



South Salem Elementary School
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Holly H. Dubois
Principal

La Sharon McClain
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Student Handbook
2009-2010

This Planner Belongs to:

Name: _____

Grade: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Student #: _____

South Salem Elementary School

South Salem Elementary School Mission Statement:

The mission of South Salem Elementary is to build positive relationships among all stakeholders so that our children are empowered to achieve beyond expectations.

Newton County Schools Mission Statement:

The mission of the Newton County Schools is to ensure educational excellence for all students.

Newton County Schools Beliefs Statements:

Educational Excellence is the primary goal of the Newton County Schools so that graduates can think critically, solve problems, make good decisions and succeed in the workplace;

Schools should provide a leadership role in the development of a balanced educational experience, socialization, opportunity for personal, physical and mental fitness, and basic living skills;

The curriculum should provide students with knowledge, skills and attitudes for contributing to the betterment of society;

Quality faculties and staffs who model the attitudes and desire to learn are vital to successful schools. Recruiting and retaining a quality staff is a high priority in a quality school system.

Educators should be pro-active regarding change;

A positive school climate providing self-enhancing experiences for students and staff is vital for achievement;

School personnel should have input in decision-making, especially when decisions affect them;

Parents have an obligation to nurture their child's educational development; schools have an obligation to involve parents in the education of their children;

The education of our youth is the responsibility of the entire community; open communication and involvement are critical elements. Input from the community is welcome and desired by the board of education and administration.

Schools are affected by the values of the community and should seek to influence values in a "positive" way;

The opportunity for an education is a fundamental right;

Every student needs to feel they are cared about, have value and are capable of learning;

Education is a life-long process.



The Principal's Message

Dear Parents, Students, and Friends of South Salem,

South Salem opens the 2009-2010 school year with a projected 850 students and over 90 faculty and staff members. The South Salem student population is a combination of students from Livingston Elementary, West Newton Elementary, Poterdale Elementary, Oak Hill Elementary, and the new students whose families are moving to the South Salem district. It will be my goal to blend the very best of these contributing groups and form the South Salem Family by honoring the past as well as planning for the future.

This will be the seventh year of the Governor's promotion/retention policy that states a student must pass the Georgia Criterion Reference Test administered in the spring in order to be promoted to the next grade. This policy will affect third and fifth grades again this year. We want all South Salem students to perform on or above their grade level. We know that not all students enter South Salem on the same readiness level, nor do they learn at the same rate, nor do they come with the same range of cognitive abilities. Our challenge will be to show that all our students are making academic gains, as well as social and emotional growth.

This Is South Salems's second year of operation, and all of our progress has been made possible by the combined efforts of our PTO (*Parent Teacher Organization*), our partners in education, the School Council, the many volunteers who work with students and assist teachers, and the dedication and professionalism of the South Salem staff. We need everyone, parents, students, and staff, working closely together to provide the best for all of our students.

Please read this handbook carefully. It is a good outline of the programs, procedures, and policies of our school. Please notice that there is a daily section designed to enhance home-school communication. Our teachers generally use this section for organization of homework. We do this in an effort to teach students such skills as organization, time management, and responsibility. Notes and/or messages from the teacher will also be included in this section. If you have questions or concerns let us know. We, the staff at South Salem, are here to serve the needs of our students. We will make every effort to see that this school year is the very best for you and your children.

Sincerely,

Holly H. Dubois
Principal

ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION

Students may be registered to attend South Salem Elementary School if they live in the South Salem attendance zone and if they are residing with their natural parents or a guardian (appropriate paperwork showing proof of guardianship must be presented at time of registration). The following items are needed for enrollment:

1. A state certified birth certificate (with seal)
2. Immunization on Ga. Form 3231
3. The student's Social Security card
4. A withdrawal form with grades or Report Card from the previous school
5. 2 Proofs of Residence – This has to be a utility bill (water, gas, or electric) and a Lease or contract agreement.

