

Frequently Asked Questions

DAVIDSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



DAVIDSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ("DES") BASICS

Q: What school district is DES part of?

A: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. Information on the district, including policies, forms and handbooks, is available here: www.cms.k12.nc.us . A helpful Parent Toolkit is available here: <http://parents.cms.k12.nc.us/>

Q: Who are the administrators at DES?

A: Principal Mr. Dana Jarrett and Assistant Principal Mrs. Erica Nelson. A full list of faculty & staff is available here: <http://schools.cms.k12.nc.us/davidsonES/Pages/FacultyAndStaff.aspx>

Q: What is DES's bell schedule?

A: The tardy bell rings at 8:30 AM, and the dismissal bell rings at 3:30 PM. Students may be dropped off beginning at 8:00 AM. Students are expected to be in the classroom before the tardy bell rings (and arriving early is highly encouraged). Any child arriving after the tardy bell must be checked in at the front office.

Q: How do I access DES during school hours?

A: DES uses the LobbyGuard system to monitor and manage access. DES's doors are locked during school hours. Ring the bell at the front door for entry, then immediately report to the front office to check in at the LobbyGuard kiosk using a valid driver's license or photo ID. The kiosk will produce a nametag that you must wear at all times while in the building.

Plan to arrive early to check in for special events during school hours, as the LobbyGuard line may be long.

To facilitate entry, anyone planning to visit the school more than once, for any reason, should register as a volunteer here: www.cms.volunteers.com

Q: Where can I find a school calendar?

A: The CMS district calendar is available here: www.cms.k12.nc.us/mediaroom/calendars/Pages/Calendars.aspx

DES-specific events and important dates will be uploaded to the ParentSquare calendar.

ATTENDANCE

Q: What is the DES attendance policy?

A: Students should be in attendance every day school is in session, unless the student has an excused absence. Parents may be prosecuted under NC law if a child under the age of 16 has more than 10 unexcused absences. See the CMS Parent-Student Handbook for more on absences: <http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/mediaroom/backtoschool/Pages/documents.aspx>

Q: How do I notify DES of my child's absence?

A: Send an email to your child's teacher and copy the school secretary, Gayle Castongia, at gayle.castongia@cms.k12.nc.us noting the date of and the reason for the absence. Ideally, send the email in advance of or on the morning of an absence.

Q: How do I pick up my child during the school day?

A: Report to the front office to sign your child out. When picking your child up near the end of the school day, please do so by 3:00 PM to avoid classroom disruption.

TRANSPORTATION

Q: Where can I get information about the bus?

A: The CMS Transportation Office can be reached at 980-343-6715. Visit the school gym at Open House for bus questions and other transportation questions. If you have **not** received a letter from CMS with bus information, email Mrs. Nelson at erical.nelson@cms.k12.nc.us. You may need alternate transportation arrangements for the first few days of school.

Q: How does the car line work?

A: If your child will be a car rider, your vehicle must display a school-issued numbered tag. Tags will be distributed in the gym during Open House. If the tag is not in the vehicle at pick-up, we may ask the driver to park and sign the student out at the front office.

In the morning, arrive with plenty of time as you may need to wait to pull into the loop in front of the school. Several monitors will be stationed on the sidewalk to assist children in safely exiting vehicles. Pull forward until traffic stops. Students should be ready to exit the vehicle when it stops. Do not obstruct the driveway or other cars while unloading.

In the afternoon, arrive early and by 3:35 PM at the latest. Students will wait inside the school and will be released as their car rider number is called. Note: Davidson Law Enforcement prohibits right hand turns from Antiquity at dismissal.

Q: Do walker pick ups need a numbered tag?

A: Yes, walker pick ups must also obtain a school-issued numbered tag. Tags will be distributed in the gym during Open House. If your child is a walker pick up – meaning that you park your car and greet your child at the front door of the school – you should plan to arrive by 3:25, as these students are usually dismissed promptly at 3:30.

