2019-20

Sara Harp Minter Elementary

Sara Harp Minter Elementary School
Student Handbook
2019-20

"Celebrating life, one child at a time."

Vision:

It's All About the TEAM.

T—Tell Our Story
E—Enriching lives
A—Achieving More Together
M—Making a Difference

Mission/Purpose Statement:

Our purpose is to educate, equip, and inspire students to become leaders who are responsible, respectful, problem solvers who are contributing citizens in the 21st century.

Value Statements:

We believe:

*Everyone can be a leader.
*Everyone has genius.
*Change starts with me.
*Educators empower students to lead their own learning.
*We should develop the whole person.

Mascot: Blaze the Mountain Lion
Colors: Red, Blue, and Gold

www.saraharpminter.org
1650 Hwy.85 South
Fayetteville, GA 30215
Office: 770-716-3910
Fax: 770-716-3914
ASP: 770-716-3918

John Gibbas, Principal
Cindy Holland, Assistant Principal

Sara Harp Minter Elementary School

www.saraharpminter.org

Principal	John Gibbas
Asst. Principal	Cindy Holland
Counselor	Mesha Bolton
Counselor	Rebekah Gilliam
Media Specialist	Amanda Lane
Secretary/Bookkeeper	Kelley Danley
Student Information Clerk	Beth Yeager
Front Office Secretary	Karla Sowell
School Nurse	Donna Lawrence
ASP Coordinator	Dianna Robertson
Café Manager	Tina Bowlden
Head Custodian	Barbara Wilson

Office Hours
7:00 am -- 3:30 pm

ASP Hours
2:30 pm -- 6:30 pm

Fayette County Board of Education

770-460-3535

www.fcboe.org

Superintendent	Dr. Joseph Barrow

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AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM (ASP):

Sara Harp Minter offers an After School Program which operates from dismissal until 6:30 PM providing a safe, nurturing environment for our students. Space is limited and is offered on a first come, first served basis. SHME's ASP is accredited by the National School-Age Care Alliance (NSACA). **Please see the ASP Family Handbook for Registration and Fee Information, or call 770-716-3918.**

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL:

Arrival: We welcome your students to arrive at 7:15 a.m. For the safety of your children, **please refrain from arriving earlier as there is no supervision until 7:15 a.m.** Car riders must enter through the front entrance as the side of the school is reserved for buses. The school day and instruction begin at 7:40 a.m. Students are expected to be present in their classrooms by this time or they will be considered tardy. Students arriving after 7:40 a.m. must be checked into school by a parent in the front office.

Car Lane Procedures - Following these procedures helps keep our children safe and traffic flowing smoothly.

Car Lane Drop-off:

- Follow the "S" curve of the parking lot.
- Have students ready to exit the vehicle when you pull up to the drop off area. A quick and safe exit from the car keeps traffic moving.
- After your student exits the car, wait for the car in front of you to move forward before moving your car. Please do not pull around cars. This is extremely dangerous.

Park and Drop-off (for parents visiting the school):

- Park in one of the available parking spaces. Do not double-park behind parked cars or along the fire lane.
- Use the crosswalk. Duty personnel will indicate when it is safe to cross.
- Parents must escort students across the car lane into the school building.

Dismissal: Dismissal begins at 2:20 p.m. Students not picked up by 2:40 p.m. will be placed in the After School Program and the drop-in fee will be charged. This will be done for your child's safety as staff members are extremely busy after school and supervision is not available.

Afternoon Pick up:

- Follow the "S" curve of the parking lot.
- Have the car rider card **prominently** displayed in the car windshield. If a card is not present, you will be asked to park in the parking lot and present your identification to the front office staff.
- Please stay in line and wait for your child to be delivered to your vehicle. Do not exit the line until the vehicle in front of you leaves.

Change in Transportation: At the beginning of the year, parents are asked to identify a student's usual dismissal procedure (bus, ASP, car, etc). We will not change a child's mode of transportation unless we have a note from the parent. **Under no circumstances will a teacher take a child's word regarding dismissal plans.**

- If the child's dismissal plans change from day to day, the parent must send a note to the teacher and to ASP (if applicable).

● If a student will be going home with a friend, the parents of both students must send a note to the teacher(s).
● If you have a transportation change during the school day, you must call the front office at 770.716-3910 **before 1:45 p.m**. **All transportation changes must be made in writing or by phone call prior to 1:45 p.m.**
● **Do not email teachers or office staff regarding transportation changes**. **All changes must be made in writing or by phone call.**
● **Each family has a password for verification purposes for transportation changes made over the phone. Please make sure family members are aware of the password.**

Early dismissal: If your child needs to leave school early, please send a note to the teacher. Parents must come into the building to sign their child out from the office, not from the classroom. A photo ID and being listed on the student emergency card are required when checking out a child. **If we cannot verify the identity, your child will not be released. Teachers will not release students until notified by the office. We do not honor early dismissals between 2:00-2:20 due to the safety of our students.**

