



# Student Handbook

## 2025-2026

1200 Parkins Mill Road Greenville, SC 29607

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<https://www.greenville.k12.sc.us/scollins/>

## "Discover the Treasures within Sara Collins Elementary!"

(\*Rules and Policies of this GCS and Sara Collins Handbook may be added or changed to ensure the safety and effective operation of the school.

### Sara Collins School's Statement of Philosophy

Committed to the belief that a strong academic program is the fundamental right of every child, the staff of Sara Collins plans a curriculum in which each child can be successful regardless of his or her ability. The school exists to provide the fullest possible development through a curriculum augmented by extra-curricular activities. It is the belief of the staff that each student's highest personal fulfillment may be realized through the cooperative effort of the staff, students, parents, and community.

### Mission Statement

The **mission** of the SCE family is to create an environment where all students will grow academically, socially, and emotionally.

### Vision

The **vision** of the SCE family is to maintain a safe, inclusive, collaborative environment that upholds high standards while supporting the needs of all students.

### Collective Commitments

In order to fulfill our fundamental purpose and become the school we describe in our vision statement, each member will:

- Celebrate success, encourage risk-taking, and embrace growing from our mistakes
- Model and teach common behavior expectations and consistently reinforce expectations
- Value each other's differences by seeking to connect with all members of the SCE family
- Commit to being a collaborative team member by listening to others, sharing best practices, and being open to new ideas and change.
- Foster relationships within the classroom, the grade level, and the school.
- Create and implement common learning outcomes and common formative assessments
- Use evidence of student learning to improve practice
- Seek out and implement practices that support the needs of all students in different learning environments (whole group instruction, small group instruction, conferring)



### **School Song** *(to the tune of “You’re a Grand Old Flag”)*

You're a grand old school,  
You're a high-ranking school,  
You're the best in the south we all say!  
Sara Collins!  
Here the kids are smart.  
We all do our part.  
We're loyal to you every day.  
Every heart beats true  
For the white and the blue;  
You're the best school in every way.  
We'll forever hold you in our hearts;  
Sara Collins - Hip! Hip! Hooray!

### **Five Goal Areas of Greenville County Schools**

#### **Student Success**

*Deliver high-quality curriculum, instruction, and interventions that meet the needs of each student.*

#### **Premier Workforce**

*Recruit, retain, and develop exemplary personnel in all positions.*

#### **Caring Culture and Environment**

*Provide a safe and healthy environment that promotes learning and respectful relationships.*

#### **Resource Stewardship**

*Ensure efficient use of resources through effective management and development.*

#### **Community Engagement and Communications**

*Generate support and system effectiveness through engaging partnerships, communications, and recognitions.*

### **Sara Collins Elementary School Promise**

#### **At Sara Collins Elementary, I will:**

be kind to myself and others,  
show respect to all adults and children,  
cooperate and follow directions,  
take care of school property and materials, and  
practice responsibility through self-control.

## **Greenville County Schools Student Handbook**

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## **Attendance**

In South Carolina, all children are required to attend a public or private school or kindergarten beginning at age five (5) and continuing until their 17<sup>th</sup> birthday. If a child is not six years of age on or before the first day of September in a particular school year, parents and guardians may choose not to send their children to kindergarten; however, they must sign a waiver which may be obtained at the local school. In accordance with the South Carolina Compulsory School Attendance law, the School District of Greenville County has adopted uniform rules to ensure that students attend school regularly. Each day that students are not in school, they miss hours of valuable instruction and opportunities for learning that they will not have again. Students are counted present only when they are actually in school, on homebound instruction, or are present at an activity authorized by the school principal. A student is considered in attendance when present for at least three (3) hours of a school day. All absences beginning with the first shall be approved or disapproved by the board's designee, the building principal. In making this decision, the principal shall be guided by the procedures as presented herein. Decisions regarding approval of absences and eligibility for credit may be appealed in accordance with district policy.

Students must present a written excuse, signed by a parent/legal guardian or a medical professional, for all absences within 3 days of the student's return to school. The written excuse should include the reason for and the date of absence. Without a valid written excuse, the absence will be recorded as unlawful. Absences in excess of 10 days will not be considered excused with a parent/guardian note unless accompanied by official medical documentation or approved by the principal..

### **Lawful Absences**

- Absences caused by a student's illness and whose attendance in school would endanger his or her health or the health of others. These absences must be verified by a physician statement within three days of the student's return to school.
- Absences due to an illness or death in the student's immediate family verified by a statement from the parent within three days of the student's return to school.
- Absences due to a recognized religious holiday of the student's faith when approved in advance. Such requests must be made to the principal in writing.

- Absences for students whose parents/guardians are experiencing a military deployment. Specifically absences when the parent or legal guardian of a student is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be excused as long as such absences are reasonable in duration as deemed by the principal so that the student can visit with his or her parent or legal guardian relative to such leave or deployment of the parent or legal guardian.
- Absences due to activities that are approved in advance by the principal. This would include absences for extreme hardships. Such approval should be prearranged when possible.

### **Unlawful Absences**

- Absences of a student without the knowledge of his or her parents
- Absences of a student without acceptable cause with the knowledge of his or her parents
- Suspension is not to be counted as an unlawful absence for truancy purposes

### **Absences**

For students in grades K-12, principals shall promptly approve or disapprove any student's absence in excess of ten (10) days, whether those absences are lawful, unlawful, or a combination of the two. A student does not exceed the 10 day absence limit until the student has reached his or her 11<sup>th</sup> unlawful absence. Furthermore, a student does not exceed the 5 day absence limit for a 90 day course until the student has reached his or her 6<sup>th</sup> unlawful absence.

### **Truancy**

Although the state requires students to only attend 170 of the 180-day school year, parents and students should be aware that SC Code of Regulations-Chapter 43-274 stipulates that a child ages 6 to 17 year is considered truant when the child has three consecutive unlawful absences or a total of five unlawful absences. For purposes of this section (truancy and compulsory attendance), a parent may provide up to 10 parent notes excusing a student's absence, 5 parent notes in a 90-day course, and 3 parent notes in a 45-day course. However, in order for any subsequent absence related to an illness to be lawful it must be supported by a physician statement/medical note.

## **Student Arrival and Dismissal**

Each school is responsible for overseeing the development of protocols and supervision that are tailored to the age and needs of students at each school facility. The protocols will include:

- Staff assignment to specific locations and related responsibilities;
- The area in which students will be retained awaiting designated transportation;
- Plan for supervision when a parent/escort is unable to pick up their child at the appropriate dismissal time.

## **Student Behavior Code**

The District expects students to conduct themselves in an orderly, courteous, dignified and respectful manner. This requirement refers to their actions toward other students and teachers, their language, their dress and their manners.

Students have a responsibility to know and respect the policies, rules and regulations of the school and District. Violations of such policies, rules and regulations will result in disciplinary actions. The school directs students to the District's Behavior Code set forth in [Policy JCDA](#), and this handbook. Schools are authorized to incorporate the use of electronic devices, including cell phones, tablets and other similar devices, into the school environment when appropriate to enhance learning and student achievement. Students are prohibited from using electronic devices to capture images, record or otherwise use electronic devices in a manner that harasses, humiliates, threatens, embarrasses, intimidates another person or otherwise violates the law. Students may not use electronic devices to access and/or view websites, internet, or other content or images that are inappropriate or otherwise blocked to students at school while on school property or at a school-sponsored event. Students are personally and solely responsible for the care and security of electronic devices.

Personal electronic devices cannot be used by students during the instructional day absent authorized permission by the principal or principal's designee for unique events. All personal devices must remain out of sight of others and be silenced during this time. The instructional

day for elementary schools shall be from 7:45 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. The instructional day for middle schools shall be from 8:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. The instructional day for schools that have combined levels of instruction, such as K-8 schools, shall be determined by the principal or principal's designee in accordance with the instructional activities of the facility.

The Board and the administration offer the following listing of offenses and the required or recommended dispositions for the information of students, parents/legal guardians and school personnel.

### **Levels of offenses**

Students who engage in an ongoing pattern of behavior that is disruptive to the orderly operations of the school shall be recommended for expulsion. The following is a general listing of offenses and the required or recommended disciplinary actions which should be taken as a result of such offenses being committed.

#### **Disorderly conduct - Level I**

Disorderly conduct is defined as any activity in which a student engages that tends to impede orderly classroom procedures or instructional activities, orderly operation of the school or the frequency or seriousness of which disturbs the classroom or school.

