

2022-2023
 Thomas L. Sims Middle School
 5500 Education Drive Pace, Florida 32571
 850-995-3676

Name: _____ Address: _____ Grade: _____

Class Schedule			
Periods	Subject	Teacher	Room #
Period 1 7:25-8:21			
Period 2 8:26-9:18			
Period 3 9:23-10:15			
Period 4 6 th – 10:53-11:45 7 th /8 th - 10:19-11:11			
Period 5 6 th /7 th - 11:49-12:41 8 th – 11:15-12:07			
Period 6 12-46-1:39			
Important Numbers			
Lunch Code			
PE or Band Locker	Number:	Combination:	
Acceptable Use Policy Approval	To be stamped		

Thomas L. Sims Middle School

Welcome Patriot Family

We at Sims Middle School believe that as educators, we should inspire and motivate students to learn and take an active role in their own learning. We are committed to developing programs that will meet the needs and interests of the student body and to provide quality instruction. We know that in today's world students need to be prepared to collaborate, communicate, think critically and be creative to solve problems. We believe that effective classroom management is an essential part of creating a positive instructional environment but must be tempered with compassion and understanding. We recognize that the middle school student is in a transitional stage and should be given guidance and encouragement to help develop a positive self-concept.

This student handbook is to be used as a guide to school policies and procedures in conjunction with the Santa Rosa County Code of Student Conduct. Every situation or circumstance which may occur may not be specifically addressed. However, should an event occur that is considered by the administration or faculty to be disruptive to the learning environment, disciplinary action may be taken. It is possible that rules may be added and/or adjusted as needed during the school year. Students will be informed of any additional rules and/or changes.

We hope both parents and students will read this handbook carefully in order to become well informed and aware of school rules and procedures and to prevent misunderstandings or infractions of rules. We encourage parents to contact the school should they have questions or feel an issue should be addressed. We encourage students to share their concerns with staff members. We welcome each student to Sims Middle School and hope you have a positive, productive year.

TRACKING STUDENT PROGRESS

This section is designed for students to track their progress throughout the year based on course grades and standardized tests.

School Course Grades											
Students should enter course grade scores at each quarter mid-term and quarter-end.											
Period	Subjects	Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4		Final Course Grade	
		Mid-Term	Final	Mid-Term	Final	Mid-Term	Final	Mid-Term	Final		
1											
2											
3											
4											
5											
6											

Assessment Scores from Prior Year						
With the assistance of your Reading and Math teacher, enter your FSA scores from the prior year.						
FSA Reading	DSS & Level	Key Ideas & Details	Craft & Structure	Integration of Knowledge & Ideas	Language & Editing	Text-Based Writing
Student Scores						
FSA Math Please note that the sub-skill areas are different for each grade level, therefore each student will need to enter math scores on the line of his/her grade level.		Ratios, Proportional Relationships	Expressions & Equations	Geometry	Statistics & Probability	The Number System
6th Grade Scores	DSS/Level					
		Ratios, Proportional Relationships	Expressions & Equations	Geometry	Statistics & Probability	The Number System
7th Grade Scores	DSS/Level					
		Ratios, Proportional Relationships	Expressions & Equations	Geometry	Statistics & Probability	The Number System
8th Grade Scores	DSS/Level					
Diagnostic Science			Nature of Science	Earth & Space Science	Physical Science	Life Science
Student Scores	DSS/Level					

Diagnostic Assessment Scores

With the assistance of your Reading, Math and Science teacher, enter your PM scores after each testing period.						
ELA	Level			Areas of Focus After A	Areas of Focus After B	Areas of Focus After C
	Test A	Test B	Test C			
Student Scores						
Math	Level			Areas of Focus After A	Areas of Focus After B	Areas of Focus After C
	Test A	Test B	Test C			
Student Scores						
Civics				Areas of Focus After A	Areas of Focus After B	Areas of Focus After C
Student Scores	Test A	Test B	Test C			
Algebra I / Geometry				Areas of Focus After A	Areas of Focus After B	Areas of Focus After C
Student Scores	Test A	Test B	Test C			
Science				Areas of Focus After A	Areas of Focus After B	Areas of Focus After C
Levels						

2022-2023 Sims Middle School Student Handbook

The following information is provided in addition to the Santa Rosa County Code of Student Conduct. These are the rules and procedures for Sims Middle School.

ACCIDENTS

In case of accidents, the principal will have the authority to take necessary measures. The parents will be notified in case of an emergency. Prior to visiting the clinic, students must report to their assigned teacher when an accident occurs. Students should report accidents to the teacher or staff member in charge immediately.

ALCOHOL/DRUGS/TOBACCO

Alcohol, drugs or tobacco products will not be permitted on school grounds. The possession and/or use of tobacco products (or products purported to be alcohol, drugs, or tobacco) and paraphernalia (i.e., matches, lighters, etc.) are not permitted on campus. This includes items to be used for vaping. See the Code of Student Conduct for more information.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Each day, the Pledge of Allegiance will be recited. Additionally, students are provided a moment of silence as required by state statute. Announcements must be approved by the administration.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Middle School Absenteeism-A student in grades six (6) through eight (8) is required to be in attendance 162 days per year in the 180 day school year. If a student accrues more than nineteen (19) absences within a school year, the student will be referred to a team of staff members at the school to determine whether the student shall be promoted or retained. Students who have ten (10) or more total absences during a semester will be required to pass the semester exam in order to pass the class for that semester.

Family vacations that interfere with student instruction are discouraged. Excusals of these prearranged absences will be based upon the individual student's current year's attendance pattern and academic performance. Absences for students who have already missed 5 days (excused or unexcused) are subject to be unexcused.

