

GRANITE FALLS MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2021 - 2022

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students:

We are pleased to have you as partners of Granite Falls Middle School this year! The staff at GFMS is committed to the highest expectations for each student to grow as a good citizen, responsible learner, and strong moral being. We believe that our primary purpose is to provide each student with an opportunity to develop top-notch abilities, skills, and knowledge. We expect three things from everyone in our school community:

Be Kind - to everyone, in every place, and at all times;
Be Respectful - to themselves, to each other, to time, and to property;
Be Willing - to try hard, to try harder, and to try again.

GFMS has a long tradition of academic and extracurricular excellence. We are eager to assist students as they begin to take more responsibility for their learning. Success depends largely upon a student's choice and attitude. Students will benefit greatly by becoming involved in the learning opportunities in the classrooms and in programs and activities offered. We highly encourage involvement for students and parents!

This GFMS Student Handbook is for student and parent use. Students and parents will need to read the handbook and be very familiar with the expectations that will ensure a safe learning environment. We look forward to a successful school year and invite parents to visit often. Communication between you and our staff is crucial. Together we can make this year successful for every student. Thank you in advance for your enthusiasm, support, and hard work!

VISION STATEMENT: Granite Falls Middle School will be a school that prepares every student for high school in a caring learning environment that supports creativity, responsibility, collaboration, and 21st century life skills.

Mission Statement: To work as a community of parents, teachers, students, and other key stakeholders to prepare students for high school by meeting the needs of all students through engaging rigorous instruction with relevant academic and social experiences.

School Beliefs:

- **Whole Child: We believe that the needs of the whole child-physical, emotional, intellectual, and social-are our priority.**
- **Safety: We believe that all students and staff have a right to a safe, positive, and supportive environment.**
- **Community Partnerships: We believe that community partnerships are integral to our success.**
- **Academic Instruction: We believe in quality instruction for every child in every classroom.**

Principal
Chris Ackerman

Assistant Principal
Kristy Hollar

IMPORTANT NOTE: This handbook is a **BRIEF** summary and contains **HIGHLIGHTS** of the policies, procedures, and guidelines for Granite Falls Middle School and Caldwell County Schools. It does not include everything and every expectation that each child/parent will be responsible for meeting.

For a **COMPLETE** listing of Caldwell County Policies, please visit the **website** at https://boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=caldwell_county or stop by our office and we will print out a copy for you.

To reach administration:

Principal:
Assistant Principal:

Mr. Chris Ackerman
Ms. Kristy Hollar

cackerman@caldwellschools.com
khollar@caldwellschools.com

828-396-2341
828-396-2341

The School Day

7:30 Doors unlocked: Students should be dropped off at main entrance by office and remain outside the main office entrance at the front until the doors are unlocked. We do not have supervision available for students prior to 7:30 am. At 7:30 am doors will be unlocked. All students report directly to their homeroom class upon arrival.

7:45 First Bell-School Begins: Breakfast is served in classrooms. Breakfast and lunch are free for all students during the 2021 – 2022 school year. Attendance is checked in homeroom.

7:50 Tardy Bell: Arrivals after 7:55 am report to the office to sign in with a parent. *Students must be checked-in with a parent if they are tardy.* Instruction begins at 7:55 am. Students should be in their classrooms with all materials ready. Cell phones, bookbags, and any personal items are to be placed in lockers. Please remember: Students and parents who choose to bring cell phones, and personal belongings to campus do so under the condition that they accept all responsibility and liability for the items. Granite Falls Middle School personnel will not be held responsible or liable for damaged or stolen student items.

2:00 If students must be checked out early, please do so before **2:00pm** to avoid traffic and student safety issues.

2:45 Dismissal Bell – Students must be picked up by 3:15.

Report Cards and Grading

Report cards are released every nine weeks. Progress reports go out at the mid-point of each nine weeks. Classroom teachers are expected to enter at least one grade per week into PowerSchool. Parents can check student grades /progress in PowerSchool. Students are responsible for keeping up with grades and assignments. The following grading scale is used:

- A – 90 to 100 percent
- B – 80 to 89 percent
- C – 70 to 79 percent
- D – 60 to 69 percent
- F – 59 percent and below

Missing & Make-Up Work

Students will have opportunities to complete items below and missing assignments each nine weeks:

- Correct test and quiz answers for partial credit to increase a grade
- Correct some classwork/homework (at teacher discretion) for partial credit to increase grade
- Turn in late/missing work for partial credit

All work turned in is for partial credit. The highest grade that can be earned on late/missing work turned in is a “B.” Please see each teacher’s individual grading policies for details.

Earning a ZERO (o)

As per [board policy 3400](#), the staff at GFMS are committed to giving students every chance to succeed. Teachers will only assign a zero (o) to any given assignment, project, test, or quiz if a student fails to turn in anything at all. Please refer to the teaching teams procedures / policies for missing work.

Grading Questions

Any questions regarding a grade earned or an assignment given should be directed to the classroom teacher as soon as possible. Students should make every effort to keep their own record of grades and follow-up to ensure everything is recorded accurately. Reminder: PowerSchool is accessible for parents and students to track student grades. Teachers are required to enter at least one grade per week for each student in their classes.

Homework

Please refer to the Caldwell County School Board Homework Policy: [Board Policy 3135](#).

Use of Lockers

Granite Falls Middle School will issue students lockers in their homeroom class. Students are responsible for purchasing locks if desired. Only **combination locks** are allowed to secure school lockers. Students should keep a lock on their locker to prevent theft and / or damage to personal items. Theft and damage to cell phones or personal belongings will not be investigated by administration. Students should only share lock combinations with their homeroom teacher to further prevent theft or damage to personal items.

Combinations for student purchased locks must be given to homeroom teachers. Combinations will be documented for administrative use and safety. Any locker without a combination lock will be cut off if the locker needs to be opened. The school is not responsible for replacing the destroyed student lock. Reminder: Only combination locks should be used on Granite Falls Middle School lockers.

Lockers will be searched when a school official has reason to believe there is evidence that the student has violated or is violating a law, Board policy, the Code of Student Conduct or a school rule. Again, students are personally and solely responsible for the security of their wireless communication devices and any other item stored in their locker. The school system is not responsible for the theft, loss or damage of a cellular phone, other personal wireless communication devices, and / or personal belongings that are placed in lockers. Using school provided lockers is a choice and a privilege for students and parents. Although lockers will be used to store student belongings, the purchase of a combination lock is not a required service for students. However, purchasing a combination lock is encouraged to ensure the safety of items inside of individual student lockers. [Board Policy 4342](#) - Locker searches

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

USE OF WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICES:

The Board recognizes that cellular phones and other wireless communication devices have become important tools through which parents communicate with their children. Therefore, students are permitted to possess such devices on school property so long as the devices are not activated, used, displayed or visible during the instructional day (beginning with the arrival at school until the dismissal bell) or as otherwise directed by school rules or school personnel. Students must turn off cell phones / electronic devices and place them in their assigned locker before reporting to homeroom each morning. Students will not be permitted to access cell phones / electronic devices again until the closing of the school day.

Wireless communication devices include, but are not limited to, cellular phones, smart watches, electronic devices with internet capability, two-way radios and similar devices.

Administrators may authorize individual students to use wireless communication devices for personal purposes when there is a reasonable need for such communication. Although usage is generally permitted before and after school, use of cellular phones and other wireless communication devices may be prohibited on school buses when noise from such devices interferes with the safe operation of the buses.

Consequences for Unauthorized Use School:

Employees may immediately confiscate any wireless communication device that is on, used, displayed or visible in violation of this policy.

1st Offense: Student takes device to locker immediately. Offense should be noted on the matrix.

2nd Offense: Device is confiscated by school personnel until the end of the school day. Offense should be noted on the matrix.

3rd Offense: Parent must pick up device from administration.

4th Offense and beyond: Parent will pick up device from administration.

