

Ocee Elementary School Family Handbook 2011-2012



Deborah Pernice
Principal

Brooke Humphrey
Assistant Principal

4375 Kimball Bridge Road, Johns Creek, Georgia 30022
Phone: 770-667-2960 Fax: 770-667-2964
website: <http://www2.fultonschools.org/school/ocee>

Ocee Elementary School

2011–2012 Calendar

Aug. 15	First Day of School for Students
Aug. 18	New Parent Panel
Aug. 23	Curriculum Night for K, 2, 5
Aug. 25	Curriculum Night for PK, 1, 3, 4
Sept. 5	Labor Day Holiday – NO SCHOOL
Sept. 21	Hearing & Vision Screening for 1, 3, 5
Oct. 14	Fall Picture Day
Oct. 17	Conference Day – No School for Students
Oct. 24-28	ITBS Testing for 3, 5
Nov. 16	Thanksgiving Feast for PK, 1, 3, 4
Nov. 17	Thanksgiving Feast for K, 2, 5
Nov. 23-25	Thanksgiving Holidays – NO SCHOOL
Dec. 23-Jan 3	Winter Break – NO SCHOOL
Jan. 4	Teacher Work Day – No School for Students
Jan. 5	First Day of Second Semester
Jan. 16	Martin Luther King Day – NO SCHOOL
Feb. 17	Student/Teacher Holiday – NO SCHOOL
Feb. 20	Presidents' Day Holiday – NO SCHOOL
Mar. 9	Teacher Work Day – No School for Students
Mar. 13	Volunteer and Business Partners' Brunch
Mar. 16	Spring Picture Day
Apr. 2-6	Spring Break – NO SCHOOL
Apr. 11, 12, 13, 17, 18	CRCT Testing for 3, 4, 5
May 3	Field Day for PK, K, 1, 2
May 4	Field Day for 3, 4, 5
May 18	Last Day of School for Students



Ocee Elementary School

4375 Kimball Bridge Road
Johns Creek, Georgia 30022
770-667-2960

Welcome to Ocee Elementary School!

We are happy to have your child as a student at Ocee Elementary. He/she is going to have a lot of fun, make new friends, and learn many new things. Each year our students will have the opportunity to learn more about themselves, to learn more about other people in the world, and to learn from other students who are at our school.

Ocee Elementary School serves just under 750 students. We want you to know that we care about your child and that each student is very important to us.

Mission: In the Ocee Otter Community, we maximize our potential every day.

Vision: We envision Ocee Elementary to be a positive learning environment where ...

- motivated students learn with confidence
- dedicated teachers collaborate to ensure student success
- a supportive community recognizes all achievement

Values:

- We will collaborate and share our instructional strategies.
- We will consider the whole student: academic progress, social interactions, and self-concept.
- We will create common grade level expectations for learners.
- We will dedicate our efforts to help students become high achievers.
- We will design rich learning activities and use a variety of instructional strategies that promote critical thinking and self-evaluation.
- We will develop a high level of mutual support and trust among all members of the learning community.
- We will develop and use common assessments in order to fairly evaluate student learning and drive instructional decisions.
- We will foster open communication and develop positive relationships among staff, students, and community.

In order for our school to run smoothly and efficiently, the Family Handbook has been prepared to provide necessary guidelines. Please take a few minutes to read the handbook and familiarize yourself with our local school policies. We need your assistance and cooperation to provide continuity in a fair and equitable manner.

Educating your child is a mutual venture--together we will shape your child's future!

The Ocee Elementary School Faculty and Staff

Table of Contents

Page Numbers

School Calendar	Inside Front Cover
Accidents	4
Accelerated Reader (AR) Lab	4
Arrivals/Dismissals	4
Attendance	5
Birthdays	7
Bus Transportation	8
Cafeteria	9
Car Riders	11
Changes in Transportation/Dismissal	12
Clinic	13
Computers	13
Conferences	13
Counseling and Guidance	13
Curriculum Support Tacher (CST)	14
Day Care Riders	14
Differentiation/Continuous Achievement	14
Discipline	14
Dress Code	16
Emergency School Closing	17
Equal Opportunity	17
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)	17
Exceptional Children Services	18
Field Trips	18
Gifted Services	19

Grading	19
Home-School Communication	20
Homework	21
Illness	21
Informal Collaboration	21
Instructional Support Teacher (IST)	22
Local School Council (LSC)	22
Lost and Found	22
Media Center	22
Medication	23
Music	23
Parking	23
Parties	23
Parent Teacher Association (PTA)	24
Recess Policies	24
School Records	24
Social Worker	24
Student Accident Insurance	24
Student Information	24
Student Support Team (SST)	25
Telephone Use	25
Textbooks	25
Toys and Trends	25
Visitation	26
Volunteering	26
Who Can Provide Answers	27
Withdrawal Procedure	27
PTA Handbook	27
PTA Executive Board	28

ACCIDENTS

Safety precautions are always taken at school; however, accidents may happen. Necessary first aid will be administered, and a clinic slip will be sent home to inform you of clinic visits. Minor scrapes may be treated with first aid in the classroom; however, you will receive a clinic slip or be contacted by the clinic aide or teacher in all other situations. Please reinforce with your child that any accident not witnessed by an adult should immediately be reported to a teacher or the clinic aide. See “CLINIC” for additional information.

ACCELERATED READER (AR) LAB

The AR lab is open each morning at 7:10 for students in grades 1 through 5. It is staffed by Ocee staff members and trained volunteers; therefore, parents may not go with their children to the lab. Any parent interested in being trained to volunteer in the lab should contact the PTA AR committee chairperson.

ARRIVALS/DISMISSALS

The school day for students begins at 7:40 a.m. Students may enter the school building beginning at 7:10 a.m. Students should not arrive before that time unless they are participating in a school-sanctioned activity under the direct supervision of a teacher or administrator. Students who arrive prior to 7:10 a.m. are expected to wait outside in front of the school in the carpool lane with a parent and will not be admitted into the building. **You may check with the YMCA to see if they are providing before school care.**

After the first day of school, parents may not walk their children in grades 1 through 5 to their classrooms. Parents of kindergartners may walk their kindergarten students to class for the first three days of school. School staff members will be in the halls to assist students each morning. If it is necessary for your child to leave school early, please send a note to his/her teacher. This helps the teacher in making sure your child has all of his or her homework and materials ready at the appointed time. Any student leaving before the regular dismissal time must be signed out through the office by a parent or legal guardian. **Do not go directly to your child’s room—for safety reasons, teachers are instructed not to dismiss students to adults at their doors.** We cannot have a child sent up to the office to wait for you at the appointed time. The front office area is a very busy area, and we will not be able to provide adequate supervision for your child. We will instead call the child once you arrive. Students may be checked out by a parent designee with prior verification and picture identification. Be prepared to show your driver’s license when checking out students. For the safety of your child, please notify the school in writing if both parents are out of town, and someone else will be acting as guardian in your absence. **No students may be checked out after 2 p.m., as changes made during the dismissal process may result in confusion and ultimately unsafe conditions.**

Dismissal procedures begin at 2:20. Students must be responsible and remember all necessary items (i.e., homework, jackets, books, musical instruments, etc.) as students and parents are not allowed access to classrooms following the last dismissal bell of the day for safety reasons.

