



**SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
Mr. Adrian H. Cline**

DESOTO DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

**Mr. Ronnie Allen
Mrs. Karen Chancey
Mr. Rodney Hollingsworth
Mrs. Debby Snyder
Mr. Bill Stanko**

SCHOOL BOARD ATTORNEY

Mr. Bucky Waldron

**De Soto District Schools
An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer
530 LaSolona Ave.
Arcadia, FL 34266
(863) 494-4222**

PARENT SIGNATURE PAGE

The purpose of this handbook is to explain the policies, procedures and rules of:

Memorial Elementary School

Information contained in this handbook will be shared with students throughout the school year.

After reading this handbook, please fill in the information below, cut and return to the school with your child.



Students Name: _____

Parent Acknowledgement of Receipt _____
(Parent Signature)

Date: _____

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF DESOTO COUNTY

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the School District of De Soto County is to prepare all children to be successful citizens and workers in the twenty-first century. This will include educating them to read with comprehension, write clearly, compute accurately, think, reason, and use information to solve problems.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Students, the quality of work provided to students, and the needs of students will be central concerns in all decisions made in the School District of De Soto County.
2. Fairness, honesty, responsiveness, and openness are core values in the School District of De Soto County.
3. Decisions should be made as close to the point of implementation as possible.
4. The schools belong to the community and the community's opinions and partnerships are essential to effectively meet the needs of students.

GOALS

1. To create a challenging, supportive education environment that results in higher levels of achievement for all students;
2. To provide leadership to agencies that serve youth and families to ensure that families have the necessary support to actively work to help achieve academic success for their children;
3. To help all employees become educational leaders responsible for providing quality leadership at all levels and to all publics, internal and external, to achieve quality instruction for students;
4. To hold everyone in the school district accountable for contributing to the ultimate educational goal- student achievement;
5. To create an organizational culture that treats its people as its most valuable resource, invests in their growth and development, and encourages risk taking consistent with the School District of Desoto County's mission and beliefs;
6. To create within the total community a sense of ownership of the schools and a belief that a quality public school system is an investment in the continued growth and prosperity of De Soto County.

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MEMORIAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**Debbie Hall, Principal
Phyllis Clemons, Assistant Principal**

**851 East Hickory Street
Arcadia, Florida 34266**

(863) 494-2736

MES WEBSITE ADDRESS- www.desoto.k12.fl.us

School Colors-----Green and White

School Mascot-----The Ram

School Motto-----Right Attitude Means Success!

Student Hours-----7:45-2:10

Teacher Hours-----7:30-3:00

Office Hours-----7:00-4:30

IMPORTANT STUDENT DATES

Students first day

August 24, 2009

Students last day

June 10, 2010 (Early Release)

STUDENT HOLIDAYS – NO SCHOOL

Labor Day/Holiday

September 7

Records Day/No students

October 30

Thanksgiving/Holiday

November 23-27

Winter Break

December 21 – January 4

Professional Development/No students

January 4

Martin Luther/Holiday

January 18

Records Day

January 25

President’s Day/Holiday

February 15

Records Day

April 1

Good Friday/Holiday

April 2

Spring Break

April 12-16

Memorial Day

May 31

MEMORIAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS



1. RESPECT YOURSELF, RESPECT OTHERS
2. KEEP HANDS AND FEET TO YOURSELF
3. WALK
4. USE A QUIET VOICE
5. KEEP TOYS, GAMES, AND ELECTRONICS AT HOME*
6. OBEY SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM RULES

***EXCEPTIONS MAY BE MADE WITH TEACHER APPROVAL FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS.**

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to be in school every day. Excessive absences will have a negative impact on learning.

Timeliness is equally important. Students arriving late disrupt the regular routine of the class. School begins at 7:45. A student is tardy at 7:46.

Being on time is beneficial to the individual child as well as to the entire class.
Perfect attendance is defined as being in attendance everyday, all day.

When situations arise that prevent a child from attending school or keep a child from getting to school on time:

1. Call the school (494-2736) to report that the child will be absent or tardy;
2. Provide the reason why the absence or the tardiness is necessary.