After the fourth offense, additional offenses may result in a range of approved consequences for minor infractions, including in-school or short-term out-of-school suspension, if warranted. More severe consequence, including those reserved for major violations, may be imposed, based on consideration of the following factors: whether the wireless communication device was used (1) to reproduce images of tests, obtain unauthorized access to school information or assist students in any aspect of their instructional program in a manner that violates any Board Policy, administrative regulation or school rule; (2) to bully or harass other students; (3) to send illicit text messages; (4) to take and/or send illicit photographs; or (5) in any other manner that would make more severe disciplinary consequences appropriate.

Search of Wireless Communication Devices: [Board Policy 4342](#) A student's wireless communication device and its contents, including, but not limited to, text messages and digital photos, may be searched when a school official has reason to believe the search will provide evidence that the student has violated or is violating a law, Board Policy, the Code of Student Conduct or a school rule. The scope of such searches shall be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the nature of the suspected infraction.

Liability:

Students are personally and solely responsible for the security of their wireless communication devices. The school system nor Granite Falls Middle School is not responsible for the theft, loss or damage of a cellular phone or other personal wireless communication device.

Students and parents who choose to bring cell phones, and personal belongings to campus do so under the condition that they accept all responsibility and liability for the items. Granite Falls Middle School personnel will not be held responsible or liable for damaged or stolen student items.

Technology Responsible Use - [Board Policy 3228, 4312, 7320](#)

- Students and parents sign an agreement to use technology (on school hardware or personally owned devices) in a way that is respectful and adheres to all regular school rules.
- Using any technology for illegal purposes (explicit pictures, threats, bullying, etc.) will result in school disciplinary action and may result in law enforcement involvement.
- This expectation extends to any school-related activity (bus stop, athletic events, dances, events, bus, field trips, etc.). Misuse of technology after school hours and off-campus can also be included in this policy when it disrupts the learning environment.
- The school system reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, and review a personally owned device or file when administration has a reasonable suspicion that a violation of Board policies has occurred.
- Students are not permitted to use any electronic device to record audio or video media or take pictures of any student or staff member without their express permission. The distribution of any unauthorized media may result in discipline including, but not limited to, suspension, criminal charges, and expulsion.
- No right of privacy exists in the use of technological resources. Users should not assume that files or communications created or transmitted using school system technological resources or stored on services or hard drives of individual computers will be private. School system administrators or individuals designated by the Superintendent may review files, monitor all communication, and intercept e-mail messages to maintain system integrity and to ensure compliance with Board policy and applicable laws and regulations

Technology Resources for Parents

We encourage parents to have a listing of all passwords for their student's email and other accounts – including school email and PowerSchool. The more information parents have, the safer our students will be! Feel free to call the school counselor or your child's teacher if you have concerns about your child accessing the internet safely.

During the parent night in the fall, teachers will give parents instructions for signing up to access grades online ([Parent Portal Request Link](#) for Parents), to receive email reports about student's progress in STAR, how to access the teacher's google classroom, etc. If you must miss the fall parent night and need help accessing these technology helpers, please contact the teacher and schedule an appointment for a meeting – we're glad to help!

Extra-Curricular Activities and Athletics

We encourage student participation in extra-curricular activities and athletics. We have many offerings though they may change year-to-year depending on participation and sponsorship. Students should be picked up ON TIME if they are participating in athletics or extra-curricular events. This is a sampling of activities and teams that may be available:

Football (7 th & 8 th Only)	Cheerleading	Archery
Girls' Softball	Chorus Performances	
Boys' & Girls' Soccer	Band Performances	
Boys' & Girls' Wrestling	Unified Champions	
Boys' & Girls' Basketball	BETA Club	
Girls' Volleyball	Student Council	
Boys' & Girls' Track	Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)	
Boys' Baseball	Dances	

Guidelines for Participation in Extra-Curricular

- Participation in extracurricular activities, including student organizations, dances, fundraiser rewards, reward days, award ceremonies, and interscholastic athletics is a privilege. Student attendance and/or participation in any such activity or event is at the discretion of the principal based on a student being in “good standing” to include attendance, behavior, and academics.
- Participation in extracurricular activities may be restricted or eliminated if a student is not performing at grade level, is missing assignments or is struggling academically (failing more than one subject), has excessive absences (including late check-ins/early check-outs), and/or has violated the student conduct standards (ISS, OSS, Alternative Placement, or administrative discretion based on behaviors). All of these conditions are detailed in CCS Board Policy and in the behavior matrix provided by the school.
- Student athletes and club members may be taken off their team or out of their club if their behavior warrants ISS or OSS. This step will be at the discretion of the administration, athletic director and coach.
- A student must be in attendance at school for the entire day in order to participate in any athletic practice/match/game, club function/meeting, dances, fundraisers, concerts, and any other events in which he or she participates.
- The school administration, the club sponsor, the athletic director, and/or the coach have the authority and discretion to suspend or dismiss any player who has attendance issues, displays conduct that is considered detrimental to the team and/or has academic issues deemed unsatisfactory.

Field Trips

For insurance purposes, all students ride to and from all destinations on the bus. Parents may check their student out from the field trip site if arranged in advance with the teacher. Students may only be checked out by their own parent or guardian. Chaperones wishing to check students out early must do so AFTER all chaperone duties have been completed and all students are on the bus with teacher supervision. Chaperones should not leave any field trip until they have completed all chaperone duties and made sure that all students are on the bus with a teacher for supervision. Chaperones are not allowed to let students check out early with another adult. The student’s teacher will allow students to be checked out early, if appropriate. Failure to follow these expectations will result in not being asked or allowed to chaperone in the future. The safety of our students is our primary goal. We must ensure that any person, student or adult on a field trip can keep that goal at the forefront of all decision making. All field trip monies are non-refundable. Tour companies/attractions refund monies collected and receipted from the school at their leisure, not ours. Please be advised of this when you are making decisions on your child’s participation.

To participate in overnight trips and/or earn “reward” trips, students must comply with the following:

- No instances of Out-of-School Suspension (OSS).
- No more than two (2) instances of In-School Suspension (ISS) for minor violations.
- Passing grades in at least three of the four core subjects (math, language arts/reading, social studies, and science).

Some field trips will allow parents to attend while some will not. Teachers will advise if parents may attend and what additional conditions may apply. The charge for parents attending field trips are typically more expensive than the student cost of the trip. If a parent wants to attend a field trip, please adhere to the following:

- A complete background check in Volunteer Tracker should be completed or updated. Volunteer Tracker can be found on our school home page or county website.
- Parents will be responsible for chaperoning a small group of students (assigned by the teacher) in addition to your own child.
- Parents are expected to follow all school rules and procedures including dress code.
- Parents may not travel on trips unless they are official chaperones and have passed the background check (Use “Volunteer Tracker” found on the GFMS website to register).
- Parents may not check children out of school and meet the group at the site. Parents may not meet their child at the field trip site unless they are an official chaperone. Only official chaperones are guaranteed entrance with the school group.
- Official chaperones may not leave with their child until the field trip has ended. All students in the chaperones care should be accounted for by the teacher before a chaperone departs. Chaperones may not let students leave with another adult. Only the teacher can allow students to be checked out early by a parent or guardian.
- In instances where space is limited, parent names will be drawn by lottery to chaperone. Preference will be given to parents that have already completed the Volunteer Tracker form for a background check and are in good standing from previous field trip experiences.
- A chaperone agreement should also be signed AND returned to the teacher prior to the trip. Parents who are unwilling to follow the expectations stated above should refrain from requesting to chaperone. Failure to comply with the expectations of being a Granite Falls Middle School chaperon will result in not being asked to chaperon again.

Attendance & Arrivals/Dismissals

If a student is absent for ANY reason, the student must bring a doctor's note or explanation note from home. This note should be turned in to the office by 8am on the day that the student returns to school. Student absent notes should be given to Mrs. Allen, our data manager. Students who acquire excessive absences could be required to provide doctor's notes in order for absences to be excused. Poor attendance may affect athletic eligibility and the ability to participate in other activities and events.

