teacher understand how he/she will get home from school each day. The parent must send a note if there is a change from the normal procedure. **Without a note, we must send your child home the usual way at the end of the day.** For your child's safety, transportation changes will not be made over the phone, e-mail or FAX. In an emergency, a parent or someone on the office pick-up list must bring to the school office, in writing, a note for a dismissal change. The note must state the reason for the change and the name, address, and phone number of the adult who will pick up the student or meet the bus.

LACK OF SUPERVISION

The following guidelines shall be used in determining the level of neglect that exist when children are left alone without supervision as set for the by the Bartow County DFCS. At what age can a child be left alone . . . see below:

- Children 8 or younger shall never be left alone.
- Children between the ages of 9 and 12, based on their level of maturity, may be left alone for brief periods of time. Brief is defined as less than two hours.
- Children 13 and older, who are at an adequate level of maturity, may be left alone and may perform the role of babysitter as authorized by the parent / caretaker.

School board policy states that parents of students in Grade 2 and below must have an adult or responsible individual of at least thirteen (13) years of age present at the bus stop to receive them. It is NOT the responsibility of the school to ensure that someone is present to care of the child. If a student is brought back to the school, he/she will be placed in the after-school care program at a cost of \$10 per day plus a one-time family registration fee of \$10.

BUS RETURN PROCEDURES

- If your child has been returned to school **5 times** during a semester, your child will be suspended from afternoon transportation for **3 days**.
- If your child has been returned to school **6-9 times** during a semester, your child will be suspended from afternoon transportation for **5 days**.
- If your child has been returned to school **10 times** during a semester, your child will be suspended from afternoon transportation for the **remainder of the semester**.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Parents must supply the school with a current street address. For each change of address during the school year, parents must provide the school with two proofs of residency. Please refer to the district website for approved proofs of residency.

CURRENT PHONE NUMBER

Parents must supply the school with current working phone numbers, (home/work/emergency) in case a situation arises at school in which the parent must be contacted. These numbers are kept confidential.

PARKING

Do not park along any of the curbed area surrounding the school. When dropping off or picking up students, remain in your car. Cars must not be parked in the area behind the school, which is reserved for loading and unloading buses. Car riders may not be loaded or unloaded in the bus loading area. Observe the speed limits and stop at crosswalks when children are at the curb, as well as when children are crossing.

A parking lot is located at the front and south end of the building for parents, visitors, and staff. Handicapped parking is available at the front of the school. **A SRO officer will periodically monitor parking and curbed areas at CPS and will issue citations as appropriate.**

VISITORS

All visitors to the school are to report to the office immediately upon entering the building and sign in. Parents are considered visitors. Under no circumstances are parents to go beyond the front office without first signing in at the office through Lobby Guard. A picture ID is required for sign in purposes. This is for protection of all students. Once you sign in, you will receive a visitor's pass. This must be worn while in the building. In order to minimize instructional, interruptions, classroom visits must be by appointment only.

LUNCH ROOM VISITORS

We welcome CPS families to visit the school during their child's scheduled 30-minute lunch time. **However, while we are teaching our students rituals and routines of lunchroom behaviors, we ask for no lunch visitors until after Labor Day.**

After Labor Day weekend, the lunchroom visitor schedule will be as follows:

Kindergarten – Tuesday, 1st grade – Wednesday, and 2nd grade – Thursday.

Please follow the appropriate sign-in procedures as stated above in the visitor section. No birthday goodies or treats should be brought to lunch.

SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

For the 2022-23 school year, the meals at CPS will be the following costs: Breakfast - \$1.50 and Lunch - \$2.50. The Cartersville City Schools application for free and reduced-priced meals is available on our website. **Families that are eligible for free or reduced-price meals must apply this year to receive them,** and all other students will pay full price for their meals this school year.

CLASSROOM PARTIES AND BIRTHDAY RECOGNITION

Throughout the school year, we have several scheduled party events. These include the Character Day Parade, Winter Holiday party, and the End of the Year party. **Due to certain student allergies, any outside treats must be store bought and contain an ingredients label.**

Monthly birthday recognition will be coordinated through the classroom teacher and room parent. This will be held the last week of the month to recognize birthday students. Due to this recognition lasting just a short time in the middle of the instructional day, we ask that parents refrain from attending. No birthday goodies or treats should be brought to lunch.