ATTENDANCE

Absences and Tardies:
A student is considered absent if s/he does not attend classes for at least one half of the official school day. If a student is scheduled to go to the clinic before 11:00 and needs to be picked up from school, the student will be marked absent for the day even if the parents do not come to pick up the student until after 11:00. In order for makeup work to be given, the absence must be excused. Absences are considered excused for illness, a death in the family, religious holidays, or a mandated court appearance. Students must bring a written excuse the day following the absence. If a child is going to be absent for three or more days, we encourage a parent to call the school by 8:00 a.m. and ask for makeup work. This work will be available for pickup in the office at the close of the school day. If the parent calls later in the day, there is a possibility that the work will not be ready until the next school day

A student is considered tardy if s/he arrives in their classroom after the 7:40 a.m. bell. **If a student is tardy, the *PARENT* must check the student into school by signing in at the front office.** If a tardy is a result of a doctor or dental appointment, please provide a copy of the doctor/dentist excuse when signing your child in at the front office. We ask that you make every effort to see that your child is here on time since instructional time is so valuable.

Please read the attendance policy in the Fayette County Student Code of Conduct that encompasses the Compulsory Attendance Law. Below is the official Fayette County Public Schools Attendance Protocol for Unexcused Absences that became effective for the 2005-2006 school year.

Number of Unexcused Absences	Procedure
5 Cumulative Unexcused absences Per Semester	**Ages 6-16** **The school notifies parents by first class mail of the unexcused absences and a summary of consequences**

7 Cumulative Unexcused absences Per School Year	**Ages 14-17** **The Attendance/Residency Officer will notify parents by letter concerning the attendance/driver's license law and a summary of consequences**
10 Cumulative Unexcused absences Per Semester	**Ages 6-16** **The Attendance/Residency Officer will report violations to the Student Attendance Protocol Committee to determine if court action will be pursued for formal intervention**

♦ *After five (5) personal notes written by the parent/guardian for excused absences, the school administration may request appropriate medical documentation upon return to school for the purpose of validating the absences.*

All children enrolled for 20 calendar days or more in the public schools of this state prior to their seventh birthday shall become subject to the provisions of the compulsory school attendance law.

SUMMARY OF CONSEQUENCES: ANY PARENT, GUARDIAN, OR OTHER PERSON WHO HAS CONTROL OF ANY CHILD WHO ON THE TENTH UNEXCUSED DAY OF ABSENCE PER SEMESTER, AND AFTER THE CHILD'S SCHOOL SYSTEM NOTIFIES THE PARENT, GUARDIAN OR OTHER PERSON WHO HAS CONTROL OF ANY CHILD, UPON EACH DAY'S ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL SHALL BE GUILTY OF A MISDEMEANOR AND COURT ACTION MAY BE PURSUED FOR FORMAL INTERVENTION.

Penalties: Subject to;

1. **Fine** – not less than $25 and not greater than $100.00
2. **Imprisonment** – not to exceed 30 days
3. **Community Service**, or any combination of penalties, at the discretion of the court.

Lawful absences (excused) are defined by the State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.10 Student Attendance:

- Personal Illness
- Death in immediate family
- Religious holiday
- Instances in which attendance could be hazardous as determined by the Fayette County School System
- Service as page in legislature
- Court Order
- Absence to vote in an election

BIRTHDAY / CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays are a special day and an important time to celebrate with classmates. However, we are experiencing a growing number of students with severe food allergies. For the 2018-19 school year, we have made the decision to not allow cupcakes/cakes or other birthday food items brought from home.

We would still love to celebrate your child's special day. If you would like an alternative idea for your child's birthday celebration, below are some suggestions. As always, please check with your child's teacher first to make sure your birthday plans fit into the class schedule.

- **School Ice Cream pass** for the class ($15.00 for entire class—can be purchased in the front office). Our ice cream has been approved to comply with the Smart Snack regulations from the Federal government.
- **Read a book** to the class and/or donate the book to the classroom library in honor of your child's birthday.
- **Party Favors**, such as stickers, pens, pencils, erasers, notepads, bubbles, etc.
- **Send in an autograph book** for each classmate to write a special birthday message to your child.
- **Donate a board game, puzzle, jump rope, ball**, etc. in honor of your child's birthday.
- Have the class work on a quick **community service project** together in honor of your child's birthday. Examples—write a letter to someone in the military or collect items to donate to a local charity.
- **Donate a plant**, seeds, or a bulb for the school garden.
- **Send in a t-shirt**, a stuffed animal, pillow case, etc. for the class to sign.
- Other ideas: please check with your child's teacher and share your ideas so we can add them to our list.

