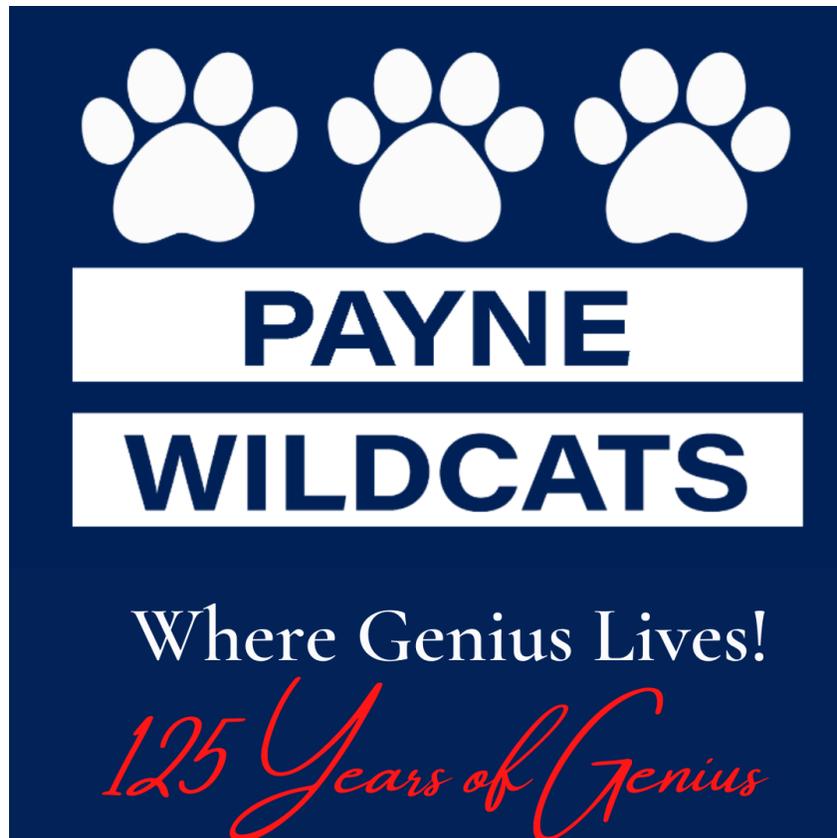


# PAYNE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



PARENT HANDBOOK 2022-2023

Stephanie Byrd, Principal

Mya Harper, Assistant Principal

# Administrators

Please don't hesitate to reach out to anyone on this team regarding your child. We are your partners and want to keep the lines of communication open. If you have any questions, concerns or even want to share positive news with us, we can be reached at the contact information below.

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## Vision and Mission

### Vision

**Payne Elementary School is where genius lives!** We grow self-efficacy and school pride by acknowledging each student's innate ability to learn and cultivating individual genius.

### Mission

Each member of the Payne community is committed to ensuring growth and intellectual development through rigorous instruction in a nurturing and engaging learning community. We teach genius.

## School Philosophy

Daniel A. Payne Elementary School has as its sole purpose the education of the whole child. Given a rigorous curriculum, individualized support, and an engaging social-emotional curriculum, students will evolve into courageous scholarly community members.

Each adult is responsible for ensuring that each child grows into a courageous student by creating a physically, emotionally and socially safe space where students feel free taking academic risks. A growth mindset in both children and adults is essential.

Payne ES is an inclusive school where all students belong to all adults. Students who are English Language Learners and those with disabilities are included alongside their peers to the greatest extent possible.

Payne ES is a community of learners.

# School Values

## **We Value Children**

Each child is a unique gift, a joyful explorer, learner and grower.

## **We Value Excellence**

Each child is held to very high expectations for learning, performance, behavior and character.

## **We Value Inclusivity**

Each child is a unique individual and is a beloved member of this learning community.

## **We Value Community**

Each child will succeed because of the collective efforts of caring adults who believe they can.

# We Value Children

# Responsive Classroom

*Responsive Classroom* is an evidence-based approach to teaching and discipline that focuses on engaging academics, positive community, effective management, and developmental awareness. [Professional development](#), [books](#) and [resources](#) help educators create safe, joyful, and engaging classrooms and school communities where students develop strong social and academic skills, and every student can thrive.

Independent [research](#) has found that the *Responsive Classroom* approach is associated with higher academic achievement in math and reading, improved school climate, and higher-quality instruction. It has been described by the [Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#) as one of the most “well-designed evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) programs”.

