

Gatesville Elementary School Student / Parent Handbook



2025-2026

Kristal Brooks - Principal

Gatesville Elementary School



Mrs. Kristal M. Brooks
Principal

709 Main Street
Gatesville, NC 27938
(252) 357-0613
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Dear Gatesville Elementary Parents and Guardians,

As we begin another exciting school year, I want to take a moment to thank you for the incredible support, trust, and partnership you've shown since I became principal of Gatesville Elementary. Serving this school community continues to be one of the greatest honors of my career, and I remain deeply committed to helping every child grow into a confident, capable learner and leader.

Last year, we focused on building strong foundations — from creating systems that support academic excellence to celebrating our shared vision: **"Great Learners Today, Great Leaders Tomorrow."** We set goals, tracked progress, and watched our students rise to every challenge with determination and pride. Whether through our daily announcements, leadership opportunities, family events, or our Think Tank data room, we worked together to ignite both growth and greatness.

As we head into the 2025–2026 school year, we are ready to take that momentum even further. We will continue to challenge students academically while nurturing a school culture rooted in **respect, responsibility, and resilience** — as Gatesville ROARS. Most importantly, we will keep building strong partnerships between home and school, because your involvement is key to your child's success.

As a parent myself, I understand the importance of clear communication and knowing your child is cared for each day. I welcome your ideas, your questions, and your presence. Whether at drop-off, a family night, or a quick conversation in the hallway, I am always happy to connect.

Let's make this year one of continued excellence, joyful learning, and lasting memories for our Dragons. Thank you for allowing us the privilege of teaching, guiding, and loving your children.

It's great to be a Dragon!

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristal M. Brooks". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Kristal M. Brooks

Principal, Gatesville Elementary School

**Gatesville Elementary School
2025 – 2026**

Professional Staff

Kristal Brooks	Principal
Helen Smith	Pre-K
Mary Bunch	Pre-K
Nikki Galzerano	Pre-K
Leslie Keith	K
Jennifer Rose	K
Kristy Davenport	1 st Grade
Meredith Barnhill	1 st Grade
Jessica Lassiter	1 st Grade
Crystal Lee	2 nd Grade
Jessica Harrell	2 nd Grade
Christine Liverman	3 rd Grade
Lori Lolie	3 rd Grade/IC
Kathy Matthews	3 rd Grade
Gracie Boyce	4 th Grade
Robi Mitchell	4 th Grade
Dorlisha Walton	5 th Grade
Hailey Hedgepeth	5 th Grade
Sherry Jones	EC
Andy Riddick	Health/PE
Heather Turner	Media
Wanda Hathaway	Tech. Asst.
Y'Nechia Hall	Tech. Asst.
Aretha Ruffin	Guidance
Lisa Lassiter-Jordan	Nurse

Support Staff

Jennifer Hayes (Interim)	Day Care Director
Ginny Cowper	Bookkeeper/Pay-Roll/School
Secretary	
Dennis Lassiter	FT Custodian
Hurley Jones	PT Custodian
Lelita Valentine	PT Custodian ?
Devin Riddick	Teacher Assistant
Madison Mills	Teacher Assistant
Tracey Carr	Teacher Assistant
Robin Boone	EC Assistant
Shalland Beamon	EC Assistant
Angela Pierce	EC Assistant
Gwen Tallman	EC Assistant
Jo Chatman	Pre-K Assistant
Amanda Ward	Pre-K Assistant
Kristin Knapp	Pre-K Assistant
Danielle Smith	Pre-K Assistant

Itinerant Staff

Amanda Dillard	EC/Pre-K Coord.
Erica Bradley	Speech
Jennifer Hobbs	AIG Coordinator

Gates County Public Schools Web Address:

<http://coserver.gates.k12.nc.us>

Gates County Public Schools

2025-2026 School Calendar

July

4-----Independence Day Holiday

JULY 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

JANUARY 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

January

1-----New Year Holiday
2-----Optional Workday
5-6-----Optional Workdays
7-----Mandatory Workday
8-----1st day 2nd Semester
19-----Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday

August

11-13-----Optional Workdays
14-15-----Mandatory Workdays
18-21-----Mandatory Workdays
22-----Optional Workday
25-----First Day of School

AUGUST 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

FEBRUARY 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

February

16-----Optional Workday
17-----Mandatory Workday

September

1-----Labor Day

SEPTEMBER 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

MARCH 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13*	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

March

13-----End or 3rd Quarter
16-----Optional Workday
17-----Mandatory Workday

October

17-----End of 1st Quarter
20-----Optional Workday
21-----Mandatory Workday

OCTOBER 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17*	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

APRIL 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

April

3-----Optional Workday
6-10-----Spring Break

November

11-----Veterans Day
26-----Annual Leave
27-28-----Thanksgiving Holiday

NOVEMBER 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

MAY 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29*	30
31						

May

25-----Memorial Day Holiday
29-----Last Day of School
29-----End of 4th Quarter/Early Release

December

19-----End of 2nd Quarter
19-----Early Release
22-----Annual Leave
23-25-----Winter Break
26,29-31-----Annual Leave

DECEMBER 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19*	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

JUNE 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

June

1-2-----Mandatory Workdays
3-5-----Optional Workdays

First Day of School/ First Day 2 nd Semester	Mandatory Workday (No School for Students)	Holidays (No School)	Annual Leave Days (No School)
Early Release Days (1:00pm)	Optional Workday (No School for Students)	*End of the Quarter	

Arrival and Departure

Arrival

Arrival: Our cafeteria doors are unlocked for students to enter the building at 7:30 a.m. **ALL doors will be locked prior to 7:30 a.m. Please do not drop off students prior to this time as no one will be available to receive your child.** If you plan to come in during morning arrival, please park in the designated parking lot only. **DO NOT park in front of the school in the "Kiss 'n Go Lane."** Please be considerate of others and mindful of the safety of all. Being patient, alert, and respectful to others can help prevent accidents.

Tardiness: Students are expected to be on time for the beginning of the school day. Instruction will begin promptly at 8:15 a.m. Students arriving late to school are required to sign-in at the main office (with an adult). **We ask that parents do not escort their children to class when they are tardy to avoid interrupting instructional time.** If you need to speak with the teacher, please make an appointment to meet with the teacher during planning time or before or after school. **Habitual tardiness will be addressed by the school counselor and/or principal.**

Departure

Entrance: Parents picking up students in the car rider line should follow our traffic pattern and please be patient. Safety first! If you need to speak to a staff member, please go around and park your car in a parking space. Car rider departure will begin at 3:10 p.m.

Bus Departure: Students will begin loading buses at 3:10 p.m.

Transportation Changes: Changes in transportation should be sent to school via note to ensure the safety and well being of your child. If it is necessary for a student to ride a different bus, ride with someone else, remain after school, or in any way change the normal method of departure, the student must bring a note to the homeroom teacher indicating specifically what the student should do. The note must be signed and dated by the parent/guardian with a phone number so that the school personnel can contact and verify the change in transportation (if necessary).

