

Student/Parent Guide

2021-2022



Finch Elementary Eagles

1114 Avon Avenue
Atlanta, Georgia 30310
404-802-4000





August 2021

Dear Parents, Guardians, & Extended Caregivers:

Welcome to William Finch Elementary School, a place where families and community members are welcomed to collaborate, support, celebrate, and honor the diverse achievements of all children. With the caring guidance of dedicated staff, Finch Elementary is committed to continuing our path of achieving academic gains while developing self-efficacy and personal responsibility within our scholars. These qualities are the cornerstone of lifelong learning and will be treasured as we continue our journey of excellence in the midst of this global pandemic.

As we move into the 2021-2022 school year, Atlanta Public Schools remains committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of our students and staff. The school district is closely monitoring all developments related to COVID-19, and will remain in close contact with local, state, and federal agencies for the latest information on this disease. Furthermore, this information will continue to be the basis of the decisions and plans around quarantine or school closures. As information changes it will be important for all stakeholders to remain flexible. Nonetheless, Finch Elementary remains dedicated to being student-focused and providing our scholars with highly effective and engaging instruction. We are a family, bound together by shared goals and a commitment to excellence in everything we do to ensure student success!

Our staff values the successful education of our students enhanced by the involvement and support of parents and the community. We welcome your partnership in the learning process and encourage continuous communication between home and school. As stakeholders, you are encouraged to be actively involved in your child's education by talking with your scholar(s) about school, volunteering whenever possible, and participating in the Finch Parent Teacher Association (PTA). This partnership will contribute to our students' mastery of the core curriculum, the development of foundational skills, and our ability to meet the individual needs of our scholars.

The Finch Student/Parent Guide is written for the purpose of sharing important information specific to school policies and procedures. The following guidelines/expectations will direct the implementation of a quality educational program for our scholars and their families.

Please read this guide carefully and review the information with your scholar(s). We look forward to partnering with each of you as we celebrate the achievements of our students throughout the year!

Sincerely,

Forrestella Taylor
Principal

2021-2022

William Finch Elementary Staff

Forrestella Taylor	Principal	Forrest.Taylor@atlanta.k12.ga.us
Gerald Johnson	Assistant Principal	Gerald.Johnson@atlanta.k12.ga.us
Dacia Lampkin	Instructional Coach	Dacia.Lampkin@atlanta.k12.ga.us
Craig Simmons	Instructional Coach	Craig.Simmons@atlanta.k12.ga.us
Anntionette Thompson	Counselor	dathompson@atlanta.k12.ga.us
Misha Brothers-Bembry	Social Worker	Tamisha.Brothersb@atlanta.k12.ga.us
Dr. January Few	School Psychologist	January.Few@atlanta.k12.ga.us
Shan Tukes	School Secretary	Shanquitta.Tukes@atlanta.k12.ga.us
Max Joseph	School Clerk	Max.Joseph@atlanta.k12.ga.us
Sherian Turner	Bookkeeper	suturner@atlanta.k12.ga.us
Christina Spurlock	School Nurse	cspurlock@atlanta.k12.ga.us
Megan Bland	MTSS/504 Coordinator	mebland@atlanta.k12.ga.us
Dr. Beverly Gullatt	Special Education Lead Teacher	bgullatt@atlanta.k12.ga.us
Kimberle Fowlkes	Gifted/STE(A)M Teacher	Kimberle.Fowlkes@atlanta.k12.ga.us
John Butts	Cafeteria Manager	jmbutts@atlanta.k12.ga.us
Nartasha Smith-Willis	Media Specialist	smithfn@atlanta.k12.ga.us
Dr. Delleni Guest	Behavior Specialist	Delleni.Guest@atlanta.k12.ga.us
Aketa Wise	Parent Liaison	awise@atlanta.k12.ga.us

CONTACT INFORMATION

Office Numbers: 404-802-4000

Fax Number: 404-802-9981

Website: <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/finch>

School Colors: Royal Blue & Red

School Mascot: Eagles



Mission

"Together, Finch Elementary School will provide meaningful, rigorous learning experiences and opportunities that enrich learning for students, staff, and the community in order to make college and career readiness a reality."

Vision

"A community school where teachers plan intentionally, students embrace academic struggle, and the community's values align with the school."

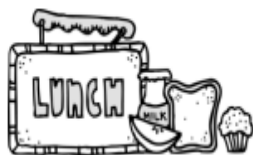
SCHOOL HOURS

Office Hours: 7:45 AM until 3:00 PM each day school is in session.

