

Student/Parent Guide 2019-2020



Finch Elementary Eagles

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



August 2019

Dear Parents, Guardians, & Extended Caregivers:

Welcome to William Finch Elementary School, a place where families and community members are welcomed to gather, support, celebrate, and honor the diverse achievements of all our children. With the caring guidance of dedicated staff, our students will continue to make academic gains while developing persistence and personal responsibility; qualities that are the cornerstone of lifelong learning. 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 to 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 for the journey towards graduation, and the creation of lifelong learners.

The Finch Student/Parent Guide is written to share important information regarding school policies and procedures. Please read it carefully and review the information with your child. We look forward to partnering with each of you as we work to provide your child with the best possible education. We look forward to celebrating the achievements of our students with you throughout the year!

Sincerely,

The Finch Family Staff

2019-2020

William Finch Elementary Staff

Forrestella Taylor	Principal
Gerald Johnson	Assistant Principal
Dacia Lampkin	Instructional Coach
Craig Simmons	Instructional Coach
Antoinette Thompson	Counselor
Tamisha Bembry	Social Worker
Dr. January Few	School Psychologist
Shan Tukes	School Secretary
Max Joseph	School Clerk
Sherian Turner	Bookkeeper
Christina Spurlock	School Nurse
Megan Bland	RTI/SST/504 Coordinator
Dr. Beverly Gullatt	Special Education Lead Teacher
Kimberle Fowlkes	Gifted Teacher
John Butts	Cafeteria Manager
Nartasha Smith	Media Specialist
Dr. Delleni Guest	Behavior Specialist

CONTACT INFORMATION

Office Numbers: 404-802-4000

Fax Number: 404-802-9981

Website:

<https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/Domain/571>

School Colors: Royal Blue & Red

School Mascot: Eagles



SCHOOL TIMES

Office Hours: 8:00 AM until 3:00 PM each day school is in session.

Instructional Hours: 8:00 AM until 2:30 PM daily.

Breakfast: 7:30-8:00 AM

Lunch Periods:



PRE-K	10:10-10:40
K	10:15-10:50
1 st Grade	11:00-11:35
2 nd Grade	10:30-11:05
3 rd Grade	12:05-12:40
4 th Grade	11:45-12:15
5 th Grade	11:30-12:05

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 **7:30 AM** each day when staff are on duty and able to provide supervision. Teachers are on duty and providing outside supervision from 7:30 AM until 8:00 AM. For safety reasons, it is

the parents' responsibility to see that children do not arrive earlier than 7:30 AM. Bus students are supervised from the time they arrive until 8:00 AM.

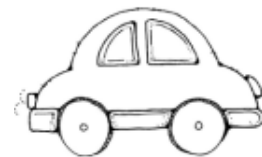
Upon arrival, students should go directly to the cafeteria for breakfast. If students choose not to eat breakfast, they should go directly to class to be greeted and supervised by their homeroom teacher.

We welcome parents in our building at all times, however we ask that parents adhere to the following guidelines during arrival:

- If necessary, parents are permitted to walk students to class until 7:50 AM.
- Teachers are responsible for supervising students during this time and parents should not use this as an opportunity to engage the teacher in an official conference. If you need to meet with your student's teacher, please request an official meeting/phone conference. Conference request forms are available in the front office and will be scheduled by the Parent Liaison.
- Parents who are visiting between 7:50 AM 2:30 PM are required to sign-in at the front office and obtain a visitors pass.

DISMISSAL: Dismissal begins each day promptly at 2:30 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 2:30-2:45 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 our building at all times, however we ask 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 so 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 2:25 -2:30 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 of our busses 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 2:00.

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 11:00 AM will be counted absent for the day.

Parents must arrive no later than 2:00 PM for early dismissal. NO STUDENT WILL BE RELEASED FOR EARLY DISMISSAL AFTER 2:00 PM.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE: 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 counted 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, court appointment, quarantine or conditions rendering school attendance hazardous to health and safety.

On the first day back in school after an absence, the parent should send a note to the teacher giving a reason for the absence. 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.

- **UEXCUSED ABSENCE:** All other absences will be considered unexcused. After one (1) absence, the school will contact you in regards to your child's attendance history.

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAW: Unexcused absences and/or truancy may lead to legal action against the student and/or parents/guardians (see Student Attendance Policy, JB). All children enrolled in APS for 20 school days or more are subject to compulsory school attendance, even if they are under 6 years of age. Every parent, guardian or other person who has control of any child between the ages of 6 and 16 must enroll and send their child to school. Any parent, guardian or other person having control of a child that has more than 5 unexcused absences, after being notified by school personnel, will be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to the following penalties:

- Fine – not less than \$25.00 and not greater than \$100.00
- Imprisonment – not to exceed 30 days
- Community Service – or any combination of such penalties at the discretion of the courts

Each day absent after 5 unexcused absences will constitute a separate offense. Please refer to the Atlanta Public Schools 2019-2020 Student Handbook for a quick view of the system attendance protocol:

TARDIES: Students should be in their homeroom by 8:00 AM and will be marked tardy after this time. A parent **MUST** sign the student in at the office if arriving after 8:00 AM. Partial attendance of a day is considered a tardy.



