

# **Helena Elementary School 2020-2021 Handbook**



**The Information in this document is subject to change due to CDC, State, and/or district guidelines. Updated information will be communicated via our school website. You may also contact the office directly: (205) 682- 5540.**

# Welcome to Helena Elementary School!

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Helena Elementary School! We are proud to be known as a student-centered, warm and welcoming place for students to grow each day. Our motto, “Big Dreams, Bright Future,” embodies the vision of our school. We embrace the diverse group of students at our school and are dedicated to helping them achieve their dreams.

Our teachers have high expectations and provide quality instruction to students to help them meet their goals. They use best practices to promote hands-on learning and higher level thinking. Most importantly, our teachers sincerely care about our students and want to make a difference each day.

One strength of HES is the high level of parent involvement. Our PTO is crucial to the success of our school, from sponsoring school-wide events to volunteering during the school day. We seek to foster the parent-school partnership through communication and participation in school events and hope you will be a part of our team!

We are both new to HES and look forward to this new adventure! Ms. Anderson has over sixteen years of experience in public education and most recently served as assistant principal at Chelsea Park Elementary School. Prior to that, Ms. Anderson was principal in the Cleveland School District in Mississippi. Anderson earned a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and a master's degree in Educational Leadership from Delta State University. Ms. Dunham has over 15 years of experience in public education serving at Chelsea Park Elementary. She has a bachelor's degree in education from Belmont University and a master's degree in Educational Leadership from Samford University. She is a National Board Certified teacher currently working on renewal.

Please contact us if you have questions. We are excited for you to join the HES family!

**School Website:** <http://www.shelbyed.k12.al.us/schools/hes/index.htm>

**Facebook:** Like our page at “Helena Elementary News”

**Twitter:** @HelenaElem

**E-mail ListServe:** <https://eforms.shelbyed.k12.al.us/#/subscribe-parent-list>

Mary Anderson  
Principal  
m3anderson@shelbyed.org

Brooke Dunham  
Assistant Principal  
bdunham@shelbyed.org

# **Helena Elementary School**

## **Parent/Student Guide**

### **2020-2021**

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## **Vision Statement**

To be the model for excellence in early childhood education

## **Mission Statement**

To enable every child to be a lifelong learner and leader.

## **Beliefs**

- **Work Hard:** We believe in an engaging environment with opportunities for learning and leading.
- **Be Kind:** We believe that building relationships and trust is vital for mutual respect and understanding.
- **Dream Big:** We believe it is the collective responsibility of all stakeholders to set and monitor individual goals for future success.

## **Motto**

Helena Elementary School: Big Dreams, Bright Future

# 2020-2021 HES Faculty and Staff

<b>Kindergarten</b>	<b>Special Education</b>
Amanda Brown	Lindsey Dachelet
Andrea Burk	Allison Festavan
Emily Callaway	Shannon Glenn
Jessica Cummings	Mandie Gibbs
Jacie Davidson	Jennifer Johnson
Melanie Henderson	Carolyn Fort
Jamie Ruth Hitch	
Jan Hughey	<b>Special Area</b>
Lakin Kimble	Adam Short - Art
Kim McCown	Angela Johnson - Computer
Sabrina Nolen	Janie Blackstone - ELL
Sarah Poorian	Dutcha Lawson, Media Specialist
Patrick Riley	Shannon Norman - Music
Sarah Stainback	Amy Sullivan - PE
	Ashley Belew - PE
<b>First Grade</b>	Shelly Johnson - Counselor
Stephanie Allen	Shelly Mitchell - Counselor
Tiara Billups	
Christin Brown	<b>Instructional Support Staff</b>
Ann Esslinger	Cassey Abbott
Meghan Handley	Susan Curtis
Leah Jordan	Mina Morris
Dana Ling	Marion Ferguson
Lidija Nikolic	Anita Oliver
Toni Redding	Jennifer Owen
Jennifer Sellers	Branda Stovall
Olivia Serritelli	Dessie Tkacik
Jenni Shackelford	Tiffany Wehby
Julie Stephens	
Misty Stephens	
Kristin Underwood	
<b>Second Grade</b>	<b>Maintenance Staff</b>
Brandi Abernathy	Laura Brashear, Custodian
Betty Ansley	Garry Carlisle, Maintenance Technician
LeShaun Brown	Ray Lewis, Custodian
Pam Clay	Daniel Wooley, Custodian
Shelly Daley	
Brandy Henderson	
Clarenda Jackson	<b>Cafeteria Staff</b>
Tammie Moore	Cathy Brannon
Heather Posey	Amanda Contorno
Laura Sokol	Val Garner, Assistant Manager
Lindsay Talley	Jennifer Lamoureux, Manager
Lisa Winter	Christina Register
Wendy Woods	April Kuhlmann
<b>Administration &amp; Office Staff</b>	
Mary Anderson, Principal	Flo Dassau, Bookkeeper
Brooke Dunham, Assistant Principal	Clare Cipriano, Registrar
Patty King, Secretary	Christy Moore, Nurse

