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PRIDE

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RELATIONSHIPS

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INTEGRITY

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DEDICATION

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EMPATHY

Parent Blueprint for Crafting Excellence



Roaring with Pride

Mission

At Toomer, we cultivate global citizens and life-long learners through inquiry, voice, choice, and agency. We provide a safe and equitable community that embraces diversity to inspire students to become critical agents of change.

Vision

A caring school embracing community, respect, honesty, and hard work.

Strategic Plan Core Priorities

1. Become an authorized International Baccalaureate PYP World School
(completed in February 2022)
2. Increase lexile (reading) levels for 1st-5th graders
3. Implement research-based instructional practices
4. Close the achievement gap and increase performance of our sub-groups of students
5. Improve teacher efficacy in IB and core content areas
6. Develop protocols and systems to support student needs
7. Inform and engage the school community
8. Improve our school climate by increasing our Georgia Star Climate Rating

Welcome

Dear Toomer ES Families,

Welcome to the Toomer community! This blueprint has been created to reflect Toomer's mission, programming, policies, and procedures. It is important to us that we accurately communicate through as many avenues as necessary so that all students have access to a quality education. We hope you find this resource useful.

Please note that not all school policies and procedures are listed here. This blueprint is to be used in conjunction with the [district wide Student Handbook](#) that contains all student and parent policies and procedures. We simply adjusted the policies and procedures so that they reflected the practices we have here at Toomer.

Our philosophy of education puts children first with safety as the most important feature. We also believe that school should be enjoyable, and we want students to be excited about school each day. We believe in focusing on an inclusive and equitable environment for all.

We are looking forward to the school year, please let us know if you have any questions or concerns. We consider parents as partners at Toomer ES. It takes a village!

Sincerely,

Caroline Brown

Principal, Toomer Elementary

Feedback on our parent handbook is always welcomed and appreciated as we try to meet the needs of our Toomer students, families, and community.

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SECTION 1: ACADEMICS

Academic Program/Curriculum

The curriculum at Toomer ES is correlated with the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE), and includes literacy instruction, mathematics, social studies, science, health, music, art, mandarin, and physical education. Fourth and fifth grade students are given the opportunity to take part in band. Your child's homeroom teacher will give parents additional information on specific grade level content. You can also visit the state standards website at

<https://www.georgiastandards.org/Georgia-Standards>.

International Baccalaureate

In addition to instruction on the GSE, Toomer ES is officially an authorized IB World School. IB World Schools share a common philosophy, including a commitment to a high-quality, challenging, and global education that we believe is important for our students. Units of inquiry interweave subject areas such as mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies. This approach encourages students to make their own connections between what they learn in core subject areas and how it relates to the world around them. Students at Toomer will continue to receive what is widely considered a "best practice" of pedagogy in middle and high school as both King Middle School and Jackson High School are IB world schools. You can read more about what it means to be an IB school here:

<https://www.ibo.org/programmes/primary-years-programme/>.

Gifted & Talented Education

Toomer ES implements a collaborative model for gifted and talented instruction. This model fits with our IB program and our belief that all children have strengths. In the collaborative model, the homeroom teacher is either certified in gifted education or will receive support weekly from the gifted lead teacher. The homeroom teacher and the gifted lead teacher will plan the units of study together to ensure the instruction is appropriate for all

students. This means that all students in each classroom will benefit from gifted planning and instruction.

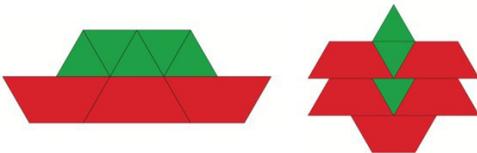
Assessments

Assessments serve multiple purposes. At Toomer ES we mainly use assessments to plan for instruction. Those assessments come in many forms. Often students are unaware they are being assessed. Daily *informal* assessment lets the teachers know if their instruction is effective and provides information for future instruction. More *formal* assessments are summative in nature and give the teacher and parent information about what the student has mastered.

All assessments are given in a developmentally appropriate way for the age of the student. So, an assessment in kindergarten will not look like an assessment in fifth grade.

Example Kindergarten question:

What are the different ways to make 8 that you found in the designs?