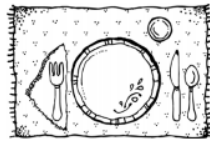
NUTRITION PROGRAM: Finch Elementary is a Community Eligibility Program (CEP) school. As a CEP school, all students enrolled receive free breakfast and lunch every day.

Breakfast Program

- Breakfast is served daily from 7:30 AM until 8:00 AM
- Students who arrive by car, daycare bus, or walk must arrive by 8:00 AM to be served.
- Students who ride APS buses will be served upon arrival.

Lunch Program

- A nutritious lunch is 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 make contact with 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: If a student becomes too ill to remain in class, the school nurse or designee will contact the parent to make arrangements 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- 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.

Contagious illness: If a student has been identified as possibly having a contagious illness, the school system will follow the infectious disease reporting protocol including recommendations from the Fulton County Health Department.

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.

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 exhibiting respect to both the driver and fellow bus riders. Children who display poor behavior may be denied bus privileges. To ensure the safety of all, please impress upon your child the need to behave while on the bus.

FOOD AT SCHOOL: Any food brought for a special occasion for the classroom or club activity must be cleared with classroom teacher, club advisor or principal. Please do not bring treats to students, other than your own child, without clearance from one of the above named Finch staff members.

PARTIES: There is no school time allotted for birthday parties, going away parties or bringing special treats celebrating individual student events. Organized parties held during the year are at the individual teacher's discretion and must be approved by the principal or designee. When permissible students, school personnel and parents should contribute **ONLY STORE-BOUGHT ITEMS, PLEASE.**

TEXTBOOKS: Textbooks are the property of the Finch Elementary and are checked out to each student on a loan basis. The student's name and general condition of the book will be placed inside the front cover. A student will be responsible for paying full price for a lost textbook, or for any damage assessed by the teacher for ink marks, torn pages, etc.

MEDIA CENTER: Finch Elementary has an excellent library that we encourage children to use frequently. Please urge your child to bring library books home on a regular basis.

Reading with your child is an excellent way to spend time together while reinforcing important reading skills. Studies show that children who have been read to often develop a great love of reading. You can help by reading to your child, or listening to him or her read, daily. Checking out library books can also teach children responsibility. Children are expected to take care of the school's books and return them on time. To help defray the cost of book replacement/repair, students will be charged for lost or damaged books.



SCHOOL SUPPLIES: While basic supplies are provided, parents are asked to purchase classroom supplies and a minimum of a book bag at the beginning of the year and as needed throughout the year. Should this pose a problem for your family, please contact your child's teacher and alternate arrangements will be made. From time to time teachers and students may wish to order additional classroom materials or educational publications such as weekly current events publications. The fees charged for these additional items are paid on a voluntary donation basis.

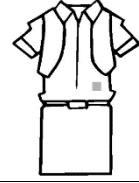


HOMEWORK: The Finch Staff view homework as an integral part of the instructional program. As an extension of the classroom, teachers expect children to have a basic understanding of the work assigned. To teach responsibility, we expect students to complete class work and homework on time. However, if your child does not understand the assignment, or fails to accomplish the task because of difficulty, please write a note to the teacher informing him/her of the problem. Parents will be notified if incomplete homework becomes a problem.

TUTORIAL (AFTER-SCHOOL): Students can receive additional academic instruction and tutoring every Wednesday until 4:00 pm by their homeroom & instructional support teachers. Students must sign-up the day prior to the Wednesday tutorial and have a signed permission slip on file from the parent/guardian inclusive of the dismissal plan for the student. **Transportation will not be provided** for students who attend the after school tutorial program. Families must make arrangements to pick up their students from tutoring by 4:00 p.m. each Wednesday.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM: After-school care is available every day on campus through the ***GreenLit Training Program*** for a weekly monetary fee. The program hours are 2:30-6:00 and provides students with academic support and enrichment opportunities within our safe learning environment. For additional information, please call 678-870-6576 or register online at www.GreenLitTraininProgram.org.

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.

VISITING SCHOOL: For the security and safety of our students, all visitors must sign in at the school office and obtain a visitor's badge that must be worn at all times while in the building or while on the school grounds.

Maintaining a professional, safe environment at all times while visiting our campus or while volunteering your time is extremely important. Individuals should refrain from visiting our 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.

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 2019-2020 Student Handbook or by accessing the link below:

https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/cms/lib/GA01000924/Centricity/Domain/94/ENG2_2019-2020_APS%20Student%20HandbookWEB.pdf

The APS Online Board Policy Manual can be accessed via

<http://www.atlantapublicschools.us/site/Default.aspx?PageID=211>

For ongoing updates and information, download the Finch Elementary app available in either the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store:

