

The cover features a large, light gray outline of a bulldog mascot in the background. The bulldog is standing on all fours, facing forward with its head slightly turned to the right. It has a thick, wrinkled face and a small, curled tail. The text is overlaid on this background.

Durham Student Handbook

2023-2024

Principal: Dr. Andy Bristow

Assistant Principals: Mrs. Kerri Bell and Mrs. Linda Corriveau

**2891 Mars Hill Road
Acworth, Georgia 30101**

HISTORY OF DURHAM

The land on which Durham is located was once the Durham family farm, a traditional row crop farm with cattle and small dairy. The school is named to honor Harvey and Bessie Durham, active and well-respected community members and parents to four children, Marjorie Durham Evans, Mary Durham Davis, Jimmy Durham, and Edward Durham. Harvey Durham served on the Mars Hill Church Road. The farmland was sold to Cobb County School District and Durham Middle School was built. Durham Middle School opened in 2000.

SCHOOL HOURS

Morning Tardy Bell – 9:10 AM

Afternoon Dismissal – 4:15 PM

The school day is from 8:50 AM to 4:15 PM. The front office hours are 8:00 AM to 4:45 PM. If you must enter the building before 8:50 AM, you must report to your assigned supervised area. No student should arrive before 8:15 AM. You are not to leave campus before school dismissal unless signed out by an authorized adult whose name appears on your registration form. You should leave campus at dismissal unless you are attending a staff supervised activity after school. Supervision is not available after 4:15 unless you are involved in an activity.

ARRIVAL

When you arrive, you should report to your homeroom class. This class begins at 9:10 AM. Attendance is taken, and announcements are made at this time.

LATE ARRIVAL

You will check in at the front office and receive a tardy pass before going to class. Excused tardies must have a note from a parent, doctor, dentist, etc. Unexcused tardiness to school or repetitive unexcused tardiness to class will result in disciplinary action.

For safety and security, students will have to show their student id before being allowed into the building after 9:15 am.

CAMPUS VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS

All visitors and volunteers on campus are required to show identification and “buzz in” at the front doors. Every visitor you encounter should be wearing a CCSD badge or a visitor’s sticker from the front

office. If you see anyone without a badge or sticker, alert the nearest staff member immediately.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

CCSD has adopted the following policy to address unexcused absences.

- After 3 Unexcused Absences – either your homeroom teacher or the pupil personnel clerk will contact your parent or guardian by telephone, email, letter, or through a parent conference.
- After 5 Unexcused Absences – a letter will be sent home to your parent/guardian expressing concern regarding your attendance and informing them that 7 or more unexcused absences could result in a referral to the School Social Worker for future assistance regarding attendance.
- After 7 Unexcused Absences – The School Social Worker will be consulted to determine if a referral is needed.

CELL PHONES and all other electronic devices

Cell phones and all other electronic devices (i.e. cell phones, tablets, iPods, PSPs, Smart watches, audio ear pieces/air pods, headphones, etc.) must be turned off, including the notification setting, upon arrival at school. Beginning at 8:50, all personal electronic devices must remain in the student’s bookbag until the end of the school day.

First Week of School students will receive a Warning and students will be allowed to place phone or device in bookbag.

After First week of school:

1st Offense: student will be sent to front office and phone will be placed in a secured location and student may retrieve the phone at the end of the day.

2nd Offense: student will be sent to front office and phone will be placed in a secured location; parent/guardian will be contacted and will have to come to school to pick up phone/electronic device.

3rd and additional offenses: student will be sent to front office and phone will be placed in a secured location; parent/guardian will be contacted and will have to come to school to pick up phone or electronic device: in addition,

the student will receive a referral and consequence(s).

GRADE REPORTING

The dates are available from the Cobb County School District website. In addition, you and your parents have access to your grades through an online grade reporting system, ParentVUE/StudentVUE. Information and logins are provided at the start of the year.

