

**Williams Memorial Elementary School
2020-2021
Student & Parent Handbook
AND
Hybrid/Virtual Handbook**

**290 South Metts Street
Saint George, SC 29477
Phone (843) 563-3231
Fax (843) 563-3421
wm.dorchester4.k12.sc.us**

**Ruth Mims, Principal/CERDEP Director
Jeremy Wolfgang, Assistant Principal/Head Start Director**



Williams Memorial Elementary

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students,

It is with great anticipation and excitement that I officially welcome you to Williams Memorial Elementary School and the 2020-2021 School Year! We are in unprecedented times and are trying to get use to the new “normal”. However, I am thrilled at the opportunity to get to know all of you and engage in the educational process of your child with you. I look forward to working with all of you to make this year successful. Our faculty and staff welcome the opportunity to enhance our students’ educational experiences, be it in the classroom or from home.

These handbooks serve as a vital source of information, time management, and a communication tool between the home and school. Should you have any questions relative to this handbook, various school policies or procedures, or the academic well-being of your child, please contact any member of the administrative team.

Williams Memorial Elementary School is creating a community of academic excellence for our students by establishing high expectations and academic rigor, providing effective and innovative educational practices in a safe and supportive environment, and helping our students develop world-class skills and career characteristics that will prepare them to graduate with a 21st Century education and to be globally competitive in their chosen career path.

The core values of Williams Memorial Elementary School—Trust, Integrity, Generosity, Excellence, Respect, and Success—and the use of differentiated instructional approaches that recognizes the uniqueness of each of our students will encourage a love of learning in all of our students. Let’s join forces to make the 2020-2021 school year positive and productive. Together, we can make WMES “PAWS”-itively THE Best!

Ruth Mims
Principal

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Dorchester School District #4 Board Members

Dr. Kenneth Jenkins-Chairman
Ms. Angie Crum
Mr. Tony Folk
Dr. James Hodges
Mrs. Phyllis Hughes

Dorchester School District #4 Mission Statement

The mission of Dorchester School District Four is to develop life-long learners who will have a positive impact on our global world.

Dorchester School District #4 Vision Statement

The vision of Dorchester School District Four is to be an exemplary district where all students reach their maximum potential with the support of the district, home and community.

District Personnel & Information

Dorchester School District #4
500 Ridge Street
St. George, South Carolina 29477
Phone (843) 563-3231
Fax (843) 563-9269
www.dorchester4.k12.sc.us

Superintendent	Dr. Kelvin Wymbbs
Superintendent's Secretary	Val Anderson
Director of Curriculum & Instruction (Secondary)	Dr. Nancy Britt-Stevens
Director of Curriculum & Instruction (Elementary)	Shelissa Bowman
Director of Finance	Emily Temple
Director of Student Services	Dr. Nancy Britt-Stevens
Student Services Secretary/Receptionist	Shirley Brown
Director of Personnel	Dr. Andrea Sturkey
Human Resources Administrative Assistant	Yulonda Rivers
Director of Food Service	Kevin Earle
Transportation Supervisor	Paul Cobbs
Director of Technology (563-5906)	Elijah Delee
Director of Facilities & Maintenance	Adam Davis

Office of Exceptional Children
810 School House Road
Dorchester, South Carolina 29437
Phone (843) 462-7629
Fax (843) 462-2959

Director of Exceptional Children	Monica Tudder
Lead School Psychologist	Dr. Andrew Preston
School Psychologist	Shannon Tapp

Title I Administrative Office
190 South Metts Street
St. George, South Carolina 29477
Phone (843) 563-5923
Fax (843) 563-5928

Director of Federal Programs	Dr. Tracy Jackson
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Williams Memorial Elementary School Administration