ATTENDANCE

Regular and punctual attendance is essential for school success. Students who are absent from school are deprived of a variety of valuable educational experiences. Students attend school 177 days per year. A student must be present for at least half of the instructional day (3 hours) to be counted present. If students accrue 5 or more unexcused absences or are excessively tardy, additional measures may be taken to ensure that children are in school and on time. The school social worker may be called to intervene when a child has numerous absences or is tardy often.

Absences

Fulton County board policy on excused student absences is as follows:

A student's absence from school or class will be considered excused when it is due to any of the following circumstances:

1. Personal illness of the student.
2. Attendance at school would be detrimental to the health of the student or others.
3. A serious illness or death in the student's immediate family necessitating absence from school.
4. Compliance with a court order or an order issued by a governmental agency, including an order for a pre-induction physical examination for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school.
5. Observance of religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
6. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to the student's health or safety.
7. Absences not exceeding a cumulative total of six (6) days per school year for the following reasons, **but only if the absence has been pre-approved by the principal or designee:**
 - a. scholarship interviews/college visitations
 - b. travel opportunity with educational benefits
 - c. graduation or wedding of an immediate family member
 - d. specialized educational experience
 - e. other circumstances that are mutually agreeable to the parent and principal
 - f. up to 5 of these days can be used to visit with a parent or guardian who is on leave from or is being deployed to military service overseas.
8. Up to ten (10) instructional days (60 instructional hours) per year for school-sponsored, non-instructional activities (defined as functions during the school day that are under the auspices or sponsorship of a school or the school system) that are specifically approved in advance by the principal or designee. The principal shall ensure that an accurate record of all such absences is maintained.
9. School days missed as a result of an out-of-school suspension.
10. An absence not to exceed one-half day for registering to vote. Students may register to vote at their high school.

A student's absence from school or class for any reason other than those listed above will be considered an unexcused absence. If an absence meets these requirements, a student must bring a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian the day the student returns to school. If no note is received, the absence is recorded as unexcused. No absences during standardized testing will be excused except in an emergency situation. **If a note is not received within three days of the student returning to school, only a doctor's note will be accepted for a medical excuse. If a student accumulates five or more days of unexcused absences from school, the parent is placed in violation of the state law.** This is a misdemeanor and the parent could be subject to one or more of the following penalties:

1. a fine of not less than \$25.00 and not greater than \$100.00
2. imprisonment not to exceed 30 days
3. community service

Unexcused absences of five or more days will result in a letter of notification from the school, and continued unexcused absences may result in a referral to the social worker.

Tardiness

Students are considered tardy if they arrive in the classroom after 7:40 a.m. In order to start the day smoothly and minimize the interruptions caused by late arriving students, please see that your child is on time. If you do not see the carpool monitors out front, you will know that the bell has rung. At that point, it will be necessary for you to walk your child into the building and sign your child in to school. Students riding Fulton County Board of Education buses will not be counted tardy if the bus arrives late. Excessive tardiness (ten or more) in grades K-5 will result in a letter of Notification of Excessive Tardiness from the school. Continued tardiness may result in a referral to the school social worker.

When a student arrives in the room even five minutes late, it is disruptive to his or her learning, as well as to the learning of the entire class. Although the child is only five minutes late, it takes him or her up to 10 minutes to unpack and get ready for the day. During this time the class has been involved in instructional time. If a child is even later than that, it is almost impossible to make up the instruction with its full impact. Please show that you value your child's education and make a commitment to have him or her at school on time each and every day.

Make-up Work

If a student is absent for 2 or more days, work may be requested the 2nd day of the absence before 8:15 a.m. Should you desire to pick up work for a child during an absence, you may request it in person, by phone, or by letter to the school office. Material may be sent home with another student, or you may pick it up after 2:30 p.m. at the front desk. This gives the teacher adequate time during the school day to organize needed materials.

In the case of planned absences, teachers are NOT required to provide students with work in advance. Although teachers may be able to provide some assignments for the student to work on, the majority of what is taught in the classroom requires the student's presence and cannot be replaced with worksheets. Therefore, it is recommended that absences from school be kept to a minimum.

Upon returning from an absence, it is the student's responsibility to contact the teacher to request make-up work. The contact should be made on the day the student returns to school. Missing assignments will be provided to the student. Make-up work must be completed by the student within the time specified by the teacher. Elementary students will receive the actual grade earned on any make-up work submitted on time.

BIRTHDAYS

We love to help celebrate the birthdays of our students. On or around your child's birthday, you may choose to send in treats for your child's homeroom class as part of your celebration. This is completely optional. We ask that all treats are sent to school already individually wrapped. These could be food treats, such as cookies, brownies, or small bag of snacks such as Chex Mix. Birthday treats could also be non-food treats, such as a pencil or a few fun stickers. The individual wrapping will enable the birthday treats to be distributed quickly and easily by the classroom teacher. Just drop the class set of items off at the front desk, and the teacher will distribute them to the students. No birthday treats may be distributed to students in the cafeteria or by the parent.

If you choose to send in food treats, we ask that you refrain from including any type of nuts in the treats that you share, so that they can be enjoyed by more students. Please see the list below of nut-free snacks if you would like guidance in selecting a treat for your child's birthday. We look forward to celebrating our students' birthdays all year long! **Party invitations will not be distributed in school** (even for those cases where the entire class is invited). Families who join the PTA are provided with a directory that contains student addresses.

Peanut and Nut Free Dry Snacks

(These snacks are not made on any shared equipment.)

GUMMY SNACKS:

(Not Brachs...they are made on shared equipment)

Betty Crocker or Nabisco Fruit flavored

Surf Sweets Gummy Bears from: NaturalCandyStore.com

Life Saver Gummies

CRACKERS:

Honey Maid Grahams and Sticks

Ritz Simply Social Original

Ritz Crackers (PLAIN ONLY – not sandwiches)

Keebler Club Crackers (ORIGINAL ONLY – not sandwiches)

Sunshine – Cheese Its

Nabisco Wheat Thins

Pepperidge Farms Goldfish

COOKIES:

Nabisco Nilla Wafers

Nabisco Barnum Animal Crackers

Rice Krispie Treats (PLAIN ONLY)

Oreos and Mini Oreos (NOT MINT CRÈME)
Chips-AHoy Chocolate Chip Cookies
Teddy Grahams
Cherrybrookkitchen.com (peanut free/nut free cookies and cakes)

SALTY SNACKS:

Rold Gold Pretzels (NOT SYNDERS BRAND)
Ruffles Potato Chips
Lays Potato Chips
Doritos (NOT CRACKERS)
Cheetos
Pringles (ONLY ORIGINAL)
Popcorn (ONLY POP SECRET OR REDENBACHER PLAIN)

CANDY:

Starburst
Skittles
Dum Dum Lollipops
Tootsie Rolls
Tootsie Pops
Smarties
Chocoley.com (peanut/nut free chocolates)

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Safe school transportation is considered an important part of the total educational program. Riding a school bus is a privilege contingent upon proper, courteous conduct.