GRADING SCALE

A: 90 – 100 D: 70 - 73
B: 80 – 89 F: 69 and below
C: 74 - 79

HONOR ROLL

- Principal's Honor Roll – All A's in all classes
- Durham Honor Roll – All A's and B's in all classes

CONDUCT GRADES

You and your parents can monitor your conduct by reviewing your points on the PBIS Rewards website. The following interpretation of grades in conduct should be of help to you:

- Satisfactory – Conduct which generally follows classroom and school rules and does not interfere with the learning of others.
- Needs Improvement – Conduct that frequently causes class disruptions and does not always conform to classroom and school rules.
- Unsatisfactory – Conduct that consistently causes class disruptions or that interferes with the learning of others, and which often does not conform to classroom and school rules.

HOMEWORK

At the middle school level, homework counts toward your grade in each class. This is a difference between elementary and middle school. Homework is an extension of the skills introduced during the school day. Most is a review of the days classwork or assignment. For most purposes, student should be reviewing their lessons, vocabulary, and information in CTLs daily. Most often when a student has a homework assignment to complete it

is a result of him/her not completing work that was assigned during class time.

LUNCH

- Lunches cannot be charged. If you forget your lunch money, you may be provided an alternative meal (peanut butter sandwich/milk or cheese sandwich/milk).
- Free/reduced priced lunch applications are distributed on the first day of school and are available in the cafeteria during the year.
- Fast /restaurant items will not be delivered to the cafeteria, nor will we call a student out of class to retrieve a delivery of food that is dropped off or delivered to the school.
- You may use the computerized debit system to purchase lunch using the 6-7 digit student number. Payments into your lunch account may be made in person or online through My Payments Plus.
- Please visit the Food and Nutrition Services website for current meal prices, menus, nutrient analysis, staff contacts or make payments at www.cobbk12.org

Lanyards and IDs

For safety and security of all students and staff members, everyone must wear their issued student lanyard and id at all times while in the building. This allows the school to identify who should be in the building. In addition, students will use their id in the cafeteria, in the media center, and for getting into the building if they are late.

Students are not permitted to alter their lanyards or ids in any way. Lost or damaged lanyards and ids must be replaced.

The cost for a new lanyard is \$5.00

The cost for a new id is \$5.00.

DURHAM SCHOOL-WIDE BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

You will find that Durham Middle School is an outstanding place because of the cooperation and mutual respect among students, teachers, administrators, and parents. Respect means treating people with positive regard, keeping hands to self, acknowledging your rights and responsibilities as an individual and as part of a school community.

Durham has Four Behavior Expectations:

- **Be Punctual**
- **Be Prepared**

- **Be Cooperative**
- **Be Respectful**

Each teacher has these expectations and may also have additional rules specific to his/her class. Our most important rule, which falls under being respectful and cooperative is that all students must keep their hands to themselves at all times. Following this rule will help to keep you out of trouble and ensure a positive school day for everyone.

DURHAM POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORTS

Durham is recognized by the State of Georgia for our PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) Program. We utilize an online, app-based program, PBIS Rewards, to help students and teachers manage which students are eligible for rewards. Students can earn weekly Fun Friday time for being an outstanding Durham student and making excellent behavior choices. Our teachers and/or administration will also assign consequences for inappropriate behaviors. Detailed information about this program will be reviewed with students at the start of the school year and reviewed quarterly.

COBB COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BEHAVIOR POLICIES

Cobb County J-Policies concerning student behavior are provided to you via www.cobbk12.org, in this handbook, and in the Parent Information Guide. Disciplinary consequences will arise from behavior that violates the CCSD J-Policies. It is the student's responsibility to review these policies and be aware of content and consequences.

BUS CONDUCT

Buses are an extension of the school building. The Cobb County School J-Policies for behavior provided in this handbook and in the Parent Information Guide apply both at school and on the school bus. In addition, Durham participates in the Safe Rider Transportation Program. All students riding the school bus must have a signed contract on file with the bus driver.

STUDENTS RIGHTS/RESPONSIBILITIES

As Durham students, you have specific rights and responsibilities.