Early Departure: **Please try to avoid taking your child out of school before 3:10. If it is necessary for a student to leave school early, we encourage parents to write a note.** Before a student leaves the school property, the parent/guardian must sign the student out in the main office. If a student returns to school after being permitted to leave, he/she must sign back in (with an adult). We discourage early departures unless there is an emergency or an appointment. Try to schedule appointments for after school hours. **Students will not be called to the office for departure after 2:45. Parents will have to wait until dismissal, unless there is an emergency appointment.** Early departures will be monitored. **Excessive early departures will be reported to the attendance counselor and/or principal for investigation.**

Parking: Please use parking spaces when available and avoid parking on the grass. On special occasions, drivers may be directed to other areas.

2025-2026 Master Schedule

(Announcements at 8:15 each morning.)

Kindergarten*	First Grade	Second Grade	Third Grade	Fourth Grade	Fifth Grade
7:50-8:15 Breakfast 8:15-10:15 Literacy 10:15-11:00 Dragon Fire 11:00-11:30 Lunch 11:30-12:00 Recess 12:00-1:20 Math 1:20-2:10 Connect 2:10-3:00 Science/SS	7:50-8:15 Breakfast 8:15-10:15 Literacy 10:15-11:00 Dragon Fire 11:00-11:30 Lunch 11:30-12:00 Recess 12:00-12:30 Math 12:30-1:20 Connect 1:20-2:10 Math 2:10-3:00 Science/SS	7:50-8:15 Breakfast 8:15-10:15 Literacy 10:15-11:35 Math 11:35-12:25 Connect 12:25-12:55 Lunch 12:55-1:25 Recess 1:25-2:10 Dragon Fire 2:10-3:00 Science/SS	7:50-8:15 Breakfast 8:15-9:40 Block 1 9:40-11:05 Block 2 11:05-12:25 Block 3 12:25-12:55 Lunch 12:55-1:25 Recess 1:25-2:10 Dragon Fire 2:10-3:00 Connect	7:50-8:15 Breakfast 8:15-9:00 Dragon Fire 9:00-10:00 Block 1 10:00-10:50 Connect 10:50-11:55 Block 1 11:55-12:25 Lunch 12:25-12:55 Recess 12:55-3:00 Block 2	7:50-8:15 Breakfast 8:15-9:00 Dragon Fire 9:00-9:50 Connect 9:50-11:55 Block 1 11:55-12:25 Lunch 12:25-12:55 Recess 12:55-3:00 Block 2

* The Kindergarten schedule will be modified for the first semester to allow students a short rest time as they adjust to school.

Connect	Lunch	Recess
7:50-8:15 Morning Duty 8:15-9:00 Planning 9:00-9:50 Fifth grade 10:00-10:50 Fourth grade 10:50-11:35 Lunch 11:35-12:25 Second grade 12:30-1:20 First grade 1:20-2:10 Kindergarten 2:10-3:00 Third grade	11:00 Daycare (pick up and eat in room) 11:00-11:30 Kindergarten and First grade 11:30-12:00 PreK 11:55-12:25 Fourth and Fifth grade 12:25-12:55 Second and Third grade	11:30-12:00 Kindergarten and First grade 12:25-12:55 Fourth and Fifth grade 12:55-1:25 Second and Third grade

Connect Information

	Group A Homerooms (K-Rose, 1st-Davenport, 2nd-Harrell, 3rd-Lolies, 4th-Boyce, 5th-Walton)	Group B Homerooms (K-Keith, 1st-Barnhill, 2nd-Lee, 3rd-Liverman, 4th-Mitchell, 5th-Hedgepeth)
Monday and Wednesday	PE	Computer (1st, 2nd, & 4th 9 weeks) or Art (3rd 9 weeks)
Tuesday and Thursday	Computer (1st, 2nd, & 4th 9 weeks) or Art (3rd 9 weeks)	PE
Friday	1st & 4th 9 weeks: 1st & 2nd Friday - PE, 3rd Friday - Guidance, 4th Friday - Library 2nd 9 weeks: 1st & 2nd Friday - PE, 3rd & 4th Friday - Computer 3rd 9 weeks: 1st & 2nd Friday - PE, 3rd & 4th Friday - Art	1st & 4th 9 weeks: 1st Friday - Guidance, 2nd Friday - Library, 3rd & 4th Friday - PE 2nd 9 weeks: 1st & 2nd Friday - Computer, 3rd & 4th Friday - PE 3rd 9 weeks: 1st & 2nd Friday - Art, 3rd & 4th Friday - PE

* Group C Homerooms (1st-Lassiter and 3rd-Matthews) will split their students and send half with Group A and half with Group B each day.

1 Hour Delay AND 2 Hour Delay Connect Schedule

(The times in bold italic are for 1 hour delay days only.)

8:45-9:15 *Morning Duty*

9:15-10:15 *Planning*

10:15-11:00 4th grade

11:00-11:45 5th grade

11:45-12:15 Lunch

12:15-1:00 1st grade

1:00-1:45 2nd grade

1:45-2:15 Kindergarten

2:15-3:00 3rd grade

- Breakfast WILL be served on 1 hour delay days.
- Breakfast will NOT be served on 2 hour delay days.
- Lunch schedules will be at regular time on delay days.





Early Release Schedules

Early Release Lunch Schedule	Early Release Connect Schedule
11:00-11:30 Daycare (eat in class)	8:45-9:15 Second grade
11:00-11:30 Kindergarten	9:20-9:50 First grade
11:00-11:30 Second grade	9:55-10:25 Fourth grade
11:30-12:00 First grade	10:25-10:45 Mini Planning
11:30-12:00 Fourth grade	10:45-11:15 Fifth grade
12:00-12:30 PreK	11:20-11:50 Third grade
12:00-12:30 Third grade	11:55-12:25 Kindergarten
12:00-12:30 Fifth grade	12:25-1:00 Lunch



Gatesville Elementary School Dragons ROAR

Behavior Matrix

	Playground	Lunch Room	Bathroom	Hall	Bus	Classroom
	Wait your turn. Share.	Have your lunch number ready. Use your inside voice.	Let others have privacy.	Keep hands to yourself.	Keep hands, feet, and materials to yourself. Use your inside voice while talking to others.	Have materials ready and be prepared. Use your inside voice.
	Stay in your class area.	Wait your turn.	Three students at a time.	Walk on the correct side of the hall.	Keep feet and book bag out of the aisle.	Raise your hand. Keep materials in your area.
	Include everyone.	Make good food choices.	Wash your hands.	Keep quiet.	Raise your hand to talk to the bus driver.	Complete all work. Follow classroom rules.
	Throw any trash in trashcans.	Take your trash to the trashcan.	Pick up trash. Flush the toilet.	Keep hands off walls and artwork.	Pick up trash. Keep candy or food in book bag.	Turn in completed work.