Acts of disorderly conduct may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- classroom tardiness
- cheating on examinations or classroom assignments
- lying
- blackmail of other students or school personnel
- acting in a manner so as to interfere with the instructional process
- abusive language between or among students, to include profane language
- failure to complete assignments or carry out directions
- use of forged notes or excuses
- violation of school bus regulations
- cutting class
- school tardiness

- truancy
- use of obscene or profane language or gestures
- other disorderly acts as determined at the school level, which are not inconsistent with Board policy

The administration may apply sanctions in cases of disorderly conduct which may include, but are not limited to, the following

- verbal reprimand
- withdrawal of privileges (a privilege, as defined by the Greenville County School Board, is a student's opportunity to participate in any function of the school beyond attending class, riding buses and participating in the school District's food service program)
- Detention
- In-school/out of school suspension
- Other sanctions approved by the Board or administration

### **Disruptive conduct - Level II**

Disruptive conduct is defined as those activities engaged in by student(s) which are directed against persons or property and the consequences of which tend to endanger the health or safety of themselves or others in the school. Some instances of disruptive conduct may overlap certain criminal offenses, justifying both administrative sanctions and court proceedings.

The administration may reclassify disorderly conduct (Level I) as disruptive conduct (Level II) if the student engages in the activity three or more times.

Acts of disruptive conduct may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- fighting
- vandalism (minor)
- stealing
- use or possession of laser pointers, fireworks, smoke bombs, pepper-style sprays, and other similar devices or materials
- threats against others
- trespass

- abusive language to staff, to include profane language
- other disruptive acts which interfere with the educational process
- refusal to obey school personnel or agents (such as volunteer aids or chaperones) whose responsibilities include supervision of students
- possession or use of unauthorized substances, including tobacco and tobacco products, alternative nicotine products, non-prescription drugs, "look-a-like" drugs, and drug paraphernalia, including rolling papers
- illegally occupying or blocking in any way school property with the intent to deprive others of its use
- inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature
- misuse of District technology resources
- gambling on school property
- unlawful assembly
- disrupting lawful assembly
- harassment, intimidation or bullying
- intimidating, threatening, or physically abusing another student
- any other acts as determined at the school level that are not inconsistent with Board policy

The administration may apply sanctions in cases of disruptive conduct which may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- in-school suspension
- withdrawal of privileges (a privilege, as defined by the Greenville County School Board, is a student's opportunity to participate in any function of the school beyond attending class, riding buses and participating in the school District's food service program)
- temporary removal from class
- out-of-school suspension
- referral to outside agency
- assignment to alternative school

- expulsion
- restitution of property and damages, where appropriate, should be sought by local school authorities
- other sanctions as approved by the Board or administration

### **Criminal conduct - Level III**

Criminal conduct is defined as those activities engaged in by students (whether or not they result in criminal charges) that result in violence to themselves or to another's person or property or which pose a direct and serious threat to the safety of themselves or others in the school or to the security of District resources. These activities usually require administrative actions which result in the immediate removal of the student from the school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities and/or action by the Board.

Whenever a student is engaging or has engaged in activities including, but not limited to, one of the acts specified below, while on school property or at a school sanctioned or sponsored activity which a principal or his/her designee has reason to believe may result, or has resulted, in injury or serious threat of injury to a person or to his/her property, the principal or his/her designee is required to notify law enforcement officials.

Acts for which principals must recommend students for expulsion include, but are not limited to, the following:

- bomb threat
- possession, use or transfer of weapons - a weapon is defined as a firearm (rifle, shotgun, pistol or similar device that propels a projectile through the energy of an explosive); a knife, razor, bludgeon, blackjack, metal pipe or pole, brass knuckles (to include multi-finger rings); incendiary or explosive device; or any other type of device or object which may be used to inflict bodily injury or death.
- sexual offenses (which include sexual acts that do not result in a criminal offense)
- arson
- distribution, sale, purchase, manufacture, use, being under the influence of, or unlawful possession of alcohol or a controlled substance, as defined in S.C.

Code Ann. §§ 44-53-110 through 44-53-270. (See Policy JCDAC)

- threatening to take the life of or inflict bodily harm upon a school employee or member of their immediate family
- ganging ("Ganging" or participating as a member of a gang and inflicting a violent act of bodily harm, however slight, upon another person will not be tolerated. A "gang" shall consist of two or more persons acting together for and with the purpose of committing an act of violence against another person. "Participation" also includes any act that interferes with or hinders a staff member from stopping the infliction of bodily injury that is the objective of the gang.)
- Unauthorized access, use, or attempted access or use of District computer systems

Additional acts for which principals may recommend students for expulsion include, but are not limited to, the following:

- vandalism (major)
- theft, possession or sale of stolen property
- disturbing the schools
- possession, use, or transfer of "look-a-like" weapons
- assault and battery
- extortion
- any other acts as determined by the Board

**NOTE: In determining whether a student is under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance, the student's appearance, behavior, manner, presence of an odor of the substance, and statements made by the student as to the use of controlled substances or alcohol may be considered without regard to the amount of alcohol/controlled substance consumed.**

**The principals must recommend students for expulsion if they have committed offenses which are underlined above.** If a student commits an offense that is not underlined, the principals may recommend the student for expulsion when the circumstances warrant it. The administration may apply

sanctions in cases of criminal conduct which may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- withdrawal of privileges (a privilege, as defined by the Greenville County School Board, is a student's opportunity to participate in any function of the school beyond attending class, riding buses and participating in the school District's food service program)
- out-of-school suspension
- assignment to alternative school
- expulsion
- restitution of property and damages, where appropriate, should be sought by local school authorities
- other sanctions as approved by the Board or administration

## **Dress Code**

Students are expected to dress and be groomed in such a way as to not distract or cause disruption in the educational program or orderly operation of the school. Personal appearance of students should promote health and safety, contribute to a climate conducive to teaching and learning and project a positive image of the District to the community. Students should dress for the educational setting and not the recreational one. The principal may create further guidelines regarding student dress which are consistent with the guidelines below.

- Clothing and/or hair should not be so extreme or inappropriate to the school setting as to disrupt the education process. Therefore, clothing deemed distracting, revealing, overly suggestive or otherwise disruptive will not be permitted.
- Wearing accessories or clothing that could pose a safety threat to oneself or others is not allowed.
- Hoods, hats and sunglasses may not be worn in the building.
- Attire must not evidence membership or affiliation with a "gang" in any negative sense of the term.
- Proper shoes must be worn at all times. No bedroom shoes or slippers are permitted.
- Attire must not be immodest, obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, indecent or offensive.
- The length of shorts and skirts when standing upright must come to the bottom of the student's fingertips

- Holes in garments or exposed skin are prohibited above the required short/skirt length
- Clothing that inappropriately exposes body parts is not permitted. Students shall not expose undergarments.
- The width of top straps must be at least the width of a student ID card (2.125 inches)
- Pants must be worn at the natural waistline and undergarments are not to be visible. Pants and slacks must not bag, sag, or drag. Pajamas are prohibited.
- No clothing, jewelry, or tattoos are permitted that display profanity, suggestive phrases, or advertisements for, or messages or pictures depicting or suggesting alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or sex.

In the event the administration determines a student's dress is inappropriate for school in accordance with this policy, schools will either have clothes available to provide to students who are in violation or will permit the students to have clothes brought to the school to correct the dress code violation. Students will wait in a designated location until that violation of the dress code is remediated. Students who would like to make a request for accommodations to the dress code related to a disability or religious belief should notify the school's administration of that request in advance.

Students shall be subject to the following consequences for violating the dress code.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Warning/Parent Contact
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Detention
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Referral for Additional Discipline

## **Transportation** **Discipline**

In order to ensure the safety of all students riding buses in Greenville County Schools, appropriate behavior is required for all students. Transportation to and from school is an extension of the classroom and should be considered part of the school day. The issue of safety requires students to be on their best behavior while on school buses or vehicles. Violations of school bus rules will be addressed in the manner listed below. The School District Behavior Code (Board Policy JCDA) is in effect for all students at all times when being transported on school buses to and from school or school activities. Thus, while students may lose the privilege to



ride the bus due to their conduct as contained below, the student may also be disciplined in accordance with the District's Behavior Code up to and including being recommended for expulsion.

#### **Level I Offenses - Disorderly Conduct**

- Refusing to follow driver directions
- Getting on or off the bus at an unauthorized stop without permission
- Standing or sitting improperly while the bus is moving
- Intentionally riding the wrong bus without permission from the principal
- General horseplay
- Making loud noises
- Profanity/Obscene Gestures
- Littering
- Possession of tobacco products, e-cigarettes or vaping devices
- Delaying bus services by tardiness, loitering, etc.
- The school administration may classify a Level I offense as a Level II offense if the infraction seriously jeopardizes the health and/or safety of others.

#### **Level I Consequences**

- 1st Referral -- Warning and parent contact
- 2nd Referral -- In school punishment, parent contact and/or one (1) day bus suspension
- 3rd Referral -- Suspended from bus up to three (3) days and parent conference
- 4th Referral -- Suspended from bus up to five (5) days and parent conference
- Additional Level 1 referrals will result in administrative review and may be accelerated to a Level consequence.

#### **Level II Offenses**

- Use of tobacco products, e- cigarettes, or vaping devices
- Throwing objects out of bus
- Profanity directed at staff
- Rude, discourteous behavior directed at staff
- Vandalism [restitution may be required]
- Harassing, threatening or intimidating another student
- Fighting
- Stealing
- Inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature

- Other safety violations that may interfere with the safe operation of the school bus
- The school administration may classify a Level II offense as a Level III offense if the infraction seriously jeopardizes the health and/or safety of others.

