



# Parent/Student Handbook

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Excite. Reach. Learn. Grow.

### **Smothers Mission**

Our mission is to ensure that Smothers Elementary guarantees that students reach their full potential and become their best selves through rigorous and exciting learning experiences provided in a safe and nurturing environment.

### **Vision**

Smothers will be a beacon of hope for families East of the River. Our students will leave with a strong foundation that will enable them to have choices and opportunities in life.

### **Smothers ES Core Values**

Ready

Responsible

Respectful

Resilient

### **After School Enrichment**

After school enrichment will be available for 88 students. Families must enroll their students, and adhere to the after-school policies handbook

- ☐ After school enrichment begins at 4:15 pm and ends at 5:45 pm.
- ☐ All students who are enrolled in after school enrichment must be escorted to the cafeteria at 4:15 pm by an teacher.
- ☐ The after-school staff will remain in the cafeteria with the students for supper which will take place from 4:30-5:00 pm.
- ☐ After supper, teachers will transition their students to the assigned location.
- ☐ Students will have an opportunity to complete their homework with the assistance of their enrichment teacher/paraprofessional from 5:00-5:30pm.
- ☐ The remainder of the after-school enrichment period (5:30pm-6:00pm) will consist of an enrichment activity such as arts and crafts, poetry, drama, research projects, and/or educational games (on Fridays).

### **Attendance Policy for Students**

It is extremely important that your child is here on time every day.

- ☐ Days 1 and 2 the classroom teacher must call home and document the results of the call in the Smothers Elementary communication log.
- ☐ Day 3 a Notification letter is sent to student's home.
- ☐ Day 5 a Notification letter is sent to student's home, Parent must attend Student Support Team (SST) meeting, Home visit will be conducted if parent fails to attend SST meeting.

### **Blended Learning**

We use ST Math and Lexia Blended learning programs to allow students to work on individual areas of need online. Students should use ST Math a minimum of 90 minutes each week. Students are prescribed individual minutes for Lexia. See your child's teacher to get login information to use both of the programs at home.

#### *ST Math*

All teachers (Grades K-2 & Departmentalized Math Teachers) are responsible for progressing through 3% of the syllabus each week which equates to approximately 90 minutes of usage time for each student each week.

#### *Lexia*

All teachers (K-5) are responsible for ensuring that students meet their prescribed weekly Lexia usage. Under no circumstances should a student's login information be shared with anyone other than the teacher and his/her family. Furthermore, it is expected that the student is the only one completing the work in said blended learning program.

### **Breakfast in the Classroom**

We eat breakfast in the classrooms to help our students and teachers' bond and develop community. **Breakfast begins at 8:45am.** Please make sure that your child is on time.

### **Cell Phones**

Toys and electronics such as iPods and game boys are not permitted at Smothers. Children with cell phones will be asked to turn them off upon arrival and keep them in their backpacks. We are not responsible for lost or stolen toys and electronics including cellphones.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect**

Every teacher and staff member who has reasonable cause to know or to suspect that a child is being abused through physical injury, harm or neglect, is required to report the incident to the Child and Family Services Agency (202-671-SAFE) immediately as well as to Security and the Police. Teachers and staff members are not investigators; they are simply reporters. CFSA will conduct any necessary investigative work.

### **Classroom Community**

- ☐ We use responsive classroom strategies which include morning meetings to set the tone for the day and create a sense of belonging for all students.
- ☐ Teachers use accountable talk to teach students how to ask questions, give praise to their peers, build on the ideas of their peers, and give feedback to their peers.
- ☐ Restorative Justice Conferences and/or circle time are used to help students to work through peer-to-peer conflict.

### **Classroom Management and Discipline**

Staff members shall exercise the responsibility for the supervision and discipline of students. This responsibility shall be exercised throughout the school, during the school day, and during school- sponsored activities. Students are never to be left unattended and should only be supervised by an approved adult. Students may not be sent to the hallway as a disciplinary measure.