# PTO

The HES PTO is composed of parents, grandparents, and friends who support HES. Please contact Dana Langham, PTO president at [danabonavia@yahoo.com](mailto:danabonavia@yahoo.com) for more information on ways you can help. A PTO membership packet may be purchased for \$15.00 any time during the school year. The HES PTO meets monthly and all dates will be publicized in advance. We would love for you to join us in supporting HES!

## School Day Schedule

The school day is 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Because school begins promptly at 8:00 a.m., it is essential that all students report to school no later than 7:40 a.m. if they plan to eat breakfast. Instruction starts at 8:00 a.m. If students report to school after 7:55 a.m., parents **must** accompany them in the school before they can be admitted to class. Students who arrive after 11:30 a.m. or who check out prior to 11:30 a.m. will be counted absent.

6:30 a.m.	Early Morning Care (offered for a fee)
7:15 a.m.	Building opens Breakfast begins Students report to cafeteria or grade level areas
7:45 a.m.	Students report directly to classrooms; breakfast no longer served
7:50 a.m.	Breakfast ends
7:55 a.m.	Carpool lane closes-parents must escort students in at front entrance
8:00 a.m.	Tardy bell rings (Students must be in the classroom before this bell rings to avoid being tardy)
8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Classroom Instruction
1:00 p.m.	Changes in dismissal for students must be submitted (no phone calls or emails accepted)
3:00 p.m.	Dismissal begins (students will not be called for checkouts during dismissal)

# Attendance

Children must be in school every day that they are physically able in order to achieve academic success. The following are the Shelby County School System Attendance Policy Regulations:

- Students who are absent must bring a written explanation of the absence from the parent or guardian within **three** days of returning to school, regardless of the absence reason. Please include your child's first and last name, date, and teacher name on the excuse. **Emailed excuses will not be accepted.**
- Absences for reasons other than illness may be considered excused at the principal's discretion. A "Parent Request for Planned Absence" form will be available in the Shelby County Code of Conduct and must be submitted before the absence. This form is also located in the HES office, on the HES website, and at the end of this handbook.
- HES will comply with the Shelby County Attendance Policy Regulations by sending letters to students having multiple unexcused absences. A pattern of tardies or absences may result in a referral to Early Warning Court. If you have any questions about the SCBOE Attendance Policy after reading the SCBOE Code of Conduct, please contact Brooke Dunham or Clare Cipriano.

## Arrival Procedures

Students are not allowed to wait outside of the building if they arrive before 7:15 a.m. The school building does not open until 7:15 a.m. Please do not drop off students before this time. Please do not drop off any students in the front of the building prior to 7:55 a.m. unless you need to talk with someone in the office.

## Dismissal of Children

Parents desiring to check out students during the school day for doctor/dentist or other valid reasons are to come to the office and sign their child out of school. Parents are asked not to check students out of school after 2:30 p.m. Contact the principal if you have questions regarding the above request. Should a parent send another person to pick up his/her child(ren), written authorization from the parent is required, and those persons **must** be listed on the child's enrollment card.

Any changes in dismissal procedures for children must be in writing and must be submitted before 1:00 p.m. **Telephone calls and emails will NOT be accepted.** Please use the Change in Transportation Form available on the HES website or in the office or send a handwritten note into the office. Please be prepared to show photo identification when picking up a child from school.

# Parent Guidelines

- Due to COVID procedures set forth by the county, we will not be allowing any visitors in the building.
- Please pick up and drop off your child at the appropriate designated area.
- If your child is absent for two or more days, please notify the school prior to 9:00 a.m. to make arrangements for picking up make-up work. Remember to allow adequate time for the classroom teacher to gather the work. Make-up work will not be faxed but may be picked up between 3:00 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.
- If you have a problem or concern: first, discuss the issue with the teacher, and second, if necessary, schedule a conference with administration.