MANAGEMENT OF STUDENT BEHAVIOR

It is the intent of Gatesville Elementary to provide a learning environment for all students that is safe, orderly, and inviting. In order to create such an environment, Student Behavior Policies are established by the local School Board (Series 4300) and communicated through the Gates County School Student Policy and Information Manual. Gatesville Elementary School utilizes a continuous improvement model known as PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Support) that applies positive behavior interventions and systems that will reinforce clearly defined expectations. The PBIS matrix for our school is included in this handbook. Throughout the school year, our administration and staff will provide opportunities to reward appropriate behaviors and teach new behavior and skills where needed. In addition, the school has established a student behavior plan to support state and district policies. These guidelines will be used in situations when corrective action is necessary to maintain an orderly environment in which students can learn, accept consequences, and develop self-discipline.

The school's student behavior plan is applicable before, during, or after school hours when a student is on any school premises managed by the school, on a school-sponsored activity, school transportation (including waiting at any bus stop), or under the direction of school personnel. Students shall comply with the directions of administrators or their designee, teachers, substitute teachers, student teachers, teacher assistants, bus drivers, and all other school personnel who are authorized to give such directions during any period of time when they are subject to the authority of such school personnel. Administrators and other school officials are authorized to involve law enforcement in serious violations in any category and are required to involve law enforcement in cases of certain alleged criminal acts as set forth in G.S. 115C-288(g). In such cases, school officials shall cooperate fully with the law enforcement agency.

The student behavior plan is meant to be a guide that is supportive of positive behavior and provides constructive measures for correcting and managing student behavior in a way that repeated misbehavior and suspensions are avoided. The plan may be changed at the discretion of the principal or their designee, if warranted, based upon the investigation of the incident and/or severity of the situation. Students and parents may appeal any consequences imposed by a school administrator per the procedure outlined in the student behavior plan and the county's Student Policy and Information Manual. The following information should assist parents and students in understanding how behavior policies will be specifically implemented.

Classroom Management Plan:

Each teacher will communicate to students their behavior and academic expectations for their classes. The teacher, using strategies that include conferencing, warnings, phone calls to parents, and removal from the classroom for a short time period, will handle minor classroom disruptions. Classroom rules will be communicated to students and parents.

Dragon Care (ISS):

Reflection time will be assigned by the administration for class periods or full days depending on the consequences for the student's behavior. Reflection will be served during the regular school day. Written and/or verbal notification will be provided to parents outlining the behavior and resulting consequences. Students will be supervised by grade-level teachers and are expected to spend time working on assignments and adhering to the reflection classroom management plan. If a student refuses to work during the reflection time period, they will be referred to administration, and if after conferencing, a student still refuses to comply, the student will receive OSS. The time assigned for reflection must be completed prior to a student returning to the classroom. Students may not choose to serve OSS rather than serving the assigned reflection. If a student is referred to reflection for a full day(s), they may not attend school-sponsored events after school (athletics, trips, club activities, etc.)

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS):

OSS is assigned by the administration for situations in which behavior is deemed to be severely disruptive, harmful to the student and/or others, in violation of North Carolina Criminal Statutes, or a pattern of repetitive violations. In addition to an incident referral, every effort will be made to immediately contact parents by phone to advise them of the situation, and make transportation arrangements. Students who are placed on OSS cannot participate in any school-sponsored events or be present on any Gates County school property during the time of suspension.

Discipline Review:

In addition to individual conversations held with students and parents by classroom teachers and administration, parents are encouraged to contact school personnel if they have concerns regarding classroom management plans or consequences for student misconduct. It is the desire of the school administration that most situations can be resolved at the local school level by working together.

Exceptional Children/Students with Disabilities:

Consequences and actions for misbehavior for students identified as exceptional children according to the North Carolina guidelines will conform to Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities. Any consequence (ISS or OSS) resulting in a student being removed from their designated instructional area will be communicated to the student's case manager and/or the director of the exceptional children's program to ensure that the student still receives mandated services.

Behavior and Resulting Consequences:

The following is a list of behavior policy violations and a guideline for consequences. The administration will take into consideration the severity/frequency of the student's misbehavior when applying the consequence. Following an investigation, the consequence may be changed at the administration's discretion. All incident referrals that receive a consequence will become a part of the student's disciplinary record for the current school year. For the purpose of the GES Behavior Management Plan, repetitive is defined as three (3) occurrences. Three (3) minor consequences for the same behavior will result in a Major consequence. Three (3) major consequences for the same behavior will result in an extreme consequence.

Behavior Response Matrix

Minor

Consequence- Administrative Conference, then 1 to 3 days Silent Lunch. If this continues the consequences will be to the administrator's discretion.

Inappropriate Location on or off campus - student is not in designated area based on their daily schedule or do not have permission from school personnel to be in an area	Disruption- horseplay, loud voices, etc. either in classroom, hallways, cafeteria, etc. that is not of an aggressive nature	Spitting/Biting
Inappropriate Language- inadvertent use of profane language overheard but not directed towards a student or staff member	Dress Code- after student has failed to comply with attempts to adhere to policy (<i>students who violate dress code will be asked to remain in Dragon Care change of clothes can be provided then they will be allowed to return to class</i>)	Cheating/Plagiarism- 1st incident will be submitted as a referral and result in counseling. The student receives a zero and the classroom teacher contacts the parent.
Inappropriate display of affection- kissing, prolonged hugging		

Major

Consequence- First offense, Administrative conference, then 1 to 3 days during the class period or full day Dragon Care (ISS) up to 3 days (*Referrals accumulated by school year*)

Failure to Follow Classroom or School Rules and Policies- Repetitive failure to comply with directions or requests to follow classroom or school rules that impact the academic goals of GES or the need to keep order	Abusive Language- repetitive use of insulting, harassing, profane language, or gestures overheard/seen but not directed towards a student or staff member: Includes race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, nationality, or religion	Property Damage- resulting from student misbehavior or negligence (may include restitution for damages)
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Major

Consequence- First offense, Administrative conference, then 1 to 3 days class period or full day Dragon Care (ISS) up to 3 days (*Referrals accumulated by school year*)

Misrepresentation/Forgery- providing false information to school personnel verbally or by forging notes or other documents that interferes with a behavior management investigation or academic integrity.	Disruption Endangering the safety and welfare of self and others- arguing, yelling, and refusing to cooperate in such a manner that it causes a disruption to the learning environment or disturbance that affects the ability to maintain order of other students during any school activity or location (<i>nonaggressive physical contact could occur- bumping or attempts to protect oneself</i>)	Instigating others to participate in inappropriate behaviors (not including physical contact).
	Bullying- intimidation through verbal and/or cyber attacks during or after school time (<i>these communications are not conducting sexual or physical threats but are disruptive to student learning</i>)	

Extreme**Consequences- Dragon Care (ISS) or OSS as outlined below (Referrals Accumulated by school year)**