#### **Level II Consequences**

- 1st Referral -- Suspension from bus up to ten (10) days and parent conference
- 2nd Referral -- Suspension from bus up to ten (10) days and parent conference
- 3rd Referral -- Suspension from bus up to thirty (30) days, possible removal and parent conference

#### **Level III Offenses**

- Possession, use or transfer of weapons
- Sexual offenses (which include sexual acts that do not result in criminal offense)
- Arson
- Impeding the operation of a school bus
- Distribution, sale, purchase, use or being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substance
- Threatening to take the life of or inflict bodily harm to a school employee
- Ganging
- Bomb threat

#### **Level III Consequences**

- Any referral - Minimum thirty (30) days suspension from bus and possible removal from bus for remainder of school year and parent conference.

### **Discipline of Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities will be disciplined in accordance with federal and state law including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as set forth in the procedures developed by the administration.

### **Procedures for Transporting 4k, 5k and 1st Grade Students**

For safety reasons, all K4, K5 and 1st grade students will receive a numbered ID tag from the school prior to boarding the bus in the afternoon. The tag must be visible to the driver. As the student departs the bus in the afternoon, the driver will collect the student's identification tag. The driver will retain the tag and deliver all tags to the school the following morning. The school will distribute the tags to the respective teacher or staff member so the tags can be put on the student before afternoon bus dismissal. Each 4K, 5K and 1st grade student must wear a bus tag while being transported from school for the entire school year. The student tag shall include the following information:

Front:	Back:
Student Name	Student address unique number
Student designee name (4th grade or above)	
Route number	

### **Parent Responsibilities:**

The parent/guardian is responsible for properly registering their student(s) at the designated school and ensuring that all information provided on required forms is accurate and current. The parent/guardian is responsible for updating this information at the school whenever changes occur. The parent/guardian must be present at the regular bus stop both during the morning pickup and afternoon drop-off of their 4K, 5K or 1st grade child. The parent/guardian will be given four (4) numbered cards to distribute to any designee to be at the bus stop in their place. The designee may be another adult or student designee (4th grade or higher). A Bus Tag Application is to be furnished by the school, completed and returned by the parent/guardian to the school before the student rides the bus. One person may serve as designee for multiple children. The parent/guardian is ultimately responsible for the safety and conduct of his/her child at the regular school bus stop.

If a 4K, 5K or first grade student is preparing to depart the bus at their assigned stop, whether alone or in a group, and the parent/guardian/designee with the numbered card is not present at the bus stop, the student will be returned to his/her elementary school. When a student is returned to the elementary school, school staff will contact the parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian cannot be located, the matter could be referred to Greenville County Schools Law Enforcement Division, appropriate local Law Enforcement Agency, and/or the Greenville County Department of Social Services (DSS).

Incidents of the parent/guardian/designee with the numbered card not being at the bus stop for afternoon drop-off will result in all transportation services being discontinued according to the following schedule:

- First Incident: Warning to parent by school with review of future consequences
- Second Incident: 3 days off the bus
- Third Incident: 5 days off the bus
- Fourth Incident: 10 days off the bus
- Fifth Incident: Removal from bus for the remainder of the school year

The school administration will implement the above schedule without a bus driver referral and notify the appropriate bus center of the effective dates of loss of bus transportation services. Only the Superintendent or his or her designee may make exceptions to the provisions contained in this administrative rule.

## **Anti-Bullying and Safe Schools**

The District is committed to fostering an environment that both promotes learning and prevents disruptions to the educational process. In order to create and maintain an atmosphere that promotes learning and prevents disruption, the District has implemented the following procedures to address student concerns, complaints, and grievances in regards to bullying, discrimination, harassment, intimidation or misconduct as provided in Board Policy and Administrative Rule JCDAG. All formal complaints of any allegation of bullying, discrimination or harassment will follow the below process, except for complaints filed on the basis of sex (Title IX), which will follow the procedures contained in that Section II below.

### **Reporting Bullying, Harassment & Discrimination**

Any student who believes that he/she has been subject to harassment, intimidation, bullying or misconduct by other students, employees of the District or third parties in the school setting should immediately inform the school's administration and may also file a formal complaint under Board Policy and Administrative Rule JCDAG.

All complaints should be filed with the principal or his or her designee within sixty days of the date of the alleged incident using the Complaint Form attached to Rule JCDAG. Complaints may also be filed by a student's parent. If the allegation is against the school's administration, the student or parent should file a report

directly with the District's Ombudsman. Anonymous reports may be made, but those reports must provide the District with adequate information in order to begin an investigation.

Additionally, students and parents should immediately report any concerns related to employee interactions with students that are inconsistent with the requirements and expectations contained in Board Policy GBV pertaining to staff and adult interactions with students. Concerns that should be immediately reported to a school's administration include potential mistreatment of students and other conduct by employees that could constitute inappropriate interaction or communication, including those sexual in nature.

#### **Investigation**

Complaints will be investigated promptly, thoroughly, and confidentially. The investigation shall include appropriate steps to determine what occurred and to take actions to end the harassment, intimidation, or bullying and prevent such misconduct from occurring again. A meeting will be scheduled within ten working days of the complaint with the complainant to discuss the complaint. The student and his/her parent(s) shall be informed in writing of the outcome of the investigation but all discipline of students and staff will remain confidential. The written notice will also outline the complainant's right to appeal.

#### **Appeals**

An appeal related to disability discrimination or harassment should be made to the District's Section 504 coordinator. An appeal regarding color, race, or national origin discrimination or harassment should be made to the District's Title VI coordinator. The email contact information for the Section 504 Coordinator and Title VI Coordinator is Section504@greenville.k12.sc.us and TitleVI@greenville.k12.sc.us. Both may also be contacted by mail at Post Office Box 2848, Greenville SC 29602 or by phone at 864-355-3100.

The appeal shall state the reasons for which the complainant is appealing the initial decision. The coordinator will examine the evidence presented by all the parties, and may conduct a meeting with both the complainant and the school principal or designee if needed. The coordinator must provide a written decision to the complainant within 10 working days of receiving the complainant's written appeal. The coordinator shall inform the complainant of the right to appeal to the Superintendent or his/her

designee. If a coordinator or the Superintendent or his/her designee is alleged to be involved in the complaint, the District will appoint an objective and impartial administrator to address the complainant's appeal at that level.

If a student or parent/guardian is dissatisfied with the action or decision of the Coordinator, they may appeal the decision to the Superintendent or his/her designee within 10 working days of the decision of the Coordinator. The appeal shall be in writing and shall state the reasons for the appeal. The superintendent or designee, in his or her discretion, may choose to have a meeting with the complainant and the coordinator. The Superintendent or designee shall provide a written determination to the complainant and take appropriate action within 10 working days after the receipt of a written appeal.

### **Title IX Complaints (Sex-Based Discrimination/Harassment)**

The District, as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 and its corresponding regulations ("Title IX"), does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education program or activities. Title IX prohibits sex-based harassment, which may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex even if those acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature. The District prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of sex in all of its programs and activities by its employees, students or third parties.

#### **Reporting & Investigation**

Any student (or parent/guardian of a student) who believes they have been the subject of sex-based harassment or discrimination should contact the school's administration immediately. A formal complaint may be filed in accordance with Administrative Rule JCDAG. Even if a formal complaint is not filed related to a Title IX concern, the District must still conduct a thorough review into the concern and implement appropriate supportive measures and disciplinary consequences and provide a written summary to the student/parents related to its efforts and actions.

The District prohibits retaliation or reprisal in any form against a student or employee who has filed a report. The District also prohibits any person from falsely accusing another person.

Additional information pertaining to Title IX, including contact information for the District's Title IX Coordinator, training received by District employees, and the process for appeals can be found under [Title IX](#) on the District's website..

## **Homework**

When homework is given, assignments shall reflect the following guidelines:

Homework shall include one or more of the three generally recognized types of homework:

- Practice: reinforces newly acquired skills taught in class
- Preparation: helps students prepare for upcoming lessons, activities, or tests

Extension: provides challenging, often long-term opportunities for enrichment that parallel class work

Homework shall be carefully planned and explained to the students. Content and duration of homework shall be personalized to accommodate the age, grade, ability, and readiness of the students. Homework shall be assigned with awareness of the home resources available to the student and the family and alternative options offered, where necessary. Since involvement in extracurricular activities is encouraged and valued, homework assignments that are lengthy shall be scheduled as far in advance as possible.

Because homework at the high school level varies according to a student's course load and schedule, high school students should spend sufficient time on homework to master the content of the subject matter. Completed homework assignments are to be reviewed by the teacher or designee; appropriate instructional follow-up shall occur.