Balloons, flowers, etc. *should not* be delivered to school to celebrate a student's birthday or special event. Students should not wear any clothing or accessories that distract from the learning environment. Written invitations to birthdays or social events outside the school should be mailed unless every child in the class or every member of the same gender in the class receives an invitation. This policy is in effect to ensure that no child's feelings are hurt because of being left out of a special activity.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

MOST STUDENTS RIDE SCHOOL BUSES TO AND FROM SCHOOL. TO RIDE A BUS IS A PRIVILEGE, AND A STUDENT IS REQUIRED TO BEHAVE IN AN ACCEPTABLE MANNER IN ORDER TO BE ALLOWED THIS PRIVILEGE. THE DRIVER MUST BE ABLE TO CONCENTRATE WITHOUT DISTRACTIONS AND STUDENT-RELATED PROBLEMS. BUS SAFETY RULES ARE PART OF THE FAYETTE COUNTY CODE OF CONDUCT. PLEASE REVIEW THESE SAFETY RULES WITH YOUR CHILD.

School bus drivers may assign students to seats. If further disciplinary action is necessary, the driver may refer students to the administration, and the administration may take further action. A bus driver should be considered "the" authority figure on the bus and should be treated in a respectful manner by the students. If a student continually fails to behave in a respectful and safe manner, the student will be denied the privilege of riding the bus. Students suspended from riding one bus may not ride another bus. The student is not suspended from school and is expected to attend.

BUS RULES

1. Being on time at the bus stop is essential. Each student should be at the bus stop five to ten minutes before the time the bus normally arrives.
2. Most school buses have a seating capacity of 66. Students are expected to sit three to a seat unless otherwise directed by the driver. The driver has the right to assign students to specific seats.
3. Students are expected to sit facing the front of the bus and to remain in their seats until the bus stops for unloading.
4. Students will be permitted to carry only books and other items related to school work which can fit in the student's lap. This includes musical instruments. Exceptions must be cleared with the bus driver.
5. No eating or drinking is permitted on the school bus.
6. The route will be run the same way each day. Exceptions may be made for rain or cold weather.

7. Students are permitted to talk in a normal tone while on the bus. Loud talking or screaming cannot be tolerated. Absolute silence will be enforced at all railroad crossings and hazardous intersections.
8. Students should always cross in front of, never behind, the bus.
9. Students should not open or close windows without permission from the driver.
10. Students should not behave in any manner that would jeopardize their safety.

CAFETERIA

Sara Harp Minter has a 'Point of Sale' program in the cafeteria, which allows parents to pay in advance for student lunches. Each student is assigned a PIN number that s/he enters into a keypad at the cafeteria cash register, and the price of the meal is deducted from the student's account. You will receive notification when the account is getting low. ***When paying for your child's lunch please place the check/cash in an envelope clearly marked with the student's name, teacher, PIN number, and amount enclosed***. Another option for paying for lunch is MyLunchMoney.com. This is an online option for automatic payment into your child's lunch account. Go to www.MyLunchMoney.com for more information.

Students should not have charges in the lunchroom. A written notification of lunch debt will be sent to parents. If money is owed, the lunchroom will provide the child an alternative lunch. Students who have lunch charges will be denied the privilege of purchasing ice cream until their lunch charges are cleared.

Lunch program: A cafeteria lunch is available for student purchase on a daily basis. The menu is available on our school newsletter and website. Two entree choices and a salad option are available each day, along with a variety of side dishes. Extra milk and/or water may be purchased.

CAFETERIA PRICES Meal	SY 2019-20
Elementary Lunch	$2.75
Adult Lunch	$3.75
Reduced Price Lunch	$0.40
Extra Milk	$0.50
Ice Cream	$1.00

Guests at lunch: We welcome parents to eat lunch with their children, but we ask that you make every effort to let the teacher know of the dates you will be eating with your child ahead of time. If you cannot send a note, please call the office by 8:30 a.m. on the day you are planning to eat lunch so the cafeteria staff can prepare the appropriate amount of food. Due to our large student population, we are unable to have a parent table. Parents are invited to sit at the class table with their student. ***For the safety of all of our students, please refrain from sharing food with children other than your own or buying ice cream for other students due to allergies.***

CARE TEAM

The Fayette County CARE (**C**hildren **A**t **R**isk in **E**ducation) Team chaired by our school counselor is dedicated to helping our students and families who may need assistance both in and outside of the school setting. The CARE program also sponsors the Parent Enrichment Series, Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP) classes for parents, and the

tutoring/mentoring program. The school counselor can provide specific information to you about these programs.

CELL PHONES/GAMES/PERSONAL PROPERTY

Electronic devices and personal property such as games, toys, Pokemon Cards and similar items are not allowed in the school or on school buses. Book bags and other personal items may be subject to search. Please label all personal property with your child's full name. Unless cell phones and other personal electronic devices are being used for instructional purposes they MUST be kept in the off position and in their book bag unless an alternate location has been created by the homeroom teacher. **At no time are cell phones allowed to be used on the school bus, on the playground, in the restroom, etc.** If you need to get an important message to your student during the day, please call the school and we will relay the message.

Smart Watches must not be used during the school day for phone calls, text messaging, videos, music, etc. If a Smart Watch disrupts the learning environment, the teacher may ask the student to remove the watch to be placed in a safe location.

