

Student Handbook



2024-2025

STUDENT HANDBOOK

McCormick Elementary School

A Title I School

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Dr. Shawn Perry, Principal

Shauna Stanton, Assistant Principal

Our Mission:

At McCormick Elementary School, we are preparing all students to work effectively, responsibly, and productively within our society.

Our Vision:

MES Mustangs are EPIC – Educated, Prepared, and Inspired Citizens with all students meeting their stretch growth goals in i-Ready Reading and Math.

Our Beliefs:

- *Our children are the center of all decision making.*
- *All students can become productive members of society.*
- *Education is a partnership among students, families, schools, and community.*
- *Education should prepare students to succeed academically and socially so they can compete for the quality jobs of their dreams and become productive members of society.*

A Message From the Principal, Dr. Shawn Perry:

Dear Parents and Students,

The 2024-25 school year is set to be the most impactful and important school year for our Staff, Students, and Community. This is my third year at McCormick and we have a few new faces but are returning a strong educational team. Our Mission is to Teach, Mentor, and Grow Strong Readers, Writers, and Mathematicians. Our Vision is for all Mustangs to be Educated, Prepared, and Inspired Citizens by reaching their Stretch Growth Goals in i-Ready Reading and Math.

This handbook will provide key guidelines and expectations but I personally want to emphasize ATTENDANCE, RESPECT, & TEAMWORK because Teaching and Learning is an ART. Mustang Family Members, Please consider your future and prepare to sacrifice now, sow good work, and reap the harvest for your future.

You are important, You are Loved, and You are worthy of a GREAT Education, a GREAT life, and a GREAT Career. At McCormick Elementary, We are fully Committed to supporting your journey because we know You have a Hope and a Future and a Plan of Prosperity and not of Harm. At MES, You Belong! You are Loved & Appreciated! #GoMustangs

Sincerely,

Dr. Shawn Perry, Principal

Shauna Stanton, Assistant Principal

SCHOOL HOURS:

Student Arrival: 7:00 am- 7:30 am

School Day Begins: 7:45 am

Student Dismissal: 2:30 - 3:00 pm

Please do not drop students off before 7:00 a.m. Supervision will not be provided, and front doors will remain locked for students who arrive before 7:00 a.m.

Children should be picked up no later than 3:00 p.m. afterschool.

TARDIES:

Students must be at school, in their seats, and ready to learn no later than 7:45 a.m. Any student who arrives after 7:40 am must have a parent walk them into the front office to obtain a tardy slip for admission to class.

EARLY DISMISSAL:

If it is absolutely necessary to get your child out before the end of the school day, please do so before 2:00 pm.

ATTENDANCE:

Marion County School District Primary/ Elementary Attendance Guidelines Please carefully read the following information concerning South Carolina Attendance Laws and the Marion County School District Guidelines for student attendance. The MCSD Board believes that attendance is a key factor in student achievement and any absence from school represents an educational loss to the student. However, the board also recognizes that some absences from school are unavoidable.

Requirements to be Counted Present for the School Day

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) states that a school year consists of 180 days of instruction. Schools may count students present only when they are actually at school, on medical homebound instruction, or are present at a school activity which is authorized by the school. In MCSD, primary and elementary students must be present for 3½ hours of instruction for the instructional day to count as one of the present school days.

Required Excuses

Within 5 days after returning to school, a student must submit a written excuse explaining his/her absence, signed by his/her parent/legal guardian and accompanied, if applicable, by a doctor's statement. If a student does not do so, his/her absence will be considered unlawful.

An excuse form can be picked up from the attendance office and completed with the appropriate information.

Lawful/Excused Absences

- The absence is caused by the student's own illness and whose attendance in school would endanger his/her health or the health of others.
- The absence is due to an illness or death in the student's immediate family.
- The absence is due to a recognized religious holiday of the student's faith.
- The absence is due to school activities that are approved in advance by the principal.

Unlawful/Unexcused Absences

- The absence of the student without the knowledge of his/ her parent/legal guardian.
- The absence of the student without acceptable cause with the knowledge of his/her parent/legal guardian.

Suspension(s)

- Suspension(s) are not to be counted as an unlawful/unexcused absences for truancy purposes.

Primary/Elementary School Tardy Procedures

Students who are late to school receive consequences if the behavior continues. Students who are continually late may expect the following on a semester basis:

1st tardy - the office/teacher will issue a verbal notification.

2nd tardy - the office/teacher will issue written notification.