In addition to a phone call, provide a written excuse for the absence or the tardiness at the time the child enters school.

Generally, absences are excused for personal illness or a death in the family. Tardiness is generally excused for early morning doctor appointments. Absences and tardiness are generally un-excused for things like shopping trips, vacations during school days**, or alarm clock malfunctions. Attendance problems may result in the revocation of approved out of district transfers.

Excessive absences and tardiness shall be brought to the attention of the Attendance Committee. Parents will be invited to attend a meeting to review the child's attendance record and plans will be made to improve the attendance or timeliness.

Parents shall be referred to the judicial system if excessive absences continue without just cause. Students may be retained for excessive absences if those absences are accompanied with poor academic progress. (PLEASE SEE DETAILED ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND LAWS IN THE DISTRICT SECTION OF THIS BOOK.)

** (Pre-arranged absences may be approved ahead of time by contacting the school).

CHECK OUT PROCEDURES

Children will be checked out only to their parents or to other adults approved by the parents and only if the other adults appear on the emergency card.

Parents and other approved adults may expect to be asked to produce picture identification before a child will be released.

If custody issues arise, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to contact the school and present appropriate court documents prohibiting the other parent from checking the child out. Without appropriate court documents on file, school personnel have no legal ability to prohibit the non-custodial parent from checking the child out.

VISITORS ON CAMPUS

ALL VISITORS, INCLUDING PARENTS, MUST report to the administrative offices, sign-in, and get a visitors pass. Your driver's license is needed for placement into the MES Raptor System in order to receive a visitor's pass to be on campus. Persons on campus and not having a visitor pass will be directed to the office. The office will be notified of any person on campus without a visitor pass.

DRESS CODE

All students are expected to wear neat, acceptable and clean clothing which include pants, shirts, dresses, skirts, blouses, shorts and shoes.

The following types of clothing and accessories are prohibited:

- (1) No short shorts or pants that do not cover underwear.
- (2) Belts must be worn with shorts or pants when expected.
- (3) No see-through blouses without undergarments.
- (4) No undershirts, long shirts down to the mid-thighs or knees.
- (5) No clothing that does not cover the torso and/or shoulders.
- (6) No low-neck dresses, halters, backless or midriff.
- (7) No Caps, hats, visors, do-rags or any other head covering worn inside the building.
- (8) No clothing with profane writings, insignias, sexual implications, or advertising any form of drug, alcohol or tobacco product.
- (9) No gang or Gothic related clothing.
- (10) No jewelry worn in pierced body parts shall be limited to the ear.
- (11) No sunglasses are to be worn inside the building.
- (12) No flip-flops or house-slippers.
- (13) No tennis shoes with wheels (wheelies).

All students are expected to dress appropriately for school; undergarments, shirt/blouse, pants/shorts/skirt, or dress, belt and shoes. In the event a student fails to follow this dress code, the parent will be called to bring the student a change of clothing or the student will be sent home to change. Proper school attire is the responsibility of the parent.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO JUDGE ANY FORM OF DRESS THAT MAY BE INAPPROPRIATE, DISRUPTIVE, OR UNSAFE FOR THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT.

ELECTRONIC GAMES AND TRADING CARDS

Electronic games and trading cards i.e. (Pokemon, Ugeo) are prohibited on campus. Anyone caught with these will have them confiscated. Parent must come to the office to pick these up if they wish to have them returned.

BACKPACKS

Backpacks that can be carried are permitted. For safety reasons, the use of rolling backpacks is not permitted. According to the Academy of Pediatrics, backpacks should not exceed 15% of the child's weight, back straps should be wide and padded, and both straps should be used to distribute the weight evenly.

SUPERVISION AT SCHOOL

ARRIVAL:

1. Students are not to be at school before 7:15 a.m. This is a Florida law. The ONLY exception is students arriving by bus.
2. Support staff is assigned at all entry areas as of 7:15 a.m.
3. The school is not responsible for the supervision of non-bus riders before 7:15 a.m.
4. Students arriving after 7:45 a.m. are tardy and must get a late pass before entering the classroom. Late passes are available in the Attendance Office, located in the Main Office.
5. The Drop-off/Pick-up areas are located at Mills and Cypress for all students.
6. THE ADMINISTRATIVE /VISITOR PARKING AREA IS NOT A DROP OFF AREA.