If homework is graded, the homework shall count no more than 10% of the overall quarterly grade at the middle school and high school levels. Because they require a greater amount of time and effort than daily assignments, grades for long- range assignments shall not count as part of the homework percentage, but should be considered in the time allocated for homework.

Parents and students shall be informed at the beginning of the school year and at the beginning of second semester, if appropriate, of the district homework policies and classroom homework expectations.

Students are encouraged to spend some time each day reading a variety of materials independently.

## **Uniform Grading Scale**

The Uniform Grading Policy approved by the State Board of Education is effective for all students enrolled in unit-bearing classes, including those offered at the middle school level.

**The SC Grading Scale is as follows:**

A= 90-100; B= 80-89, C= 70-79, D= 60-69, F= 0-59

[SC Uniform Grading Scale](#)

### **PreKindergarten**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal and social growth</li> <li>• Approaches to learning</li> <li>• Physical development and health</li> <li>• Language arts and literacy</li> <li>• Mathematics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Exceeds standard</li> <li>= Meets standard</li> <li># Making Sufficient Progress</li> <li>- Not Yet making Progress</li> <li>Blank-Not taught or assessed</li> </ul>
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### **Kindergarten and First Grade**

Student progress in kindergarten and first grade is reported for South Carolina Academic Standard as follows:

#### **Academic Skills Indicators:**

Reading Writing and Language Communication Science Mathematics Social Studies	M=The student consistently meets or exceeds end-of-year expectations for this standard P=The student shows expected growth/progress in meeting this end-of-year standard B=The student is beginning to progress toward meeting this end-of-year standard N=The student needs intensive support at school and home to develop this end-of-year standard  <i>If left blank, this standard was not addressed or assessed during this reporting period</i>
--	---

#### **Successful Learner Characteristics:**

Interacts positively with adults and peers Shows initiative and eagerness to learn Participates and works well in a variety of settings (whole class, small groups, independently)	4=The student consistently demonstrates the characteristics 3=The student demonstrates the characteristics most of the time 2=The student demonstrates the characteristics some of the time 1=The characteristic is not yet evident
---	--

Demonstrates organizational skills Sustains attention in a variety of settings Demonstrates perseverance in various tasks/situations Follows multiple-step directions	
--	--

**Related Arts Indicators:**

Art Music Physical Education	M=Meets related arts standards P=making progress towards related arts standards
------------------------------------	--

**2<sup>nd</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade**

The following grade scale will be applied to students in grades 2-12.

A=100-90 B=89-80 C=79-70 D=69-60 F=59-50

For Carnegie Unit courses please refer to the state Uniform Grading Policy (UGP) for quality points and state regulations guiding credit-bearing courses.

**Grading Floors**

- **Elementary School Students (Grades 2-5)**  
A floor of 50 will be applied to quarter report cards for elementary students (2-5). The floor will not be applied to Interim Progress Reports.
- **Middle School Students (Grades 6-8)**  
A floor of 50 will be applied to all grades for middle school students (6-8)
- **High School Students (Grades 9-12)**  
A floor of 50 will be applied to quarter report cards for High School Students (9-12). The floor will not be applied to Interim Progress reports.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that affords parents (including legal guardians) and students over 18 years of age (eligible students) certain rights with respect to students' education records. "Student education records" include any records maintained by a school or the district that are directly related to the student. These rights are:

- The right to inspect and review a student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access.  
Parents or eligible students should write a letter to the school principal and identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access to those records and will notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where they may inspect them.
- The right to request an amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend an education record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading by writing the school principal. In that letter, they should not only clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, but also specify why they believe it is inaccurate or misleading. They should also provide any evidence to support their claim. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a district-level hearing regarding the request for amendment. The school will provide additional information regarding the district's hearing procedures when they notify the parent or eligible student of the decision. After the hearing, if the district still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his/her view about the contested information.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. FERPA allows the district to disclose education records to school

officials with a legitimate educational interest in the information contained in the record without consent from the parent or eligible student. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health and law enforcement staff); a person serving on the School Board; and a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor or therapist). A school official has a legitimate educational interest if that official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request and without consent, the district forwards and discloses education records to officials of another school district in which a student seeks/intends to enroll, specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes, appropriate parties in connection with financial aid, organizations conducting certain studies for the school, accrediting organizations, to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena, to appropriate offices in cases of health and safety emergencies, and to state and local authorities within a juvenile system.

- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the federal agency that administers FERPA is as follows:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-5920

\*An eligible student is defined as a student who reaches 18 years of age or attends a post-secondary school.

## **Directory Information**

Information that the District has designated as "directory information" regarding a student may be released to outside organizations without prior written consent from the parent/eligible student. The District defines directory information as a student's name, address, telephone number, photograph, grade level, school to which he/she is assigned, years of attendance at that school, awards received, participation in officially

recognized activities and sports, and weight and height of athletic team members. Outside organizations requesting directory information include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, the law requires that local high schools must provide military recruiters, upon request, access to secondary school students' names, addresses, and telephone listings. If you do not wish for the District to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the School in writing no later than 30 calendar days after the first day of school.

## **Student Speakers at School-Sponsored Activities**

The School District of Greenville County is committed to maintaining an educational environment in which students of all backgrounds, beliefs and religions are welcome and treated with equal dignity and respect. The District will neither advance nor inhibit religion. In accord with the United States Constitution, the District protects private expression, including religious expression, by individual students as long as that expression does not create a disruption to or interfere with the educational environment. Student speakers at school-sponsored activities, including graduations, may not be selected on a basis that either favors or disfavors religious speech. Where student speakers are selected on the basis of genuinely neutral, evenhanded criteria and retain primary control over the content of their expression, that expression is not attributable to the school and therefore may not be restricted because of its religious or secular content. In contrast, where school officials determine or substantially control the content of what is expressed, such speech is attributable to the school and may not include prayer or religious content. A school, however, may prevent or remove a speaker if the content of their speech is obscene, contrary to the District's behavior code or substantially disruptive to the school environment.

## **School Insurance**

Student accident insurance is offered as a service to parents. The available insurance coverage includes school-only or 24-hour coverage. Coverage, cost, and enrollment information is provided on the District's website at [Insurance](#)

Voluntary student accident insurance is different from athletic insurance, which is required.

### **Parent's Right to Know**

As the parent or family of a student enrolled in Greenville County Schools, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers and instructional assistants who instruct your child. Federal law allows you to ask for the following information about your child's classroom teachers and requires the District to give you this information in a timely manner:

- whether a teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- whether a teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
- the baccalaureate degree major of a teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree;

If you would like to receive this information, please call the Human Resources Department.

### **Student Use of Technology**

Students must use school technology in an appropriate manner and in accordance with Board Policy and Administrative Rule EFE. This school technology includes District email, network, equipment, and assigned devices to students. Students will be disciplined in accordance with the District's Behavior Code (JCDA) for any misuse of school technology. While the District implements filters and safeguards for school technology, the District cannot guarantee that these measures will detect or prevent inappropriate use of technology by students. Parents and students should immediately contact the student's school with any concerns pertaining to the use of technology.

### **Board Policies and Administrative Rules**

All current policies of the Greenville County School District Board of Trustees and administrative rules can be found on [Board Docs](#) on the District's website.

## **SARA COLLINS ELEMENTARY STAFF LIST 2025-2026** (updated as of 7/2025)

Dr. Melissa Burns - Principal

Cheryl Elliott - Assistant Principal

Victoria Schwartz - Administrative Assistant

### KINDERGARTEN

Monica Langston  
PollyRose O'Neill  
Abigail Rabon  
Laura Sharp  
Marty Weekes

### GRADE 1

Erin Camire  
Kim Cheney  
Jane Cooper  
Heather Haines  
Christine Martin  
Melanie Mills  
Brooke Smith  
Ellis Turner

### GRADE 2

Sophia Conwell  
Ashlyn Davis  
Alissa Edwards  
Erin Hedges  
Tonya Long  
Laurn Price

### COUNSELORS

Cheri Orozco  
Katie Sanford

### ESOL

Rachael Branyon

### GRADE 3

Rachel Chinault  
Loren Graves  
Mary Beth Greene  
Shelly Lapkin  
Danielle Phillips  
Carene Porter  
Margaret Sprewell

### GRADE 4

Kaitlyn Shuman  
Debbie Carter  
Michelle Dunann  
Julia Ward  
Haley Woods

### GRADE 5

Chely Campbell  
Karen Clelland  
Laynie Frazier  
Katie Kreycik  
Loren Simmons  
Emma Stoffel  
Carolyn Vaughan

### ART

Lily McClure  
Emily West

### P. E.

Brent Coggins  
Jacob Scruggs

### MUSIC

Abi Barron  
Susan Matthews

### SPANISH

Adriana Groot  
Gladys Patino

### CHALLENGE

Kristen Wiggs

### MEDIA CENTER

Katie Beaudet, Specialist  
Mary John McNair, Clerk

### INSTRUCTIONAL

#### COACH

Carrie Johnson

### LITERACY

Katherine Morrissey  
Taylor Schneider

### HH RESOURCE/SC

Sara McCall

### INTERPRETERS

Amy Handley  
Angie Highsmith  
Amanda White

### SPEECH

Allison Walkenhorst  
Sara Warrington

### OT/PT

Ashley Brewington (PT)  
Heather Heardt (OT)