What is the same about these designs? What is different?

Example Fifth Grade question:

Decide if each quantity is exact or an estimate. Be prepared to explain your reasoning.

1. There are 14 pencils on the desk.
2. The population of Los Angeles is 12,400,000.
3. It's 2.4 miles from the school to the park.
4. The runner finished the race in 19.78 seconds.

Parents will be given information about how their child is progressing in literacy using the Fountas and Pinnell assessment system and in reading and math using the MAP Reading assessment system. Results from these standardized assessments will be sent home three times per year. Parents of students in grades 3-5 will also receive information on the results Georgia Milestones Assessment sometime in the fall (for milestone testing from the prior spring).

Students will participate in formative benchmark assessments and unit assessments in all content areas grade K-5. These assessments will be used by the teacher to design and improve instruction.

Clubs

Toomer ES has several after school clubs. Teachers and parent volunteers run the clubs. Information will be sent home when available towards the beginning of the year. Clubs are only as successful as the volunteers who support the clubs. If you are interested in sponsoring a club for our students please contact Ms. Kaitie Clark, KAITLIN.CLARK@atlanta.k12.ga.us.

Aftercare

Toomer ES has onsite aftercare for families who need it. Global Tech Academy (a third-party vendor) is offered Monday-Friday from 2:30pm-6:00pm and offers the following activities for all students enrolled in the After-School Program: Homework Assistance, Tutorial Assistance, STEAM Activities, GTA Clubhouse, Health & Fitness, Character Development, Arts & Crafts, and Snack. The weekly fee is \$70. You can [read more here](#) and start the online enrollment process. Other aftercare programs pick up at Toomer including Soulshine, YMCA, and iCare. Parents should contact those programs directly for details on aftercare arrangements.

Field Trips

Parents will receive notices of field trips in advance of the scheduled trip and will be asked to sign a field trip permission form. Sometimes a

small contribution may be requested to help defray transportation or facility costs. No student will be penalized in any manner or denied the opportunity to go on the field trip that is part of the regular academic program for failure to contribute.

At times chaperones will be asked to attend the trip with the classes. Chaperones will be required to go through the same background check as volunteers. This can be done at the school. Chaperones will also be asked to pay admission cost should any occur. At times there may be a limit on the number of chaperones allowed and at no time may non-APS students attend the field trip with the chaperone (i.e., younger siblings).

Homework

The most important aspect of homework is daily reading. Daily reading is the best way for your child to develop vocabulary and content and to become a critical thinker. Some teachers will occasionally assign other short assignments for students to complete at home, but homework is not meant to be long, involved, or take away from reading and/or family time. Homework is not recorded in Infinite Campus and is not graded.

Library

The Library/Media Center is meant to be an inviting place that provides students with reference materials and reading materials to extend their learning. Our goal is to provide books for every reading and interest level. Children are welcome to visit whenever their teacher allows, and students will visit as a class on a regular schedule. Damaged and lost books will be the responsibility of the parents. You will receive communication home with each report card stating the books that your child has in their possession.

Report Cards & Progress Reports

Beginning in first grade, students will be assigned letter grades of A

through F. Kindergarten students receive letters that represent their current status in certain areas (S – Satisfactory; G – Growth; P – Problems; NG – No Grade Given).

Toomer ES students will receive report cards after the end of the 9th, 18th, 27th and 36th weeks of the school year. For grades K-5, evaluation of student mastery will be cumulative throughout the year and will be included on report cards. Progress reports will be issued at the mid-point of each quarter to allow teachers, parents, and students to identify growth areas and challenge areas.

Grades will be posted in Infinite Campus, <https://ic.apsk12.org/campus/portal/atlanta.jsp>, the student information portal, weekly. You should see at least one grade per week for each core content area. If you need to set up your Infinite Campus account, you may retrieve your access password from Ms. Moore in the Toomer main office by emailing her at kierra.moore@atlanta.k12.ga.us.

An opportunity to discuss student progress with your child's teacher will be offered through Parent-Teacher conferences in the late Fall, early Spring, and an additional time at the end of the year, if necessary. Sign-ups will be sent to parents by their child's homeroom teacher. Parents are welcome to reach out to their child's teacher to discuss academic progress at any time beyond parent-teacher conference time.