## Transportation

### Bus Overview:

- Students may only ride the bus to which they are assigned.
- Emergency situations should be directed to the principal/ assistant principal.
- Students should arrive 5-10 minutes before estimated pick-up time. Times may vary 5-10 minutes depending upon traffic and weather conditions. Parents need to be at the bus stop!
- During the first two weeks of school, the bus is establishing the route. Please be patient if the bus is not on time.
- Students should remain on the grass while waiting and approach the bus only after it has stopped.
- Students should wait for the bus on the side of the road on which they live unless accompanied by an adult.
- When the bus comes to complete stop, the driver will motion students to walk across the street.
- Students should stay at least ten feet in front of the bus in order for the bus driver to keep them in his/her line of vision.
- HES bus drivers follow discipline procedures listed in the Shelby County Code of Conduct. Please see the general bus behavior guidelines listed below.



## **Bus Behavior:**

- Sit at all times.
- Speak in a low voice.
- Food and drinks are not allowed.
- Only items that fit in a backpack are allowed.
- Keep the bus clean.
- Follow the driver's directions and rules.
- Keep hands and head inside the bus at all times.
- Treat others and others' property as if it were yours.
- No glass items.

## **Car Rider Overview:**

- We ask that all parents in carpool line refrain from using cell phones while in the car rider line. This is an obvious danger as attention is diverted from the many young children who are loading/unloading their cars. For the safety of our students, we ask the cooperation of all parents and drivers. Thank you for your patience and understanding.
- Students should enter and exit the car using the door closest to the school building.
- Parents, please remain in your cars. If you are having difficulty getting your child in/out of the car, please summon a teacher on duty for assistance.
- Students should be able to buckle/unbuckle themselves without adult assistance.

## **Morning Carpool:**

- Drop off is in the marked "Drop Off Zone" behind the school building, along the sidewalk near the gym. Please have your child exit the door closest to the school building.
- Car riders should be dropped off at the school between 7:15 a.m. and 7:55 a.m. If you arrive at 7:55 a.m. and there is not someone on duty outside/the gate is closed, please park in the front of the school and escort your child inside and sign them in at the office.
- Please drive slowly as you enter and exit the loading area in a single line.
- When unloading, please pull your vehicle up as far as possible so other vehicles may unload at the same time and put your car in park.
- Have your children's lunch, books, backpacks and other items ready before you enter the unloading area. Say your good-byes early and be ready to unload.
- Do not wait to unload until you are directly in front of the gym. You may unload anywhere in the "Drop Off Zone." This will keep the carpool line moving quickly and efficiently.

## **Afternoon Carpool:**

- Car line begins at the white gate behind the school building. Cars will form two lines leading from the street on the left side of the parking area near the school; the two lines continue through the bus parking lot across the street if necessary.
- When the gate is opened, drivers will pull up to the teacher on duty and place the car in park. Please make sure you have placed your Car Rider sign in your front windshield clearly.
- Students will be seated according to car rider number and a teacher will be on duty for each grade. Students will load in order and you may exit when your child has loaded. You may be asked to pull up if your child does not load in a timely manner.
- If you do not have a car rider sign posted in your front windshield, you will be asked to pull around to the front office. All car riders should be picked up prior to 3:15 p.m.

## **Walkers To/From School:**

- Parents will escort their students down the staircase by the gymnasium. The teacher on duty will signal when the child can cross the road to come in the school building.
- Students will dismiss with car rider students at first bell. Parents will use the car rider sign in order to pick up their students. Parents will wait at the main staircase next to the playground. Students will not be allowed to walk home by themselves.

## **After School Care Program**

ASCP operates from 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. each day. Please contact Cindy Warner at 682-7084 or the HES after school program after 2:30 p.m. at 682-5549 for more information. You must register for ASCP online at <http://www.ezchildtrack.com/scscomed/parent> or visit the Shelby County Schools Community Education program online at <http://shelbyed.k12.al.us/communityed.htm>

## **Breakfast, Lunch, and Snack Program**

HES has an outstanding breakfast and lunch program. Meals are of high quality and meet strict federal and state guidelines.

School lunches are \$2.25 per day for students. The cafeteria does not offer loans for lunch and breakfast. If paying by check, please issue a check made payable to HES/CNP for the meal account with your child's name/account number on the check. You may also set up an online payment account at <http://myschoolbucks.com>. Adult/visitor lunch prices are \$4.25.

