GULF GATE SCHOOL
FAMILY HANDBOOK
2026-2027



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Vision/Mission Statements

The School Board of Sarasota County…

Vision: To be the premier provider of education, empowering every student to thrive in the everchanging world through innovation and continuous improvement.

Mission: Engage, elevate, and empower every student, every day!

Gulf Gate School…

Vision*:* The students at Gulf Gate School will become life-long learners, able to make decisions, solve problems, and lead healthful, responsible, productive lives.



Mission: The mission of Gulf Gate School is to develop in all students their maximum potential by utilizing quality staff, supportive, involved parents, and a community geared toward helping students do their best today for a better tomorrow.

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ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE

School is a student's first and most important job. Students are expected to be in school every day, all day, and on time, to maximize their learning. School hours are from 8:30am – 3:15pm. **Students should not arrive on campus prior to 8:00, as there is no supervision**, unless they are enrolled in the YMCA Before-Care program. Students are expected to be unpacked and, in their seats, no later than 8:30am.

Regular and punctual attendance is vitally important to a student's success in school. Florida State Law requires regular school attendance, and it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that their child attends school daily. Whenever attendance problems exist, parents will be contacted by school authorities to aid in solutions to these problems. We strongly encourage parents to help Gulf Gate School students develop good school attendance habits.

The principal or designee has the authority, within the guidelines of the law, to determine if an absence is excused. It is the parents' responsibility to provide the school with written justification for their child's absence. Failure to do so within three (3) school days will cause the absence to be recorded as unexcused.

In cases of excessive excused absences for illness, a parent may be asked to provide documentation from a physician.

Absences for vacation or other anticipated reasons must be given prior approval from an administrator and the student must make arrangements for completion of work prior to the absence. Students with excessive absences will not be excused for such reasons.

You will be notified, using your primary home phone number listed on the portal, if your child is absent from school. Please be aware that these calls are automatic and go out regardless of prior notice of the absence. Please be advised that Focus automatically sends out 5, 10, and 15 day truancy letters within a rolling 90 day period to inform parents of possible truancy. If attendance does not improve, parents may be referred to truancy court.

ATTENDANCE: ABSENCES/MAKE-UP WORK

When students are absent and parents write a valid excuse, teachers will provide opportunities for students to complete missed assignments. Students are expected to make up all work missed. Make up work must be completed within a time frame equal to the number of days absent. Please give teachers 24 hours notice when calling in work requests. Please be aware that scheduled vacations are not excused absences. Please use the school calendar on the SCS website to schedule vacations during the various breaks throughout the year.

ATTENDANCE: EARLY RELEASE FROM SCHOOL

****NO EARLY DISMISSALS WILL BE GRANTED AFTER 2:30PM****

We strongly encourage parents to keep their children in school for the entire instructional day. If it is absolutely necessary to take your child out of school early, parents are requested to send a note to the teacher. Parents must sign the child out in the main office, show identification, and the child will be called from his/her classroom. If a person other than the parent or guardian is to pick up the child, they must have a written statement from the parents specifying the necessary information, must be on the student contact list, and we will call the parent to verify the statement. For the protection of all our

students, you must show identification and sign the student out prior to leaving the campus. **Daily "early dismissals" are never allowed**, as classroom instruction continues until the end of the school day.
Please note: Early Dismissals from school will be marked with a "D" on a student's attendance record.

ATTENDANCE: TARDINESS



Students coming in late impede the learning process for all other students in a classroom. We appreciate your efforts to minimize interruptions. Students who are late for any reason must report, with their parent, to the front office to sign them in prior to proceeding to the classroom. Once a parent signs them in, students will receive a late pass to give to his/her teacher. The office will adjust the teacher's attendance report to reflect the student's presence. Please note, *students should never be dropped off in the parking lot or parent loop to enter school alone, as it is not a secure and safe area of our campus*. Parents must escort students inside and sign them in. Please *note: Tardies to school will be marked with a "T" on a student's attendance record*.

AFTERCARE/BEFORE CARE

We are proud to be partnering with the YMCA to provide quality and affordable Before and Aftercare for our families. For more information, please contact the YMCA at 941-922-9622 ext.204.



AGENDA BOOKS

Agenda books are provided to students in grades 1-6. It is expected that all our students and their parents will use it as a tool to plan for academic success. The agenda book should accompany students to school each day and will be reviewed daily by teachers and used by students. It is intended to help our students develop the life skills of planning ahead, managing time, and meeting deadlines. **Please check, review and sign this important book each day to maintain our partnership in your child's education**. There is no initial cost to students; however, there is a replacement cost of $5.00.

ANIMAL POLICY

The School District of Sarasota County has a comprehensive animal policy. If you would like to review these policies, please visit: 3.47 Animals on Campus | Sarasota County Schools .
For the safety of our students, animals (dogs, cats, etc.) are not permitted on school grounds.

ARRIVAL SAFETY PROCEDURES: FIRST DAYS
Please see the Appendix A for this important information.



ARRIVAL SAFETY PROCEDURES

Please see the Appendix B for this important information.

BADGES

Beginning with the 2026–2027 school year, all students will be issued a new student identification badge equipped with RFID technology. The RFID feature is used exclusively to support school operations and enhance student safety by allowing students to access designated school services quickly and efficiently. The badges are not used to monitor or track students' locations throughout the school day.

Student identification badges will be used for:

- Cafeteria purchases
- Media Center checkout
- Student transportation (bus riders)

Each student will receive one identification badge attached to a school-issued lanyard. Students are expected to wear their badge at all times while on campus. Wearing student identification badges helps us maintain a safe, secure, and efficient learning environment.

Students who ride a school bus will receive an additional RFID transportation badge that will be securely attached (zip-tied) to their backpack. This transportation badge should remain attached to the backpack for the entire school year and should not be removed.

Students are responsible for the care and safekeeping of their badges. A $5 replacement fee will be charged for any lost, damaged, or replacement badge.

We appreciate your support in helping students care for their identification badges and wear them each day. Doing so helps ensure the safety and efficiency of our campus operations.

BREAKFAST

8:00-8:30: Breakfast is served in the cafeteria.

8:15: Students will be strategically dismissed from the café.

After 8:15- Students must take a bagged breakfast to class.

Students are expected to be in class and ready to learn by 8:30. Breakfast should be eaten by the end of the school news.

Parents are NOT permitted to have breakfast with their students in the morning.

Note: The first two weeks of school can be flexible by a few minutes as needed.

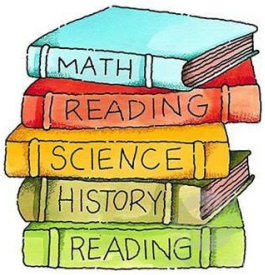
BICYCLES/SKATEBOARDS/ROLLERBLADES/ HEELYS

For safety reasons, bicycles are never to be ridden on school grounds. Bikes must be parked in the enclosed bike area. *The bike area is **NOT** locked during the school day.* **Please be sure your child comes with a lock for his or her bike. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen bikes.** By law, **students riding their bikes, scooters or skateboard to school must wear a safety helmet** (see Arrival Procedures).

Skateboards and roller blades are not permitted on campus. Heeleys are not to be worn at school, with or without wheels. **Students will not be permitted to ride their bike home without a helmet.**

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Parents are asked to please make prior arrangements with the homeroom teacher before arriving at school with treats. Healthy treats are encouraged. **Treats must be store-purchased items – homemade items are NOT permitted.** (see Home-Baked Goods). Invitations to student parties may not be passed out in class unless everyone in the class receives an invitation.



BOOKS

Library books on loan should always be returned on time so that others may enjoy them. Lost or damaged books must be paid for or replaced before additional books can be checked out.

