

Warren Hope Dawson Elementary Parent Handbook

2018-2019 (Updated July 18, 2018)

We welcome you to our Dawson Elementary Family for this school term. At Dawson Elementary, we are “Providing HOPE for our future, one child at a time.” We hope you will find a warm, friendly atmosphere in our school. It is our sincere hope that this handbook will help you have a better understanding of school policies and procedures. We hope that you’ll reach out to us with any questions/concerns. Please do not hesitate to call the school at (813)442-7396. We are here to serve you and your children. Please visit our website at <http://dawson.mysdhc.org> for additional information.

Parent/Student Information

Daily Schedule/Arrival and Dismissal Times

All students and families are asked to remain off school property until the 7:10am arrival bell rings. At that time, it is safe to enter our campus. *Exceptions – morning programs (Mama Dragons, Dragon Dads, etc.).

Parents are encouraged to drop their students off at our front gate. If you wish to walk your child to class and/or breakfast, you may do so by checking in at the Main Office with your photo ID.

7:10am Students may enter the building and head toward the cafeteria (for FREE breakfast) or go directly to class.

7:35am First bell rings and all exterior doors/gates are closed for student/family safety. NO students may be dropped off beyond this time.

7:40am School starts

7:41am Students entering are considered tardy

1:30pm Last call for early sign-out

1:45pm Dismissal begins*

*Every Monday is early release Dismissal is at 12:55pm, and last call for early sign-out is 12:30pm.

Staff members will be available to supervise students on the campus beginning at 7:10 A.M. The breakfast schedule is from 7:10 A.M. to 7:40 A.M. **Parents should not have their children arrive at school prior to 7:10 A.M. because there is no supervision until the staff is on duty at 7:10 A.M.**

Please help us protect the instructional time at school by ensuring your child comes to school on time each day, ready with everything that he/she may need. If your child is late to school, you will be required to present a photo ID and check them in. You will no longer be permitted to walk your late student to class. We also ask that you do not pick up students prior to our dismissal time. Each time we call for a student, we interrupt instruction and take precious time away from teacher/student contact. Please do not ask us to interrupt the classroom.

Important Phone Numbers

We are providing a list of school extensions that may be of assistance to you.

Please don't hesitate to call Dawson's School Office at (813)442-7396 if you have any questions or concerns.

AttendanceExt. 1

General Questions.....Ext. 0

School Counselor (Mrs. Sochor)Ext. 225

Dawson Lunchroom (Mrs. Adams)Ext. 227

Health Assistant/Nurse (Nurse Hill).....Ext. 226

Registrar/Data Processor (Mr. DeJesus)Ext. 229

Principal's Secretary (Ms. Christ)Ext. 223

PTA Officers for 2018-19

President: Elise Raspitzi

VP Special Programs: Kristen Lopez

VP Fundraising: Holly VanHorn

VP Membership: Sue Svetkovich

Treasurer: Meg Swanson

Recording Secretary: Katrina Thorpe



Corresponding Secretary: Trish Waddell

Our PTA offers a variety of opportunities for volunteerism. Choose to work on campus, at home, or both. Lots of exciting things are happening at school – you won't want to miss out! You'll find that volunteering is rewarding for both you and your child(ren). Please contact us to find out how you can participate! For more information, please contact Sue Svetkovich at (813)442-7396, and dial zero. Our Office staff will be happy to assist.

General Information

School Parties/Birthday Parties, Etc.

Each grade level is allowed two class parties per year. One usually comes before the Winter Holiday and the second before the end of school. If you would like to provide small treats (please no balloons, noisemakers, or other highly distracting party items) in celebration of your child's birthday or distribute birthday party invitations to classmates, please contact your child's teacher in advance to prevent disruption to the schedule. Any baked goods must be store bought and still in packaging. Please check with your child's teacher regarding possible allergies in the class.