Instructional Hours: 7:15 AM -2:45 PM school day for all students

(Please refer to the instructional schedules posted in your Google Classroom. Teacher Office hours are provided immediately following the instructional day until 3:15 pm)

Lunch Periods:



PRE-K	10:10 -10:40 AM
K	10:15 -10:45 AM
1 st Grade	10:30 -11:00 AM
2 nd Grade	11:15 -11:45 AM
3 rd Grade	11:45- 12:15 PM
4 th Grade	10:50 -11:20 AM
5 th Grade	12:15 -12:45 PM



UNIFORMS:

Students are expected to come to school daily (Monday-Friday) in the designated uniform as listed below.

Tops (collared shirts)	Bottoms	Additional Accessories
Red Royal Blue White	Khaki/navy shorts Khaki/navy pants Khaki/navy skirts or rompers	Black or brown belts Closed toe shoes

Students not in uniform may not be able to participate in special events and activities.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL: Student safety is our utmost priority at Finch and we make every effort to help each and every student arrive and get home from school without incident.

ARRIVAL: School doors do not open for students until **7:15 AM** each day when staff are on duty and able to provide supervision. Teachers are on duty and providing outside supervision from 7:15 AM until 7:45 AM. For safety reasons, it is the parents' responsibility to see that children do not arrive earlier than 7:15 AM. Bus students are supervised from the time they arrive until 7:45 AM.

Upon arrival, students should pick up a grab-and-go breakfast meal either from the cafeteria line or from carts throughout the campus. If students choose not to eat breakfast, they should go directly to class to be greeted and supervised by their homeroom teacher.



Due to health and safety guidelines, parents are not permitted to walk students to class in the morning. PreK and Kindergarten students should report directly to the gymnasium upon arrival. PreK and Kindergarten students will be greeted by their homeroom teacher(s) in the gymnasium and are escorted as a class to their homeroom at the appropriate time.

DISMISSAL: Dismissal begins each day promptly at 2:45 PM. At the end of the school day students should proceed directly to their assigned dismissal area when called. Teachers are on duty and providing outside supervision from 2:45 - 3:00 PM. After this time, supervision is not available unless a student is participating in a scheduled after-school activity. If this causes a difficulty, please consider enrolling your child in the Afterschool Program.

We welcome parents in designated areas within our building and as scheduled by appointment. It is important that parents adhere to the following guidelines during dismissal:

- Parents should not enter the building during dismissal time. This includes the gymnasium, cafeteria, and front office foyer areas.
- We are staffed such that we can supervise all areas after school. In order to dismiss our students in a safe and orderly manner, we need all parents to follow one of the procedures outlined below.

-CAR RIDERS: Students are called and assembled in the gymnasium. Parents should file into one line in the front driveway area of the campus. Parents are encouraged to complete a car rider registration form for their student(s). Students will be called in the order cars are assembled.

-DAY CARE VAN RIDERS: Students are called and assembled in the cafeteria. Day care vans should file into the designated lane on Avon Avenue closest to the bus ramp. Students will be escorted to their day care provider in the order they are assembled.

NO STUDENT WILL BE RELEASED AS A CAR RIDER OR DAY CARE VAN RIDER UNLESS THE RESPONSIBLE ADULT IS ASSEMBLED IN A VEHICLE OR DAY CARE VAN UPON PICK-UP.

-WALKERS: Students are called by grade levels and escorted by staff out of the gate on the side of the gymnasium. Parents who desire to pick their students up as walkers should arrive between 2:40 -2:45 PM. Students eight years old and younger are encouraged to have a designated adult escort or an older student(s) assigned to escort the student home each day. Students walking home should honor crosswalks and follow the guidelines set forth by the crossing guard.

-BUS RIDERS: We supervise the bus pick-up area until all buses have come and gone. Per Atlanta Public Schools Transportation Policy, *the parent or designee must accompany their student(s) at the bus stop at drop-off and pick-up for students eight years old and younger. A student eight years and under may be brought back to their school in the afternoon if a parent, guardian or designee is not present at the bus stop to receive them or if they otherwise appear to have no appropriate supervision. This requirement also applies to Special Needs Students who must have adult supervision during drop-off.*



- Changes to your student's dismissal plan must be submitted in writing to the homeroom teacher. In the event of an emergency, changes must be communicated and approved by the principal or designee no later than 2:15 PM.

EARLY DISMISSAL: Your child's daily attendance is important to their overall success at school. Parents should attempt to schedule appointments outside school hours, whenever possible. Students released during the school day for doctor and dental appointments must check out in the main office. Teachers are instructed not to release a child unless told to do so by the office. Students may be released only to parents or an authorized representative of the parents (NOTE: Authorization for pick-up must be in writing). Parents should not check out students for the purpose of avoiding car rider traffic or convenience.

