

# Thornwell School for the Arts

## “Setting the Stage for Excellence”

### PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK 2009-2010

#### Welcome to Thornwell School for the Arts!

The administration, faculty and staff are prepared for a new and exciting school year! We have prepared this listing of guidelines to bring about a better understanding between the school and parents/students. We welcome your cooperation so that we may provide your child with a rewarding and enriching educational experience. On behalf of the faculty and staff, we extend an invitation for you to visit our school, attend your child’s programs, and become an active member in the PTO and volunteer programs. We are very happy to have you and your child with us at **Thornwell School for the Arts** where we are “**Setting the Stage for Excellence.**”

**Any celebrations, comments, suggestions, and/or feedback are welcome! We must work together to reach high levels of success for our students and our school. If you ever have a problem, please contact your child’s teacher first and if assistance is still needed, please contact Mrs Mahn. Our families are important to us!**

**WELCOME TO 2009-2010!  
Thornwell School for the Arts  
Setting the Stage for Excellence!**

#### MISSION

The mission of Thornwell School for the Arts is to support the overall growth of students in an atmosphere of academic and artistic excellence.

### SCHOOL CALENDAR

First day of school.....Aug. 17, 2009  
Winter Break...Dec. 21, 2009 - Jan. 1, 2010  
Spring Break...April 5-9, 2010  
Last day of school...May 27, 2010

### 2009-2010 DAILY SCHEDULES

6:50 -Bus riders enter building and sit beside classrooms  
7:25- Students eat breakfast in the classrooms  
7:40 –Bell for beginning of the school day  
7:40-2:25 -Student instructional hours  
2:00 –Shuttle bus rider dismissal  
2:25 -Car rider/walker/YMCA dismissal  
2:30 –Bus rider dismissal

### ATTENDANCE

Every day of school is important. We have been very proud of our attendance record in the past. Please make every effort to have your student with us during each of the 180 school days. Perfect attendance certificates are given for attendance at school for 180 days.

Elementary students must attend a minimum of four hours of the instructional day in order to be counted present for the day. Written excuses are required and the reason must meet the guidelines for lawful absences or the absence will be counted as unlawful.

It is the policy of the Darlington County public schools to require elementary students to attend school at least 170 days in order to be considered for promotion. Written documentation is required within five school days for students who are ill, have an illness, death in the immediate family, or due to recognition of religious holidays of their faith.

## BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAMS

School lunch and breakfast will be served beginning the first day of school. Student lunches will cost \$1.25 per day, and may be purchased by the day, week, or month. Breakfast is free for all and will be served in the classroom at 7:25 am. We are fortunate to participate in the "Universal Breakfast Program."

Applications for free and reduced meals are sent home in the summer and available in the cafeteria. If parents are interested they should return the application properly completed to the child's teacher or the school office. Parents will be notified if the application is approved or disapproved.

## BUS TRANSPORTATION

All students must be on good behavior at all times while riding a bus. Under the state law the bus driver is responsible for all students' behavior. The driver may, with the approval of the principal or superintendent of the schools, suspend a pupil or pupils from riding the bus for misconduct beyond reasonable control. **Riding a school bus is a privilege.**

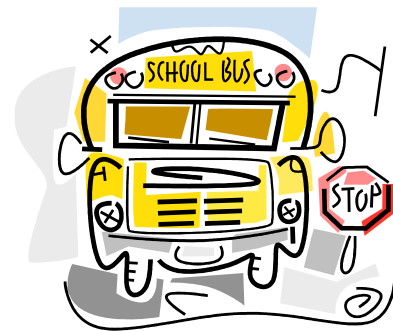
1. Students who ride school buses must have school or home as their destination. They shall not ride the bus to go downtown, to see relatives, or other such business. Students violating this regulation will be subject to suspension from riding the bus.
2. Students must not leave the school ground when waiting to board a bus or transfer to another bus without the permission of the principal of that school.

3. Soft-drink bottles or glass bottles of any kind shall not be carried or handled on the bus.
4. It is unlawful for the bus driver, student, or any other person to use any form of tobacco or alcoholic beverages on school buses.
5. No student may ride a bus that is not eligible to do so. Bus transportation is not provided for any students living within 1-1/2 miles of the school.

## BUS RULES

Drivers will assign students to seats. Prior to a referral to an administrator, the driver will have done one or more of the following: contacted parent, given the student a verbal or written reprimand or reassign the student to a specific seat.