Smothers Elementary climate and culture is regulated by following established school rules:

- ☐ Follow directions quickly and quietly
- ☐ Raise your hand for permission to speak
- ☐ Raise your hand for permission to leave your seat
- ☐ Make smart choices
- ☐ Follow directions the first time given

It is expected that these rules are posted and visible in each classroom and all common spaces.

Smothers teachers and staff are expected to use the Smothers behavior ladder to hold students accountable for following the school rules and expectations. The behavior ladder is as follows:

#### *Smothers Behavior Ladder*

- ☐ Blue- Awesome!
- ☐ Green – Ready to Learn
- ☐ Yellow –Warning
- ☐ Red – Consequence

#### *Minor Infractions*

Minor infractions of misconduct, which interfere with the learning and school environment of the school daily functions, will be handled immediately by the teacher or any staff member within the guidelines of DCPS Chapter 25 of the DCMR.

Examples of minor infractions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ☐ Excessive noise in the classroom, hall or building.
- ☐ Using computer/office equipment without permission.
- ☐ Inappropriate or disruptive physical contact between students.
- ☐ Directing profanity or obscene/offensive gestures toward staff.
- ☐ Refusal to comply with reasonable staff directions.

It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to document minor infractions by completing a discipline referral form for each incident. It is expected that the classroom teacher makes the initial contact with the parent/guardian and note it on the form. Other classroom level consequences should be noted as well. **Once students have acquired three classroom level referrals for the same infraction, the referrals should be submitted to the admin team for review.**

Student referrals will remain actionable for one academic grading period.

#### *Serious Infractions*

Serious infractions will be reported **immediately** to the school administration via a completed student discipline referral which will be handled within the guidelines of DCPS Chapter 25 of the DCMR.

Examples of serious infractions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ☐ Engaging in reckless behavior that may cause harm to self or others
- ☐ Harassment/bullying
- ☐ Major destruction of property
- ☐ Fighting which creates substantial risk of or results in minor injury
- ☐ Lewd or indecent public behavior or sexual misconduct

#### *Administrative Actions*

A discipline referral does not always mean the child should or will be removed from class. At a minimum, a discipline referral indicates that the teacher or staff member has followed the outlined discipline policy including making parent contact but needs additional support in changing the students' behavior. Upon receiving three discipline referrals for minor infractions or one referral for a major infraction, an administrator will decide the appropriate consequence within 24 hours and follow-up with the student, teacher or staff member.

Examples of administrative actions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ☐ Contact parent and remove student from class
- ☐ Contact parent and assign lunch detention
- ☐ Contact parent regarding parent shadowing the student
- ☐ Contact parent and assign to ISS
- ☐ Contact parent and assign Out of School Suspension (OSS)
- ☐ Contact parent and utilize restorative practices
- ☐ Contact parent and assign Saturday detention

In all instances the most logical consequence will be applied to match the offense and severity in order to promote self-reflection in the student and teach him/her more appropriate behaviors for the future.

#### *Student Removal from Class*

Removal from class occurs when a child is a danger to themselves or others.

- ☐ The teacher notifies the office via the intercom.
- ☐ An administrator or designee will report to the classroom to escort the student to another location. Under no circumstances should a class be sent out of the classroom as a punitive measure.
- ☐ A discipline referral should be completed as quickly as possible but no later than the end of the school day.
- ☐ An administrator will assign appropriate consequences.

#### **Classroom Observation-Parents**

Parents may schedule observations of classes through the classroom teacher and Principal after the first 4-6 weeks of school.

#### **Communication with Families**

At Smothers Elementary, we value all stakeholders in our school community and believe that effective communication can help to ensure positive relationships between school and home. To facilitate effective communication, we do the following:

- ☐ Provide all guardians with all contact information including best hours and preferred modes of communication which might include the use of Remind 101 app and/or Class Dojo.
- ☐ Remain calm, listen, and stay positive and talk things out.
- ☐ Respond to all parent concerns within 24-48 hours.
- ☐ Communicate disciplinary infractions as soon as possible.
- ☐ All teachers (ECE-5<sup>th</sup>) must complete a monthly newsletter outlining upcoming events and academic focal standards for ELA, Math, and Cornerstones

## Communication with Students

At Smother Elementary, we believe that students who feel connected, cared for, and held to the highest expectation with appropriate supports will excel at the highest levels. For these reasons, Smothers has adopted the following practices to develop positive adult/student interactions.