CHECKS AND MONEY

The school accepts personal checks for all activities or materials. Separate checks should be issued for each child and for each activity. School lunch checks must be issued separately. Ice cream money cannot be included in a check for lunches. There is a $15.00 service charge for each returned check. If a family has a returned check on file, all school transactions must be made in cash until the matter has been resolved. **After April 30, all financial transactions must be made using cash.**

CIVILITY POLICY

The Fayette County Board of Education has a civility policy to encourage positive civil and professional behavior between school system employees and citizens. All exchanges between employees and citizens are to be considerate, respectful and professional. Under no circumstances should unpleasant exchanges with inappropriate language take place in the presence of children. Please see Civility Policy in the Student Code of Conduct.

CLASS PARTIES

In an effort to provide a safe and healthy environment for all of our elementary students, school parties and activities should emphasize activities (such as crafts or games) and limit refreshments and/or treats. Room parents are expected to consult with the classroom teacher to determine if any students have food allergies or diet restrictions.

Classes have two parties each year—winter holiday and end-of-year. We do enjoy smaller celebrations for Valentine's Day and Egg Hunts/Spring Snacks. Parents may be asked to contribute money and or refreshments for these special occasions. We invite parents to come and
participate, but ask that **younger children do not attend (this does not include infants in a car seat and/or stroller).** Attention must be on the students and the younger children may prove to be a distraction.

CLINIC

Our clinic is staffed with a full-time Registered Nurse trained in basic First Aid, Red Cross lifesaving techniques, and CPR. If a child is injured or is too ill to be at school, we will contact you to pick up the child. It is imperative that the child be picked up in a timely manner. If we feel that the illness or injury is beyond our capabilities, we will immediately notify the parents and call the paramedics. We want our children to attend school as much as possible. However, **if your child has been ill, s/he cannot attend school until s/he has been fever/symptom free without medication for one FULL school day.** Consult the School/Health Services section of the FCBOE Student Code of Conduct for information regarding the dispensing of medicine.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between parents and teachers is valuable in establishing a positive relationship focused on student success. Communication can be in the form of notes, emails, letters, newsletters, telephone calls and conferences. If you wish to contact your child's teacher, please call the front office or email the teacher. It is our goal to respond to all messages within 24 hours.

CONFERENCES

Parents are encouraged to schedule conferences with their child's teachers. It is recommended that parents have at least one scheduled face-to-face conference with their child's teacher. Parents should not expect teachers to conference about their child's progress during arrival time, lunch time, etc. without an appointment. The counselor, support teachers, and administrators are also available for scheduled conferences by contacting the office or by e-mail. For the 2019-20 school year, we will hold one student-led conference. More information about this will come home during second semester.

DISCIPLINE

The faculty and staff strive to establish a positive school climate. Sara Harp Minter is a place where students are taught guidelines to live successfully with others, where students are encouraged and recognized, and where natural or logical consequences for misbehavior are consistent and fair. The Fayette County Student Code of Conduct will be issued to all students/parents. Parents should read the *Code of Conduct* with their child(ren) in order to help them to understand the document. As per Fayette County Board of Education policy, there will be no corporal punishment. When it is necessary to impose discipline, school administrators and teachers will follow an age-appropriate progressive discipline process.

The use of consistent school-wide positive behavior expectations encourages children to make responsible choices for their personal behaviors. Every staff member will monitor student behavior throughout the school setting. Sara Harp Minter is a Leader in Me and PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Support) school. All staff members will teach and model our school pledge and behavior matrix expectations and teachers will reinforce positive student behavior through "Leader Loot", which is new to our school this year.
(*chart on the following page*).

I Am A Leader When…

	Hallway *Silent Zone*	Playground	Cafe	Bathroom *Quiet Zone*	Technology	Assembly	Media
I am RESPECTFUL.	Hands to self. Be Polite.	Take turns. Use your words.	Use Minter Manners. Respect personal space.	Respect the privacy of others. Use kind words.	Participate appropriately. Be a positive role model of digital citizenship.	Participate appropriately. Be an active listener.	Participate appropriately. Be an active listener.
I am RESPONSIBLE.	Follow directions. Walk directly to destination.	Follow directions. Clean up after yourself.	Follow directions. Clean up after yourself.	Keep bathroom clean. Go, Flush, Wash, Leave	Follow directions. Be a digital citizen.	Follow directions. Stay seated.	Follow directions. Clean up after yourself.
I am SAFE.	Be alert. Eyes forward.	Stay in assigned area. Use equipment properly.	Eat only your food. Stay in your seat.	Report problems to an adult. Keep your body to yourself.	Report misuse to an adult. Visit only approved sites.	Keep your body to yourself. Be calm.	Be calm. Share space with others.
I am a PROBLEM SOLVER.	Get to where you are going with a purpose. Walk away from teasing situations or use STOP, WALK, TALK.	Walk away from teasing situations or use STOP, WALK, TALK. Count to 10 if you get angry.	Inform an adult of dangerous or teasing situations. Count to 10 if you get angry.	Report any misbehavior to a teacher/adult right away.	Think or a possible solution before speaking to your teacher. Use only teacher assigned Websites.	Ignore misbehavior and model positive behavior for the students around you.	Report any misbehavior to the teacher. Listen and follow all directions in the media center.

