**Gracewood Elementary School**

2032 Tobacco Rd

Augusta, Ga 30906

706-796-4969



**“Students soaring through lessons that promote active engagement and increased rigor.”**

**Student Handbook**

**Dr. Renee Perry, Principal**

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**GRACEWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

**Mission Statement:**

Our mission at Gracewood Elementary is to provide students a basis for life-long learning so they may become productive, responsible citizens.

**Beliefs:**

The following principles, beliefs, and convictions are held by the Gracewood staff

1. All students must be stimulated to seek the unknown.
2. Students must be taught to think critically.
3. Students learn by doing.
4. All students can learn and achieve.
5. Students must be motivated to enhance their self-esteem.
6. Students can be encouraged to appreciate their diversity.
7. A safe environment is conducive to learning.
8. Students should be instructed in basic technology.
9. Students can be empowered to know that knowledge is

Powerful.

1. Students must develop decision-making skills for life-long living.

**SCHOOL SCHEDULE**

7:50 - 8:15 Breakfast

8:15 - 3:15 School-wide Instruction

10:15 Lunch Periods Begin

3:15 Student Dismissal



**Transportation**

Please download the SafeStop app for real-time updates on bus location and arrival times. Information regarding the app may be found at: <https://www.rcboe.org/Page/38851>.

**ARRIVAL/ CAR RIDERS**

School begins promptly at 8:15 a.m. Please make every effort to have your child at school by 8:10 so that he/she may prepare to start the day. For those students who ride with parents, **we ask that they arrive at school no earlier than 7:45 a.m.**

* If your child is a car rider and you are late dropping them off after 8:15 a.m., please escort them to the office to sign them in.
* If your child is a car rider and you are late picking them up from the car rider area (after 3:30pm), please report to the office.

**TRAFFIC PROCEDURES**

**BUSES:** All buses will load and unload on the Tobacco Roadside of the School. Cars and other vehicles are not allowed in this area at any time. ***PARENTS AND STUDENTS SHOULD NOT LOAD OR UNLOAD IN THE BUS AREA***.

**TARDINESS**

**\*\*Parents must report to the office to sign a tardy student in.**

Please be aware that when students enter the classroom late, instruction and daily announcements are disrupted. Students must report to their classroom before 8:15 a.m. in order to be unpacked and settled in their desks when the bell rings at 8:15 a.m. Students who are tardy (those who arrive after 8:15 bell) must remain in the foyer. **AGAIN**, **parents must report to the office to sign them in.**

**EARLY DISMISSAL**

Parents must send a written note to school if they are going to pick their child up early unless it is an emergency. Parents also need to send a written note if someone other than the parent is picking up their child from school or if the child is riding home with another student.

**STUDENTS WILL NOT BE DISMISSED FROM THE OFFICE AFTER 2:30 P.M.**

**ABSENCES AND EXCUSES**

Richmond County students are expected to attend school daily. Students should provide the school with a written explanation of any absence.

Students may be excused from school in cases of:

1. *Personal illness;*
2. *Serious illness or death in the immediate family;*
3. *Special and recognized religious holidays observed by their faith;*
4. *Mandated order of government agencies;*
5. *Registration to vote (limited to one day)*
6. *Emergencies which reasonably necessitate absences from school; (approved by Principal)*

All other absences are unexcused. Students shall be afforded the opportunity to make up work when absences are excused. Absences due to short-term suspension (10 days or less) are unexcused and make up work shall not be afforded; however, an opportunity to make up major tests and special projects shall be afforded, provided the suspension is imposed by the school and is not the choice of the student.

Absences shall not penalize student’s grades provided the following conditions are met:

1. ***Absences are justified and validated for excusable reasons;***
2. ***Make up work for excused absences was completed satisfactorily***
3. ***A grade average of 70 or above has been earned in the course work.***

A parental or medical excuse will be required within two school days of return to school; otherwise, the absence will be considered unexcused and make up opportunity will not be afforded. It will be the student’s responsibility to attend to make up work promptly upon return to school and to complete all assignments within a reasonable time. **Only 5 parent notes will be accepted for the year.**

Students who have emergencies necessitating their absence from school for a portion of the school day must have been present for the majority of the school day to be counted present.

**WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENTS**

If you are moving and are withdrawing your child from school, please call or come by the school a few days ***prior*** to the withdrawal date. School staff are expected to have **24 hour notice** to complete withdrawal paperwork. Your cooperation is always appreciated. A withdrawal form will be completed and sent to the child’s next school. Please remember that all school materials and/or fees owed must be taken care of prior to leaving.