Noncompliance or Insubordination with administration's requests (including refusal to comply with electronic device policy) following counseling and attempts to remediate First offense- 1 Full day of Dragon Care, Second Offense- 2-3 days Dragon Care Third Offense- 1 day OSS	Aggressive or threatening physical behavior (may or may not constitute physical contact) towards other students First offense- 1 day Dragon Care Second Offense- 2 days OSS Third Offense- 3 days OSS	Aggressive or threatening physical behavior towards school personnel First Offense- 1 Day OSS Second Offense- 2 days OSS Third Offense- 3 days OSS
Harassment/ Communication of a threat of either a physical or sexual nature (verbal and/ or written) towards a student First Offense- 1 Day OSS Second Offense- 2 Days OSS Third Offense- 3 Days OSS	Harassment/ Communication of a threat of either a physical or sexual nature (verbal and/or written) towards school personnel First Offense- 1 Day OSS Second Offense- 2 Days OSS Third Offense- 3 Days OSS	Harassment/ Sexual Harassment/ Aggressive Acts of Intolerance- includes race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, nationality, and/or religion(may or may not involve physical acts towards a student) 1 to 3 days OSS or Administrative Discretion
Fighting and/or instigating a fight First Offense- 1 Day OSS Second Offense- 2 Days OSS Third Offense- 3 Days OSS	Assault against a student or school personnel 2 days OSS with mandatory Discipline Review	Bullying of a physical nature and /or repetitive intimidation and or Extortion (personal property, money, and/or information) First Offense- 1 Day OSS Second Offense- 2 Days OSS Third Offense- 3 Days of OSS
Cell Phone usage during school hours without permission from school personnel First Offense- Phone confiscated (returned to parent) Second Offense- ½ day Dragon Care Third Offense- 1 day Dragon Care		

Extreme**Consequences- Dragon Care as outlined below (Referrals accumulates by school year)**

Abusive Language- insulting, harassing, profane language and/or gestures directed specifically towards a student or school personal First Offense- 1 day Dragon Care Second Offense- 2 days Dragon Care Third Offense- 1 day OSS Next offense -Administrative discretion		Extensive Property Damage of a vandalism nature or negligence will include restitution for damages First Offense- 2 days Dragon Care Second Offense- 1 day OSS Third Offense- 3 days OSS Next offense- Administration offense	
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Use/Possession of Tobacco, E-Cigarettes, Tobacco Products, lighter and/or other paraphernalia First Offense- 1 day OSS Second Offense- 2 days OSS Third Offense- 5 days OSS	Use or Possession of Drugs and/or Alcohol/ could also constitute a violation of North Carolina Criminal Statute <i>and/or other paraphernalia.</i> 5 days OSS with mandatory Discipline Review	Unlawful Entry/Theft and/or Burglary First Offense- 1 day Dragon Care Second Offense- 2 days OSS Third Offense- 4 days OSS	
Inappropriate (consensual) sexual behavior or contact. First Offense- 3 days Next Offense- Administrative Discretion	Gambling (dice, cards, or any other activity which results in the exchange of money or products) 1 to 3 days OSS	Arson, Possession of Explosive or Incendiary Devices, Possession of Mace/Pepper Spray 10 days OSS w/mandatory Discipline Review	

Extreme - Consequences- OSS as outlined below (Referrals accumulated by school year)

Possession of a Firearm 10 day OSS/w mandatory Discipline Review	Possession of a Dangerous Weapon or Instrument other than a Firearm 10 day OSS/w mandatory Discipline Review	Inappropriate Social Networking of a threatening or bullying nature or repeated offenses after previous consequences. Social networking which takes place after school hours will be addressed if it is disruptive to the school learning environment or student/ staff safety 1 to 3 days OSS- 1st offense 5-10 days OSS- 2nd and 3rd offense
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Bus Behavior Management

In order for students to be transported safely to and from school, it is critical that students demonstrate appropriate behavior. Any misbehavior which distracts the driver is serious as it endangers the student and others. Bus drivers have the responsibility to correct misbehavior through strategies such as seating charts, bus conduct rules, and in extreme cases, immediate removal or assistance from law enforcement. When a problem arises, the parents will be contacted and encouraged to cooperate with the bus driver to resolve the problem. The following bus rules and regulations have been established:

General Bus Rules & Regulations

- ❖ Follow the driver's directions.
- ❖ Refrain from making loud, distracting noises
- ❖ Respect the driver, the bus, and each other
- ❖ Remove earbuds and headphones when crossing the road to enter and exit the bus
- ❖ Remain in assigned seats
- ❖ Keep hands, feet and other objects to themselves.
- ❖ Get off only at designated stops.

Students wishing to ride another bus, or needing to get off at another bus stop going to or from school must submit a note to the office to ensure consideration. The front office must receive a note from the parent and may call a parent to verify the authenticity of the date, as it deems necessary. Because of the limited capacity on buses and in cases where a student's bus behavior is not satisfactory, requests to ride a different bus may not always be honored. ANY BUS SUSPENSION INCLUDES ALL BUSES IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM.

BUS VIOLATIONS AND RESULTING CONSEQUENCES

Level I Violation	Level I Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disrespectful/ Defiant behavior toward driver• Talking too loudly• Spitting/Spitballs• Inappropriate Behavior• Bullying, harassment, name calling• Unauthorized eating and/or drinking• Throwing items on the bus or out of the bus window• Distracting the driver's attention while the bus is moving• Failure to keep the bus clean/littering• Use of profanity/Unacceptable language• Tampering with the possessions of others• Annoying other students• Failure to remain in seat	<p>First Offense: Parent contact and/or bus level consequence Possible 1-3 day suspension depending on the severity of the situation</p> <p>Second Offense: 1-3 day bus suspension</p> <p>Third Offense: 3-5 day bus suspension</p> <p>Fourth Offense: Fourth and any other offenses will be handled at the discretion of a school administrator</p>
Level II Violations	Level II Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Damaging/Tampering with bus• Fighting/Aggressive behavior• Profanity directed toward driver/student• Endangering the safety of others• Threatening the driver• Possession or use of controlled substances• Striking Driver• Possession of a weapon	<p>Bus suspension time will be determined at the discretion of a school administrator. Guidelines for school code conduct will be followed. Out of school suspension is possible for this level of violation.</p>

Please remember, riding the bus is a privilege, not a right.

BUS BEHAVIOR

- When a student arrives at home and there is no one present, an immediate attempt will be made to contact the parent or legal guardian. If contact is not made, the student will be brought back to school and the parent or legal guardian will be required to make arrangements for the student to be picked up immediately.
- Bus Double-Runs and Split-Runs: Decisions involving a double-run or split-run are made by the Transportation Director or Designee when there are unforeseen circumstances in which a driver has to be absent and a substitute cannot be secured. A double-run is when a driver completes his/her first route, and returns to school to pick up students for another route. Please be patient, as this will require students waiting at school with a designated staff member(s). A split-run means that a driver will have extra students on the bus. He/she will drop-off students in various locations (which will extend your child's arrival home time). Parents will be notified by a School Reach/Connect call. Please make sure our number is current so that you will receive the notification in a timely manner.