COUNSELORS

Our School Counselors are available to students, parents and staff. Referrals for the counselor to visit with students can come from parents, teachers or students. The School Counselors also provide lessons in each class focusing on the monthly character words and lessons that address American School Counseling standards; Social/Emotional Learning, Being Successful Learners and Career Exploration.

You are welcome to contact the School Counselors at:

Emily Plaisted eplaisted@cartersvilleschools.org

Rachel Fisher rfisher@cartersvilleschools.org

Karen Crawford kcrawford@cartersvilleschools.org

You can find out more about the School Counselors at the school website:

www.cartersvilleschools.org

DRESS CODE

Clothing and dyed bright hair colors which interrupts, interferes with, or detracts from the learning environment/normal school day is prohibited. All clothing must be worn in the manner in which it was intended.

MEDICATION GIVEN AT SCHOOL

Dear Parents or Guardians:

To ensure the safety of all students in our school, the following guidelines should be followed when medications are to be sent to the school.

All medications (prescription and non-prescription) must be taken directly to the clinic for safe storage. Students cannot keep any medication with them in their pockets, purses, book bags, etc.

1. All medications, both prescription and over the counter, must be brought to the school by the parent or guardian. Parent/Guardian must fill out a **Request for Medication Administration** form or a note of permission, which is dated and has complete directions (including time, dose, and name of medication).
2. All medications must be in **the ORIGINAL CONTAINER**. Prescription medications must be in the labeled prescription bottle. Medications stored in envelopes, baggies, etc. **WILL NOT** be administered.
3. Administration of prescription and over the counter medicine (even for a short period of time) is discouraged. Parents should check with their physician regarding the need for medications to be administered during school hours. Medication prescribed for three times daily often can be given before school, after school and at bedtime.

If you have questions, please feel free to call the school nurse at 770-382-1733, during school hours.

Thank you for your assistance.

Jessica Caverly, RN

CHILD CUSTODY

Parents/guardians must indicate who can/cannot pick their child up from school. Official copies of custody papers must be on file in the office in those instances where one parent may not have legal permission to pick up or see a child at school. It is the parent's responsibility to update/notify the school office of any changes in custody that may occur during the school year.

GIFTED STUDENTS

The Board recognizes that there are identifiable students enrolled in the school system who demonstrate a high degree of intellectual, creative and/or artistic ability; possess exceptional leadership skills; or who excel in specific academic disciplines and who have exceptional learning needs.

The Board shall provide gifted education services to students who have been identified as intellectually gifted as defined by Georgia Board of Education rules in grades 1-12. The gifted program shall be staffed by highly qualified, certified gifted teachers.

A student may be referred for consideration for gifted services by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents, guardians, self, or other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities. In addition, teachers of gifted students shall review all standardized achievement and state assessment data annually as an automatic referral process.

Students shall be tested and accepted into the gifted program based upon Georgia Department of Education guidelines, and shall be placed only upon written parental consent. Students eligible for gifted services in other Georgia schools are automatically eligible to receive services in the Cartersville City School System upon receipt of appropriate records.

Curricula shall be developed for gifted students that incorporate the state approved student competencies and standards. Curriculum objectives shall focus on developing academic skills using differentiated instructional strategies in one or more of the following content areas: mathematics, science, language arts, social studies, foreign language, and fine arts.

Students identified as gifted and whose participation in the gifted program has received parental consent shall receive a minimum of five segments per week of gifted education services.

The Superintendent is directed to operate, in accordance with state guidelines, programs for gifted students in grades 1-12. The system will establish procedural guidelines to carry out the intent of this policy and the program.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

A conference with your child's teacher is your best means of learning how your child is performing in school. Every teacher is asked to have two conferences to discuss report cards and student progress. **A conference must be held by the end of the 2nd 9 week grading period.** If parents are continually unable to come to school conferences, the school counselor will provide assistance. Students who are enrolled for 4 and 1/2 weeks of any grading period are entitled to receive a report card. Requests may be made for additional conferences by the parent by sending a note or email to the teacher. **We ask that you do not drop in unannounced for a conference.** The teacher may have a prior commitment. The first scheduled conference is to go over the report card. It is extremely important that you make every effort to attend these conferences.