Note: A driver's license will not be accepted as proof of residence. Office personnel will be happy to answer any questions you may have with regard to the registration of your child. Please refer to the Newton County Elementary Handbook which is located in this Student Handbook, for additional information on this subject.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

South Salem has a very active PTO that is involved in many aspects of our school. PTO volunteers are needed to assist with many projects and programs. Please contact any of the PTO officers if you would like to become an involved committee member.

SCHOOL PARTNER

We are extremely fortunate to have *Bank of North Georgia* and *Fat Daddy's* as our Partners In Education. They provide many special opportunities for our students and staff. Please contact Mrs. Dubois if you are interested in becoming an official Partner in Education with South Salem Elementary.

VOLUNTEERS

South Salem Elementary is able to provide many special opportunities and programs for our students through the generosity of volunteers. We are always looking for volunteers to work in the Media Center, help in the classroom, read with a student, run copies, help with special events, etc. Please contact your child's teacher and let him/her know if you are interested in volunteering. Contact any PTO officer if you would like to get more involved with the PTO. **Children are more likely to do better in school when their parents are actively involved in the school.**

LOST AND FOUND

The school keeps a lost and found box. **Please prevent things from becoming lost by labeling or marking jackets, sweaters, lunch boxes, etc.** Lost and found items not reclaimed in a reasonable time will be given to the needy.

DRESS CODE

South Salem students are expected to dress in an appropriate manner for an elementary learning environment. We ask that the boys not wear earrings, and that the girls not wear makeup. In addition to the Newton County Dress Code policy, students are not allowed to wear solid, white undershirts as a shirt to school or heavy chain necklaces. For student safety, proper pant length should be maintained and shirt tails are to be tucked in. All 1-5 graders will participate in Physical Education. Tennis shoes are required for Physical Education and recess. Shoes that require shoe strings should be worn with shoe strings and properly tied and fastened.

ATTENDANCE / TARDINESS

It is important that students be at school all day every day. If a student is absent, a written excuse should be sent to his/her teacher the day he/she returns to school. All students will be responsible for any assignments they may have missed due to absences. If students come to school after 8:00 a.m., they must check in at the office before going to their classrooms. If students must leave school early, they must be checked-out by a parent from the office before 2:00. **Excessive absences and tardies are monitored by the school social worker and will result in truancy charges being filed.**

ILLNESS

Should your child become ill at school and you would not be able to come and get your child, you must make plans for someone to pick your child up. We do not have the staff or facilities to care for sick children. It is not fair to your child to be at school sick or for other children to be exposed. **Illnesses and accidents do occur; therefore, it is very important for the school to be kept informed of current home, work, and emergency phone numbers. Due to new regulations, NO over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol, Maalox, and Benadryl can be administered in the clinic.**

DISCIPLINE

We expect students to conduct themselves in a way as to reflect positively on their parents and home. We know that parents will be supportive in helping maintain good discipline and conduct in our school. Therefore we will not hesitate to contact parents concerning their child's conduct if the need arises. There is a system-wide "Code of Conduct" included in this handbook.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between the school and home plays a significant role in the educational process for your child. We want you to know what is happening at South Salem, what your child is learning, and most importantly how your child is progressing. Instead of sending newsletters, flyers, and other forms of paper communication that schools send home on a weekly basis with students, South Salem is now sending its paper communication via email to parents. The PTO publishes a monthly newsletter to communicate news about the school, upcoming events, various projects, and the cafeteria menu. The school website, *www.newtoncountyschools.org*, is updated monthly and gives additional school information. Each grade level sends home a weekly newsletter via email highlighting classroom events, projects, and curriculum objectives that your child will be working on for the upcoming week. In addition, all teachers send home weekly folders for you to see your child's work. **If you have a question about your child's progress, don't wait until report card time; contact the teacher immediately.** We want to work with you to help your child succeed. Parent conferences are held in September and in February for all parents.