3rd tardy - the office/teacher will issue a second written notification.

4th tardy – the office/teacher will issue a written tardy notice warning.

5th tardy– the school administrator will request a parent/legal guardian tardy conference.

6 th & 7th tardy – the student will be placed on a tardy intervention contract.

8 th & 9th tardy – the student may be assigned In-School Suspension.

10th tardy – the student may be given one day out-of-school suspension for each additional tardy after 10.

Truancy:

The Code of Laws of SC 59-65-10 reads: “All parents or guardians shall cause their children or wards who are in the age group of five to seventeen, inclusive, to regularly attend a public or private school or kindergarten of this state...”

Parents of students with excessive absences or tardies will be called for a Truancy Intervention Plan. Failure to comply with the plan developed may result in a referral to the Truancy Officer of Marion County School District and the Marion County Truancy Officer.

Examples of Notes Required from Parents/Guardians:

- *Notes to explain an absence
- *Notes to explain tardiness
- *Notes to request early dismissal
- *Notes to excuse the child from recess or physical education class
- *Notes to grant permission to attend field trips
- *Notes to allow the child to ride home in a vehicle with another child
- *Notes to change student’s mode of transportation
- *Proper form of taking medication
- *Notes to inform about an allergic reaction (should be accompanied by a doctor’s note)

FIELD TRIPS

Students who leave the school for field trips represent McCormick Elementary School and excellent student behavior is essential! To assist in maintaining the positive public image of McCormick, students who have proven that they cannot consistently meet the expectations of good behavior in the school may not be allowed to visit places with less structure. Siblings will not be allowed to attend field trips or field days.

Chaperones may be needed on field trips. The grade level will determine the number of chaperones. A Volunteer Chaperone Form must be completed for approval through the district office before the trip. No parent acting as a chaperone is allowed to drive separately from the school bus due to liability issues and to ensure the safety and supervision of our students. All children must ride the school bus. Students who cannot attend a field trip will remain at school in a structured learning environment and will work on a related curriculum. Likewise, students suspended from riding the school bus may be ineligible to participate in field trips. Transportation for these trips is provided by Marion County School District.

Fees for field trips must be submitted by the deadline. Each child must have a completed permission form before leaving. No children can call home for permission slips or forgotten items.

No refunds will be issued for students who become ineligible (i.e., discipline) to attend or cannot attend a field trip due to family illness or family emergencies.

We must have a current phone number for all children attending a field trip.

All children are asked to wear their school uniforms on all field trips for safety accountability.

SCHOOL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

McCormick Elementary students are expected to conduct themselves accordingly so that learning can occur throughout the school day. Behavior that stops teachers from teaching or prevents students from learning is unacceptable. School behavior expectations for common areas and classrooms are developed through our EPIC vision and PBIS model of **TEAM**.

Treat everyone with respect-how we wish to be treated. Be kind, no put-downs, no name-calling.

Exemplify positivity-help others, try to find good in all things.

Act responsibly-follow rules and expectations, make good choices, integrity.

Maintain safety-report things that could hurt you or another Mustang.

CELEBRATING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

Celebrations are held to reward students for their appropriate behavior. Students earn these incentives by meeting PBIS criteria and not receiving office referrals.

School rules are taught and practiced during the 1st week of school, constantly reinforced during the school year, and posted in our hallways as visual reminders for our children. Please review these expectations with your child.

- Respect adults and peers
- Respect personal space
- Allow privacy
- Clean up after yourself
- Stay on task
- Wash your hands
- Bring only materials needed for school to school. Leave toys and other items at home that would distract you from your work.
- Walk in the classrooms, hallways, and sidewalks.
- Speak politely. Maintain appropriate voice level at all times.

When a student refuses to follow school rules or cooperate with the teacher, disciplinary actions may include the following:

Classroom Actions

- Verbal warnings
- Loss of privileges
- Opportunity for a break
- Time out
- Notes home

- Parent contact/Conferences
- Office referrals**

Administrative Actions

- Student conferences
- Guidance referrals
- Parent conferences
- Suspension
- Mediation

**In all cases of office referrals, a written report of the student's misconduct is submitted by the teacher to the assistant principal/principal. School administration will follow the MCSD 2024-25 Code of Conduct (found online www.marion.k12.sc.us). A copy of the school report is sent home with the student for parents to review, sign, and return to school the following day. Parent will also be contacted by phone.