If your child is absent:

1. Any student who has been absent from school shall bring a note from one of his/her parents or guardians stating the reason for the absence.
2. Call 850-995-3676 to report absences.
3. A principal may choose to accept notification in person or by telephone in lieu of a note.
4. Failure to properly notify of an absence within three (3) days shall result in an automatic unexcused absence.

Excused Absences

An excused absence can be granted for personal illness, illness or death of a member of the immediate family, medical or dental appointments, religious holidays, court dates, special emergencies, and pre-arranged absences approved by the principal or designee. If a student desires to be absent for reasons not listed, he/she may make a prior request to the principal by bringing a written request from his/her parent or guardian. Pre-arranged absence requests must be made at least five (5) days prior to the absence, except in the case of an emergency. Pre-arrangements for schoolwork can be made, however assignments are due the day a student returns to school. When a student is absent repeatedly or for a prolonged period due to an illness or injury, the principal or designee may require documentation from a physician or health care provider. If requested documentation is not provided, an absence(s) will be unexcused.

Unexcused Absences

Absences for shopping trips, vacations, pleasure trips, truancy, suspension or dismissal from school, or other avoidable absences which have not been pre-arranged and approved by the principal or designee will be considered unexcused. Failure to properly notify the school or the inability of the school to reach the parent to establish the reason for the absence within three (3) days shall result in an unexcused absence.

Perfect Attendance

For a student to earn perfect attendance, the student must be present every class period for roll call. When moving from elementary to middle and high school, attendance changes from daily attendance to class attendance. Each teacher records absences each class period, therefore, if a student misses a class he/she will be counted absent for that class.

Excessive Absences

Students with excessive absences may not be allowed to participate in field trips away from school, especially when make-up work needs to be completed. Pre-arranged absences may be denied due to excessive absences. **STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR APPROACHING TEACHERS TO RECEIVE MAKE-UP WORK.**

Tardiness

Students are responsible for being at school and in class on time. Only tardies as a result of late buses will be accepted as excused. A student is considered tardy if the student is present on campus but is absent in class when the tardy bell rings and provided the student is in attendance before the end of class. Arriving to school late is defined as "Late to School". Repeated and/or excessive incidents of tardiness may potentially result in disciplinary action for the student.

Accumulation of 5 unexcused absences will result in the following:

- A **certified letter** will be sent to the parent regarding the required conference.
 - The conference will include the guidance counselor, administrator or designee, and other appropriate personnel.
 - Issues regarding absences and corrective action will be discussed.

Accumulation of 15 unexcused absences will result in the following:

- Legal and social service requirements and sanctions will be addressed.

Interventions Truancy Pick-up Program

Students who are unsupervised and not in school during regular school hours will be subject to pick-up by law enforcement officers. Suspended students are also subject to pick-up.

1. Law enforcement officers will stop, interview, and take into custody any child believed to be of compulsory school age or currently enrolled in school.
2. The student will be transported to the nearest pick-up program site.
3. The school and parents will be notified of the pick-up.
4. **Parents will be required to pick-up the child from the program site.**
5. Parent/guardians will be advised of state compulsory attendance laws and given further instructions on reentering the child in school.

ATTENDANCE: MAKE-UP WORK PROCEDURES

When a student's absence from school is **excused**, all assignments may be made up. The student shall be responsible for arranging with teachers for make-up work. The student shall complete all make-up work (unless the teacher has given an extension because of a lengthy absence) within three (3) days after returning to school. Assignments and projects given or announced prior to the student's absence should be turned in on the student's first day back to school. Tests announced prior to the absence may be given on the student's first day back to school, or at the teacher's discretion. Requests for make-up work during a child's absence should be made through the guidance office **only after a minimum 3-day absence**. Please note that any make-up work sent at parents request during an absence is expected to be turned in the day the student returns to school. Work missed due to an unexcused absence may result in a zero. Make-up work will be required for field trip days.

Make-up Work Policy for Suspended Students

Parents may request classroom assignments. If a parent requests work for an OSS student, the teacher must provide the work for the student within 24 hours of the parent's request. Otherwise a teacher may choose:

1. To assign make-up work during the suspension period.
 - Make-up work assigned during the suspension period will be due upon the first day back from suspension.
 - A student will receive a grade of zero for make-up work that has been assigned during the suspension period and **not** submitted to the teacher upon the first day back from suspension.
2. To wait and assign make-up work upon a suspended student's return.
 - A student is allowed three days to make up work that has been assigned upon his/her return from suspension.
 - A grade of zero will be assigned for make-up work that is not returned three days after the assignment date.
3. Not to assign make-up work. Zeros cannot be given for unassigned work.

AWARDS

At the end of the school year, special recognition ceremonies are held for 8th grade students. Parents are encouraged to attend these ceremonies as well as other school-sponsored programs and activities. Please be aware that an All-A award is based upon the student maintaining all A's every reporting period (each 9-weeks). This means that a student does not make less than an A at any point in the year(s). All A averages are not included in this award, because students could make B's or C's in some instances and have an A average. Students receiving a reward will also receive an invitation to the award ceremony.

BACKPACKS, BOOK BAGS, and GYM BAGS

Students may bring book bags, backpacks, or gym bags on school buses or school grounds. All bags must be small enough to fit under a desk. Backpack violations may result in the loss of backpack privileges. Due to safety, backpacks with rollers are not allowed. Any exceptions must be approved ahead-of-time by the administration. Pursuant to Florida Statutes, school authorities may search student lockers, backpacks or other areas when reasonable suspicion that a prohibited or illegally possessed substance or object is contained within an area.

BICYCLES

Students who ride bikes to school must park them in the bike rack provided by the school. Students **must** wear a helmet at all times (F.S. 316.2065 Paragraph d). Students must provide their own locks to insure proper safety. For convenience, a bike rack is located at the front and back of the campus. Students should use the rack that creates the safest situation for them.

CAFETERIA / FOOD AT SCHOOL

Santa Rosa County School Board Policy prohibits students from charging lunch. This policy will be strictly enforced. The cafeteria will not have funds available to loan money for breakfast or lunch. Some families may qualify for free or reduced-price meals. A free lunch paper application is to be given to all students at the beginning of the school year or when a student enrolls during the school year. An online application may be completed through an online system found on the left side of the Santa Rosa County School District's home webpage <http://www.santarosa.k12.fl.us>. Applications must be filled out completely to be considered. The parent/guardian is responsible for all meal payments until an application has been submitted for meal benefits, and the application has been officially approved at the Food Service Office. This includes those who are on Food Stamps or

TANF. Parents are encouraged to pre-pay for lunches through the **MySchoolBucks** system located on the on the left side of the Santa Rosa County School District's home webpage <http://www.santarosa.k12.fl.us>.

Breakfast-\$1.05; Lunch -\$2.85

Students are encouraged to partake of lunch in one of the following ways.

1. Buy lunch in the cafeteria.
2. Bring own lunch (**glass bottled drinks are not permitted**). No student will be permitted to go home for lunch. Students not eating lunch will go with their class to the cafeteria.
3. Students will be expected to abide by the following rules:
 - Use proper etiquette.
 - Give respect to all adults.
 - Be seated at assigned lunch tables.
 - Wait for permission to get in line for food.
 - Follow directions for reporting to the food line and returning to assigned tables.
 - Raise hand for permission to leave an assigned table.
 - Alert monitors of spills.
 - Clean up areas and wait for dismissal from monitors prior to leaving cafeteria.
 - Do not take drink bottles or opened food outside of the cafeteria.
 - Energy drinks are prohibited.
 - Do not bring serving knives from home.
 - Due to safety, talking should be kept low.
 - Parents eating lunch with their child will be provided a location in the front office. Parents may eat lunch with their child only.
 - The delivery of student lunches is discouraged.
 - Due to limited access and time of school personnel, fast food delivery will not be distributed to students. However, fast food items will be allowed if the parent/grandparent/guardian elects to share lunch with the student.
 - Students may not order fast food deliveries to school.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Each student should take individual responsibility in caring for school property such as books, desks, floors, lockers, cafeteria, and restroom facilities. Inappropriate graffiti is not permitted on papers, books or walls. Students responsible for any damages will be fined and/or punished in accordance with the severity of their actions.

CHECK CASHING

Internal funds will not be used to cash checks to accommodate individuals. Checks given in payment for purchases through the school such as lost and damaged textbooks, yearbooks, lunches, etc., shall be for the exact amount of purchase. No exceptions will be made for the purpose of returning cash to the payer. (This is in compliance with School Board Policy and State Regulations.)

CHECK-IN POLICY

Student check-in is at the kiosk in the front of the school. Students do not have to be accompanied by an adult in order to check-in.

For a check-in to be excused, a student must provide a written note from the doctor or parent stating the reason for being late to school. The school will determine if the late to school meets the criteria for excused or unexcused. Reasons such as but not limited to missing the school bus, over sleeping, or being late to parent drop off are not excused.

CHECK-OUT POLICY

A student must have parental/guardian authorization to leave school early. For safety reasons, office personnel must verify written or verbal authorization before a student will be allowed to leave school. An early dismissal slip will be issued by the front office once the proper authorization has been received. The parent or designee must sign the student out in the front office/guidance office, giving the date and time of his/her arrival or departure. The student is responsible for getting assignments from his/her teachers and notifying them of the early departure. The school reserves the right to refuse habitual check outs that are non-emergency/medically related. **Students will not be permitted to check-out to circumvent parent pick-up. Students may not be checked out of school after 1:15 p.m. Repeated and/or excessive incidents of leaving school prior to the end of the day will result in absences due to Early Check-Out/Late Check-In policy and may also potentially result in truancy.**

CLASSROOM RULES

Each teacher establishes a set of classroom rules for his/her **individual** class. Such rules may include correct procedures for obtaining passes and make-up work, conduct within the classroom, food access in the classroom, care of individual and school property, proper headings on papers, etc.

CONFERENCES

To monitor student progress, the school encourages parent-teacher conferences. To avoid conflict with classroom instruction, conferences should be pre-arranged. Upon arrival for a conference, parents should go to the front office to determine the location of the conference and so personnel know the purpose of their visit.

COURSE RECOVERY / REMEDIATION PROGRAMS

To allow the opportunity to improve course grades, students who are missing assignments may be reassigned from an elective class to a course recovery/remediation classroom. In addition, students scoring below proficiency on the FSA may be rescheduled into the school's remediation program in order to target academic deficiencies.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Based on Florida Statute students must successfully complete the following courses:

- **Three** middle school or higher courses in English (Language Arts)
- **Three** middle school or higher courses in mathematics
- **Three** middle school or higher courses in social studies. Once course must be Civics which requires and End of Course exam that counts as 30% of the student's final course grade.
- **Three** middle school or higher courses in science
- **One** semester of Physical Education for each year a student is enrolled in middle school

CUSTODY OF CHILDREN

School personnel are required by law to release children to their natural parent(s) unless a copy of a court order, granting custody to one or the other parent or a third party, is on file at the school site.

DISCIPLINE

Sims Middle School is a PBIS school (**Positive Behavior Intervention & Support**). This program is designed to reward positive behavior and discourage negative behaviors based on school-wide expectations: Respect Yourself; Inspire Others; Demonstrate Excellence; and Exhibit Character.

At the end of a nine-week grading period, students who meet the following criteria receive an end-of-the-quarter reward for meeting the following school-wide expectations:

- **Tardies**-Three tardies in a grading period may result in a parent contact. A total of five tardies will result in a referral.
- **Absences**-No more than 3 unexcused absences will be allowed.
- **Grades**-No D or F Grades will be allowed.
- **Discipline Referrals**- No discipline referrals will be allowed.