NO BULLYING ZONE

All decisions related to student behavior are guided by the Board of Education's objectives to teach responsibility and respect for cultural identity and ideological differences and by the Board's commitment to safe, orderly, and inviting schools. The Gates County Board of Education recognizes bullying as a school safety issue, and the bullying policy was created to protect students and staff.

Bullying involves repeated harmful acts and an imbalance of power. It involves repeated physical, verbal, or psychological attacks. It is also intimidation directed against a victim who cannot properly defend himself/herself because of size or strength, the victim is outnumbered, or less psychologically resilient. Bullying can include, but is not limited to the following:

- Unwanted touch of any sort - pinching, shoving, hitting, slapping, etc.
- Tripping
- Intimidation
- Rumor spreading and isolation
- Demands for money
- Destruction of property
- Theft of possessions
- Destruction of another's work or personal items
- Name calling
- Sexual harassment
- Ostracism based on perceived sexual orientation or ethnicity
- Hazing.

Recognizing that bullying entails any of the aforementioned acts, the building principal or designee must determine if the situation in question is bullying. To prevent bullying, the GC Board of Education advocates system-wide prevention efforts that promote positive school and community climate. During the school year the guidance teacher and the classroom teachers will address issues of bullying regularly during special classes and group sessions.

Staff members will assess the extent of the problem at their site, and will involve staff, students, parents and the community in accomplishing the following objectives:

- Identifying victims and their bullies
- Empowering students who witness bullying to speak out
- Assisting parents in ways to help their child if the child is a victim or perpetrator
- Finding assistance for the victims and their perpetrators
- Disciplining the perpetrator if deemed appropriate and
- Reaching out to the community to prevent bullying outside of the school setting.

****Please encourage your child to tell a trusted adult at school. Also, please contact the teacher, school counselor, and/or principal. In order for us to intervene, we have to be aware.**

Safe and Orderly Schools

Expectations: Gatesville Elementary School believes all children can learn. It is our responsibility to provide a safe, orderly, and effective learning environment for all children. We expect students to use the Positive Behavior Intervention Matrix. We have included a copy of the matrix in this handbook. Appropriate behavior will be taught, modeled, and monitored through class meetings, role playing, character education and positive reinforcement that promotes a respectful atmosphere for all. We ask that parents support our efforts to create and maintain a safe, orderly environment of mutual respect where all teachers can teach and all students can learn. Inappropriate behavior will be addressed in a fair, firm, and consistent manner. Consequences will be reasonable, related (when possible), and respectful. Our goal is to provide students with alternative methods for handling peer pressure, bullying, frustration, and conflict. Students, teachers, parents and administrators must work cooperatively to ensure the safety of our children. We will document minor incidents to help students redirect their behavior whenever they do not follow the PBIS Matrix. The parent will be notified by the teacher or principal. We do not tolerate bullying or physical/verbal threats of any nature. **Please report bullying as soon as possible.**

Technology: Students are expected to use the school's technological resources in an appropriate and responsible manner. Please refer to Policy Code: 3225/4312/7320 Technology Responsible Use and Policy Code: 3226/4205 Internet Safety to gain a thorough understanding of these expectations. These policies are included at the back of this handbook and online at (<https://boardpolicyonline.com/?b=gates>).

Safety Drills: Drills are held frequently. Teachers will teach and review safety procedures throughout the school year for all types of emergencies. If you have any questions, please contact the teacher, school counselor, or principal.

Vandalism and Property Damage: The construction and maintenance of our school buildings and their contents are a cost to the taxpayers. **Students who destroy or vandalize school property will be required to pay for loss or damage they inflict.** If students willfully destroy school property, suspension may be necessary. If a student happens to damage school property by accident, he/she should report it to a teacher or to the office immediately.

Personal Belongings: All of your child's belongings (sweaters, hats, supplies, etc.) should be labeled with their names in case items are lost. A Lost and Found area will be designated in the building.

Electronic Devices, Toys, and Trading Cards: Students are not allowed to use electronic devices (including cell phones), during school hours unless authorized by the school administrator. Any electronic device of any type brought to school may be confiscated by staff members and returned to the parent. Parents will be required to pick up the device. Toys nor trading cards (Example: Pokemon Cards) should be brought to school unless the teacher specifically requests them (Example: Show and Tell). Staff members are not responsible for lost or stolen items. Please refer to Policy Code: 4318 Use of Wireless Communication Devices to gain a thorough understanding of student use while being at school. This policy is included at the back of this handbook and online at (<https://boardpolicyonline.com/?b=gates>).

All summer and regular school day programs will abide by the rules and procedures listed above.

After School Program

In the years past, 4-H has offered after school care at Gatesville Elementary for Kindergarten through 5th Grade students. If offered this year, 4-H After School Enrollment Packets can be obtained from the school office. If there is a regular Early Release, the program will run from 1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. If the school is closed or has to close for whatever reason, this program will not operate.

Health and Safety

Child Nutrition: Research indicates that nutritious, well-balanced meals improve student performance. Therefore, breakfast and lunch are available to all students. **Breakfast is served from 7:35 a.m. to 8:15 a.m. If school is delayed one hour, breakfast will be served from 8:35 a.m. to 9:15 a.m. If school is delayed two hours, breakfast WILL NOT be served.** Application forms for free and reduced price meals are available on the district website, as well as in our front office. Applications for the program must be made each year and one form can be completed for several children in the same family. Completed applications will not be back-dated if submitted after the start of the school year. Parents will be responsible for all accumulated charges.

Immunizations: The North Carolina Immunization law requires that all students be immunized. If your child does not have the proper immunizations, you will be contacted by the school nurse. Non-compliance with this immunization requirement means that your child will not be able to attend school until the requirement is fulfilled.

Medication: Students will be administered medicine by a designated school employee. In order for this to occur, an authorization form must be submitted and signed by the physician and a parent/guardian. The form will be kept on file until the end of the school year. All medication will be secured. If your child has an Asthma Plan, please submit it to us immediately. Our school nurse is Mrs. Lisa Lassiter Jordan. She will serve our school 3-4 days a week. We also have First Responders on hand.

Accident or Illness: In the event of illness at school or minor accidents needing medical attention, the school staff will notify parents as soon as possible. A parent or other responsible adult must be reached for permission before any student will be allowed to leave school. If we cannot reach a parent, we will use the emergency contact information you have provided. **Please make sure the emergency information is up to date at the school and in Infinite Campus, should there be any changes during the school year.**

Emergency Contact: All students should have the name and phone number (and address, if possible) of someone who can be reached in case of an emergency when the parent cannot be reached. **This information should be updated throughout the year.**

Gates County Public Schools Policy Reference: Code 6220 Operation of School Nutrition Services and 6140 Student Wellness (<https://boardpolicyonline.com/?b=gates>)

Gatesville Elementary School Dress Code

Students are encouraged to maintain a standard of dress that meets the measure of being modest, clean, and appropriate. We look to parents for their support in meeting this standard. Inappropriate clothing would be the attire that draws abnormal attention to the wearer. **Parents will be notified to bring a change of clothes for students not adhering to the dress code.** All staff members are required to model appropriate dress and we ask parents to model appropriate dress when they are in the school building.

1. Clothing must not be disruptive to the teaching-learning process, revealing, vulgar, or obscene.
2. Clothing will not be allowed which promotes or is suggestive of alcoholic beverages, tobacco or the use of controlled substances, promotes illegal violence, or is of a sexual nature.
3. Clothing is not to be sheer or mesh.
4. Clothing will not be allowed that reveals underwear, cleavage, or bare skin underneath the pants/ shorts/skirts/ shirts. Additional shirts must be worn underneath shirts with cutout sleeves or extra large armholes that expose bare skin.
5. Shorts, skirts and dresses must be no higher than mid- thigh.
6. Shirts or blouses may NOT have spaghetti straps unless covered by acceptable outer garment.
7. Shirts and blouses must cover the waist, midriff and go past the waistline.
8. Sagging pants that reveal undergarments are not allowed.
9. Head rags, scarves, do-rags, bandanas, gaiters, shiesty, facemasks or similar head coverings are not permitted, except for reasons of religious observance or documented medical conditions.
10. Footwear is required at all times on school grounds.
11. Pajama pants and bedroom slippers/shoes are not allowed.

Gates County Public Schools Policy Reference: Code 4316 Student Dress Code
(<https://boardpolicyonline.com/?b=gates>)

Academics

Expectations: We believe all children can learn. It is our job as partners - parents, teachers, and students - to help each child reach their full potential.

Instructional Time: We value instructional time because it is very important to your child's success. Visitors will be allowed into the classrooms during instructional time if they are volunteering upon the approval of the principal. If you need to speak with your child's teacher, please make an appointment to meet with him/her during planning time, before school, or after school. If you have an emergency and need to see your child during the school day, please notify the office and we will get someone to bring your child to the lobby.

Reading, Math, Science, and Social Studies: All subjects are important; however, students need to have proficient reading skills to do well in other subject areas. Students learn how to read in Grades K - 3, and they read to learn in Grades 4 and 5. We spend about 90 minutes every day teaching and practicing the essential skills of reading. **Students in all grade levels should read between 15 and 30 minutes every day outside of school hours.** They should read from a variety of fiction and nonfiction materials. As students become more proficient in reading, they will be able to apply the essential skills of reading in science and social studies using higher order thinking skills to advance their comprehension.

Assessments: Student performance is assessed through a variety of measures for reading fluency and comprehension. Students in Grade 3 take a Beginning of Year Test, and students in Grades 3, 4 & 5 take End-of-Grade tests. Students in Grades K-3 participate in state reading assessments. Progress is shared with parents in the weekly folders, on interim reports, and on report cards. Please contact your child's teacher if you have questions or concerns about your child's progress. A Parent-Teacher conference can be scheduled during any 9-weeks. Also, please share any information that will help us determine how to best meet your child's academic needs.

Homework and Make-Up Policies

The faculty and staff at Gatesville Elementary School believe students should receive meaningful homework and project assignments on a regular basis. Homework provides the opportunity for students to practice independently what is learned in the classroom. Purposeful homework extends the lesson and provides valuable reinforcement of key concepts taught in the classroom. Projects give students the opportunity to explore those key concepts in a more extensive manner. Students are expected to complete all assignments in a timely manner.

Attendance

The staff of Gatesville Elementary School believes attendance is one of the most important factors in a student's academic success. A student is not able to learn if he or she is not in school. As stated in the Rules and Regulations of the State Board of Education governing Compulsory Attendance and Student Accounting, "Attendance must be taken each day of the school year. In order to be considered in attendance, a student (except for hospital, homebound or staggered kindergarten) must be present in the school for the school day or a place other than the school with approval of the school official for the purpose of attending an authorized school activity...a student must be present one-half of the school instructional day in order to be recorded present for that day."

Additionally, "The State of North Carolina requires that every child in the state between the ages of 7 (or younger if already enrolled) and 16 attend school. Parents and legal guardians are responsible for ensuring that students attend and remain at school daily."

Our school day begins at 8:00 a.m. (tardy bell rings at 8:15 a.m.). Students arriving after 8:15 a.m., but before 11:30 a.m. are counted as tardy. **A student must be present by 11:30 a.m. to be counted present for the day. If a student is present at school, yet leaves before 11:30 a.m., he/she will be counted absent.**

Instruction will begin promptly at 8:15 a.m. in the morning and end in the afternoon at the 3:10 p.m. dismissal bells. **A student arriving late or leaving early misses a portion of the instructional day.** Staff recognizes all doctor and dental appointments cannot be made outside of school hours. **Occasional tardiness and early dismissals are quite acceptable.** However, when late arrivals and early dismissals become frequent, the minutes lost from the instructional day become a matter of concern. **If this occurs, the principal or school counselor will set an appointment with the parent to discuss ways in which this can be resolved.**

The staff of our school will follow the policy of the Gates County School District (see next page) regarding students with excessive absences and tardies. It is important to know that students with 20 or more absences will be considered for retention. The teachers, school counselor, and principal will address these situations accordingly. Our priority is optimum student learning. Decreasing student absences is one of our school goals for the year! We will work diligently to maximize time for student learning. Thank you in advance for helping us to achieve this goal.

Gates County Public Schools Policy Reference: Code 4400 Attendance
(<https://boardpolicyonline.com/?b=gates>)

Retention Alert & Intervention Protocol

1. Early Identification & Monitoring

- **Weekly Grade Updates:** Parents have access to updated grades every Monday via the parent portal.
- **Progress Reports:** Sent home at the midpoint of each quarter.
- **Teacher Monitoring:** Teachers track students showing signs of academic struggles based on classroom performance, assignments, assessments, and attendance. A portfolio is initiated.

2. Initial Parent Notification (End of Quarter 1)

- **Quarter 1 & 2 Report Cards:** If a student is failing or at risk, the teacher sends a **Retention Risk Letter** along with the report card.
- **Parent-Teacher Conference:** Teachers request a meeting with parents to discuss concerns (using data that is in the portfolio).
- **Intervention Plan Begins:** The teacher implements classroom interventions such as tutoring, small-group instruction, or modified assignments.

3. Mid-Year Mandatory Conference (End of Quarter 2)

- **Required Parent-Teacher Conference:** For students still at risk, a **Retention Concern Meeting** is scheduled in January.
- **Student Support Plan:** A documented plan is developed, including interventions like:
 - Additional tutoring (before/after school)
 - Small group instruction
 - Academic contracts for students
 - Mentoring support
- **Parent Support Resources:** Provide tips, online resources, and potential at-home learning activities.