Homework

All grade levels have thoughtfully considered the benefits of significantly reducing the amount of homework given. Research supports that students who engage in regular (nightly) reading show the same or greater success as compared to students who engage in more traditional homework assignments. Dawson's Administration supports our teachers in their homework policies and know that grade level decisions regarding homework have been made in the best interests of students. If you have specific concerns, requests, or needs for your child, please discuss this with their teacher and work to make the most successful plan for your child.

How Parents Can Help with Homework

1. Have a quiet place set aside -- a table or desk where homework/reading is to be done.
2. Set a specific time for homework:
 - a. as soon as child gets home and gets comfortable
 - b. after play, but at least one hour before dinner
 - c. right after dinner, before television

If your child experiences difficulty with his/her homework, please write the teacher a note or call your child's teacher during his/her planning time. If for some reason you cannot reach the teacher, please do not hesitate to call the school at (813)442-7396, and dial zero. Someone will help you.

Parent Communication

We are an informed community of child advocates with the common goal of student success. As such, we strive to maintain a relevant and open line of communication between school personnel and home. The Principal sends out an automated phone message every Sunday (between 5pm and 7pm) with important events for the upcoming week. The Dawson PTA sends out monthly newsletters. In addition, the school sends communication via Twitter, Facebook, and Peachjar with important information about school related activities for the week.

Student Transfers

It takes one day to process a child's record when he/she is moving. Please notify the office one day prior to your departure in order that we may prepare your child's records. If an emergency arises and you cannot give us a one-day notice, please make every effort to notify us as soon as possible.

Attendance Line (813) 443-7396 & press 1

This year, we will continue the use of the Attendance Line. This line is for parents to call to report student absences 24 hours a day. The line will have an answering device that will allow you, as parents, to let the school know when your child will be out of school.

STRICTLY ENFORCED. Change of PICK-UP: For your child's safety no child will be dismissed from school by a different method than the one established unless the school receives a written note by 10:00 A.M. Please email teacher, write a note and/or fax a note to 813-559-8492.

Illness/Health

Illness or Accident at School

Many times children become too ill to remain at school. In all fairness to your child and to others, it is of utmost importance that we have on file the following information:

1. Name, address, phone number of parents or guardian (should include business phone)
2. **Emergency numbers:** Name and phone number of relative, friend or neighbor, should your child need home care and you cannot be reached

Please make every effort to keep the office informed of any changes in the status of the information listed above.

Pediculosis (Head Lice)

It is HCPS policy that a child will be excluded from school when this condition exists. The school takes special precautions and checks students' hair on a continued basis. If you, as parents, will also check on a continued basis, this will assist us at school.

Health Screening

School Health Services Program conducts health-screening activities at various times during a child's school experience. Screening activities occur based upon guidelines established by the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services and local school health personnel. School health screening may include the following activities: vision screening; hearing screening; measurement of height, weight and dental screening. Parents will be notified prior to any screening that takes place in school.

Conduct (read Student Code of conduct on district website <http://sdhc.k12.fl.us/conduct>)

Cell Phone and Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Policy

During school hours and while on the bus, cell phones and other electronic devices are to be used under the supervision of district staff for educational purposes only.

Students must comply with the directives of school/district staff regarding when and where electronic devices can be used.

Devices may only be used in approved areas and students must comply with the directives of school/ district staff regarding when and where electronic devices may be used. Cell phone conversations during the school day are prohibited unless under the supervision of staff/school personnel. Failure to comply with staff directives may result in the following student consequences:

First Offense: The device may be confiscated by the staff member, labeled, and given to the administrator. The administrator will notify the parent/guardian and will return the device to the student at the end of the day.

Second Offense: The device may be confiscated by the staff member, labeled and given to the administrator. A mandatory conference is scheduled and the electronic device is returned to the parent. This can be a phone conference since some parents cannot physically come to the school.

Third Offense: The device may be confiscated by the staff member, labeled, and given to the administrator. A mandatory conference will be held with the parent/guardian and disciplinary actions will be imposed by administration (detention, work detail, etc.).

Any future offenses will result in the device being confiscated and a meeting arranged with the parent/guardian to discuss further disciplinary action for disobedience and possible out-of-school suspension.