1. Students must respect the rights of others and refrain from hitting, pushing, name-calling or harassing other students.
2. Students must follow directions of the driver.
3. Students must sit in their assigned seats while the bus is in motion.
4. Students must follow all bus safety rules and procedures.
5. Severe offenses will be dealt with in accordance with the Elementary Student Behavioral Guidelines



## CAFETERIA

- Students will enter the cafeteria in a quiet manner and sit in assigned areas.
- Students will not play with or throw food.
- Students will clean their area and put their tray away as they line up with their class.
- Students will observe 10 minutes of silent lunch in order to eat while the remaining time may be spent whispering to their neighbors.

## CARE OF TEXTBOOKS, LIBRARY BOOKS, ETC.

Students are responsible for all textbooks and library books issued to them during the school year. All lost or damaged books must be paid for before students may receive a report card at the end of the year.

Each textbook has 2 bar codes which are used to check books out to students. Any student who damages one bar code will be charged a fee of \$5.00. If both bar codes are removed or damaged, the assumption will be that the book does not belong to that student and the student will be charged the total replacement cost of the book. Please insure your child does not damage or remove the bar codes on the state owned textbooks.

## CLASSROOM MATERIALS

In order to learn, a certain amount of responsibility rests on the individual student. Students are expected to show up in class with the necessary tools for learning. These will sometimes vary from class to class but generally include the following:

1. Pencil
2. Paper
3. Textbooks
4. Homework assignments
5. Agenda books

Students are expected to show responsibility by bringing all the things needed to class.

## DISMISSAL

Bus students will be dismissed at 2:30 p.m. Car riders will be dismissed at 2:25 p.m. If your child is a car rider, please enter the large circle located off of West Carolina Avenue. Please pull all the way around the circle. Do not park in the circle and block traffic during afternoon pick-up. **No students will be picked up anywhere other than the designated area. NO child is to be dropped off or picked up at the front doors unless an adult is present. This is for the safety of the children.**

## DISCIPLINE

It is necessary that children learn to develop self-discipline in order to further their learning. We ask that you discuss with your child the importance of, and need for, good behavior and a good attitude while at school. We will not tolerate fighting, disrespect toward others, obscene language, or destruction of school property. Students who break rules continuously will be sent to the office and handled accordingly. If problems reoccur, parents will be called in to help resolve the problem. Behavioral problems may result in your child not attending or participating in school activities including: field trips, parties, field day, and any other functions the administration deems necessary. Please adhere to the Darlington County Behavioral Guidelines, which will be given to each student

## DRESS CODE

Thornwell School for the Arts follows the Dress Code of the Darlington County School District. A copy of this code was provided in registration materials, is available in the school office and also on the district's website. A few important items to remember:

1. The dress code applies while attending school, riding buses to and from school, and participating in school functions.
2. If a student violates the dress code, he/she will be sent home to change or a parent may bring a change of clothes to school.
3. Students who are removed from class to change clothes will be required to make-up any assignments they missed after school hours.
4. All shirts must be tucked in so that belts or waistbands are clearly visible at all times unless it is clear that contraband or a weapon cannot be concealed under the shirt.
5. Clothing must cover the waist, back and shoulders. No tank tops, tight shirts, low cut shirts, halter tops, or shirts with spaghetti straps are permitted.
6. Pants must be worn at the natural waist and not touch the floor.
7. No bandanas or "do rags" are allowed.
8. No short skirts or shorts are allowed. Shorts and skirts must be long enough to extend below the extended fingertips of the wearer or two inches above the knee. Any slits in the garment must open below the fingertips.

9. No undergarments should be exposed if a student bends over when wearing shorts or skirts.
10. Shoes must be tied. Students should limit wearing open toed shoes. Sneakers must be worn during PE or the student will not be permitted to participate and an alternate written activity will be provided.

## GENERAL SUGGESTIONS TO PARENTS

1. Please encourage your child to do his/her best in their schoolwork. Be involved with the education of your child.
2. Please do not phone your child during school hours unless there is an emergency.
3. Be aware of and enforce the district behavioral guidelines.
4. **Gum is not allowed at school, on the bus or at any school functions. Gum will result in an automatic discipline referral.**
5. Place names on all articles of outer clothing – coats, gloves, hats, sweaters, raincoats, etc.
6. Your child must have plenty of sleep each night for him/her to do well in their schoolwork.
7. Be supportive and involved.

## GUIDANCE

The guidance counselor is available to discuss such subjects as self-concept, friendship, feelings, study skills, and substance abuse. The counselor is available for individual and/or group counseling sessions with students or parents. Please contact the school for more information.

## GRADING POLICY/SCALE

Efforts are made to communicate the teacher's grading policy to the parent at the beginning of the school year. Please keep in mind that we are a primary/elementary school and allow for students several attempts to show mastery and achieve success.