Bus Conduct

Students may be subject to disciplinary procedures when bus safety rules are violated. These may include assigned seats and/or suspension from riding the bus for one or more days. The following rules must be followed:

1. Students are to behave appropriately on the bus as well as at the bus stop and follow the bus driver's directions.
2. Students are expected to display respectful behavior to each other and the driver at all times. Bullying, teasing, horseplay, play fighting, name calling, etc., will not be tolerated.
3. Students are expected to sit where the bus driver instructs them to sit.
4. Students may not eat, drink, or chew gum while on the bus.
5. Students are to remain in their seats while the bus is in motion, facing forward at all times. Hands and feet are to be kept out of the aisle.
6. Live animals and insects are not permitted on the bus.
7. Glass objects, radios, electronic equipment (pagers, games, etc.) are not permitted on the bus. Under no circumstances are laser pointers allowed on the bus or in school.

8. Large instruments or anything that cannot be held in the lap are not permitted on the bus.
9. All body parts must remain inside the bus windows at all times.
10. Toys, stuffed animals, and any other personal belongings brought to school should stay in students' book bags at all times.
11. Additional information is provided in the Fulton County pamphlet, "School Bus Safety Rides With You." Please read this pamphlet and discuss bus behavior expectations with your child. If your child's driver believes that your child's behavior is inconsistent with Fulton County expectations, you will receive a Bus Behavior Report.

Please note the following Fulton County Board of Education Policy as it refers to buses:

Students shall be prohibited from using items during the operation of a school bus in a manner which might interfere with the school bus communications equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the bus. These items include but are not limited to cell phones; pagers; audible radios; tape or compact disc players without head-phones; mirrors; lasers, or flash cameras. Cell phone use will not be allowed during the operation of the bus because it interferes with the operational technology. However, they may be used with the special permission of the principal, supervising teacher, or bus driver while the student is on the bus waiting to depart the starting location or when the bus returns to its final destination after athletic events, field trips, or other special situations deemed appropriate by the principal, supervising teacher, or bus driver. (Consequences may include confiscation of a device.)

The Fulton County Board of Education recognizes that safe school bus operation is only possible with the full cooperation of our parents, students, and school staff. Call the North Transportation Department (770-667-2970) with questions or concerns regarding bus routes, times, and bus supervision. There is also a website link available at www.fultonschools.org with bus information.

Bus Changes

- ◆ Students must get on and off the bus at their own stop only. **Students may not ride another bus for the purpose of visiting a friend.**
- ◆ If it is necessary to change buses due to a childcare situation, written authorization must be granted by the Fulton County Transportation Department.
- ◆ **IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS ONLY**, the principal or her designee may grant bus changes. Parents must send a written request to an administrator. The method of transportation will not be altered without a written request from a parent and approval from the administration.
- ◆ A student who ordinarily rides the bus but desires to go home with a friend who is a car rider must bring written permission from his/her parent. We will not allow any changes in transportation unless we have written communication from the parent.

CAFETERIA

- ◆ Nutritious, well-balanced meals are served in our cafeteria.
- ◆ Breakfast will be served from 7:10 a.m. until 7:35 a.m. for those who wish to participate.
- ◆ There are multiple choices of entrees for lunch.
- ◆ A weekly menu will be provided for planning your child's meals. Meals may be purchased daily or

prepaid. Any amount of money may be prepaid and put in a student’s account at any time. Some parents prefer to prepay for lunches only. Other parents prepay for lunches and extras. Either is acceptable. Checks should be made payable to Ocee School Cafeteria, and the student’s name should appear on the check in the space marked, “For.”

- ◆ Parents can also manage their children's meal accounts online by using Mealpay Plus at www.mealpayplus.com. Ocee ES will send home more detailed information on how to use this service at the beginning of the year.
- ◆ Meals may be charged in an emergency situation only; however, charges must be paid the following day, and no more than three charges can be allowed. Charges are not allowed for juice, extra milk, or any extra food. No charges or checks will be allowed for the last month of school.
- ◆ We encourage nutritious lunches; therefore, sodas, canned drinks, candy, etc., are not appropriate. Parents are discouraged from bringing commercially prepared food (for example: McDonald’s, Pizza Hut, etc.) to the cafeteria to be eaten by their child or other students.
- ◆ **After the first two weeks of school**, you may eat breakfast or lunch with your children. (However, if your child’s birthday falls during the first two weeks, you may have lunch with him/her on that day.) A visitor’s table will be available for parents who wish to lunch with their child and one friend, or you may eat with your child’s class if space permits.
- ◆ When having lunch at school, please follow our “Greet and Good-bye” procedures. Check in at the office and obtain a visitor badge. Enter through the main doors as the cafeteria doors will be locked throughout the day, and visitors will not be allowed to enter there. “Greet” your child at the cafeteria and say “good-bye” at the cafeteria door. In no case are visitors to go to the classroom to wait for the child or return to the classroom after lunch unless prearranged with the teacher. This constitutes an interruption to the instructional day of all students in the class.
- ◆ Parents are asked not to eat lunch with their children during the five days of CRCT standardized testing in April.

School meal prices:

Elementary Student Breakfast	\$1.05
Elementary Student Reduced Breakfast	\$0.30
Elementary Student Lunch	\$2.10
Elementary Student Reduced Lunch	\$0.40
Adult Breakfast	\$1.55
Adult Lunch	\$3.15
Milk or Juice	\$0.50

Our cafeteria behavior rules for all students are as follows:

Enter the Cafeteria Appropriately

- ◆ Use inside voices.
- ◆ Walk in line.
- ◆ Stay in your own space in line.

Show Good Table Manners

- ◆ Sit in your chair and face the table.
- ◆ Raise your hands if you need something.
- ◆ Stay in your own space.
- ◆ Eat only your own food. Don't trade or share with others.
- ◆ Don't play with food.

Keep an Appropriate Noise Level

- ◆ Use inside (restaurant) voices.

Exit the Cafeteria Correctly

- ◆ Leave the table and floor spaces clean.
- ◆ Stack your trays neatly.
- ◆ Throw away all of your trash.
- ◆ Walk quietly in line.
- ◆ Wait quietly for your teacher to pick you up.

We appreciate your support in making the Ocee Café a place where everyone can be safe and enjoy the lunch period. We ask that you help with this by following our guidelines below:

- ◆ Take no more than one friend with your child to the back tables when you come to lunch. If your child would like to eat with more than one friend when you come for lunch, please join your child at the regular cafeteria table.
- ◆ If you do eat at the back tables, children must remain seated and continue to follow the cafeteria rules. They may not leave the cafeteria or play on the stage steps. If you have to leave before your child's lunch time is over, please walk your child back to the regular cafeteria table to sit for the remainder of the lunch period.
- ◆ Keep a watch for the dismissal of your child's class. At that time, assist your child and his or her friend with throwing away all trash and returning any trays to be washed. They can then join the class line just outside the cafeteria.