DEPARTURE:

1. Students are to leave the school grounds AT DISMISSAL, unless they are participating in an approved after school activity.
2. ALL STUDENTS must be off campus by 2:45 according to Florida Statute, unless in an approved after school activity.
3. Bus students are to go directly to their bus lines. Students who miss the bus will be required to contact their parent/guardian for transportation home.
4. Students will not be permitted to ride different buses unless:
 - a. the parent writes a permission slip, or calls the office, and
 - b. the request is approved by the school office.
5. DO NOT DROP STUDENTS OFF OUTSIDE THE BUS LOOP ON LUTHER OR CYPRESS AT EITHER ENTRANCE. THIS A SAFETY HAZARD FOR YOUR CHILD.
6. Pick-up areas are as follows:
 - a. Bus Riders- go to the bus ramp located on Luther.
 - b. Bicycle riders- go to the bike racks located on Luther. They will be dismissed from that location.
 - c. Walkers- go to designated area on Luther. They will be dismissed from that location.
 - d. Parents who pick their children up from school will meet them at the same location where they dropped them off in the morning.
 - e. NO CARS OR STUDENTS ARE PERMITTED IN THE BUS LOOP.
 - f. THE ADMINISTRATIVE/VISITOR AND STAFF PARKING LOTS ARE NOT STUDENT PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF AREAS.

THEFT

Memorial Elementary does not assume responsibility for money and other valuables brought to school by students. However, school personnel will do whatever possible to recover lost/stolen items. Each student is responsible for school items checked out to them such as textbooks and library books.

1. NEVER allow students to bring large amounts of money or valuable objects to school.
2. Make sure you take purses and valuables with you at all times.
3. Lock bicycles in the bike rack.
4. Any money/items of value should be left with the teacher or in the office.

STUDENT WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

1. Parents should come to the office in person to withdraw the child.
2. All textbooks, library, and school-owned materials are to be returned to the school.
3. All moneys owed for lunches, lost/damaged books, or other unpaid fees are to be paid.
4. Records will be forwarded to all educational institutions upon request from the receiving school.

MEDICATIONS

Students cannot bring medication to school in any form. If medication is required, the parent must come to school with a physician's order and sign a medication release form for dispensing medication. The parent is also required to bring the medication to school in its original container. Medications referred to in this policy include prescription drugs and over the counter medications.

DISCIPLINE

Maintaining positive discipline at school is extremely important if children are to have an orderly, structured learning environment. Students are at Memorial to learn. Your cooperation and support are expected to make Memorial a quality learning school. Rules and consequences are posted in each classroom. Details of administrative consequences may be found in the De Soto District Code of Conduct section in this book. Short discipline forms and long discipline forms that are sent home are expected to be signed and returned the next day. Days missed due to out of school suspensions are unexcused absences and work missed may not be made up.

MEDIA CENTER

The Media Center is available to all students, individually and with a class. Students who lose or damage library books are expected to pay for them to be replaced. Access to computers is also available. Access to the Internet is available only with parental consent. Firewalls are set up in all De Soto District Schools to assure access to appropriate educational sites.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

A planned physical education program is provided for all pupils. A pupil may be excused from activities up to three days by written request from the parent **FOR MEDICAL REASONS ONLY**. Extended periods of non-participation require a doctor's statement.

The use of appropriate shoes for Physical Education is expected. Although tennis shoes are recommended, various styles of shoes with rubber soles are acceptable. The only shoes that are not acceptable include sandals, slippers, and cowboy boots for obvious safety reasons.

Slacks or shorts must be worn under dresses or skirts (if worn) on Physical Education days.

SCHOOL INSURANCE

School insurance is not required, however, it is recommended. Two types of insurance are available. One covers the student during school hours. The other covers the student 24 hours a day. Both of these coverage's are for one year. Information is sent home with each student on the first day of school.

FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

Memorial Elementary participates in the federal government's free and reduced price lunch program. Parents may apply for assistance by filling out an application available through the school front office.

BREAKFAST****

Full Price Breakfast (student)	\$ 1.00
Reduced Price Breakfast (student)	\$.30
Adult Price Breakfast	\$ 1.55

**** The breakfast lines close at 7:30 a.m. Only bus riders arriving late on a BUS will be accommodated after 7:30 a.m.

LUNCH

Full Price Lunch (student)	\$ 2.00
Reduced Price Lunch (student)	\$.40
Adult Price Lunch	\$ 3.25
Adult Salads	\$ 2.50
Extra Milk	\$.35

Memorial Elementary encourages prepaying for lunches the entire week when possible. Prepaying helps speed up the serving line by avoiding the need to handle money at the cash register, thus giving our children more time to eat their lunches.

Parents and/or other authorized adults may eat with their child at lunch by reporting to the school office and receiving a pass. Only two additional students may eat with each parent. Students will only be released to eat lunch on campus with the parents or other authorized adults as designated by their parents at their assigned lunch period. Lunch periods are scheduled for 30 minutes.

STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTING

REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS:

Students will no longer be issued 4 ½ week progress reports. Instead, progress will be reported weekly through an electronic program called Phone-master.

To access the student progress by phone (PHONE-MASTER)

1. Dial 494-1933, extension 8000.
2. Enter the Student's 6 digit local student ID. This is the same number used for lunch cards. The number may be obtained through the office in person only.
3. Enter the pin number, which is the student's date of birth, in the form of: mm/dd/yy (for example, the date of birth is January 7, 1994; the pin would be 01/07/94).

To access student progress by the Internet:

1. Go the <http://www.desotoschools.com/piv>.
2. Follow the instructions from there.
3. Have available the students 6 digit local student ID.
4. The pin number with the date of birth in the form of mm/dd/yy.

If parents notice progress slipping or adequate progress not being made, a conference with the teacher should be scheduled.

REPORT CARDS: Report Cards – At the end of each nine week grading period, report cards are distributed and a hand carried home by each student:

DISTRIBUTION DATES FOR REPORT CARDS ARE:

November 4
January 28
April 7
June 10

GRADING SYSTEM

Grades K – 5

A	90 - 100%	Excellent
B	80 - 89%	Above Average
C	70 - 79%	Average
D	60 - 69%	Below Average
F	0 - 59%	Failing

COMMENT CODES

- 1 – Follows school/class rules
- 2 – Has difficulty following school/class rules
- 3 – Has difficulty completing assignments on time
- 4 – Missing/late assignments
- 5 – Missing/late homework
- 6 – Respects others and their property
- 7 – Works neatly and accurately
- 8 – Student is a pleasure to work with
- 9 – Parent/teacher conference requested

*If a student receives multiple short forms (more than one) this may result in a negative comment on their report card.

QUARTERLY AWARDS

KINDERGARTEN:

*Principal's Award: All E's Math, Reading and Writing. Comments 2, 3, 4, 5, or a long form will DISQUALIFY a student from receiving the Principal's Award.

*Honor Roll Award: (K) No letter grade below an S in Math, Reading or Writing. Comments 2, 3, 4, 5, or a long form will DISQUALIFY a student from receiving the Honor Roll Award.

Academic Achievement: (Grades Kg,) At least 3 E's in the four core subject areas of ; reading, English, math, and spelling, and no grade below an S in all evaluated areas on the report card.

GRADES 1-5:

*Superintendents Award: (Grades 1,2,3,4, & 5) All A's and all E's in all evaluated areas on the report card. Comments 2, 3, 4, 5, or a long form will DISQUALIFY a student from receiving the Superintendent's Award.

*Honor Roll: (Grades 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5) No grade lower than a B and an S in all evaluated areas on the report card. Comments 2, 3, 4, 5, or a long form will DISQUALIFY a student from receiving the Honor Roll Award.

*Extra Effort: (Grades K-5) Demonstrated improvement in any area of academics, behavior, or citizenship.

*Perfect Attendance: (Grades K-5) No absences, no tardiness, no early check-outs before dismissal.