Phone (843) 563-3231 Fax (843) 563-3421

Principal/CERDEP Director	Ruth Mims	rmims@dd4.k12.sc.us
Asst. Principal/Head Start Director	Jeremy Wolfgang	jwolfgang@dd4.k12.sc.us
Instructional Coach	Alisa Lemon	alemon@dd4.k12.sc.us
Literacy Coach	Evan Eadon	eadon@dd4.k12.sc.us
Secretary/Bookkeeper	Tracy Delee	tdelee@dd4.k12.sc.us
Receptionist/Attendance	Shakiema Ravenell	sravenell@dd4.k12.sc.us

Our Vision Statement

The vision of Williams Memorial Elementary School is to create a community of academic excellence for our students by establishing high expectations and academic rigor, providing effective and innovative educational practices in a safe and supportive environment, and helping our students develop world-class skills and career characteristics that will help to prepare them to graduate with a 21st Century education and to be globally competitive in their chosen career path.

Our Mission Statement

The children, parents, and staff of Williams Memorial Elementary School are unified in their purpose of accelerating the learning of all students through shared decision-making and powerful learning experiences.

Our Belief Statements

- Students will participate in real world learning opportunities that will move them toward success.
- WMES will be a safe and caring environment that provides a successful and challenging atmosphere through the support of parents, staff, faculty, students and the community.
- All students will demonstrate qualities of good citizenship in order to be responsible members of the learning community.
- Strengths of the stakeholders (parents, staff, faculty, students, and the community) will be identified and built upon to enhance our school.

Our Core Values

The core values of Williams Memorial Elementary School encourage a love of learning through the use of differentiated instructional approaches that recognizes the uniqueness of each student. These are our core values:

Trust
Integrity
Generosity
Excellence
Respect (for self and others)
Success

Other District Schools

Harleyville-Ridgeville Middle School (6-8)
1650 East Main Street
Dorchester, South Carolina 29437
Phone (843) 462-7671
Fax (843) 462-7647
Principal: Catherine Yates

Woodland High School (9-12)
4128 Highway 78
Dorchester, South Carolina 29437
Phone (843) 563-5956
Fax (843) 563-5997
Principal: Adrian Busch

St. George Middle School (6-8)
600 Minus Street
St. George, South Carolina 29477
Phone (843) 563-3171
Fax (843) 563-5936
Principal: Benjamin Kennedy

Clay Hill Elementary School (PreK-5)
387 South Railroad Avenue
Ridgeville, South Carolina 29472
Phone (843) 851-7386
Fax (843) 873-0571
Principal: April Sanders

Harleyville Elementary School (PreK-5)
1650 East Main Street
Dorchester, South Carolina 29437
Phone (843) 462-7671
Fax (843) 462-7647
Principal: Chaquilla Green

Odyssey Educational Center-Jenkins Hill Campus
145 Hill Street
Harleyville, South Carolina 29448
Phone (843) 462-2270
Fax (843) 462-2275
Principal: Shannon Stephens

School Schedule (During Pandemic-Modified Schedule)

7:00 A.M. Bus Riders and Early Car Riders Enter the Building
7:15 A.M. Breakfast Begins
7:45 A.M. Students Arriving After this are Counted as Tardy (ALL Students Should be in Class)—**EXCEPTION** Bus Riders who Ride Double Routes
7:50 A.M. School Day Officially Starts
8:30 A.M. Instructional Day Begins (Traditional & Hybrid)
1:45-2:00 P.M. Instructional Day Ends (Traditional & Hybrid)
2:00 P.M. Dismissal/Bus Riders Load Buses
2:15 P.M. Car Rider Begin Dismissal
3:00 P.M. Faculty/Staff Allowed to Leave as Long as No Students are in the Building
4:00 P.M. Front Office Closes

School Schedule (When School Resumes to Normal Face-to-Face Day)