We consider the first 4 and 1/2 weeks of the school year as an adjustment period for children. The teacher will use this time to assess the readiness skills for subject areas taught.

FIELD TRIPS

Students attending school-sponsored trips must have written permission from their parents or guardians before going on the trips. Students are expected to conduct themselves in an acceptable manner while on the trip. Siblings are NOT allowed on school field trips. Siblings

interfere with and detract from the educational value of the field trip designed for the class and Cartersville Primary students. Parents are also asked not to send extra money for souvenirs.

SCHOOL EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

In the event of a crisis situation such as a tornado, chemical spill, etc. specific set procedures shall be followed. Students will be kept at school or the emergency evacuation site until the crisis/lockdown is determined to be over. Students **will not** be released during a lockdown. At the conclusion of the crisis/lockdown, students will be released to parents who come to get them. Do not phone the school and tie up lines needed for emergency use. When a person other the parent comes to get a student, school personnel will first check the student record and then a record will be kept of the person who picked up the student. If there is any doubt the parents want the student released, the student will be kept at school. The school is one of the safest places that students may be located during most crises or natural disasters.

GRADING AND REPORTING PROCEDURES

As you know, Cartersville City Schools in grades K-2 report student performance using a standards-based report card. The purpose of a standards-based report card is to communicate progress relative to specific end-of-year grade level learning standards. The progress is reported as: **Exceeds Standard (5), Mastery of Standard (4), Progressing toward meeting the Standard (3), Progressing with additional support (2), and Little to no progress toward meeting standard(s) (1).**

As you review the progress indicators on the report card, you may notice that many standards at the beginning of the year have not yet reached a **Meets Standard (4)** level. Many students receive a **Progressing (3) or Progressing with additional support (2)** in the first three grading terms showing that your student is on track towards meeting the standard, however their work has not yet shown consistency, evidence of independence, or mastery of the entire standard. Mastery of the standard, which is **Meets Standards (4)** is an end of the year expectation. These standards will continue to be an anchor of instruction as students move from one grade level to another. This will allow your student the opportunity to continue their progression from year to year in regards to meeting each standard in the Georgia Standards of Excellence.

All teachers in the same grade level work and plan together to ensure common tasks and assessments are provided to all students throughout the grade level. This occurs through weekly collaboration team meetings.

PROMOTION/RETENTION/PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS

Teachers have the complete responsibility and authority to assign grades to each student based upon work done in the class or subject area and assessments given to measure mastery and understanding of content. Administrators and support personnel cannot change a student's grade as assigned by a teacher.

Similarly, the school principal has the final responsibility and authority to determine the promotion/retention/placement decisions regarding each student. Such decisions are based upon criteria established by the school. The Central Office, School Board, Superintendent, nor his/her staff have any authority to make or change grades, promotion, retention, or placement decisions of any student.

When making decisions on student retention, we consider the following information:

1. Kindergarten State assessment (GKIDS)
2. Standards-based Grade Reports
3. AIMS Web for Reading and Math, the BAS (Benchmark Assessment System) for Reading, and the Math Comprehensive Growth Assessment
4. Percentage of State Grade Level Standards mastered
5. Recommendation of Promotion/Retention Committee

SCHOOL WIDE BEHAVIOR PROGRAM

Cartersville Primary School strives to ensure a safe and positive learning environment for all our students. To accomplish this goal, we use the Chick-Fila character education program and a PBIS plan (positive behavior and instructional support plan). The character education program covers topics on a monthly basis, which help students develop positive qualities of character such as responsibility, punctuality, respect, kindness, etc. Our PBIS school wide behavior plan provides clear school-wide expectations that are consistent among classrooms and grade levels. Students will be taught the school wide expectations through a variety of grade specific lessons, modeling of the appropriate behaviors, and use of school created videos teaching appropriate behaviors. These expectations will provide the base for the operation of the school plan.

CPS School Wide Expectations

We are kind and respectful.

We listen and follow directions.

We are prepared and ready to learn.

We have good manners and character.