[Board Policy 4400](#) - Attendance in school and participation in class are integral parts of academic achievement and the teaching-learning process. Through regular attendance, students develop patterns of behavior essential to professional and personal success in life. Regular attendance by every student is mandatory. The State of North Carolina requires that every child in the State between the ages of 7 (or younger if enrolled) and 16 attend school. Parents and legal guardians are responsible for ensuring that students attend and remain at school daily.

A. ATTENDANCE RECORDS

School officials shall keep accurate records of attendance, including accurate attendance records in each class. Attendance records will be used to enforce the Compulsory Attendance Law of North Carolina.

B. EXCUSED ABSENCES

When a student misses school, a written excuse signed by a parent, guardian or doctor shall be provided to the student's teacher on the day the student returns from an absence. Absences due to extended illnesses may also require a statement from a physician. An absence may be excused for any of the following reasons:

1. personal illness or injury that makes the student physically unable to attend school.
2. isolation ordered by the State Board of Health.
3. death in the immediate family.
4. medical or dental appointment.
5. participation under subpoena as a witness in a court proceeding.
6. a minimum of two days each academic year for observance of an event required or suggested by the religion of the student or the student's parent(s).
7. participation in a valid educational opportunity, such as travel or service as a legislative or Governor's page, with prior approval from the principal.
8. pregnancy and related conditions or parenting, when medically necessary; or
9. visitation with the student's parent or legal guardian, at the discretion of the superintendent or designee, if the parent or legal guardian (a) is an active duty member of the uniformed services as defined by board [policy 4050, Children of Military Families](#), and (b) has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting.

In the case of excused absences, short-term out-of-school suspensions, and absences under [G.S. 130A-1540](#) for failure to submit a school health assessment form within 30 days of entering school) the student will be permitted to make up his or her work. (See also [Board Policy 4110](#), Immunization and Health Requirements for School Admission, and [4351](#), - Short-Term Suspension.) The teacher will determine when work is to be made up. The student is responsible for finding out what assignments are due and completing them within the specified time period.

C. SCHOOL-RELATED ACTIVITIES

All classroom activities are important and difficult, if not impossible, to replace if missed. Principals shall ensure that classes missed by students due to school-related activities are kept to an absolute minimum. The following school-related activities will not be counted as absences from either class or school:

1. field trips sponsored by the school;
2. job shadows and other work-based learning opportunities, as described in [G.S. 115C-47\(34a\)](#);
3. school-initiated and -scheduled activities;
4. athletic events that require early dismissal from school;
5. Career and Technical Education student organization activities approved in advance by the principal; and
6. in-school suspensions.

Assignments missed for these reasons are eligible for makeup by the student. The teacher will determine when work is to be made up. The student is responsible for finding out what assignments are due and completing them within the specified time period. [Board policy - 4400](#)

D. EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

Class attendance and participation are critical elements of the educational process and may be taken into account in

assessing academic achievement. Students are expected to be at school on time and to be present at the scheduled starting time for each class.

- o The principal shall notify parents and take all other steps required by [G.S. 115C-378](#) for excessive absences.
- o Students in grades six through eight must be in attendance at least 170 school days. Students with more than 10 unexcused absences may not be promoted to the next grade level.
- o School attendance committees will review student absences at the end of the first three grading periods and in the middle of the last grading period. The committee shall submit to the principal or designee the names of students who are in danger of not being promoted due to excessive unexcused absences.
- o Absences due to disability or for religious observance will not be included in determining the cumulative days absent in a course. All other absences, both excused and unexcused, will be combined to determine the cumulative days absent. Before a student is denied credit for a course due to excessive absences the principal shall ensure that any absences due to disability or for religious observance are excluded from the calculation of cumulative absences.
- o Students with extenuating circumstances may file an appeal prior to the completion of the course as follows:
 - ALL attendance appeals are presented to the School Attendance Appeals Committee, which has sole responsibility for approving attendance appeals. Either the student or a teacher of the student may file an appeal.
- o Students with excused absences due to documented chronic health problems are exempt from this policy. In addition, for students experiencing homelessness (see [Board policy 4125](#), Homeless Students), school officials must consider issues related to the student's homelessness, such as change of caregivers or nighttime residence before taking disciplinary action or imposing other barriers to school attendance based on excessive absences or tardies.
- o Excessive absences may impact eligibility for participation in interscholastic athletics. See [policy 3620](#), Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations and [policy 3621](#), Student Athletic Eligibility.

E. PERFECT ATTENDANCE AWARDS

Students with 10 or more unexcused tardies and/or early dismissals are not eligible for a perfect attendance certificate. Principals will use the same administrative guidelines applied to absences in determining what constitutes an unexcused tardy/early dismissal.

Tardies and Early Dismissals

Please try to schedule make all appointments for students outside of the school day. Every minute of instruction throughout the school day is important for student success.

Students that come in tardy should report to the office with a parent to sign in late. If students need to be dismissed early, a parent must report to the office to sign out the student prior to 2:00pm.

School Cafeteria Services

It is important that children eat - hungry children have difficulty learning in class. Breakfast and lunch will be FREE for all students again during the 2021 – 2022 school year. However, any “extra” item that your student might want must be paid in full at the time of purchase if they do not have money in their account. Please encourage your student to take advantage of this resource. Our expectations for the cafeteria setting are listed below. Please help us keep our students healthy and our cafeteria out of competition with outside vendors.

- Reminder: Students with outstanding balances will NOT be allowed to purchase extra items until the cafeteria debt has been paid.
- Extra items such as slushies, chips, cookies, bottled juice, etc must be paid for when purchased if the student does not have money in their lunch account.
- Soft drinks are NOT allowed in the cafeteria with the school meal or a home packed meal.
- Restaurant food is NOT allowed in the cafeteria. If a parent brings in restaurant food the child and parent will need to be seated at an alternate location.
- **DUE TO COVID-19:** Please be patient with us as we continue to maneuver through the COVID-19 pandemic. Visitors have always been welcome at Granite Falls Middle School. However, guidelines will continue to change as to when and how we can allow visitors on our campus for the upcoming year. Please check with our front office staff if you wish to eat lunch with your student. Reminder: Any parent, grandparent, guardian, etc allowed to eat with a student must be on their PowerSchool information sheet. No adult will be allowed to spend time with a student if they are not on the PowerSchool information sheet. Again, the safety of our students is our primary goal.

School & Student Safety

Medications

Basic first aid supplies are kept on hand for minor injuries, personal needs etc. Occasionally, a student may need to take medication during the school day. To avoid complications in the management of such medications, the school system requires the following:

- A Medication Consent Form must be filled out and signed by the Physician and Parent for each and any medication (including over-the-counter medication) the child needs to take at school. **Medication Consent Forms can be requested from our front office.
- All medications must be provided to the school in the original medication container.
- All medication will be kept in an assigned location and be administered by an assigned school individual.

Parents should advise the school office and the school nurse, Denise Fleming, of particular student health conditions that may cause an emergency during the school day (i.e... Seizures, Asthma, Kidney Failure, Abnormal Blood Pressure, Severe Allergies to food or stings, etc.).

A health plan can be created for students by the school nurse, Denise Fleming, to address any student health conditions that can impede the student's education and/or otherwise significantly interferes with the student's ability to access services.

School Insurance

Each student has the opportunity to enroll in an accident insurance plan as approved by the Caldwell County Board of Education. Students have the option to enroll in a 24-hour coverage program (gaining broader coverage than for just the school day) or the regular school-time coverage program. Insurance is provided for students trying out for or participating in school athletics. If a student is injured, the school secretary must be notified in order to complete the school's portion of the claim form for processing.

School Safety

School safety is a top priority for school administration, faculty and staff. Drills (fire, lockdown, tornado, etc.) will be conducted often throughout the year. For more information, contact the Community Services Office at 728-8407. Refer to School [Board Policy: 1510/4200/7270](#).

Other Information

Office Hours

Our office opens at 7:30 a.m. and closes at 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The office is closed on any school holiday or inclement weather day announced by the school. Please see the calendar online at the GFMS website, FB page or Instagram page for posted events, closings, and regular school information.

