

Parent–Student Handbook

2023–2024



Believe in me. Believe in you. Believe in us.

Welcome to Sterling Elementary School and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public School System.
Our entire school community looks forward to
working, learning, and growing with you and your child.



MISSION:
Be leaders &
learners!

We will work together to intentionally create learning opportunities that teach and challenge students to develop, understand, and reflect upon their values, leadership skills and goals.

SCHOOL HOURS

School hours for Sterling are **8:45 AM until 3:45 PM.**

ARRIVAL and DISMISSAL

In order to provide a safe environment for our students and staff and to maintain the integrity of the instructional day, the following policies and procedures have been implemented at Sterling.

Arrival Times

Classrooms officially open and are ready to receive students at 8:15 AM each morning. **Students should not arrive at school before 8:15 AM.** Do not drop students off unsupervised in front of the school to wait for the building to open. Staff members are preparing for the day to begin and are not available to supervise children who arrive early.

Car Riders: 8:15-8:40 AM.

Car riders are to enter the building through the front entrance for morning drop off. **After the first week of school, parents should drop their children off exclusively in the carpool line.** Please do not walk your child to class unless it is a special circumstance. **For safety reasons, parents should not drop off children at the street or by mobile units and allow them to walk into the building without adult supervision.**

Bus Riders: 8:15-8:40 AM

Sterling staff will dismiss students from the bus. Upon exiting the bus, students should either go directly to breakfast or to their classroom. This is not a time to visit the media center or other classrooms.

Late Arrivals

The carpool line closes at 8:43 AM in order for staff members to get to their classroom by 8:45 AM when class begins. If you arrive after the carpool line has closed at 8:43, you must park your car and escort your child into the building. This is a safety issue since school staff is no longer at the carpool door to direct students safely to class.

Class begins at 8:45 AM. **Students must be in their classroom at 8:45,** not in the hallway on their way to class to be considered "on time." Our late bell rings at 8:45 AM. If you arrive on campus after the 8:45 bell, an adult must accompany the student to the office to sign them in for the day. They will be given a tardy pass and counted tardy for the day.

Breakfast

Breakfast is served between 8:15AM and 8:40 AM and is free for all students.

Car riders should arrive for breakfast by 8:30 AM in order to be served, eat and get to class by 8:45 AM. If they arrive at their classroom after the 8:45 bell, they will be asked to return to the office for a tardy slip and will be counted tardy for the day. Bus riders eating breakfast should report to their classroom no later than 8:45 AM. If they arrive in their classroom after the 8:45 bell, they will be asked to return to the office for a tardy slip and will be counted tardy for the day. The only exception will be, late arrival of the school bus. If that occurs, students will be allowed to finish their breakfast and will not be counted tardy for the day.

Dismissal Time

For safety reasons, parents/guardians are not allowed to pick children up in the lobby, hallways, or breezeways between buildings as they are walking to carpool or buses. Do not gather in these areas to wait for students. Crowding in these areas hinders our ability to get all students to their destination safely and efficiently.

Carpool parents should be at school as close to 3:45 as possible and go directly to the carpool line. Car riders will be dismissed at 3:45 PM. In order for the carpool line to operate efficiently, please stay in your car. Do not leave your car unattended. Car riders should be picked up by 4:00 PM each day, unless they are involved in a pre-arranged, supervised activity with staff members. At the close of the day, staff members are involved in after school meetings and/or preparing for their classrooms for the next day and cannot be asked to supervise students after school hours. Parents must have a current "parent pick-up" tag in order to pick up a child in the car pool line. If a tag is not present, the adult picking the child up must enter the office, show a valid ID, and be listed on the child's emergency blue card.

Early Dismissal

CMS policy states that a child must attend school for half the school day in order to be counted present for that day. At Sterling, the half day is 12:15 PM (3.5 hours). If a student is picked up prior to that time, for any reason, he/she will be counted absent for the day. If a student leaves earlier than 12:15 PM but returns to school before the end of the day, that student may be counted present, depending on the number of hours in attendance that day. Please schedule routine appointments/extracurricular activities before or after school hours whenever possible. Our students are working until the end of the school day, including Special Area classes, and frequent early dismissals are disruptive to their academic progress.

If you must pick up your child early, we ask that you come before 3:00 PM. You should come directly to the office to sign your child out. If someone other than a parent/guardian will be picking your child up, we must have written permission from you. For safety reasons, a phone call is not acceptable.

If your child attends a daycare facility please let them know that your child will not be attending due to early dismissal.

Afternoon Transportation Changes

Please plan ahead and make sure your child knows how they are going home each day. **If there is an afternoon transportation change, please send a note to the classroom teacher. Do not message, text or email changes to the teacher during the day.** Teachers are not always able to check messages or emails in a timely manner during instructional time. If an emergency occurs during the day and you need to change your child's regular afternoon transportation, please call the school office as early as possible. We receive numerous transportation calls throughout the day and it can be very confusing to your child and our staff. Dismissal time is very busy and we do not want to risk sending your child home the wrong way because of a last minute change that was not communicated in a timely manner. **All changes must be in writing and submitted by 1:00 PM.**

If your child does not have a note regarding transportation change, he/she will go home as normal. We trust your child, but in the case of an afternoon transportation change, we must hear directly from you, as the parent/guardian.

ATTENDANCE

There is strong evidence of a clear relationship between good attendance and school achievement. In addition to good attendance, it is important for students to arrive at school on time and stay for the entire day. We encourage parents to make **regular attendance** and **punctuality** a high priority for their children.

If your child is ill: **DO NOT** send your child to school when he/she has a cough, runny nose, fever, or any other illness that would prevent the child from remaining in class and participating in the usual activities. A child must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. If your child throws-up the night before or in the morning of a school day, please keep him/her home for the day. As a safety precaution to all of our students, please be aware that we reserve the right to request an excuse from your physician in the event of chronic, repeated absences due to illness.

If your child is absent: You may call the school or send a written note with your child when he/she returns to school explaining the absence. All absences are coded unexcused until we receive a message from you indicating that the absence was illness related.

If your child becomes ill or injured at school: The school will notify you in the event your child becomes ill or injured. Please plan to pick up your child as soon as possible.

Please be sure to inform the teacher and the office of any particular medical needs that your child may have. Example: Is your child allergic to bee stings? Is your child allergic to any foods? Does your child have any serious medical conditions?

CELL PHONE POLICY

Our commitment to student achievement requires us to create an optimal learning environment for our students. One crucial step in achieving this is by limiting cell phone usage in accordance with Rule 5 of the Code of Student Conduct.

During instructional time, **CELL PHONES MUST BE TURNED OFF AND STORED.** Possession of a cell phone by a student during school hours is a privilege, which may be revoked for violations of the Code of Student Conduct. Violations may result in confiscation and/or other disciplinary actions. This allows you the flexibility to assess the needs of your students and make decisions that best align with our commitment to student achievement. Guidelines on other Personal Technology Devices (PTDs) will be forthcoming.

The district is not responsible for theft, loss, or damage to cell phones or other PTDs brought onto CMS property. If students are permitted to use a cell phone during non-instructional times, they must follow all rules set forth in Policy S-SINT and Regulation S-SINT/R and sign the Student Internet Use Agreement.

At Sterling, we believe that an uninterrupted learning environment is vital to nurturing academic excellence, one of our four pillars necessary to fulfill our vision and mission. As educational leaders, you have a critical role in ensuring that instructional time is protected and utilized effectively to maximize the learning potential of our students. We acknowledge the role technology plays in modern education and the benefits it brings to learning experiences. As such, students will continue to have access to the internet using district-issued devices. Thank you for your outstanding leadership and dedication to the students and families of Sterling Elementary.

MEDICATION

We **CANNOT** administer medication of any kind without an official form signed by the parent and completed by the doctor. This includes over the counter medication. PLEASE DO NOT ASK TEACHERS OR STAFF TO VIOLATE THIS REGULATION. Medication should not be transported on the bus and must be checked in at the office. Our school nurse will be happy to work with you regarding medical needs and/or medication for your child. Please do not send medication to school with your child and have them self-medicate.

COMMUNICATION

This year our school will utilize the app ParentSquare as our communication platform. Please make sure your phone number and email address are up to date in Powerschool and that you download the APP, to receive notifications from your child's teacher and from our administration! Your child will receive a folder on Thursdays with important school news and student work. It is important that the folder be returned no later than the following Monday.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

It is the responsibility of each parent to make certain the school has accurate contact information for your child. Any change in emergency information should be communicated to us immediately so that we may contact you in the event of an injury or illness.

LUNCH

A hot lunch is available for all students or your child may bring his/her own lunch. A lunch menu is available on the CMS website. Please label your child's lunch box with his/her name on it. Please do not send in sweets/soda with your child for lunch. One of our priorities is to instill healthy eating habits in our students. All students at Sterling will eat lunch for free.

VISITING THE SCHOOL

Volunteers and School Visitors: For the safety of all children, CMS policy requires that all volunteers, tutors, and visitors who will be in contact with children complete an online Volunteer Profile Form. This includes eating lunch with or visiting your child's classroom. The volunteer form is needed to attend field trips as a chaperone. This can be done easily from home. Go to cmsvolunteers.com to register. If you have any trouble please see a secretary in the main office.

When you visit school during the school day you MUST sign in at the office and wear a name badge during your visit. This includes volunteering in classes. Please do not be offended if you are asked to return to the office to get a badge. With heightened safety awareness, we must all do our part!

Please notify the classroom teacher if you wish to visit your child's classroom. A classroom visit IS NOT the time for a parent/teacher conference. Please make an appointment with your child's teacher if a conference is needed. We ask that you not hold private conferences in the hallways as this can be disruptive to classes. Parents will not be allowed to visit classrooms unless the teacher has established an appointment with you.

Instruction is happening all day and we do not want to interrupt the great learning that is occurring in our classrooms.

No classroom visits are allowed during the first month of school. We ask for this “adjustment period” to allow your child to become comfortable in his/her environment.



Sterling Elementary Administrative/Office Staff

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Principal: Emily Miles

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VISION

Sterling will be a nurturing learning community where excellence is expected of everyone. Students will be provided with opportunities to develop to their full potential and be prepared for the future.

