

DICKERSON MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK 2025-2026

DICKERSON MIDDLE SCHOOL POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PLAN

At DMS, we are proud of our outstanding students. As a school, we want to encourage students to make positive choices and reward them for demonstrating EXCELLENT character and behavior.

FRESH AIR FRIDAY! Fresh Air Friday (FAF) is a 30-minute segment for students to be outside, move around, get some fresh air, and socialize with their friends. On a Fresh Air Friday morning, homeroom teachers stamp the Fresh Air Friday box on the behavior card indicating that the student is eligible to participate that day. The stamped behavior card serves as the student's "ticket" to Fresh Air Friday. Parents/guardians can monitor student behavior throughout the year by checking the quarter's behavior card for stamps or infractions.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Students receive infractions for inappropriate behavior. Infractions are recorded by teachers and staff on the student's behavior card in the back of this agenda.
- To be eligible for Fresh Air Friday, a student must earn a stamp by not having any infractions or having redeemed infractions (stamped/initialed by the teacher who originally assigned the infraction) as a result of corrected behavior.
- Students who have unredeemed or multiple infractions marked on their behavior card during the week are not eligible to participate in FAF activities.
- Students who do not earn FAF will remain inside under teacher supervision. Failure to report during this time will result in a consequence.
- Behavior cards document the student's conduct grades in each class: Satisfactory (S), Needs Improvement (N) or Unsatisfactory (U). Parents/guardians can monitor student behavior throughout the year.
- Parents/guardians should review the behavior card so that they are aware of their child's behavior and conduct grade in each class.
- The CCSD Student Code of Conduct for Middle School (JCDA-R) and the DMS handbook provide specific expectations, information and guidelines regarding student behavior at school.

LEVEL 1 INFRACTIONS are acts of misconduct that are addressed by the teacher and will be noted on the student's behavior card. If repeated, these infractions may result in a referral to the grade level administrator and a lowered conduct grade. Consequences for these behaviors are outlined below.

Level 1 Infractions include but are not limited to:		Consequences for Level 1 Infractions
Off Task in class	Failure to follow directions	1st Infraction – Student Conference 2nd Infraction – Parent/Guardian Contact 3rd Infraction – Teacher contact with student and parent/guardian phone call 4th Infraction – Office referral with phone call
Disruptive behaviors	Food	
Excessive Talking	Horse playing	
Tardy or Out of Area	Dishonesty	
Unprepared for class	Other	
Disrespectful behaviors		
Redeemed behaviors A teacher may choose to remove Level 1 infractions and "redeem" the student if his/her behavior improves during the week. The teacher who assigned the infraction has total discretion to decide whether or not to redeem a student's behavior and remove an infraction. Redeemed behaviors do not result in a lowered conduct grade.		

LEVEL 2 INFRACTIONS are intermediate or serious acts of misconduct which result in a referral to administration for discipline and a lowered conduct grade. Level 2 infractions are not documented on the student behavior card since the referral will be documented through the administrative referral process.

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SECTION 1 - ATTENDANCE

ARRIVAL / DISMISSAL / CARPOOL

Morning drop off begins at 8:00 AM. Students should not arrive at school before 8:00 AM. Homeroom begins at 8:45 AM with announcements and attendance. A student is considered tardy if they are not in homeroom by 9:08. Tardy students must sign in at the front office with a note.

Dismissal begins at 4:15 PM. The crossing guard will help our students walk safely across the street but IS NOT authorized to direct traffic. During carpool, please drop off and pick up children in the carpool lane along the sidewalk in front of the building only. Parents/Guardians **SHOULD NEVER** stop on Woodlawn Drive to drop off or pick up students. Drivers may be subject to tickets and/or fines.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

A student must attend more than half of the school day to be counted present.

Unexcused absences are addressed by:

- After 3 Unexcused Absences - The homeroom teacher will contact the parent/guardian.
- After 5 Unexcused Absences - A letter will be sent home to a parent/guardian to inform them that 7 or more unexcused absences could result in a referral to the school social worker.
- After 7 Unexcused Absences - The school social worker will be consulted to determine if a referral is needed.

CHANGE IN AFTERNOON TRANSPORTATION

Afternoon transportation plans should be arranged with your student before they arrive to school. In the case of emergency changes, call the front office (770-578-2710) before 4pm. Students can only be released to an adult who is listed as a student contact and is given permission. Enrolling parents and guardians can update the contact list in PVUE.

DMS SCHOOL HOURS

The school opens at 8:00 AM, and the school day is 8:50 AM to 4:15 PM. Students are counted tardy at 9:08 AM. The front office hours are 8:00 AM to 4:45 PM. Students are not to leave campus before dismissal unless signed out by an authorized adult. After dismissal is complete, all students should leave campus unless they are attending a staff supervised activity. If a student is not picked up by 4:30 PM, a parent/guardian must come into the school to sign them out.