RIGHTS

- Be an individual
- Be treated fairly
- Be given a list of expectations and policies
- Make choices
- Learn in a safe environment
- Use the various areas of the school
- Know how you will be graded
- Know your grades
- Be absent for a legal reason and make up assignments you may miss
- Ride the bus to and from school safely

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Respect others as individuals
- Keep you hands to yourself at all times
- Treat others fairly and with respect
- Read and be familiar with all expectations and policies
- Accept the consequences of your decisions
- Do your part to help keep your school safe by reporting any unsafe or threatening conduct to a staff member immediately
- Follow the rules for the various areas of the school and keep them clean
- Come prepared and work hard
- Monitor your progress and do your best
- Bring a note for your absences, and make up work within the appropriate time limit
- Follow district and driver bus rules to keep your bus safe

CTLS

CTLS is updated regularly. Please check individual teacher pages for information regarding class work and homework assignments

CLINIC

The clinic is open 8:45 AM – 4:15 PM and is closed for lunch for 30 minutes.

MEDICATION

The official clinic form must be signed by the student, his/her parent/guardian and/or a physician before any medications, either prescription or over the counter, that is to be administered by the nurse. All medications, either prescription or over-the-counter, may be administered by the nurse. All

medications must be brought in their original containers with the student's name on it. No medications, even over-the-counter items such as Tylenol, Advil, etc.; can be shared with other students.

LIBRARY LEARNING COMMONS

The Durham Library Learning Commons offers an abundance of resources including more than 10,000 books, including digital audio and ebooks, more than 50 subscription-based online databases through *Cobb Digital Library*, print magazines and newspapers, and a Creation Station featuring project resources and supplies including a green screen for video production. For more information, check out the *Library Learning Commons* blog linked from the Durham website under *Menu* and *Resources*.

CARPOOL

Students are to be dropped off and picked up in carpool lanes along the sidewalk near the front of the building only. Cars should not enter the bus lane area in the morning or the afternoon. The full procedures are on our webpage.

INTRAMURALS

Listen to the morning and afternoon announcements and see the PE bulletin boards for information about intramurals. Intramurals are held in the morning before school between 8:15 and 8:50 AM. Students must be signed in by 8:20 AM in the gym in order to participate.

COUNSELING

The Durham counselors are here to help and support students in order for them to have the best school day possible. They are happy to meet with students to talk about organization, stress, friendship, career development, changes in family, or anything else students want to talk about. If a student wants to meet with a counselor, they will need to come to the office and fill out an appointment form, and a counselor will call him/her from class when she is available. If it's an emergency, please write that on the form. Counselors work with students in different ways, so they can meet individually or with a group. Sometimes they work with a whole class and will participate in an activity like "Career Cruising."

DRIVER'S LICENSES

Georgia law (TAADRA) requires that a school certify whether a student's attendance pattern and discipline record allow the student to have a Georgia driver's permit or license. Before applying for a

driver's permit, please print a report card from ParentVUE. Students must demonstrate good attendance and behavior to be eligible to obtain your learner's permit.

EMERGENCY DRILLS & ALARMS

When the fire or emergency alarms are sounded, students are to stop what they are doing, be absolutely silent, and follow a teacher's directions. There is NO TALKING during emergency drills. Every drill should be responded to as if it were the actual/real thing.

DURHAM DRESS CODE:

- Shirts must be worn at all times with a minimum of a 1-inch-wide strap and fabric in the front, back, and on the sides immediately under the armpits.
- Midriff shirts/blouses or crop-tops are not allowed.
- Appropriate bottoms including, dresses, skirts, shorts, pants, jean or the equivalent (sweatpants, opaque leggings)
- Shoes must be always worn. Shoes must be appropriate for the school. House shoes or house slippers are not allowed. With the variety of different brands of shoes that are like house shoes and house slippers, the decision on whether or not they are slippers will be up to administration or their designee.
- All undergarments must be covered and cannot be seen even through opaque garments.
- No caps, hats, or other head coverings or anything that covers the student's face (except items worn for a religious or medical purpose).
- Clothing or items not permitted: Any clothing, jewelry, or personal items that:
 - Are pornographic, contain threats, or that promote illegal or violent conduct such as the unlawful use of weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or drug paraphernalia.
 - Intentionally show private parts (nipples, genitals, buttocks). Clothing must cover private parts in opaque (not able to be seen-through) material.