Bullying

Bullying will not be tolerated at McCormick. We take reports of bullying very seriously. Children are encouraged to report bullying incidents to a staff member. Records of all reported incidents are kept on file by our guidance counselor.

DRESS CODE

McCormick Elementary School Uniform Policy

Shirts: Long or short sleeve style polo shirts will be worn. Color is based on grade level.

3rd grade: Black

4th grade: Red

5th grade: Royal Blue

T-shirts (long or short sleeve) worn under the polo must be white or the color of the polo shirt. Shirt tails must be tucked in.

Pants/Capris: Solid khaki color

Skirts/dresses/shorts/skorts: Solid khaki color and no shorter than 4 inches above the knee. If leggings/tights are worn, they must be the color of the polo shirt, black, or white. They may not be worn as pants.

Belts: Belts must be worn within the belts loops if clothing item was manufactured with belt loops.

Shoes/footwear: Closed toe shoes with heels 1 inch or less must be worn. Shoe strings must be tied, straps must be around the back of the heel. No bedroom shoes. No shoes with wheels.

Headwear: Hair bows and ribbons are acceptable headwear for girls. No hats—including hoods—may be worn inside the building, sweatbands, bandanas, picks, doo rags, or sunglasses may not be worn. Picks with metal prongs are not allowed.

Jackets/hoodies: We prefer any jackets or hoodies that are worn inside the building are to be the color of the polo shirt.

ALL students are expected to wear uniforms when on school campus.

STUDENT CELL PHONE USE

We understand the need some students have for cell phones after school. There is no need for cell phones during the school day, and if they are seen or heard, they will be taken and

must be picked up by a parent. Photos, videos, and messaging during school hours are not permitted and are a violation of the district technology agreement.

TOYS AND ELECTRONICS

Collector's cards (i.e., sports, Pokemon), video games, iPods/MP3 players, and other toy-like items are prohibited at school or on the school bus. These items will be confiscated and returned when a parent comes to claim the item.

CONTACT WITH TEACHERS

It is important to build a positive relationship with your child's teacher. Communication is key! Teachers may be contacted by sending a note, email, or calling the school office. Please remember phone calls need to be made before or after school hours to protect instructional time. Please allow 24 hours for faculty/staff to respond.

STUDENT INTERIMS & REPORT CARDS

Interim reports will be issued at the midpoint of each nine weeks via email. Interim conferences will also be scheduled during this time where parents/students can discuss student progress. Report cards will be sent home quarterly via email. The teacher or school office should be notified if a report is not received.

PROMOTION/RETENTION POLICY

Students must achieve passing grades and demonstrate mastery of grade-appropriate S.C. State Standards to be promoted to the next grade. The following shall be considered when determining promotion/retention:

- available standardized or criterion-referenced test results
- documented progress on the academic assistance plan
- teacher judgment
- grades, work samples, parent input
- Grade 3: State Read to Succeed guidelines

Parents will be invited to conferences frequently throughout the school year. It will be discussed at one or more of these conferences if retention is being considered. A letter from the teacher and principal will notify the parent of retention and the appeals process.

The MTSS team will determine if alternatives to the promotion/retention policy are required for each students with a disability. The alternatives will be described in the individual education plan (IEP).

GRADING SCALE

Marion County School District

Grading Scale A-F

100 – 90 A

89 – 80 B

79 – 70 C

69 – 60 D

59 – 0 F

WF

GRADING POLICY

Late Work

- All assigned work must be completed. It will be accepted at no penalty for a full week.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please provide current contact information. We must have a working telephone number to reach a parent or guardian in case of an emergency. Please remember to update student records when phone numbers or addresses change.

TEXTBOOKS/WORKBOOKS/TECHNOLOGY

As a part of the educational program, students are provided the textbooks and workbooks needed at their particular grade level. All students will be issued a laptop. Students are expected to carefully use all books and technology so that wear will be kept at a minimum. If textbooks, workbooks, or laptops are lost or damaged, an assessment fee will be charged. Separate technology guidelines and permission forms will be sent home.

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

Please advise the teacher in writing if there is a change in how your child regularly goes home. Do not email teachers; they do not always check their email throughout the day as they are busy teaching. Call the school if you need to change your child's transportation after the school day begins. If no notification is received, your child will follow his/her regular transportation method.

VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS/PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

You are encouraged to visit our school for observations, conferences, or as a volunteer. As a visitor, you must inform our office personnel of your presence on campus. Visitors must wear a visitor's badge at all times during their visit. Visitors are not permitted on our playgrounds during the school day. Parents and friends are welcome to attend all school functions and programs noted on the school calendar.

Please make an appointment to confer with teachers and administrators. We cannot permit parents or visitors to interrupt a class to speak to the teacher or drop items off. Every minute is valuable learning time!

We invite parents and community residents to assist in the instructional programs by volunteering their time to work in classrooms, the media center, and the office. All visitors must sign in at the front office and receive a visitor or volunteer badge.

SCHOOL LUNCH AND BREAKFAST PROGRAM

The McCormick Elementary cafeteria provides nourishing and well-balanced meals for students, visitors, and staff. While students are encouraged to eat the school lunch provided, they may also bring lunches from home. Glass containers, candy, and sodas are discouraged. Microwaves are not available for student use.

Breakfast is served in the cafeteria from 7:00 to 7:30 each morning.

CELEBRATIONS (BIRTHDAYS OR HOLIDAYS)

All food items for any celebration must be STORE BOUGHT due to the increasing number of students with food allergies. Please do not send party invitations to the school for birthdays for distribution. Please contact your child's teacher if you plan to bring treats. Birthday parties cannot take place during the school day.

HEALTH ROOM SERVICES

McCormick Elementary has a Registered Nurse assigned to the school. She coordinates the school health program and liaises between school personnel, community organizations, and medical resources. We have a well-equipped Health Room staffed by the school nurse. The Health Room is set up to assist students with minor first aid and minor illnesses. The nurse reports students' illnesses to parents and follows the school district policies and the DHEC exclusion policies for South Carolina schools and daycares regarding whether a student should go home due to illness or injury. Students with a temperature of 100° or above will be sent home. Before returning to school, all students must be fever-free for 24 hours without Tylenol, Motrin, etc. In addition, any student who is vomiting will be sent home.

For student safety, we must have your current address, phone number(s), and another emergency number on file. The health room is also where any medication that needs to be taken during the school day is stored. The school nurse/health room assistant is trained to assist students with medication during the school day in accordance with the school district's policy for assisting students with medications.

The school district medication permission form must be completed by a parent/guardian, and the physician's signature is required for all medications taken to school. This includes all medications (over-the-counter and prescription). All medications (prescription and over-the-counter, including cough drops/lozenges) must be in the original pharmacy-labeled container and must be brought in by an adult. Please do not send any medication with students. The parent/guardian must be responsible for informing school personnel of any changes in the medication routine or the student's health status.

TRANSPORTATION

- CAR RIDERS

- ARRIVAL PROCEDURES - All students must come through the car rider line. When exiting the car, students must exit from the right side of the vehicle closest to the school building. The front parking lot will not be used for arrival before 7:40 am.
- DISMISSAL PROCEDURES - All parents must remain in their car during afternoon dismissal. The parking lot will not be used for pick-up. Failure to follow this procedure could result in being placed on school trespass. Students will only be loaded on the right side of the car. ALL CARS MUST HAVE A CAR SIGN visible in the front window with the names of all children being picked up. Cars without signs will be directed to the front parking lot so an adult can enter the front office to sign out their child(ren).

- BUS

- School bus transportation is a privilege that may be withdrawn for inappropriate behavior. We have excellent drivers who work with students before a referral is made to the school's administration for assistance. If discipline problems occur on the bus, the driver will complete a disciplinary report and submit it to the school for appropriate action in accordance with the Marion County School Bus Discipline Code. A copy of the school bus referral will be sent to the parents via the student or mail, and/or the parents may be phoned regarding the incident. If the problem persists, students may be suspended from riding a bus. If your child is suspended from the school bus, you must send a change of transportation note indicating how your child will go home and with whom.

- Rules for Safe Bus Riding

1. PBIS/School rules are enforced on the bus.
2. Board the bus in an orderly manner and remain seated. If seats are assigned, sit in your assigned seat.
3. Remain seated while the bus is in motion.
4. Keep arms, hands, feet, and other body parts inside the bus and to yourself.
5. Do not throw things on the bus or from a bus window. Keep the bus clean and sanitary.
6. Keep books, packages, coats, and other objects in your lap and free from the aisle.
7. Be on time at your designated bus stop. Buses are unable to wait for children.
8. Do not bring onto the bus large objects (i.e., science fair projects) or any other items prohibited by district policy.

(Please note this is a guide, and information is subject to change.)