Transportation Changes

Transportation changes are for emergencies only. We will only accept transportation changes in writing for liability reasons. Parents are welcome to fax a written change to 828-396-7072 as well as calling the office to ensure the fax was received at 828-396-2341.

Parents who are requesting that two or more students be granted a change in transportation must provide a written note from ALL parents. We will not consider a transportation change for students without all parents/guardian permission.

DUE TO SHARED BUSING WITH GRANITE FALLS ELEMENTARY:

Our school now shares buses with Granite Falls Elementary School. Due to this recent change, space is limited on each bus. Please understand that students are not be able to ride home with another student who does not regularly assigned to their bus due to seating space. Students who have notes to ride home with each other are welcome to ride home together in the car rider line. Students riding a bus MUST wear a mask the entire time while on the bus.

DUE TO COVID-19:

At this time we are still limited in how many students we can seat on each bus and in each seat. At this time our students are still required to wear a mask while they are on the bus. As we continue to get guidance from state agencies, county leadership, etc we will make you aware as well.

Granite Falls Recreation Center

The Granite Falls Parks and Recreation Department implemented the following policies as of August 1, 2018

concerning area school students being on department grounds. The following policies are:

- 1) During the calendar school year, no one under the age of 17 is allowed on any Town of Granite Falls Park and Recreation property before 3:00 pm with the exception of summer break, holidays, or homeschooled students accompanied by an adult.
- 2) Any person under the age of 15 must be accompanied by an adult at all times at any Town of Granite Falls Parks and Recreation property.

**GFMS students are not allowed to walk to the Granite Falls Recreation Center without an adult at all times.

Deliveries

According to School [Board policy 7273](#), deliveries to students of flowers, balloons, pizza, etc. will NOT be accepted.

Visitors – Please read COVID-19 statement...

Granite Falls Middle School welcomes parents and other visitors. Visitors should report to the office upon arrival and sign in. A pass will be issued to the visitor. Any adult on our campus without a visible pass will be stopped and escorted to the office. The visitor should return the pass and sign out upon leaving the school campus. **No visitor is permitted to go to any teacher's classroom without prior approval from the principal.** High school students are not allowed to come to visit teachers during regular school hours.

DUE TO COVID-19:

Visitors on campus are not allowed on campus at this time. Visitors on campus to check in/check out students, meet with teachers, etc will be screened and expected to wear a mask whether the visitor is fully vaccinated or not. Thank you for understanding. As we continue to get guidance from our state agencies, county leadership, etc we will revisit and update our visitor policy and procedures.

Nondiscrimination Clause

Programs, activities and facilities of the Caldwell County School System are available to all on a non-discriminatory basis. The school system is an equal access Equal Opportunity Employer. Granite Falls Middle School does not discriminate against any person on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, political affiliation, age or handicap in any of its educational or employment programs or activities. Questions pertaining to educational equity, equal opportunity, or equal access should be addressed to the Associate Superintendent of Human Resources, Dr. Bill Griffin, Title IX Coordinator; Caldwell County Schools, at 1914 Hickory Blvd. SW, Lenoir, NC 28645 or call (828)728-8407.

Directory Information

The Caldwell County School System follows the Family Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) when disclosing any personally identifiable information from student education records. The school district may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent. This information, generally not considered harmful, such as student's name, address, participation in school activities, awards, and the most recent previous school attended, may be utilized by the school district, individual schools, or organizations, unless parents advise the Caldwell County Schools that they do not want their student's information disclosed. To prevent disclosure, parents or eligible students (one who is 18 years old or is married) must notify the school in writing within the first 20 calendar days of the school year. The Board of Education strongly discourages the release of directory information to outside organizations which have requested the information for their own purposes, including private, commercial or religious organizations. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow Caldwell County Schools to include this type of information in certain school publications. Examples include: the yearbook; honor rolls or recognition lists; graduation programs; and sports programs and activity sheets.

Custody – [Board policy 4210](#)

Each year we have a number of students involved in family legal matters concerning parental custody or visitation rights. The office receives requests to limit student activities such as visits, telephone messages or transportation based on court judgments. Parents must provide the school copies of court/legal documents regarding student movement or information concerning custody, visitation, transportation, telephone messages, etc. In the absence of court/legal documents, we must consider parents' rights to be equal. We cannot deny a legal parent/guardian neither the access to, or information about, their child. All information shared with the school will be kept confidential.

Lost and Found

Students must take responsibility for their personal property. Students are encouraged to have identification on such items as coats, jackets, sweaters, ball gloves, book bags, etc. Lost and found articles are kept for a reasonable amount of t

ime. They will then be disposed of or given to our student services. Students should never carry more money than is needed or more than one can afford to lose. Granite Falls Middle School will not be responsible for large sums of money, expensive jewelry, clothing, cell phones, or music devices.

Telephone

Use of the school telephone by students is limited to emergency calls. Telephone messages are discouraged. Only emergency messages will be delivered.

Students and parents are asked to plan ahead in order to decrease the number of calls that come into and out of the office. Remember to take care of personal belongings, lunch money, arranging transportation, etc. before coming to school. Parents need to inform students of transportation plans for afternoon pickup before the student leaves for school.

Family and friends are requested NOT to call students at school. Please remember that student cell phones (should they choose to bring one) will be placed in their locker at the beginning of their day. If a student needs to call home due to illness, the student will be required to get permission from the teacher to call home.

Athletics

Our school offers an opportunity for students to participate in interscholastic athletics. Students compete in the Northwestern Middle Six Conference. All student athletes must meet the state, local, and school level requirements in matters such as age, residency, academics and attendance. See [Board Policy 3621](#) for eligibility information. The school administration, the athletic director, and the coaches have the authority to suspend or dismiss any player that has any conduct that is considered detrimental to the team.

Healthful Living/ Healthy School Act of 2009

We will be teaching the Reproductive Health and Safety Education (formerly Abstinence until Marriage) Curriculum this year. Students in grades six (6) through nine (9) will have access to an abstinence-based comprehensive sexuality health education curriculum, per House Bill 88. Parents will receive a permission form to allow or object to the curriculum in which they want their child to participate. If a parent objects to any of this curriculum, he/she is responsible for writing the principal and asking that their child be excused from the curriculum. Otherwise, if the parent does not “opt out,” the student will be included in the instruction. The School Board Policy states this requirement. Questions should be directed to Angie Ashley, Executive Director for Caldwell Counsel on Adolescent Health at 828-757-9020.

Integrated Pest Management

The Caldwell County School System utilizes an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach for controlling insects, rodents, and other pests. Parents have the right to be notified in advance of specific pesticide applications made at the school. To view [Policy 9205](#) in its entirety and to download a notification request form go to www.caldwellschools.com choose Parents, then Parent Resources and choose the link Integrated Pest Management

School Improvement

A Multi-tier system of support (MTSS) is the framework that Granite Falls Middle School uses for continuous school improvement through engaging, research-based academic and behavioral practices. We use a data-driven problem solving model to maximize growth for all students.

Student Code of Conduct

Positive Behavior Interventions & Support (PBIS)

GFMS School Expectations

Be Kind -- To everyone... at all times... in all places
 Be Respectful -- Of ourselves... of others... of property... of time
 Be Willing -- To try... to try something new... to try harder... to try again

All of our policies, procedures, and rules comply with Caldwell County School Board policy and are encompassed in the three expectations of our school. (Please see the end of this handbook for a complete and thorough list of behaviors and consequences.)

As part of PBIS, we have a matrix of behaviors that are expected in all areas of the school. Students will be taught (and re-taught) these expectations many times throughout the year. We will be using technology to track behaviors and students will have the opportunity to earn rewards for exceptional behavior. As always, poor choices result in consequences instead of rewards. Students are taught the items on the matrix on the first few days of school and the matrix is reviewed throughout the school year by teachers. While good examples of expectations are listed on the matrix, there are many other ways the expectations may be demonstrated.