Whenever possible, parents should notify the front office or send a note to let us know about scheduled appointments requiring an early dismissal, ahead of time. Students should present a valid excuse upon return to school.

Students dismissed prior to 11:15 AM will be counted absent for the day.

Parents must arrive no later than 2:15 PM for early dismissal. NO STUDENT WILL BE RELEASED FOR EARLY DISMISSAL AFTER 2:15 PM.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND TARDIES: Regular school attendance is vital for a child to fully benefit from the instructional program. Students who are absent or tardy miss valuable instructional time, and are less likely to master those skills, concepts, and principles needed for success. Regular school attendance also establishes a pattern of positive habits that can be carried over throughout life.

- **EXCUSED ABSENCE:** Students will be marked as excused if the student is absent for a legitimate and acceptable reason. The lawful reasons for an excused absence are personal illness, illness or death in the family, religious holiday, or court appointment.

On the first day back in school after an absence, the parent should submit an excuse note electronically providing a reason for the absence using the following link:

<https://forms.gle/nQbdCjPmuJH9k3Jh9>

The school must receive a written excuse for absences within two days of the child's return to school, from parents/guardians or a doctor, in order to be considered an excused absence.

After three parental excuse notes in a semester, parents will be required to submit documentation from a physician explaining the reason for the student absence. If documentation from a doctor is not provided after three parental excuse notes in a semester, subsequent absences will be marked as unexcused.

- **UNEXCUSED ABSENCE:** All other absences will be considered unexcused. After 1-4 absences, your child's teacher will contact you for each instance. Continued absence from the physical and/or virtual environment beyond 4 days will engage intervention from the school counselor and/or school social worker to discuss your child's attendance history and to develop an appropriate action plan of support.
- **NO SHOWS AND STUDENT WITHDRAWALS:** If a student has accumulated more than 10 consecutive days of unexcused absences from the physical and/or virtual learning environment, the school shall use due diligence to notify the parent, guardian, or other person of plans to withdraw such student.
- **TARDIES:** Students should be in their classrooms by 7:45 AM and will be marked tardy after this time. Partial attendance of an instructional day is considered a tardy.
- **EARLY DISMISSAL:** Your child's daily attendance is important to their overall success at school. Parents should attempt to schedule appointments outside school hours, whenever possible. Partial attendance of an instructional day, including early dismissal, will be marked as tardy.



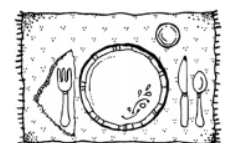
NUTRITION PROGRAM: Finch Elementary is a Community Eligibility Program (CEP) school. As a CEP school, all students enrolled receive free breakfast and lunch every day.

Breakfast Program

- A grab-and-go pre-packaged breakfast with all the components will be available for all students daily from 7:15 AM until 7:45 AM.
- Students who arrive by car, daycare bus, or walk must arrive by 7:45 AM to receive a meal.
- Students who ride APS buses will be served upon arrival.

Lunch Program

- A pre-packaged lunch will be available and served daily.
- Students may choose the school lunch or bring a lunch from home.
- Milk and juice are available with lunch.
- Carbonated beverages such as soda are not encouraged.
- Per federal guidelines, students are not permitted to receive food from outside vendors (i.e. fast food, restaurants, etc.) during breakfast or lunch.
- Parties/celebrations are not permitted during lunch nor may outside items be served within the cafeteria.



CLOSURES and DELAYS: In the event of severe weather or other emergencies, official information about school closings will be broadcast on Atlanta area radio and television stations. Parents should be aware that severe weather or other emergencies could cause school to be canceled during the school day and should plan accordingly. Atlanta Public Schools works closely with local television and radio media outlets to inform the public when school closings occur.

The following media outlets will provide up-to-date information to the public in the event of a school closing or if the student day must be shortened due to emergency conditions: WSB radio and local television WSB (ABC), WGCL (CBS), WAGA (FOX), and WXIA (NBC) are the official stations for APS announcements of school closure.

CELL PHONES and PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES: We understand that many parents provide cell phones for their children, but we require cell phones to be turned off and kept in backpacks until the child leaves school property. We have phones in the office for students to use should they need to contact a parent during the school day. Should a student violate this school policy, the phone will be taken and placed in the office until the end of the school day. Should it happen a second time, the phone will be kept in the office until picked up by a parent and/or guardian. Smart phones may be used in accordance with the Atlanta Public Schools acceptable use procedures.