DRESS CODE

All Fayette County students are expected to be neatly groomed and dressed appropriately. Students' dress and hairstyles should not distract from the educational process. School administrators are responsible for determining dress code violations. The principal reserves the right to interpret or add to these provisions as deemed in the best interest of the school. Inappropriate dress for all students includes clothing containing inappropriate language, advertisements for drugs, tobacco, or alcohol, suggestive lettering or pictures, or any clothing that glorifies death and/or violence. An appropriate shirt needs to be worn underneath transparent or mesh clothing. Hats or caps are not to be worn inside the building. Shorts are acceptable as long as they are finger-tip length or longer. If a student is dressed inappropriately, parents may be asked to bring a change of clothing to school and/or the student will be provided a change of clothing from the clinic. Please dress your child appropriately, including safe and comfortable shoes, for P.E., recess, and the weather. **Refer to the Student Dress Code Section in the Student Code of Conduct for more specifics.**

EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM (EIP)

First through fifth grade students who are experiencing difficulties in reading and/or math may be referred to the Early Intervention Program (EIP). Students qualify for EIP by meeting state eligibility requirements. EIP teachers work with groups of students to help them learn the skills necessary to be successful in reading and/or math.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION CARD AND FAMILY PASSWORD

Parents must update and/or complete student emergency cards at the beginning of the school year. These contain basic information such as address, home and office telephone numbers, place of employment, and the **names of two emergency contacts who live close to school.** Children will not be released to anyone whose name does not appear on the card. **If any of the information on the card should change during the school year (i.e. new work number), please send these changes to the teacher and the front office so that we will always have up to date information.**

At the beginning of the school year, all families will be asked to give the front office a family password. This password will be logged in our online student information system. The purpose of the password is to provide an additional level of security when making student changes over the phone.

ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

Enrichment classes are provided for students who meet state eligibility requirements for the enrichment/gifted program. These classes meet once a week for an entire day. The remainder of the week these students work in their regular classrooms with needed differentiated instruction provided by the classroom teacher.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Please see Fayette County Student Code of Conduct

FIELD TRIPS (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Your child's class may take educational field trips throughout the year and parents may serve as chaperones. **Siblings of the student may not accompany their parents on field trips.** To participate in a field trip, students must have the parent/guardian's written permission on the official permission slip. No verbal or phone permissions will be accepted. Because Fayette County does not fund field trips, donations are requested. No child will be denied participation in the field trip for not making a donation; however, if adequate donations are not received, the trip may be canceled. Field trip payments are nonrefundable. Appropriate behavior and attire is expected. As needed, students may be placed on a behavior contract to earn the privilege of attending the field trip. If a parent needs to check out their student from the site of the field trip (not ride the bus home), they must obtain prior approval from the school administration.

GRADES AND REPORT CARDS

Students receive report cards every nine weeks. Progress reports are issued after the first 4 ½ weeks of school and every 4 ½ weeks after report cards. Parents are informed of student progress in both character and academic traits. Parents are expected to sign and return the report card promptly to the classroom teacher.

Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Grades

The reporting scale for core content areas: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies consists of 4 performance levels. Students in K, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd ***will not*** receive a traditional progress report, as they are grader on mastery of grade level standards:

4.0--Exceeding proficiency of the standard
3.0--Meeting proficiency of the standard
2.0--Developing proficiency of the standard
1.0--Beginning to demonstrate understanding of the standard

Explanation of the grading system (4th and 5th Grade)

4 – Working above grade level standards
3 – Working at grade level standards
2 – Working at grade level standards with interventions
1 – Working below grade level standards with interventions
S – Satisfactory
NI – Needs Improvement
* Not Formally Assessed

In addition to the above rating, 4th-5th receive letter grades in academic subjects:

A+ 98-100 A 93-97 A- 90-92
B+ 88-89 B 83-87 B- 80-82
C+ 78-79 C 73-77 C- 71-72
D 70 F below 70

Other Codes for All Elementary Grades

***** - Not formally introduced
Used in Specials (Art, Music, PE and Technology) and Learning & Life Skills
S - Satisfactory

NI - Needs Improvement

Report Card and Progress Reports
(Progress Reports will be sent home in 4th and 5th grade)

1st 4-1/2 weeks Progress Report Sept. 10, 2019

1st 9 week period Report Card October 16, 2019

2nd 4-1/2 weeks Progress Report November 14, 2019

2nd 9 week period Report Card January 13, 2019

3rd 4-1/2 weeks Progress Report February 11, 2019

3rd 9 week period Report Card March 19, 2020

4th 4-1/2 weeks Progress Report April 27, 2020

4th 9 week period Report Card May 22, 2020

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

Sara Harp Minter has two counselors to assist with the social and emotional needs of our students. The counselors teach classroom guidance lessons on a variety of topics including a unit on careers and character education, and are available for individual and small group sessions. They also support parents, teachers, and administrators to meet the needs of our students.