*Citizenship: (Grades K-5) For the children who exhibit exemplary behavior, helps others, and demonstrates positive character.

END OF YEAR AWARDS

- * Superintendent List Ribbon – 4 Superintendent List Quarterly Awards.
- * Honor Roll Ribbon – 4 Honor Roll Quarterly Awards, or any combination of quarterly Honor Roll and Superintendent List Awards.
- * Academic Achievement Ribbon – 4 Academic Achievement quarterly awards.
- * Perfect Attendance Ribbon - 4 perfect attendance quarterly awards.
- * Citizenship Certificate and Pin – A maximum of 1 boy and 1 girl per class may receive these awards for outstanding examples of citizenship.
- * American Legion Award – A total of four fifth grade students are recognized by the local American Legion Post of Arcadia.
- * Sunshine State Readers Medals – (Grades 3, 4, & 5) these go to students participating in the program all year. Details are available through the school's media center.

FIELD TRIPS

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Students must have permission slips signed and returned and fees paid prior to leaving for a field trip.

Field trips are tied to behavior. To assure safety, teachers must be confident a child will conform to rules. Students may be held back from field trips if inappropriate behavior is routinely demonstrated on campus or if they do not meet behavioral requirements identified by the teacher prior to the trip. In such cases, parents will be notified in advance and will be invited to attend the trip with the child. If the parent cannot attend, the child will stay on campus and be assigned to a different class for the day.

Any parent wanting to participate as a chaperone or volunteering in the classroom MUST HAVE A VOLUNTEER APPLICATION ON FILE IN THE FRONT OFFICE AND BE FINGERPRINTED.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents and other adults accompanying their student on a field trip are responsible for the payment of fees and for their own transportation unless other arrangements have been made by the teacher. All adults accompanying students on field trips must have a volunteer application on file with the school.

Adults providing their own transportation by private vehicle may only transport their own child.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Parents are responsible for their children having adequate supplies.
2. The entire school population is screened weekly for lice. ANY student found with lice or nits will be sent home and cannot return to school until they have been cleared by the school nurse, or the Board of Health. Students may NOT ride the school bus during this time. Absences due to head lice are excused.
3. "Lost and Found" items will be kept in the office area. Please check your child's clothing and personal items regularly. Clothing left at the end of each semester will be recycled, either through the school or community service organization.

PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

RAMS: is a parent organization primarily involved in fund-raising and providing equipment for students. They also participate in providing assemblies, activities, reward systems, classroom parent support, and parent programs to name a few.

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL: is a school-related organization established by the state to provide support and information to the school staff and administration. Though the School Advisory Council (SAC) does have some funds, their function is primarily to look at the academics and directions of the school and to provide the parent support and involvement necessary to accomplish the desired goals of the school.

Both organizations elect officers annually and are in continual need for parent involvement and support. ALL parents at Memorial are strongly encouraged to participate in both of these organizations.

TEACHER QUALIFICATION NOTIFICATION

Parents or guardians have the right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's teachers. As stated by the Department of Education, the following information can be obtained:

- (1) Whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- (2) Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
- (3) The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of certification or degree.
- (4) Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals.

PARENT ACCESS TO RECORDS

Parents have rights to access school records of their children in accordance with Florida State Law which clarifies that “the rights of access to records and information and education providers, apply to either parent IN THE ABSENCE OF A COURT ORDER SPECIFICALLY REVOKING THESE RIGHTS.”

GUIDANCE

M.E.S. has guidance counselors on staff. The purpose of the guidance program is to help meet the academic, social and emotional needs of the children and, to the greatest extent possible, the family. Guidance services may be accessed by contacting the M.E.S. office at 494-2736.

MEMORIAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FIFTH GRADE GRADUATION POLICY

Fifth grade students who meet the requirements of promotion shall receive a certificate of graduation and participate in approved graduation ceremonies.