EARLY CHECK OUT AND EARLY RELEASE

There are no check outs after 3:45 pm - no exceptions. To check a student out early, your name must be included in the computer system as someone the student may be released to, and you must have a valid photo ID. If the check-out is prearranged, the student must turn in a note to the front office upon arrival with the following information in the note:

- Student's first and last name
- Homeroom teacher
- Date and specific time of pick-up

- Reason for leaving school
- Parent/Guardian signature
- Name of person picking up student

Parents can check the emergency student contacts in Parent VUE. Directions are on the Dickerson website, www.cobbk12.org/dickerson.

SECTION 2 - ACADEMICS

COBB TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARDS

Cobb County teachers utilize the Cobb Teaching and Learning Standards to develop instruction in the areas of ELA, math, science, social studies, technical subjects and the fine arts. For more information, visit the CCSD website.

CONFERENCE WEEK

During conference week, parents will meet with one of their child's teachers to discuss their child's progress. DMS will be on an Early Release Schedule this week.

GRADE REPORTING AND GRADE SCALE

Parents/Guardians and students can access ParentVUE and StudentVUE to review student grades online. PDF copies of report cards may be printed from PVUE. Contact Mary Lefevre, Mary.Lefevre@cobbk12.org, if you need assistance with PVUE.

CCSD uses the following grade scale for grades 6-8:

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

HOMEWORK AND CTLS LEARN

Homework is an extension of skills introduced during the school day and counts toward the grade in each class. Students should use the agenda to record nightly homework assignments and to stay organized with assignments, quizzes, and tests. Students should check their teachers' class boards daily to stay informed of important classroom information. These are used as a tool to support students and parents at home.

HONOR AWARDS

DMS recognizes the hard work of their students. The following requirements must be met to earn recognition:

- Principal's Honor Roll - All A's in all classes and all S's in conduct
- Dickerson Honor Roll - A's and no more than two B's in all classes, and all S's in conduct.

LIBRARY LEARNING COMMONS

The Library Learning Commons is a student-centered space supporting student learning and success. Students can come individually with a pass or with their class. Students may check out books for up to three weeks. Books may be renewed if they are not on the reserved waiting list. Overdue notices will be sent every couple of weeks to help keep up with due dates. Students will be responsible for replacing lost/damaged books. Fees will be based on the current replacement cost for the book. If students have technical issues with their school issued laptop,

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they should enter a help ticket via the kiosk in the Library Learning Commons.

MAKE UP WORK

It is the student's responsibility to check CTLS when he/she has been absent. If an assessment was missed, the student should arrange a time with the teacher to make up the assessment. Student work is not provided early for families who take a personal trip during the year. Teachers will assign a grade of zero for any assignment missed. If possible, work can be made up when the student returns. However, please be aware that this is not an option at the end of the year, and final exams are not given early. Personal trips are considered an unexcused absence.

SECTION 3 - STUDENT BEHAVIOR

BUS CONDUCT

Buses are an extension of the school building. The CCSD J-Policies for behavior apply on school grounds, on the school bus, and at the bus stop. DMS participates in the Safe Rider Transportation Program. All students riding the school bus must have a signed contract on file with the bus driver.

CONDUCT GRADES

Parents/Guardians and students can monitor conduct grades by reviewing the behavior card. DMS uses the following interpretation for conduct grades:

- Satisfactory – A student receives no more than 2 infractions with conduct that generally follows classroom and school rules.
- Needs Improvement – A student receives 3 infractions with conduct that does not always conform to classroom and school rules.
- Unsatisfactory – A student receives more than 3 infractions with conduct that does not conform to classroom and school rules.

DMS BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

DMS is an outstanding place because of the cooperation and mutual respect among students, teachers, administrators, and parents/guardians. Respect includes the following:

- Respect for oneself and others, school and private property, the teaching and learning process.
- Keep hands and feet to oneself.

DMS students are LIFE-LONG LEARNERS by...

- Eating a healthy meal in the time given.
- Knowing the correct route to get to class.
- Following proper procedures and using the restroom appropriately.
- Knowing all bus information and following safety rules.
- Using laptops as directed.

DMS students are EMPATHETIC by...

- Speaking respectfully and being kind.
- Being aware of others' space and keeping your hands and feet to yourself.
- Respecting the privacy of others.

- Using good manners with the bus driver and peers.
- Treating all laptops with care.

DMS students are ACCOUNTABLE by...

- Keeping assigned area clean and free of trash.
- Carrying the needed materials and arriving on time.
- Washing your hands and leaving the restroom area clean.
- Being prepared and going directly to class.
- Staying seated and taking all belongings.
- Charging their devices nightly and using responsibly.