HONOR ROLL

Sara Harp Minter honors the academic achievements of students in many ways. Students in grades four and five earning all A's or all A's and B's will have their names posted on the A and A/B Honor Roll each 9-week marking period.

ICE CREAM

Students may purchase ice cream in the cafeteria during the last ten minutes of their lunch period on Wednesday and Friday. If a student owes cafeteria charges, s/he may not purchase ice cream on that day. Parents may consider purchasing ice cream for their child's class to celebrate their child's birthday.

INTERNET USE POLICY

See information in the Fayette County Student Code of Conduct.

LEGAL NOTICES

The Fayette County Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, or disabilities in educational programs, activities, or

employment practices. Complaints of discrimination or harassment procedures and school system contact personnel are listed in the Fayette County Student Code of Conduct.

LOST AND FOUND

If your child is missing an article of clothing check our lost and found box. It is very important that you write your child's name in all coats, jackets, sweaters, caps, etc. This makes for easy identification. When the lost and found box "runneth over," parents will be notified via the school website that any items still remaining after a specific date will be donated to charity.

MEDIA SERVICES

Students go to the media center as a class on a flexible schedule. In addition to this, students may be sent to the media center at various times to check out or return books, and to browse or do research. Books are checked out for two weeks at a time. Students are responsible for all books they check out and must pay for any book they lose. Overdue notices are sent on a regular basis to help students be responsible for their books. Overdue notices are also periodically sent to parents via email to inform parents if their child has an overdue book. Parents can visit the media center to assist their child in book check-out from 7:15-7:40 a.m. if desired. Parents are welcome to come to the media center at any time to ask questions or volunteer!

Reading Counts: Our school participates in the Scholastic Reading Counts (RC) Program (http://teacher.scholastic.com), which is designed to develop reading skills and motivate students to achieve reading success. At the beginning of the year, students in grades 2-5 take the Reading Inventory (RI) to determine their reading Lexile range (http://www.lexile.com). The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) is used to determine the reading level of younger students. Students then check out books in this range for reading, read the entire book, and take the corresponding quiz on the computer. Quiz results help assess and monitor reading progress. Various honors are given to students as they reach their personal Reading Counts goals. **We urge parents to encourage their child to read or to read with their child nightly to support success in reading.**

OBSERVATIONS

Parents are welcome to visit their children's classrooms. **All observations must be prearranged through the school principal or assistant principal and are limited to two adult observers at the same time.** Younger siblings are not allowed during the observation. Outside observers should respect the confidentiality of all students within the classroom setting; therefore, no personally identifiable information should be shared. A staff member may be assigned to accompany the observer during the observation. Observations should be limited to thirty minutes and should occur no more than one time during any school week. Observations for any other purpose than to address instructional needs of enrolled students are scheduled at the discretion of the school administration.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Georgia law requires physical education (PE) instruction and participation as mandatory except for health reasons. A written note is required from a physician or parent explaining the nature of the illness or injury and stating specifically the length of time before normal participation can be resumed. The note needs to be presented to the PE instructor and the school nurse if the

student is to have none or limited PE participation for more than one week. Appropriate shoes and clothing should be worn on the days when the children have PE classes.

PTO INFORMATION

The Parent Teacher Organization benefits all families of Sara Harp Minter Elementary, and both the parents and teachers at Minter are encouraged to become members of this valuable organization. The PTO Board is composed of the officers and the chairs of our various committees. The principal, assistant principal and a teacher representative also attend the board meetings. The board meetings occur monthly, and all parents are encouraged to attend. If you have any questions or would like to become involved, please feel free to contact a PTO officer, or the school office for more information.

PUBLICITY, PHOTOGRAPHS, LISTS, AND VIDEO TAPES

Students are often photographed or they may participate in activities which may be videotaped for school related news stories or broadcasts. These may be released to newspapers, radio or television, possibly citing the child's name for school publicity. **If you would prefer your child's picture and/or name NOT be published, please write a letter to that effect to the principal and your child's teacher.**

When photographing school events/parties/field trips, we ask that all stakeholders respect the privacy of our students. We ask that any photos posted on social media do not include student names and/or any other specific details.

RAINBOWS

The Rainbows Program is for children who have experienced a significant loss in their life either through divorce, death, or separation from a family member. The children meet in small groups with a trained adult leader once a week for approximately 12 weeks. The program includes a Celebrate Me Day when all children and their leaders come together for a special time of sharing and learning. For more information please contact a school counselor.

RECYCLING AND RETAIL COMMITMENT CARD PROGRAMS

There is a paper recycling bin, for all types of paper and cardboard located near the bus door in the first hallway and in the commons area. Proceeds earned from these and the following programs go directly to the children in the form of supplies, computer equipment, books, etc.