FALSIFYING REPORTS

Falsifying reports regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher or other school personnel is prohibited (OS House Bill 1321). An investigation will be held with the penalty at the discretion of the administrator which may include ISS, suspension or suspension to a formal hearing.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

In order to maintain high academic standards at South Salem, we feel it is vital to recognize students who excel in academic areas. An honors program will be held for grades 3-5 at the end of each semester to recognize students who have the highest grade point average in their class for the different subject areas, honor roll (all A's), and perfect attendance. **Students who have more than four tardies will not be eligible for perfect attendance.**

ATTENTION PARENTS/GUARDIANS

In order to insure the safety of our students, please follow these guidelines for visiting the school, checking a student out early, morning arrival, and afternoon dismissal.

SCHOOL VISITS

We encourage all parents, grandparents, and/or guardians to visit their child at school. There is strong evidence that shows that students who have parental involvement at school perform better academically. The best time to visit your child at school is during lunch. **Classroom visits must be arranged through your child's teacher. If your wish to conference with a teacher, it will be necessary to call in advance and set up an appointment time.**

- Enter the building through our main front doors.
- Sign in with the secretary in the front office and pick up a visitor's tag **every** time you visit.
- Let your child's teacher know you are coming.
- Sign out before leaving and return your visitor's tag to the front desk.

STUDENT CHECK OUT

All students need to have an updated Student Release Transportation Card on file in the office. Only the persons listed on the form will be allowed to pick your child up unless we receive written notice stating otherwise. We may ask you, or the person you have authorized to pick up your child, to show some identification. This is in no way intended to offend anyone, but it assures the office staff that the right person is picking up your child.

- Send a note in advance if you know you will be checking out your child early.
- Please come to the office, not the classroom, to check out a student.
- Sign the student out with the secretary at the front desk.
- Be prepared to show identification.
- No checkouts after 2:00 p.m.

STUDENT ARRIVAL

Please try not to walk your students into the building in the mornings. It is important for the students to establish their own routine of getting to the classroom. A staff member is on hand at the front door every morning to assist your child into the building.

- Students will not be allowed in the building until **7:15 a.m.**
- Drop students off at the front door only.
- Car drop off uses the front drive in the mornings. Please unload quickly, as to not impede the flow of traffic.
- Please do not park on the front curb.

- Do not go around other cars. Stay in a single file line even as you pull away from the curb. Be ready to unload your children on the side of the car beside the curb so that children do not have to go between cars.
- Make sure that your children are safely on the curb before you pull away. Please remind your children about **walking** on the sidewalk and keeping away from the curb. Also, keep your eye on the car or road ahead and not on your children. We have had some near misses as parents are waving goodbye to their children as they are pulling off and almost colliding with another car or person crossing the drive.
- Do not park in the handicap parking places unless someone in your vehicle is handicapped.
- Most importantly, please slow down, slow down, and slow down!
- The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. Students not in their classrooms by 8:00 a.m. will need to sign the tardy roster in the office before going to class.
- Breakfast is not served after 7:45 a.m.

DISMISSAL

Students are dismissed at 2:15 p.m. Dismissal works well if parents will not come into the building. It is very difficult to monitor who is picking up which children when parents just walk up and take their child.

- Do not come into the building to pick up your child.
- All car riders will load in the main driveway in front of the school.
- Car riders will be given a South Salem Car Rider Card at the beginning of the year. These cards are to be hung from your rearview mirror.
- Please do not park on campus and walk up to pick up your child.
- **All students are to be picked up by 2:45 p.m.**
- You are responsible for notifying your child's teacher the first day of school as to how your child will be going home. **Any changes in transportation after that point must be done in writing by the parent or guardian.** In an emergency situation, we will take a Fax (678-342-5908). This policy is for your child's own protection.

Please note that policies and procedures are subject to change as we work together to find the best solutions for the daily operations of South Salem.

Your cooperation regarding any needed changes is greatly appreciated.



Visit our Website at
www.newtoncountyschools.org/southsaalem