### SPECIAL EDUCATION

Danielle Candilado  
Sharon Cochran  
Annabelle Colon  
Lauren Cupstid  
Bonnie Elrod  
Sarah Lewandowski  
Jules Urban

### OFFICE STAFF

Renee Monto, Secretary  
Christel McDowell,  
Attendance  
Kim Geddie, Receptionist

### K-5 AIDES

Celeste Hesse  
Hanna Howe  
Mary Beth Melton  
Abigail O'Rear

### COMPUTER LAB

Tresh Crosby  
Shawanda Gamble

### MENTAL HEALTH

COUNSELOR  
Sarah Mendez

### NURSE

Azahlia Benjamin

### PSYCHOLOGIST

Michael Sewell

### SPEC ED AIDES

Breana Harris  
Pam Johnson  
Sundra Johnson  
Anitra Miller  
Deanna Moldovan  
Claire Recinos  
Thristan Searchfield  
Mason Weathers  
Ashley Willimon

### CAFETERIA STAFF

Kaci Jolley, Manager  
Polly Carter  
Todd Cheney  
Suzette Hamilton  
Shayla Silvers  
Kim Vincent  
Cindy Walden

### CUSTODIAL STAFF

Scott Painter, Plant Engineer  
Glinda Abercrombie  
Walter Hall  
Jeannie Hedrick  
Jerry McGowan  
Aretta Murphy



# Sara Collins Elementary Student Handbook

The contents in this section of the handbook are specific to our school and includes the contents of the GCS Student Handbook.

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## Schedule and School Information

### Daily Schedule

7:00 - 7:30 Breakfast

7:30 Students and teachers go to classrooms. Only bus students will be served breakfast after 7:35 AM.

**7:45** School begins. Students should be in classrooms ready to start the school day. Students arriving after 7:45 *will be marked tardy and a parent must check them in the office to be admitted to their classrooms.*

2:15 Dismissal.

### Early Dismissal of Students

To ensure the safe dismissal of all students and lack of disruptions, we will have early dismissals before 1:45 P.M. If parents must take a child from school before the end of the school day, they should send a note in the morning stating the reason for the early dismissal and the time. Teachers keep students in the classroom until the office notifies them the parent has arrived. Please note the following District Policy JGFC (5/11/99):

No elementary school shall release any student prior to the end of the school day unless either (1) the student's custodial parent or legal guardian is the person picking up the child or (2) the school has previously received from the student's custodial parent or legal guardian a signed note indicating the date, time, and reason for the early dismissal and the person who will pick up the student for the early dismissal. If school personnel do not know a person attempting to pick up a student, they will require the person to produce appropriate identification, such as a driver's license, before releasing the student. For purposes of this policy, "legal guardian" shall include (1) any person to whom a court of competent jurisdiction has awarded custody of the child, (2) a foster parent, (3) an appropriate employee of a residential community-based care facility licensed by the Department of Social Services or operated by the Department of Social Services or the Department of Youth Services, for a child living in such a facility, and (4) a person who signed an affidavit permitting the child to attend school under Policy JBCA.

### School Closing Due to Weather or Emergency

The closing of school due to extremely bad weather or other severe emergencies will be announced on local radio and television stations. In case of an emergency situation during the school day, ***parents are asked not to call the school for information.*** The school has detailed plans for the evacuation and safety of all students. Information will be given on the radio, television, and district webpage. In an emergency, it is vital that the phone be available for use by those who are directing emergency procedures.

### School Information

Greenville County school information is available by calling the **School District Office info line at 355-3100** or the numbers listed below. Additionally, current information is always available on the following websites:

School District: <https://greenville.k12.sc.us/>

Sara Collins website: <https://www.greenville.k12.sc.us/scollins/>

Bus Transportation	355-5280
Attendance	355-3214
Health Room	355-3207
Cafeteria	355-3208

### Extended Day Program

We are excited that we will continue offering our own extended day program at our school again this year! Our aftercare childcare offers homework help, play

time, and arts and crafts. Hours of operation are 2:15 PM- 6:00 PM during regularly scheduled school days. Please contact our EDP Director, Carolyn Vaughan, at [cjvaughan@greenville.k12.sc.us](mailto:cjvaughan@greenville.k12.sc.us) for more details regarding registration and fees. All school policies and rules in this handbook and of Greenville County Schools apply to our program. If a student has been suspended from the school, they may not return for the after-school program.

## **Curriculum and Instruction**

### **Content of Curriculum**

Sara Collins provides a curriculum that is designed to meet the needs of all students. South Carolina State Standards in Language Arts/Reading, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Spanish, Art, Music, and Physical Education are taken into consideration as teachers plan units and lessons for their students.

### **GCS Counseling Services**

The school counseling program in Greenville County is a collaborative effort benefiting students, parents, teachers, administrators and the overall community. The comprehensive and developmental school counseling program utilizes a planned program of activities that address the three components of student educational development, student career development, and student personal/social development. The school counseling program is provided to all students, K-12, and provides services through individual, group, and classroom counseling.

The school counseling program is developmental and includes sequential activities designed to address the needs of all students and therefore is an integral part of each school's educational program.

The counseling program components include the direct student services of guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and the indirect services of system support.

At the elementary level, the school counseling program promotes successful achievement by assisting students in learning the skills and attitudes that focus on decision-making, skill development, awareness and exploration of future educational and occupational possibilities. The program also stresses core character traits such as respect for self and others and the acquisition in developing interpersonal relationships.

### **Literacy Instruction**

The goal of the language arts program in Greenville County Schools is to develop the necessary language skills within each student that will allow them to pursue their life's goals and to become productive members of society. For students to become successful communicators, a balanced approach to literacy instruction is needed to meet all the needs of the students who make up our classrooms. Over the years, teachers and researchers have learned that there is not one basic approach that builds a proficient reader and communicator. It is the combination or balance within the instructional model that creates success in our classrooms. A balanced literacy model should include instruction in phonics, reading comprehension, interpretation of literature, writing and reading fluency.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips are planned by the teacher for specific instructional purposes. They are considered an extension of the classroom. The school requires written permission from a parent or legal guardian before a child is permitted to go on a field trip. Transportation will be by school bus or a district approved charter bus company. Each child may be asked to pay a fee to cover the expense of the bus. The use of private cars is not allowed for transporting children on field trips. Children may not leave the school group and field trip with parents without a prior written approval by the principal.

It is a teacher's decision as to the type and number of chaperones that may be needed on field trips. Due to limited space, cost, and the age of the students, a field trip may or may not require parents as chaperones. Teachers will make decisions based on their classroom needs.

When buses return from a field trip, students will be taken to homerooms. Parents are required to sign students out in the front office.

### **Media Center**

The Media Center is an important part of Sara Collins Elementary School. The basic function is to help children to learn by:

1. Providing books, technology and other media for the school's educational program;
2. Helping students develop an interest in reading, thus stimulating their interest in many subjects;
3. Teaching research skills and how to use the media center.

The Media Center is the center for all teaching materials, books, magazines, pamphlets, pictures, recordings and other audio-visual aids. It is the center of the reading program in that it stimulates and enriches classroom instruction in reading and bridges the gap between textbooks and the many types of reading materials used in everyday life.

The purpose of the Media Center begins and ends with children - their needs, problems, abilities, motivations and values. It is open from 7:15 AM until 2:15 PM. We encourage students to visit for reference work, but also for recreational reading and checking out books.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

There will be at least one scheduled conference between the child's teacher and parent during the school year by the end of the first nine weeks for all students. All parents are expected to attend these scheduled conferences. Parents are encouraged to initiate conferences at any time by writing a note or calling the school office for an appointment with the child's teacher. When teachers observe the need for additional parent-teacher conferences, they will request the parents to come in for special conferences.

### **Permanent Records**

A permanent record is maintained in the school office for each student. All information in the permanent record is confidential and is accessible only by the professional staff, the student and the student's parent, or guardian. When a student transfers to another school outside Greenville County, it is necessary for the parents to sign a written permission for the records to be forwarded to the new school.

### **Placement of Students**

It is the principal's responsibility to assign students to the homeroom class. In keeping with the policy of The School District of Greenville County, heterogeneous grouping has been identified as the most desirable means for assigning children to classrooms. Therefore, children are placed with regard to:

1. Consideration of individual child's needs;
2. Balanced distribution of boys and girls;
3. Balanced distribution based on ethnicity; and
4. Reading achievement level.

The placement of all students at the beginning of the school year is considered a tentative assignment. Changes in enrollment at the beginning of school may necessitate assigning students to different classes, but every effort will be made to limit the changes. Parent request for individual teachers is *not* a consideration for placement in a classroom.