- Publix – use your school commitment card (available in front office)
- Target - You can also designate1% of your Target Visa and Guest Card purchases to be donated to Sara Harp Minter. Please contact Target @ 1-800-316-6142 or target.com for more information.
- Box Tops for Education - Box Top certificates can be found on many grocery products; more information can be found at www.boxtops4education.com.

SCHOOL CLOSING DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

School closing due to inclement weather will be broadcast on WSB Radio 750 AM, WSB TV, WXIA TV, WFOX TV and www.wsbtv.com. Please tune to one of these if the weather is threatening.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

Sara Harp Minter has a school council as mandated by the Education Reform Act. The school council was established to bring parents and the community together with teachers and school administrators to create a better understanding of and mutual respect for each other's concerns, and to share ideas for school improvement. The council's role is to provide advice and recommendations in the areas of student achievement and school improvement. Meetings are open to any Minter parent. Meeting dates and times are posted on our school website.

SMART SNACKS IN SCHOOLS

USDA's "All Foods Sold in Schools" Standards Effective July 1, 2014

Due to the Food Guidelines set forth by the USDA, all schools have to make changes to current practices. The changes that will be made at Sara Harp Minter to comply with these federal regulations include: eliminating bake sales, eliminating the sale of popcorn during the school day, and purchasing approved ice cream products. We are still allowed to have classroom parties and events with food that is not "sold" to the students. After-school events, such as Spring Fling and movie nights do not fall under these guidelines.

Food Guidelines
Nutrition Standards for Foods (per item as packaged or served)

Any food sold on the school campus during the school day must:

- Be a whole grain-rich grain product; **or**
- Have as the first ingredient a fruit, vegetable, dairy product, or protein food; **or**
- Be a combination food that contains at least ¼ cup fruit and/or vegetable; **or**
- Contain 10% of the Daily Value (DV) of a nutrient of public health concern in the *2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* (calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or dietary fiber).*****

AND

Foods must also meet all of the specific nutrient standards (with accompaniments):

Calorie limits
Entrée items: ≤ 350 calories Snack/side items: ≤ 200 calories

Sodium limits
Entrée items: ≤ 480 mg Snack/side items: ≤ 230 mg******

Fat limits
Total fat: ≤ 35% of total calories
- *Exemptions: Reduced fat cheese (including part skim mozzarella), nuts and seeds and nut/seed butters, dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats, seafood with no added fat*

Saturated fat: < 10% of total calories
- *Exemptions: Reduced fat cheese(including part skim mozzarella), nuts and seeds and nut/seed butters, dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats*

Trans fat: zero grams (<0.5g)

Sugar limit
Total sugar: ≤ 35% of weight from total sugars

SPECIAL EDUCATION/EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Students with specific learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities, other health impairments, emotional behavior disorders, speech language disabilities, etc. are provided services by a special education teacher. In order to be placed in a program, students must have gone through the response to intervention process, been referred, evaluated, and staffed into the program through an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

STUDENT COMPLAINTS

In accordance with the FCBOE policy, students shall have the right to present and resolve complaints related to matters affecting the student relationship at the lowest organizational level possible. Our school encourages all students to resolve complaints informally in a spirit of trust whenever possible. This policy and procedure is available where such efforts do not succeed or, where for any other reason, the student desires to pursue this procedure.

- Step I - The student shall present the complaint to the teacher, staff member, counselor, or administrator with whom the student has the complaint.
- Step II - If the situation cannot be resolved, it is to be presented by the student (if against a teacher, counselor, or staff member) to the Assistant Principal.
- Step III - If the situation cannot be resolved by the Assistant Principal, it will be turned over to the Principal for final dispensation.

STUDENT SUPPORT PROCESS

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI) and PYRAMID OF INTERVENTIONS

Student academic and/or behavioral concerns are addressed through a four-tiered process that systematically develops and delivers instructional and behavioral interventions. This process is known interchangeably as the Tier process or Response to Intervention (RTI). The essential components of the process include the following:

- Providing scientific, research based instruction and interventions
- Monitoring progress in response to these changes in instruction and interventions
- Using this information to shape instruction and make educational decisions

Tier 1 is Standards-Based Classroom Teaching and Learning. It consists of high quality instructional and behavioral support that is provided for all students. This includes implementing the CCGPS using research-based instructional practices, adjusting instruction to meet student needs, and monitoring student progress. Parents are notified of concerns related to their child's academic or behavioral struggles. If students still struggle or they need a more enriched curriculum, Tier 2 instruction is recommended.

Tier 2 is Student Success Team, Needs Based Teaching and Learning. Students receive more specialized interventions, remediation, acceleration, and enhancement within the general education setting. The "Success Team," comprised of interdisciplinary teachers, works collaboratively to formalize interventions in addition to Tier 1 instruction. Parent involvement in Tier 2 meetings is optional; however, the intervention plan is communicated to parents. The classroom teacher, remedial teachers, or others generally provide Tier 2 instruction in small groups. Monitoring of the student's progress is increased. Should the student continue to show lack of progress or failure to thrive academically and/or socially and need more specialized instruction, Tier 3 instruction is considered.