4. Continued Monitoring & Additional Interventions (Quarter 3)

- **Mid-Quarter 3 Progress Reports:** Another retention warning is sent if the student remains at risk.
- **Follow-up Conference (if needed):** To evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- **Possible Referral for Additional Support:** Consider evaluations for learning difficulties, behavior support, or specialized instruction (could be considered earlier in the process if the need is recognized).

5. Final Decision & Notification (End of Quarter 4)

- **Quarter 4 Review:** If the student has not met the required standards, a final retention meeting is held.
- **Final Parent Notification:** Parents receive written notification of retention, along with appeal options if applicable.
- **Transition Support:** If retained, the school provides a transition plan for success in the repeated grade.

Home-School Partnership



Parent Involvement Throughout the Year

Forms: We know that the first day of school is very exciting, and can be somewhat overwhelming. Please take some time each day to fill out a few important forms to make sure we have the imperative information for your child. It is important that we have accurate phone numbers, addresses, and emergency information. If your information changes, please notify us as soon as possible. If we have inaccurate information, we will be unable to contact you in emergency situations, and you will not be able to receive our School Connect calls.

Safety Note: All parents and visitors will enter through the front entrance only. Please do not knock on other doors or windows as we have taught the students NOT to open doors for anyone. This is a part of our Safety procedures.

Visitors: If there are any safety issues with certain people visiting your child, please inform the teacher and Office Staff **immediately! Also, if there are legal custody documents, please advise us and provide a copy.**

Lunch With Your Child: Feel free to eat lunch with your child. On occasion, our lunch schedules may change due to Benchmark Testing, State testing, or school delays.

Report Cards: These reports will be distributed four times during the year.

Parties/Special Occasions: Food items brought to school for birthday parties and other events must be purchased from vendors (bakeries, stores, restaurants) where proper quality control and sanitation are required. Food should arrive, and be served in the original container. We cannot allow homemade goods. Purchased items may be distributed after 1:00 p.m.

Special Events/Fees: We will try to offer various special events for students. Some of the events may require a fee. If students/parents owe fees to the school, those fees will have to be paid **BEFORE** the students participate in the event or trip. We try to make every effort to work with parents. If you are having financial difficulty, it is important that you contact the guidance counselor or principal in a timely manner.



August 13, 2025

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are pleased to share some exciting news regarding school meals for the upcoming school year. Gates County Schools will be participating in the **Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)** on a **trial basis** for the [2025–2026] school year.

CEP is a federal program that allows eligible schools to provide **meals at no cost (breakfast and lunch) to all students**—regardless of household income—without the need to complete a meal application. This trial will help us assess the program's impact on student participation, program costs, and overall success.

What This Means for You:

- All students enrolled in the Gates County School District will receive **one breakfast and one lunch at no cost each school day**.
- No meal applications are required during this trial period.
- Additional items (like snacks or second meals) will still be available for purchase.
- You can add funds for additional purchases and monitor your child's account by visiting our online payment center at www.K12PaymentCenter.com.

Why We're Trying This:

We believe this initiative can reduce barriers to healthy meals, increase participation in school nutrition programs, and support a better learning environment. However, because this is a trial, we will closely monitor participation and financial sustainability throughout the year to determine if the program should continue long-term.

We encourage every student to take advantage of this opportunity and enjoy nutritious meals at school each day. Your support and feedback will be valuable as we evaluate the program's success.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the School Nutrition Office at (252)-357-1113 or simpsonpj@gatescountyschools.net

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Dr. Paula Simpson'.

Dr. Paula Simpson

Director of School Nutrition
Gates County Public Schools



GATES COUNTY SCHOOLS
DR. PAULA SIMPSON
OFFICE OF SCHOOL NUTRITION
205 MAIN STREET/PO BOX 125
GATESVILLE, NC 27938
252-357-1113
simpsonpj@gatescountyschools.net

The following criteria will be used for checks written in the School Nutrition Program.

1. All checks require First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name or Initials and Last Name, Current Address and Local Phone Number.
2. Address has to be local; no out of state address will be accepted.
3. Bank can be out of state, but address has to be local.
4. No check numbers below 300.
5. No change will be given from a check, the entire amount must be credited to the child's account.
6. **Returned Checks:** School Nutrition will work with you to settle your check that is returned for Non- Sufficient Funds (NSF). The second NSF check will result in checks no longer being accepted if given within a two-year period. Immediate restitution of NSF check will be considered.
7. If your NSF check has to go to collections, checks will no longer be accepted even is it is the first NSF check.
8. A fee of \$25.00 will be added to all returned checks.



Online Payment Information to Parents

Dear Parents,

Dealing with your children's school money just got a lot easier! You can now add money to their accounts for meals, pay for school-related fees online securely and even see what they are buying.

You may have previously used www.K12PaymentCenter.com to access your child's meal account, but now the website is new and improved, with more features that make it easier to manage your child's account. You can now pay for school fees like merchandise, apparel, supplies, tickets, yearbooks and more online. You'll even receive email and text notifications when school fees are assigned to your student.

If you already have an online payment account, just login with your current login credentials. All of your information will be transferred over. If you haven't used the website before, go to www.K12PaymentCenter.com and click "Register Now" to create an account. Select **Gates County Public Schools** from the drop-down lists of school districts, fill in your information, input your credit or debit card information and you're ready to go! Note that you will need your child's student ID number; simply contact us for their ID number and with any other questions you may have.

Online Payment Website Facts:

- Make payments for meals and school fees online securely using your credit card
- Have more than one child in the district? You can deposit money into multiple accounts with just one payment!
- You get quick and easy access to your child's account 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- The ability to:
 - see 120 calendar days of purchases and payments
 - Check your child's meal account balance
 - Get low balance alerts by e-mail and text
- Pay for not only school meals but school fees, such as merchandise, apparel, supplies, tickets, yearbooks, etc.
- Receive email and text notifications when school fees are assigned to your student
- Less hassle and no more "lost lunch money" or sending checks into the district office
- Setup monthly or weekly recurring payments
- Peace of mind, knowing exactly what your money is being spent on
- You can access [online payments on Facebook](#)
- There are no banners, pop ups ads or advertising
- We do not share any information with third parties, other than your financial institution and your child's school
- The website is secure site and utilizes all of the current industry privacy standards

For more information, go to www.K12PaymentCenter.com or call the **Gates County Public Schools** at (252) 357-1113.

[Click here](#) to see a video on how to start managing your child's account online today!

FEDERAL LEGISLATION PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION

TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 - "No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal Financial Assistance."

TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972 - "No person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program receiving Federal Financial Assistance."

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 - No otherwise qualified handicapped individual...shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under a program or activity receiving Federal Financial Assistance.

RESPECT for ALL!

It is the policy of the Board of Education for Gates County Schools that all students and employees will be treated with respect.

The Gates County Board of Education believes that all employees and students should be free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying as a part of a safe, orderly, caring, and inviting working and learning environment. The board commits itself to nondiscrimination in all its educational and employment activities.