### **Academic Reports**

Report cards are created every nine weeks and are sent home in the 1st - 3rd quarters. Reports are available in Parent Backpack at the end of the 4th quarter. This report will assess children in reading, language, spelling, handwriting, mathematics, social studies, science and health, art, music, physical education, and habits and attitudes. If a report is not received at the end of each nine-week period, please notify the child's teacher or school office. Interim progress reports may be sent at any time during the grading period to inform parents of a lack of progress in certain areas. These are issued mid-nine weeks between report cards. If you have a concern that an error is made on your child's grade, please contact the teacher immediately. Grades may be reviewed by parents in Backpack at any time.

### **Parent Backpack**

A backpack for parents account provides parents, guardians, or contacts with a central place to sign in to do the following:

- View their student's information including demographics, attendance, classes, grades, lunch balances, and test scores
- Apply or register their student to Special Focus schools and programs (Fine Arts Center, Career Centers, etc.)
- Receive alerts and notifications regarding their students
- View their student's school and contact information
- Manage parent and contact information for their students
- <https://www.greenville.k12.sc.us/Parents/main.asp?titleid=backpack>

### **Promotion and Retention**

The curriculum at Sara Collins is such that children are able to make continuous progress regardless of the grade placement. It is recognized that some students benefit from the opportunity to continue in the same grade another year. Certain definite procedures are followed during the retention process. During the first parent conference, parents are informed if the child is not performing at grade level. By the end of the third reporting period, a teacher should be able to identify a child who may need to be retained and will notify the parents that their child may benefit by continuing in the same grade another year. Final decisions regarding promotion and retention of students are determined by the principal.

### **Related Arts Program**

Art, music, Spanish, media center (K-2), and physical education teachers work with each class for a 45-minute period each week. Classroom teachers also provide activities in each of these areas, as well as computer lab instruction. A special event in the spring is the Field Day event for all students.

### **Special Education Program**

A special education resource program is provided for students who are learning disabled. Due process procedures are followed in the placement of children in the program. Written permission for a psychological evaluation and placement must be obtained from the parents, a staffing committee must recommend placement, and a written educational plan for the student must be provided.

Sara Collins has four self-contained classes for students in Greenville County. Many of the students are mainstreamed to a regular class for one or more subject areas. Speech clinicians work with students individually or in small groups.

### **Challenge**

The School District of Greenville County provides programs for Gifted and Talented Students to challenge them with rigorous, complex class work and research. Gifted students may demonstrate high performance ability or potential in academic areas. Administrators, parents, teachers, and students may make referrals for students to be screened.

However, students must meet the state criteria before being placed in the Challenge program. Identification in academic areas will be made using multiple criteria. Students who meet the criteria in two of the three dimensions are eligible for placement. All students currently in the program will continue to be served. Students may qualify automatically with an extremely high aptitude or IQ score at 96th percentile or higher for their age group. If students do not qualify solely on aptitude, this process will be used for screening:

- **In Dimension A - Reasoning Abilities** Students must demonstrate high aptitude (93rd national age percentile or above) in one or more of these areas: verbal, nonverbal, quantitative and/or a composite of the three.
- **In Dimension B - Academic Achievement** Students must demonstrate high achievement (94th national percentile and above or advanced status) in reading and/or math as measured by a nationally normed or South Carolina statewide assessment instruments.

- **In Dimension C - Intellectual/Academic Performance** Students must demonstrate a high degree of interest in and commitment to academic and/or intellectual pursuits, or demonstrate intellectual characteristics such as curiosity/inquiry, reflection, persistence/tenacity in the face of challenge and creative, productive thinking. Rising third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students may be eligible to take the Performance Task Test in March if they have already met the criteria in Dimension A or Dimension B. Beginning with grade 7, students must have a 3.75 GPA on a 4.0 scale to meet the criteria in Dimension C.

Students must meet the criteria in two of these three dimensions to participate in the Gifted and Talented Program.

### **Textbooks**

The state provides one set of free textbooks for all students in elementary school. If a textbook is lost or damaged by a student, the student must pay the assessed amount.

## **Policies and Regulations**

### **Care of School Property**

Any damage to school property must be repaired or replaced at the expense of the offender. The cooperation of parents is required in helping us teach children to respect school property, materials, furnishings, equipment, and the building itself.

### **Change of Address**

It is necessary that we have your current address and phone number at all times. This information is especially important in cases of emergency. Please notify the school immediately upon changing your address or telephone number. If it is determined that a parent has failed to provide the school with their correct address, the student will be dismissed from Sara Collins Elementary immediately and asked to enroll at the school within their correct attendance area.

### **Code of Conduct**

The staff at Sara Collins is committed to providing a safe environment in which students can learn and grow. Much media attention has been given to the issue of discipline in schools. In an effort to maintain the best possible atmosphere for learning at Sara Collins, we have a school-wide Code of Conduct. It includes school-wide expectations to be enforced by all faculty and staff at Sara Collins. Refer to GCS Student Handbook or the district website for additional information.

We will be discussing the Student Behavior Code with your child within the first days of school. After this discussion, we will be sending home a copy that is to be discussed and signed by you and your child. Should you have concerns regarding this plan, please contact your child's teacher or a school administrator.

### ***SCHOOL-WIDE PROMISE***

As a student at Sara Collins Elementary I will:

- Be kind to myself and other students.
- Show Respect to all adults and children.
- Cooperate and follow directions.
- Take care of school property and materials.
- Practice responsibility through self-control.

### **SCHOOL-WIDE EXPECTATIONS**

At Sara Collins Elementary, we will all focus on CARING about our school. We will show this by meeting our school-wide expectations using the letters, C - A - R - E.

*At Sara Collins we CARE about school-wide expectations!*

**C = Control Yourself**

**A = Act Appropriately**

**R = Respect for all Adults and Children**

**E = Engage in Learning**

### **Money Sent to School**

Children should be discouraged from bringing money to school except for specific purposes. When money is brought to school by the child, please place it in an envelope with the student's name, the teacher's name, the amount, and the purpose written on the envelope. Neither the teacher nor the school can be held responsible when money or items are lost.

### **Notes Required from Parent or Guardian**

The school requires notes from parents or guardians for explanation of the following:

1. Absence (see Attendance Guidelines)
2. Tardiness

3. Request for early dismissal
4. Request for excusal from recess or physical education
5. In reply to notes from the teacher or principal
6. Field Trips

### **School Parties**

There are **two** scheduled school parties each year. These will be at the winter holidays and Valentine's Day. Parent's participation in these events is determined by the classroom teacher.

Individual birthday parties at school are not allowed. Please do not bring birthday treats to school without consulting with the teacher before the day of the birthday. Birthday treats will be served at the end of the student's lunch in the cafeteria or at the end of the school day. Invitations to birthday parties may be distributed before or after school by a student, but not by a staff member. Absolutely, no balloons are allowed for individuals.

### **Policies of the School District of Greenville County**

The official policies of the School District of Greenville County are located on line and can be accessed at <https://www.boarddocs.com/sc/greenville/Board.nsf> or through the School District's Home Page.

### **School Telephone**

The school telephone number is 355-3200. Messages will be taken for students and teachers and delivered as soon as possible. Students will not be called to the phone for emergencies. In the event of an emergency, the caller should contact the school counselor or an administrator who will relay the emergency to the child.

Parents wishing to confer with teachers on the phone are requested to limit their calls to after-school hours. Teachers cannot leave their classrooms for telephone conferences from 7:15 AM to 2:30 PM.

Students wishing to call home may use the telephone in the office **for emergencies only**. Arrangements for transportation and after-school activities of students must be made before the child leaves home.

### Smart Device Contract

We understand that some children need to carry a cellphone, smartwatch, or other smart device for before and after school communication. However, students do not need them during the day. We have a “bell to bell – no cellphone” expectation. The cell phone or smart device must be kept in my child’s backpack during school hours and/or while in the school building.

#### Consequences:

First offense: Verbal warning

Second offense: Parent phone call

Third Offense: Parent/Teacher Conference (administration attendance possible)

Fourth Offense: Disciplinary Referral

### Staff Telephone Numbers

The school will not furnish the personal phone number of any staff member to parents. We strongly recommend that teachers use only their school phone number for school business. The school must have a number at which parents can be located at all times.

### Transfer to Another School

When a child is to be transferred from Sara Collins to another school, please notify the school office at least a week in advance. A transfer form will be prepared and may be picked up by the parent the last day of the child’s attendance. Parents must sign a statement granting Sara Collins permission to forward the child’s records to the new school if that school is outside Greenville County. School records will be forwarded to the receiving school upon request from that school.

### Visitation in School

Providing instructional time for students in a safe and orderly environment is our primary objective. In order to provide quality time, all parents and visitors must enter through the office area and sign-in if they have made previous arrangements with the teacher. If visitors and parents have not made previous arrangements with the teacher, we cannot allow interruptions during instructional time. We will be happy to set up an appointment for you with the teacher or call an administrator to help you. Volunteers should not use time to discuss their individual child’s progress or interrupt the class with lengthy discussions with the teacher during volunteer time. All volunteers should only visit classrooms where they have

assigned tasks. They should not use their volunteer status to visit with teachers in other classrooms even if they have their child assigned to that class.

