

# **Student Handbook 2026-2027**



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Medina, TN 38355**

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**District Website: [gcssd.org](http://gcssd.org)**

**School Website: [gcssd.org/o/sgces](http://gcssd.org/o/sgces)**

**Find us on Facebook: [facebook.com/SGCESHornets](https://facebook.com/SGCESHornets)**

**Giving our children a strong foundation of  
knowledge so they can achieve their future goals.**

If you would like to have a paper copy of our handbook, please see the front office.

# South Gibson County Elementary School

## **Welcome**

We are so glad you are here! At SGCES, we believe every student is important and capable of achieving great things. Our goal is to create a safe, caring, and positive environment where everyone feels valued and encouraged to learn and grow. We are united as students, staff, and community, working together to support one another and build strong relationships.

Each day, we begin with our shared phrase, *"Today I will grow a love for learning,"* as a reminder of the goals we have for ourselves and each other. We strive to make responsible choices, show respect, and take pride in all that we do.

## **Board of Education**

Tom Lannom – Chairman, Email: [lannomt@gcssd.org](mailto:lannomt@gcssd.org)

Eddie Watkins – Email: [watkinse@gcssd.org](mailto:watkinse@gcssd.org)

Scott Ball – Email: [balls@gcssd.org](mailto:balls@gcssd.org)

Treva Maitland – Email: [maitlandt@gcssd.org](mailto:maitlandt@gcssd.org)

John Campbell II – Email: [campbellj2@gcssd.org](mailto:campbellj2@gcssd.org)

Benny Boals – Email: [boalsb@gcssd.org](mailto:boalsb@gcssd.org)

Richard Addo – Email: [addor@gcssd.org](mailto:addor@gcssd.org)

## **School Administration**

Margaret DeLoach, Principal – Email: [Deloachm@gcssd.org](mailto:Deloachm@gcssd.org)

Callie Craig, Assistant Principal – Email: [Craigc@gcssd.org](mailto:Craigc@gcssd.org)

Jamie Hodges, Assistant Principal – Email: [jhodges@gcssd.org](mailto:jhodges@gcssd.org)

## **Future Changes**

Although every effort will be made to update the handbook on a regular basis, South Gibson County Elementary School reserves the right to change this handbook and any content within, without notice, except as may be required by state and federal law. As a result, the online version of the handbook shall be the official version.

**Gibson County Special School District  
2026-2027 School Year  
Student Calendar**

August 3 (Monday)	Students dismissed at 11:30 - No Lunch	1st Term Begins
September 7 (Monday)	NO SCHOOL	Labor Day Holiday
September 14-18 (Monday - Friday) Grades 1-4		Parent-Teacher Conference Week for Grades 1-4
October 19-23 Kindergarten ONLY		Parent-Teacher Conference Week for Kindergarten
October 5-9 (Monday-Friday)	NO SCHOOL	Fall Break
November 25- 27 (Wednesday-Friday)	NO SCHOOL	Thanksgiving Holidays
December 18 (Friday)	Students dismissed at 11:30 - No Lunch	1st Term Ends
December 21 - January 4	NO SCHOOL	Christmas Holidays
January 5 (Tuesday)		2nd Term Begins
January 18 (Monday)	NO SCHOOL	Martin Luther King Day
February 8-12 (Monday - Friday)		Parent-Teacher Conference Week
February 15 (Monday)	NO SCHOOL	President's Day
March 26 (Friday)	NO SCHOOL	Good Friday
March 29-April 2 (Monday- Friday)	NO SCHOOL	Spring Break
May 7 (Friday)	NO SCHOOL	Strawberry Festival
May 21 (Tuesday)	Students dismissed at 11:30 - No Lunch	2nd Term Ends

**PLEASE NOTE:** The GCSSD Board of Trustees has 6 days built-in this schedule to allow for inclement weather; after that time, we are required to make up those days.

The following days have been scheduled, if needed:  
7<sup>th</sup> day missed – Martin Luther King Day - January 18  
8<sup>th</sup> day missed – President’s Day – February 15  
9<sup>th</sup> day missed – Spring Break – March 26  
10<sup>th</sup> day missed – Spring Break – April 2  
11<sup>th</sup> day missed – May 24

## ACADEMICS

Progress reports will be sent home at the end of each 4 ½ weeks. Report cards for K-2 will be sent home at the end of each 9 weeks. Report cards for grades 3-4 will be found online using Parent Portal. Mastery will be determined from daily work, homework, written assignments, projects, and/or tests. Parents will receive a weekly folder with student work. The folder must be signed and returned the next day.

