



A. B. Combs Leadership Magnet Elementary School

2001 Lorimer Road

Raleigh, North Carolina 27606

919-233-4300 fax, 919-670-4241

<http://wcpss.net/combses>

Muriel T. Summers, Principal

Juley Sexton, Assistant Principal

Traci Totherow, Magnet Coordinator

Paula Everett, Instructional Resource Teacher

Susan Staton, Administrative Assistant

Denise Price, Data Manager

Heather Barnes, Receptionist

August 20, 2019

Dear Parents,

Welcome to *A. B. Combs Leadership Magnet Elementary School*. We look forward to an exhilarating year together as partners in your child's education. Many exciting opportunities await the 776 students we feel honored to serve. We can hardly wait for school to start back. Our school theme this year is Blast Off to Success! This theme was inspired by our students and we are so excited to see this theme come to life! We look forward to organizing student and parent activities around this fun theme. Don't be surprised if you see a few astronauts walking around the school this year.

Our school's circle of influence continues to be felt in every corner of the world. There are currently 4500 schools across the globe embracing the work we created as a school community. As the popularity of our leadership theme continues to grow, we are reminded that our school community is a beacon of light and hope to make a difference by nurturing tomorrow's global leaders, one child at a time. Our school district's Strategic Plan, which can be found on our school's website, is the road map which guides us in providing rich and robust learning experiences for your child. All students will learn in an environment that promotes leadership development, collaboration, critical thinking, communication and creativity.

We continue to face budget cuts this year. We will continue to rely on parent volunteers, business partners, and our own creative capacities to help us through this challenging time; many of you have already given so generously of your time, resources and talents, and we greatly appreciate your support.

The following information is intended to assist you in helping your child get off to a great start to the 2019-20 school year!

INFORMATION PACKET

Enclosed in this information is a “Welcome Letter” from your child’s teacher and/or grade level team. It contains basic information about your child’s class or grade level team and a supply list for the school-year. Class assignments for all grades will be tentative for the first ten days of school. **The number of children that enroll during the first ten days of school will determine if we have to reorganize classes and/or add an additional class.** This tentative assignment is necessary due to anticipated growth, student assignment changes, and unknown magnet assignments. No assignments will change unless it is absolutely necessary, but your support will be needed if such changes are unavoidable. Thank you in advance for *seeking to understand* that your child may need to change classes if our numbers continue to grow.

SCHOOL HOURS

The instructional day will begin at 8:15am and end at 3:00pm. **Since morning announcements begin at 8:15am, we encourage all students to be in their desks ready to start their day at 8:00am.** Students are counted tardy after 8:30am. **If your child arrives after the tardy bell, you must walk your child into the building and sign in. Tardies were such a problem for us last year.** Please know that we are collecting data on our tardies this year and so appreciate your help in getting your child to school on time ready to learn. If you plan to bring your child into the building on the first day, you will need to find a place to park and walk. We have six visitor parking spaces at the front of our school for parent and visitor parking. Campus parking is very limited at Combs, so we ask that you park only in the designated spaces or on the street. We ask that you reserve all other parking spaces for our staff members. ***Please remember not to park in the carpool lane, bus lanes or near the modular units.*** **Please do not park your car in front of driveways, mailboxes, trash bins or in the neighboring cul-de-sacs. Thank you for respecting our neighbors by honoring these requests. Please do not drop off your child in any area other than the supervised carpool areas. Dropping students off at the street, cul-de-sacs, playground or modular units is not allowed.** There is no adult supervision in these areas and you are jeopardizing your child’s safety and the safety of others.

Students should not be on campus before 8:00 am, unless they are in the Early Morning Care Program (7:00am – 8:00am). If your child is enrolled in the Early Morning Care program, you must drop your child off before 7:50am. If you arrive on campus after 7:50am, you will need to remain in the carpool lane. Going around parked cars in the carpool lane is prohibited unless you display a card indicating that you are a taxi or van rider. **We must put the safety of our students first!** If children are asked to come in early for a rehearsal or for a special activity, they must enter at the outside cafeteria door. Our teachers are not required to be at school until 7:50am; therefore, any child dropped off before that time will not be supervised. **If children come before 7:50am and are not in the Early Morning Care Program, they will need to remain in their cars outside until the bell rings.** If you need to enroll your child in the Early Morning Care Program, please call the coordinator, Denise Price, at 919-233-4300. We are thrilled that the YMCA will offer our After School Care Program this year. The After School YMCA will operate from dismissal to 6:00pm. If you have any questions regarding the program or enrollment, you may contact Morgan Lesieur at 919-582-2239.