***At no time should parents interrupt the class to speak with the teacher.*** This regulation is for your child’s protection. It may keep out persons who may disrupt classes and accommodates visitors who may receive a phone call while in the building.

## Attendance

### Permission to Leave School

If parents must take a child from school before the close of the day, they ***must send a note in the morning stating the reason for an early dismissal and the time the child will be picked up. For the safety of the children at dismissal time, there will be no early dismissals after 1:45 PM, and we will not call students from class after that time.*** Parents must sign their child out in the school office before 1:45 PM if an early dismissal is necessary. Whenever possible, medical and dental appointments should be scheduled after school hours. Parents are urged not to take the child out of school early.

No child will be allowed to leave the school grounds during school hours unless signed out by a parent or another adult designated by the parent. Children should be cautioned about accepting rides with strangers. They will be expected to leave the school grounds immediately after dismissal at 2:15 PM.

School personnel cannot supervise or be responsible for students who remain on the grounds after dismissal unless they are enrolled in the Extended Day Program.

### Tardiness

The school day begins promptly at 7:45 AM. Students should be in their classrooms and ready to begin work at 7:40 AM. Students arriving after 7:45 AM must report to the office where they will be given a permission slip to enter class late. Punctuality is a quality of good citizenship. ***Please help your child to be on time!***

**\*Leaving Class to Attend Siblings Programs** Every child needs to have their own special celebration time with parents. Often, parents want to take a sibling from class to observe a sibling’s program or field day. This causes the child to miss instructional time. It also interrupts the day for all the students in the sibling’s class. If a parent elects to take a child from their classroom for this purpose, the student will not be allowed to make up work that is missed.

## **Health and Safety of Students**

### **Accidents and Emergencies**

Every effort is made to prevent accidents. However, in case of an accident, first aid is given by authorized school personnel or the Health Room nurse. In all cases of serious accident or illness, every effort is made to contact the parents. The school will follow parents' directions on the health card and enrollment form if we

### **Fire and Emergency Drills**

In accordance with state laws, a fire drill must be held once each month. Fire drills will be held without warning. Each teacher will be responsible for instructing pupils on the manner and route of exit during each drill. These rehearsals are necessary for helping children react quickly and responsibly in instances of emergency. Instruction and drill will be provided in preparation for tornados or severe weather conditions, lockdowns, and the evacuation of buses.

### **Food Service Program**

The cafeteria manager and her assistants provide a nourishing, well-balanced breakfast and lunch each day for students and staff. While students are encouraged to eat the meals prepared at school, they may bring lunch from home. Elementary school children may buy lunch daily by adding money to the student's account or they may choose to pay by the day at the cash register before being served. Menus are available online. Meal and milk prices are as follows:

Breakfast	Lunch
All Students: No Charge Adults: \$3.10	All Students: No Charge Adult: \$4.75
Extra Milk: \$0.65 Additional snacks may be available for purchase.	

\* **Free Breakfast and Lunch Program for all students in 2024- 25.**

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) is a school meal funding option from USDA that enables a school to provide free meals to all students, without the necessity of completing applications for individual eligibility. CEP status is determined by the percentage of students from households receiving public benefits.

This year, CEP in South Carolina has expanded to include students who receive Medicaid benefits, which will enable some GCS schools to qualify for the 2025-26 school year. There is a four-year eligibility guarantee, which means during the 2025-26 school year, Sara Collins Elementary will **offer free breakfast and lunch for students.**

Parents are welcome to eat lunch with their children. Please call the school office the morning of the day you plan to eat. When parents come for breakfast or lunch, please stop by the office, sign-in, and put on a visitor's badge. **We strongly encourage you not to bring food from a restaurant for your child.**

Eating in the cafeteria provides many opportunities for positive learning experiences and for practicing social skills and good manners. Students are expected to leave the area around their place at the table free of food or paper when the meal is over. Acceptable table behavior is a skill, which each child will be helped to learn and practice.

### **Health Room**

The Health Room is staffed daily by a school nurse. Any child who is not feeling well or has been hurt will be sent to the Health Room. A Health Room Card is kept on file in the Health Room for every child. This card supplies vital information about who to call in case of an emergency or special health problems the child may have. It is necessary that you give the school the information requested on the Health Room Card. The Health Room nurse will keep a record of the child's visit and will take his/her temperature or perform any minor first aid necessary, depending upon the symptoms. The Health Room does not have aspirin or any other over-the-counter medications, and the nurse cannot administer any.

If a child is too ill or uncomfortable to remain in school, the nurse will notify you by telephone to come for him/her. Parents are always contacted if the child has a fever of **100 degrees** or more or is nauseated. The parent must sign the child out of the Health Room. The child must remain out of school for 24 hours after the fever breaks. Vision and Hearing is checked for every kindergarten, first, and third grade student. Hearing is checked for all second graders. All fifth graders have their vision checked. If a problem is discovered, the parents will be notified. Students may be screened for speech/language problems throughout the year.

### **Medication Policy**

All medication must be delivered to the School Nurse or other designated school employee by the student's parent, legal guardian or a previously designated adult. It is against School District Policy for a student to carry ANY medication on their person without physician permission, parent permission and school district permission to self-administer and self-monitor (SC Law S144). All medication will be maintained in the health room. Medication required for field trips must be given to and administered by an employee of Greenville County Schools designated by the principal. There are separate permission forms for medications on field trips.

### **Transportation**

The following guidelines are for the purpose of ensuring the safety of the students and facilitating the flow of traffic. Your cooperation is needed. We welcome your suggestions concerning safety. Please remember to send a note to the teacher if your child is to go home in a manner different from the customary way.

#### **Arrival**

Unless you are a bus rider, no students should be dropped off **prior to 7:15 AM**. There is no supervision before 7:15 AM except for bus students. Students who eat breakfast at school will go directly to the cafeteria upon arrival. All cars bringing students to school will enter the car parking lot on Betty Spencer or Windmont Drive. Students should enter at the front or back designated door. One front door will be the only entrance accessible throughout the day.

Students will be assigned rooms by grade level to report to prior to 7:30 AM. After 7:30 AM, students will report to their classrooms. All students who arrive after 7:45 AM will need a tardy slip from the main office in order to report to class. The side parking lot is designated for buses and students with special needs. During the school year, all buses from Washington Center and our buses may be parked in the middle parking lot. Students should never be dropped off in the bus parking lot or from the main streets surrounding the school.

#### **Dismissal**

Students are dismissed at 2:15 PM. All early dismissals must be completed before 1:45 PM. **There will be no early dismissals after 1:45 PM due to the quality of instructional time.** Students will report to assigned grade level rooms to watch for their name/number. When their group is dismissed, they will walk to their designated pick-up area.

#### **For Students in Kindergarten and First Grade**

Kindergarten students, first graders, and carpools that include them may pick up their entire car pool at the back parking lot at 2:15 PM. Students will go to the room of the youngest child in their family/carpool.

#### **For Students in 2nd-5th Grades**

Parents should enter the campus from Betty Spencer Drive and pick up their students at the covered walkway. For the safety of students, adults should remain in their cars. For the first few days of school dismissal takes a little longer than usual. However, as the year progresses the car pool becomes very efficient. Students will only be called if their car is in the car line and the person has a car tag.

Students are to be picked up by **2:45 PM**. After 2:45 PM, parents must park and come into the office to sign out their child. School personnel cannot supervise or be responsible for students who remain on the grounds after dismissal unless they are enrolled in the Extended Day Program.



### **Walkers**

Students must have parental permission to walk to and from school. Permission forms will be kept on file in the front office. Walkers will be accounted for using SAS as they exit the building. Students in Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade will have a tag that must match the card brought by a designated adult. If the tag is not presented, the child will not be dismissed to that person.

## **Special Services**

### **Lost and Found**

A lost-and-found area is maintained in the school cafeteria. To help minimize lost articles, please put your child's name on items of clothing such as jackets, sweaters, coats, scarves, hats, and gloves. Unclaimed articles will be donated to charity at the end of each nine weeks period. Remind your child to check the lost-and-found containers for missing items.

### **School Newsletter**

One way of communicating with parents is through the school newsletter, *Scout's World News*, which will be sent home. Included in the newsletter will be information about upcoming events at the school, students' stories and poems, and news about students and teachers in the school.

### **School Pictures and Yearbook**

Arrangements will be made for a photographer to take Fall and Spring Individual and Winter group pictures and make them available for purchase by the students. The schedule for having the photographs taken will be announced in the school newsletter. The school Yearbook must be purchased at the time of sales. Extra copies usually are not ordered. The Yearbooks are distributed near the end of the school year.

### **School Store**

The School Store is open each day from 7:15 - 7:40 AM. for the convenience of students. The store will have available items such as pencils, erasers, paper, folders, and composition books.