CAR RIDERS

Arrival

1. Children are dropped off and picked up at the front of the school following the designated traffic pattern.
2. Cars should form a single line in front of the school where they will stop for children to enter or exit the car.
3. In order to facilitate the unloading or loading of car riders, we ask that you pull all the way to the end of the walkway as directed by duty personnel before stopping to let your children out or in.
4. **Children are not permitted to exit driver's side doors.**

5. **Children may not be dropped off in the parking lot since they are not permitted to cross through the parking lot without an adult accompanying them.**
6. **If your child should need assistance getting out of the car in the morning or if your child needs to unload items, please park and walk him/her across. Do not block the handicapped parking spaces – use a designated parking space only.**
7. Cars have the “right-of-way” in the carpool line, as we are trying to get the line to move as quickly as possible. If you are walking across the carpool lane, wait for the crossing guard to tell you when to cross.
8. **Cars must not park in the pickup or dismissal area along the front curb.**
9. **Use slow speed at all times.**
10. **Please adjust your time from home on rainy days when there is a higher volume of cars and wait time. We encourage you to allow your child to ride the bus if possible.**
11. Fulton County Schools’ behavior expectations continue during carpool.
12. No children can be dropped off on the State Bridge side of the building and walk around on their own for safety reasons.
13. There is no parking in the bus lane.

Dismissal

1. All persons picking up a child at afternoon carpool at any time during the year must have and display a carpool number. This number may be obtained at Open House or through a request to the front office. Please do not make your own carpool number card if you lose the one provided. Instead, request an additional copy from the office.
2. All those picking up a child at afternoon carpool are encouraged to wait in their cars and come through the carpool line. If you choose to park and walk over to the carpool area to pick up your child, you will need to park in a designated parking space and have your carpool number in hand. Do not park on the curb, double park, or block the handicapped parking area.
3. Pickup in the carpool area begins as dismissal starts, usually around 2:20 p.m. All students who are car riders should be picked up no later than 2:40 p.m.
4. When your car pulls into the curved area at the front of the building, your carpool number will be relayed inside where the students are waiting safely in designated areas. Please pull as far up as you can so that we can accommodate as many pickups as possible in a given time period. Your child will then come outside and be able to get into the car. The same will be true for those who walk into the area with their carpool numbers—your child will only be called once you reach the pickup area.
5. Once the cars in the pickup area have children safely buckled in, drivers are free to pull off and another set of cars will take their place. At that time the next set of children will be called. Cars take precedence over pedestrians during the afternoon carpool time, so pedestrians will need to wait to cross the carpool lane until all cars are stopped and ready for pickup.

CHANGES IN TRANSPORTATION/DISMISSAL

If there is a change in the manner in which a child is to leave school, the teacher must receive a note from the parent stating the change; otherwise, the child will be sent home in the usual manner. All changes must be sent to the school in writing. We cannot accept changes over the phone. This is for your child’s safety. **While**

we can accept dismissal changes via e-mail, we cannot accept them the day of the change. There is no guarantee that a teacher will be able to check his or her e-mail before dismissal, and some e-mail deliveries are delayed. Please do not call the school with changes unless it is an emergency. Please note that children may not ride any bus but their assigned bus except in emergencies, and permission from the principal or the Transportation Department is required.

CLINIC

Our clinic is not staffed or equipped to handle serious injury or illness. When your child requires more than first aid, we will contact you by using the Clinic Emergency Information. Therefore, it is essential that student records be kept up-to-date. Please notify the school office immediately of any change in address, telephone numbers, and emergency contacts. Notify the school in writing if you are out of town, and your child will be under the supervision of another adult in your absence. Provide the information to your child's classroom teacher and the office. (See Medication and Illness.)

COMPUTERS

At Ocee Elementary, our students have access to many valuable instructional technology tools as well as Internet access in our media center, technology labs, and classrooms. Our goal is to teach students to utilize these electronic resources to enhance their learning. Computers provide the opportunity for students to have hands-on experiences with technology and receive enhanced instruction through the use of educational software and programs through the Fulton County network. Interactive White Boards in classrooms and in the computer lab provide students with an additional approach to learning that is both current and meaningful.

All students must have a signed Internet use form on file at the school each year in order to use any school technology. These forms are provided at the beginning of the year to every student and outline the guidelines for appropriate use of school technology resources that must be followed by each child.

CONFERENCES

Parent/teacher conferences are an integral part of reporting and monitoring pupil progress. The school and teachers are partners with you in the education of your children; therefore, it is important to regularly share information. A parent/teacher conference is scheduled for the first semester of the school year, and additional conferences may be scheduled as necessary. **Please be mindful that teachers are responsible for their students from 7:10 a.m. until the last bus leaves. Therefore, they are not able to conference with parents during the school day unless the conference has been prearranged during their planning period.** Conferences may be initiated by the parent, teacher, or an administrator and held at a mutually agreeable time.

COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE

The mission of Fulton County School Counselors is to help leaders of tomorrow begin their success today.

Through the implementation of a comprehensive guidance program, Fulton County School Counselors provide strategies that support and enhance academic achievement. Some of these strategies may include activities/lessons on study skills, test preparation, organization tips and time management skills. Small group counseling may be provided on such topics as classroom motivation, stress reduction and study skills. Sessions dealing with the affective development as it impedes academic performance may also be offered. Classroom guidance activities and small group topics are determined by the needs of the students at a particular school setting. Short term individual counseling support and crisis counseling are also available with the counselors providing resources for community providers, if requested. Counselors also serve as consultants for both parents and teachers.

The Guidance and Counseling Program supports the academic, career, and social/emotional development of all students by providing strategies and information that will enable them to be successful within the school environment, the larger community and the world. If you have questions regarding the counseling program at our school, please contact the school's counselor.

CURRICULUM SUPPORT TEACHER (CST)

The Curriculum Support Teacher (CST) is responsible for helping teachers implement the Fulton County Curriculum. The CST is involved in selecting textbooks, curriculum writing, working with teachers in organizing classrooms and suggesting learning strategies for students. The CST is an active participant on the Student Support Team. New students entering the school may be evaluated by the CST for suggested placement within language arts and math programs. If you have questions involving curriculum, please contact the CST for information.

DAY CARE RIDERS

Students riding day care vehicles will load in the bus loading area of the school; some day care vehicles with smaller loads may use the carpool lane. Cars arriving to pick up students should not park in the area designated for the buses along the curb on the side of the building. If a student is absent from school or will not be attending day care for any reason, the parent must notify the day care provider.

DIFFERENTIATION/CONTINUOUS ACHIEVEMENT

Ocee follows county guidelines for determining placement in advanced curriculum.