### Grading Scale:

Pre-K - 2nd Grade: An informational report will be sent home, reflecting student progress on standards and concepts covered each nine weeks.

3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Grading Scale: A 100-90 B 89-80 C 79-70 D 69-60 F Below 59

## SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Gibson County Special School District policy states: "Attendance is a key factor in student achievement and therefore, students are expected to be present each day school is in session. Absences shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the principal or his/her designee. Excused absences shall include personal illness, illness of immediate family member, death in the family, extreme weather conditions, religious observances, or circumstances which in the judgment of the principal create emergencies over which the student has no control."

Parents will receive an automated call from our district once a student has been marked absent or tardy for the school day. When the student returns to school, he/she is required to bring a note to the office explaining the absence.

The following notes will be used to excuse student absences: Maximum of **FIVE** parent notes per year, doctor's notes, and/or notes from the funeral home. A dentist's note will not be accepted for an entire day unless there is extensive work done. In that case, the note must state the extent of the work.

### **Tardiness**

Students must be present at least 50% of the school day to be counted present. School begins promptly at 7:45 a.m. **Students must be in the classroom by 7:45 a.m., or they will be considered tardy.** Tardiness is considered a form of truancy. Every 3<sup>rd</sup> tardy will equal ONE unexcused absence from school and count towards the FIVE unexcused absences allowed per year.

### **Truancy**

Parents or guardians of students accumulating three unexcused absences will be contacted by the administration. Students with five unexcused absences will be contacted by district personnel and reported to the truancy board.

### **Attendance Incentive Program**

To award those students who are here every day, SGCES implements a Perfect Attendance Award. A student must not be absent or tardy for any reason to receive an award. This includes being late for school or leaving before school is dismissed. This is given at the grade level Awards day in May.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

To ensure that students have a proper learning environment, it is necessary to have rules. These rules must be simple, clearly defined, and understood by all students, parents, and staff. School rules will help to encourage the type of student behavior which is required to have a positive learning environment. When a student violates one of these rules, appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken. Disruptive behavior takes away from instructional time and infringes upon the rights of others. Rules will be enforced by all staff and will be handled in a fair and consistent manner. *Video cameras may be operating in the school for the protection of all students.*

### **Student Discrimination/Harassment and Bullying/Intimidation and Cyberbullying**

Please refer to Gibson County Special School District Board Policy 6.304 [Click Here](#)

### **Dress Code**

Students are expected to dress appropriately and maintain an appearance that is not distracting to teachers or other students. When a student's appearance disrupts the learning environment, parents may be contacted to bring other clothing. Clothing and accessories that are suggestive or offensive will not be allowed.

**The following items are prohibited:** Backless tops, tops with spaghetti straps, shirts with language or pictures that promote drugs, violence, alcohol, or tobacco. Shirts must cover the midriff area. Hats, caps, and visors are not to be worn except on field trips, field days, or other specially designated days. Tennis shoes must be worn on the days the student has P.E. In the pre-k through 4<sup>th</sup> grade setting, age-appropriate dress is looked at on a grade-by-grade basis. In all cases, the school reserves the right to determine if an item of dress is a disruptive influence or inappropriate school attire.

### **Drugs/Weapons**

Disorderly conduct, the illegal possession of weapons, and the illegal use, possession, distribution, and sale of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs by students is prohibited. Possession and/or use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products by a minor is in violation of state law. Students possessing and/or using such items will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Interrogation and Searches**

Students may be questioned by teachers or principals about any matter pertaining to the operation of a school and/or enforcement of its rules.

### **No Trespassing Rule**

There will be no trespassing onto the school premises before or after school hours or during the times that school is not in session unless involved in some type of school function.

### **Unacceptable Items:**

1. Cell phones or other electronic devices that can cause distraction.
2. Drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products.
3. Gang related items (rags, bandanas, etc.)
4. Weapons or any item that could cause physical harm.
5. Medication or pills
6. Toys, games, and/or trading cards of any type that is disruptive to learning.

### **Electronic Devices:**

Electronic devices are only permitted to be used at the discretion of the teacher and/or administrator for instructional purposes. In permitting the possession of such devices, the district, the school site, its administration and employees assume no liability for the loss or damage of the device or its misuse by another person.