Q: What if I need to change the way my child is picked up?

A: You must send in a handwritten note with your child’s name, date of the change, a description of how they will get home, and your signature. **PHONE CALLS AND EMAILS ARE NOT ACCEPTED.** You will be asked during Open House to identify how your child will be going home each day of the week.

COMMUNICATION

Q:	How will CMS communicate with me?
A:	CMS uses a parent notification system as well as its website (www.cms.k12.nc.us), Facebook and Twitter. Download the CMS mobile app on your Apple or Android device (via bit.ly/cmsapps) to receive weather-related updates and CMS news, calendars and more. Questions about CMS? Visit the website or contact the Communications Office at 980- 343-7450.

Q: How will DES communicate with me?

A: ParentSquare is our new, private, two-way communication platform between home and school. It provides a safe way for administrators, teachers, staff, groups and parents to connect. Most regular communication will be sent via ParentSquare. ParentSquare will also be used for volunteer sign-ups, event invitations and RSVPs, and DES calendars. **You must join ParentSquare to receive communications from DES.**

Q: How do I join ParentSquare?

A: Download the FREE app via iTunes or Google Play, or visit <https://parentsquare.com/signin>. Choose your preferred communication channel and frequency in "Notification Settings".

Q: Will my child’s teacher communicate regularly with me?

A: Teachers are encouraged to communicate regularly with parents, but there is no prescribed schedule. Teachers and administrators commit to responding to emails and other messages within 24 hours. You will also receive e-mail communication about classroom and grade-level events from your Room Parent(s).

Q: How do I escalate concerns?

A: CMS recommends first contacting your child’s teacher, followed by the school principal if necessary. If the issue remains unresolved, contact the North Learning Community Superintendent at 980-344-7100.

Q: What is PowerSchool?

A: PowerSchool is a web-based program for parents of students in grades 3-12 that shows attendance, assignments, grades, disciplinary information and other data from any device with internet access. DES will supply credentials for new students.

Q: Does DES have a social media presence?

A: DES is on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, though these may be replaced by ParentSquare this year, as it allows us to share photos privately. The Davidson Elementary School PTO Facebook page is updated regularly. Like us!

MEALS: BREAKFAST and LUNCH

Q: Is school breakfast available?

A: Yes. A free breakfast is available to all students from 8:00 – 8:30 AM.

Q: When do students eat lunch? May I join my child for lunch?

A: There are several lunch periods; your child's teacher will inform you of your child's lunch time. You may join your child for lunch after checking in at the front office. Visitor tables are provided. Parents are asked to wait until after the first week of school to join their children so that students can acclimate to the lunch period.

Q: How can I find the school menu?

A: CMS menus are available here: <http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/cmsdepartments/cns/Pages/default.aspx>

Q: How do I pay for school lunch?

A: PayPAMS is the online payment system for lunch: <https://paypams.com/HomePage.aspx>

CONNECT CLASSES

Q: What is a Connect Class?

A: Connect classes are often called "specials" elsewhere. Connect classes – Computer Lab, Art, Music, PE, Media Center, and Science Lab – are based on a six-day rotation. Your child's teacher will inform you of the schedule for your child's class.

TALENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Q: Does Davidson Elementary offer gifted education?

A: Yes. The Talent Development, or "TD" program, is CMS's gifted education program. Eligibility is determined by a combination of standardized testing administered at the beginning of second grade and a Gifted Rating Scale completed by first grade teachers. Visit the TD site for more information: destd.weebly.com

CLUBS

Q: Does DES offer any clubs?

A: Yes. The club schedule for this school year is in development, but available clubs commonly include chess club, safety patrol, flag crew, running clubs for girls and boys, morning muralists (art), and Turning Tigers (jump rope team). See the 2016-2017 Club Schedule for an example: <http://schools.cms.k12.nc.us/davidsonES/Pages/Clubs.aspx>

TIGERS ON THE PROWL ("TOTP")

Q: What is Tigers on the Prowl?