7:05 A.M. All Faculty/Staff Report
7:10 A.M. All Duty Personnel at their Assigned Area and Teachers in Their Classroom
7:15 A.M. Students Enter/Teachers in Classroom/Breakfast Begins
7:40 A.M. Breakfast Ends
7:45 A.M. School Begins/Students Arriving After this are Counted as Tardy (ALL Students Should be in Class)
2:25 P.M. All Duty Personnel at their Assigned Area
2:30 P.M. Begin Dismissal of Bus and Car Riders
3:10 P.M. Faculty/Staff Allowed to Leave as Long as No Students are in the Building

Attendance

Students need to be in attendance at school every day. If it is necessary for a child to be absent from school, it is required they bring a written excuse for each day missed as soon as they return to school. If a student fails to bring an excuse to school, he/she will automatically receive an unexcused absence. ***Only 10 handwritten excuses per school year can be submitted.***

Students will be considered ***lawfully*** absent when:

1. They are ill and their attendance in school would endanger their health or the health of others.
2. There is a death or serious illness in the immediate family.
3. There is a recognized religious holiday of their faith.
4. They are participating in a field trip or other school activity that requires being away from classes.
5. There are unusual circumstances that have been approved by the Principal.
6. They are suspended by the Administration for violations of the Discipline Code.

Students will be considered ***unlawfully*** absent and unexcused when:

1. They are willfully absent without the knowledge of their parent/guardian.
2. They are absent with the knowledge of their parent/guardian, but the absence does not fall within the reasons listed as “lawful.”

It is important to teach our children the responsibility of being at school on time. Additionally, students arriving to school late create a disruption when they arrive to their classes. When repeated absences threaten the student’s academic success, the Administration will intervene to improve attendance. **Excessive tardiness to school or signing your child out from school early could result in the need for an Attendance Meeting with the Administration. After the *third* unexcused absence, a meeting will be held with an Administrator. The development of an Attendance Improvement Plan/Contract will automatically happen after *five* absences. After the *seventh* absence, the District Office will be contacted. *Pre-Kindergarten students who miss ten days of school without medical verification may be dismissed from the program.***

Excessive absences in Kindergarten through the fifth grade will be considered as a part of the information compiled on an individual when determining the promotion or retention of a student.

A Perfect Attendance certificate will be given to those students who are present **all day and every day** of the academic school year.

Arrival

The school day begins at 7:45 A.M. To prevent instructional disruptions, it is imperative that your child be at school on time and prepared to learn. Parents arriving late with their child(ren) are required to come into the Front Office and sign their child(ren) in. Social distancing should be adhered to when entering the building. Face Masks are also highly recommended when entering the building to sign in a late student. Parents will **NOT** be permitted down the hallways with their children when they are late to school.

Behavior

Refer to the school’s Code of Conduct. Both the parent/guardian and the student should review the Code of Conduct.

Breakfast

Every WMES student is eligible for a *free* breakfast. During the Pandemic, when students arrive to school, they should report to their classroom, unpack their bookbag, and then get their breakfast. Once school returns to a normal schedule, students will proceed to the cafeteria. Students are expected to walk in an orderly manner to the cafeteria, eat quietly in the cafeteria, and then return back to their classroom.

Breakfast will be closed at 7:40 A.M. each day, unless a student arrives on a late school bus. Students who are dropped off at the Car Rider Area should be at school no later than 7:30 A.M. in order to make it to breakfast on time. During the Pandemic, breakfast will be served in the classroom. Once school returns to a normal schedule, Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten classes will eat breakfast in their classrooms.

Car Riders

Car riders should be dropped off in the **Car Rider Line** on the side of the building. Students exiting the car should do so on the side where school personnel are located. During the Pandemic, students will have their temperature checked when they get out. **Parents will not be allowed to walk students to class.**

At 7:45 A.M., the Car Rider Line will be closed, and you will need to escort students to the Front Office to be signed in with the receptionist. Students are considered tardy after 7:45 A.M. Social distancing should be adhered to when entering the building. Face Masks are also highly recommended when entering the building to sign in a late student.

Once the normal schedule resumes, parent volunteers will be required to park in the designated parking lot across from the Car Rider Drop Off location.