"Achievement" refers to the student's academic progress. Letter grades are assigned in the four major subjects as follows:

**A=93-100    B=85-92    C=77-84**  
**D=70-76    F=0-69**

**Report cards will be issued on:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter ... Oct. 29, 2009
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter ... Jan. 21, 2010
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter ... March 25, 2010
- 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter ... May 27, 2010

### Hallways

- Students are expected to remain quiet in the hallways to avoid interfering with the learning taking place in other classrooms.
- Students are to walk on the right side of the hall, keeping hands and feet to themselves.
- Students will go to activities as a group, with their teachers walking them to class.
- All students must use a hall pass when walking individually.

## HEALTH INFORMATION

A nurse is assigned to the school 3 days per week. Students who become ill at school should report to the office. If the illness or injury is of such a nature that the student should go home, the parents will be notified.

**It is important that we have on file home, work, and emergency telephone numbers. Parents/guardians should notify the office in the event that any of these numbers change.**

**Parents should inform the school if his/her child has any special medical problems, such as epilepsy, allergies, diabetes, poor vision, hearing, or any conditions that may require special attention.**

## MEDICATION POLICY

Students needing medication while at school must have the following:

### Prescription Meds:

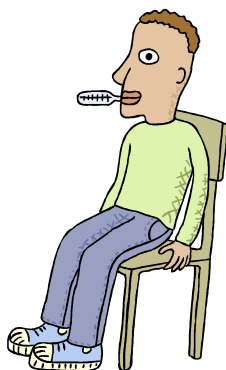
1. Must have written parental permission.
2. Must have a physician's authorization.
3. Must be in original container.

### Non-Prescription:

1. Must have written parental permission, including dosage, time to be given, child's name and teacher.
2. Must be in original container. NO medication will be accepted in baggies, tin foil or envelopes.
3. Students cannot carry any medications with them. All medications must be kept in the office during school hours.

## VIRUS POLICY

Students must be free of fever, vomiting or diarrhea 24 hours before returning to school.



### **HOMEWORK**

1. The primary purpose of homework is to provide reinforcement and practice for previously taught material.
2. Homework is required of all students in grades 1-5.
3. Homework may be assigned in any subject area. In general, all students should be able to finish the assignment within the times indicated below.
  - 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades – 30 minutes*
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> grade – 45 minutes*
  - 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades – 60 minutes*
4. Homework can be given for weekends on an infrequent basis.
5. Teachers are responsible for assigning homework and thoroughly explaining the assignment to students.
6. Parents are responsible for providing their child with a time and place to do the homework.
7. Homework will be checked and returned to students. The checking can be a self-check in class, teacher checking or other appropriate methods.

8. Homework can be included as part of the total grading process.
9. The penalty for not bringing in homework will be teacher consequence and/or parent contact.
10. It is suggested that parents set a special time for home study. There is not a substitute for good hard study at home. Parents are requested to monitor assignments in the agenda book and sign or initial daily. The agenda book is a great way to communicate with your child's teacher.

You may leave a message anytime of the day or night for a teacher by calling directly to the telephone that is located in the classroom.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

When severe weather creates hazardous conditions, the regular school schedule may be adjusted to ensure students' safety. The district will notify the local television and radio stations of any school closings or delays as soon as possible. Please monitor local news reports via television and radio stations for updated information.

### **LIFE SKILLS**

The life skills program at TSA incorporates Darlington County's thirty-seven Words of the Week and the Thornwell Give Me 5 List. The program is integrated into all aspects of the curriculum and is reinforced by the teachers and staff. Awareness of life skills is provided in the morning announcements, the school newsletter and daily in the classroom.

## LOST AND FOUND

Every effort will be made to help students find lost articles if it is reported immediately. Lost and found articles are collected and kept together for students to look through. Lost and found is located on a rack in the cafeteria.

## MEDIA CENTER

Please encourage your child to read, read, read. Books that are checked out in your child's name must be handled with care and returned to the school. If your child loses or damages a book, a fee will be charged. Your child may lose privileges until the fee is paid.

## PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Communication is an essential part of the educational program. We feel it is very important for parents to keep in close contact with their child's teacher concerning his/her progress. Please make every effort to attend the parent teacher conferences held in the fall and spring. It is our goal to have 100% parent involvement for these conferences. If other conferences are needed, please remember to schedule a conference in advance. **Conferences may only be scheduled at such times that they do not interrupt or interfere with a teacher's class.**

### Fall Conferences will be held on

- September 17<sup>th</sup> from 4-7
- September 18<sup>th</sup> from 9-12

### Spring Conferences will be held on

- February 11<sup>th</sup> from 4-7
- February 12<sup>th</sup> from 9-12

## PERSONAL ITEMS

The following items are not allowed at school; cd's/cd players, IPODS, toys, computers games, water pistols, cell phones, baseballs, bats, etc. If one of these items is brought to school, it will be taken and a parent will have to come to school and get the item.