School Discipline Policies

We firmly believe in the right of every child to have the best academic instruction and the happiest school life we are able to provide. We enjoy praising the successes of all of our students and believe that praise and success are the keys to good discipline.

In order to guarantee your child and all the students in the classroom the excellent learning climate they deserve, we will practice Conscious Discipline at Dawson Elementary. For more specific information, you can visit our website.

We believe all students can behave appropriately. Certain rules and consequences have been developed to aid students in making appropriate decisions governing their behavior. These rules and consequences will vary slightly from grade level to grade level, but in general, they will be consistent throughout the school.

Please be aware that some behaviors **cannot** be tolerated in school. Students who commit offenses such as fighting, destroying property, using profanity or continuing repeated offenses will be handled by the Administration and the appropriate consequences will be communicated with parents.

School Meal Information

School Breakfast and Lunch Programs and Prices

We provide children the opportunity to participate in our breakfast and lunch programs at Dawson. Breakfast is served from 7:10-7:40 each morning, and lunch is served between 10:00-12:00 each day (times vary by grade/class). Lunch menus are available online and are also available in the cafeteria.

Lunch & Breakfast Prices

Full price lunch \$2.25

Full breakfast is Free to **ALL** students

We have an easy and efficient method for parents who are interested in paying for their child's meals by the week or longer. Parents will receive information explaining our lunch program in the first day packet as well as the opening school mail out.

Applying for free and reduced meal benefits is now easier than ever with the NEW online application center!

Complete in the comfort of your home or office

Follow easy, step-by-step instructions

Available online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Avoid delays through school or U.S. mail

Available in English and Spanish

For more information or to complete an application log on to: www.sdhc.k12.fl.us

Meal Status/Meal Prepay Hotline: 1-866-544-5575 (Be sure to have your child's ID number available.)

If you would like to eat with your child, please consider purchasing lunches through our cafeteria as opposed to bringing restaurant-bought meals.

Snacks

Please make sure that your child does not bring candy, chewing gum, or other food items to school. Children may bring a dessert or a snack with their lunch if they bring their lunch from home. We ask that they eat this dessert or snack at lunchtime only. Exceptions may be needed, and teachers will communicate this need to parents. Our cafeteria also sells healthy snacks for students to purchase.

Dress Code/ Parent Conference

Dress Code

Dawson Elementary does NOT require uniforms, however we encourage all students to show their Dawson pride through wearing spirit wear, which can be purchased through out Dawson Dragon PTA.

1. Clothing should be non-disruptive and appropriate for the learning environment.
2. The following will be classified as disruptive or inappropriate clothing: tank tops, hats worn indoors, ankle-length dresses, bare midriffs, halter tops, short-shorts, see through material
3. Shoes or sandals should be securely fastened to the feet and of a reasonable heel height; therefore, **NO** thongs or clogs. Crocs should not be worn. They do not fit the feet securely.
4. Hair should be clean and neatly groomed.
5. General appearance of students should reflect neatness and good personal hygiene.

Labeling Student's Clothing

Please label your child's clothing (coats, sweaters, etc.) so that it will be easily identified and returned if it is misplaced. After a reasonable time, unclaimed clothing or articles will be sent to a local charity.

Parent Visitation

For your child's protection, we are asking that anyone coming to the school report to the office for a visitor's pass. This procedure will assure the staff that the visitor has been cleared by the office. (Thank you for your cooperation.) Visitors on the campus who have not registered in the office will be asked to leave immediately.

Conference with Teachers

The faculty encourages at least two parent-teacher conferences during the year. Please keep in mind these conferences cannot be held during the school day when the teacher is working with the children. Additionally, teachers cannot conference before school time while they are supervising students. A conference may be scheduled during the teacher's conference time, before or after school, and on conference days. We will make every effort to communicate effectively with parents.

Arrival/Dismissal & Parking Procedures

Car signs with student information will be provided by the school to assist in identifying the child(ren) you will be picking up along with grade.