We are asking that there be no lining up in the Car Rider Line before 1:15 P.M. This is for the safety of our students and for ease of deliveries being made to the cafeteria.

Chaperones/Volunteers

To be a volunteer or a chaperone for a school related field trip, adults will be required to have a background check completed by the District. Volunteer Applications must be renewed every three (3) years. During the Pandemic, only school employees will be in the building.

Change of Personal or Parent Information

Parents are responsible for updating any personal information that may change throughout the school year. This includes any information related to custodial circumstances within the family.

You should notify the Front Office any time your personal information changes (phone numbers, addresses, or guardianship and/or custody). To do so, speak to the Front Office receptionist or a guidance counselor. All information released to the school, including secretaries, teachers, and staff members remains highly confidential at all times.

Communication

A newsletter will be sent home monthly with students highlighting key dates and information. Grade levels will send newsletters home to inform parents of upcoming projects or events. We will hold

school-wide Parent Conferences in February, but conferences with teachers can be held at any time when instruction is not taking place, during the Pandemic, they may be held through Zoom. The school will also continue to utilize the school's website and the School Messenger to inform parents of upcoming events. Our teachers also use REMIND 101 and Class DoJo. The monthly breakfast and lunch menus can also be found on the school's Website (<http://wm.dorchester4.k12.sc.us/>).

Computers

Students in Kindergarten-5th grades will have individual Chromebooks, and students in Pre-Kindergarten will use i-Pads. The use of the school's technology resources is a privilege. Students will have the opportunity to use all of our electronic resources; however, failure to follow the rules and procedures for technology use will result in forfeiture of computer privileges.

This year your child will use the following programs:

1. Accelerated Reader
2. Flocabulary
3. Edgenuity
4. Learning.com
5. BrainPop
6. Nearpod
7. Eric & Tumble Books
8. Moby Max
9. Other instructional software

Counseling

Our WMES Guidance Counselors are available to do individual, group, and whole class counseling sessions with our students. If you have a concern about your child's behaviors, please contact one of our Guidance Counselors and set up a meeting to share your concerns or questions. Our counseling sessions revolve around our school's Core Values and basic Character traits.

- Beth McMillan (Pre-Kindergarten thru 2nd Grade) bmcmillan@dd4.k12.sc.us
- Tarsha Smith (3rd-5th Grades) tbrown@dd4.k12.sc.us

COVID-19 Requirements and Recommendations

Dorchester County strongly encourages the following CDC guidelines:

- Avoid crowds
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth; Cover a cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash (Students should cough or sneeze into elbow)
- Stay home if sick
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (If soap and water not available, use hand sanitizer)
- Practice social distancing
- Wear a face mask

Dismissal

Dismissal is a very busy time during the school day. For that reason, we need to have as few parents on the Bus Ramp or in the office as possible. Students will only be allowed to leave the school in one of three ways.

1. **Take the bus home;**
2. **Get picked up in the Car Rider Line; or**
3. **Signed out from the gymnasium *after* 3:00 P.M. (once normal schedule resumes)**

During the Pandemic, parents will not be allowed in the building until 2:15 P.M. or when all the buses have left the campus. There will be no sign-out after 1:15 P.M.

Once the normal schedule resumes, parents will not be allowed in the building to pick up students until *after* 3:00 P.M. Daily car riders should report to the gymnasium to wait until called.

Once the normal schedule resumes, the end of the day becomes a very busy time. To help reduce confusion and to limit instructional disruptions, students will not be called from their classes for early dismissal after 2:00 P.M. (unless for an emergency). Also, students will not be called from their classes to leave until a parent/guardian arrives at the school.

To keep our students safe, any change to a child's afternoon transportation must be done in writing before 2:00 P.M. On the letter, there must be a phone number listed, so we can confirm the changes. We will *not* accept transportation changes over the telephone. We will accept a FAX; however, the FAX must have a phone number for the parent listed for confirmation purposes.