DMS students are DEPENDABLE by...

- Using appropriate table manners and talking quietly.
- Acting responsibly when outside the classroom.
- Reporting incidents and issues immediately to an adult.
- Listening to the bus driver and report any incidents.
- Staying on task and using correctly.

Carefully review the Student Code of Conduct for Middle Grades. Students are responsible for reviewing these policies and following them at all times at DMS.

DRESS CODE

All students shall maintain the following minimum standard of dress:

1. Appropriate shoes shall be worn. Slippers are not permitted.
2. Midriffs shall be covered.
3. Appropriate under-garments shall be worn and may not be visible.
4. Strapless garments shall be worn with a jacket.
5. Tank-tops shall be worn with a jacket.
6. Appropriate shorts, dresses, and skirts may be worn. The suggested length is 4-inch inseam or longer.
7. Pajama pants/slippers are not permitted.
8. Caps, hats, bandanas, hoods covering the head are not to be worn in the school building during the school day unless there is a special activity during which they are deemed appropriate by the school administration.
9. Clothing or ornamentation that does any of the following is prohibited:
 - a. Displays or advertises substances illegal for minors.
 - b. Displays suggestive phrases, designs, markings, or profanities.
 - c. Advocates, promotes, or suggests illegal activity.

STUDENT DEVICES

Students are expected to follow the CCSD Student Code of Conduct Policy for use of cell phones and smart watches. The only reason a student should use a cell phone, or a smart watch is if a teacher allows it for instructional purposes only. Students should not text or call parents/guardians during the day, and likewise, parents/guardians should not text or call students during the school day.

We do encourage all parents/guardians to opt in for a student laptop. Students use the laptops in most classes daily. Students are expected to charge their laptop at home nightly and bring their laptop to school every day. Laptops are intended for

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instructional use only. Students should use caution when transporting the device to and from school to keep it working properly.

Consequences for unacceptable use will follow the Dickerson Behavior Plan and Cobb County Board Policies. If damage is deemed excessive or repetitive, student may lose student device privileges.

SECTION 4 - GENERAL INFORMATION

AGENDAS

Students should bring their agenda to all classes because it serves as an assignment book, hall pass, reward incentive for positive behavior, record of conduct grades, and student handbook/policy manual. If lost, the replacement cost of an agenda is \$10.00 (cash only) and can be purchased through the front office.

CLINIC AND MEDICATION

The clinic is open from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM and is closed 30 minutes for lunch. A CCSD medication authorization form must be signed by a parent/guardian before any medications can be administered by the nurse. All medications must be brought to the clinic in their original containers with legible labels (over the counter and Rx), including the student's first and last name. No expired medications will be accepted, per CCSD policy. Email the nurse to schedule a time to drop off medications. Medications MAY NOT be shared between students (including over-the counter meds, such as Tylenol, Advil, etc.).

STUDENT RECORDS REQUEST

Parents/Guardians may request student academic records by contacting the Dickerson Records Clerk. Visit the Dickerson Counselors' website (Records & Enrollment tab) for required forms and procedures to follow based on your request. Please allow up to ten (10) school days for your request to be processed.

TEACHER EVALUATION/RECOMMENDATION REQUESTS

Parents/Guardians may request the completion of teacher recommendations and/or evaluation forms by contacting their child's grade level counselor. Visit the Dickerson Counselors' website (Records & Enrollment tab) for required forms and procedures to follow based on your request. Please allow up to ten (10) school days for your request to be processed.

COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

Dickerson counselors are available to support students and their families in a variety of ways, including individual sessions, small group sessions, and classroom lessons. Please refer to the Dickerson Counseling website for more detailed information.

How do students meet with a counselor?

Students may make an appointment or ask to speak with the counselor in the following ways:

- Links to online request forms are posted on the teachers' and counselors' CTLS pages, and the counseling website.

- Students may e-mail their counselor directly.
- Students may ask their teacher to e-mail the counselor for an appointment.

How do parents/guardians meet with a counselor?

Parents/Guardians may make an appointment to talk with their child's counselor by calling or sending an email to the grade level counselor.

LOCKERS

In middle school students are assigned lockers for music classes and PE. With this privilege there are also responsibilities:

- Know your own combination and only use your assigned locker.
- Keep your combination private from others.
- Use lockers to keep personal items secure.
- Lockers are school property. Administration has the right to search a locker and its contents at any time.

LOST AND FOUND

Each grade level and connections have their own lost and found. Items that are not claimed will periodically be donated to local charities.