Proper respect is to be given to all school personnel. All students are subject to discipline by any teacher or staff member. Discipline will be given in accordance with state law and School Board Regulation. Discipline referrals can result in loss of privileges. (See the Code of Student Conduct for more information.)

DISRUPTIONS (OFF-CAMPUS)

Normally off-campus actions of students are not the basis for disciplinary actions by the school or school district. However, when actions are of such a nature and extent that they reasonably can or do cause a disruption of the educational environment at the school, they may be the subject to disciplinary action. An example might be a student's use of an off-campus computer or electronic device to post libelous, slanderous, demeaning or profane remarks pertaining to other students or school personnel or to plan an event (deemed to be disruptive) to take place during the school day. It is not the purpose to suppress the student's right of free speech, but rather to protect the school environment from actions that have a direct and detrimental effect on the educational process taking place at the school.

DRESS CODE GUIDELINES

DRESSING FOR SUCCESS – One of the most important non-verbal forms of communication is personal appearance. "Appropriate," "suitable," "proper," and "neat" are four words to keep in mind when dressing for school, sports activities, church, or any other occasion. At Sims Middle School students are required to follow a dress code which is printed in below. Through the use of the dress code we stress to students the importance of appropriate appearance both at school and as they prepare to enter the world of work. We strongly encourage both students and parents to focus on the importance of "**DRESSING FOR SUCCESS.**"

The following items represent a guide for students attending Sims Middle School. In the area of personal dress and grooming, appropriate for school, the student must assume responsibility. Since fashion and styles change rapidly, school administrators reserve the right to determine whether a student's dress satisfies the school's policy.

1. Students may not wear any garment with obscene or offensive language or garments that portray or support drugs, tobacco, or alcoholic beverages. Garments that make innuendoes toward other unacceptable subjects are also not acceptable attire for school. Students may not wear any garments that portray association to any group that may be offensive to faculty or students.
2. Students may not wear any color, clothing, insignia, emblem, jewelry, or other objects in such a manner as to indicate membership or association with any secret organization or gang, including the wearing/displaying items which may have obscene meanings.
3. Students may not wear tank tops, halter-tops, spaghetti strap tops, muscle shirts, or undershirts as outer garments. Shirts that have straps less than 3 inches wide are not allowed. Layering of tank tops to achieve 3 inches is not acceptable.
4. All shirts and blouses are required to be long enough to be tucked in and stay tucked in when one's hands are raised above the head. Shirts in which the midriff is exposed while sitting, standing or reaching are not permitted. The necklines must cover the view of cleavage while sitting, standing, or while one is moving. Students may not wear clothing that reveals undergarments, or blouses or shirts that are low cut or see-through. Sheer tops or blouses require dress code appropriate clothing underneath' including 3-inch wide straps. Any clothing that is extremely tight may be deemed inappropriate.
5. Shorts, skirts, culottes, and dresses may be worn, but must be no shorter than 5 inches from the kneecap (this includes P.E. clothing). **Holes or threadbare holes 5 inches above the knee on jeans, pants or shorts are not allowed.** Shorts, skirts, culottes, and dresses should also not be so tight that they "ride up" while walking. Extremely tight (form-fitting pants, including but not limited to yoga pants, tights, leggings, spandex, jeggings, etc.) or transparent pants may not be worn unless a shirt, blouse, and/or dress is worn over them and the shirt, blouse, and/or dress can be no shorter than midway between the hip and knee. (Pants are to be worn at the natural waistline and cannot reveal undergarments - even if the shirt is covering the pants. The practice of "Sagging" is not allowed.)
6. Shoes must always be worn unless medically necessary.
7. Armbands, wristbands, belts, or other items with heavy metal projections and chains, including wallet chains, are prohibited.
8. Students may not wear hats or head coverings in the buildings. Students who need hats for any extracurricular event are to leave them in their backpack, or vehicle. Hoods are not allowed to be worn during school hours. In the event of inclement weather, and for the safety and protection of students, exceptions may be allowed by school officials.
9. Students are not permitted to draw special attention to themselves in a manner that can be deemed inappropriate or disruptive to the learning environment (face paint, excessive body art, etc.).
10. Body piercings, other than ear, are not allowed. No clear studs are allowed. Piercings cannot be covered up by band aids.
11. Sunglasses are not to be worn unless medically indicated.
12. Bedroom attire, including pajamas and slippers, is not allowed.
13. Trench coats and furry attire (ears/tails) are not allowed.
14. Costumes or costume accessories are not permitted except on school sponsored dress-up days. Costume masks are never allowed.

ELECTRONIC/MECHANICAL DEVICES
(Includes any electronic communication device)

A student may bring a mobile device to school. The mobile device shall be in silent mode during school hours so noises from the device will not disrupt the instructional environment. Students may use their mobile device at any time during NON-INSTRUCTIONAL time unless instructed specifically not to do so by a member of the school staff. During INSTRUCTIONAL time, a student may use their mobile device as indicated by the teacher/instructor in charge. Parents who need to reach their child (or vice versa) should communicate via the front office if an emergency arises. A student may use a mobile device on a school bus as directed by the official in charge. (Bus Driver, Teacher, Coach). Failure to follow instructions from the school official in charge may result in a discipline referral. Continued use of a mobile device after being instructed by a school official not to do so may result in disciplinary action.

The possession and/or use of tape players, compact disc players, radios, televisions, remote controls, electronic games, laser pens, or any other electronic device designed solely for playing music and/or gaming including but not limited to tapes, game cartridges, mp3 players, mp4 players or discs used in the operation of the devices are prohibited. Headphones and earbuds are for instructional purposes only and should not be out during noninstructional times and are only allowed at the discretion of the teacher. At no time should a student connect his/her device to a school computer or electrical outlet.