Recess

Recess will take place daily outside weather permitting for a minimum of 20 minutes per day. Rain will usually be the only reason students will not take recess outside, so please dress students warmly in layers when needed. Please label all outerwear so that we may return it to the child instead of going to lost and found. When indoor recess is necessary, teachers will work to make that time as physically active as

possible. *Please note it is against Toomer policy for teachers to withhold recess as a consequence for poor behavior.* The American Academy of Pediatrics states that recess is “a necessary break in the day for optimizing a child’s social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development” and we agree! It’s an important part of a student’s day.

Technology

The use of technology as a tool for learning is imbedded throughout the school day mainly through the one-to-one use of an iPad or Chromebook. Teachers continually find new innovative ways of engaging students with their learning that foster critical thinking and problem solving in culturally responsive ways. Throughout the course of their instruction, students will have access to a wide variety of tools supported by the district that are educational and are used to expand students’ learning experiences. Teachers will consistently provide guidance to the students to ensure they are using the tools safely and appropriately. Any inappropriate use of technology will be handled in accordance with the procedures in the Student Handbook.

Breakfast & Lunch

Breakfast and Lunch is served daily in the cafeteria and are offered at NO COST to all Toomer students. Students may bring meals made at home as an alternative to the school-provided lunch. Please refrain from sending food and snacks to share with other students. Soda and energy drinks are not allowed to be consumed at school.

Parents/guardians are allowed to join their children at lunch. Please inform your child’s teacher and sign in at the front office when arriving.

SECTION 2: ATTENDANCE

Arrival and Dismissal

Toomer ES students arrive to school and depart school in multiple ways, and it is important for all to follow procedures to keep all families and staff safe.

Arrival

Walkers are to arrive from the various sidewalks and are to use the school parking lot sidewalk or playground/side sidewalk when entering school grounds. Do not enter through the exit driveway. Walkers may also arrive via the mulch path from Hosea Williams Drive & Warren Street. Walkers can be picked up after school at these locations as well.

Bus riders will be dropped off and picked up on the loading sidewalk in front of the school. Please do not park in front of the school during the hours of 7:00 to 8:00 AM or from 2:00- 3:00 PM.

Car riders are to line up in one of the two car lanes marked in the parking lot one behind the other and wait for a staff member to let the student out of the car. Please refrain from having long conversations in the car line as it holds up traffic and causes a backup on Rogers St.

Dismissal

The dismissal order is as follows and begins at 2:15 PM. Bus riders are dismissed first, followed by walkers, van riders (various aftercares), and finally car riders. Given that car riders are dismissed last, it is not necessary to line up before 2:15 PM for dismissal. Additionally, all car riders will be given a car tag number for their rear-view mirror to help us dismiss more efficiently. Should you need to pick up your child early please do so before 1:50 PM. After 1:50 PM students will be held until the 2:15 PM dismissal time. Any student who remains after dismissal is over can be picked up in the front office from the school social worker.

To change your child's dismissal route, you must send in a written note to your child's homeroom teacher signed and stating the changes. In case of an emergency change, please contact the front office.

Attendance Policy

Regular school attendance is necessary for mastery of the educational program provided to students. Daily attendance and active participation in each class are critical parts of the learning process.

Excused absences are absences due to:

- Personal illness of the student and/or a situation in which attendance in school would endanger the health of the student or the health of others.
- Serious illness or death in the immediate family of the student that would reasonably necessitate absence from school.
- Special and recognized religious holidays observed by the faith of the student that necessitate absence from school.
- Mandates by the school or other governmental agencies, such as pre-induction physical examination for service in the armed forces, a court order or out-of-school suspension.
- Conditions rendering school attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.
- Voter registration or voting in a public election, not to exceed one (1) day per school year.
- Five (5) days or fewer per school year for a child of a military or National Guard parent who is called to duty in a combat zone or combat-supporting post or for a student whose parent is on leave from such an assignment.

Please alert your child's teacher if your child will be absent from school. Upon return to school from any absence, the student should bring written a note, signed by the parent/legal guardian, stating the reason for the absence and give it to Ms. Moore in the front office. If a student has multiple absences or tardies, the parent/guardian will be contacted by the school Social Worker to offer assistance and support.