Tier 3 is Student Support Team (SST) Data Driven Teaching and Learning. At this point the SST, which can include school-based interdisciplinary teachers, countywide specialists, and parents, reviews the student's progress and plans for more intensive and systematic instruction. Interventions increase in intensity and duration and may be provided one-on-one, in small groups, or in classes. Progress monitoring is implemented more frequently to determine continued instructional interventions. If, with all the interventions and intensive instruction provided, the data indicates the student still shows lack of progress, a referral to Tier 4 is considered.

Tier 4 is Individually Designed Teaching and Learning. At this point, the student is referred for comprehensive psycho-educational evaluations through the Exceptional Children's Services, formerly known as Special Education. Grade or subject-area remediation and/or acceleration may be considered, or students may require adapted content and instructional delivery while still having access to the general curriculum.

Section 504 Under Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance . . ." The Section 504 regulation requires a school district to provide a "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) to each qualified person with a disability who is in the school district's jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the person's disability.

If a parent or teacher identifies a student as having a medical or psychological condition that could substantially limit the student's school performance, the school should be informed and begin the student support process immediately. **For more information on 504, contact Cindy Holland, Assistant Principal.**

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

In compliance with federal regulations, the Fayette County School District informs parents that they may request information about the professional qualifications of their child's teacher(s). Parents wishing to request the information should contact the school principal by phone (770) 716-3910 or email at gibbas.john@mail.fcboe.org

The following information may be requested:

1. Certification information
2. College major/graduate certification or degree held by the teacher
3. Whether or not the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status through which Georgia qualifications or certification criteria have been waived
4. Qualifications of the paraprofessional, if paraprofessional services are provided

TESTING

Throughout the year we administer a number of tests to our students to assess both individual and the school's progress.

- The Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS) consists of teachers assessing each standard of the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) in the kindergarten curriculum. Reports at the end of the year, inform parents as to their child's mastery of kindergarten standards.

- Reading Inventory (RI) assesses reading comprehension and gives each student a Lexile score, which indicates the level of difficulty a student can successfully comprehend.
- The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) is administered twice a year in grades K-1, giving information about each student's development in the various areas of reading.
- DIBELS reading assessment is administered to students to gain information on first sound fluency, letter naming fluency, phoneme segmentation, and oral reading fluency.
- The STAR Math assessment is administered three times a year to students in K-5 to assess progress in math standards.
- Georgia Milestones Testing will take place in grades 3-5 and will be taken online during the month of April.

Other assessments may be administered as mandated by the Georgia Department of Education or the Fayette County School System.

THREATS AND HARASSMENT

For all students to learn and grow, school must be a safe environment. Ensuring such an environment is a task that requires a strict, no-nonsense approach to any words or deeds that are intended to threaten the safety of another. All Fayette County Schools will regard all written and/or verbal threats, implied or direct, toward students, staff members, or school and staff property in a serious manner. The school's discipline action will be immediate and severe. Incidences may be reported to the police and/or the sheriff's department depending on the specific jurisdiction.

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

We welcome parent and community volunteers and visitors to our school. Anyone (parent, volunteer, other visitor) visiting the school must report directly to the office and sign in and get a visitor's badge. You also must sign out when you leave. If you are not wearing a visitor's badge, you may be escorted to the office to pick one up. School visits and volunteer work should be prearranged with the appropriate faculty member. We also ask that you not bring younger siblings when volunteering in the classroom or school, as often your attention must be given to them instead of the students in the class. Volunteers are always welcome in our media center and to assist with selling ice cream in the cafeteria. Please contact PTO, the office, or your child's teacher if you would like to volunteer at Sara Harp Minter.

All visitors are required to sign in at the front office so that we will know who is in our building. This is for the safety of all of our children and staff members.

WEAPONS

It is unlawful for any person to carry, possess or have under control any weapon at a school building, school function, on school property, on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school. The term "weapon" means and includes any pistol, revolver, or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind, or any dirk, Bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, spring stick, metal knucks, blackjack, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a way to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chuck, or fighting chain, throwing star or Oriental dart, or any weapon of like kind.

- Punishment: A fine of not more than $5000; imprisonment for not more than five years. [O>C>G>A> 16-11-127.1]
- House Bill 1100 amended this criminal code section which makes it a fine to possess a weapon at school and adds to the list of weapons prohibited: "any bat, club, or other

bludgeon type weapon." The bill adds an exception to the law, stating that sports equipment brought for legitimate athletic purposes is not covered by the prohibition.

In order to comply with this weapons law, a child wanting to have a baseball bat for recess or physical education will not be allowed to bring it to school. However, a parent or guardian may deliver the baseball bat to the office and pick it up there after its use. There will be no baseball bats allowed on buses.