**STUDENT DRESS CODE**

Students must adhere to the dress code policy. Students shall not dress, groom, wear or use emblems, insignias, badges, or other symbols where the effect thereof is to distract unreasonably the attention of other students or cause disruption or interference with the operation of the school. Shirts, blouses, and T-shirts must be tucked into the pants, shorts, or skirt.Denim fabric is acceptable but must meet the style and fit requirements. All pants, including jeans, must be of a traditional style without cutouts or holes and without excessive ornamentation. They must be fitted at the waist and not be baggy or oversized and not be frayed at the bottom. Under all circumstances, the attire must conform to the county dress and grooming policy. Shorts and skirts must be no shorter than the width of a dollar bill**. Please refer to the RCBOE Code of Student Conduct and Discipline Handbook.**

**DRESS FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

All students will receive physical education instruction. **Tennis shoes** and shorts or pants should be worn on those days. Shirts and/or sweaters should be long enough to cover the upper body.

**VISITATION PROCEDURES**

We are concerned with school security as well as maximizing instructional time. For these reasons, **it is necessary for all parents and visitors to report to the office upon entering the building.**

Parents or other visitors shall not go directly to a teacher’s classroom or other areas of the school at any time during the school day.

If an appointment has been scheduled with the teacher, a pass will be issued. Please remember to schedule a conference, send a note or leave a message for your child’s teacher if there is a problem. The office staff will be happy to assist you with other situations. No students will be permitted to leave the building with a visitor unless cleared through the office.

**DISCIPLINE**

It is necessary that children learn to develop self-discipline in order to further their learning. We ask that you discuss with your children the importance of and need for good behavior and a positive attitude while at school. We will not tolerate fighting, threats, bullying, disrespect toward others, or obscene language. Students who break the rules continuously will be sent to the office and handled according to the RCSS Code of Conduct. Students who choose to have in their possession any object which may be potentially dangerous to others (ex: knives, bullets, combs with sharp, blade-like points, fireworks, etc) will be subject to suspension. If problems reoccur, parents will be called to come in to help resolve the problem.

**MEDICINES**

All medicines must be in the original container with the name of the child on the medication. If the medication was prescribed by a physician, the pharmacy label must be on the bottle. Many pharmacists will provide additional prescription bottles on request. This will enable you to keep a portion of the medicine at home while sending the needed dosage to school. This procedure will avoid the problems of sending medication home each night.

**Written parental approval is required before the school administration will dispense medication. All notes must include the date (s) on which the medication is to be given. Upon arriving, the medication and the note must first be shown to the classroom teacher, who will then instruct the student to bring it to the office**.

The procedures also apply to students who use inhalants. The inhalants, along with the parent’s note of instruction, must remain in the clinic. If however, it is necessary for the student to keep the inhalant with him/her, we must have these instructions in writing from the doctor.

Please be aware that pain relievers, such as Tylenol, are not provided by the school. These types of medicines must be provided by you in the original container, along with your note of dosage instructions.

**HEALTH**

One of the major objectives of the school is the encouragement and development of good health habits. Please keep your child at home if he or she has symptoms such as a sore throat, nausea, rashes, enlarged glands, fever, running nose, etc.

Immunization and Three-Point Screening

Students entering Georgia public schools for the first time must have a three-point screening as prescribed by state law. This includes a hearing, vision, and dental examination, which may be obtained through the Health Department, or a private physician. The appropriate form DHR Form 3300 (6-75) must be presented as proof of these examinations. Students may be admitted to school without the eye, ear, and dental certificate but must present it within 120 days following entrance to school.

Illnesses

If a student becomes too ill to remain in class, we will reach you by phone to come to school and pick up your child. That is why it is so important that we have an updated, working phone number on the emergency contact card to reach you.

**EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

In case of emergency, each student is required to have on file at the school office the following information:

1. Parent(s) of guardian(s) name
2. Complete and up-to-date address
3. Home phone and parent(s) work phone (connected and working)
4. Emergency phone number of friend or relative (connected and working)
5. Any pertinent medical information
6. Authorized person(s) allowed to pick up a child.

**\*\*\*Please notify the school immediately if changes in the above information are necessary.**

**FIRE, TORNADO AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT DRILLS**

Drills are held periodically to train students and staff in safe procedures when any emergency occurs. Students should follow the rules of the teacher and remain quiet.

**USE OF THE TELEPHONE**

Students may use the telephone in cases of emergencies only.

Please remember to give them instructions before they leave home.

**SCHOOL INSURANCE**

School insurance is available to all students. A packet will be sent home for your review. Purchase of the insurance is optional.

**CARE OF TEXTBOOKS AND LIBRARY BOOKS**

All students are expected to take care of library books and textbooks. Textbooks shall be covered and handled carefully at all times. Students will be required to pay for lost or stolen books. All monies collected are recorded by the school bookkeeper and paid to the proper fund for replacement purposes. If a lost book is found, money paid will be refunded.