School Hours

School is from 7:45 AM until 2:15 PM Monday through Friday unless noted in the school calendar. The building will be opened at 7:15 AM for students to begin arriving for breakfast. Students arriving after 7:45 AM must be escorted to the front office by a parent/guardian and sign in with Ms. Moore.

SECTION 3: COMMUNICATION

Contact Information

Toomer Elementary School

65 Rogers Street NE
Atlanta, GA 30317
404-802-3450

Ms. Caroline Brown
Principal

caebrown@atlanta.k12.ga.us

Dr. Teruko Dobashi
Assistant Principal

TERUKO.DOBASHITAY@atlanta.k12.ga.us

Mr. Jamie Manning
Assistant Principal

jmanning@atlanta.k12.ga.us

Ms. Kaitie Clark
School Business Manager

KAITLIN.CLARK@atlanta.k12.ga.us

Emergency Information

In case of an emergency, you will receive a robo call from the Student Information System in Infinite Campus. This can be initiated from the school or the district. Please make sure we have current contact information for your family so you can be alerted promptly in case of an emergency. To submit a change simply have your child bring a note to school or give us a call. You can also update your contact information directly in Infinite Campus:

<https://ic.apsk12.org/campus/portal/atlanta.jsp>.

Let's Talk

"Let's Talk" is a district wide communication platform which allows parents to ask questions or communicate a specific need. You can select topics from the interest areas, district departments or schools below and send your questions, concerns, suggestions, and or compliments. If you don't see your topic listed, click on the "GENERAL" comment tab. Feedback left via the Let's Talk app will be directed to Principal Brown for follow up. You can access Let's Talk here:

<https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/domain/14240>.

Request Teacher Time

We appreciate your interest in your child's progress and learning experiences. Parents are welcome to visit their child's classroom. However, to avoid classroom disruption, please contact the teacher to schedule specific visitation time. Each teacher will communicate their preferred method of communication with their students' parents/guardians. If you need assistance communicating with your child's teacher regarding a classroom visit or other concerns related to your child's experience in the classroom, please call Principal Brown at 404-802-3455 or email her at caebrown@atlanta.k12.ga.us and arrangements will be made. We recommend that any concerns you may have with your child's teacher be directed to the teacher first. However, we welcome parents to engage with Ms. Brown if additional support is needed.

Student Information System

To get reminders and updates from Principal Brown please ensure your contact information in [Infinite Campus](#) is up to date. You can elect to receive reminders and updates via text or email (or both). ***This is the best way to stay connected to school updates, events, and announcements. It's important that you receive these messages!***

Surveys

Several times during the school year we will ask parents/guardians and families to complete a school survey. Two of the surveys are required. 1) Georgia Health Survey which is administered throughout the year, and 2) Title 1 parent feedback survey which is administered during the fall semester. All surveys are confidential and are not tied to students. We use the information to improve all areas of school. We hope you participate in as many surveys as you can and as often as you can.

Social Media

Toomer ES participates on several social media platforms. Many teachers along with support staff use the various sites to highlight current activities and to make announcements about upcoming activities. Many times students are highlighted in the photos. If you do not want your child to appear on any sites or Toomer publications, please sign a media opt out statement which is available in the main office.

Please follow Toomer Elementary on Twitter (@ToomerES) as well as the social media accounts our PTA manages including Friends of Fred Armon Toomer Elementary (Facebook); @toomerpta (Instagram); and @FAtoomerpta (twitter).

Weekly Communication

Toomer ES teachers will send out weekly communication to their students' families on Thursdays. The focus will be on highlights, content learned, and upcoming instruction. There will also be reminders about upcoming dates and items needed. Many updates will be shared through Class DoJo app so please ask your child's teacher how to sign up for your class channel. Communication will also come from the front office (and Principal Brown) that include flyers about upcoming events and activities as well as general school updates. To minimize the amount of paper we use,

parents can also expect weekly announcements sent out at the beginning of the week as well as a monthly newsletter from the PTA. Be sure you sign up for the PTA mailing list to receive these using this link: <https://forms.gle/Yi5GKQBYX9oB4aBd9>.