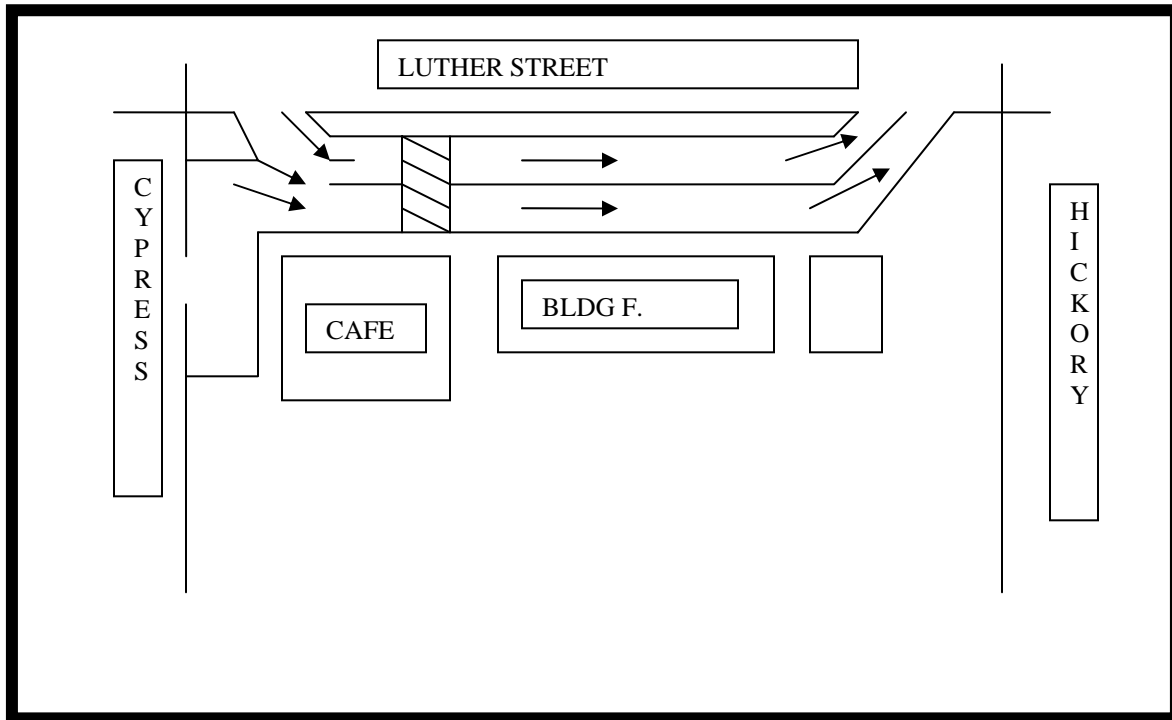
Fifth grade students who do not meet the requirements of promotion, but are recommended for placement to the next grade level with good cause shall receive a certificate of attendance and participate in approved graduation ceremonies.

Fifth grade students who do not meet the requirements of promotion and are retained in the fifth grade do not receive certificates and do not participate in approved graduation ceremonies.

A fifth grade student who qualifies for a certificate of graduation or a certificate of attendance may be withheld from participation in approved graduation ceremonies for behavioral reasons. If a teacher recommends a student not participate in graduation ceremonies due to behavioral reasons, the teacher must notify the parent and a conference must be documented outlining the reasons the student is being withheld from participation. The principal or the principal's designee shall mediate disputes.

On the day of graduation only the principal may withhold an eligible student from graduation ceremonies.

BUS LOOP AREA MAP



PARENT PICK-UP/DROP-OFF AREAS 2009 – 2010

SAFETY FIRST!

SPEED LIMIT: 5 MPH

Locations: Mills and Cypress

All students will use these pick-up/drop-off areas.

Traffic flow through the pick-up areas are one way heading West onto Mills and North onto Cypress. There is no parking or standing in the pick-up/drop-off lanes.

Cars form two lines off of Cypress. A school official control person will be at the gate to direct cars to the appropriate lane.

Cars proceed to the striped area where they will be stopped. A school official control person will be at the striped area to direct cars.

The school official control person will direct drivers to move forward into the loading/unloading zone just on the other side of the striped area where adults will escort children either from the car or to the car.

Exiting vehicles may go in one of two directions when exiting onto Mills or onto Cypress.