OFFICE HOURS and HOME- SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

The school office hours are from 8:00am until 3:30pm Monday through Friday. Administrators

and teachers strive to return all phone calls and respond to emails within a 24-hour period.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

We ask that you please refrain from taking vacations during the school year. If you do request an excused absence for travel purposes it will be marked as unexcused. Please know that I support families traveling and exposing their children to the many educational experiences that these trips provide. There are no consequences for children in elementary school, other than the number of days missed and their missed classroom instruction. It will be the child's responsibility to meet with the teacher to make up any missed work.

EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE

Multiple people are often copied on the same email. **In an effort to better help us communicate with you in a timely manner, we ask that you only email one of us.** If you have a concern regarding your child, another student, the school as a whole, or a teacher, please email the principal-Muriel Summers at msummers@wcpss.net. If you have concerns regarding bus transportation please email/call the assistant principal, Mrs. Sexton at jsexton@wcpss.net. Magnet questions, please email Mrs. Totherow, ttotherow@wcpss.net.

CARPOOL AND BUS TRANSPORTATION

School bus transportation is provided for all students who reside one and a half miles or further from Combs in the base attendance area. Please refer to the WCPSS Bus Transportation website-<http://www.wcpss.net/domain/30> for all information regarding school bus transportation. The new centralized phone number for WCPSS Transportation is 919-805-3030. If your child is riding the bus this year, we encourage you to have your child ride the bus the first day of school. Please understand that it takes a few weeks for routes to settle and for schedules to be in place. Please be outside at your stop at least 10 minutes before your bus is scheduled to arrive. Bus routes may be extended by as much as 30 minutes as students become familiar with a new routine. Parents should contact transportation **only** if you have waited 30 minutes or if school has started and the bus has not yet arrived. Wake County Transportation has been very proactive in creating an App that will alert you that your child's bus is in route and how many minutes the driver is from your stop. Schools that are already in session and are using the App and just love it! Please visit our school's website www.wcpss.net/combses for more information on how to download this App-*"Here comes the bus."* We are so grateful to our district for providing this wonderful service to our families. Bus information will be available to Traditional calendar families on Friday, August 23. Existing app users will need to add students back but should not need to reinstall the app. Working with WCPSS Communications, we will also be sharing information about Here Comes the Bus with our families via a web article and SchoolMessenger broadcast.

Staff members will be on duty at the carpool and bus areas to greet children and direct them to their classrooms. Parents are asked to remain in the carpool line to collect children at the end of the day. Bus riders and walkers will be dismissed through the front doors. Carpoolers will be dismissed through the side entrance. **For safety and security reasons, parents are not to wait outside the classrooms or in the hallways to drop off or pick up students. After the first day of school, parents are discouraged from walking children to their classes.** We encourage our students to develop their independence and leadership early. **We also ask that you please do not**

check out your child 30 minutes prior to dismissal. All doors will be locked during this time to ensure that all students are safe and dismissal is orderly. Please do not ask us to make allowances and please do not expect for us to answer the door during this time. We have instructed our teachers not to release any child after 2:30. Please do not put our teachers in a compromising position by asking them to release your child during this time. All students must be dismissed from the office. Again, your child's safety is our number one concern. Instruction is ongoing until 2:50 when students pack up to go home. We appreciate your understanding and support as we strive to keep your child safe.

All parents and authorized adults who complete a carpool application will be provided a carpool number that is to be displayed from your rear view mirror. The staff member on duty will view the number on your rear view mirror, radio to the staff member in the carpool lane, who in turn displays the number on our televised carpool dismissal, and your child will be released. A carpool application is enclosed for your convenience. Your child should learn the carpool number assigned to him/her. Your support with this systematic means of carpool identification will help us assure your child's safety. Please be assured that we will make sure your child is on the right bus or in the right car. All kindergarten teachers will escort their students to the bus and carpool areas for the first month of school or longer if necessary.

All carpoolers will need a carpool number this year with an updated or new application. We will not have a booth set up for you to receive your carpool number like in years past. Please complete the application and submit to your child's teacher. If you have more than one child, please submit to the teacher of your oldest child. Carpool numbers will be sent home the same day the application is received. If you had a carpool number last year, your child's teacher has your number in the classroom ready for you at the Back to School Meet the Teacher event. Please update the application and return it to the teacher. Kindergarten parents may receive their carpool number during Staggered Entry drop off. Other new families to Combs, Grades 1-5, may stop the office to receive a carpool number. The sooner you can get your number the smoother carpool will flow. Please attach the carpool number to your rear view mirror. For safety and security reasons, your number **must** be displayed each time you pick up your child in the afternoon.