SECTION 4: DISCIPLINE

Restorative Practices

Toomer ES recognizes that students learn appropriate behaviors just like they learn math content. Like when we teach math, we expect students to struggle and to not always be successful. So just like math we provide additional re-teaching opportunities for learning how to participate appropriately at school.

At Toomer we put in place restorative practices. Research indicates that the use of restorative practices in elementary schools leads to significantly fewer suspensions, a narrowing of the suspension gap between black and white students, and improved perceptions of school climates among teachers.

Restorative practices empower students to resolve conflicts on their own and brings students together in peer-mediated small groups to talk, ask questions, and air their grievances. These practices are centered in our Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) instruction. Students have 20 minutes of SEL instruction each day (often during a morning meeting). That instruction takes many forms to include direct instruction on the SEL core competencies and community gatherings where classrooms work on problems that happen within that classroom.

We do recognize that some behaviors are simply not safe for school and while we know that quality instruction that engages students, effective supervision of all students, and effective proactive instruction diminish most inappropriate behaviors we also know that additional responses are needed. When safety is an issue, we will refer to our Student Code of Conduct and follow the progressive discipline process.

Student Handbook

The student handbook is a summary of policies, laws and regulations that affect students including the student code of conduct and the progressive discipline process. Please be sure to review this document in detail. All Atlanta Public Schools policies and regulations may be accessed via the Atlanta Public Schools web site at <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/domain/94>

SECTION 5: FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Title I Parent Involvement/Family Engagement Committee

Toomer ES is currently a Title I school. Title I is a federal program that provides funding to local school districts to help ensure that all children in district Title I schools meet state's high academic standards. Title I, Part A requires that schools involve parents and family members in their children's education. Toomer will send home a family-school compact for all families to review and provide feedback on near the beginning of the school year. We also have a Family Engagement Committee (FEC) that provides guidance and feedback to school leadership on ways to more effectively and impactfully engage parents. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please email Ms. Kaitie Clark at KAITLIN.CLARK@atlanta.k12.ga.us.

Curriculum Nights

Curriculum Nights will be offered several times over the course of the school year. During curriculum nights you will learn about the upcoming term and what is to be expected. They offer an opportunity to pick up information about your child's progress. Each night will have a particular theme that will showcase some of what your child has completed during the previous term. These are great ways to pick up tips for supporting learning at home as well as get a sense for what your child is experiencing in the classroom!

PTA

Your Parent-Teacher Association is a valuable source of support and has committed to remaining an accessible community. No parent is charged for joining the PTA's Parent Network. The PTA helps organize events and fundraisers and provides volunteers for many of the activities your students enjoy. PTA meetings are scheduled for the year and typically overlap with school events. All meetings will provide food and childcare. Please support and get involved in your PTA! Be sure to join the mailing list and for specific questions please email

fatepta@gmail.com. You can also look on their page on our website at <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/domain/1675>.

Volunteers

Parent volunteers are an integral and important part of Toomer ES and we welcome them in the building. Without parent volunteers, many of our programs and activities would not be possible. However, for safety and security it is important to adhere to the following while volunteering the building:

- Volunteers may not “pop in” to any classrooms including your own child’s, please report to the front office and inform the office of your change in purpose for your visit.
- Photographs taken at school may not be posted on any form of social media.
- Volunteers must wear visitor badges at all times.
- Volunteers must check-in and check-out in the main office.
- Volunteers must submit to a background screening by completing the volunteer form and submitting a copy of your state I.D.

Parent Advocacy

As parents you are your child’s first and most important teacher. You know your child best. We encourage all parents to be advocates for their child at Toomer ES. If you have concerns, questions, or need to speak with someone regarding your child, please don’t hesitate to reach out. Your first point of contact should be your child’s teacher, but you may also reach out to Principal Brown. We will work with you to sort out issues and challenges. We want parents to feel comfortable initiating contact and feel empowered to share your concerns and/or ideas. We also ask that you share our commitment to show each other grace and patience as we navigate issues together.

SECTION 6: PROFILE OF A TOOMER COUGAR STUDENT

Cougar Dress

Toomer students will wear a uniform that represents our school. The school uniform consists of khaki or black bottoms and black, yellow/gold, or white collared tops. Bottoms can also include shorts, skorts, jumpers, and leggings.