Dress Code

It is very important that students are dressed comfortably and appropriately for school. Clothing should not be too tight or brief (bare shoulders/skirts). Shorts and skirts should be fingertip length. Holes in jeans are permitted, but holes *should not* be above fingertip length. If a child's outfit is deemed inappropriate for school, the parent will be contacted to bring in a change of clothing.

Sunglasses are not permitted in school unless prescribed by a doctor. Hats will be allowed on the playground but may not be worn in the building except on special days (i.e., Hat Day, Favorite Sport Team Day). Neither hoodies nor coat hoods should not be worn in the building.

Flip flops and slide-on "shower" shoes should not be worn for safety reasons.

When the normal schedule resumes, students should plan accordingly on days when they have physical education, being sure to wear sneakers and comfortable clothing making it easy to move around. Additionally, students scheduled for art may want to consider wearing clothing appropriate for painting and working with clay (aprons for the children will be made available by the school).

Electronics

Cell phones, electronic games, toys, headsets etc. should not be brought to school. Williams Memorial Elementary School is not responsible for lost, broken, or stolen items.

Cell phones and electronic devices that are confiscated by a teacher or staff member will be turned into the Principal. A parent or guardian will need to pick up the device from the front office.

Emergency Drills

WMES will practice a number of emergency drills. Tornado, earthquake, evacuation, lock out/down will be conducted throughout the school year and fire drills monthly.

Extra-Curricular Activities

The teachers and staff feel it is very important that students have the opportunity to grow beyond the classroom setting. For this reason, we have established a number of programs and clubs that may be of interest to your child, if the COVID-19 spread decreases, or we return to a normal schedule.

In order for a student to participate in an extra-curricular activity, they must be cleared of all fees (textbooks, library books, Chromebook, and school fees).

Depending on volunteer availability, opportunities for your child may include, but are not limited to:

- * Tiger Crew (Announcements) – 5th grade
- * Basketball – 3rd through 5th grade
- * Soccer – 1st through 5th grade
- * Chorus – 3rd through 5th grade
- * Cheerleading – Kindergarten through 5th grade
- * Art Club – 3rd through 5th grade
- * Science Club - 4th & 5th grade
- * Birthday Club – 5th grade
- * Snack Pack/Backpack Helpers – 4th and 5th grade
- * Reading Club -- 4th and 5th grade
- **Other Extra-Curricular Activities may be added throughout the school year.

Student participation is based on behavior and effort given during their school day. A student not fulfilling these expectations may either be suspended or removed from the club or activity.

Field Trips

Field trips are designed as an extension to classroom learning. All trips are organized in to that meet and reinforce South Carolina State Standards. In order for a child to participate in a trip, they must have a signed permission slip and all financial requirements paid to the school. In an effort to minimize any financial burden to our families, we will make every effort possible to keep the maximum cost as low as possible.

If a child is not going on the field trip, they are still required to attend school and continue with their daily instruction. Attendance and discipline may prohibit a child from attending a field trip.

Chaperones for field trips must be on the District's Approved Volunteers List and are expected to assist the teacher and school staff with the supervision of our students. Therefore, chaperones are not allowed to bring other children/siblings along on the field trip.

In order for a student to participate in a Field Trip, they must be cleared of all fees (textbooks, library books, Chromebook, and school fees).

Gifted and Talented

Students in grades three through five have the opportunity, based on academic performance, to be placed in our Academic Gifted and Talented Program. The “Special Class Model” is used for instruction. In these classes, students are offered an accelerated instructional program that is aligned to South Carolina State Standards. In South Carolina, students in the Gifted and Talented class are identified either locally or at the State level. Students who have been State identified will remain in the Gifted and Talented class as long as it is offered by the school. Additionally, if a State identified Gifted and Talented student transfers from our school to any other school in South Carolina, they will automatically be placed in the other school’s Gifted and Talented Program. Locally identified students risk the possibility of being removed from the Gifted and Talented class from year to year based on their previous year’s academic achievement. Items that are considered for Gifted and Talented placement include the Performance Task Assessment, CogAT, ITBS, SC Ready, OLSAT, report card grades, and teacher evaluation.