Students who withdraw will need to return all textbooks and/or library books to school before clearance can be given.

Library books must be checked out through the Media Center and returned on the proper date. Fees will be charged for lost and/or damaged library books.

**CARE OF SCHOOL AND PERSONAL PROPERTY**

The faculty and staff of Gracewood strive to instill pride in students for respect of school property.

* Students must not mark school furniture, wall, floor or equipment with pen, pencil, or marker on any other instrument.
* Students must not tamper with fire alarms, fire extinguishers, plants, trees, or any electrical system in the school.
* Anyone who willfully destroys school property or creates a hazard to the safety of students will be subject to disciplinary action and replacement cost.
* Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money, radios, cameras or other personal items to school. If a student wears glasses or a watch, we ask that the student take responsibility for the care of these items. Students should not leave money or other valuables in the desks.

**EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING**

When inclement weather occurs, district administrators will decide early if schools will open. This decision will be broadcast on radio and television. The Richmond County School System will also utilize *Global Connect*, a telephone calling system, to notify parents on important issues such as school closings. Please listen for reports such as these to avoid tying up the phone lines at school.

**FIELD TRIPS**

When a field trip is to be taken, your child will bring home a permission form giving the destination, date, and times. This form **MUST** be returned with parent/guardian signature before your child will be allowed to go on the trip. While all field trips are a support to our instructional program, students that miss the trip will be given appropriate assignments.

**GRADES**

Student’s grades will be based on daily classroom participation, projects, process tests (usually on a weekly basis), summative exams and homework. Teachers will send home papers every **Tuesday**. Parents who have questions regarding grades and/or the grading procedure should contact the child’s teacher. Parents are also encouraged to sign up for the RCSS parent portal that gives 24 hr access to your students’ grades.

**Promotion Requirements**

Promotion requirements can be found on the RCBOE website

**https://www.rcboe.org/domain/112**

***HOMEWORK TIPS***

1. *Make homework a top priority.*
2. *Provide necessary supplies.*
3. *Set a daily homework time.*
4. *Provide praise when your child shows responsibility for his/her homework.*
5. *Don’t do the homework for your child but give support when needed.*

**REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are sent home once during the first semester and once during the second semester. Parents are to sign and return the outer envelope. Papers are sent home weekly for your review. In addition to this, a progress report will be sent home twice the first semester and twice during the second semester.

**PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent-teacher conferences will be held once during each semester. Teachers are available to meet with parents on a continuing basis throughout the year. Teachers, parents, or the principal may initiate conferences. Parents are asked to contact the teacher or to call the school office to schedule conferences.

**P.T.O. (PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION)**

The Gracewood Elementary Parent Teacher Organization is an integral part of the total school program. We urge all parentsto become involved by participating in established meetings and special school functions which support our children.

The P.T.O. is an organized body of parents, teachers and staff working together to provide a common bond which strengthens home and school. Various activities are initiated which allow for positive interaction among parents, students, staff and community.

**GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAM**

The guidance counselor is available to students to help them develop their educational, social, career and personal strengths and become responsible and productive citizens. Intervention may be provided through:

**Classroom Guidance:** Large group instruction in the classroom focusing on the general needs, interests, concerns and behaviors of all students.

**Small Group Counseling:** Two or more students working with a counselor discussing a specific area of concern to develop positive relationships, solve problems and work toward goals, Parental permission is required.

**Individual Counseling:** Personal and private interaction between a counselor and a student in which they work together on a personal or academic concern. Parents will be notified if the concern affects the safety of the student or others. Parental permission is required for individual counseling.

**TESTING PROGRAM**

Each school year, standardized tests are given at specified grade levels. Parents will be notified when students are scheduled to take one of these tests. A copy of test scores will be sent home, and parents will be offered an opportunity to schedule a conference for discussion of test results.

**TRANSPORTATION EXPECTATIONS**

**Students who are to leave school by means other than their normal transportation must have a note from parents stating the specific date and means of transportation**. Students will not be able to ride another bus without a note from the parents. This note must be turned into the office for administrative approval. If parents request a change in bus transportation exceeding five days, approval must be received from the Director of Transportation.

Students will not be allowed to make transportation arrangements by phone. Please make transportation arrangements prior to your child coming to school. Be reminded that a note to the teacher is required for all transportation exceptions. Please phone the school to make transportation exceptions only in *emergency situations*.

**OUTSIDE FOOD**

Parents will not be able to bring cupcakes or any other party food to classes this year. We are adhering to safety guidelines established by the CDC.