### **Bus Conduct**

Buses are provided as a convenience for our students. All students must show respect for others while on the bus. Any problems should be reported to the bus driver. Failure to obey the driver and the

rules of bus conduct will result in disciplinary action, including suspension from the bus. A student may be denied the privilege of riding the bus if the principal determines that his/her behavior is such to cause disruption on the bus, or if he/she disobeys state or local rules and regulations pertaining to student transportation. Each student and guardian will be required to read and sign the GCSSD Bus Guidelines.

***Fighting, drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, disrespect for the driver, or profanity will not be tolerated. There will be no warnings for these offenses. Video cameras are placed on buses for the protection of all students. Tapes may be used to enforce the rules of bus conduct.***

Any student wishing to ride a bus other than their designated bus must have written parental permission and the approval of the principal or their designee.

Visit <https://www.gcssd.org/page/transportation> for complaint form, guidelines for students, and bus routes.

The GCSSD Transportation Handbook is on the following 3 pages.

# GCSSD TRANSPORTATION

## COMPLAINT PROCESS

The following procedure will govern how students, teachers, staff, and community members shall submit bus safety complaints:

1. All complaints shall be submitted to the Transportation Supervisor; and
2. Forms may be submitted in person, via phone, mail, or email.
  - a. Written complaints shall be submitted on forms located on the district's website. In the case of a complaint received via phone, the person receiving the phone call shall be responsible for filling out the form and submitting it to the Transportation Supervisor.

The Transportation Supervisor shall begin an investigation of all bus safety complaints within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt.

Within forty-eight (48) hours of receipt of the initial complaint, the Transportation Supervisor shall submit a preliminary report to the Director of Schools. This report shall include:

1. The time and date the complaint was received;
2. The name of the bus driver;
3. A copy or summary of the complaint; and
4. Any prior complaints or disciplinary actions taken against the driver.

Within sixty (60) school days of receiving the initial complaint, the Transportation Supervisor shall submit a final written report to the Director of Schools that details the investigation's findings as well as the action taken in response to the complaint.

# GCSSD TRANSPORTATION

## STUDENT GUIDELINES FOR RIDING A SCHOOL BUS:

- There will be no profanity used on the bus at any time for any reason.
- Get seated as quickly as possible. Sit on your bottom facing the front at all times. Do not have your legs in the aisle or be turned around looking over the back of the seat.
- Do not be out of your seat while the bus is moving. Wait until the bus stops before going to the front to exit. Exit as quickly as possible.
- Keep your hands to yourself. Absolutely no horseplay or bullying will be tolerated.
- Do not get things out of your backpack. Pencils, paper, toys, etc. can wait until you get home.
- No eating or drinking on the bus. This is a state law! Buses can be taken off line due to food and candy being on the floor (it attracts insects). Your drivers should not have to continue to scrape food and candy off the floor.
- Keep the noise level to a minimum. You may talk to the person riding beside you, but do not yell at someone sitting far away from you. Screams and loud noises are very distracting to the driver.
- Do not put anything out of the window. Keep your head and arms in the bus and do not throw anything out of a window.
- If you need to talk to the bus driver for a non-emergency, try to wait until the bus has stopped. If it is a serious matter, then get the attention of the bus driver as quickly as you can.
- Keep trash picked up and help the driver keep a clean bus. Take ownership of the bus you ride; it is your bus. If you see trash on the floor, pick it up on your way off and throw it away. Your driver will appreciate this very much.
- Follow the instructions of the driver at all times.
- Failure to follow these rules will result in the loss of the privilege to ride the bus.

# GCSSD TRANSPORTATION

## 5 IMPORTANT SCHOOL BUS SAFETY TIPS

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**1** ALWAYS BE EARLY TO THE BUS STOP, AND STAND IN A SAFE SPOT WHERE THE DRIVER CAN SEE YOU
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**2** ALWAYS SIT IN YOUR SEATS, AISLES CLEAR, HANDS AND HEAD INSIDE THE BUS
- 

**3** NEVER CROSS THE STREET WITHOUT THE BUS DRIVERS GO AHEAD. ALWAYS LOOK LEFT & RIGHT BEFORE CROSSING
- 

**4** BEWARE OF THE DANGER ZONE! ALWAYS STAY 10 FT IN FRONT OF THE BUS, NEVER GO BEHIND THE BUS
- 

**5** USE EMERGENCY EXITS CALMLY, LEAVE IN AN ORDERLY MANNER, FOLLOW DRIVERS INSTRUCTIONS

## SOUTH GIBSON COUNTY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CONDUCT PLAN

Hornet Values are at the core of everything we do at SGCES. They shape our rules and expectations. We recite the Hornet Values as a school each morning during our morning announcements.