Referral Process

Referral procedures ensure that students who have demonstrated ability or potential for high performance in academic areas will have access to the Gifted and Talented Program. In accordance with R 43-220, Dorchester District Four’s procedures allow for referrals from administrators, parents, teachers, and the students themselves.

Screening Process

Dorchester District Four screens all second grade students with regard to aptitude by using the CogAT, and achievement by using the ITBS.

All students are tested for Dimension B each year using MAP (2nd Grade) or STAR Reading and Math (3rd-5th Grades) as well as the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY).

Parents, teachers, or students may request, through the Guidance Department, that the OLSAT be administered for Dimension A aptitude during the designated referral window.

Testing is not used for the removal of students who are already placed in the program. Once State identified, students do not have to qualify again for the Gifted and Talented Program each year. However, locally identified students must qualify each year.

Grades

Core Content grading scale is as follows:

A – 90-100

B – 80-89

C – 70-79

D – 60-69

F – Below 59

Principal's List – 90 and above in all subjects

Honor Roll – 80 and above in all subjects

Related Arts grading scale is as follows:

E - Excellent (80%-100%)

S - Satisfactory (60%-79%)

U - Unsatisfactory (Below 59%)

To receive yearly Principal's List recognition, a student must maintain an average of 90 or higher in *all* core content classes for the entire school year. To receive yearly Honor Roll recognition, a student must maintain an average of 80 or higher in *all* core content classes for the entire school year.

Homework

Homework is given to students to reinforce what has been learned in the classroom. Additionally, homework should teach our children independent study skills as well as provide our parents with an opportunity to see their child's academic progress. If you ever have a question about your child's homework, contact your child's teacher.

*Homework will resume once we return to a normal schedule.

Incentives

Students will have the opportunity to receive incentives for student behavior and academic effort. Incentives will include school supplies, extra recess, free activity time, and treats. All incentives are designed to promote and reinforce appropriate behaviors.

Library Books

Our Media Center works on a blended schedule, allowing all teachers and students to utilize the numerous resources offered to them. The WMES media center houses nearly 10,000 leveled volumes for students to check out. Students are ultimately responsible for any books they check out, and families will be held liable for any books not returned to the media center or returned damaged. Students must be clear of any library fees to participate in any extra-curricular activities or field trips.

Lunch

All student breakfasts and lunches are *free* for the 2020-2021 school year. During the Pandemic, lunch will be in the classroom.

Once the normal schedule resumes, students bringing their lunch will be allowed to use a microwave in the cafeteria to heat up their food. If a child abuses this privilege, they will no longer be allowed to use the microwave. Students will not be allowed to use the microwave to heat up their lunches received at the school.

Medication

Williams Memorial requires that the parents or guardians of all students who need medication (prescription or over the counter) during school do the following:

1. Present a written request signed by the parent or legal guardian and witnessed by a school official.
2. The parent or guardian must bring the medication in the original prescription bottle, properly labeled by a doctor.

Students should not have any type of medication with them during the school day. School personnel will dispose of any medicine that is not claimed at the end of the school year. Questions concerning medication should be directed to the school nurse, Jessica Stickles, at (843) 563-3231 or jstickles@dd4.k12.sc.us.

No Smoking

Smoking, including e-cigarettes, is prohibited on school grounds and/or at any school related events, including field trips. WMES is a “Smoke Free Environment”.

Nurse

The WMES Nurse is at the school daily from 7:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. during the Pandemic. Once the normal schedule resumes, the nurse will be at school from 7:10 A.M.-3:10 P.M. If the nurse contacts you concerning your child (either sick or injured), you must either pick them up or make arrangements to do so in a timely manner. Students cannot return to class or get on a bus if they are sick. Space is also limited in the Nurse’s Office.

We ask that you help us keep our students and staff healthy by keeping your children home anytime they have a fever or appear physically sick. Additionally, you should contact the nurse if your child has any physical or health limitations so appropriate accommodations can be made for your child.

Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

Our PTA plays an active role in our school building and instructional program. Membership forms will be sent home to all of our families at the beginning of the school year. The cost to become a member is \$5.00 per person. PTA Meetings will take place periodically throughout the school year. All dates will be listed in the school newsletter and on the school’s Website (<http://wm.dorchester4.k12.sc.us/>).

Parking

All parents or visitors should park in one of the parking lots. We are asking that you do not park in the front loop, so deliveries and other school procedures can continue without disruption. Visitors should *not* park in any other locations around the building during the regular school day.

Parties and Party Invitations

Birthday “treats” should *not* be taken to or eaten in the cafeteria, because of the healthy “SMART” snacks initiative. Students passing out party invitations must have one for every child in the classroom. Students will not be allowed to pass out invitations to students outside of their classroom.

Playgrounds/Recess

Recess is a privilege and a time when our children are expected to have fun, but it is also important that appropriate behavior is still demonstrated. During the Pandemic, playground equipment will not be used. Students will have movement time made into their day and after lunch.

There are three playgrounds at Williams Memorial for our students to use during the school day. It is very important that students use caution at all times while playing on the equipment. If at any time you see a piece of equipment that is broken or looks to be broken, please notify the teacher or school immediately. The playgrounds are broken up as follows:

1. Head Start, Pre-Kindergarten, and Kindergarten
2. 1st and 2nd Grade

3. 3rd, 4th, and 5th Grade

Photographs

Students must have an updated letter or form on file each year stating they are not to be photographed at the school for different media resources (newspaper, news). This also pertains to our school Website. Please refer to the FERPA letter in the Appendix for further information.

Promotion and Retention

Students must meet certain requirements in order to be promoted to the next grade level. This is done to ensure students will have a fair opportunity to be successful during the upcoming school year. Teachers will be monitoring your child's progress frequently throughout the school year and will provide you with the details. To assist in this process, it is very important that parents remain involved in their child's education throughout the school year. **At the end of the second and third quarters, if your child is endanger of retention, parents or guardians will be requested to attend an Academic Conference. Parents or Guardians must submit a letter at the end of the year, if they want their child to be retained.**

Kindergarten – It is the school's expectation that students leaving Kindergarten are reading on or above grade level. Students who score at levels below this risk the chance of being retained OR placed in the 1st grade Bridge Class.

1st & 2nd Grade –Students in grades one and two will also be required to have a yearly average of 60 or higher in Math and Reading to be promoted.

3rd Grade- Students must have a grade of 60 or higher as a final average in Math and Reading to be promoted to the next grade. Students in third grade who have a yearly average below 60 in either Math or Reading and/or score below the required score on SC State Reading Test (SC Ready), and do not meet exemption criteria, will be retained for the upcoming school year. South Carolina law states, "Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, a student must be retained in the third grade if the student fails to demonstrate reading proficiency at the end of the third grade as indicated by scoring at the lowest achievement level on the State summative reading assessment that equates to **Not Met 1 on the SC Ready**."

4th & 5th Grade – Students must have a grade of 60 or higher as a final average in Math and Reading to be promoted to the next grade. Students in fourth grade who have a yearly average below 60 in either Math or Reading will be retained for the upcoming school year. Students in fifth grade who have an average below 60 in either Math, Reading, or Language Arts will be retained.

Report Cards

Report cards will be sent home every nine weeks for students in 1st through 5th grades. Students in 1st grade will have an adjustment period the **first** nine weeks; therefore, their first official report card will go out the **second** nine weeks. Report cards for first through third grade students will also list your child's current reading levels. Any questions related to your child's report card should be directed to your child's teacher.