## The Four Key Domains of Responsive Classroom

### Engaging Academics

Learner-centered lessons that are participatory, appropriately challenging, fun, and relevant and promote curiosity, wonder, and interest.

### Positive Community

A safe, predictable, joyful, and inclusive environment where all students have a sense of belonging and significance.

### Effective Management

A calm and orderly learning environment that promotes autonomy, responsibility, and high engagement in learning.

### Developmentally Responsive Teaching

Basing all decisions for teaching and discipline upon research and knowledge of students’ social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development.

## School Meals

- Breakfast service begins at 8:15am.
- ECE through Kindergarten eat breakfast in their classrooms. First through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students have daily meals in the cafeteria.
- ECE students eat lunch in the classroom. All other students have lunch in the cafeteria.
- A lunch is provided to all students who do not bring a lunch from home.
- Please note that microwave use is not allowed for students.
- Meals cannot be ordered through delivery services for students.
- Due to allergies, students are not permitted to bring foods containing nuts (for example, peanut butter & jelly sandwiches) in their lunches.
- If your child needs a special diet, due to religious beliefs or health concerns, please contact the main office for a lunch application.

## Birthday Parties

Birthday parties for students can either be held at lunchtime or during the last 30 minutes of the day. Cupcakes must be purchased from the store and not homemade. Please consult with your child's teacher for classroom allergies and class size.

## Recess

Lunch and recess are important parts of a student's day. It is an opportunity for students to learn and practice appropriate social skills through conversation and play. It is also a time for students to become aware of health and fitness.

All students are welcome on the playground starting at 8:15 to 8:40 in the morning. There is a midday recess before or after lunch, according to the schedule. Students in ECE have an additional late afternoon recess time scheduled before dismissal at 3:15.

# Junk Food Free Zone: Promoting A Healthier Choice

“Where Genius Lives” a healthy approach to a daily diet is imperative for the development of a child’s brain. Here at Payne we are pleased to take part in the **Healthier Choice Initiative**. Our cafeteria is supplied daily with fruits and vegetables along with vegetarian and vegan meals. Additionally, we reduce food waste with our Share Table initiative, so students are provided healthy options throughout the school day. Let’s work together in limiting our unhealthy snacks and replacing them with a healthier choice.

**Payne is a Junk Food Free Zone. We will not serve junk food and parents should refrain from sending junk food to school.**

## Medication

All medication shall be administered by the school nurse, according to the DCPS rules and guidelines. In the absence of the nurse, designated personnel shall dispense all medications. Non-prescription medications (e.g. aspirin-free pain relievers, cough lozenges, etc) shall only be administered to a child by the child's parent/guardian.

All medication must be given to the school nurse only. The school nurse is the only person who may receive medication.

We Value Excellence

# Student Attendance

Student attendance is vital to student achievement. If students are not in their seats, they are not learning. Tracking student attendance allows for the implementation of appropriate and timely interventions. Instruction begins promptly at 8:45am. Each teacher is responsible for taking and posting daily attendance by 9:00am.

# The Payne Classroom

*It is easier to build strong children, than it is to repair broken men. - Frederick Douglass*

## **The classrooms are teachers too!**

### **Classroom Libraries:**

Each ECE, ELA and Math classroom has a classroom library. Students are allowed to shop for books each week

### **Data Boards/Walls:**

Data is displayed and used to celebrate student success. Caution is taken to protect individual student identities. Data displays reflect class progress.

### **Workstations/Centers:**

Each classroom has workstations for experiential learning and exploration

- ECE: dramatic play, blocks, manipulatives, library, discovery
- Writing
- Fluency
- Independent Reading/Math
- Technology

# Homework

Homework is an important component in education. It allows students to practice skills acquired during the school day; it allows parents to participate in their child's learning; and helps develop the discipline required for lifelong learning. Therefore, homework is a meaningful extension of the work presented in class.

All homework must be completed and turned in on time.

# Classroom Management

All children belong to all adults.

Thus, all adults must, always:

- model appropriate behavior
- instruct students on appropriate/desired behavior
- expect appropriate behavior
- refrain from engaging in a power struggle with students

Time is carved out at the beginning of the year (1<sup>st</sup> 6 Weeks) and on an ongoing basis to teach students specific expectations for behavior.

Teachers explicitly teach classroom and school-wide routines, on an ongoing basis, including:

- Appropriate communication with adults and peers and within the classroom
- Listening and following directions to ensure a safe viable learning community

Behavior is managed on a case-by-case basis; however, teachers create systems for behavior management within each classroom.