As of Tuesday, September 3rd, we will not release students to anyone in the carpool line who does not have a number displayed. Please display only the placard that we give you. Writing your number on a small piece of paper or stating your number rather than displaying it, makes it very difficult for the attendant to see and slows down the carpool process. **Please display ONLY the card you are given. Please do not write your carpool number on a card or try to verbalize this to the carpool attendant.** Using the carpool tag helps up to move quickly and safely through the carpool process. Our carpool students should be picked up no later than 3:15pm. In case of an emergency, please call the school office to let us know that you are running late. Please follow all safety rules and procedures. **We must insist that you do not pass cars in the carpool lane unless you are directed to do so by a carpool attendant. Please do not stop your car in the carpool line on a crosswalk area. We also ask that you refrain from talking on your cell phones while you are moving through the carpool area. Please be respectful of our crossing guard, carpool attendants and our student safety patrol officers.** Please review the carpool procedures on our school's website <http://wcpss.net/combses> for further clarification. Our number one goal is to keep all students safe. With 878 students, we must politely insist that everyone cooperates and abides by our safety rules.

STUDENT LOCATOR

A student locator card will be sent home for your child. This form will provide us with information in the event we need to contact you or if there is an emergency at school. Please **complete the entire card** including any custody information and the names of adults authorized to pick up your child. To assure the safety of your child(ren), **we will only release your child(ren) to the authorized adults listed on the card, without exception.** Since this is critical information that our staff takes very seriously, this card should be returned to your child's teacher the first day of school. In the event the locator card is not returned, we will release the student only to the enrolling parent when the proper identification has been provided. Please do not be offended if we ask to see identification when you pick up your child early from school. Until we know all our families, we may need to ask for identification. **Your child's safety is our top priority.**

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

All visitors and volunteers to our campus must report to the school office upon entering the building. All doors except for the front entrance to the school will be locked from 8:30 am-3:00pm each day. All visitors must sign in and wear a visitor's badge if they are visiting any area of the school. Because of the size of our student population, we must insist that these rules are enforced. This badge indicates to all staff members who may not know you that you are authorized to be in the school. Regardless of whether we know you or not, everyone must report to the office, sign in, and wear a visitor's badge. When you report to the main office, you will sign in electronically. Your picture will be taken and your badge will be printed. **Again, we ask that if you must pick up your child early from school that you do so before 2:30. We will not release any students between 2:30pm-3:00pm for safety and security reasons.** We appreciate your understanding and adherence to this request. Thanks to the WCPSS and our wonderful PTA we have a very secure system for allowing people inside our building. Please ring the doorbell if you would like to get in and one of our office staff members will be happy to assist you.

MEDICATION

If your child is to receive any medication at school, a physician and parent must complete the Parent Request and Physician's Order Form 1702. This form will allow the school personnel to supervise the administration of the medication. All medication must be in its original container. No medication of any sort, whether prescription or non-prescription, can be administered without this form.

COMMUNICATION

Effective communication is one of the keys to any organizations' success. If you need to reach your child's teacher you may do so by calling the school and leaving a message. Teachers will return your phone calls within a 24-hour period. If you email your child's teacher, please expect a response within a 24-hour period. Teachers are happy to schedule conferences whenever you feel a need to meet with your child's teachers. Please do not ask teachers to talk with you in length before or after the school day. They have many responsibilities during this time and want to give you their undivided attention; stopping by unannounced is not productive for you. The best way to have these discussions is by scheduling an appointment.

Information regarding our school can be found on our school's website,

<http://www.wcpss.net/combses> . Monthly newsletters will be sent from the school office and from our PTA. It is our goal to improve communications between home and school. We want for you to feel informed at all times.

AGENDAS/FRIDAY FOLDERS

Grades 2 – 5 use agendas daily. These will go home with students the first day of school. Each agenda costs \$14.00. All students also use a Friday Folder for home to school communication. The cost of these folders is \$3.00. Please make checks payable to A. B. Combs PTA and return to your child's teacher. Grades K-1, \$3.00. Grades 2-5, \$17.00.

AFTER SCHOOL PLAYGROUND USAGE

The YMCA contracts with the school to provide afterschool care to our students. The playground area is off limits to anyone except those involved with the YMCA from 3:15-6:00 pm. The community is welcome to use this area after 6:00pm. We appreciate your cooperation.

SCHOOL MEALS

Our school provides delicious and nutritious meals on a daily basis. We encourage you to come and eat lunch with your child as often as you can. **Our only request is that you not bring food from outside restaurants.** You may prepay for lunches for your child on a monthly, weekly, or daily basis. Please write your child's name, teacher's name, and the number of lunches/breakfasts that the check covers in the memo portion at the bottom of your check. Make checks payable to A. B. Combs Elementary Cafeteria or visit the website, myschoolbucks.com If you have any questions regarding lunch or breakfast, please call our school cafeteria manager, Tina Lockwood, at 919-233-4300 x 21008.

A new year offers new opportunities for our young leaders. This is such an exciting time to be a student at A. B. Combs and we're glad your child is part of our school community. The staff and I look forward to helping your child learn and grow in the caring, loving, and challenging environment at A. B. Combs Leadership Elementary School. Please feel free to call us at 919-233-4300 if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Muriel T. Summers

Muriel T. Summers, Principal