School Closings

In the event that adverse weather conditions may occur, you should turn to the local news, radio stations, check the school's Website (<http://wm.dorchester4.k12.sc.us/>), or list to the School Messenger to find out any information pertaining to school closings, cancellations, or delays.

School Improvement Council (SIC)

The School Improvement Council consists of teachers, parents, community members, and other school staff. Their purpose is to discuss, as a team, different ways to improve the school. SIC Meetings will take place monthly during the school year, and all dates will be listed in the school newsletter and on the school's Website (<http://wm.dorchester4.k12.sc.us/>).

Members of the team are chosen and elected each year. If you have any interest in being part of the SIC, speak with our Principal.

Smart Snacks

Information pertaining to Smart Snacks can be found in the Appendix and on the school's Website (<http://wm.dorchester4.k12.sc.us/>).

Student Fees

All students are required to pay a \$20.00 Student Fee at the beginning of each school year. This fee helps the school cover costs for site licenses, supplemental materials, student incentives, classroom material, and technology. This fee can be paid in the Front Office by cash or check. Checks should be made to Williams Memorial Elementary.

*School fees should be paid in order to participate in extra-curricular activities and Field Trips.

Student Records

Student records are used for school use only and are used by the child's teacher, Guidance Counselors, Nurse, and Administration. The records cannot be released to any person or agency without the written consent of a student's parent or guardian.

Telephone Use

Students are not permitted to use the school's telephone unless there is an emergency.

Textbooks

Students receive State owned textbooks from their teacher at the beginning of the school year. Once your child has their textbook, it becomes their responsibility for the remainder of the school year. Any textbooks that are damaged or lost during the school year will be the responsibility of the child to whom the book was issued. The student must pay for the damaged or missing textbook(s) in order to participate in extra-curricular activities and Field Trips. Questions related to textbooks should be directed to your child's teacher or to the school's Assistant Principal.

Transportation

Riding the school bus to and from school is considered a privilege and can be taken away from a child due to inappropriate behavior. Refer to the Appendix in the Student Code of Conduct for bus discipline. Any changes made in your child's bus transportation must be submitted *in writing* before 2:00 P.M.

with a telephone number. Changes in bus routes, requested by parents, can only be made, if the student is getting off at a designated stop.

Students will not be allowed to bring balloons, glass objects, or any object that will not fit into a bookbag on the bus at any time. Buses do NOT stop at any of the Campgrounds.

Questions related to transportation should be directed to the District's Transportation Supervisor at (843) 563-5921.

Visitors/Conferences

Please note that during the Pandemic, visitors will not be allowed past the Front Office. Once the normal schedule resumes, we welcome all visitors in our school but insist that our instructional programs continue without disruption. Any visitor who disrupts the learning process or creates an unsafe learning environment for our children and staff will be asked to leave the building immediately. Visitors are required to stop in at the Front Office to sign in using the Lobby Guard. Once in the hallway, visitors must go straight to their destination. When the scheduled conference is concluded, visitors will need to return to the Front Office and sign out of the Lobby Guard.

Conferences with teachers should be scheduled during non-instructional times (after school or during a planning period). Teachers are not permitted to hold conferences when they are supervising students or involved in instruction. During the Pandemic, conferences may be held through Zoom.

Once we return to a normal schedule, if you would like to observe in your child's class, you must set up a scheduled time with the teacher in advance. Parents will not be permitted to go into a classroom without talking to the teacher first.

Cell phone use in our hallways is prohibited during the regular school day. If you are on your cell phone, you will be asked to return to the Front Office to finish your call.

Volunteers

Volunteers are always welcome at Williams Memorial, but during the Pandemic, volunteers will not be allowed in the building. Once the normal schedule resumes, to become a volunteer, parents and community members must fill out an Volunteer Application Form in order to be approved by the District.

Volunteers may be asked to do a number of different tasks around the building but will never be left in a position to supervise children. Once a person has been approved, they do not need to fill out an application again for a period of three (3) years (Volunteer Applications must be renewed every three (3) years).