To include

1. Verbal warning.
2. Separation from peers, while allowing the student to remain INSIDE the classroom. NO students shall be unsupervised. **Each classroom is expected to have a place within the classroom that can be used for student reflection (Zen Zone)**
3. Buddy Room: Send student to buddy room for a time out. **Each teacher shall have a designated buddy room, on the same grade level, where students can change/modify their behavior.**

**Recess shall not be withheld, unless the student's misbehavior occurred during recess.**

# Academic Parent Teacher Team and Parent Teacher Conferences

Academic Parent Teacher Team and Parent Teacher Conferences are scheduled 3 times during each school year.

The Academic Parent Teacher Team (APTT) model, teachers facilitate 75-minute team meetings. In these meetings, teachers meet with the families of all the teachers' students. During these team meetings, class and individual data is shared, information about the curriculum is given and there is an opportunity to practice methods and strategies for home learning.

Parent teacher conferences are the time when parent(s) and teachers meet to discuss the student's progress and performance. These conference times are very valuable. **Parents may request a conference with a teacher at any time during the school year.** Please call or email to schedule an appointment.

## Grading Policies and Documentation

It is very important that parents are kept up to date with students' progress and performance in all classes. Student report cards will be shared electronically, however, a printed copy can be generated upon request.

## Promotion and Retention

In order to be promoted to the next grade level, students in PreK through 8<sup>th</sup> grade must:

- Receive proficient or advanced marks in reading/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies and achieve the goals of the student's intervention learning plan where applicable.
- Have 30 or fewer unexcused absences.
- Note: On third term report cards, the following notification was included for all K-5 students, *“Please be aware that your child is at risk of grade level retention if he/she accrues more than 30 unexcused absences this school year or receives a mark of “1” in two or more academic terms this school year in one or more core subject (reading/ELA, math, social studies, science); therefore, Summer School may be required to be promoted to the next grade. Please contact your child’s school administrator for more information.”*

Per DC Code § 38-781.02(b), promotion/retention decisions are **ultimately made by principals** based upon the recommendation of each student’s teacher. A principal **may** promote a student who has failed to meet the promotion requirements if the principal submits a rationale in Aspen justifying the decision before the promotion is made.<sup>[2]</sup>

According to DC Code § 38-781.05(a)(1), **all students who are slated to be retained for failure to meet the promotion criteria explained above must attend summer school.** All affected students who attend summer school must be reconsidered for promotion to the next grade level, taking into consideration factors including academic performance and attendance during summer.<sup>[3]</sup>  
[Please note that DCPS does not offer summer school programming for PreK students.](#)

[1] 5-E.DCMR § 2201.6.

[2] DC Code § 38-781.05(c)(1)(b) & (c)(2).

[3] DC Code § 38-781.05(a)(2). (“A student who attends summer school pursuant to this section shall be reevaluated for promotion if the student: (A) Does not have more than 3 unexcused absences from summer school; and (B) Receives a passing grade in the subject or content area for which the student did not achieve a passing grade during the school year.”)

## Uniform

Payne is a uniform school. The uniform consists of dark blue bottoms (pants, shorts, skirts, rompers) and white or blue tops. Students may wear the school t-shirt as part of the uniform. Students in grades 4 and 5 may wear dark blue denim bottoms. Fridays are students' choice.

## Cell Phones

Cell phones should be turned off and placed in a student's backpacks while in school. Visible cell phones will be confiscated and turned into the office. Parents can retrieve phones at the end of the day.

# Emergency Procedures

Each classroom teacher is expected to post The District of Columbia School Emergency Procedure Guide (red flip chart) detailing the appropriate procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency. Staff members will review them before the beginning of the school year and are also expected to review them with their students on a regular basis.

Tips: Know the building maps and exits. Walk quickly, quietly and show urgency.

**Please practice and discuss safety and evacuation procedures with your students early and regularly.**

A fire drill will be conducted the first week of school and once monthly thereafter. We also will conduct a lock down, shelter in place, earthquake and evacuation drill.