**Hornet Ticket**

**Honest**

**Owning it**

**Respectful**

**Nurturing**

**Encouraging**

**Team Player**

**Successful**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_



**STUDENT OF THE MONTH**

South Gibson County Elementary School recognizes

\_\_\_\_\_ as student of the month for displaying the values of a HORNET!

**H**onest \_\_\_\_\_

**O**wning it *Margaret DeFouch*

**R**espectful \_\_\_\_\_ Principal

**N**urturing \_\_\_\_\_

**E**ncouraging \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher

**T**eam Players \_\_\_\_\_

**S**uccessful \_\_\_\_\_ Date

### Student of the Month

Our Student of the Month program is based on the Hornet Values. Each month focuses on a specific value (such as Honesty in September and Owning It in October).

- One student from each class is selected who best demonstrates that month's value.
- Students receive a certificate recognizing their achievement.
- They are celebrated on our school Facebook page.
- Each honoree also participates in a special celebration with our school counselor.

### Hornet Tickets

Students who demonstrate our values are recognized throughout each week by staff on a 'Hornet Ticket'. The ticket is placed in a grade bin and two tickets are selected at the end of the week. Those students are recognized during morning announcements and come to the office to receive a treat and have their picture posted on our school Facebook page.

### Classroom Management Plan

Each student will follow a classroom management plan designed by the classroom teacher. Students are expected to maintain appropriate behavior in all areas of the school including classrooms, hallways, playground, gym, cafeteria, and restrooms. The following are examples of general offenses and possible consequences that will be observed school wide.

<p><u>Minor offenses</u> will be handled on case-by-case basis by the classroom teacher (see Board Policy 6.313).</p> <p>Examples: rude to a classmate, refusal to do assignments, classroom disturbances</p>	<p><u>Major offenses</u> will be referred to the office per teacher's discretion.</p> <p>Examples: repeated minor offenses, fighting, use of profanity, disrespect, stealing, lying, cheating, destruction of property</p>	<p><u>Possible consequences may include, but not limited to:</u></p> <p>Parent notification                  Conference with student                  Student reflection sheet                  Isolated/silent lunch                  Afterschool detention                  Referral to counselor                  In-school suspension, alternative placement                  Out-of-school suspension</p>
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### Cafeteria Rules

Our cafeteria follows clear rules and expectations to ensure the safety and well-being of all students. The rules are as follows: Stay seated at your own table, eat your own food, raise your hand to ask for help, talk quietly, clean your area, walk, line up quickly and quietly.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

### **School Counseling**

Students and parents are encouraged to visit with the counselor for personal guidance. The counselor is available to discuss any home, school, or social concerns.

### **Special Education**

Students shall have access to a free, appropriate, public education for all disabled children ages 3-21. All children with disabilities living within the school system have available to them a free, appropriate, public education which emphasizes special education and related services to meet their unique needs. The rights of disabled children and their parents are protected.

### **Homeless Students**

Students meeting the definition of homelessness may be eligible for additional educational services. Information may be obtained from the local school office. Reference GCSSD policy 6.503 - [Click Here](#)

### **Student Rights and Services**

Parents and/or Guardians may receive information pertaining to contacting child advocacy groups and information on how to contact the state department of education for information on student rights and services by contacting:

Chasity Reasons, Supervisor of Special Education-GCSSD  
reasonsc@gcssd.org  
P.O. Box 60, Dyer, TN 38330

### **Residency and Child Custody**

Gibson County Special School District is under a U. S. Department of Justice ruling that requires all parents/guardians to provide two proofs of residency for all students who attend our school. This proof must be provided upon registration. Proofs of residency must show a physical address NOT a P. O. Box, must be current (within 30 days), and in the names of the legal parent/guardian. Acceptable forms of proof are copies of mortgage/loan/lease agreements and utility bills (water, gas, electric, cable). We must have this information on file each year for all students enrolled in PreK-4<sup>th</sup> grade. If the student or family resided with another family, all parties are required to sign a copy of our Fraudulent Enrollment policy (TCA # 49-6-3003). This policy states that if you are found not to be living at the provided address, the family member will be financially responsible to the district. This policy must be signed in the presence of a GCSSD employee.

Please be advised that all students are subject to address checks at any point throughout the school year. Anyone found to be falsifying information will be asked to leave and enroll in the school for which they are zoned.

For the safety of our students, we ask that you provide a copy of the complete Parenting Agreement/Plan, Orders of Protection, and/or Power of Attorney, if applicable. All copies must have signatures. You do not have to provide any information that you feel is personal (child support payments, reason for divorce). This request follows [Gibson County School District Policy 6.209](#). A child will only be released to a custodial parent/guardian, or those listed on the student's emergency contact list.

### **Majority to Minority Transfer Policy**

The GCSSD shall permit students from other school districts to transfer to the GCSSD if the race of the student who plans to transfer is in the minority at the GCSSD school to which he/she applies for transfer. Non-resident students may be accepted in a specific school on a space available basis in accordance to EIA class size standards with less 10% of total capacity for that grade level. When accepted at a specific school, enrollment will be for that school year only. Brothers and sisters will be given priority for enrollment.

## Dismissal Changes

Messages for students about a change in dismissal must be called into the office before 2:00 p.m. Parents may write a note in the planner to inform the teacher of a change in dismissal rather than calling the school office. Changes will not be accepted based solely on a student informing the teacher.

## Student Money

All money sent to school (Examples: fund raiser, PTO, lunch, pictures) must be sent in a sealed envelope labeled with student's name, amount, and teacher's name. Teachers are not allowed to open the envelope to give change. Please be sure to send the correct amount.

## CAFETERIA

Lunch prices will be posted on the school website and on the monthly school menu.

**Regular Prices: Breakfast \$1.25 Lunch \$2.50 Guest Lunch: \$5.00**

**Reduced Prices: Breakfast \$0.30 Lunch \$0.40**

Students in grades K-4 will bring their lunch money in an envelope labeled with their first and last name and their teacher's name. It will be collected by their homeroom teacher. Parents can also pay for lunch online using [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com).

Parents, family, and friends of our students, who are listed in PowerSchool by the custodial parent, are welcome to eat lunch at any time, unless there is a special occasion.

Applications for free and reduced-price lunches are available online at [gcssd.org](http://gcssd.org). The form must be completed correctly and submitted online. [Click Here](#)

## **GIBSON COUNTY SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL MEAL CHARGE POLICY (Effective July 1, 2017)**

### **I. Purpose**

The Gibson County Special School District recognizes that healthy, nutritious meals play an important role in student readiness and their ability to learn. The purpose of this policy is to ensure compliance with federal reporting requirements for the USDA Child Nutrition Program, and to establish procedures for methods of payment, charge availability, and collection methods. The provisions of this policy are in place for children participating at the reduced price or at the paid meal price rate for school breakfast and lunch who either do not have money in their account or in hand to cover the cost of the meal at the time of service. This policy is set to establish the following goals:

- To ensure that all students receive a nutritious meal every day.
- To establish a consistent and fair practice across the district regarding meal charges and collection of charges.
- To support positive and clear communication among staff, administrators, teachers, students, and parent/guardians.
- To encourage the parent(s)/guardian(s) to assume the responsibility of payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student.

Families will have access to the school meal charge policy via the district website at [www.gcssd.org](http://www.gcssd.org). In addition, the policy will be available as part of the online student registration information to insure all students, including transfer students, have access upon enrollment.

### **II. Student Accounts / Charge Limits**

Any student whose school meal account has a zero or negative balance will be allowed to charge a reimbursable meal. To qualify as a reimbursable lunch, the meal must consist of at least (3) of the (5) offered meal components (grain, meat/meat alternate, fruit, vegetable, and milk) with one of the 3 being a ½ cup fruit or vegetable. Under no circumstances will a student with a zero or

negative account balance be allowed to purchase a second meal or any a la carte items until the student's account is in good standing.

- **For Students with FREE School Meal Status** – Free status students will be allowed to receive one free breakfast and one free lunch every day meals are offered. Students are required to take all food components necessary to constitute a reimbursable meal. Items sold on an a la carte basis are not part of the USDA program and must be purchased with cash on hand or money on the child's meal account. A la carte items cannot be charged.
- **For Students with REDUCED School Meal Status** – Reduced status students will be allowed to receive one breakfast for \$0.30 and one lunch for \$0.40 every day meals are offered. Students are required to take all food components necessary to constitute a reimbursable meal. Students with a reduced-price meal status will be allowed to charge meals up to -\$4.00. When a child's account reaches the -\$4.00 charge limit, he/she will no longer be able to charge until their account returns below the -\$4.00 limit.
- **For Students with PAID School Meal Status** – Paid status students will be required to prepay or pay cash/check at the register for all meals and/or a la carte purchases. No a la carte or snack items can be charged to an account with insufficient funds, even if the child offers to pay in cash at the register. Students with a paid price meal status will be allowed to charge meals up to -\$25.00.

### **III. Household Notifications / Payment Methods**

Each school cafeteria manager will closely monitor student meal accounts with the goal of eliminating negative balances and delinquent accounts. Once a student's account falls below \$3.00, the cashier will inform the student that he/she will need to add funds to their account to avoid reaching a negative balance. When a child's account reaches below zero, the school cafeteria manager will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) either by letter, phone, or email to inform them of their child's negative balance. These notifications will be sent home weekly or until the account balance is in good standing. Parents are strongly encouraged to utilize the school district online meal payment system to register their child's meal account at [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com) which gives them access to:

- Request e-mail alerts to receive low balance notifications
- Make payments to their child's meal account
- Set up automatic deposits into their child's meal account
- View student transaction history of all meal purchases and deposits

### **IV. Debt Collection Process**

When the charge balance reaches the limits set above, the school administration or cafeteria manager will contact the parent/guardian by phone or email to request immediate payment. If the parent/guardian has not made any payments to reduce the negative balance or fails to bring the student's account in good standing within (30) days, the administration may:

- Refer the account to a collection agency
- Initiate a claim in the court system
- Notify other appropriate state agencies

Each household may request a repayment plan that will include payment levels and due dates appropriate to a household's particular circumstances. To establish a repayment plan, you may contact Erica Durall, School Nutrition Director, at (731) 692-3803 or email her at [duralle@gcssd.org](mailto:duralle@gcssd.org). ALL accounts must be "paid in full" and in good standing by the last day of the school year. If a senior's account is not in good standing as of May 15<sup>th</sup>, the administration may prohibit the student from participating in senior activities and/or graduation exercises. Delinquent debts that are deemed uncollectable due to unforeseen circumstances will be

determined as bad debt effective June 30<sup>th</sup> of each school year. Funds from the school district's general fund will be obtained to restore the unallowable bad debt to the School Nutrition Department account.

#### **V. Refunds**

A parent/guardian may request a refund on money remaining on a child's account due to the child withdrawing from the school district, graduating, or if the child's meal status changes to benefit the household. To receive a refund, the parent/guardian must submit the request in writing via email to the school cafeteria manager or contact Erica Durall at (731) 692-3803 or [duralle@gcssd.org](mailto:duralle@gcssd.org). Also, if a parent has a graduating senior with a remaining balance, that child's balance may be transferred to a younger siblings account upon request.

#### **VI. Free/Reduced Meal Application for Households**

Meal application forms may be completed and submitted online at [www.gcssd.org](http://www.gcssd.org). Once you are on the school district website, click the following tabs to locate the application: "For Parents", "Cafeteria", "Free/Reduced Meal Application" "Apply Online" and you are ready to begin! Feel free to contact Erica Durall at (731) 692-3803 for assistance with applying. [Click Here](#)

#### **Emergency Drills**

During any emergency drill (fire, tornado, earthquake, or code red), students should follow the directions of the classroom teacher and respond in an appropriate manner.

#### **Early Dismissal**

Students who become ill or injured while at school shall be dismissed from school only after parents or guardians have been notified by the school nurse. Exceptions to this policy shall be made only in case of an emergency. Students shall be dismissed during regular school hours only when a parent or guardian calls, submits a written explanation, or appears in person requesting the student's dismissal. Students shall not leave school premises during school hours without permission from the principal or his/her designee. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action. All students must be checked out from the office. Students needing to leave early must be picked up no later than 2:25 p.m. to ensure a smooth dismissal. A valid ID is required for all student check-outs.

#### **Visitors & Lunch Visitors**

All visitors, including parents and guardians, must report to the school office upon arrival. Visitors are not allowed to go directly to classrooms under any circumstances. Entry into classrooms requires prior approval from administration and proper check-in procedures.