NON-SCHOOL ITEMS: Personal music devices and hand-held games, laser pens, fidget spinners and other non-school items SHOULD NOT be brought to school unless prior approval is received from the classroom teacher. Game equipment for recess and physical education is provided by the school and should NOT be brought from home. Bringing make-up, perfume, etc. to school is not allowed due to allergies and other health concerns. Trading cards of any kind are NOT allowed at school. Gum and sunflower seeds are not permitted at school.

ILLNESS (GENERAL): If a student becomes too ill to remain in class, the school nurse or designee will contact the parent to arrange for the student to be checked out of school. The school should be notified in writing if a student has a chronic illness or disability that could require special or emergency treatment.

Students should not return to school until fever-free and/or vomit-free for 24 hours. Except as permitted by BOE Policy, medicine must be kept in the school office/clinic and dispensed by the school nurse, principal or his/her designee.



ILLNESS (COVID-19 RELATED): Parents are encouraged to get into the habit of daily screening of student(s) for health symptoms. Students should remain home if they are exhibiting any of the following:

- Displaying signs or symptoms of a fever in the past 24 hours such as chills, sweats, or an elevated temperature of 100.4 F or greater
- Has taken fever-reducing medication within the last 24 hours, or experienced symptoms such as a new cough, shortness of breath, chest tightness, sore throat, nasal congestion, body aches, runny nose, loss of taste and/or smell, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, or fever/chills/sweats
- Had any close contact in the last 14 days with someone with a diagnosis of COVID-19
- Has taken a COVID-19 test and are awaiting results based on potential exposure to a known case or other high-risk exposure
- Has taken a COVID-19 test and are awaiting results based on mild symptoms or overall feeling unwell

Parents are required to assess students before sending them to school each day and complete and attestation form using the HealthCheck, and online tool. Based on the responses, families will be advised whether their student(s) is well enough to attend school. Visit the district site for more information and details (<https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/Page/65256>).

Failure to complete the at-home assessment and attestation form could result in student placement in isolation until the parent either presents this documentation or retrieves the student from campus.

If a student becomes ill while at school with COVID-like symptoms, the student will be escorted to the “CARE Room” and isolated immediately. Parents will be contacted for immediate pick up of the student. Symptomatic students will safely remain under the supervision of a trained designated staff member until parents or guardians arrive. Symptomatic students will be escorted to the parent outside to reduce the potential for further spread.

Individuals presenting a fever cannot return until symptom-free for 24 hours without fever reducing medications. If a healthcare provider suspects COVID-19 they should remain out of school and follow the guidance of the school nurse in alignment with CDC guidelines.

MEDICINE: School personnel are not permitted to give medication of any kind without a Medication Authorization Form. When students must take medicine at school, parents should bring medicine and related equipment to the school nurse and complete a Medication Authorization Form. Forms for medication self-administration can be obtained from the school nurse.

MEDIA CENTER: Finch Elementary has an excellent media center that we look forward to having our scholars use frequently. Students will be able to check out books online through the MyBackpack platform. The media specialist will share with the students how to checkout their materials during orientation and will revisit the steps during class visits. Additionally, students are encouraged to access the MyOn digital platform.

MyOn is accessible to all students in the MyBackpack platform. MyOn is a student-centered, personalized literacy environment that gives students access to more than 6,000 enhanced digital books. Students can assess their comprehension of various books through the Accelerated Reader program.



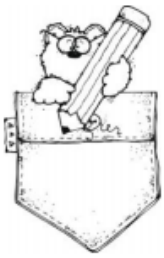
SCHOOL SUPPLIES & TECHNOLOGY: All basic supplies are provided for every student enrolled at Finch to ensure their success. In addition, district issued technology devices will be available for all students. We ask that you complete consent for your child(ren)'s technology device through the following link: <http://tinyaps.com/?StuDevAgree>. If a student's APS issued device is not working or damaged, parents should contact the school at 404-802-4000. If the device is stolen, parents are required to obtain an official police report and provide a copy to the school in order to have the device replaced.

TRANSPORTATION: School bus drivers have a tremendous task and responsibility. They must always be conscious of their driving while simultaneously supervising a busload of students. For safety reasons, children are expected to be well-behaved and exhibit respect to both the driver and fellow bus riders. Children who display poor behavior may be denied bus privileges.

Finch students are required to wear masks and maintain physical distance while on the bus when possible. Parents and caregivers will be encouraged to reinforce bus rules about maintaining quiet, calm behavior on the bus. Loud talking, yelling or singing are known to more widely disperse infectious respiratory droplets.

