**Think . . . SAFETY FIRST
(Safety Guidelines)**

**Visitors, Volunteers, and Parents**

We enjoy having parents, visitors, and volunteers at Matthews Elementary School. We appreciate your involvement in our school. Visitors and volunteers are welcome. Please follow the guidelines listed below.

* All CMS buildings keep all exterior doors secure. All visitors will have to be buzzed in by office staff when arriving at Matthews Elementary School between 7:45 AM and 2:45 PM. Please allow additional time for this added step in security. **You will also need a photo ID**.
* Additionally, all visitors must sign into the Lobby Guard System and put a name tag on before entering the halls. (**Remember to bring a photo ID/driver’s license.**)
* Visitors/volunteers will be allowed to eat with students during lunch. Guests cannot join students for breakfast due to space limitations in the cafeteria.
* Please be mindful of classroom interruptions during instructional time.
* Unscheduled parent/teacher conferences or classroom visits are not permitted between 7:00 AM and 3:00 PM.

**School Parking**

We regret that we do not have campus parking for parents and visitors during the drop off and pick up times (7:15-7:45 AM and 2:15-2:45 PM). The most convenient and safe parking during those times are located in the Matthews United Methodist Church lot. There is limited parking between 8:00 AM and 1:00 PM in the parking lot to the east of the school, next to the Baptist Church. **PARKING IS NOT PERMITTED AT ANY TIME DURING THE SCHOOL DAY BEHIND THE COMMUNITY CENTER OR THE BUS PARKING LOT.**

Matthews Police Officer assistance for crossing and traffic control is provided at the parent drive on the west side of the school at Trade St. Parents who park must cross at the crosswalk where the Matthews Police Officer is located. PARENTS ARE ASKED NOT TO USE THE CROSSWALK ACROSS TRADE ST. AT MCDOWELL AVE.

**Early Dismissal**

**Early dismissals will not be permitted after 2:00 PM**. Students will be released early only by written notification sent to their teacher at the beginning of the school day. Written notification must include the date and time for release and the name of the person who will pick up your child. Telephone requests cannot be accepted. Students will not be called to the office until the parent/guardian arrives at school. Parents or guardians picking up students must speak with the office staff first, **present a photo identification** and sign the log book. Students will not be released to the parent from the classroom.

**Daily Dismissal Changes**

Daily dismissal changes are only permitted with a written note to your child’s teacher on the day of the event. If a parent sends an email to the teacher, the teacher may not get the email before the end of the day. Without a note, students will be sent home their regular way. **Students are not permitted to change buses to go home with a friend**. Telephone requests cannot be accepted.

**Early Release Days**
CMS will have four days this year in which students will be released early at 11:45 AM. These dates will be September 20th, October 18th, February 14th, and March 13th. You will receive more information such as curriculum and dismissal as these days approach, but please plan ahead to ensure you have appropriate transportation and childcare in place. Our staff will be in professional development beginning at 12:00 PM on each of these days and will be unavailable for conferences or inquiries regarding students.

**Car-Rider Traffic To/From School**

* All car rider traffic enters and exits on the west side of the school next to the school sign. **ONLY BUSES WILL BE PERMITTED TO TURN ONTO MCDOWELL STREET OR TO ENTER VIA SADIE DRIVE** between the church and school. No student drop-off or pick-up will be permitted in this area.
* The cut-through sidewalk and driveway behind the First Baptist Church off Sadie Drive is closed to all car and pedestrian traffic during arrival and dismissal.
* Car rider traffic will enter the driveway beside the school sign and travel around the staff parking area to let out or pick up students next to the sidewalks. No U-turns are permitted by the canopy section, please drive around the staff parking area.
* For the safety of your child and all others, please turn off your cell phone when you approach the student pick up zone.
* Please contact the office if you need to fill out the form for a car rider sign with a watermark. These signs help ensure the safety of our students. Please place your sign in the front right corner of the windshield. Please leave this sign visible until you have picked up your child. **Students will not be released to an adult in a car without the car rider sign. If the driver does not have the sign, the adult will be asked to go to the front office for verification of identity and ability to retrieve the student.**
* Students must be let out and picked up only from the right (passenger) side of the car when the car is parallel to the sidewalk. It is recommended that children sit in the back seat until they are at least 12 years old. For safety purposes we would prefer to put all students in the backseat of the car.
* Cars cannot pass once they are in line in the drive and parking lot area.
* **There will be two drop-off areas in the morning-under the overhang near the first grade classrooms and at the end of the second/fourth grade hallway.**

**Walkers**

Our “walkers” are mainly students whose parents choose to drive to school, park their cars off campus and “walk” to the building to retrieve their child. To increase safety and improve traffic flow in the downtown area, parking during arrival and dismissal will only be available in the parking lot at Matthews United Methodist Church.

* All students will remain **in the building** during walker dismissal. All parents will check them out with staff at the end of the fifth grade hall (near the basketball court and softball/baseball field). Parents are encouraged to utilize the sidewalk and greenway paths from Matthew United Methodist to reduce walker traffic in the front of the building and around the car rider line.
* Please complete a walker form indicating the names of people who are permitted to pick up your child. Contact the front office to request a walker sign with a watermark.
* Caregivers picking up students as walkers should have identification ready as they line up at the door during the first weeks of school and have the walker sign with a watermark from the school.
* Parents who pick up walkers are required to park their vehicle and walk to the building before students will be released. We will not send students to your vehicle while you wait inside for any reason.
* **ALL PARENTS PICKING UP STUDENTS AS WALKERS SHOULD PARK IN THE PARKING LOT OF MATTHEWS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. NO PARENT PARKING OR TRAFFIC WILL BE PERMITTED ON MCDOWELL AVENUE BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND SCHOOL DURING ARRIVAL OR DISMISSAL.**