Failure to follow the rules regarding the possession and use of an electronic device or a mobile device will result in disciplinary action up to and including a loss of the privilege of carrying said device(s) on campus for a period of time to be determined by the school official.

Use of a wireless communication device in a criminal act on school property or while in attendance at a school function may result in criminal penalties as well as disciplinary action. Using a communication device to send/receive obscene, inappropriate, or profane messages, graphics, and/or pictures while on school campus will result in disciplinary action and/or criminal charges based on the nature of the offense.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students participating in school sponsored extracurricular activities on and off campus are expected to follow the expectations of Sims Middle School as outlined in the Student Handbook and the *Santa Rosa County Code of Student Conduct*.

FAILURE TO NOTIFY

A student who has knowledge of, and fails to report to a person in authority, the actions, or plans for action, of another person where harm could result, or has resulted, to another person(s), or damage could result, or has resulted, to property, could face disciplinary action.

FIGHTING

Physical altercations (fighting) between students will not be tolerated and will be handled in a firm and swift manner. Any student who is involved in fighting on Sims Middle School's campus or on a Sims Middle School bus is subject to immediate out-of-school suspension and legal action through law enforcement officials.

GAMBLING

Students are prohibited to engage in any game of chance of gambling while on campus. Violations will be a cause for disciplinary action.

GRADING SCALE

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

GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT

The goal of the guidance department is to provide an avenue for students, teachers, and parents to work in an enthusiastic partnership to inspire and develop life-long learners who value human dignity, contribute to society and strive for excellence. Our school counselors have training in human development, cognitive and behavioral theory, testing and measurement, test interpretation, career development, and other areas appropriate to the practice of counseling in the school. The guidance program focuses concern on the personal and educational guidance available to each student, and our guidance office offers a variety of services which include:

Individual Check-Ins, Classroom guidance lessons, Career Café
Academic Guidance
Social/Emotional Guidance
Parent conferences
Psychological assessment and testing by the School Psychologist

Interpretation of state tests
Referrals to outside agencies
Services with other school specialists
Truancy
Information services

This year students have been divided between the counselors as follows:

A – K Ms. Godwin

L – Z Mrs. Moore

Middle school students are unique individuals with distinct needs, talents, and concerns. Middle school guidance is a continuous process concerned with determining and providing for these needs. All services attempt to help each student gain self-confidence, develop a positive attitude toward people, and grow to meet the demands of life in our society.

All conferences are scheduled by the guidance department. Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled in the mornings at 7:00 a.m. and end before classes begin at 7:20. Appointments may be scheduled by calling 995-3676 and asking for the guidance

department. Students are permitted to visit the counselor's office before or after classes but must have permission from the classroom teacher before coming to the office.

GUM CHEWING

Sims Middle School has a **NO GUM CHEWING** policy. Candy received as an incentive may only be consumed within that teacher's classroom.

HALLWAYS

Students should use proper etiquette in the hallways. Students should not gather in groups in the center of hallways. Loud talking and noise, general horseplay and misconduct are not acceptable behaviors in the hallways. No food or drink is allowed in classrooms or in hallways. When walking the hallways, students are asked to "stay on the right" for safety reasons.

HARASSMENT/BULLYING/THREATS

The harassment and bullying policy for the Santa Rosa School District can be found in the Santa Rosa County School Board Policy. It is the desire of the administration, faculty and staff that each child feels safe at Sims Middle School. Harassment of students in any form will not be tolerated. Any student feeling threatened or harassed should report the problem to the Guidance Office, the Dean of Students, a teacher, or administration, so immediate action may be taken to solve the problem. The definition of a threat is defined as follows: "To cause substantial emotional distress, to cause injury, to make threats against life, or stalk another student." This form of misconduct is unacceptable. Any and all threats will be taken seriously. If you feel you are being harassed or threatened you may report any incidences by clicking on the **Santa Rosa SpeakOut** web link at the bottom of the Sims homepage <http://www.santarosa.k12.fl.us/sms>. Incidents reported through **Santa Rosa SpeakOut** are anonymous for the safety of students.

Cyberstalking is defined as a means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication directed at a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person. Cyberstalking on such forums as social media can result in disciplinary action and/or criminal charges based on the nature of the offense. (See the section on "Disruptions/Off Campus")

HOMEWORK

Each student is responsible for his/her assignments. He/she will be allowed a reasonable length-of-time set by the teacher to prepare an assignment. If a student is present when an assignment is given, the assignment is due on the first day the student returns from being absent. (See the Code of Student Conduct for more information.)

IMMUNIZATIONS

Any student who does not have an up-to-date certificate of immunization will be temporarily excluded from school until such documentation is presented to the school office. Students must show evidence of the following:

- 6th Grade-Kindergarten series and 2nd MMR
 - 7th Grade-Kindergarten series, 2nd MMR, Tdap, Hepatitis B
 - 8th Grade-Kindergarten series, 2nd MMR, Tdap, Hepatitis B
- (Note: The Hepatitis B series takes 5 months to complete.)

Any immunization available at school will be given only if the child presents a permission slip signed by his/her parent/guardian. Permission will not be accepted by telephone.

INAPPROPRIATE LITERATURE

Students will not be allowed to bring, exchange, or display undesirable literature to school via magazines, books, or electronic devices. Note passing in the classroom is prohibited. Inappropriate journalizing will not be allowed.

INSURANCE

Through Florida KidCare, the State of Florida offers health insurance for uninsured children from birth through age 18. Florida KidCare applications are available (in the front office). For additional questions about the KidCare program, call 1-888-540-KIDS or go to www.floridacare.org. In addition, supplemental insurance policies for accidents, losses and/or medical expenses are available.