## PTO

We encourage everyone to attend the PTO meetings. A light meal will be provided. **PTO Meetings will be held on the following dates:**

- **August 25, 2009**
- **November 17, 2009**
- **February 23, 2010**
- **May 4, 2010**

**August 25, 2009** – begins our World's Finest Chocolate fundraiser.

## RESTROOMS

- Students are expected to attend to bathroom needs without running, playing, or shouting.
- Students are expected to take care of all property at all times.
- Students are expected to wash hands.

## SAFETY DRILLS

Fire, tornado, evacuation and lockdown drills are necessary for the safety of the students, staff, and faculty. Everyone will be instructed on the specific directions for reaching a point of safety from any area within the building.

## SCHOOL PICTURES

During the fall, school pictures will be taken on **October 13, 2009**. Make-ups will be taken on **November 19 2009**. Students do not have to purchase school pictures. Spring and group pictures will be taken on **February 24, 2010**. The school receives a percentage from these pictures, and the money is used to purchase incentive rewards for academics, arts, athletics, attendance, and character education.

## SIGN OUT POLICY

We encourage you to schedule your child's appointments around school hours. If you must sign your child out early, please send a note notifying the teacher of the time you will be signing the student out so he/she is ready in the office. This cuts down on your wait time, but more importantly, classes are not disturbed by calls from the office. If you must sign him/her out early, you will have to come to the main office no later than 1:45 p.m., because the roads are closed for bus traffic only at 2:00. Please know that signing a child out early interferes with their learning, so if there is a pattern of signing-out, it will be addressed by the administration.

## STUDENT ASSEMBLIES

Student behavior should be courteous at all times. As image of the school is presented to all by the way students conduct themselves at school assemblies. Inattentiveness and talking will not be permitted during assemblies.

## SUPERVISION

**IMPORTANT:** Supervision of students will begin at **7:05 a.m.** For safety reasons, **car riders are not allowed to be dropped off until 7:05a.m.**

Supervision ends at **3:00 p.m.** Please make sure that car riders are picked up by **3:00.** You are welcome to make other arrangements with the Boys and Girls Club or the YMCA.

## TARDINESS

Students begin eating breakfast in the classroom at 7:25. Our first bell rings at 7:40 a.m. **Students are tardy if they are not in their rooms by 7:40 a.m. After 7:40 a.m., your child is tardy and an adult MUST sign-in your child in the office.** Please help us avoid needless delays by getting your child to school prior to 7:40 a.m. When tardiness becomes a problem for a student, you will be notified of the number of tardies. Your child will miss recess, not be able to attend field trips, activities, etc., if tardiness is a chronic problem.

## TELEPHONE

Since it is not practical for all students to call home when the weather is bad, instructions should be given in advance as to what procedure your child should follow. Students will be permitted to use the telephone for emergencies only or be called to the office for messages of a serious nature.

## **TIGER BUCKS**

The school incentive/reward program, Tiger Bucks, gives each student an opportunity to earn "bucks" to spend at a school store. Procedures are set in place regarding this program. Students who are not honest with their bucks will not be allowed to participate in the reward system for the remainder of the year. This includes taking bucks, forging bucks or stealing them. Any items that you would like to donate are greatly appreciated. We want this to be a great reward system and need everyone's help to make it so!

## **TRANSPORTATION CHANGE**

**WRITTEN NOTIFICATION IS REQUIRED TO CHANGE ANY TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS.** Telephone calls will not be accepted. If you wish your child to ride a bus, a Bus Pass must be completed and submitted to the office. If written notification is not received, your child will follow his/her regular method of transportation.

## **VISITORS**

Visitors to our school are always welcome. All visitors must stop by the office and pick up a visitor's pass before visiting any part of the school. If you wish to talk to a teacher, you will need to schedule a conference before or after school or during their planning time. Since we value every minute of the instructional day, authorized visitors are welcome to observe in the classrooms at any time, but no discussion or conferences with the teacher will be held.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

If you are interested in becoming a school volunteer, please call 857-3121 and speak with Ms. Raven Legette, Parent Liaison. Ms. Legette will put you to work. We need your help and support in order to be a successful school. Your interest and involvement is always appreciated.

## **WEB SITE**

Please visit our school's web-site by going to the Darlington County School District's main page and scrolling down to Thornwell School for the Arts under schools.