A: TOTP is our popular running/walking program. Students accumulate laps throughout the year and earn awards for reaching mileage goals such as 10K, ½ marathon, marathon and multi-marathons. Parents are encouraged to run laps with their children during the September kickoff event and the announced Guest Lap Weeks.

FUNDRAISING

Q: Do I have to sell anything?

A: No. Instead, we ask that you contribute directly to the Tiger Fund.

Q: What is the Tiger Fund?

A: The Tiger Fund is a direct-giving campaign and the principal source of PTO funding. It provides the "extras" that enhance the educational experience for all DES students but aren't covered by state funding, such as classroom technology, classroom and science lab supplies, curricula, and teacher training. We need your help to meet our goal of \$72,000.

Q: How can I contribute to the Tiger Fund?

A: You will receive a pledge form in your back-to-school packet. All donations are deeply valued and tax deductible. We ask every family to contribute at a comfortable level. Contact Julie Young for more details: juliemwyong@gmail.com

Q: What are Value Programs?

A: Value Programs are “free money” for DES that you help earn by clipping Box Tops and though your everyday purchases at Harris Teeter, Publix, Office Depot and OfficeMax, Amazon Smile, and Shutterfly. See the Value Programs handout included in your back-to-school packet.

VOLUNTEERING

Q: How can I volunteer?

A: Davidson Elementary needs your time and talents. Make a difference for our students and our school, and have fun while doing it! The DES PTO is an active and vibrant part of our school community. Consider chairing or joining a PTO committee, volunteering in the front office, hosting a parent party or supporting a special event. Contact Jessica Nock, PTO President, for information on how you can get involved: jessica.nock@gmail.com. Your child’s teacher will also have several volunteer needs.

SPECIAL EVENTS and FIELD TRIPS

Q: What special events are scheduled throughout the year?

A: The PTO supports many special events and family activities throughout the year. Visit the PTO website to learn more: <http://www.davidsonpto.org/pto-events.html>

<p>September</p> <p>TOTP Kickoff New Parent Social Scholastic Book Fair <i>Kindergarten Event</i> <i>Family Night</i> <i>KISS Breakfast</i></p>	<p>October</p> <p>Bingo Night TOTP Guest Lap Week Bike/Walk to School Day</p>	<p>November</p> <p>Silent Auction</p>	<p>December</p> <p>Class Holiday Parties</p>
<p>January</p> <p>Boys’ Night Out Game</p>	<p>February</p> <p>Girls’ Night Out Dance</p>	<p>March</p> <p>TOTP Guest Lap Week Scholastic Book Fair <i>Family Night</i> <i>KISS Breakfast</i></p>	<p>April</p> <p>ArtFest Charity Basketball Game Parent Social</p>
<p>May</p> <p>Field Day</p>	<p>June</p> <p>End of Year Parties 5th Grade Graduation</p>		

Q: Are there any annual field trips?

A: 3rd graders visit Charlotte for a theatrical performance, 4th graders travel to Winston-Salem to tour Old Salem, and 5th graders visit Washington DC. Other field trips are planned periodically by other grades/classes.

THE DES ROCK

Q: What is the DES Rock, and how can I sign up to paint it?

A: The DES Rock is a beloved tradition, and painting it is a privilege and a way for DES students to celebrate milestones, most often birthdays. **You must have a reservation to paint the rock.** Sign up is via a SignUpGenius that will be posted to <http://www.davidsonpto.org/des-rock-sign-up.html> on or near the first day of school. Watch ParentSquare for an announcement. When signing up, please carefully read the instructions, especially those with respect to timing. You may start painting the rock at 5:00 PM on the night preceding your selected day. For example, if you have signed up for October 12, you may begin painting at 5:00 PM on October 11. There is no cost to paint the rock, though you must furnish your own painting supplies.