All Visitors must:

- Present a valid ID
- Sign in at the front office
- Always obtain and wear a visitor badge/sticker while on campus

#### **Lunch Visitors**

Lunch visitors are welcome but must sign a lunch visitor agreement the first time they come to eat. The lunch

visitor agreement is as follows:

As a lunch visitor at our school, you will abide by the following rules in our cafeteria:

1. Wait for your child on the benches located just outside of the office.
2. For the privacy of all students, taking pictures is prohibited.
3. Only sit with your child. No other students may sit with you.
4. Do not use student bathrooms located in the hallway. There is a visitor bathroom in the office for your use.
5. After lunch, your student will line up to go with their class. Parents are not permitted to enter grade-level hallways.
6. We are a nut-free school. No food items containing nuts should be brought into the cafeteria.

### **Other Visitors (Volunteers, PTO, etc.)**

Visitors coming for other school-related purposes (such as PTO or volunteering) must:

- Enter through the front office
- Present a valid ID
- Sign in and receive a visitor badge/sticker

### **Traffic and Parking**

During both the morning drop off time and the afternoon pick up time, parents in personal vehicles are to never pass either side of a bus that is loading or unloading students and displaying the stop sign with red flashers. If you need to enter the school during arrival or dismissal, please park in the front parking lot. The bus lane must stay clear during this time for buses to safely enter and exit. Please use extreme caution when arriving and departing the school parking area. Arrive promptly to avoid congestion and avoid being tardy. We want to ensure the safety of all students, faculty, and staff.

### **Home and School Communication and Involvement**

At SGCES, we are committed to keeping the lines of communication open and clear. We are proud of our parental involvement and efforts to make SGCES the great school it is. Parents are welcome to participate in their child's education in the following ways:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Open House</li><li>* Camp Kindergarten</li><li>* Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)</li><li>* Parent-Teacher Conferences</li><li>* Teacher Communication (Remind, Dojo, Group Me, Facebook, etc.)</li><li>* Agenda/Planner communication</li><li>* Weekly Folders</li><li>* Report Cards/Progress reports</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SGCES Lost and Found Page</li><li>• SGCES Facebook Page</li><li>• SGCES Website/GCSSD Website</li><li>• Collect Box Tops for Education</li><li>• Monthly Calendar/Menu</li><li>• Special Programs (Science Fair, Awards Days, Music Programs)</li><li>• Field Trips</li><li>• Volunteer – Book Fair, Trunk-or-Treat, etc.</li></ul>
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### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

It is the policy of the Gibson County Special School District not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, age, or disability in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by Title VI and Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the Equal Pay Act of 1973, Title IX of the 1972

Educational Amendments, Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX, Section 504, or the Americans Disabilities Act should be directed to the Gibson County School District, P.O. Box 60, Dyer, TN 38330.

### **Birthday Parties**

Classroom birthday celebrations are for students in the class only and are not open to visitors. If you would like to send a treat, please contact your child's teacher in advance to make arrangements. All items sent must follow our school's nut-free policy, including checking labels for any "may contain" ingredients.

**Our school is Nut-Free (NO NUT PRODUCTS ARE ALLOWED.)** Due to many severe and potentially life-threatening food allergies, we have implemented the following safety rule: For all class parties (including birthdays): Only pre-packaged, purchased items will be allowed. No bakery cupcakes or cookies, homemade goodies or food will be permitted in the classrooms. There is a list of "safe" foods below and located on our school website.



## **SGCES is a NUT-FREE School!**

**Due to many of our students having severe nut allergies, we do not allow any items containing nuts in our building.**

**Important Reminder - Always check packaging labels! When choosing a nut free snack for your child, it is important to always check the label on the package. Avoid items that say "May contain peanuts or tree nuts", "Processed in a facility that also processes peanuts", or "May contain traces of peanuts or tree nuts."**

### **Nut-Free Snack Ideas**

Apple Sauce  
String Cheese individually wrapped  
GoGurt  
Jello Pudding Cups  
Cheez Its, Wheat Thins by Nabisco, Triscuits by Nabisco, Nabisco Honey Maid  
Graham Crackers, Nabisco Ritz Crackers  
Goldfish (all flavors)  
Nabisco Barnum's Animal Crackers, Nabisco Chips Ahoy, Nabisco Teddy  
Grahams, Nabisco Nilla Wafers, Nabisco Oreo Cookies  
Kellogg's Rice Krispie Treats individually wrapped  
Hostess Cupcakes individually wrapped, Hostess Powdered Donuts  
SkinnyPop, Frito-Lay Doritos, Sun Chips, Funyuns, Cheetos, Cheeto Puffs, Lays,  
Ruffles, Pretzels  
Fruit Snacks, Fruit Roll-Ups, Gushers