DISCIPLINE

The Ocee staff believes in providing a school environment in which students are able to learn and teachers are able to teach. Optimal learning takes place in an atmosphere of mutual respect, high expectations, encouragement, and positive motivation. Discipline is defined as a process of helping students understand

what they have done that is inappropriate and learning how to correct the inappropriate behavior. Students are taught to take responsibility for their behavior and to accept the consequences for inappropriate behavior. Furthermore, students should learn how to change or adjust behavior in the future. Student discipline is a joint responsibility of the school and home. Your support for good discipline enables the school to maintain a wholesome environment conducive for learning for all students.

Love and Logic – All Ocee staff members have been trained in the Love and Logic approach to discipline. According to the book, *Teaching With Love and Logic: Taking Control of the Classroom* by Jim Fay and David Funk, “Love and Logic is an approach to working with students that:

- Puts teachers in control
- Teaches kids to think for themselves
- Raises the level of student responsibility
- Prepares kids to function effectively in a society filled with temptations, decisions, and consequences.”

The Love and Logic approach, which can be explored at <http://www.loveandlogic.com/>, encourages teachers to establish real connections with students. Students are shown that their presence in school matters, and their learning matters. When students are having difficulties with behavior, recovery time is provided to help students get back on track. When discipline infractions occur, the consequences are created for that specific child and situation. There is a parenting component to Love and Logic which can be explored as well by interested parents.

Minor Offenses – Teachers deal with minor offenses as they occur during the instructional day. They use interventions such as positive reinforcement, verbal reminders, parent conferences, time out, time out in other classrooms, individual action plans, referrals to the school counselor, referrals to SST, etc.

Major Offenses – Administrators deal with major offenses and chronic minor offenses. They use interventions such as, but not limited to, administrative time out, parent conferences, out-of-school suspension, referrals to school counselors, and referrals to the Disciplinary Tribunal.

Discipline Plan Guidelines – A detailed copy of the Fulton County Student Discipline Guidelines is provided to each student to share with his/her parents at the beginning of each school year. You are requested to read and review discipline policies with your children.

Prohibited Items – Students may not bring gum, trading cards, Silly Bandz, electronic games, radios, CD players, iPods or MP3 players to school. If they are brought to school, they will be confiscated and will have to be picked up by a parent or guardian. Repeated offenses may result in disciplinary action by the school.

Cell Phones – Students may keep cell phones only in their backpacks. They cannot be kept in pockets, desks, lunch bags, or binders. They cannot be visible, turned on, or used at any time during the school day. Cell phones that are visible, ring, or are used by students during the day will be confiscated and held in the assistant principal’s office until picked up by the parent or guardian. Repeated cell phone offenses may result in disciplinary action by the school.

Threats – Per the Fulton County Discipline Handbook, students may not threaten to harm other students,

staff members, or school property. All threats are taken seriously, even if the child says that he/she was “joking.” For this reason students must be very careful with what they say and do at school. Some actions, such as imitating the sound or motions of weapons, are considered threats as well. Please work with the school in helping your child understand the serious consequences of threatening phrases or expressions that they may use without thinking.

Weapons:

- ◆ Georgia law requires school officials to report incidences of weapons being brought to school to law enforcement officials. Students who bring weapons to school may be subject to arrest. To avoid any possibility of unintentional violations, do not allow your child to bring any item that resembles a weapon or may qualify as a weapon. This includes items such as steak knives, pocket knives, box cutters, mock weapons, replicas, or toys. Students do not have permission to bring any such items to school for any reason, not even as part of a school assignment, show and tell, or for use as a cutting instrument for food.
- ◆ Special permission with strict procedures may be granted by the principal for bringing certain items for instructional purposes. The teacher of the class or sponsor of the activity where the item will be used or shown can provide the parent with a form that must be completed and signed by the principal prior to bringing the weapon on campus. Any students bringing weapons on campus without having the form previously completed and signed will be subject to all applicable Fulton County Discipline Procedures. If you have any questions regarding weapons, please contact an administrator for further clarification.
- ◆ For cooking or other school-sponsored activities, parents sometimes bring knives or other kitchen tools that could be construed or used as weapons. Parents bringing these items on campus are responsible for them and must ensure that they are not used by students at any time, nor may students have access to them at any time when they are not in use by the adults. Therefore, please keep them out of sight and reach of students when not in use. In these situations, please be careful and watchful so that everyone can be safe.

DRESS CODE

Students are expected to groom themselves in such a way as to reflect neatness, cleanliness, and good taste. All students shall be modestly groomed so as not to distract the attention of others or to cause disruption or interference with the educational program or the orderly operation of the school. Extremes in dress will not be permitted. The principal or other duly authorized school official shall determine whether any particular mode of dress or grooming results in violation of the spirit and intent of this rule.

Ocee School Dress Code (Per FCBOE Policy)

- ◆ No short-shorts or mini-skirts are to be worn. Shorts and culottes must be worn at fingertip length. Bicycle shorts, athletic shorts, or cut-offs are not appropriate.
- ◆ No hats, curlers, bandannas, sweat bands, sunglasses, or gloves are to be worn during school hours. This applies to both male and female students. (Hats may be permitted on school Spirit Days).

- ◆ No face paint, painted hair or face tattoos.
- ◆ No bare midriffs, spaghetti strap tank tops, fishnet shirts, T-shirts with ripped sleeve openings or other ripped clothing, or see-through clothing is to be worn.
- ◆ All T-shirts must be in good taste. No suggestive wording or illustrations or advertisements for alcoholic beverages or pictures or content that may be offensive to others will be allowed.
- ◆ Pants at any length between the knee and ankle are acceptable.
- ◆ Flip flops are discouraged since frequent accidents occur when students play outdoors in flip flops. For safety reasons, shoes with high heels are also discouraged. Tennis shoes must be worn on PE days.
- ◆ No shoes with rollers on the bottom of them are allowed at school, on the school bus or at school sponsored weekend events.

Students are expected to honor the dress code so that valuable school time is not spent examining attire to determine appropriateness. Students will be notified of any exceptions to the dress code (Field Day, Spirit Days, special event days, etc.) and any other changes or additional requests. Teachers will be accountable for the dress code standard being followed by the students and will report any infractions to an administrator.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

In the event that school must be closed due to inclement weather, the most up-to-date information will be provided on local radio and TV stations and the Fulton County Schools' website (www.fultonschools.org). **Please do not contact or come to the school.** School telephones and personnel will be utilized in order to follow emergency procedures to ensure the safety of the children. The staff of Ocee Elementary School has developed a detailed emergency evacuation plan which is annually reviewed, updated, and practiced. This plan will be followed should any emergency occur during the school day. In case of an emergency requiring the evacuation of the building, students would be relocated to an off-site location. Please be sure to have a completed emergency school closing form on file for your child and update as changes occur.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

It is the policy of the Fulton County School System not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, or disability in any employment practices, educational program, or any other program, activity, or service.