Walkers will exit the campus around 1:50 p.m. with their designated staff member and meet parents at the designated pick-up point (where sidewalk ends at our property line).

Day Care Vans: Kindergarten through fifth grade students will be escorted by staff members to the designated daycare area and placed in the appropriate vehicles.

HOST: Designated staff members will escort kindergarten through fifth grade students to the HOST area where they will meet with their HOST counselor. HOST will be housed in the cafeteria and parent pick-up will be in the front of school (AFTER 2:30pm in order to safely account for all students).

Rainy Day Procedures: If it is raining, without a severe weather threat, we will dismiss students as usual. If a severe weather threat is issued by the National Weather Service, we will put out a ParentLink message indicating any needed changes to our dismissal. **Special Note: Please have a plan for rainy days.** Your child should keep a small umbrella and/or poncho in their backpack just in case. We have limited telephone facilities at Dawson Elementary, and they are for business only. Therefore, it is imperative that your child has a rainy day plan. In case of illness and/or emergency, we will always allow the children to call home.

Bicycle Safety

If your child rides a bicycle to school, be sure he/she knows and abides by the traffic rules, which apply to the use of bicycles. **Please be sure your child is wearing a safety helmet while riding his/her bike.** Bicycles will be parked in the bike racks on the southeast side of the campus in the gated bike area. **The school is not responsible for lost or stolen bicycles.**

Sun Protection

Our boys and girls will be outside at various times throughout the day. Please be sure that you take the necessary precautions to protect your child's skin with sunscreen. It would be most beneficial if applying sunscreen became a daily morning routine prior to school.

Car DROP OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURE

ARRIVAL: ALL car rider traffic is directed to the front of the school

1. See the Car Rider map on our webpage for car rider line directions. Arrows show the path where cars are to drive and safety zones for walkers/bike riders.
2. The right lane is designated for stopping/picking up and the left lane is designated for passing and/or traveling. **DO NOT** drop students off in the left lane or before the designated drop off zone.
3. If you wish to walk your child into the school, please park in a **SAFE** parking area and walk to the front of the school. We are a closed campus. ID is required to walk your child to class. Please **DO NOT** double park in the teachers' parking lot to walk your child to class. The teacher parking lot will be closed 7:40am (after buses have unloaded). Do not try to take short cuts with your car or send your child to walk in to the school across traffic lanes.
4. Pull all the way up to let students out of cars. Someone will open and close the passenger door for your child and greet you both.
5. If you have a special needs student, please pull all the way to the end of the drop-off area. This will allow traffic to flow while an aide assists your child from the car.
6. If you are late (after 7:40am), you will be asked to check in with the office (with proper ID) and walk your child to class. This will ensure a minimum of instructional time is lost for our students.

DISMISSAL:

1. Place car tag(s) hanger on your rearview mirror at dismissal (available in the main office).
2. Students will not be allowed to get into cars that do not have car tag(s) displayed.
3. Anyone without a car tag wishing to pick up a student will be required to park and go into the office to show proper photo ID and sign out the student. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** This is for your child's safety. You will need to wait until all remaining car riders are brought into the office.
4. Staff have been instructed not to release students to adults who park elsewhere and walk up with a car tag hoping to avoid a long pick-up line. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
5. Stay in line and progress through the pick-up lane in order. Do not pass the vehicle in front of you unless waved ahead. Do not "call" your child to come over to you. Please drive slowly as any child could walk out in front of you, or another car may pull out in front of you.

Please refer to the map on our webpage.

PARKING PROCEDURE

We have provided visitor parking spaces in the front of our school (in the car rider area). For your convenience, the left lane is for moving traffic (toward parking spaces). If **ALL** spaces are taken, we ask that you park in the faculty/staff lot on the south side of the campus. This is also our bus loop. You may not pass busses or "double park" in this lot. The development has placed several "on street parking spaces" along Triple Creek Blvd. We do not advise utilizing these spaces, as it may not be the safest means of parking.

Please share these procedures with all individuals responsible for transporting your child. Extra copies are available upon request.