BULLYING/HARASSMENT/EQUITY

The school board's Bullying and Harassment Policy is explicitly defined in section 2.70 of board policies. Bullying means: (including cyberbullying) ***systematically* and *chronically*** *inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as* ***unwanted and repeated*** *written, verbal, or physical behavior, including a threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by a student or adult, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation.*

The Sarasota County School Board and Gulf Gate Elementary School prohibit the act of bullying on our campus. Any student who is found to be bullying others according to the above definition and policy will be disciplined according to the Code of Student Conduct. Anyone can report bullying or harassment concerns by talking to the school counselor, behavior coach, or administrator.

The Equity Policies and Procedures for students and for employees/applicants in place for 2025/2026 are located on the district website; https://www.sarasotacountyschools.net/o/scs/page/equity-procedures-for-employees-applicants-students under Human Resources/Equity.

BUS TRANSPORTATION



***Parents must register their child for the school bus!**

Click here to see school bus registration FAQ's:
My Ride K-12

QR Code for iPhone

QR Code for Android

Buses load and unload in our "Bus Loop" which can be found on the south end of campus. All children must follow the safety policies established by the transportation department. These rules include, but are not limited to:

STUDENTS WILL CONDUCT THEMSELVES IN AN ORDERLY MANNER AT THE BUS STOPS BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL.

- **Students MUST have their badge to scan and load on and off the bus. If they do not have their badge they may be refused transportation.**
- Stand off the roadway while waiting for the bus.
- Upon the driver's signal, cross roadway immediately, ten paces in front of the bus.
- Stay in your seat at all times while bus is moving.
- Keep your arms and head inside the windows.
- Unnecessary conversation with the driver is dangerous.
- The driver is in full charge of the bus students. Students must obey the driver.
- The driver must assign students' seats. Seats may be reassigned if necessary to promote order.
- Students must be on time: the bus cannot wait for those who are tardy. (It is suggested that students arrive at their bus stop at least five minutes before scheduled arrival of bus.)
- No eating, drinking, or chewing gum is allowed on the bus.
- Absolute silence at all railroad crossings is necessary.
- Profane or obscene language or gestures are prohibited.
- No electronic equipment is allowed.
- Large objects that cannot be held in the student's lap or that interfere with seating safety of others will not be permitted.
- Animals, snakes, frogs, etc… (dead or alive), glass containers, sharp objects, balls, bats, cutting instruments, fireworks, and any similar items are NOT allowed on the bus OR AT SCHOOL.
- No object is allowed to be placed in the aisle or in the way of the emergency exit or the front door.

PENALTY: For violating these rules, a pupil may be reported by the driver to the school administration who must implement specific disciplinary procedures as outlined by the Sarasota County Board policy, which could result in suspension of bus riding privileges. Transportation progressive discipline is as

follows:

- 1st Referral — Parent Contacted and Conference
- 2nd Referral — 1-3 days bus suspension (Both AM and PM)
- 3rd Referral — 3-5 days bus suspension (Both AM and PM)
- 4th Referral — 10 days or may result in bus privileges being revoked for remainder of the year

Please remember riding the bus is a privilege and can be revoked as per admin decision.

CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES



Elementary student use of cell phones, smart watches or electronic devices are prohibited during school hours. If a student has a cell phone on campus, it must be turned off and left in the student's backpack for the entire school day. Smart watches must have text and call features disabled during the school day. If a cell phone, smart watch, or electronic device causes a disruption, it will be confiscated and returned to the parent. ***The school is not responsible for items that are lost/stolen***.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER/ EMERGENCY NUMBERS

It is important that we have your correct address and telephone numbers, both at home and at work. **We also require emergency numbers and ask that you keep these updated**. If you move during the school year or if your telephone number is changed, it is the parent's responsibility to **notify the school registrar's office immediately and in writing**. Please note: You are required to ensure numbers, addresses, and emergency contacts are up to date via the Focus Portal. School staff are NOT able to make any changes.

CLASS PLACEMENT

Placement of students in their academic classrooms is of the utmost importance. A tremendous amount of time is spent creating balanced classrooms, matching students with teachers, attempting to keep the boy-girl ratio as even as possible, and keeping the size of the class in compliance. Specific teacher requests will not be accepted, as we work as a team to create the most balanced learning environment using a district approved program to optimize learning for all students.

CLASS REASSIGNMENT DUE TO INCREASED/ DECREASED STUDENT POPULATION

Student placement is considered tentative for the first several weeks of school. On occasion, our classes may grow in student population beyond an expected or desirable student-teacher ratio. In such cases, an additional class may be formed with a new teacher. This also will require moving students from the overcrowded class to the new class. Should enrollment prove lower than projected, loss of personnel may require a change in teachers or class placement. This will require moving. Should this become necessary, parents will be notified, and all efforts will be made for a smooth transition. In either case, administration will ensure a fair procedure by which classes are adjusted to create balanced learning environments. **Please note: All classrooms are subject to change pending the results of the 5-day student enrollment count in August**.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Please see the appendix H for further information

CLASS SIZE AMENDMENT

This amendment to the Florida Constitution mandates the ratio of students to teachers in public schools. The Class Size amendment may cause a "shifting" of students from one classroom to another at any time throughout the year. If this occurs, parents will be notified, and procedures will be followed as outlined in the "Class Reassignment" section of this handbook.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

The Code of Student Conduct can be found in the Student and Family Handbook on the School Board web site: Sarasota County Schools Student Code of Conduct. Behavior which is inconsistent with the Code of Student Conduct will be addressed as needed. The disciplinary actions are described and explained in the Code of Student Conduct.

COMMUNICATION

We will let families know of important upcoming school-wide events, safety and security topics, and educational issues through our school Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/GulfGateElementary), and through Thrillshare using phone calls, emails and/or text messages, and Miller's Minute information. It is important to keep your current phone numbers/address updated in the parent portal. This is the only way you will receive important messages and notifications.

CURRICULUM/STANDARDS

Teachers at Gulf Gate School follow the Florida State Standards when planning lessons. For complete Florida State Standards, visit www.cpalms.org.

CUSTODY ISSUES

The safety and security of our students is always a priority at Gulf Gate. We will follow the school district guidelines with regards to custody issues. Parents are responsible for providing copies of court-ordered, signed custody papers which will become a part of the student's cumulative record. Parents are responsible for setting up a Focus Portal account to have equal access to assessment information, report cards and attendance.

School personnel will not be placed in a position of negotiating parent disputes regarding the release of children as **school is a safe haven for children.**

Teachers will accommodate parent requests for duplication of information if a student splits time.

DISCIPLINE

Please read and review the Sarasota County's Student and Family Handbook with your child (ren). Discipline procedures are outlined in the Student Code of Conduct (see page 9 for direct link).

Gulf Gate students are expected to make good choices throughout the school day and understand that their choices result in consequences. Gulf Gate has a school-wide, Positive Behavior Support Plan which is outlined on page 15.

DISMISSAL SAFETY PROCEDURES



Please see the Appendix for this important information

PLEASE READ AND BECOME FAMILIAR WITH OUR SAFETY POLICIES.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING GGES IN OUR CONTINUING EFFORTS TO KEEP OUR STUDENTS SAFE.

DRESS AND GROOMING

At Gulf Gate Elementary School, we believe that students learn best in a professional learning environment where they are safe and free of distractions. Our school places a prime value on showing respect for others and ourselves. Wearing appropriate clothing to school contributes to this climate of respect. The ability to present a neat, pleasant appearance is a career skill that will serve students well.