### **Student Helpers**

Fifth grade students assist the school staff as media center/morning show helpers, tutors, safety patrol, school store workers, and teacher helpers. They perform a very valuable service to the school.

# **Parent and Community Involvement**

## **Parent Teacher Association (PTA)**

Themes and Goals 2025-2026

**Goal:** To ensure all students at Sara Collins have a healthy, safe learning environment and master the academic skills at each grade level.

### **Objectives:**

1. To continue to monitor legislation and activities of School Board and other elected bodies to remain informed of actions pertaining to the care and education of our children
2. To continue to be a financial resource, as well as, provide volunteers to meet the needs of the staff.
3. To promote the welfare of our children by encouraging and providing opportunities for parent involvement in our children's education.
4. To strive to provide an environment where all children are encouraged and valued for their unique talents and abilities.

Sara Collins has an active Parent Teacher Association, which lends support to the total school program. Objectives of the National PTA are as follows:

1. To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community and place of worship.
2. To raise the standards of home life.
3. To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.
4. To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth.
5. To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as well as secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social and spiritual education.

The PTA renders a number of valuable services to the school and sponsors fund-raising projects during the year. You are encouraged to become actively involved in supporting the PTA activities.

Meetings of the PTA are typically held on a Monday of designated months in the school cafeteria. The meetings usually occur in the evening. Announcements about meetings will be sent home with the children prior to each meeting. Programs will be planned around topics of interest and concern to parents. Additional daytime meetings will be scheduled throughout the school year and will be planned around topics of interest and concern to parents. PTA membership dues are \$5.00 per person and \$20 per family if purchased prior to August 31. Rates may increase after that date, due to increases in National dues. Fathers, mothers, other family members, and friends are encouraged to join. Upon payment of the dues, a membership card can be printed from the MemberHub website. Money from membership dues is used to support worthwhile school projects.

**Volunteer with the PTA** Volunteering at Greenville County Schools (GCS) can be exciting and rewarding. To ensure student and staff safety, GCS has added security checks for volunteers. If you want to chaperone field trips or mentor students, please complete the volunteer application process. For more information, contact our school clerk at 355-3200 or visit the PTA website <http://www.saracollinspta.com>. Volunteers can help in many ways, including the areas listed below:

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

### **Communications Committee: Roles**

- **Facebook/Social Media Administrator:** Update the school's Facebook page with 4-5 posts per week (1-2 hours/week from home).
- **School Photographer(s):** Take and compile photos for school use (1 hour/week, varies, at school).
- **Yearbook Editor:** Produce the yearbook using Herff Jones software (2 hours/month, more in March).
- **Assistant Yearbook Editor:** Assist the Yearbook Editor (1 hour/month, more in March).
- **Yearbook Sales:** Handle yearbook orders and communication (3-4 hours in spring).
- **Scout's World News Editor:** Publish 4 issues of the school newsletter (4-5 hours/issue).
- **Website Coordinator:** Maintain and update the PTA website (1-2 hours/month).
- **Scout Mascot:** Wear the Scout outfit at school events (1-2 times/month).
- **Marquee:** Update the school marquee weekly (once a week).
- **Bulletin Board:** Update the PTA bulletin board monthly and the front/annex board quarterly (1-2 hours/month).
- **Event Flyer:** Create flyers for upcoming events (1 hour/month).

### **Fundraising Committee: Roles**

- **Freaky Friday Chairs (2):** Plan the main fundraiser starting in January, oversee event committees (3-5 hours/week January-August, heavy in September and October).
- **Apparel:** Design and sell school apparel (1-2 hours/week during summer and early school year).
- **School Store:** Manage the store with school staff (2-3 hours/month).
- **Book Fair:** Coordinate 2 book fairs/year with librarians (3-5 hours each).
- **Grants:** Research and apply for grants (2-4 hours/month).
- **Family Night Out:** Plan 2 family fun nights at restaurants (2 hours/event).
- **Scout's Rock:** Manage Sign Up Genius for events (1-2 hours at the start of the school year).
- **Grocery Partners:** Distribute flyers for box tops and partner programs (4-5 hours/year).
- **Pay It Forward:** Organize a community fundraiser (2-3 hours planning, 1 week of lunch collection).

### **Enrichment Committee: Roles**

- **Book Buddies (2):** Attend and structure Tuesday morning tutoring sessions (45 minutes/week).
- **Breakfast Buddies (2):** Plan 3 events/year, secure volunteers and speakers (3-4 hours/event).
- **Mentoring Program:** Promote and support the mentoring program (1 hour/week if paired with a student).
- **Lunch and Learns:** Plan 2 events/year with speakers (2 hours/event).
- **Bingo Night:** Organize and coordinate the Bingo Night event (4-5 hours total).

### School Events Committee: Roles

- **Red Ribbon Week:** Organize event with Guidance Counselor (3-5 hours).
- **Veteran's Day Lunch:** Plan and organize the lunch (9-11 hours total).
- **Love Luncheon:** Plan and organize Valentine's lunch for staff (9-11 hours total).
- **Dr. Seuss Day:** Organize event and coordinate volunteers (8-10 hours total).
- **Grandparents/Special Friends Lunch:** Organize and manage event (20-24 hours total).
- **Family Arts Night:** Assist Art Teacher in planning the event (2-3 hours).
- **Field Days (2):** Coordinate field day activities with PE Teachers (full days for each grade level).
- **Parent and Staff Party:** Plan and organize party (8-9 hours total).
- **Staff Appreciation Week:** Plan and coordinate week-long activities (22-28 hours total).

### Program Coordinator Committee: Roles

- **Grade Level Coordinators (6):** Communicate needs to Room Parents and plan a Meet and Greet (less than 1 hour/week).
- **Landscaping:** Coordinate landscaping needs and volunteers (varies as needed).
- **Battle of the Books:** Support 4th and 5th grade book club (2-3 hours).
- **Reflections:** Promote the Reflections contest (3-5 hours).
- **Grandparents and Special Friends Club:** Compile and communicate with volunteers (3-5 hours).
- **Singing Scouts (Chorus mom):** Support Music Teachers in coordinating the chorus (3-5 hours).
- **Lego Robotics:** Lead the Lego Robotics program with a faculty member (3-4 hours/week from September-December).

### How to Volunteer

If you're interested in any of these opportunities, please reach out to the PTA for more information and to sign up. Your support and involvement make a huge difference in enriching the school community!

### Greenville County Volunteer Requirements

**Level I - *This level requires the presence and supervision of a GCS employee at all times.***

Level I volunteers must have a National Sex Offender Registry check run every time they volunteer at the school (this is the current process each time you check into a school and/or district office). Level I volunteers may volunteer in classrooms, work in the Media Center, and participate in school activities on campus as long as staff members are present.

#### Level I application process:

- Complete the [Volunteer Application Form](#) found on the Sara Collins Elementary School website.
- The applicant prints the completed **Volunteer Application Form** and returns it in person to the main office of the school. Applicants must present a photo identification and the information will be entered into the system.
- Level I volunteers must sign in each time they volunteer. Photo identification must be presented each time for verification.

Level II – *This level allows interaction with students without a GCS employee present.*

Level II volunteers must have a National Sex Offender Registry check every time they volunteer at the school as well as an annual criminal background check. *Chaperones for field trips are required to be a Level II volunteer, regardless of the destination.*

**Level II application process:**

- Complete the [Volunteer Application Form](#) found on the Sara Collins Elementary School website.
- The applicant must also click on the link <https://gcsd-is.Quickapp.pro/> on the application and complete the required information for the background check.
- Applicants will be notified of the approval or denial. Schools are not provided details of the check other than approved or denied to assure confidentiality of the applicants. This process could take up to two weeks to complete.
- Level II volunteers must sign in each time they volunteer. Photo identification must be presented each time for verification.
- This process only needs to be repeated when your Level II Volunteer status expires. You will be notified 30 and 45 days prior to the expiration date.

Our primary responsibility is to safeguard our children and ensure we follow the identified guidelines. Thank you for your cooperation as we work with our stakeholders to complete this process. All volunteers will be required to remain in the presence of a GCS employee at all times until applications for Level II are approved.

**A Desirable School Volunteer:**

- is prompt, regular and dependable in attendance
- graciously accepts the tasks assigned
- recognizes that he/she is setting an example of behavior, speech and dress
- accepts differences in school practices and personnel **without criticism**; recognizes the role as a volunteer, not a professional
- observes **discretion** and **confidentiality** in commenting on school matters, including the performance of other volunteers, school personnel and children
- loves children, listens to them, encourages them, calls them by name
- is happy that he/she can express a sense of social responsibility and concern for education in an active way
- understands that the work they perform is in the best interest of all children in the school.
- **Smiles!**

**Get involved as a volunteer! There is a special place that is only for you!**

If you are interested in serving as a Sara Collins volunteer, contact the school office (355-3200) or call the PTA Volunteer Chairman.