- **Lock Down** – dangerous threat in the immediate vicinity of the school. Prevents individuals from entering or exiting the school and keeps all students hidden in the classroom.
- **Shelter in Place** – short term safety procedure, that will help staff and students by taking shelter inside the school if there is hazardous material, extreme weather, or danger not in the immediate vicinity of the school. Prevents individuals from entering or exiting the school.
- **Evacuation** – dangerous threat, hazardous material inside the building. Depending on the circumstances, students may evacuate to the field, to the corner or to another DCPS school (Eastern High School or Watkins Elementary School)

We Value Inclusivity

# Culture and Climate

*“DC Public Schools is proud to be an ally to students, school leaders and staff within the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer+ (LGBTQ+) community. We are at our best when we can be our authentic selves. DCPS works to create safe and inclusive environments for students and staff to learn and work” - Lewis Ferebee*

An inclusive school is one in which there is an emphasis on intentionally creating a culture and climate that encourages all students to engage in learning and thrive.

An inclusive school is one where self-contained classrooms, students, and teaching staff are integrated fully into the school.

Payne is fortunate to house a self-contained program for students in need of Behavioral, Emotional, and Supports, and for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The Teachers and administration will align the curriculum and instruction in these classrooms with the general education program to the greatest extent possible while also providing the kind of individualized and differentiated instruction that these students require. Additionally, the teachers and administration at Payne will seek to reintegrate these students into the general education classrooms whenever possible.

# Least Restrictive Environment

An inclusive school is one where administration, teachers, and related service providers provide instruction in the least restrictive environment. This is not just because IDEA demands it, but because this philosophy lives in the MTSS process and general education classroom as well.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act mandates that, to the maximum extent appropriate, all children with disabilities be educated alongside their non-disabled peers in the least restrictive environment (LRE). LRE can be achieved through inclusive practices in which all children, including those with significant disabilities, have an equal opportunity to receive a high-quality instruction in the general education classroom with the necessary supplementary aids and services.

Payne takes this concept enshrined in the Individuals with Disabilities Act and expands it to apply to all of its students. Whether considering the MTSS process, small group interventions, or how instruction is given within general education environments – all students will be challenged to participate in learning that challenges them and keeps them integrated with the greatest number of their peers as possible.

# We Value Community

# We Value Community

At Payne we foster positive parent relationships and seek to engage all parents in the life of the school. Student achievement depends on parents who are active participants in their children's education on a continuous basis. Parents are expected to volunteer throughout the school year.

## Parent Volunteers

Volunteer Opportunities Include:

- **Room Parents:** Each class/homeroom must have two room parents. Room parents serve as a liaison between parents in the classroom and the class/homeroom teacher. Room parents gather contact information and organize support for the classroom. Below is a sampling of room parent responsibilities:
  - Back to School Night potlucks
  - Afternoon snack schedules
  - Teacher Appreciation
  - Field Trip Volunteers
- **Parent Teacher Association:** Payne has a robust PTA which provides support for the school. The PTA hosts several events throughout the school year (Fall Festival, Movie Nights, Spring Carnival, etc.) and raises funds to supplement the school budget.

# Parent Event Adoption Schedule

Parents at each grade level are responsible for collaborating with Payne staff to organize events

Grade	Events	Date	Payne Collaborator
5	Book Character Day	10/31	Douglas
	Volunteer Breakfast	6/1	Baggett
4	Winter Performance	12/14	Specials Team
	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Promotion Reception	6/15	Bergfalk/Clary
3	Fall Field Day	11/18	Crumb
	Youth Arts Festival	3/24	Harvey
2	Earth Month	April	Creef/Hackett
	Spring Field Day & Paper Airplane Day	5/26	Crumb/Brown
1	Grandparents Day	9/9	Perry
	Pi Day/Math Night	3/14	Mitchell
K	Literacy Night	10/20	Turner
	Daniel A. Payne Day of Service	2/17	McDowell
Pk4	ECE 1 <sup>st</sup> Day Parent Reception	9/1	Allen
	Career Day	5/24	Harper
Pk3	Summer Soiree	7/21/2023	McDowell

## Field Trips

*Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school. - Albert Einstein*

True depth of learning and understanding occurs through experiences that are extensions of the classroom. Field trips are considered important instructional time. Just as students are not excluded from classroom instruction, students shall not be excluded from field trips.

An official field trip permission slip will be sent home with each child and must be signed and returned by parent/guardian to teacher. Verbal consent is not acceptable.

\*\*\*If a parent or other adult would like to Chaperone, they must go to DCPS Central Office and go through the fingerprint procedures. Please note, there is no cost associated with obtaining a background check. E-mail [dcps.clearance@k12.dc.gov](mailto:dcps.clearance@k12.dc.gov) for more information.