TEACHER OFFICE HOURS: Teachers and instructional support staff will be available each day following their instructional schedules until 3:10 pm to provide additional support and/or tutoring for students, provide additional support for parents, or to host conferences with parents to discuss overall student progress. On occasion, staff are required to attend meetings

or professional learning workshops during these times. In such instances, staff will provided families with adequate notice.



STUDENT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Atlanta Public Schools has constructed school discipline policies that are aimed at creating a positive school climate, supporting the social and emotional development of students, and teaching non-violence and respect for all members of the school community. Our approach to discipline reflects our desire to understand and address the causes of behavior, resolve conflicts, repair harm done, restore relationships, and successfully reintegrate students into the school community. The incorporation of expectations and responsibilities in our discipline framework creates transparency for stakeholders to embrace the expectations and responsibilities that are unique to them.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

- To read and become familiar with the APS Code of Conduct
- To attend school daily, prepare for class, and complete class and homework assignments to the best of his/her ability
- To know and follow school rules and instructions given by the school principal, teachers, and other staff
- To tell school staff about any dangerous behavior or bullying that occurs at school, on the way to and from school, or in the community
- To bring to school only those materials that are allowed
- To treat everyone in the school community with respect
- To respect school property, community property, and the property of others

PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES:

- To read and become familiar with the APS Code of Conduct
- To make sure their child attends school regularly, on time, and to notify the school before the school day begins if their child is absent
- To give the school accurate and current contact information and inform/update that contact information when and if it changes
- To tell school officials about any concerns or complaints respectfully and in a timely manner
- To work with the school principal, teachers, and other staff to address any academic or behavioral concerns regarding their child
- To talk with their child about the behavior expected in school
- To support their child's learning and school activities at home
- To be respectful and courteous to staff, other parents, guardians, and students
- To respect other students' privacy rights

The Atlanta Public Schools Code of Conduct can be accessed in the 2021-2022 Student Handbook or by accessing the link below:

https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/cms/lib/GA01000924/Centricity/Domain/94/APS%2021-22%20Student%20Handbook_Final.pdf

IN-PERSON VISITS TO CAMPUS: We welcome parents in our building for essential business only; however, we ask that parents adhere to the following guidelines:

- When possible, please call the school first prior to your visit to address your need or concern.
- If your need or concern must be addressed in-person, you will need to make an appointment prior to arrival.
- Please do not bring nonessential individuals with you to conduct your business with the school. Groups of more than two adults together will not be permitted to enter the campus.
- For the health and safety of others, all visitors and staff are required to wear facemask or coverings while on campus or they will not be permitted to enter the campus.
- All visitors and staff are required to adhere to social distancing practice and always remain a minimum of 3 feet apart.
- All visitors must follow the safety guidelines and practices as directed by administration and the front office staff.

All visitors are expected to maintain a professional, safe environment at all times while visiting our campus. Individuals should refrain from visiting the campus with attire that is provocative, displays excessive exposed skin, bare midriffs, sleepwear (including bonnets and slippers), or attire which displays the use of vulgar or profane language.

Any visitor in attire deemed as inappropriate, and/or is a distraction to the order of the school environment, and/or under the influence of alcohol or an illegal substance, will be asked to leave the premises immediately.



PTA: The goal of the Finch Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is to bring together the interests of the parents and the school to support student achievement. PTAs normally meet once a month. Through PTA initiatives and activities, parents work with the faculty to enhance the school environment and improve student achievement.

WHAT DOES THE PTA DO?

- Supports and organizes school-wide events
- Provides a forum to discuss issues of importance to parents and teachers
- Provides the volunteers and the organization needed to support school projects
- Conducts fundraising for school activities
- Assists with special school projects development, landscaping or community outreach

HOW DO I JOIN THE PTA?

The PTA membership drive begins a few weeks after the new school year starts. Contact our school at 404-802-4000 for information regarding membership meetings, dues and activities.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- **MY BACKPACK:** All Atlanta Public Schools students and staff can access their favorite websites and school applications from any device anywhere. Once logged in, myBackpack acts as a single sign-on so you do not have to remember all the different web addresses and passwords for your favorite school resources.

myBackpack ACCESS

- 🔗 Through an internet connection navigate to <http://mybackpack.apsk12.org>.
- 🔗 Enter the APS student username (username) and lunch id (password)
- 🔗 The myBackpack screen will load with your username and password
- 🔗 For general questions or support, please email helpdesk@classlink.com or call 1-888-963-7550 ext. 101

Visit us: <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/finch>

Follow Us:



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