Students engaged in behaviors that clearly exemplify the school expectations (Be Kind, Be Respectful, Be Willing) may be rewarded by a staff member with a ticket at the staff member's discretion. Tickets can be redeemed for events, prizes and rewards. Students are responsible for keeping up with tickets as lost tickets will not be replaced.

Inappropriate/unacceptable behaviors are categorized as minor or major. Staff members may correct the behavior with or without making matrix marks for the student. Matrix marks are considered minor and handled by the teacher or staff member involved using the PBIS system. Behaviors/incidents are considered major when they are causing disruption to the education of that particular student as well as to others and these behaviors/incidents are referred to school administration.

Repeated minor infractions will add up to an office referral in accordance with the PBIS system at which point they are considered major and will be handled by administration. Repeated behaviors will also affect the consequences assigned.

GFMS PBIS MATRIX

	Classrooms	Hallway/ Arrival	Restrooms	Bus	Cafeteria
<p>Be KIND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·To everyone ·At all times ·In all places 	Use good manners when speaking to adults and peers	Use good manners when speaking to adults and peers	Give others privacy Flush then wash your hands	Use good manners when speaking to adults and peers	Use good manners when speaking to adults and peers
<p>Be RESPECTFUL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Of ourselves ·Of others ·Of property ·Of time 	Be prepared Follow teacher's directions Keep hands and feet to yourself	Keep hands and feet to yourself Walk quietly on the right Abide by dress code	Use facilities quickly Keep facilities damage free	Sit quietly and stay in your assigned seat Keep your hands and feet in your own seat Keep seats and floor clean	Enter and exit quietly and orderly Keep your place in line and wait your turn patiently
<p>Be WILLING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·To try ·To try something new ·To try harder ·To try again 	Be on time Be an active learner	Keep halls clean Report directly to destination	Leave it cleaner than you found it	Follow driver's instructions	Clean up behind yourself and others

DRESS CODE

Clothing that is acceptable outside of school may not meet the dress code set out by the CCS Board of Education. Parents and students should monitor and be aware that their clothing meets the minimum required by the CCS Board of Education. The dress code is set forth for all middle schools in our district and applies at all times on campus - dances, athletic events, waiting in the car-rider line, classrooms, gym, etc.

SECONDARY STUDENT DRESS CODE (Grades 6-12)

Caldwell County School Board of Education Policy concerning dress code is quoted as follows: **“Pupils are expected to be properly dressed commensurate with the activities being conducted.** Clothing which does not meet the social standards of the community will not be allowed. Athletic coaches and sponsors of other co-curricular activities are authorized to enforce dress and hair length requirements for participation in these activities.” The following rules apply to students at **ALL MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOLS IN CALDWELL COUNTY:**

- The shoulder width of female shirts must completely cover undergarments and should **cover the torso from shoulder to shoulder in front and in back.**
- Male shirts shall have sleeves (no exceptions).
- The length of dresses, skirts and shorts must reach at least **mid-thigh.**
- Pants, shorts, and skirts must be worn at the waist, and undergarments must not be exposed.

The following clothing and/or items are not allowed:

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| o Halter tops | o Tank tops |
| o Spaghetti strap tops without shirts underneath | o See-through clothing |
| o Shirts with low necklines | o Crop tops |
| o Midriffs | o Tops with slit sides |
| o Half shirts without a shirt underneath | o Bike shorts |
| o Pants or shorts that have holes above mid-thigh | o Chains |
| o Spike bracelets or necklaces | o Bedroom shoes |
| o Pajamas | |

- Head gear, hats, hoods, and bandanas are not to be worn, brought, or carried in the school building or worn on the yellow school buses. Items worn may be confiscated by the administration.
- No clothing, jewelry or accessories with letters, initials, symbols or wording that is inappropriate, obscene, threatening, dangerous, offensive, inflammatory, distracting, disruptive or detrimental to the instructional process is allowed. This includes attire that displays alcoholic beverages, drugs, and tobacco products or promotes violence, hatred or intolerance.
 - Shoes are to be worn at all times.
 - Sunglasses are not to be worn in the building.
 - Coats or over-sized garments should not be worn within the building.
 - Students are not permitted to take blankets or afghans into classrooms or on yellow buses.

***Students may not wear attire that contains language, or other content, which is sexual, inflammatory, threatening, hateful, obscene, demeaning, or promoting disharmony. School officials have the authority and responsibility to determine whether a student's appearance satisfies the intent of this policy. Anything that disrupts the learning environment will be deemed unacceptable. The administration will ask the student to change or adjust clothing as necessary.**

***Adapted from CCS Board Policy Code: [4309 Code of Student Conduct](#)**

Additional GFMS specific procedures and policy are in bold lettering.

The Caldwell County Board of Education's Student Code of Conduct serves to notify students and their parents of expected behaviors, to provide a description of conduct subject to disciplinary action and to define the range of possible disciplinary consequences for misconduct. The term "parent" as referenced in student behavior policies includes legal guardian, legal custodian, or other adult caregiver authorized by statute.

The consequences for engaging in behavior prohibited by the Code of Student Conduct will be determined by the principal, in accordance with the school's Student Behavior Management Plan. Students may be subject to a range of consequences, up to and including long-term suspension or expulsion, based on the nature of the offense and whether it constitutes a minor or serious violation, as described in Section D of Board [Policy 4300](#), Student Behavior Policies. As permitted by state law, students who engage in conduct prohibited under Section J of the Code of Student Conduct may be subject to a 365-day suspension.

***Note: Students that have in school suspension or out of school suspension are not eligible to attend or participate in extracurricular activities/events during the time the student is assigned to in school suspension or out of school suspension. Students that have out of school suspension are not allowed on any school campus. They may not participate in or attend any school function at any location.**

***Consequences assigned are affected by many factors including: repeated offenses (the same offense or different offenses), the severity of the incident, the potential for harm created by the offender to the student or others, historical disciplinary data, student actions/reactions immediately following the event and subsequent investigation and resolution, etc. The administration has discretion to assign more or less days or alternate consequences as are appropriate. ***This list of behaviors is not comprehensive.**

A. INTEGRITY AND CIVILITY

All students are expected to demonstrate integrity, civility, responsibility and self-control. This expectation is directly related to the Board's educational objectives for students to learn to be responsible for and accept the consequences of their behavior and for students to respect cultural diversity and ideological differences. Integrity, civility, responsibility and self-control also are critical for establishing and maintaining a safe, orderly and inviting environment.

In addition to any standards or rules established by the schools, the following behaviors are in violation of the standards of integrity and civility and are specifically prohibited:

1. cheating, including the actual giving or receiving of any unauthorized assistance or the actual giving or receiving of an unfair advantage on any form of academic work;
1st Offense: Student receives a zero on work/test
2nd Offense: 1-3 days ISS
3rd Offense: 1-3 days OSS
2. plagiarizing, including copying the language, structure, idea and/or thought of another and representing it as one's own original work;
1st Offense: Student receives a zero on work/test
2nd Offense: 1-3 days ISS
3rd Offense: 1-3 days OSS
3. violating copyright laws, including the unauthorized reproduction, duplication and/or use of printed or electronic work, computer software, or other copyrighted material;
1st Offense: Student receives a zero on work/test
2nd Offense: 1-3 days ISS
3rd Offense: 1-3 days OSS
4. gambling or engaging in related games of chance involving payoffs of any kind;
1st Offense: 1-3 days ISS
2nd Offense: 3-5 days ISS
3rd Offense: 1-3 days OSS
4th Offense: 3-5 days OSS
**Repeat offenders may also be referred for a disciplinary hearing and/or alternative school placement.*
5. cursing or using vulgar, abusive or demeaning language toward another person; and
1st Offense: 1-3 days ISS / OSS
2nd Offense: 3-5 days ISS / OSS
3rd Offense: 1-3 days OSS
4th Offense: 3-5 days OSS
**Repeat offenders may also be referred for a disciplinary hearing and/or alternative school placement.*
6. playing abusive or dangerous tricks or otherwise subjecting a student or an employee to personal indignity.
1st Offense: 1-3 days ISS / OSS
2nd Offense: 3-5 days ISS / OSS
3rd Offense: 1-3 days OSS
4th Offense: 3-5 days OSS
**Repeat offenders may also be referred for a disciplinary hearing and/or alternative school placement.*

B. DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

An orderly school environment is necessary for teachers to be able to teach and for students to be able to learn. Students are encouraged to participate in efforts to create a safe, orderly and inviting school environment. Students also are entitled to exercise their constitutional right to free speech as part of a stimulating, inviting educational environment. A student's r

right to free speech will not be infringed upon; however, school officials may place reasonable, constitutional restrictions on time, place and manner in order to preserve a safe, orderly environment.

Principals and teachers have full authority as provided by law to establish and enforce standards and rules as necessary to create orderly schools and classrooms.

Students are prohibited from disrupting teaching, the orderly conduct of school activities, or any other lawful function of the school or school system. The following conduct is illustrative of disruptive behavior and is prohibited:

1. intentional verbal or physical acts that result or have the potential to result in blocking access to school functions or facilities or preventing the convening or continuation of school-related functions, including false fire alarms;
 2. appearance or clothing that (1) violates a reasonable dress code adopted and publicized by the school; (2) is substantially disruptive; (3) is provocative or obscene; or (4) endangers the health or safety of the student or others (see Section C);
 3. possessing or distributing literature or illustrations that significantly disrupt the educational process or that are obscene or unlawful;
 4. engaging in behavior that is immoral, indecent, lewd, disreputable or of an overly sexual nature in the school setting;
 5. failing to observe established safety rules, standards and regulations, including on buses and in hallways;
- and
6. interfering with the operation of school buses, including delaying the bus schedule, getting off at an unauthorized stop, and willfully trespassing upon a school bus.

1st Offense: 1-3 days ISS / OSS

2nd Offense: 3-5 days ISS / OSS

3rd Offense: 1-3 days OSS

4th Offense: 3-5 days OSS

***Repeat offenders may also be referred for a disciplinary hearing and/or alternative school placement.**

C. STUDENT DRESS – Board policy 4309 - R

The Board believes the dress and personal appearance of students greatly affect their academic performance and their interaction with other students. The Board requests that parents outfit their children in clothing that is conducive to learning. Generally, dress and grooming standards as determined by the student and his or her parents will be deemed acceptable. However, the Board prohibits any appearance or clothing that does the following:

1. violates a reasonable dress code adopted and publicized by the school;
2. is substantially disruptive (for more information on gang-related attire, see Section G board policy above)
3. is provocative or obscene; or
4. endangers the health or safety of the student or others.

Before given consequences, a student who is not in compliance with this policy or a school dress code will be given a reasonable period of time to make adjustments so he or she will be in compliance. Disciplinary consequences for a student who fails to comply after being offered this opportunity shall be consistent with Section D of [policy 4300](#), Student Behavior Policies. The Superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for violation of the dress code.

1st Offense: Change clothes

2nd Offense: Final warning about insubordinate behavior

3rd Offense: 1-3 days ISS

4th Offense: 3-5 days ISS

5th Offense: 1-3 days OSS

D. TOBACCO PRODUCTS – STUDENTS

The Board is committed to creating safe, orderly, clean and inviting schools for all students and staff. To this end, the Board supports state laws that prohibit the sale or distribution of tobacco products to minors and that prohibit the use of tobacco products by minors. For the purposes of this policy, the term “tobacco product” means any product that contains or that is made or derived from tobacco and is intended for human consumption, including all lighted and smokeless tobacco products, as well as electronic cigarettes, vaporizers, and other electronic smoking devices even if they do not contain tobacco or nicotine. Specifically but not limited to *Cigarettes, Cigars, Little Cigars, Cigarillos, Dissolvable Products (tobacco products that are not smoked and are often called “dissolvables.”), Electronic Cigarettes (Also Referred to as: Vape Pen, e-Hookah, Hookah Pen, JUUL), Chewing tobacco, Snuff, and Waterpipes (Also Referred to as: Hookah, Shisha, Narghile, Argileh)*. The Board also supports state and federal laws that prohibit the use of tobacco products in school buildings, on school campuses, and in or on any other school property owned or operated by the Board.

In support of the Board’s commitments and state and federal law, students are prohibited from using or possessing any tobacco product (1) in any school building, on any school campus, and in or on any other school property owned or operated by the Board, including school vehicles; (2) at any school-related activity, including athletic events; or (3) at any time when the student is subject to the supervision of school personnel, including during school trips.

Nothing in this policy prohibits the use or possession of tobacco products for an instructional or research activity conducted in a school building, provided that the activity is conducted or supervised by a faculty member and that the activity does not include smoking, chewing or otherwise ingesting tobacco. Any student who has a tobacco product on their person must go through the ASPIRE program. This program can be provided by Granite Falls Middle School.

- 1st Offense: Confiscation, parent contact/conference, 1 day ISS and completion of ASPIRE**
 - 2nd Offense: Confiscation, 1 day OSS**
 - 3rd Offense: Confiscation, 3 days OSS**
 - 4th Offense: Confiscation, 5 days OSS**
 - 5th Offense: Confiscation, 7 days OSS**
- *Repeat offenders may also be referred for a disciplinary hearing and/or alternative school placement.**

E. DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Unauthorized or illegal drugs and alcohol are a threat to safe and orderly schools and will not be tolerated. The Superintendent is responsible for ensuring this policy is consistently applied throughout the school system. Students are prohibited from possessing, using, transmitting, selling or being under the influence of any of the following substances:

1. narcotic drugs;
2. hallucinogenic drugs;
3. amphetamines;
4. barbiturates;
5. marijuana or any other controlled substance;
6. synthetic stimulants, such as MDPV and mephedrone (e.g., "bath salts"), and synthetic cannabinoids (e.g., "Spice," "K2");
7. any alcoholic beverage, malt beverage, fortified or unfortified wine or other intoxicating liquor; or
8. any chemicals, substances or products procured or used with the intention of bringing about a state of exhilaration or euphoria or of otherwise altering the student's mood or behavior.

Students also are prohibited from possessing, using, transmitting or selling drug paraphernalia or counterfeit (fake) drugs. Students may not participate in any way in the selling or transmitting of prohibited substances, regardless of whether the sale or transmission ultimately occurs on school property.

Possession or use of prescription and over-the-counter drugs is not in violation of this policy if such drugs are possessed and used in accordance with Board [Policy 6125](#), Administering Medicines to Students. The principal may authorize other lawful uses of substances otherwise prohibited by this policy, such as for approved school projects.

1st Offense: OSS / Law Enforcement Notification / Possible disciplinary hearing & alternative school placement

F. GANG-RELATED ACTIVITY – [policy 4309](#)

The Board strives to create a safe, orderly, caring and inviting school environment. Gangs and gang-related activities have proven contrary to that mission and are prohibited within the schools. A gang is any ongoing organization, association or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its primary activities the commission of criminal acts and having a common name or common identifying sign, colors or symbols. The violence and crime that accompany gangs pose a serious threat to the safety of students and employees of the school system. Even absent acts of violence or crime, the existence of gang-related activity within the schools creates an atmosphere of fear and hostility that obstructs student learning and achievement. Thus, the Board condemns the existence of gangs and will not tolerate gang-related activity in the school system.

Gang-related activity is strictly prohibited within the schools. For the purposes of this policy, "gang-related activity" means: (1) any conduct that is prohibited by another Board policy and is engaged in by a student on behalf of an identified gang or as a result of the student's gang membership; or (2) any conduct engaged in by a student to perpetuate, proliferate or display the existence of any identified gang. Conduct prohibited by this policy includes:

1. wearing, possessing, using, distributing, displaying or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, signs or other items with the intent to convey membership or affiliation in a gang;
2. communicating either verbally or non-verbally (gestures, handshakes, slogans, drawings, etc.) with the intent to convey membership or affiliation in a gang;
3. tagging, or otherwise defacing school or personal property with symbols or slogans intended to convey membership or affiliation in a gang (see Section H);
4. requiring payment of protection, insurance or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person related to gang activity (see Section I);
5. inciting others to intimidate or to act with physical violence upon any other person related to gang activity (see Section I);
6. soliciting others for gang membership; and

7. committing any other illegal act or other violation of school system policies in connection with gang-related activity.

The Superintendent or designee shall regularly consult with law enforcement officials to maintain current examples of gang-related activities, including but not limited to gang names and particularized examples of potential gang indicators including symbols, hand signals, graffiti, clothing, accessories and behaviors.

The Board acknowledges that not all potential gang indicators denote actual membership in a gang. Before being punished for a violation of subsection A.1 or A.2, above, a student shall receive an individualized warning as to what item or conduct is in violation of this policy and shall be permitted to immediately change or remove any prohibited items. A student may be punished only if he or she previously received notice that the specific item or conduct is prohibited.

Disciplinary consequences for violations of subsections A.1, A.2 and A.6, above, shall be consistent with Section D of [policy 4300](#), Student Behavior Policies. The Superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for violations of these subsections.

Violations of subsections A.3, A.4, A.5 and A.7, above, are violations of both this policy and other Board policies. Disciplinary consequences for such violations shall be consistent with Section D of [policy 4300](#) and the specific range of consequences listed in the Code of Student Conduct for the other Board policy violated. That the violation was gang-related shall be an aggravating factor when determining the appropriate consequences.

In a situation where a student has violated this policy or is otherwise suspected of gang affiliation through other circumstantial evidence, the principal shall conduct an intervention involving the principal and/or assistant principal, the student and the student's parent. Such intervention also may include the school resource officer and others as appropriate. The purpose of an intervention is to discuss school officials' observations and concerns and to offer the student and his or her parents information and an opportunity to ask questions or provide other information to the school officials.

This policy shall be applied in a non-discriminatory manner based on the objective characteristics of the student's conduct in light of the surrounding circumstances.

G. THEFT, TRESPASS, AND DAMAGE TO PROPERTY

The Board will not tolerate theft, trespass or damage to property by any student. Any student engaging in such behavior will be removed from the classroom or school environment for as long as is necessary to provide a safe and orderly environment for learning.

1. Theft: Students are prohibited from stealing or attempting to steal school or private property and/or from knowingly being in possession of stolen property.
 2. Damage to Property: Students are prohibited from damaging, defacing, destroying, or altering the use of school property or private property or attempting to engage in such behavior.
 3. Trespass: Students are prohibited from trespassing on school property. A student will be considered a trespasser and may be criminally prosecuted in any of the following circumstances:
 - a. the student is on the campus of a school to which he or she is not assigned during the school day without the knowledge and consent of the officials of that school;
 - b. the student is loitering at any school after the close of the school day without any specific need or supervision; or
 - c. the student has been suspended from school but is on the property of any school during the suspension period without the express permission of the principal.
- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1st Offense: | 1-3 days ISS/Restitution / OSS |
| 2nd Offense: | 3-5 days ISS/Restitution / OSS |
| 3rd Offense: | 1-3 days OSS/Restitution |
| 4th Offense: | 3-5 days OSS/Restitution |
- *Repeat offenders may also be referred for a disciplinary hearing and/or alternative school placement.**

H. ASSAULTS, THREATS, AND HARASSMENT

The Board will not tolerate assaults, threats or harassment from any student. Any student engaging in such behavior will be removed from the classroom or school environment for as long as is necessary to provide a safe and orderly environment for learning.

1. Assault: Students are prohibited from assaulting, physically injuring, attempting to injure or intentionally behaving in such a way as could reasonably cause injury to any other person. Assault includes engaging in a fight.
2. Threatening Acts: Students are prohibited from directing toward any other person any language that threatens force, violence or disruption, or any sign or act that constitutes a threat of force, violence or disruption.

Bomb and terrorist threats are also addressed in policy 4333, Weapons, Bomb Threats, Terrorist Threats and Clear Threats to Safety.

3. Harassment: Students are prohibited from engaging in or encouraging any form of harassment, including bullying of students, employees or other individuals and cyber-bullying as described in [G.S. 14-458.2](#). Harassment is unwanted, unwelcome and uninvited behavior that demeans, threatens or offends the victim and results in a hostile environment for the victim. The hostile environment may be created through pervasive or persistent misbehavior or a single incident if sufficiently severe.

Harassment and bullying are further defined in [policy 1710/4021/7230](#), Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying. Complaints of harassment will be investigated pursuant to [policy 1710/4020/7230](#) Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Complaint Procedure. For incidents of misbehavior that do not rise to the level of harassment, see policy 4310, Integrity and Civility, which establishes the expectation that students will demonstrate civility and integrity in their interactions with others.

The disciplinary consequences for violations of this policy shall be consistent with Section D of policy [4300](#), Student Behavior Policies. The Superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for violations of this policy.

A student who is long-term suspended or reassigned to alternative education services as a result of assaulting or injuring a teacher shall not return to that teacher's classroom without the teacher's consent.

A student who is convicted under [G.S. 14-458.2](#) of cyber-bullying a school employee will be transferred to another school. If there is no other appropriate school within the school system, the student will be transferred to a different class or assigned to a teacher who was not involved as a victim of the cyber-bullying. The Superintendent may modify, in writing, the required transfer of an individual student on a case-by-case basis.

1st Offense: 1-5 days OSS

2nd Offense: 6-10 days OSS

***Offenders may also be referred for a disciplinary hearing and/or alternative school placement.**

I. WEAPONS, BOMB THREATS, TERRORIST THREATS, AND CLEAR THREATS TO SAFETY

The Board will not tolerate the presence of weapons or destructive devices, bomb or terrorist threats, or actions that constitute a clear threat to the safety of students or employees. Any student who violates this policy will be removed from the classroom or school environment for as long as is necessary to provide a safe and orderly environment for learning.

1. Weapons and Weapon-Like Items: Students are prohibited from possessing, handling, using or transmitting, whether concealed or open, any weapon or any instrument that reasonably looks like a weapon or could be used as a weapon.

Weapons include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. loaded and unloaded firearms, including guns, pistols and rifles;
- b. destructive devices as described in subsection B.2 of this policy, including explosives, such as dynamite cartridges, bombs, grenades and mines;
- c. knives, including pocket knives, bowie knives, switchblades, dirks and daggers;
- d. slingshots
- e. leaded canes;
- f. blackjacks;
- g. metal knuckles;
- h. BB guns;
- i. air rifles and air pistols;
- j. stun guns and other electric shock weapons, such as tasers;
- k. icepicks;
- l. razors and razor blades (except those designed and used solely for personal shaving);
- m. fireworks;
- n. gun powder, ammunition, or bullets;
- o. any sharp pointed or edged instruments except unaltered nail files and clips and tools used solely for preparation of food, instruction and maintenance; and
- p. mace, pepper spray, and other personal defense sprays.

Examples of other objects that may be considered weapons are box cutters and other types of utility blades and blowguns.

No student may knowingly or willfully cause, encourage or aid another student to possess, handle or use any of the weapons or weapon-like items listed above. A student who finds a weapon or weapon-like item, who witnesses another student or other person with such an item, or who becomes aware that another student or other person intends to possess,

handle or use such an item shall notify a teacher or the principal immediately.

This section does not apply to Board-approved and -authorized activities for which the Board has adopted appropriate safeguards to protect student safety.

2. Bomb Threats: Students are prohibited from making, aiding and/or abetting in making a bomb threat or perpetrating a bomb hoax against school system property by making a false report that a device designed to cause damage or destruction by explosion, blasting or burning is located on school property.

No student may knowingly or willfully cause, encourage or aid another student to make a bomb threat or perpetrate a bomb hoax. Any student who becomes aware that another student or other person intends to use a bomb, make a bomb threat or perpetrate a bomb hoax shall notify a teacher or the principal immediately.

3. Terrorist Threats: Students are prohibited from making, aiding, conspiring and/or abetting in making a terrorist threat or perpetrating a terrorist hoax against school system property by making a false report that a device, substance or material designed to cause harmful or life-threatening injury to another person is located on school property or at a school event.