- ☐ Whether giving directions, providing feedback, or providing positive reinforcement, we utilize clear, direct language that is free of sarcasm.
- ☐ We always speak with children using inside voices with a warm professional tone.

Teachers are expected to model appropriate communication skills for students and hold students accountable for responding to adults politely and in complete sentences. It is completely unacceptable for students to disrespect adults in the building.

## Computers

### Headphones

Smothers ES will purchase one set of headphones for each student in grades K-5. Each student's headphones should be kept in a labeled Ziplock bag. Replacement headphones will be available for Smothers families to purchase. See Mrs. Campbell for details.

## Curricula

Teachers are expected to utilize the curriculum outlined below for the grade/subject that they teach.

Curriculum	Grade Band	Content
Creative Curriculum	PK3-PK4	<i>The Creative Curriculum®</i> helps every early childhood program create a high-quality learning environment that enables every child to become a creative, confident thinker.
Cornerstones (PBL)	K-5	
DCPS English Language Arts Units of Study	K-5	Literacy, Humanities, Social Studies, Writing
Guided Reading- Jan Richardson's Next Steps in Guided Reading Framework	K-5	Reading (English and/or Spanish) at independent levels
Eureka Math	K-5	Mathematics
DCPS Science Curriculum	PK3-5	Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)
Foundations and Foundations Booster	K-2	English phonics
Words Their Way	3-5	Word study, spelling

## Dress for Students

All students are expected to wear neat and clean clothing every day and be in uniform Monday through Friday of each week. The uniform for Smothers Elementary School consists of khaki bottoms (shorts, pants, skirts or jumpers) and white or red (blouses or polo-style shirts). **Closed-toe shoes appropriate for PE and playground activity are required every day.** Blue jeans, t-shirts, athletic pants, and hooded jackets are not part of the Smothers uniform and jackets, coats, bandanas, non-prescriptive eyeglasses and sunglasses and hats are not to be worn during the school day. On select days, students have the privilege of coming to school out of uniform. However, extremes in style and fit and extremes in style of grooming, as determined by the principal, will not be permitted, including, but not limited to, clothing that exposes armpits, bare backs or midriffs, see-through clothing, open-toed shoes, and shoes with heels. Parents will be contacted and asked to bring compliant clothing if a student reports to school out of uniform. Failure to report to school in uniform is addressed in the tiered progressive discipline code. Smothers seeks to create a uniform bank and welcomes donations of used, outgrown uniforms throughout the school year.

2408.13-15 of DCMR permits the application of consequences for students who continuously violate the uniform policy. However, every effort will be made to ensure that students are properly outfitted in school apparel.

**Early Dismissal**

Parents or guardians must report to the office and sign the “Early Dismissal” book before a student may be allowed to leave the school grounds. No student may leave the school grounds without being signed out by an authorized person. Parents should not go to the classroom to pick up a child, and a teacher should not release a student until s/he receives a call from the office.

Students are encouraged to bring notes from home if an early dismissal is needed. This practice will assist the teacher in deciding so that disruptions in the school day are minimized. Students will not be called for early dismissal 15 minutes prior to the end of the day.

**Extended Day**

Smothers Elementary is an extended day school. As such, the school hours are 8:30-4:15pm Monday-Thursday and 8:30-3:15pm Friday.

**Field Trips**

Field trips should be purposeful and aligned to the grade level standards, reflecting the curriculum of the courses offered to the students or provide enrichment to expand knowledge.

**Homework**

It is expected that students consistently receive homework. Homework is an extension of daily instruction and is to be assigned and checked regularly for students in Grades ECE-5. It is the responsibility of all teachers to assign homework that reinforces the mastery of standards that have been taught as well as to provide immediate and corrective feedback to students. Please see Principal Williams if your child is not receiving homework consistently.