Breakfast is \$1.50 per day and served from 7:15 a.m.–7:50 a.m. A child who desires to eat breakfast must arrive at the cafeteria before 7:45 a.m. Free/reduced lunch applications are available to all students. Parents are encouraged to participate in the free/reduced lunch and breakfast program by completing a lunch application and returning it to the school (this is a confidential program). Please apply [HERE!](#)

Your child's teacher has a daily snack time. We prefer that you send healthy snacks such as fruit, crackers, cheese, or raw vegetables. The HES cafeteria does not have snacks for sale.

# Students Withdrawing from School

Parents withdrawing students from HES should inform the school of the withdrawal and complete a Notice of Transfer Form from the office at least one day prior to withdrawal. This form contains important information that assists the new school in facilitating proper grade placement. Before withdrawing from school, students must return all textbooks and library books and pay any cafeteria balance.

## Emergency School Closing

When inclement weather occurs **before** regular school opening, county administrators will decide if the school will open on time, close, or have a delayed start, and announce the decision on area radio/television stations and will send a message via Listserv and Blackboard Connect. If inclement weather or other emergencies occur **during** the school day, county administrators will decide if schools will remain open for the remainder of the school day. If schools close early, area radio and television stations will air the decision. HES will send a message via ListServ and Blackboard Connect regarding school closing. Only those individuals listed on the enrollment cards will be allowed to pick up children. For this reason, it is very important to keep the emergency card updated with any changes in phone numbers, addresses, or designees. (The enrolling custodial parent must come to the school office to update this information.)

Ways in which you can help during an emergency:

- Please **do not** call the school. We must have the lines open for emergency calls.
- As soon as possible, come to the school to pick up your child and any other children for whom you are the emergency card designee.
- Leave the driveway in front of the school clear for emergency vehicles.
- If, at the direction of public officials (fire, police, etc) the students have been relocated to another site for safety, announcements will be made on local radio stations and TV stations.
- Please remind your child to follow the directions of school personnel.
- **Sign-up for HES ListServ Message Service [HERE](#).**

## Health Room Services/Medication Procedures

HES faculty and staff consider the health and safety of students to be a vital concern. The HES nurse coordinates the health program. Parents are encouraged to keep children at home if they are not feeling well. If they have a fever, they are to remain at home and must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications before returning to school. If a child becomes ill at school, a parent will be contacted to pick up his or her child. For this reason, it is extremely important that the school has the home and business telephone numbers of both parents and an emergency name and phone number in the event parents cannot be reached. Medications must be brought to school by a parent or responsible adult and signed into the health room with the appropriate school medication forms. Students are not allowed to self-carry medications without proper authorization by the physician with appropriate forms on file in the health room. Please refer to the Shelby County Code of Conduct for specific medication procedures.

# **Counseling Program**

HES provides elementary guidance services for all students. Our counselors, Mrs. Shelly Mitchell (K and 1<sup>st</sup>) and Mrs. Shelly Johnson (2<sup>nd</sup>), work with parents, teachers, school administrators and other professionals to provide students with needed resources and services. Please contact Mrs. Mitchell at (205) 682-5416 or Mrs. Johnson at (205) 682-5421 for more information.

## **Library/Media Services**

Students are scheduled for checkout/library lessons every other week. There are also “open” library times throughout the week when students are able to check out books as needed. All books are property of Helena Elementary School. They may be checked out for two weeks and renewed once. Kindergarten students may check out one book; first and second grade students may have up to two books at one time. If a library book is lost/damaged, the student must pay full price as determined by the Media Specialist. Replacement copies will not be accepted.

The Birthday Book Club is a way for you to honor your child and to grow our media center collection. Your child can donate \$15 to HES and he/she will be able to choose a book from the Birthday Book shelf to donate to the school. A bookplate will be placed inside the book with your child’s name and birthday and it will also be announced on the intercom.

## **Lost and Found**

Please label your child’s supplies, personal items, and clothing. The lost and found is located in the hall near the cafeteria. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity at the end of each grading period.

## **Insurance**

Insurance is available to cover children while at school and while traveling to and from school. 24-hour/year-round coverage is limited in its benefits, but does help defray medical expenses in case of an accident.

HES will provide insurance application forms but money for insurance is mailed directly to the insurance company by the parent. Please request forms in the school’s main office.

## **Shelby County Dress Code**

Students are required to be neat, clean, and fully clothed at all times at school. Students who have questionable or inappropriate dress will call their parents to bring appropriate clothing and will not be allowed to attend class until they change. Students must wear appropriate footwear for daily physical education. All students' shoes need to have backs on them. Please refer to the Shelby County Code of Conduct for a minimum guide to acceptable dress for students.