Students will be recognized with Canes Cash for appropriately following the expectations. Students will have the opportunity to use Canes Cash for special school wide events and classroom items/privileges offered by the teacher and grade level. Students will also be made aware of consequences due to inappropriate behaviors. Consequences may include silent lunch, loss of specials time, or ISS time in the front office. Corporal punishment is *not* used in the Cartersville City School System. Level 2 offenses are considered minor violations, and teachers will send home a computer generated note to inform the parent. Level 3 offenses are considered an office referral. In this case, a letter will come home signed by an administrator showing the student was seen in the front office. Offenses which may result in an immediate discipline referral to the office include but are not limited to behaviors that result in damage to property, injury or putting others in danger, extreme disruption of the classroom, inappropriate touching, and stealing.

We believe that a clearly stated and thorough behavior plan will teach our children to be responsible for their actions and make school a positive experience. We ask for your cooperation. We have also included a copy of the Cartersville School System's **Student Code of Conduct and Discipline Procedures**. Students must adhere to and abide by all of the provisions contained there

within. Please discuss these guidelines with your child and express the importance of obeying school rules.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

Recognizing the importance of communication and participation of parents and the community in the efforts to educate our children, the Council establishes as its purpose the support of Cartersville Primary School. The Council shall work to support educational efforts of the school by working in a spirit of cooperation with school staff to improve student achievement and performance, provide support for teachers and administrators, and bring parents into the school-based decision-making process by working on education issues. The Council shall endeavor to bring parents and the community together with teachers and school administrators to create a better understanding of and mutual respect for each other's concerns and role, and share ideas for continuous school improvement.

The management and control of Cartersville Primary School shall be the responsibility of the Board, and the school leader shall be the Principal. The Council shall provide advice, recommendations, endorsements, and assistance; and represent the community of parents and local businesses in support of continuous school improvement.

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

The CPS Media Center serves as an extension of the classroom and is available for use by all teachers and students. Each class visits the media center on an established schedule. In addition to group checkout time, students from each class in first and second grades may visit the media center during established "open checkout" times. All students use library sticks (paint sticks with student barcodes) for book checkout.

Students are not allowed to check out another book when one is overdue. Overdue notices are sent to teachers every two weeks and are placed in students' "Take-home" folders. Overdue notices can also be printed upon parent request. A replacement fee will be charged for any lost/damaged materials. Within a school year, should a student find and return a book for which he has paid the cost in full, he is entitled to a refund.

Our online catalog, Destiny, and several databases may be accessed from any computer with Internet access at <http://ps.cartersvilleschools.org/MediaCenter/Media>.

P T C

Cartersville Primary has a very active PTC. Every year they sponsor fund-raising projects to help provide the school with many needed items such as playground equipment, P.E. equipment, learning materials, library books, as well as supplies and materials to assist the teachers in the buildings. If you are interested in helping make your school a better place, this program needs parent volunteers. Please talk to your child's teacher or a PTC officer about becoming a PTC member.

KIDS AND COMPANY PRE-K HANDBOOK 2022-2023



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Kids and Company Community Pre-K is a *Georgia Bright from the Start Lottery Funded Pre-K* hosted by the Cartersville City Schools. We are governed by both the rules and regulations of the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (Bright from the Start) and the Cartersville City Board of Education. Most of the Cartersville Primary School's policies outlined in the beginning of this handbook also apply to Kids and Company. This specific part of the handbook will outline any differences or highlight any information specific to our Pre-K program.

Requirements for Entrance

Parents must provide a certified birth certificate or passport from the county where the four-year-old was born, current proof of the child's immunization (Form #3231), hearing, vision, dental, & nutrition record (Form #3300), the child's social security card, proof of residence (utility bill, lease) and a copy of any federal/state programs the child participates in (Medicaid, SSI, TANF/Food Stamps, CAPS Program, and Free/Reduced Lunch).

Purpose

The primary purpose of Cartersville City School **Kids and Company** Community Pre-Kindergarten Four-Year-Old Program is to provide an educational experience for young children that is challenging, creative, and pleasurable. The entire program is designed to meet the developmental needs of the four-year-old child.

Play provides the best learning experience opportunities for the young child to explore his/her environment. We believe children need time to be children. This program is designed and implemented to enhance childhood by offering rich and appropriate learning opportunities for the young child. Materials and activities will be designed to help children solve problems, develop science, social studies, and math concepts, improve self-expression, promote cooperation, enhance social skills, and most importantly, promote language and literacy skills.