To help minimize cost and waste, the PTA maintains a uniform closet. This will allow you to trade out your gently worn uniform for a larger size. The PTA and front office support staff will be managing the closet throughout the school year and will frequently have clothes out during school events. Please note no child will be punished for not adhering to the uniform policy. If you need uniform assistance, contact our Social Worker Nisha Stevenson at Cramnisha.Stevens@atlanta.k12.ga.us.

Spirit Wear and Gear

On Fridays each week we are encouraging our students to wear their favorite bottoms and a Toomer Spirit shirt. The PTA regularly sells spirit shirts at cost through their online spirit store which can be accessed here: <https://www.bonfire.com/store/toomer-elementary-school-spirit-store/>. You can also purchase spirit wear at most school events from the PTA table.

Student of the Month

Each month Toomer ES will celebrate a student of the month from each classroom. The selection criteria will be based on the IB and the SEL trait of the month. Parents will be notified if their student is selected and will be invited to the monthly Cougar Pride celebration.

SECTION 7: SAFETY

Bus Safety

At Toomer ES we recognize that transportation is an integral part of student success. Part of that success requires that students follow all safety rules while riding on the bus. As such the following policy for transportation will be enforced.

- Students will only be picked up and dropped off at their designated bus stop
- Students may only ride on their assigned bus.
- If an emergency arises during the day causing a change in transportation parents must communicate by 1:30 PM or the student will be sent home by their regular means.
- Students who violate the behavior and cell phone rules on the bus will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary actions as defined in the student handbook.

Cell Phones

Possession of a cell phone or any other electronic device is a privilege that is granted with written permission from parents or guardians. All cell phones must remain in book bags and turned off at all times of the day. At no time will APS or Toomer ES be responsible for lost, stolen, or broken cell phones or any electronic device. All student belongings are subject to be searched if at any time a staff person has reason to believe that the item contains something that is illegal or not allowed. All staff members have the right to confiscate mobile phones when used in violation of policy JCDAF and its implementing regulation. If a student refuses to relinquish a phone or other device to a school staff member, the staff member may refer the student with the device to the principal or designee. And the appropriate disciplinary response will be strictly enforced. Disciplinary actions for students whose parent/legal guardians have completed the Parental Consent & Acknowledgement Form are as follows:

- **First violation:** Verbal warning.
- **Second violation:** The device will be confiscated, and the telephone or device will be returned only to the parent/legal guardian who must schedule a conference at the school to retrieve the item.
- **Third violation:** The device will be confiscated and will result in the student's loss of the privilege of possessing a mobile telephone or PED on school property for one (1) semester. Written notice will be mailed to the parent, and the telephone or device will be returned only to the parent/legal guardian who must schedule a conference at the school to retrieve the item.
- **Fourth** (or more) violation: The phone will be confiscated, and the student will lose the privilege of possessing a cellular telephone or PED on school property for one (1) calendar year. Written notice will be mailed to the parent, and the telephone or device will be returned only to the parent/legal guardian who must schedule a conference at the school to retrieve the item.

Medication

Prescription and/or other medications will be given during school hours only if a permission slip is signed by the parent and a doctor's note is obtained. Please do not send medication with your child and instead communicate with the school nurse regarding what medications your child may need to take.

Visitor Check-In

All, parents, volunteers, and visitors must first report and sign in at the main office with a valid state I.D. Visitors may only visit classrooms or students in which they are authorized to visit, this includes relatives of students who have not been given written permission by the enrolling parent/guardian. Please make sure you complete the student information form giving permission to all student visitors.

SECTION 8: LINKS

- [Toomer ES Website](#)
- [2024-2025 APS Calendar](#)
- [Bus Routes](#) (*these get updated weekly; please check on a regular basis if you are a bus rider*)
- [Staff list with emails](#)
- [Toomer PTA Facebook Page](#)
- [Toomer PTA Instagram](#)
- [Toomer PTA Twitter](#)
- [Toomer ES Twitter](#)
- [PTA Spirit Store](#)
- [Global Tech Aftercare](#)
- [Infinite Campus Parent Portal](#)