No student may knowingly or willfully cause, encourage or aid another student to make a terrorist threat or perpetrate a terrorist hoax. Any student who becomes aware that another student or other person intends to use a device, substance or material designed to cause harmful or life-threatening illness or injury to another person, make a terrorist threat or perpetrate a terrorist hoax shall notify a teacher or the principal immediately.

4. Clear Threats to Student and Employee Safety: Students are prohibited from engaging in behavior that constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or employees. Behavior constituting a clear threat to the safety of others includes, but is not limited to:

- a. theft or attempted theft by a student from another person by using or threatening to use a weapon;
- b. the intentional and malicious burning of any structure or personal property, including any vehicle;
- c. an attack or threatened attack by a student against another person wherein the student uses a weapon or displays a weapon in a manner found threatening to that person;
- d. an attack by a student on any employee, adult volunteer or other student that does not result in serious injury but that is intended to cause or reasonably could cause serious injury;
- e. an attack by a student on another person whereby the victim suffers obvious severe or aggravated bodily injury, such as broken bones, loss of teeth, possible internal injuries, laceration requiring stitches, loss of consciousness, or significant bruising or pain; or whereby the victim requires hospitalization or treatment in a hospital emergency room as a result of the attack;
- f. any intentional, highly reckless or negligent act that results in the death of another person;
- g. confining, restraining or removing another person from one place to another, without the victim's consent or the consent of the victim's parent, for the purpose of committing a felony or for the purpose of holding the victim as a hostage, for ransom, or for use as a shield;
- h. the possession of a weapon on any school property, including in a vehicle, with the intent to use or transmit for another's use or possession in a reckless manner so that harm is reasonably foreseeable;
- i. taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, custody or control of another person or persons, by force, threat of force, or violence, or by putting the victim in fear;
- j. any unauthorized and unwanted intentional touching, or attempt to touch, by one person of the sex organ of another, including the breasts of the female and the genital areas of the male and female;
- k. the possession, manufacture, sale or delivery, or any attempted sale or delivery, of a controlled substance in violation of Chapter 90 of the North Carolina General Statutes;
- l. any behavior resulting in a felony conviction on a weapons, drug, assault or other charge that implicates the safety of other persons; and
- m. any other behavior that demonstrates a clear threat to the safety of others in the school environment.

5. Consequences

- a. **General Consequences:** The disciplinary consequences for violations of this policy shall be consistent with Section D of policy [4300](#), Student Behavior Policies. The Superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for violations of this policy.
- b. **Specific Consequences Mandated by Law:** As required by law, a student who brings or possesses a firearm or destructive device on school property or at a school-sponsored event shall be suspended for 365 days, unless the Superintendent modifies, in writing, the required 365-day suspension for an individual student on a case-by-case basis. The Superintendent shall not impose a 365-day suspension if the Superintendent determines that the student (1) took or received the firearm or destructive device from another person at school or found the firearm or destructive device at school, (2) delivered or reported the firearm or destructive device as soon as practicable to a law enforcement officer or school personnel and (3) had no intent to use the firearm or destructive device in a harmful or threatening way.

For the purpose of this subsection, a firearm is (1) a weapon, including a starter gun that will, is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, (2) the frame or receiver of any such weapon or (3) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer. A firearm does not include an inoperable antique firearm, a BB gun, a stun gun, an air rifle or an air pistol. For the purposes of this subsection, a destructive device is an explosive, incendiary or poison gas (1) bomb, (2) grenade, (3) rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, (4) missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, (5) mine or (6) similar device. A student may not be suspended for 365 days for a weapons violation except in accordance with this subsection.

J. CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR

Criminal or other illegal behavior is prohibited. Any student who the principal reasonably believes has engaged in criminal behavior on school premises or at school activities will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, as stated in applicable Board policies, and also may be criminally prosecuted.

School officials shall cooperate fully with any criminal investigation and prosecution. School officials shall independently investigate any criminal behavior that also violates school rules or Board policy.

1. **Students Charged With Or Convicted Of Criminal Behavior:** If necessary, the Superintendent and principal may take reasonable measures to preserve a safe, orderly environment when a student has been charged with or convicted of a serious crime, regardless of whether the alleged offense was committed on school grounds or was related to school activities. Depending upon the circumstances, including the nature of the alleged crime, the child's age, and the publicity within the school community, reasonable efforts may include changing a student's classroom assignment or transferring the student to another school. Transfer to an alternative school may be made in accordance with the criteria established in policy [3470/4305](#), Alternative Learning Programs/Schools. The student will continue to be provided with educational opportunities unless and until the student is found to have violated Board policy or school rules and is suspended or expelled in accordance with procedures established in Board policy.
2. **Reporting Criminal Behavior:** A school employee may report to law enforcement an assault by a student on a school employee, and principals or other supervisors shall not, by threats or in any other manner, intimidate or attempt to intimidate the school employee from doing so.

Principals shall immediately report to law enforcement the following acts when they have personal knowledge or actual notice from school personnel that such acts have occurred on school property, regardless of the age or grade of the perpetrator or victim: (1) assault resulting in serious personal injury; (2) sexual assault; (3) sexual offense; (4) rape; (5) kidnapping; (6) indecent liberties with a minor; (7) assault involving the use of a weapon; (8) possession of a firearm in violation of the law; (9) possession of a weapon in violation of the law; and (10) possession of a controlled substance in violation of the law. A principal who willfully fails to make a required report to law enforcement will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

The principal or designee shall notify the Superintendent or designee in writing or by e-mail of any report made by the principal to law enforcement. Such notice shall occur by the end of the workday in which the incident occurred, when reasonably possible, but not later than the end of the following workday. The Superintendent shall inform the Board of any such reports. In addition, the principal or designee shall notify the parents of students who are alleged to be victims of any reported offenses.

Certain crimes shall be reported to the State Board of Education in accordance with State Board of Education Policy [HRS-A-000](#).

Student Due Process Rights

The Caldwell County Board of Education and school officials recognize that all students have Constitutional rights, including the property right to an education. Therefore, due process rights for parents and students are guaranteed by the Caldwell County School System. The exercise of discipline in the Caldwell County schools will be characterized by fairness and the maintenance of collaborative and informative relationships with parents and the community.

Disciplinary actions shall be handled first at the classroom level. Teachers are expected to handle disciplinary matters with proper interventions including parental involvement. Keeping the parent informed is a top priority of the school system. If it is necessary to remove a student from the classroom, the teacher will inform the student of the infraction before referring the student to the administration.

The administrator will investigate the facts, review information and/or confer with the teacher, interview the student, and when necessary, consult with the parents. The administrator will then determine what action is warranted.

Due Process Procedures Governing School Suspensions:

1. Provide the student notice of charges.
2. Allow the student an opportunity to present his/her side of the story.
3. Notify the parent/guardian verbally, if possible.
4. Give an explanation of the evidence against the student if he/she denies the charges.
5. Verbally notify the student of action to be taken
6. Notify the parent/guardian in writing of actions taken and reasons
7. Provide the opportunity for the parent/guardian to schedule a conference with the school principal/designee.

(Note: The first four steps may be delayed until later if the student poses a continuing danger to themselves or others or presents an ongoing threat of disruption to the school. This includes fighting, vulgarity, sexual harassment, or anything that shocks the conscience).

Student Grievances

The Caldwell County Board of Education believes that students and parents have the right to an orderly, equitable resolution of problems that may arise affecting them and the school system. *The student/parent shall start at the teacher/principal level using established procedures to resolve matters of concern (see Policy 1740/4010).*

The Board of Education will not consider any such matter until all administrative remedies have been exhausted.

Complete CCS Board Policies are found at: https://boardpolicyonline.com/bl/?b=caldwell_county

Any changes in this handbook may be made by the principal during the school year and parents will be notified in the weekly message sent home via email. Any unintentional errors in this handbook do not void the intent of the school policy or the board policy as written.