For the 2026-2027 school year, Gulf Gate School emphasizes the following expectations:

- **Athletic shoes** are required daily (***no slides, Crocs, sandals, or boots***) for safety reasons.
- **Clothing must not be frayed or have holes/tears** above the mid-thigh or inappropriate patches.
- **Jewelry** must be safe and not disruptive; chains hanging from the neck, belt, or wallet are not allowed.
- **Hair** should not obstruct vision or be distracting to the learning of the individual or other students.
- **Clothing, hairstyles, hair colors, nail length, and accessories** (such as headbands) that are distracting to the learning environment are not permitted.
- **Pajamas, slippers, and hats** are not permitted unless part of a scheduled spirit day.
- **Clothing must cover the mid-riff** when standing naturally.
- **Shirt straps** must be a minimum of 1 inch thick.
- **Shorts, skirts, and dresses** must have an inseam and outseam below mid-thigh.

We will follow the dress code of Sarasota County Schools, which can be found at the following website: https://www.sarasotacountyschools.net/o/scs/page/parents-and-students

FIELD TRIPS



Throughout the year, students are permitted to take field trips to further their academic studies. All bus rules apply when students are on field trips. These rules are reviewed with all students during our bus safety drills. It is necessary for parents/guardians to sign a permission form before a child will be allowed to go on a field trip. Signed forms must be returned on time, as verbal permission from parents/guardians will not be accepted at any time. Only enrolled GGS students may attend field trips, younger siblings may not attend. **Any parent that would like to chaperone a field trip MUST BE AN APPROVED LEVEL II VOLUNTEER**. Volunteer guidelines can be found at : Volunteer | Sarasota County Schools .

FIRE DRILLS AND OTHER SAFETY DRILLS



Safety is a top priority at Gulf Gate School. Drills are conducted throughout the year so that students and staff are better prepared to respond in the event that an emergency occurs on our campus. Teachers will discuss with their students' proper procedures to be followed for fire drills and other safety drills. Emergency Drills

will be conducted at least once a month. The school will also conduct Severe Weather Drills, Lockdown Drills, and Evacuation Drills. If you should arrive on campus during a critical incident response drill, please report directly to the office after the drill has ended. Visitors will not be permitted to enter the school during a drill or an actual emergency.

FOOD SERVICES

Gulf Gate School will serve breakfast each morning until 8:30. Please refer to the section titled Breakfast for more information. At lunchtime students may choose hot lunch or cold lunch and yogurt is available daily for those who choose it. Please notify the kitchen manager if you do not want your child to add charges to a basic lunch.



Payments for more than one day can be sent in with your child and checks should be made out to Gulf Gate Food Service (please include your child's full name and pin#). Parents may pay for lunches using the My School Bucks APP, which directly puts funds into your child's lunch account.

Link to create a My School Bucks account is:
Lunch Account Policies | Sarasota County Schools

Each year, students in Sarasota County Schools are issued a personal identification number (pin#). Students input this number whenever they purchase anything from the cafeteria. It is very important that you put your child's pin number on any checks or envelopes with cash that you send to the cafeteria.

WE ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO APPLY FOR FREE OR REDUCED LUNCH for their child on-line at:

- Free & Reduced Benefits | Sarasota County Schools



Specific criteria regarding family size and income are used to determine eligibility for free or reduced benefits. All of the necessary information is contained in the application. We ask that all families apply, even if you do not think you will qualify. Students may not carry a food charge balance of more than $8.25. No further charges will be allowed until the charge is paid. If payment is not made, the student will receive a sandwich and milk.

IF YOUR CHILD HAS A FOOD ALLERGY, A DOCTOR'S NOTE MUST BE ON FILE IN OUR HEALTH CLINIC. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide this documentation to the school nurse.
Any questions should be directed to our Food Services Manager at 361-6597.

HEAD LICE

Please see School Health Services for information:
Head Lice | Sarasota County Schools



HEALTH PROBLEMS

Parents are requested to notify the classroom teacher and the clinic

personnel regarding any physical problems your child may have that require special attention and give specific information to be followed during emergency situations.

Please be sure to:

1. Alert the health clinic of any medical problems and provide a doctor's diagnosis when necessary.
2. Keep your child home if he/she shows any signs of illness.

HEALTH ROOM

Gulf Gate School has a Health Room Aide on campus. You will be contacted if your child has a health problem that needs your immediate attention. Otherwise, children will remain in the clinic, checked periodically, and when ready they will be sent back to the classroom. **If you are contacted and requested to pick up your child due to illness, it is imperative that the student be picked up as soon as possible**. Please do not send your child back to school until the child is completely well and has been free of fever, vomiting, and/or diarrhea for 24 hours, unless noted by a doctor.

If there is an emergency, **IT IS URGENT THAT WE HAVE ACCURATE PHONE NUMBERS WHERE WE MAY CONTACT YOU OR THE EMERGENCY CONTACTS** in our student information system. Please make changes on the parent portal if any information changes during the school year. Please read the section on "Medication At School". In the event of an emergency, the nurse or administration may make the decision to call 911 if necessary.

HEALTH SCREENING

Every year a routine health screening is conducted for specific grade level students by the Sarasota County Health Department, unless parents have opted out during registration. Students are screened for height, weight, vision, and hearing. Following the screening, a copy of the results will be sent home.

HOME BAKED ITEMS

The Health Department has determined that foods prepared in a private home shall not be offered to students. Any food items to be shared with students must be commercially prepared and packaged with all ingredients listed on the label. We have students with life-threatening allergies, making this policy an important one to adhere to.

HOMEWORK

All teachers will inform students and parents about their homework policy. Please help your child develop strong study skills and become responsible for their learning:

- Check that homework is completed.
- Review all graded schoolwork.
- Provide a place and consistent time for your child to complete homework.
- Check and sign your child's agenda book.



INCLEMENT WEATHER

There may be times when severe weather prohibits us from safely dismissing our students from school at 3:15. If delayed (lightening in the area) dismissal occurs, parents will be notified via text message sent to the cell number in parent portal. Families will need to follow our stormy weather procedures. Please note this

requires all students who walk or ride bikes to be picked up by a parent. Please see appendix G.

LOST AND FOUND

Articles found in and around the school grounds will be hung on a rack provided in the cafeteria. Money, jewelry, glasses, or other breakable items should be brought to the office. Please use permanent markers to identify your child's lunch box, clothing, etc. Items will be kept for one month and then donated to charity. Students should not bring valuables, toys, or large amounts of money to school.

LUNCH CHARGES

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child will have the correct amount of money for lunch each day. Students may not carry more than $8.25 in charges. No further charges will be allowed until the charge is paid. If payment is not made, the student will receive a sandwich and milk.

LUNCH WITH FAMILIES

After the first two weeks of school, parents/guardians are invited to enjoy lunch with ONLY their child/ren during scheduled lunch periods. Parents must sign in at the main office and provide a valid picture I.D. Parents must be on the contact list and guests not on the list must accompany a parent. Families coming for lunch MUST eat outdoors in our courtyard area. Staff and students only are permitted in the cafeteria during lunch times. Please note, this is an outdoor courtyard, so it is not accessible during rainy days.

Parents may only bring their child (ren) outside, as *no additional students may accompany anyone to lunch*. Parents should return their child to the lunchroom door prior to the end of their lunch time., then parents must exit the building through the main office and not escort their child to class.

MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

The School Board's policy on medication administration by school personnel is very specific. Thank you in advance for your compliance with these rules. Before school personnel can administer any medicine at school, the following criteria must be met:

School personnel can only administer FDA approved medications that have been ordered by a physician, INCLUDING over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol, Benadryl, topical ointments, or eye drops. The physician's order for medicines taken on a regular schedule must include the dose, how the medicine is to be administered, and the specific time of day that the dose is due. The physician's order for medicines taken on an "as needed" basis must include the dose, how the medicine is to be administered, the reason for giving the medicine and the frequency between "as needed" dosages. Parental consent is needed on every medicine that is ordered by the physician. The parent will sign a medication authorization form on each medication ordered by the physician. This form is available in the Health Room as well as in all Sarasota County physicians' offices. There is a new statute (HB 1537) as of last year stating that USFDA approved OTC medication for HEADACHES ONLY will be allowed without a physician's prescription.