**Medications**

Unless trained and authorized, staff are not allowed to dispense prescribed medications. Please turn all medications in to the nurse, along with a physician’s order to administer medicine.

**Nurse**

Students should be sent to the nurse only when they are sick or injured. Such preparations as aspirin, Tylenol, gargles, ear drops, eyewashes, etc. are classified as medicines and are not to be given by school personnel. If students/parents bring such medications to school, they must be directed to the nurse.

**Parent Conduct**

We welcome parents/guardians to visit classes and meet with teachers; however, a parent or guardian’s presence in the school must never cause a disruption to the functioning of the school or the instructional program of their child or any other student or in any way compromise the safety or security of the school, its students or staff. A parent or guardian’s school visit must also not cause any disruption to the school environment or operations.

**Parent /Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher conferences are held throughout the course of the school year to communicate student progress and further develop the partnership between school and home. Please make every effort possible to attend these conferences so that together we can help your child thrive.

## **Routines and Procedures**

### *School Entry Procedure*

- ☐ We open our doors at 8:20am. Students in 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade will enter auditorium and engage in morning activities to get them prepared for learning for the day.
- ☐ PK and Kindergarten students will go directly to the classroom escorted by a parent or older sibling.
- ☐ Students who arrive by bus will be escorted to class by the bus attendant and supervised by the classroom teacher or teacher's aide.
- ☐ At 8:43 morning activities will end, and all students will be seated in their designated area.
- ☐ At 8:45, students will go to their homeroom class.
- ☐ **Students who arrive at school at 8:46 am or later are tardy.**

### *Cafeteria Procedures*

All classes are expected to report to the cafeteria at their scheduled time.

- ☐ Class enter the cafeteria and immediately line up to get trays
- ☐ Students have a seat and eat their lunch
- ☐ Students may talk quietly using a Level 1 voice
- ☐ Students must raise their hand for permission to leave their seats
- ☐ The last 2 minutes of lunch the lunch monitors will call for tables to dispose of their trash
- ☐ Students return to their seats and everyone gets to a Level 0 before transitioning to the class
- ☐ To begin the transition at the end of lunch, students will stand behind their seats, face forward, and join the line one side of the table at a time. It is the responsibility of those on lunch duty to ensure that this process is followed.

### *Restroom Routines*

We use the acronym FLUSH for restroom procedures:

- ☐ F-Follow the Smothers Code -Ready, Respectful, Responsible, Resilient
- ☐ L- low voices
- ☐ U- use and flush
- ☐ S- soap and water
- ☐ H- Hurry back to class

### *Hallway Movement/Transition Procedures & Expectations*

We use the acronym WALKS to transition in the hallways

- ☐ W-Walk Silently
- ☐ A- Allow for personal space
- ☐ L- Look forward
- ☐ K- Keep hands to self
- ☐ S- stay in a straight line

### *Dismissal Procedure*

- ☐ At 4:05 Mondays- Thursdays and at 3:05 on Fridays students who are in afterschool programming will transition to the auditorium.
- ☐ At 4:10 Mondays- Thursdays and at 3:10 on Fridays students will be dismissed by floors.
- ☐ Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade students can be picked up at the main entrance.
- ☐ 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade students can be picked up to the right of the building.
- ☐ Students who are walkers may leave to walk home after they have followed the procedure for leaving the dismissal line.

### *Procedure for leaving the dismissal line*

- ☐ Before leaving the dismissal line, students must gain the attention of the teacher by tapping them on the shoulder to announce their departure.

- Once the teacher acknowledges the tap, the students may leave the line.

**Volunteers**

Parents and other members of the community may wish to volunteer in the classroom and we warmly welcome volunteers at Smothers. If you wish to volunteer in the classroom, please inform your child's and contact the main office to receive instructions for background checks and medical clearance. All volunteers must receive a federal background check, inclusive of fingerprinting.

I have received the handbook, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it.

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Parent

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Student

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Date