**Students are always welcome to celebrate their birthday with their class!  
No bakery items are allowed - this includes donuts, bakery cupcakes,  
bakery cookies, etc. Individually wrapped Hostess Cupcakes are welcome!**

### **NURSING OFFICE**

The school nurse is available during school hours to assess students who have become ill or injured at school. The nurse will determine whether the student stays at school or if they must go home. This is for their safety and the well-being of their classmates.

### **Reasons the Nurse Will Call a Parent During the School Day:**

- Temperature of 100.0
- Diarrhea of 2 or more loose, watery stools without laxative usage
- Witnessed vomiting (not related to a single event such as gagging, positioning, mucous, running after eating or eating spicy foods)
- Soiled clothing when suitable replacements are not available
- Suspicious unidentified rash
- Severe and relentless itching which disrupts the classroom
- Uncontrolled coughing
- Injury which might require further evaluation or treatment
- Signs and symptoms of a communicable disease such as: scabies, staph infection, ringworm, pink eye, chicken pox, etc. If confirmed, the student **must** begin treatment and be seen by the nurse **before** being allowed back to class.
- Active head lice infestation –Proof of treatment and a recheck must be performed on the day of return
- Any unusual change that is out of character for that child (increased irritability, lethargy, acute pain, etc.)

**\*All students must be diarrhea, vomit and/or fever free for 24 hours without the aid of medication before returning to school.**

### **For Prescription Medication That Is Required During School Hours:**

- The medication must be brought in by the parent or guardian, not the student. It must be in the original bottle or box with the pharmacy label attached.
- An Authorization Form must be filled out completely AND signed by the parent AND the doctor. This form can be found on our school website.
- Any change in dosage must have a new Authorization Form submitted AND signed, again, by the doctor.
- It is the parent's responsibility to obtain and submit the Authorization Form to the nurse.
- All medication **must** be picked up by the end of the school year, or it will be disposed of according to Tennessee State Law.

### **For Non-Prescription Medication That Is Required During School Hours:**

- The medication (Acetaminophen, Ibuprofen, Cough Drops, Cold Medicine, Ointments, etc) must be brought in by the parent or guardian, not the student. It must be in **the original, unopened container**.
- An Authorization Form must be filled out completely and signed by the parent. No doctor's signature is required.
- All medication **must** be picked up by the end of the school year, or it will be disposed of according to Tennessee State Law.
- Medication Authorization Forms are available in the front office, nurse's office, and on the school website.

### **Mandatory Immunizations:**

- According to Tennessee State Law, specific immunizations are **required** for children entering pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and any children in other grades enrolling in a Tennessee school for the first time. These must be recorded on the official **Tennessee Certificate of Immunization**, and it must be signed by the health care provider.
- For a list of required immunizations, visit <http://health.state.tn.us/CEDS/required.htm>.
- No children shall be permitted to attend school until proof of immunizations is given with the following exceptions: (1) a signed, written statement that such measures conflict with religious tenets (2) due to medical reasons. The child must have a written statement from the doctor excusing

him for medical reasons from such immunizations, confirmed under the penalties of perjury.

**Mandatory Physicals:**

Any student entering school for the first time **must** provide evidence of a current medical examination. The **ONLY** exception to this rule is for insurance restrictions to a yearly physical where the child's birthday falls after the first day of school but before December 31<sup>st</sup>.

If your child was in a pre-kindergarten class, he/she must have a new physical for kindergarten enrollment.

**CLOSING**

As we work together throughout the school year, we encourage every student to show pride in our school by demonstrating our Hornet Values each day. By being respectful, responsible, honest, and willing to learn from our mistakes, we create a safe and positive environment where everyone can succeed.

We are proud of the students and families who make our school such a special place. Thank you for your partnership, support, and commitment to helping your child grow both academically and socially. Together, we can ensure a successful and meaningful school year for all.

Please note that the procedures and information in this handbook may be subject to change. Be sure to follow our school Facebook page and check our website for the most up-to-date information. We also encourage families to ensure they receive school text messages, as we use this system to share important updates and reminders.

Remember, each day is a new opportunity to learn, grow, and make a difference. We are glad you are part of our school community!