

Durham Middle School

Student Handbook 2024-2025

Mission: One Team, One Goal, Student Success

Vision: To achieve in arts, academics, and character

Behavior Expectations: Be Punctual, Be Prepared, Be Cooperative, and Be Respectful

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. The farmland was sold to Cobb County School District and Durham Middle School was built. Durham Middle School opened in 2000.

SCHOOL HOURS

School Day Begins in Homeroom – 8:50 AM

Morning Tardy Bell – 9:10 AM

Afternoon Dismissal – 4:15 PM

CAMPUS VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS

All visitors and volunteers on campus must show identification and “buzz in” at the front doors. Every visitor must 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

An excuse note must be provided to the front office within three days of a student's return to school. Per Cobb County’s Attendance Policy (JB-R), medical documentation may be required once a student has accrued three absences in one semester, which includes excessive parent/guardian excuse notes. CCSD has adopted the following policy to address unexcused absences.

- After 3 Unexcused Absences – Parent or guardian will be contacted by telephone, email, letter, or through a parent conference.
- After 5 Unexcused Absences – Parent or guardian will receive a letter expressing concern regarding student attendance and informing them that 7 or more unexcused absences could result in a referral to the School Social Worker regarding attendance.

- After 7 Unexcused Absences – The School Social Worker will be consulted to determine if a referral is needed.
- Tardiness is determined by the same guidelines that determine an excused or unexcused absence.

Students are responsible for checking CTLS (Cobb Teaching and Learning System) for assignment information. For extended absences due to illness, requests for hospital/homebound help can be made to the counselor.

Should a student need to leave school, parents/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. There are no checkouts after 3:45 PM each day (12:45 PM on early-release days).

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 and no unsatisfactory conduct.

CONDUCT GRADES

Conduct can be monitored by reviewing your points on the PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) Rewards website. The following interpretation of grades in conduct should be of help to you:

CONDUCT GRADES	S 0 Office Referrals	N 1 office referral	U 2 or more office referrals
0-2 Strikes	S	N	U
3-5 Strikes	N	N	U
6 or more Strikes	U	U	U

Conduct Grades are determined by student's conduct each grading period. The grade is determined by strikes and office referrals earned while in the academic class listed on the schedule/report card. Behavior during lunch and/or transitions is not reflected in the student's conduct grade for the class.

- **Satisfactory (S)**– Conduct that follows classroom and school rules and does not interfere with the learning of others.
- **Needs Improvement (N)**– Conduct that frequently does not conform to classroom and school rules causes class disruptions.
- **Unsatisfactory (U)**– Conduct that consistently does not conform to classroom and school rules and causes class disruptions or interferes with the learning of others.

CELL PHONES & ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cell phones and all other electronic devices (i.e., cell phones, tablets, AirPods/iPods, PSPs, Smartwatches, etc.) must be turned off, including the notification settings, upon arriving at school. Beginning at 8:50, all personal electronic devices must remain in the student's bookbag or locker until the end of the school day.

- **1st Offense:** student will be sent to front office, phone/device placed in a secure location, and student can retrieve device at the end of the day.
- **2nd Offense:** student will be sent to front office, phone/device placed in a secure location, and parent/guardian will be contacted to retrieve the device.
- **3rd and Additional Offenses:** student will be sent to front office, phone/device placed in

a secure location, parent/guardian will be contacted to retrieve the device, and the student will receive a referral & consequence(s).

*If student fails to report with the device to the office administrative consequences will apply.

FOOD & BEVERAGES

After 9:10 AM, any food or beverage with exception of water (in a spill-proof container) needs to be discarded.

LUNCH

- Please visit the Food and Nutrition Services website for questions, current meal prices, menus, nutrient analysis, staff contacts, or make payments into lunch accounts via My Payments Plus at www.cobbk12.org
- Fast food/restaurant items are prohibited

SUBMITTING A PAYMENT FOR A SCHOOL FUNCTION

Payments can be made on My Payments Plus, or by picking up a student payment envelope in the front office, filling out the outer envelope, enclosing the payment, and placing it into the slot in the safe located near the Media Center.

CARPOOL - See Full Procedures on the Durham Website

Students are to be dropped off and picked up in carpool lanes along the front of the building only. Cars should not enter the bus lane at any time.

CLINIC & MEDICATION

The clinic is open 8:45 AM – 4:15 PM and is closed for lunch for 30 minutes. Any medications, either prescription or over the counter, must be registered with an official clinic form. Please contact the nurse with questions and view CCSD Administrative Rules, JGCD-7 and JGCD-13.

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 to participate. Contact PE teachers with questions.

EMERGENCY DRILLS & ALARMS

When the fire or emergency alarms are sounded, students are to stop, be 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.

COBB COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BEHAVIOR POLICIES

Cobb County J-Policies concerning student behavior are provided to you via www.cobbk12.org 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 the content and consequences.

DURHAM DRESS CODE

To promote a safe environment that is aligned with our school expectations of being Punctual, Prepared, Cooperative, and Respectful, all students shall be required to maintain a standard of personal care and hygiene for the formality of the school environment. Students are to refrain from any mode of dress that may cause a disruption. In our efforts to maximize the focus on teaching and learning, we have listed outliers that will not be allowed.

- Clothing must cover private parts and shirts must be worn with at least a 1-inch-wide strap.
- Midriffs shall be covered.

- Appropriate under-garments shall be worn and may not be visible.
- Strapless garments shall be worn with a jacket.
- Tank-tops shall be worn with a jacket.
- No caps, hats, bandanas nor hoods covering the head are to be worn in the school buildings during the school day unless there is a special activity during which they are deemed appropriate by the school administration. Administrators shall evaluate requests to wear coverings in accordance with sincerely held religious belief on a case-by-case basis.
- Appropriate bottoms including dresses, skirts, shorts, pants, jeans, or the equivalent (sweatpants, leggings) must be worn and have no less than 4-inch inseams.
- Shoes must be worn. House shoes or slippers are not allowed. With the variety of assorted brands of shoes that are like house shoes and slippers, the decision on whether they are slippers will be up to administration or their designee.
- Clothing or items not permitted:
Any clothing, jewelry, or personal items that:
 - Demonstrate gang association/affiliation.
 - Displays or advertises substances illegal for minors.
 - Displays suggestive phrases, designs, markings, or profanities.
 - Advocates, promotes, or suggests illegal activity.
 - Pants, Shorts, Skirts, Leggings, etc. that have holes between the upper thigh and the waist.
 - Pajama Bottoms or similar 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

DURHAM SCHOOL-WIDE 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 hands to themselves at all times. Following this rule will alleviate disciplinary action 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 such as Fun Friday, for making excellent behavior choices. Consequences for inappropriate behaviors will be assigned as well. Detailed information about this program will be reviewed with students throughout the school year.