LUNCH

- Student lunches are available for purchase.
- If a student does not have money in their account, two lunches may be charged without any extras. After that point, a student will receive an alternate lunch (peanut butter/cheese sandwich with milk).
- Free/reduced price lunch applications are distributed on the first day of school and are available in the cafeteria during the year.
- Please DO NOT have fast food brought in for lunch. Students will not be allowed to bring it in the cafeteria.
- Parents/Guardians may drop off forgotten lunches/water bottles on the cart by the front door before 11 am (by 10:25 am on early release days). Students should check the cart in the atrium on the way to lunch. We will not notify the student.
- Students will use their student ID number to purchase lunch. Money can be added to your child's account via mypaymentsplus.com. Payments can also be made in the cafeteria.
- Visit the Food and Nutrition Services website on the CCSD website for current meal prices, menus, nutrition analysis, staff contacts, or to make payments.

INTRAMURALS

Intramurals are held in the morning before school between 8:00 AM and 8:45 AM. Students must sign-in in study hall and be in the gym by 8:15 AM to participate. Watch the PE bulletin boards for information about intramurals activities.

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

All visitors on campus are required to show picture ID and "buzz in" at the front door. Visitors must sign in at the front office and

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always wear a visitor's sticker. *No one may visit instructional areas without an appointment preapproved by the principal.*

WHAT IF A STUDENT...

...Is Tardy? After 9:08 AM, students must have a note from a parent, to be considered excused. When they arrive at school, they will sign in at the front office and turn in their note. A parent does not need to walk in with them. For any kind of a doctor/medical appointment, please ask for an excuse note for school.

...Has Been Absent? CCSD policy requires that within 3 days of returning to school, a written excuse note, or an email should be sent to the attendance clerk from the parent/guardian or doctor with the date(s) and an explanation for the absence. You can enter a message in the link included in the automated attendance notifications you receive, or you can email our attendance inbox at dickersonmssupport@cobbk12.org (attendance related messages ONLY). Students should check CTLS for missing assignments and arrange a time with the teacher to make up missed assessments.

...Misses the Bus? If a student misses the bus in the morning, parents/guardians are responsible for bringing their child to school. If a student misses the bus from school, come to the front office to call a parent/guardian.

...Needs to Change Bus Arrangements? To ride a different bus or to get off the bus at a different stop, a transportation change form must be signed by a parent/guardian. This form is available on the CCSD website under the Department tab, Transportation, and turned into the front office 48 hours prior to requested date. Please note, not all changes can be granted. Without a signed pass, students must ride their own bus. These changes/passes are valid for one day only.

...Needs to Leave School During the Day? Students who need to leave school before dismissal should bring a note from their parent/guardian explaining the reason and time they will be picked up. This note should be brought to the front office in the morning. Students should come to the front office at the prearranged check out time to be picked up by a parent/guardian. The last time a student can be checked out in the afternoon is 3:45 pm.

...Needs to Make a Telephone Call? Students should get a pass from their teacher to go to the front office to make a call. Students may only call for medicine, lunch, or glasses. They are not permitted to call for laptops, assignments, or cell phones that were forgotten.

... An address/phone number changes?

You manage all your information in ParentVUE. Login to ParentVUE via a browser, Student Information.

...Requests Records/Recommendations/Medical Forms? Visit the counselors' page on the DMS website for updated information on how to request these documents.

...Needs to Withdraw from School? A parent/guardian should send a written request to the DMS Registrar for withdrawal indicating the last full day of school and the name of the new school. Students need to return all textbooks, library books, the school issued laptop, charger, and carrying case, and pay any accumulated fines. A withdrawal form will be emailed to the parent/guardian to present when enrolling the student in the new school.

...Has Technical Issues with the School Issued Laptop? Students should use the kiosk in the Learning Commons to enter a help ticket.

...Wants to Purchase a Yearbook? Yearbooks are sold before the winter break and are distributed at the end of the school year. Students must purchase yearbooks online to receive a book.

SECTION 5 - PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

DMS FOUNDATION

The mission of the DMS Foundation is to enhance Dickerson Middle School's ability to create meaningful, state-of-the-art educational experiences and to extend programming resources beyond those provided by the CCSD. The DMS Foundation has invested in Dickerson Middle School by providing many resources to support the staff and students. We hope all DMS families will continue to invest in and support the DMS Foundation. For more information about the DMS Foundation, visit www.dmsfoundation.com.

DMS PTSA

PTSA/PTA is the oldest and largest volunteer child advocacy organization in the United States. Established in 1897, the purpose of the PTSA was to promote health, safety, nutrition, welfare, protection and education of children. Your donations to the PTSA cover the costs of priority committee programs and operations for DMS. We operate in accordance with the PTSA bylaws. For more information on the Dickerson Middle School PTSA or to sign up to receive the E-blast newsletter, visit www.dickersonptsa.org.