# School Safety

The faculty and staff of HES believe that every child should feel safe and secure during the school day. Children will be supervised during every aspect of their day, including the classroom, lunchroom, early arrival, dismissal, and in the halls. During the school day, all exterior doors are locked with the exception of the main entrance. Entry to the school is through a controlled access door. All visitors must present a photo ID and be on a child's visitor list. The Helena Police Department works closely with Shelby County Schools to ensure that a SRO (School Resource Officer) is on campus during the school day.

Our physical education staff is committed to helping each child develop to their full potential based on developmental levels. Safety is stressed at all times and equipment is well maintained.

HES developed a Crisis Plan to assist in dealing with emergency situations. We have standard operating procedures to address inclement weather, fire, intruders, and bomb threats as well as other emergencies that may occur. If a student is injured, the nurse and staff members who have Red Cross and CPR certification are available to assist until emergency personnel arrive. In the interest of school safety, play weapons of any sort (guns, swords, knives, etc.) are not allowed. Verbal/written threats of any sort are not allowed and will be referred to the office.

# Parent Communication

We partner with parents to meet the various needs of our students and value parent input. We will be meeting for conferences virtually this year due to state guidelines. If you would like to schedule any conferences, please contact your child's teacher directly. In addition, the school will send home a monthly newsletter and classroom teachers send home a weekly newsletter. Last, our school participates in a variety of social media outlets:

**School Facebook:** Like and follow "Helena Elementary News"

**School Website:** <http://shelbyed.k12.al.us/schools/hes>

**School Twitter:** @HelenaElem

# Discipline

When a student fails to follow school rules, the student may be referred to the office. Discipline procedures will include appropriate due process. Please refer to the Shelby County Code of Conduct for a minimum guide to appropriate discipline.

# Nuisance Items

Any item that disrupts the school program is not allowed. Nuisance items will be confiscated and turned in to the office. HES is not responsible for nuisance items (lost, stolen, or confiscated). A parent or guardian must pick up the item from the school office. Nuisance items may include electronic devices, trading cards, toys, etc.

# Celebrations

Classrooms will schedule Christmas, Valentine's Day, and End-of-the-Year celebrations. Student gifts (flowers, balloons, etc.) are not to be sent to the school. A special birthday snack may be sent to school for the entire class to eat in the cafeteria during their lunch time. You may leave the snack in the office before your child's lunch time. Please coordinate this with your child's teacher. Invitations to parties may only be sent to school when the entire class or either all the girls or all the boys are being invited.

# Check Policy

- All checks should be written on a commercially printed check with your name, address, and contact telephone number. No counter checks will be accepted.
- Separate checks should be sent for payment of different activities (i.e. field trips, fundraisers, meal accounts, etc.)
- A separate check should be sent for each student.
- Money should be brought to school in a sealed envelope with the **student's first and last name and teacher's name on the outside**.
- Please indicate the purpose of the money (meal account, field trips, etc.). Please include child's name and purpose on check in the blank labeled "For".
- Helena Elementary School is not allowed to cash checks.
- The Shelby County School system recognizes that occasionally a parent may inadvertently overdraw a checking account and a check may be returned by your bank. In order to recover these funds in a private and professional manner, the Shelby County School System has contracted with Nexcheck, LLC, for collection of returned checks. Any 33 check returned for insufficient funds will go directly to our collection agency. There will be a fee for collection in addition to the individual bank charges.

**\*Any procedures not covered in this plan are included in the Shelby County Code of Conduct and Attendance Handbook developed by the Shelby County Board of Education. The information in this handbook is not intended to conflict with Shelby County Board of Education's policies and procedures. Those policies supersede the information in this booklet.**

**The Information in this document is subject to change due to CDC, State, and/ or district guidelines. Updated information will be communicated via our school website. You may also contact the office directly: (205) 682- 5540.**

# Parent Request Form for Excused Absence

Date(s) of planned absence: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of school days to be missed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of student(s)	School	Grade	Absences to Date
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

If you have other children at other Helena schools also included in this request, please list them below.

Name of student(s)	School	Grade	Absences to Date
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Briefly explain the purpose/reason for this request:

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**Note:** This request should be submitted to the school's administrator. Submitting the request does not automatically mean that the absence will be excused. The registrar will notify parents whether the request has been approved or denied.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## For School Office Use Only:

Decision regarding this parent request:

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Denied \_\_\_\_\_ (but allowed to make up assignments)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Administrator Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date