INTERNET GUIDELINES

Any student who wishes to use the Internet must demonstrate his/her understanding of the "Internet Use Procedure". In addition, a student must have on file a signed and dated "Acceptable Use Policy" form. Failure to comply with these guidelines may result in disciplinary action. (See the Code of Student Conduct for more information.)

MEDIA CENTER

The Media Center at Sims Middle School provides opportunities for students to develop research and self-study skills as well as fulfill life-long learning needs and reading enjoyment. Please refer to previous pages of this planner and visit the Sims Middle Media Center webpage to find information on Destiny (our library management system), Reading Counts, eBook instructions, E-Reader policy, upcoming events in our Media Center, etc.

In addition to being open all day, every day (except for a few morning hours during some state and local testing days), the Media Center is also open at 7:00 before school on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings. Students are welcome to come in at that time to check out books, conduct research, or read quietly.

MEDICAL REGULATIONS

Any medication, either prescriptions or non-prescription, to be administered to a student on school premises or at school functions must be brought to the school **by the parent/guardian/authorized adult representative** for retention and administration. No student will be allowed to have medication, prescription or non-prescription, in his/her possession on school premises, on a school bus, or at a school function. Exceptions are an Epi-pen and/or an asthma inhaler prescribed by a physician for a specific student.

Medications brought to the school must be in the original prescription container, properly labeled with the child's name, doctor's name, name of medication, route, dosage, directions, and expiration date. A "**Dispersion of Medication Form**" must be completed at the school for each prescription and a method of disposal of any unused or expired medication designated. The medication must be counted jointly by the parent/guardian and a school staff member. The parent/guardian and school staff member must both sign the "**Registry of Medication Form**" for the initial prescription and each time additional medication for the same prescription is brought to the school.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to request prescriptions for medications that do not need to be given during school hours. Please administer first morning doses at home with only mid-day doses administered by a school staff member.

MISSING AND/OR DAMAGED PROPERTY

Sims Middle School will not be held responsible for an individual student's missing and/or damaged property. Students are encouraged to take precautions to prevent their own personal property from being stolen, misplaced, or damaged (i.e., put names on all personal belongings, place belongings in guarded areas only or PE lockers, do not leave belongings unattended, etc.) Electronic devices brought to school are the responsibility of the student.

NON-SCHOOL EVENTS/ITEMS

Celebratory deliveries such as flowers or balloon are not allowed. Invitations to personal events should be handled privately and without disruption to the school day.

PARENT DROP-OFF/PICK-UP

Sims Middle School has a designated a pick-up and drop-off area located on the west side of the school. Students are not to be dropped off any earlier than 7:00 a.m. and must be picked-up no later than 1:36 p.m. For morning drop-off please allow enough time to go through the drop-off line prior to the tardy bell. Due to safety, students should not be dropped off or picked up students in front of the school (north side) unless a student is being checked out of school. Students will not be permitted to check-out in an effort to circumvent parent pick-up. The east side of campus is used for bus transportation.

PARENT'S RIGHT OF NOTIFICATION

In accordance with the Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and Florida Statute 228.093, you are notified that educational records, including files, documents and any other materials directly related to each child are kept and maintained on each child. Parents and students, over the age of eighteen (18) have the right to review, inspect, and challenge the individual student's record. However, without the consent of the parent, only the parent, school personnel and persons specified in school board policies will have access to a student's records. Directory information on students may be released, unless the parent makes a request in writing for the school not to do so; such information includes the student's name, address, date and place of birth, dates of attendance, participation in officially recognized sports and activities, weights and heights of athletic team members, awards received, names of parents, email address, photograph, and the name of the current school attended. The written request not to publish any or all of the above information must be on file at the student's school by the first week of September. When a student transfers from one school to another, the educational records of that student are automatically forwarded to the new school upon request from the school.

PARENTAL INPUT

As a part of the School Improvement process, a climate survey is sent to parents and others each year to provide data for "needs assessment." Data from this survey will be used to provide input from parents, when appropriate, on the evaluation of teachers.

PROMOTION POLICY

5.305 PROMOTION OF STUDENTS, 6-8 5.3051- A student must successfully complete the following academic courses for promotion from 8th grade:

1. Three middle school or higher courses in English (Language Arts)
2. Three middle school or higher courses in mathematics
3. Three middle school or higher courses in social studies
4. Three middle school or higher courses in science.
5. One class period per day for one semester of physical education for each year he/she is enrolled in a middle school.

A student will be expected to successfully complete an English, mathematics, social studies and science year-long course in each grade level in order to stay on course to complete middle school in three years. A student must successfully complete three of the required core courses each year to be promoted to the next grade level classification. Any required course not completed successfully must be taken over or successful completion of a “course recovery program” may be utilized to fulfill the course requirement. Successful completion of middle school is expected prior to entering high school. Students who fail to meet the proficiency levels (established by the district) in reading, writing, mathematics and science must receive remediation or be retained in an intensive program of study. No student may be assigned to a grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute social promotion. Students and parents will be notified of options available for course recovery should a student fail to successfully complete a required course.

PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

Kissing, hugging, handholding or other public displays of affection are not appropriate behavior for school. Parents may be contacted, and disciplinary action taken if this policy is violated.

SAFETY DRILLS

Sims Middle School is always looking for ways to enhance the safe and healthy environment we provide for all students. Throughout the year fire, tornado, shelter in place, and school lock down drills will be conducted. Teachers will explain appropriate procedures to the students.

SCHOOL DAY (7:25 a.m. – 1:39 p.m.)