If you wish to make a complaint or request accommodation or modification due to discrimination in any program, activity, or service, contact Compliance Coordinator, 786 Cleveland Avenue, SW, Atlanta, Georgia 30315, or phone 404-763-4585. TTY 1-800-255-0135.

ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES (ESOL)

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is a program designed for students whose native language is not English. Eligible students participating in this program will be served by an ESOL teacher at Ocee.

EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN SERVICES

Exceptional Children Services are provided for eligible students with mild disabilities in the areas of Emotional & Behavior Disorders, Autism, Learning Disorders, Intellectual Disabilities, and Speech/Language Therapy. Ocee Elementary School also has self-contained classrooms for students in Preschool Special Education and Kindergarten Special Education.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are planned to supplement, complement, and enrich the curriculum. In an effort to ensure student safety, transportation is provided by Fulton County school buses. A donation may be requested to help pay for the trip. No child will be denied permission to attend field trips due to inability to pay; however, every child must have written permission from a parent or legal guardian before he/she can go on a field trip.

The principal or assistant principal may withhold a student from participating in a given field trip for disciplinary purposes.

If you serve as a chaperone on a field trip, please adhere to the following:

- ◆ Overall, this is an educational experience. Take advantage of any informal opportunities you find to foster new learning among the students. Learning is everywhere!
- ◆ The students watch and listen to what the adults around them do. They are often listening even when you think they aren't! Remember that all conversations on the field trip should be ones that students can hear.
- ◆ Many students are very sensitive to kidding and joking. Please remember this and keep your interactions with students positive and easily understood.
- ◆ Remember that sometimes your own child may be so excited to have you there, he or she may have trouble remembering that school rules still apply. Help your child to set a good example for all children while on the field trip.
- ◆ Feel free to remind students to sit quietly, stay with the group, etc., but if a behavior problem with a child in the class occurs, please notify the teacher and ask him or her to address it.
- ◆ There are often souvenir or snack purchase opportunities at the field trip destinations. On most trips we do not allow students to purchase these items. Please check with the teacher if you have any questions about this.
- ◆ All Fulton County field trips, regardless of destination, follow the no smoking policy of Fulton County Schools.

- ◆ No younger siblings may accompany parent chaperones on the field trip for safety reasons.

GIFTED SERVICES

The Fulton County School System screens all students for eligibility for gifted services twice a year.

- 1. Automatic Screening** – At the beginning of the school year, Talented and Gifted (TAG) teachers review the previous year’s test scores:
 - *Standardized Tests*
 - *Criterion-Referenced Competency Test*
- 2. Classroom Screening** – Local schools select a two-week period in the winter to review all students in their school.
 - Classroom teachers use the Characteristics Instrument for Screening Students (CISS) to identify students with superior abilities in five or more of the following areas: motivation, interest, communications skills, problem–solving abilities, memory inquiry, insight, reasoning, creativity, and humor. Parents may request to view their child’s screening results.

Students meeting either the automatic screening OR classroom screening criteria AND having supporting data gathered from test history, products, and/or advanced content levels are referred for gifted testing. Once referred to testing:

- Parents receive *Parent Notification for Testing Consent Form*.
- Students are tested for the gifted program.
- Parents receive test results.
- If state eligibility is determined, and parental consent is received, students are placed in TAG.

GRADING

Students in Fulton County attend school for 177 days, which are divided into two semesters. Report cards are distributed every nine weeks. The minimum number of grades used to determine the final grade is nine per semester, per subject area. Homework will not count for more than 10% of the grade.

Students K-5 receive a Progress Skills checklist three times a year, which gives updates on students’ mastery of specific objectives in each subject area.

Grading Scale for Grades K – 1

S	-	Satisfactory
N	-	Needs to Improve
U	-	Unsatisfactory
NG	-	Not Graded

Grading Scale for Grades 2 – 5

Numerical grades and letter grades will be used on report cards and transcripts. NG will be used for Not Graded.

90 and above	-	A
80-89	-	B
70-79	-	C
Below 70	-	F

Marks for effort, social skills, work/study habits, and general conduct are recorded as:

S	-	Satisfactory
N	-	Needs to Improve
U	-	Unsatisfactory

HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Every effort is made to ensure open communication between the home and school. We encourage teachers and parents to contact each other regarding any questions or concerns that arise during the school year. Please look for the following information to be sent home regularly with your child or via email:

1. Monthly curriculum letters from the classroom teacher containing upcoming curriculum material to be taught in your child's class and information regarding classroom activities.
2. Samples of work to keep you updated on your child's progress. These papers are to be signed and returned to the teacher.
3. Periodic reports from your child's teacher containing information on your child's behavior.
4. A weekly school newsletter from the administration containing general school information.
5. News articles from the PTA containing general PTA information.

If you have access to the Internet, please sign up to receive the weekly school newsletters, PTA appropriate information, and appropriate grade level newsletters available through our web-based email contact system. You can sign up to receive timely school news by visiting the Ocee ES website at www2.fultonschools.org/school/ocee. On the right hand side, under Upcoming Events find the box that prompts you to sign up for the Otter Outlook newsletter. Once you enter your e-mail address and submit, you will be able to choose which grade level newsletters you would like to receive as well.

Each teacher can be reached via his/her e-mail account or through the main school phone number for additional communication as needed. Although you may leave a voice mail message for a teacher, e-mail is the best way to communicate time-critical information.

HOMEWORK

Some home study is a necessary part of each student's educational program to reinforce skills taught in the classroom, increase student success, develop student responsibility, and provide opportunity for parent involvement. Please contact your child's teacher if you have any questions or concerns regarding homework. (Please see "Attendance – Make-Up Work" for procedures on obtaining homework when absences occur.)

Guidelines for homework on Monday through Thursday is as follows:

- K & 1st 10 – 20 minutes
- 2nd 20 – 30 minutes
- 3rd 30 – 40 minutes
- 4th 40 – 50 minutes
- 5th 50 – 60 minutes

ILLNESS

Please follow these guidelines when your child is ill:

1. Do not send your child to school unless he/she has been without a fever and/or without vomiting for 24 hours.
2. Consider sending Tylenol or Advil to the clinic for your child. This may help to eliminate trips to the school by you to bring these items. (Please see "medication" for procedures to follow.) Over the counter cough drops are considered medications and cannot be self-administered by students or shared between children. Please send cough drops to the clinic to be administered by the clinic aide and follow medication procedures.
3. Please make sure your child has some breakfast before coming to school or purchases breakfast upon his/her arrival at school. Many stomachaches are a result of skipping breakfast.
4. Please notify the clinic aide if your child has a contagious disease or an extended illness.