Another integral component of our program is parental involvement. Opportunities will be given for parents to participate in the school program and to experience personal growth as well. Teachers and parents working together in a partnership can build a mutual understanding and promote the very best program for each child. Everyone involved will be learning and growing together.

Goals

- To foster a nurturing relationship between children and their caregivers
- To facilitate connections among families and schools
- To provide information and support to families
- To recognize that each child and family is unique and wonderful
- To teach children to value, accept, and understand other cultures
- To increase caregivers' knowledge of age-appropriate parenting skills
- To assure maximum learning and maximum love of learning via exposing the child to first-hand experiences with new equipment, new materials and different environments
- To fully prepare students for a successful start in kindergarten

Attendance

The **Kids and Company** program is a full day program. Students arrive at school between 7:00 and 7:30 A.M. and leave at 2:00 P.M. One of the goals of the Pre-K program is to ensure each child receives the necessary skills to be successful in his/her educational career. In order to achieve this goal, your child must attend school on a regular basis.

Each pre-kindergarten class begins and ends on time. It is extremely important for your child to be on time and to stay the full day. A child is considered tardy any time after 7:30 A.M. Once tardy, the parent must come to the front desk and sign the child in. Children, who do not attend on a regular basis, are routinely late, or leave the program early, may be subject to dismissal from the pre-kindergarten program. Chronic tardiness is defined as late arrival or early departure more than once per week. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing more than two days per month without medical or other reasonable explanation. We feel that every minute of pre-kindergarten is too valuable to miss.

When your child must be absent a written statement is required from the parent or guardian explaining the reason for the absence the day the child returns to school. However, for the absence to be considered as excused it must meet one of the stated reasons as defined by the Cartersville City School System's policy. If the child returns to school with no note, the absence will be marked as unexcused.

- The school will accept excuses from parents/guardians for 4 total days of absence each semester and will use the Georgia Board of Education Rules above to determine whether the absence is excused or unexcused.
- While a parent can write an excuse for 4 total days each semester, if the student is out more than 2 consecutive days, a medical excuse will be required.
- If the student reaches five (5) unexcused absences, an attendance meeting will be required.
- **Family vacations are not excused absences** in accordance with Georgia Board of Education Rules.
- If the student accumulates **three unexcused tardies, three unexcused check outs or any combinations of the two**, the student will accrue **one unexcused absence** for truancy purposes only. *Unexcused tardies and check outs can be defined as convenience tardies or check outs.*

As a general rule of thumb, it is not appropriate for students to attend or remain at school under the following circumstances:

- A student who has a fever of 100 degrees or higher. **Students should be free of fever without medication for 24 hours before returning to school.**
- A student who has diarrhea/watery stools in excess of two times during the school day.
- A student who is vomiting. If a student is sent home, they should not return for 24 hours or the next school day.
- A student with a draining or weeping lesion that cannot be contained with a dressing.
- A student with a diagnosed communicable illness until released by a physician.

If you have questions about the Attendance Procedures, contact your child's classroom teacher or Mrs. Tara Peters, Site Director. The Cartersville School System attendance policy is further outlined on pages 1 - 2 of this handbook.

Birthdays

We welcome parents to send in treats to recognize their child's birthday. Due to certain student allergies, birthday treats must be **store bought and contain an ingredients label.** Please contact your child's teacher to arrange a time (usually after lunch). To minimize disruptions, we ask no balloons or decorations be brought. For birthday parties hosted outside of school, the school will not send home

birthday invitations in students' folders unless each student in the class is invited to attend. Otherwise, please send those specific invitations through the mail or contact the parents directly.

Door Safety

In efforts to increase student safety at the **Kids and Company** facility, the Cartersville School System has installed an access control system on the main entrance to the facility. As a result of this precautionary measure, anyone wanting to gain entrance to the facility will be required to request entry by pressing a button that is located beside the front door. This action will signal the secretary who will then release the locking mechanism for entry into the building. Please be advised that you may need to show picture identification prior to admittance into the building.

Parental Involvement

The Cartersville City Schools **Kids and Company** Program has a parental involvement component. Teachers will conduct a minimum of two conferences each year. One will be held at the end of each semester. Teachers will discuss a child's progression on the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) as documented by the Work Sampling Online (WSO) assessment instrument. It is **mandatory** that at least one parent attend these conferences. We also encourage parental involvement via volunteering within the classroom and Family Night Activities attendance.