Supervision is **NOT** provided before 7:00 a.m. or after 2:00 p.m. It is strongly encouraged that those who provide their own transportation or students who walk to school to arrive between 7:00 a.m. and 7:15 a.m. Between 7:00 and 7:20 a.m., students will be required to be in a supervised area and at approximately 7:20 a.m. they will be dismissed to report promptly to their first period teacher. Students who are tardy will be required to report to the guidance office for an admittance slip and then report to the classroom. Excessive and repeated tardies will result in disciplinary action. Students who must arrive before 7:00 a.m. or stay after school due to school-sponsored club activities are responsible for making individual arrangements for transportation and should be dropped off and/or picked up in the front of the school as soon as the activity concludes.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Students will pay in advance for their school pictures. Payments should be submitted on the scheduled day of pictures.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

School authorities may search student lockers or other areas when reasonable suspicion that prohibited or illegally possessed substance or object is contained within the area pursuant to Florida Statutes. *School Board Policy-5.31*

SECTION 504 PLAN

According to Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, some children may be eligible for certain services. If you feel your child requires adaptations or modifications to the regular school environment, you may request a determination of eligibility for Section 504. This request must include a written statement from your child's physician to support the condition already indicated by your child's school health card. NOTE: No additional monies are provided by the government to either the parents or the school. If you feel your child might be eligible, contact the guidance counselor at 995-3676.

SELLING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

Students are NOT allowed to sell any items while on school grounds during the school day unless approved by the administration.

SUSPENSIONS

Students who receive out-of-school suspensions may not attend or participate in any school-sponsored activities on any school district campus during the time of the suspension (i.e., assemblies, dances, games, etc.). See the sections on “Attendance and Make-up work” for policies on make-up work for out-of-school-suspensions.

TELEPHONE

Students are not allowed to use the school telephone except in case of emergency. Arrangement for the child's day should be made before he/she leaves home. No student shall use the telephone concerning visiting friends, riding a different bus home, birthdays, scouts, etc.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are furnished to students by the Santa Rosa County School District at no cost to your child. However, students are responsible for the care of the books. Assessment of book damage, and/or loss will be determined in accordance with School Board Policy 4.21(5). Failure to pay could allow for the completion of community service hours or suspension from extracurricular activities. Student planners are issued as a textbook. A \$5.00 replacement cost will be charged for lost or damaged planners.

TRANSPORTATION

A top priority of Sims Middle School is to ensure the safety of all students. For this reason, it is necessary that students follow proper procedures and rules while entering, riding and exiting school buses. Proper conduct on buses makes it possible for drivers to give full attention to bus operations during routine and in the event of adverse situations. Your support of our local school and district policies can be demonstrated by reviewing rules, procedures and consequences of misconduct with your child and explaining that transportation provided by the district is a privilege and not a right.

All buses will load and unload on the east side of the school. Parents picking children up must do so on the west side in the designated areas. Please make definite arrangements for your child's transportation to and from school before he/she leaves home. Be sure your child knows where to go after school. **If arrangements change, please notify the school office before 1:00 p.m.** All students who are walking or riding a bicycle should exit the campus immediately after the dismissal bell rings via the crosswalk located at the front (north) of the campus.

Bus Routes and Schedules

Bus routes are determined by the Santa Rosa Department of Transportation and may not be altered without their permission. Currently bus schedules and Bus Request forms can be found the following link on the district's website: <https://www.santarosa.k12.fl.us/trans/>. Bus request forms allow for parents/guardians to submit transportation questions to area transportation supervisors, who will modify the new/changing student's information.

Student Conduct, Rules, and Procedures - Students **must** follow district/school policy. Below is a list of bus information, rules and regulations:

- Students are to be prompt and orderly while waiting in line prior to bus arrival. All school policies apply while at a bus stop.
- If students are to ride a different bus than scheduled, a note must be submitted to school personnel stating the "new" bus number and drop-off location.
- Buses may be equipped with video cameras to monitor student behavior.
- Upon arrival students are to report to the school cafeteria for breakfast or to their first period classroom.
- Students should:
 - Talk quietly.
 - Face forward.
 - Remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
 - Keep arms and head inside bus windows.
 - Show respect to those in authority.
 - Sit in assigned seats, if designated by the driver.
 - Proceed with caution when exiting the bus by using handrails.
 - Be alert to traffic and/or pedestrians.
 - Move to a safe area away from the bus and remain with the group. Re-grouping should be approximately 100 feet or 40 to 50 paces from the bus.
 - Be aware of danger zones (areas around the bus that are "blind" spots to the driver).
 - Observe safety procedures while crossing a street or proceeding to a regrouping area.
 - Leave seats clean and trash free.
 - Not use profanity, and/or participate in any obscene or inappropriate behavior.
 - Not throw objects on the bus or out the window.
 - Not push, shove, wrestle, fight, or "horseplay" at anytime while on a bus.
 - Not be disruptive to other students or driver.
 - Not possess objects which will obstruct the visibility of the driver.
 - Not possess objects that will hinder the safe evacuation of students during an emergency.
 - Not possess food, drinking or glass containers or animals (alive or dead) while on the bus.

- Not possess any form of weapon.
- Not “bully” or harass others.
- Not have Ipods, MP3 players, cell phones or hats visible or in use.

Please encourage your child to confidentially report any unusual activities or behavior witnessed on buses to the Dean or Assistant Principal. Such information can be very valuable in diffusing situations. Also, failure to follow district/bus policy will result in a “Bus Referral Form” being submitted to the office for student disciplinary action. Such action may include suspension from the bus.

Due to safety and supervision concerns, party bus & limousine pick-up of students will not be allowed.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Sims Middle School has a very active volunteer program. We believe that communication and cooperation helps to insure the best quality education. You will find that being a volunteer is worthwhile and beneficial for both students and teachers. Volunteer application forms are sent to parents at the beginning of the school year and when new students enroll. Complete the application forms and return them to the school. All volunteers must attend an orientation, have a background check and be approved by the School Board. We encourage parents, grandparents, family members and interested community members to become volunteers.