INFORMAL COLLABORATION

Informal Collaboration is the process within the school whereby teachers discuss students that have been identified as struggling either academically or behaviorally. Teachers meet regularly as grade level teams in Informal Collaboration to discuss students. In these meetings, teachers receive interventions and strategies from others to implement with a student or a group of students. After a two week period, the teacher will report back to the team whether the interventions were successful. If success is not seen, the team brainstorms new strategies and interventions to implement. If, after four weeks, there is no progress made, the teacher has the option of referring the student to the Student Support Team. During the Informal Collaboration process, teachers will communicate with parents at least two times to inform parents of interventions being implemented and progress made. If you have questions regarding the Informal Collaboration process, please contact the school counselor, SST/IC Coordinator.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEACHER (IST)

The Instructional Support Teacher (IST) coordinates programs and service delivery for special education students. The IST coordinates educational testing for students referred for special education services. If you have questions about the special education process, please contact the IST for information.

LOCAL SCHOOL COUNCIL (LSC)

The objective of the Local School Council (LSC) is to advise the principal in coordinating resources to maximize educational opportunities for students. Its function is to assess school programs and services and establish goals to improve these areas, as well as act as an advisory group to the local school administration. The council is made up of parents, teachers, and business members of the community. Meetings are open to the public.

LOST AND FOUND

Parents and students are encouraged to check regularly for lost items in the Lost and Found area. We strongly encourage you to clearly label all student belongings with the child's name, especially Ocee spiritwear. Boxes of unclaimed items are periodically donated to local charities.

MEDIA CENTER

The media center is equipped with a carefully selected collection of books, magazines, book kits with audiocassettes, videos/dvds, books on cassette, and reference resources. A certified media specialist and media paraprofessional will work with children on an individual, small group, or whole class basis to instruct students in information literacy skills, the use of the library media center materials and available equipment. Activities are planned with the classroom teachers so that students can meet curriculum objectives and develop an appreciation for media resources. Throughout the school year, the media center coordinates Scholastic book fairs and a family literature night. Kindergarten students may check out one book for two weeks; students in grades 1-5 may check out two books for two weeks. Students can visit the media center daily, however, at their teacher's discretion. Students should keep track of their library books and return them undamaged and on time. Students will be responsible for the cost of replacing lost or damaged items. Final report cards will be withheld until payment has been made. If lost items are paid for and later found and returned, a refund will be issued within 30 days. Parents wishing to check library items out will be allowed to do so after registering with the media specialist. A limit of three items will be allowed out on parent library accounts. Parents are encouraged to visit the media center and volunteer during the school day. Please call or e-mail the media specialist if you are interested. The media center opens each morning with the first bell and closes at 2:45.

MEDICATION

If possible, all medication should be taken at home rather than at school. However, if medications must be taken at school in order to allow a student to attend, the instruction and authorization form entitled “Authorization To Give Medication” must be completed. This form will be sent home with students at the beginning of the year. The medicine, in the original container along with the instruction and authorization form, must be taken to the school office for central storage. If possible, the parent should bring the medication to school; however, if this is not possible, your child should be instructed to take the medication and instructions directly to the school office. Unless specifically approved, no medication, prescription or non-prescription, should be kept by a student or shown to other students. To get approval for a student to carry medicine under special conditions (specifically emergency medications like an Epi-Pen or inhaler), a second form called “Authorization To Carry Medication” must be filled out.

MUSIC

General music classes are taught to all grades K-5. Band and orchestra opportunities are available after school in grades 3, 4 and 5. Chorus opportunities are available after school for 4th and 5th grades.

PARKING

All parents and visitors must park in the designated parking lots of the building in lined spaces. The curbs around the school are fire lanes and must be kept clear at all times. Handicapped spaces must be reserved for the handicapped. Visitor spaces have been reserved on both sides of the building to facilitate parents in parking while at the school. Please do not park in the adjacent parking lot of neighboring businesses while attending school functions.

PARTIES

Two classroom parties are provided for students by PTA room parents—Winter and End of Year. A room parent may contact you to assist with these parties. If you are helping out with parties in the classroom, please do not bring younger siblings. Enjoy the time with your student!

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) plays a vital role in the success of our school. Many parents volunteer their time, financial resources, and special talents in endless ways as they truly become partners in their children’s education. We strongly encourage you to join the PTA and become active participants in the volunteer program and partners in your child’s education.

RECESS POLICIES

Fulton County Board Policy states that, “Students in grades K-5 shall have at a minimum a scheduled 15 minute recess period of unstructured activity time preferably outdoors on non-physical education days. This period is to be supervised and closely monitored by a certified teacher. This time should be scheduled to serve as a break during academic learning and should not be used as a reward or incentive nor withheld for academic reasons. The principal or assistant principal may withhold recess for disciplinary reasons. The principal or designee will be responsible for the scheduling, timing, and location of the recess period.”

At Ocee Elementary, students generally have a 15 minute recess period each day of the week. Teachers will share specific rules that apply to their grade level at Curriculum Night. These rules will include the county’s practice regarding students at elementary school. Elementary school students should not participate in any contact sports during recess.

SCHOOL RECORDS

Parents or legal guardians have the right to examine their student’s records and to have them explained. Principals, counselors, teachers, and other authorized personnel who have responsibility for supervising, instructing, or helping a student will have access to that student’s records. No third party releases will occur without written permission from the parent.

SOCIAL WORKER

A social worker is available to assist with situations that may involve the home (i.e., attendance, tardies, personal needs, and family concerns).

STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE

The Fulton County Board of Education must operate under the umbrella of Sovereign Immunity. Due to Sovereign Immunity, Fulton County Schools cannot indemnify any injury to a student. If no other medical and/or dental coverage is in place, the Student Insurance is the only source of payment for injuries occurring to a student. Therefore, we highly recommend that you purchase student insurance if your child is not covered on your insurance coverage.

STUDENT INFORMATION

Please keep the school informed of all changes regarding phone numbers, addresses, emergency information, medication the child may be taking, etc. All changes must be submitted in writing by the parent/guardian.

If you wish your child’s teacher or any school staff member to communicate specific information about your student directly to a third party (i.e., tutor, doctor, or private school, etc.) via telephone or e-mail or by filling out a form, please complete and sign a “Release of Information to Third Party” form. This will give school personnel permission to release information if you request it. Completed forms will be mailed directly to the doctor’s office or private school.

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM (SST)

The Student Support Team (SST) is a multi-disciplinary team consisting of teachers, counselors, administrators, specialists, and parents who work together to develop strategies for student success. The SST process includes the following stages: identification of needs, formulation of an action plan, implementation of interventions, and monitoring of progress.

The team's efforts may include some or all of the following activities:

- ◆ Review of the student's records
- ◆ Analysis of student's work
- ◆ Observation of student in the classroom
- ◆ Development of a written plan of strategies and modifications to assist the student
- ◆ Data collection of strategy implementation
- ◆ Review of progress after the designated intervention period

TELEPHONE USE

Phone use by students is discouraged and will be limited to address only important issues that cannot be determined before or after school. A student may use the office telephone only after receiving a telephone pass from the teacher. We ask you to help us by being sure your children are prepared for school and understand after-school arrangements before leaving home.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are furnished to all students. These books are used at school and may be taken home for purposes of study and homework completion. Students are expected to take care of all books and return them undamaged at the end of the year or before they withdraw from school. If a textbook is lost or damaged, a fee will be charged. A second set of textbooks may only be checked out if specified through an IEP or a 504 Plan. A list of textbook manufacturers is available if you wish to purchase a set of textbooks for use at home.

TOYS AND TRENDS

Sometimes new items are created and advertised which appeal to elementary school students, such as toys, clothing accessories, etc. While these items can be very appropriate for children when at home, they sometimes interfere with the structure and continuous focus on learning at school. One example of a recent trend involved Silly Bandz, specially shaped, colored rubber bands worn on students' arms, which distracted students from learning and created arguments between students at school. In order to eliminate those issues, the Ocee Leadership Team asked that Silly Bandz be left at home at all times.

If another such trend were to occur that interfered with learning in a significant way, the Leadership Team could make a similar decision with regard to that item. If this were to happen during the school year, students could be notified during Otter Talk, the informational school news closed circuit TV program, and you would be notified via Otter Outlook, Ocee's weekly electronic newsletter. In addition, individual teachers or grade levels may choose to prohibit certain items in their classrooms which interfere with learning or cause a

disruption. You would be informed of this through the classroom or grade level newsletters. We thank you for your support of Ocee's academic program.

VISITATION

For the protection of our children, all visitors to the school are required to sign in at the office and wear a "VISITOR" badge at all times while in the building. Visitors are to enter the building at the main office door. In order to avoid unnecessary interruption of instructional time, parents should leave any forgotten work, lunch, etc., with the front office staff. Teachers will be notified and the children will be sent up at the teachers' convenience. The front office staff will be notified by teachers if they have parents scheduled to volunteer in their classroom.

Reflecting Board of Education/Administrative regulations and as a courtesy to the teacher, an appointment should be made for all classroom visitations at least 24 hours in advance. All visitations must be scheduled through the CST. Observations may be requested only for parents or legal guardians. Classroom visitations are limited to a maximum of 30 minutes and are not a time for teacher-parent conferences. The regular school instruction must continue during the visit, and parents should observe only and refrain from interfering in any way with instruction or procedures. Visitors will be accompanied by an administrator.

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers are important to the success of Ocee Elementary School. Should you desire to volunteer, please contact your child's teacher, the PTA, the media specialist, or an administrator to discuss the many options available. We will welcome your help.

Please keep in mind that as a volunteer, you are required to respect the privacy of all students at the school. Please do not share your observations or thoughts regarding students with whom you come in contact with others or with the students themselves or even the family members of those students. If you have a specific concern, you may share it with the teacher. However, remember that teachers and staff protect the confidentiality of our students at all times and will be unable to discuss any issues, concerns, or observations about them with volunteers who are not their parents or guardians.

Fulton County policy requires that all volunteers working directly with students complete a Volunteer Registration Form each year. At Ocee ES, these forms will be distributed to all parents at the beginning of every school year and kept on file. A single volunteer during the regular school day must be in view of appropriate school or system employees while working with an individual student. In addition, any parent or guardian who wishes to accompany students and staff on a school-sponsored overnight field trip must submit to a background check before he/she can be included on the volunteer roster for that trip.

We appreciate and thank you for working with us to protect your children while they are in our care.

WHO CAN PROVIDE ANSWERS

- Bus Discipline – First, the bus driver, then the Assistant Principal
- Bus Issues (Routes, Times, etc.) – Transportation North (770-667-2970)
- Cafeteria – Cafeteria Manager, Millie Lindsay (LindsayM@fultonschools.org)
- Classroom Discipline – First, the Classroom Teacher, then the Assistant Principal
- Curriculum – First, the Teacher, and then the Curriculum Support Teacher
- Family Assistance – Please call the school to speak to the Counselor or contact the Social Worker (Please call the school at 770-667-2960 for appropriate contact information)
- Fulton County Schools Policies, Procedures and Departmental Contacts (www.fultonschools.org)
- Special Education – IST (Call the school for contact information)
- Student Support Team – Please call the school to speak to the Counselor

WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE

You should notify the teacher and the data clerk at least a week before your child is withdrawn from school. All textbooks and library books should be returned and lunch fees paid before withdrawal to clear all records.

Thank you for joining the staff of Ocee Elementary School in our efforts to provide a consistent and academically sound environment for your child. Your cooperation in following these guidelines will help us to ensure a quality educational experience for your child in a safe, nurturing environment.

Deborah Pernice, Principal

Ocee Elementary PTA

The Ocee Elementary PTA encourages all parents, faculty, staff and community members to become members of our organization. The Ocee Elementary PTA supports the mission statement of the National PTA, which includes:

- ◆ *To support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, the community, and before governmental agencies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children;*
- ◆ *To assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children; and*
- ◆ *To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation.*

The Ocee Elementary PTA also supports the objectives of the National PTA, which are:

- *To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community, and place of worship*
- *To raise the standards of home life*
- *To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth*
- *To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth*
- *To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education.*

Please join the Ocee Elementary PTA and take an active role in helping our school and community!

Volunteering

The Ocee Elementary PTA encourages all parents and community members to volunteer their time and talents in service to our school. *Why?*

A national survey of school volunteer programs found that:

- Volunteers give direct service to students
- Students of parents who provide volunteer service develop higher motivation for learning
- Teacher morale increases with the involvement of the community in the school
- Communication is enhanced between the school and the community
- Public support for schools is intensified
- Citizens have a better understanding of what schools do, and schools appreciate more fully the problems faced by parents.

Another study found that simply having an active PTA in a school will increase student achievement.

The positive relationship between parent involvement and enhancing your child's education is well documented. On an individual level, you can improve your child's educational experience by encouraging him/her at home, keeping a close watch on schoolwork and homework, and staying in contact with teachers.

By volunteering with the PTA, you can demonstrate to your child that you value education. You can spend time at school or help with projects that can be done at home. Please contact any member of the PTA Executive Board to express your interest in helping our school and its students.

PARENTS' RIGHT TO KNOW

In compliance with the requirements of the No Child Left Behind statute, Fulton County Schools informs parents that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student's teacher(s). The following information may be requested:

- ❖ whether the teacher has met the Georgia Professional Standards Commission requirements for certification for the grade level and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- ❖ whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status through which Georgia qualifications or certification criteria have been waived;
- ❖ the college major and any graduate certification or degree held by the teacher;
- ❖ whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher's qualification, please contact the principal at 770-667-2960.

Important Student Attendance Information

Parents, as full partners in your child's education, please ensure that...

- ...your child attends school EVERY DAY there is not a medical or other excused reason for an absence.
- ...you send in a WRITTEN EXCUSE to the teacher after each absence of each of your children WITHIN THREE DAYS of his or her return to school. E-mailed excuses cannot be accepted.

State law requires that elementary age children attend school. Students can miss no more than FOUR UNEXCUSED days in a school year without state statutes imposing consequences.

Thank you for your support! Children who attend school regularly do better academically. Together, we can help your child maximize his or her potential every day.