- Demonstrate gang association/affiliation.
- Expose the Midriff (Midriff-shirts/blouses or crop-tops are not allowed).
- Pants, Shorts, Skirts, Leggings, etc that have holes between the upper thigh and the waist.
- Pajama Bottoms or similar type lounge wear is not permitted, the decision on whether they are pajama bottoms or lounge wear will be up to administration or their designee.
- Body Suits, Morph-suits, and/or Unitards are not permitted

1st Offense: teacher emails admin team or calls the front office and then send student to front office. An administrator or designee will meet with the student and determine if the dress code has been violated. The student will be given an opportunity to change their clothes if they brought additional clothes or will be provided with appropriate clothes that they can wear.

2nd Offense: teacher emails admin team or calls the front office and then send student to front office. An administrator or designee will meet with the student and determine if the dress code has been violated. The student will be given an opportunity to change their clothes if they brought additional clothes or will be provided with appropriate clothes that they can wear. In addition, the student will be told that this is their second offense, parent/guardian will be contacted, and any additional offense will result in a referral as well as consequence(s).

3rd or additional Offense: Parent will be contacted, student will be placed in ISS until parent/guardian can bring appropriate clothes, student will be written up and a consequence will be given based on student's actions.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students must dress out daily to participate in physical education. If a student is unable to participate in physical education for health reasons, the student must provide a parent/guardian's note with name, date, telephone number, and reason for the limited or restricted participation. A parent/guardian's excuse will be good for no more than 3 days. An excuse in physical education from

total participation of any duration or restrictive participation beyond 3 days must be confirmed by a doctor's note specifying the type of illness or injury and the nature and duration of the restriction. Schedules cannot always be changed. During the time a student is excused from participation, the student will do related written assignments (reports, worksheets, etc.) to earn their grade.

Students will not be allowed on the gym floor unless dressed out and wearing gym shoes.

The dress for physical education is as follows:

- Athletic shorts of appropriate length or athletic pants for cold weather
- T-shirt or sweatshirt for cold weather
- Athletic shoes and socks (Crocs or slides are not allowed for PE)

Students will be issued a PE locker to store their clothes and belongings.

- Purses/wallets/valuables should be locked inside the PE locker during class times.
- Students are not to share their PE locker combinations.

What if a Student...?

Needs to Make a Telephone Call – the student will get a pass from his/her teacher to come to the front office.

Need to Leave Class – Student are required to have a signed and dated pass from a teacher to leave their assigned area.

Need to Submit a Payment for a School Function – To make a school payment, pick up a student payment envelope in the front office, fill out the outer envelope, enclose payment, and place it into the slot in the safe located near the Media Center.

Have Been Absent – Within three days of a student's return to school, they must bring a note to either their homeroom teacher or to the front office. This note should be from their parent/guardian or their doctor note explaining the absence. Students are responsible for going on to CTLS or asking their teachers for make-up work. Requests to pick up work are granted for absences of three days or more and can be made through the front office on the morning of the third day. For extended absences due to illness, requests, for hospital/homebound help

can be made to the counselor. During any illness, students should check CTLS for missed assignments.

Miss the Bus – If a student misses the bus in the morning, their parents are responsible for bringing them to school. When bus riders are dismissed after school, students are expected to walk out to the bus and get on their bus. Students who miss the bus in the afternoon will report to the front office to call their parent/guardian.

Need to Leave School During the Day

Parent/guardians must show proper identification at check-out and must be listed in ParentVUE as a “released to” contact. A student must be present for half of the regular school day to be counted present. For safety reasons and to minimize disruption to our academic time there are no checkouts after 3:45 PM each day (12:45 PM on early release days). If a student needs to leave early, they will need to be checked out either before 3:45 PM (or 12:45 PM on early release days) or wait until the regular 4:15 dismissal (1:30 for early release days).

Arrive Tardy to School – If a student arrives at school after 9:10, he/she must sign in at the attendance office and present a note for the tardy to be counted as excused. Tardiness is determined by the same guidelines that determine an excused or unexcused absence: CCSD Board Policy JB-R. Multiple unexcused tardies will result in disciplinary consequences.

Have Lost Something – Lost and found items can be found in the front office or designated grade level areas.

Need to Withdraw from School – A student’s parent/guardian should come to the school in person to begin this process. A student will be given a withdrawal form to take around to classes to get checked off on items that must be returned. The form will then be taken back to the counseling office and the student will be given a copy for their parent/guardian to present when enrolling the student at their new school.