All medications must be brought to the school by the parent/guardian. **AT NO TIME IS A STUDENT ALLOWED TO CARRY MEDICINES TO AND FROM SCHOOL**. If the parent/guardian cannot deliver the medicines himself, special arrangements must be made authorizing another adult to transport the medications to or from school. All medicines will be counted in the Health Room in front of the parent/guardian, and both adults will sign the medicine count.

All medicines purchased by prescription will have the prescription labels that match exactly the doctor's order. All medicines purchased "over-the-counter" will be delivered in original, UNOPENED packages and with the child's name on it. Physician orders and parental consents are valid for one entire school year, beginning in the fall and ending on the last day of school.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES



If you would like to conference with your child's teacher at any time during the school year, please make arrangements by note, telephone, or email. A conference early in the school year is encouraged. In a private meeting, you can learn what the teacher's expectations are, and the teacher can learn a great deal about your child as an individual. Please do not ask teachers to discuss your child's progress while he/she is supervising students.

PARENT COMMUNICATION: THRILLSHARE

The School District of Sarasota County uses Thrillshare as a means of communication between school and home. At different times throughout the school year, you will receive telephone calls letting you know about important events happening at our school and with Miller's Minute updates every Monday. Please be sure your contact information is up to date on the Focus portal. Please refrain from contacting your chuld's teacher during the school day while he/she is supervising students. If there is an emergency, please contact the office directly.

PARENT (FAMILY/FOCUS) PORTAL

Parents and guardians can use the Sarasota County Schools Focus Portal to access academic progress (grades), report cards, standardized test scores, and attendance for their child(ren) on a regular basis. Parents can sign up to use the portal at:

- Sarasota (focusschoolsoftware.com)



Parent can see the grades form last year in Family Portal but for the following years they need to use Focus Portal. The website is Sarasotacountyschools.net, click on Families, Focus Portal.

- If you want to see last year you will click on Family Portal website: https://parentportal.sarasotacountyschools.net/

PERMISSION TO GO HOME WITH A FRIEND

Students will **NOT** be permitted to call home at the last minute to make after school arrangements to visit a friend. All arrangements should be made in advance. Since arrangements of this nature involve a change in transportation routes, written permission is required from parents of both students.

PHONE CALLS TO SCHOOL/MESSAGES

The office cannot be responsible for delivering messages to students except in an emergency. Messages for teachers will be placed in their mailboxes and/or emailed to them, which they check daily, or you may be able to leave a voice message on the classroom phone. **Please review after-school**

arrangements with your child before he/she leaves for school especially on rainy days. We do not want to jeopardize your child's safety and we will not make a change in his/her normal routine unless we have a written note from a parent. Without a written note as confirmation, teachers will follow your child's normal after-school routine. Parents should not call school to change the way students go home.



- **FOR SAFETY REASONS, we cannot accept phone calls that change the way students are to go home!** Again, be sure you have made arrangements with your child before they leave for school AND be sure his/her teacher knows.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORT (PBIS) PLAN (SCHOOL-WIDE)

Gulf Gate School has a comprehensive PBIS plan that encourages all students to be STARRs and recognizes positive efforts every day! Below you will find the expectations we have for everyone on our campus each day of the school year.
"All students….all staff….all settings"

School Wide Expectations

Gulf Gate Students are expected to be STARRs:

- Safe
- Timely
- Active Learner
- Respectful
- Responsible

Each member of the Gulf Gate Community will:

Specific Expectations

In our **hallways**, the Gulf Gate School Community will:

- keep hands and feet to self, facing forward.
- remember that hallways are "quiet" zones, therefore, will be silent at all times.

When in **common areas** or on the **playground**, the Gulf Gate Community will:

- stay within the designated area.
- use equipment properly.
- keep hands and feet to self.
- listen for staff directions.

In our **cafeteria**, the Gulf Gate Community will:

- enter and leave the cafeteria quietly, keeping hands and feet to self.
- follow the proper traffic pattern.



- talk quietly and remain seated at the table.
- keep all food to self without sharing.
- clean up after themselves.

During school **dismissal**, the Gulf Gate Community will:

- walk to the designated dismissal area with a staff member.
- be mindful of the safety patrols.
- leave campus immediately and go directly home.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

The Gulf Gate Community will provide positive recognition for those community members who choose to make good choices. Students will be recognized in the following ways:

Gulf Gate Elementary Schools is proud to participate in the PBIS system which is a research based taken economy system based on positive behaviors.
Students at Gulf Gate can show they are a STARR by being:

- Safe
- Timely
- Active Learner
- Respectful
- Responsible

Students are incentivized by the following positive behavior supports:

- Verbal/written praise
- Awards
- Positive notes to parents
- Positive phone calls to parents
- Special privileges
- Yellow "good choice" ticket
- Student of the Week Recognition

When poor choices are made, Gulf Gate will follow the procedures outlined in Sarasota County Schools Code of Conduct located at the following website: Documents | Sarasota County Schools .

Gulf Gate follows the Sarasota County Schools Code of Conduct for discipline procedures.

300.11 Discipline Policies and Procedures

The Code of Student Conduct outlines Sarasota County Schools implementation of school board policies and statutes to guide the best practices regarding student behavior. Student behaviors that violate the Code of Student Conduct are on a scale from a minor infraction (level 1) to a severe Zero Tolerance infraction (Level 4). All student behaviors are aligned with the district's discipline policy, from least severe (Level 1) to most severe (Level 4). The range of consequences for each offense appears in the Behaviors and Consequences Chart following this section.

Infractions of the Code of Student Conduct are grouped into four levels based on severity of offenses:

- Minor Level I
- Intermediate Level II
- Major Level III
- Zero Tolerance Level IV

Please refer to the Sarasota County Schools website for the approved Code of Conduct for specifics.

RAPTOR

The Raptor System helps track all visitors to our school, thus providing a safer more monitored environment for our students and staff. When visitors, volunteers, or contractors check in to the main office, or parents come to pick up students, they will be asked to present a valid state issued ID for scanning into the system. The system has the ability to provide alerts on people who may jeopardize the safety of our campus. (see Visitors)

REGISTRATION

Kindergarten through sixth grade students must register online each year. All new students must have evidence of birth, proof of residency, immunization records, and a medical examination. The immunizations and physical must be on FL forms. The immunization form is FL680. The medical examination requirements state that children entering a Florida public school for the first time are required to present certification of a school-entry medical examination performed within twelve months prior to enrollment in school. A child must be five years old on or before September 1st to be enrolled in Kindergarten.

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

School Board Policy 4.45 discusses guidelines for religious activities in the schools. More information can be found on the School Board website.

REPORT CARDS

Parents will receive their students report card electronically on the Student/Parent Portal. A student must be in attendance at least twenty (20) days within a grading period in order to receive grades from our school. Gulf Gate teachers, teaching grades 2nd-8th, use the following grading system for reporting student progress.

"A" through "F" GRADES - These grades are based on numerical averages of work submitted by students throughout the grading period. Also included in the grade is teacher observation of student participation and involvement in class.



A=	Outstanding Progress	90-100%
B=	Above Average Progress	80-89%
C=	Average Progress	70-79%
D=	Lowest Acceptable Progress	60-69%
F=	Failing	0-59%

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Gulf Gate school is a shared decision-making school. The Gulf Gate School Advisory Council (SAC) is a group of parents, staff, administration, and community members who meet regularly to make decisions about school policies, instruction issues and school improvement. Please indicate to your child's classroom teacher if you are interested in serving as a member of this group.

SCHOOL INSURANCE

If a child is injured at school, the School District does not have an insurance medical plan that provides coverage for students and the District is ***not*** responsible to pay their medical bills. The voluntary ***Student Accident Insurance Program*** is a good option for those families concerned about their out-of-pocket medical expenses associated with accidental injuries.



***Since the school district is not responsible for payment of accidental injuries*, it is important for parents to be properly insured to minimize personal cost in the event that an accident should occur.** Twenty-four-hour insurance is also available at additional cost. (see Student Accidents/Insurance)

SCHOOL PICTURES

School pictures are taken two times during the year for your convenience as well as for file purposes.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER



The safety and well-being of our students is important to us. The school district's dedicated team of School Resource Officers, safety personnel and campus safety monitors work 24/7/365 with local law enforcement and emergency personnel to keep our schools safe and community secure. Please feel free to contact our SRO, Joseph Wolleon, with any safety questions or

concerns you may have.



SCHOOL SAFETY PATROL

Each year several mature, dependable fifth grade students are chosen to serve on the school Safety Patrol. These students provide a real service for the safety and wellbeing of other children at our school. All students are expected to cooperate when reminded by a member of the patrol to obey school rules.

STUDENT ACCIDENTS/INSURANCE

The school district is not responsible for paying medical bills if a student has an accident while at school. The voluntary Student Accident Insurance Program is a good option for families concerned about out-of-pocket medical expenses associated with accidental injuries. Information for the Student Accidental Insurance Program can be found on both our website and the Sarasota County Schools website. This information is provided by the school district as a service to our families. The school district does not profit from any sales of this policy. The information is also on our school website at:
Documents | Sarasota County Schools

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES



Student Support Services encompasses Exceptional Student Education (ESE) and Student Services. Student Services includes School Guidance Counselors, Psychologists, Social Workers, and Nurses who work daily throughout the system to facilitate and support educational programs for all our students in Sarasota County. The goal of Student Support Services is to support and promote academic achievement, citizenship, and readiness for work in the global community for all students by identifying, coordinating, and providing resources and services.

TESTING/ ASSESSMENT

Students in the Sarasota County School District are assessed, and progress monitoring takes place throughout the school year. These assessments allow staff to monitor student achievement and differentiate instruction based on individual student needs. Some of the assessments taken throughout the year are:

- I-Ready –This program is given to students in grades K-5 in reading and provides diagnostic information that is essential to guiding instruction throughout the school year.
- FLORIDA'S ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT THINKING (F.A.S.T)/STAR ASSESSMENTS—Students in grades K-8 will participate in these assessments three times a year.
- Middle School students will have EOC (End of Year Course Assessments).

TOYS FROM HOME

Please do not allow your child to bring in toys from home. This includes items such as fidget spinners, stuffed animals, and Pokemon cards. The school is not responsible for lost/missing items and school personnel will not be responsible for the investigation of missing items.

VISITORS

All visitors to campus must report to the office. Visitors **MUST** show a valid picture I.D. and wear the visitor's badge at all times. This includes parents who are walking their child to class and having lunch with their children. Please remember, if you are having lunch with your child, only your child will

be allowed to leave the cafeteria to have lunch with you in the courtyard. Student visitors are not permitted. Parents who have a volunteer badge are also required to sign in. (Please see Raptor). Badges must be returned to the receptionist upon leaving the campus. The only exit for visitors is through the main office.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

We have a very active volunteer program at Gulf Gate School. Volunteers read one-on-one with individual students, work with small groups for instructional activities, help children with special needs, chaperone field trips, do clerical work or assist with library tasks and material preparation.

All volunteers must be approved by the School District Volunteer office. Volunteer applications are completed online in the main office at Gulf Gate School. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) reviews applications for approval. **All FDLE approved volunteers must be within eyesight or hearing distance of a school board employee**. Please note that in order for you to accompany your child on a field trip, you MUST be approved as a volunteer before the trip.

WEB PAGE

Need more information about Gulf Gate School. Visit our outstanding web site at:
www.sarasotacountyschools.net/schools/gulfgate

WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

When moving out of the Gulf Gate School district, please notify our registrar as soon as possible (in writing or by phone) so that the necessary paperwork can be completed. Please note the last day your child/children will be in attendance. All textbooks should be returned to the teacher and library books need to be returned to the Media Center before your child's last day at Gulf Gate.
When you enroll in another school, that school will request that student records be sent by mail. Health information can be given to the parent/guardian to be hand-carried to the new school.

WORK HABITS

The staff of Gulf Gate School are committed to providing each child with a first-class education. Together, we will help our students develop the attitudes and work habits to be successful, not only on their educational journey, but also in life and their careers.
The following eight work habits will be addressed as part of Sarasota County School Board Rule 8.103:

- Absences
- Attends school from 8:30 until dismissal
- Brings required materials
- Completes homework
- Cooperates with staff and fellow students
- Maintains agenda book
- Appropriate dress for class
- Time in class is devoted to the appropriate task.

APPENDIX A

GGS Arrival Safety Procedures: FIRST TWO DAYS*

***The first two days of school, parents may walk their child into the school and directly to class.**
After the first 2 days, please follow the normal arrival procedures located in Appendix B.

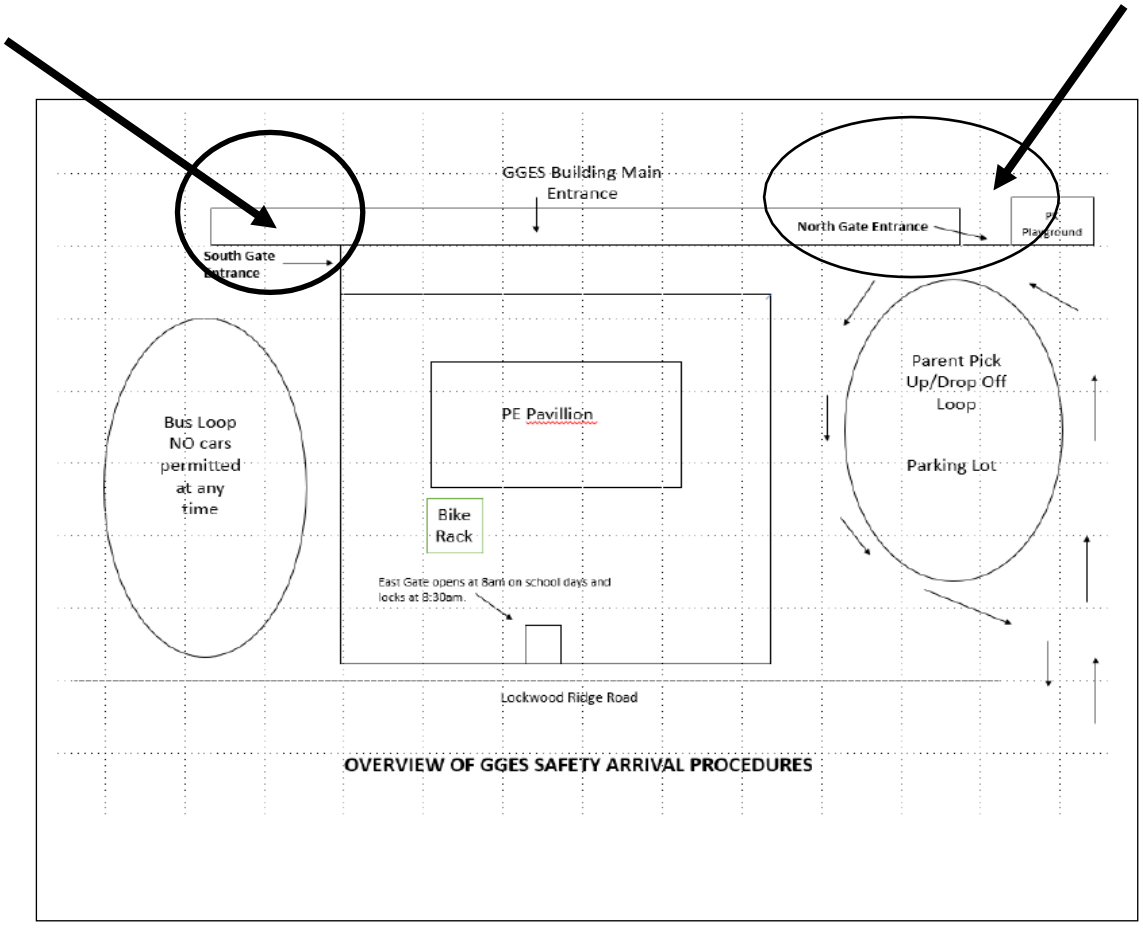
IF parents choose to WALK their child(ren) to class, on the first two days of school (8/11-8/12), please be sure to follow the procedures below:

1. Walk your child to the NORTH or SOUTH GATE, waiting in the line for the 8:15 bell.
2. Put on the ORANGE STICKER you will receive from the staff member on duty. The sticker MUST be worn while you are on campus and will only allow you entry the first 2 mornings of the school year.
3. When permitted by staff, walk into the building and directly to your child's classroom.
4. After dropping off your child, please leave campus promptly through the main office doors.

We appreciate everyone following these procedures and for helping to keep our students and staff safe.

SOUTH GATE ENTRANCE

NORTH GATE ENTRANCE



GGS Arrival Safety Procedures

***The first two days of school, parents may walk their child into the school and to class. PLEASE read "*Arrival Procedures, First Days*" for details. After the first 2 days, normal arrival procedures below will be in place.**

Walkers/Bikers

- Walkers and Bikers enter campus through the EAST GATE (by the marquee) at Lockwood Ridge Road starting at 8:00 am and remains open until 8:30 am (see map).
- Bikes should be walked on campus to the bike rack. The bike rack is open throughout the day, so please be sure you send your child with a bike lock.
- Helmets must be worn (state law) by all students riding a bike or scooter.
- Students should walk up the main corridor and enter the school at the south or north gate entrance (see map).

Bus Riders

- Students who are eligible for busing will enter the building from the bus loop to the red wing.

Parent Drop Off

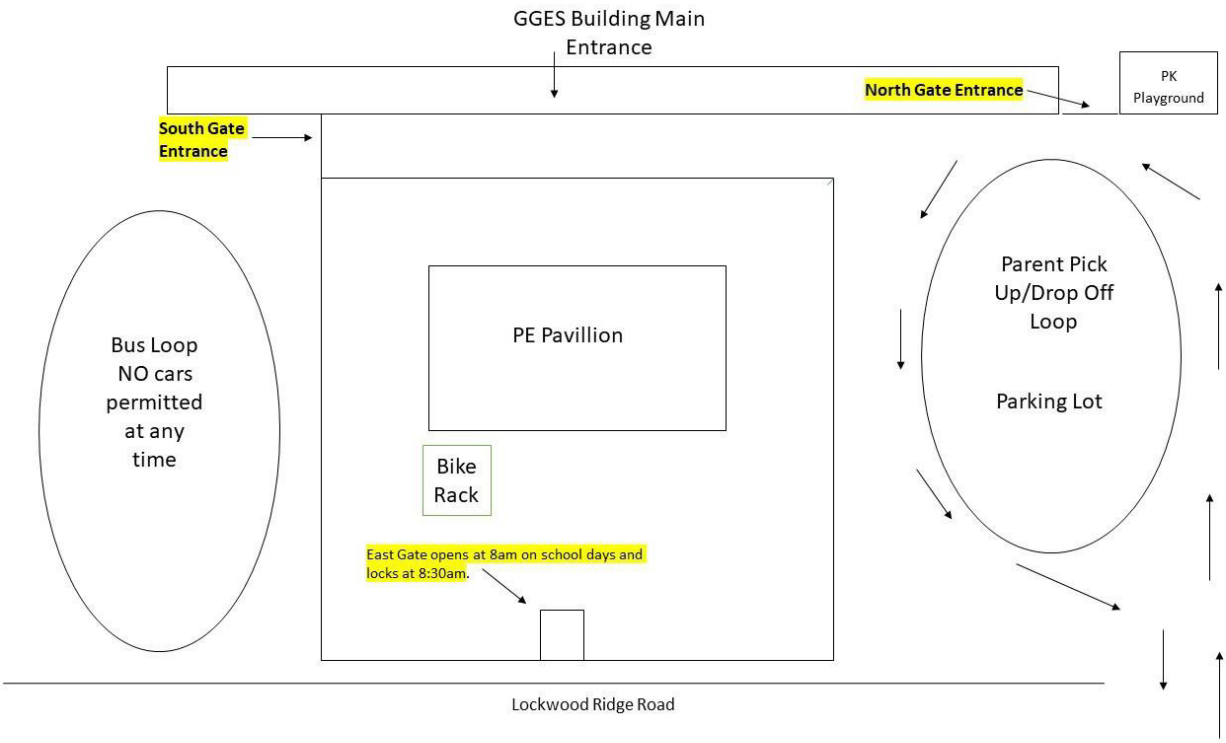
Officer Joe Wolleon asks that ALL adults abide by the following law:

No Hand-Held Phones in School Zones

As of October 1, 2019, Florida drivers will not be allowed to hold cell phones in their hands in work or school zones. Drivers in these zones shouldn't hold the phone up to their ear, type in anything on their screen, or even hold their phone to read the screen.

- Students that arrive to campus by car should be dropped off at the Parent Pick Up Loop (see map).
- Parents are asked to "move forward" in the line to ensure the maximum number of cars can be in our loop at any given time.
- Students should be ready and prepared to exit the passenger side of the car immediately when stopped.
- 5th Grade Safety Patrols will be "on duty" starting at 8:00 and can assist any student who is unsure how to get to class. Just ask!
- Student supervision begins at 8:00 daily, unless in before care. Please do not drop your student off prior to 8:00 (if eating breakfast) or 8:15 (if going directly to the classroom).

APPENDIX C – Arrival Map



OVERVIEW MAP OF GGES SAFETY ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

APPENDIX D – Parent Drop-Off Map

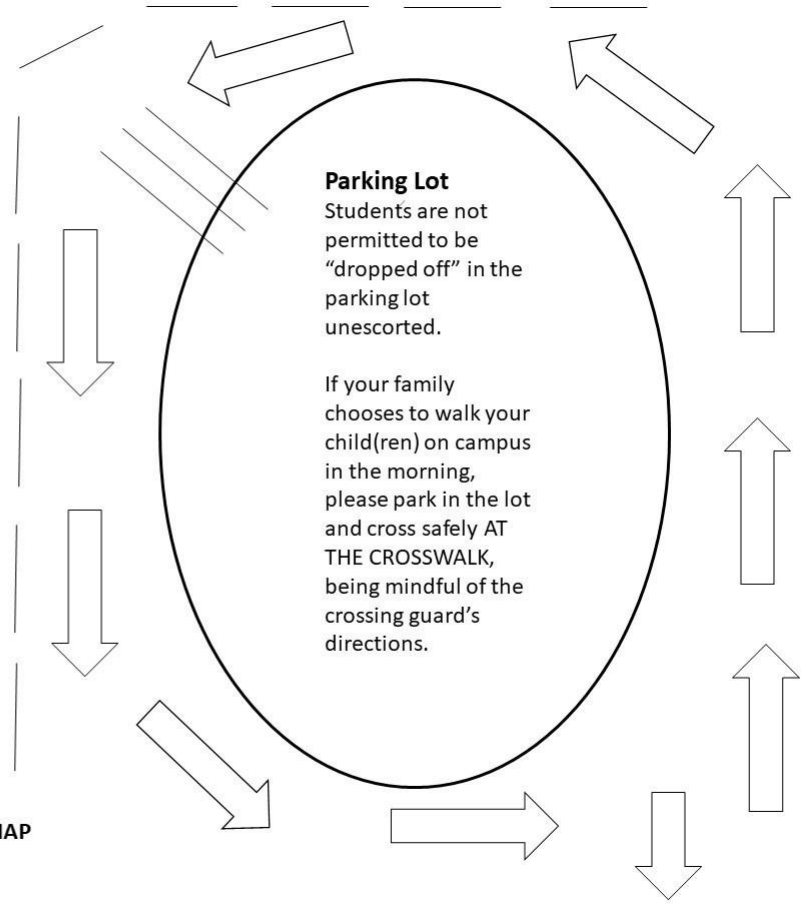
Parent Arrival Drop-Off Procedures:

- No use of cell phones in school zone (state law)
- Enter from Lockwood Ridge Road
- Continue **MOVING FORWARD** until the car in front of you stops
- When your car is completely stopped, have your child exit the car on the passenger side (school side)
- Following the car in front of you, exit the drive.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

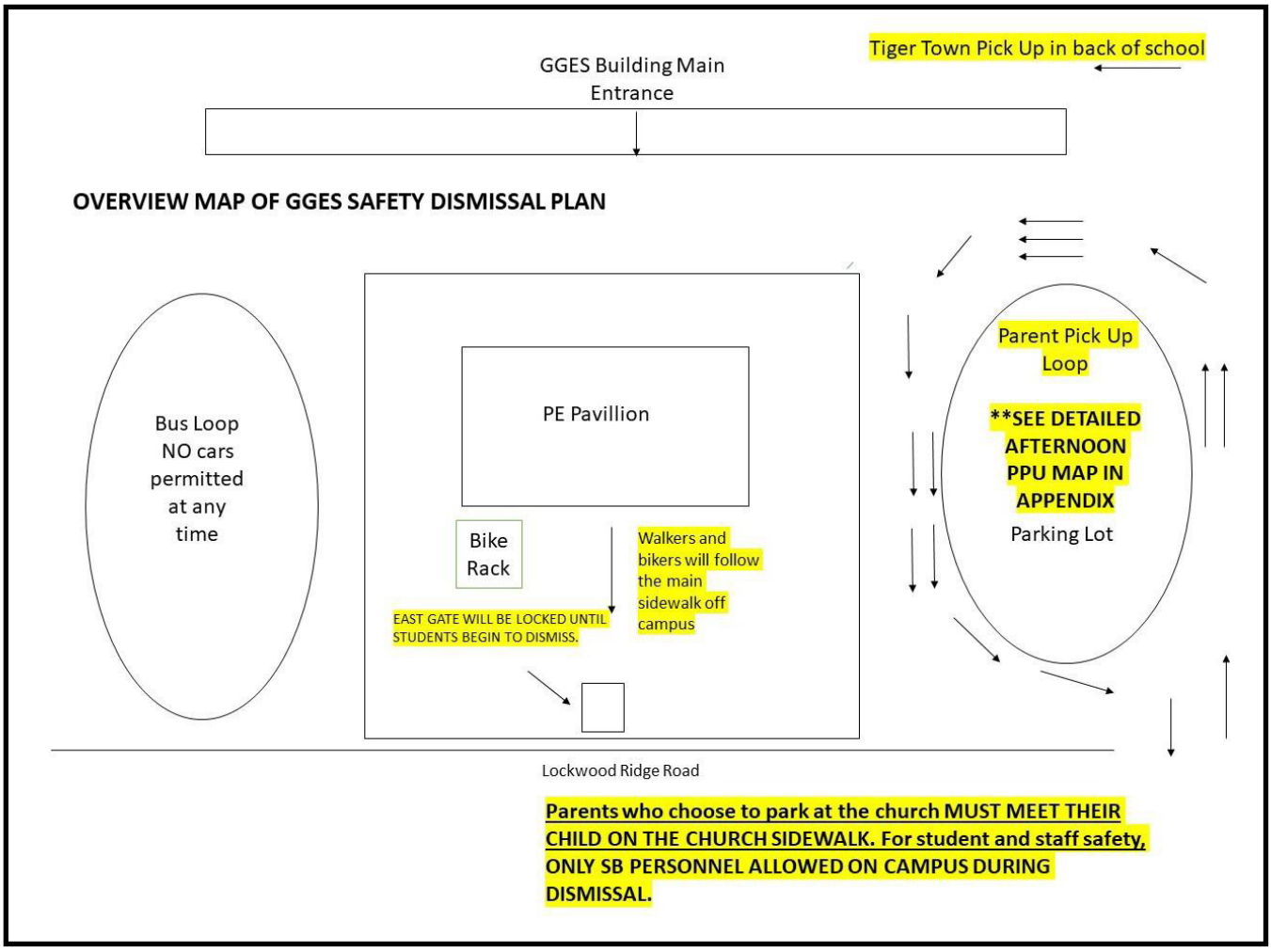
- PLEASE BE SURE YOUR CHILD EXITS AT AN OPEN GATE
- SAFETY PATROLS CAN ASSIST YOUR CHILD TO CLASS, IF NEEDED.

During **INCLEMENT WEATHER,** our safety patrols will not be outdoors.

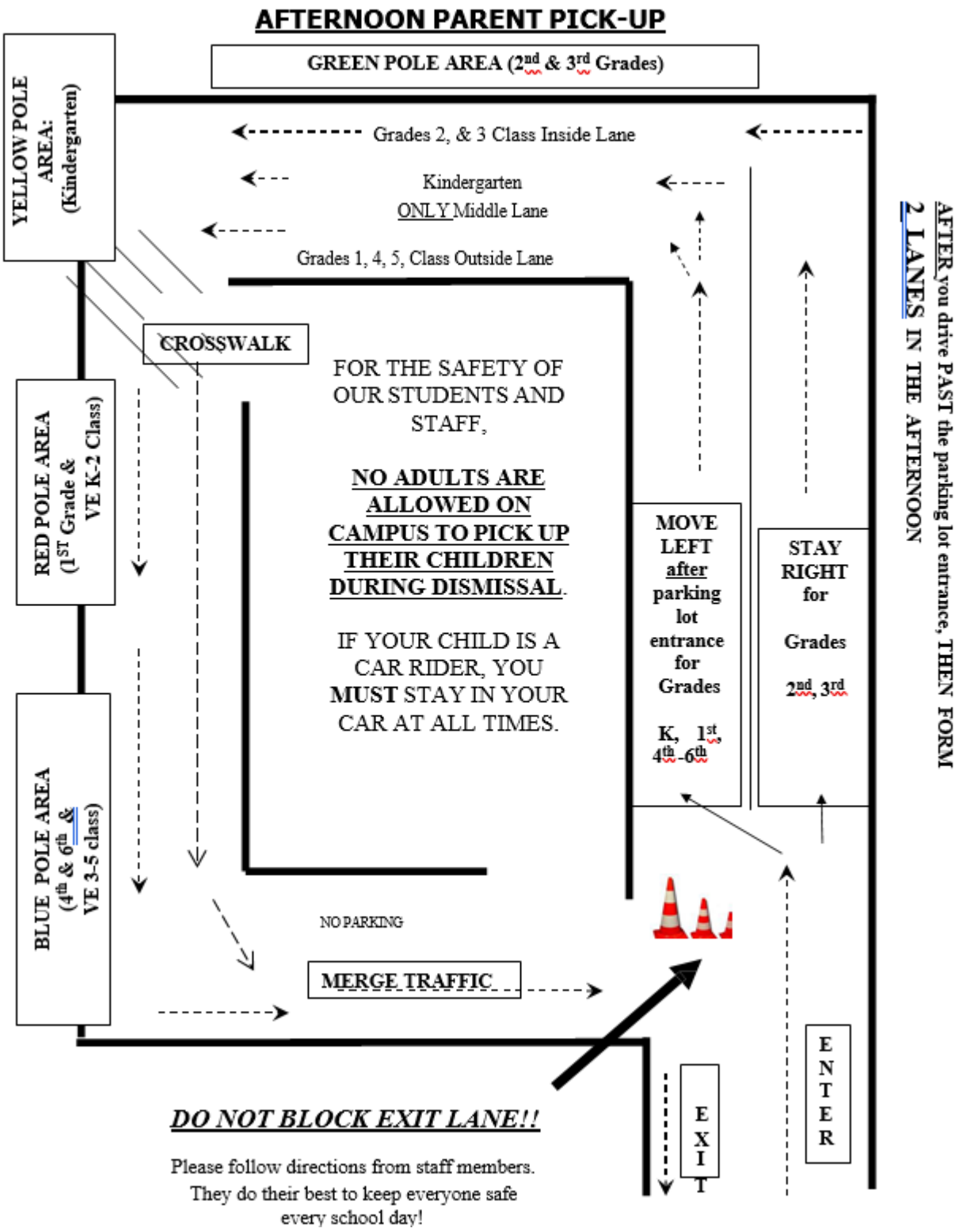


DETAILED PARENT DROP-OFF ARRIVAL MAP

APPENDIX E – Safety Dismissal Plan



APPENDIX F – Afternoon Parent Pick Up



Gulf Gate School
Parents/Guardians
Walking their Child to Class

Preparing to Visit Gulf Gate for Arrival

- Park in a parking spot in our lot when you arrive on campus. Please do not park in the loop or along the drive.
- **You must have your photo ID daily when arriving to the campus.**
- The child must accompany the parent/guardian when signing in.
- The parent/guardian must be on the child's approved pick-up list.
- Plan to arrive to the office area between 8:05 and 8:20, as all parents/guardians must be off campus by 8:30am.
- After signing in, parents and students should wait outside until the 8:15am bell. Please do not block the office door.
- Parents are permitted to enter the building at 8:15.

Once You Arrive on Campus

As a continued effort to protect the instructional time of our students and keep Gulf Gate Elementary a safe place, please adhere to the following:

- Please enter through our *single-entry point*, the office area. Parents/guardians are not permitted to enter the school through any other door.
- All parents/guardians must present a *photo ID*, clear *safety screening* through Raptor, and be on the students *approved pick-up list* to enter campus with the child.
- All parents/guardians must *wear the sticker* given to them after screening on the chest area of their outside shirt. It must be always visible by staff.
- The parent/guardian should *walk their child directly to their classroom or café door*.
- Families are asked to say goodbye at the classroom door to promote student independence and minimize classroom disruptions. Staff will be available to welcome and assist students as necessary.
- Please *do not engage your child's teacher or staff in conversations or conferences* during this time. We want their full attention on our students and their safety. If you desire a time to talk, please email the teacher for a scheduled conference.
- All parents/guardians must *exit through the office doors* only. They will return their sticker to the receptionist at that time, so we are able to keep accurate records of people on campus for safety reasons.
- Parents/guardians should *never enter or exit any other door except the main office* area.
- Parents should not eat breakfast in the cafeteria.
- Badges are issued until 8:25, *after 8:25 parents will no longer be able to walk students to class.*

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Inclement Weather Dismissal Parent Information

Gulf Gate School

The district severe weather protocol states if there is a lightning strike within 8 miles of the school, inclement weather dismissal procedures will take place. The procedures will stay in effect until there is a full 30 minutes without a lightning strike. This is usually a last minute call with as quickly as out weather changes. In the event that inclement weather is occurring at school dismissal GGS will implement the following procedures to help ensure the safety of our students and staff:

- **Parents will be notified, by text, that the Inclement Weather Plan is in place**.
- We will begin movement of the parent pick up line at 3:00.
- Bus Riders and YMCA students will be dismissed first.
- Parents of students who are **bikers/walkers** or those **students who meet their parents across the street** from the school must line up and participate in our Parent Pick Up loop to pick up their child(ren). We will not allow students to ride bikes/scooters or walk children across the street when lightning is present. Rain does not qualify as inclement weather UNLESS lightning is detected.
- THE CAR LINE WILL BE ONLY ONE LINE. PLEASE HAVE YOUR CAR TAG VISIBLE.
- If you do not have your car tag, you will be asked to park and go into the office with your ID.
- Parents who are in their "cars" must:
  - Be patient—we are dismissing almost 600 students
- A GGS staff member will:
  - …come to your car, read the name of your child(ren) from your car tag, and radio the name of the student who is being dismissed to our main office.
  - …then bring your child to you

    Please continue to "move forward" as the car(s) in front of you move ahead.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation *and* for showing patience while we keep our students safe!

APPENDIX H
PARENT CLASSROOM OBSERVATION POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent process for parent/guardian classroom observations that supports positive home-school collaboration while protecting instructional time, student confidentiality, and the educational environment of all students.

General Guidelines

- Observation requests must be submitted in writing to the school administration at least five (5) school days prior to the requested observation date.
- The parent/guardian must provide a written statement identifying the specific reason(s) for the observation and the concern(s) to be addressed. The observation shall be limited to gathering information related to the documented concern(s).
- Observations must be scheduled in advance and occur only on a mutually agreed-upon date and time approved by the teacher and school administration.
- A standard classroom observation will be twenty (20) minutes in duration unless special administration approval is given.
- To minimize disruption to instruction, observations may not occur:
  - During testing or assessment periods;
  - During emergency drills or special school events;
  - During activities involving confidential student information;

A parent's request to observe their child's classroom may be limited in frequency based on the operational needs of the school. However, reasonable requests related to specific educational or safety concerns will be accommodated whenever practicable and in a manner that minimizes disruption to the instructional environment.

A classroom observation is intended to be informal, limited in scope, and focused solely on supporting parent engagement in their child's educational experience. Classroom observations are not intended to evaluate the performance of instructional or other school personnel. Any formal observations or evaluations of school employees will be conducted in accordance with applicable district policies and procedures.

Observation Expectations

- The parent shall follow all visitor management protocols in Policy 9.60, and any school-specific protocols.
- All classroom observations shall be supervised by a school administrator or administrative designee.
- Parents/guardians shall be escorted to and from the classroom by the assigned administrator or designee and must remain with that individual for the duration of the observation.
- Observers shall remain in the location designated by school personnel.
- Observers shall not interact with students, teachers, or classroom staff during the observation period.
- Observers may not record, photograph, videotape, livestream, or otherwise capture images, audio, or information involving students or staff.
- Observers shall maintain the confidentiality of information relating to other students.

- Any disruption of the educational environment may result in the immediate termination of the observation and may affect future observation requests.

Post-Observation Meeting

Following the observation, a conference may be scheduled with the appropriate school personnel, which may include, but is not limited to, school principal or designee, classroom teacher, and other school personnel, at a mutually agreed-upon date, time, and duration. Discussion during the conference will focus on educational matters, student safety, and any observations or questions related to the visit. If all topics cannot be addressed within the scheduled meeting time, an additional meeting may be arranged to continue the discussion.

Administrative Authority

The principal or designee shall have final authority regarding the scheduling, supervision, and implementation of classroom observations to ensure compliance with district procedures, student privacy requirements, school safety expectations, and the uninterrupted delivery of instruction.

This policy shall be implemented in a manner consistent with Florida law, Sarasota County School Board policies, and applicable student privacy protections.