WEAPONS (See the Student Code of Conduct)

***For all other information not covered in the Student Handbook, please refer to the Santa Rosa County Code of Student Conduct or contact guidance or administration @ 995-3676.*

MEDIA CENTER, READING COUNTS, & PATRIOT READER PROGRAM

“Books are the plane, and the train, and the road. They are the destination and the journey.”

~Anna Quindlen



Media Center

The Media Center at Sims Middle School provides opportunities for students to develop research and self-study skills as well as fulfill life-long learning needs and reading enjoyment. In addition to being open all day, every day (except for a few hours during some state and local testing days), the Media Center is also open at 7:00am before school on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings. Students are welcome to come in at the that time to check out books, conduct research, read, or use our Makerspace activities.



Lexile

- 1) A Lexile is a number that represents a measure for a person’s reading ability or the difficulty of a text. A Lexile measure is followed by the capital letter “L,” as in 1030L for the book *Promises to Keep*. The Lexile scale ranges from below 200L for early reading books to above 1600L for more advanced texts.
- 2) A student’s Lexile is determined using a computer-based assessment called Scholastic Reading Inventory, or SRI. The Lexile measure helps monitor reading progress. More importantly, it helps match students to books and other texts at the appropriate independent reading level.
- 3) A student’s Lexile range is assigned by the teacher after the student has taken the SRI. The Lexile range helps the student select books that are “just right” with respect to reading level—books that will challenge the student during independent reading to increase vocabulary and improve reading comprehension. If the student selects books within this Lexile range, (s)he will not be bored because the books are too easy and will not be frustrated because the books are too difficult. Teachers may adjust the Lexile range for a reader at any time in order to help meet instructional and developmental goals. **Also, , teachers who monitor Reading Counts scores will make a “Lexile” exception on books that are part of the Patriot Reader Program Booklists. It is still important that a student NOT read too far above his/her Lexile when selecting books from this list; we want students to have success on the quiz. However, since these books are considered “quality fiction,” students may read BELOW their Lexile IF the book is from the booklist previously mentioned.**

4. For more information about Lexile or to look up the Lexile of any text that has been measured using Lexile, please visit <http://www.lexile.com>. You may also find Lexile information on books on the Media Center website or on the Destiny homepage under the *Reading Counts Book Expert* link.

Initial SRI: _____ **Lexile Range:** _____ **to** _____
Mid-Year SRI: _____ **Lexile Range:** _____ **to** _____
Final SRI: _____ **Lexile Range:** _____ **to** _____

Destiny

1. The SRCSD uses *Destiny (Follett Destiny in Classlink)*, an electronic card catalog. This free, online tool allows students to search for and access information about books available for checkout from their school. *Destiny* may be accessed from any computer through ClassLink. Then select the *Follett Destiny* app.
2. You may also access **Destiny** from our Sims Middle homepage and select “*Media Center*.” The **Destiny** link can be found under the tab, “*Destiny Library Manager*.” After opening the Destiny link, select “*Catalog*” from the two tabs across the top. From this page, students may search by title, author, subject, etc. Students can also refine their book searches using their personalized Lexile range. To do so, click the drop-down menu next to “*Reading Programs*,” select “*Lexile*” to open the Lexile range feature and enter the low and high measures of the student’s range in the boxes. This search will display a list of books in the student’s Lexile range. The search results will “usually” indicate if the book has a Reading Counts quiz. However, the best resource for checking RC quiz status is on the Media Center web page. Select the *Reading Counts Book Expert* link. Please note that not all books in our media center have a **Reading Counts** quiz. Students may also enjoy the **Destiny Discover** format when searching for books.
3. Many popular fiction and nonfiction titles are now available in eBook format. When searching for a list of eBooks in Destiny, change the “Material Type” drop down menu to “Electronic Book.” Information for accessing eBooks is also available on the SMS Media Center webpage.

Reading Counts (RC) and the Patriot Reader Program

- 1) Reading Counts, or RC, is a software program at SMS (not available online) designed to do the following:
 - a) offer students the opportunity to select appropriate books;
 - b) allow students to take computer-generated quizzes to test their comprehension of books they have read
 - c) enable teachers to track a student’s progress in order to make informed decisions related to Lexile ranges, book selection, and intervention needs.
 - d) enable students to participate in the **Patriot Reader Program** and receive rewards and incentives when goals are met. Please see the Media Center website for more information on the **Patriot Card Reader Program**.
- 2) While the RC program contains quizzes for thousands of titles in the media center, Scholastic has not yet created quizzes for every book title available for checkout. An example of this would be a newly-published title. To check the quiz status of a book, visit the SMS Media Center Homepage or the SMS Destiny homepage and select the **READING COUNTS BOOK EXPERT** link. Please search by title and then try by author. If a quiz is not available, you may “Request a Quiz” on this same website. It always helps to have several people (students and parents) request the quiz.
- 3) If students are receiving an RC grade for participating in the RC Program, they should make sure an RC quiz is available for a book title **BEFORE** they check out the book and begin reading. Again, to make SURE the book has a quiz, follow the steps described in #2 above.
- 4) Students should regularly check their RC progress to make sure they are passing quizzes and meeting their goals.
- 5) Some teachers and grade levels have established rewards for students who meet periodic and yearly reading goals. Rewards are also offered through the **Patriot Reader Card Program**.
- 6) Please check the SMS Media Center webpage for information regarding Patriot Reader Reward Program.
- 7) **Note: Helping another student take a quiz or taking a quiz for another student is considered academic cheating, and it will be handled as such, according to SMS and the SRCSD Code of Student Conduct. Students caught cheating will also be removed from the Patriot Reader Reward program.**