Transportation – Arrival & Dismissal

We cannot accept transportation changes over the phone or email. Please send in a signed note specifically explaining the change and its duration. It is best to place all correspondences in your child's folder. Teachers do not go through students' book bags.

Bus Transportation

Bus transportation is provided for Cartersville city resident students that live more than ½ a mile away from Cartersville Primary School (because our bus routes run through CPS). A Pre-K student must be **4 years old** to ride the bus. Students can only be picked up and dropped off at bus stops assigned to their domicile address (where they actually live) and not at businesses, relatives, or stops not assigned to them. Out-of-district students may not ride a school bus to or from school. Out-of-district students may not be dropped off at any bus stop for the purpose of riding a bus to or from school. Students who violate the provision of this rule may forfeit the opportunity to attend Cartersville City Schools and be immediately withdrawn from the Cartersville City Schools.

In the morning, all **Kids and Company** Pre-K students are first brought to Cartersville Primary School. They assemble in the kindergarten hall. Two assistant teachers from our school will supervise students. At approximately, 7:20 A.M. all Pre-K students will be shuttled via bus to the **Kids and Company** Pre-K center. The two assistant teachers will accompany them.

In the afternoon, all **Kids and Company** Pre-K students who either attend the After School Program (ASP) or ride the bus to their residence will be shuttled back over to Cartersville Primary School. All six assistant teachers will accompany those students and deliver each student to their appropriate bus or ASP location. The shuttle buses leave the **Kids and Company** campus by at approximately 1:55 PM.

Morning Car Drop Off

- Only 1 lane is utilized
- No student can enter the building prior to **7:00 A.M.**
- After the first full week of school, parents need to utilize the drop off system. Parents are not allowed to walk students to their room, unless you have a **SCHEDULED** appointment with the teacher.

- Assist us with teaching student's independence skills (work on attempting to undo car seats, being prepared to get out of the car, talking to adults when spoken to, etc.)

Afternoon Car Pick Up

- Early check outs need to occur prior to 1:30 P.M. We cannot release students between 1:30 – 2:00 P.M.. It interferes with bus dismissal.
- Do **not** arrive for car pick up prior to 2:00 P.M.. If you arrive to our campus prior to the buses leaving, you will need to drive around the block. Do not form a line or park across the street. Do not stop in the middle of Erwin Street.
- Two lanes are utilized. Pull up as close as possible (you will be directed by an employee). Our driveway can accommodate approximately 16 cars at a time. The lane closest to our building is Lane #1. The lane closest to Erwin Street is Lane #2. **Be sure to hang your car tag from your rearview mirror.**
- Please remain in your car at all times. An employee will bring the student to your car.
- We will begin loading for car dismissal no earlier than 2:00 P.M.
- This is our loading and releasing order: 1) Lane #1 is loaded front to back. 2) Lane #2 is loaded back to front. 3) Once the last student is loaded (1st car of Lane #2), we will release the cars from Lane #1. 4) After all loaded cars from Lane #1 have turned **right** out of our driveway; we start to release Lane #2.
- Please fill Lane #1, prior to filling Lane #2. After car dismissal has begun, if both lanes are filled to capacity and a line begins to form on Erwin, **never** block the entrance to Wash to the Wise (the car washing business located beside us). Please only enter our drive way if your entire vehicle can fit into one of the two lanes... otherwise remain on Erwin beside the mailboxes. Students will not be loaded if a portion of your car remains in the road. This is unsafe, and it blocks the flow of lane traffic once we start releasing the cars.
- Employees cannot buckle students into seats.
- No **LEFT TURN** as you leave our parking lot. (If you need to head north, turn right and then make a left into the Cartersville Electric/Public Works parking lot.)
- All students must be picked up by 2:20 P.M.
- Please share these procedures with anyone you grant permission to pick up your child (grandparents, neighbors, etc.)
- If a car does not have the issued car tag hanging from their rearview mirror, we will have to request photo ID. That person must be listed on your child's pick-up list or we will not release the student.

Continuous noncompliance with these policies may result in a student being unenrolled from Kids and Company Pre-K.