Protected Categories

Race	Color	National Origin	Disability
Gender	Age	Religion	Pregnancy

SEXUAL HARASSMENT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED

Sexual harassment is one form of harassment. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when: (1) submission to the conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment, academic progress, or completion of a school-related activity; or (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or in the case of a student, submission to or rejection of such conduct is used in evaluating the individual's performance within a course of study or other school-related activity; or (3) such conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive so that it has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's work or performance or a student's educational performance; limiting a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or environment; or creating an abusive, intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment.

RETALIATION against a student or employee who files a complaint is prohibited by law.

If any students, employees, or applicants have a complaint of discrimination or harassment that cannot be resolved, they should contact the appropriate personnel at the address and phone number listed below:

Gates County Schools, P. O. Box 125, Gatesville, NC 27938 - 252-357-1113

Title IX Coordinator (for gender[sex] discrimination) - Student Services Director
Section 504 Coordinator (for discrimination on the basis of disability)
Exceptional Children's Director (also for discrimination on the basis of disability)
Career Technical Education Coordinator (discrimination on the basis of program)
Nondiscrimination Officer (all other areas) - Student Services Director

Policy Code: 3225/4312/7320 Technology Responsible Use

The board provides its students and staff access to a variety of technological resources. These resources provide opportunities to enhance learning, appeal to different learning styles, improve communication within the school community and with the larger global community, and achieve the educational goals established by the board. Through the school system's technological resources, users can observe events as they occur around the world, interact with others on a variety of subjects, and acquire access to current and in-depth information.

The board intends that students and employees benefit from these resources while remaining within the bounds of safe, legal and responsible use. Accordingly, the board establishes this policy to govern student and employee use of any technological resources owned, leased, maintained, or otherwise controlled by the school system. This policy applies regardless of whether such use occurs on or off school system property, and it applies to all school system technological resources, including but not limited to computer networks and connections, the resources, tools and learning environments made available by or on the networks, and all devices that connect to those networks.

A. Expectations for Use of School Technological Resources

The use of school system technological resources, including access to the Internet, is expected to be exercised in an appropriate and responsible manner. Individual users of the school system's technological resources are responsible for their behavior and communications when using those resources. Responsible use of school system technological resources is use that is ethical, respectful, academically honest and supportive of student learning. Each user has the responsibility to respect others in the school community and on the Internet. Users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette.

General student and employee behavior standards, including those prescribed in applicable board policies, the Code of Student Conduct and other regulations and school rules, apply to use of school technological resources, including access to the Internet.

In addition, anyone who uses school system computers or electronic devices or who accesses the school's electronic storage or network, or connects to the Internet using school system-provided access must comply with the additional rules for responsible use listed in Section B, below. These rules are intended to clarify expectations for conduct but should not be construed as all-inclusive.

All students must be trained about appropriate online behavior as provided in policy 3226/4205, Internet Safety.

B. Rules for Use of School Technological Resources

1. School system technological resources are provided for school-related purposes only. Acceptable uses of such technological resources are limited to responsible, efficient and legal activities that support learning and teaching. Use of school system technological resources for commercial gain or profit is prohibited. Student personal use of school system technological resources for amusement or entertainment is also prohibited unless approved for special situations by the teacher or school administrator. Because some incidental and occasional personal use by employees is inevitable, the board permits infrequent and brief personal use by employees so long as it occurs on personal time, does not interfere with school system business and is not otherwise prohibited by board policy or procedure.

2. Unless authorized by law to do so, users may not make copies of software purchased by the school system. Under no circumstance may software purchased by the school system be copied for personal use.
3. Users must comply with all applicable laws, board policies, administrative regulations, and school standards and rules, including those relating to copyrights and trademarks, confidential information, and public records. Plagiarism of Internet resources will be treated in the same manner as any other incidents of plagiarism, as stated in the Code of Student Conduct.
4. Users must follow any software, application, or subscription services terms and conditions of use.
5. No user of technological resources, including a person sending or receiving electronic communications, may engage in creating, intentionally viewing, accessing, downloading, storing, printing or transmitting images, graphics (including still or moving pictures), sound files, text files, documents, messages or other material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, pornographic, harassing, abusive or considered to be harmful to minors.
6. Users must not circumvent fire walls. The use of anonymous proxies to circumvent content filtering is prohibited.
7. Users may not install or use any Internet-based file sharing program designed to facilitate sharing of copyrighted material.
8. Users of technological resources may not send electronic communications fraudulently (i.e., by misrepresenting the identity of the sender).
9. Users must respect the privacy of others.
 - a. Students must not reveal any personally identifying, private, or confidential information about themselves or fellow students when using e-mail, chat rooms, blogs or other forms of electronic communication. Such information includes, for example, a person's home address or telephone number, credit or checking account information or social security number. For further information regarding what constitutes personal identifying information, see policy 4705/7825, Confidentiality of Personal Identifying Information.
 - b. School employees must not disclose on school system websites or web pages or elsewhere on the Internet any personally identifiable, private or confidential information concerning students (including names, addresses or pictures) without the written permission of a parent or guardian or an eligible student, except as otherwise permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or policy 4700, Student Records.
 - c. Users may not forward or post personal communications without the author's prior consent.
 - d. Students may not use school system technological resources to capture audio, video, or still pictures of other students and/or employees in which such individuals can be personally identified, nor share such media in any way, without consent of the students and/or employees and the principal or designee. An exception will be made for settings where students and staff cannot be identified beyond the context of a sports performance or other public event or when otherwise approved by the

principal.

10. Users may not intentionally or negligently damage computers, computer systems, electronic devices, software, computer networks or data of any user connected to school system technological resources. Users may not knowingly or negligently transmit computer viruses or self-replicating messages or deliberately try to degrade or disrupt system performance, including by streaming audio or video for non-instructional purposes. Users may not disable antivirus programs installed on school system-owned or issued devices.

11. Users may not create or introduce games, network communications programs or any foreign program or software onto any school system computer, electronic device or network without the express permission of the technology director or designee.

12. Users are prohibited from engaging in unauthorized or unlawful activities, such as "hacking" or using the computer network to gain or attempt to gain unauthorized or unlawful access to other computers, computer systems or accounts.

13. Users are prohibited from using another individual's ID or password for any technological resource or account without permission from the individual. Sharing of an individual's ID or password is strongly discouraged. If an ID or password must be shared for a unique classroom situation, students must have permission from the teacher or other school official.

14. Users may not read, alter, change, block, execute or delete files or communications belonging to another user without the owner's express prior permission.

15. Employees shall not use passwords or user IDs for any data system (e.g., the state student information and instructional improvement system applications, time-keeping software, etc.), for an unauthorized or improper purpose.

16. If a user identifies or encounters an instance of unauthorized access or another security concern, he or she must immediately notify a teacher, school system administrator, or the technology director or designee. Users must not share the problem with other users. Any user identified as a security risk will be denied access.

17. It is the user's responsibility to back up data and other important files.

18. Employees shall make reasonable efforts to supervise students' use of the Internet during instructional time.

19. Views may be expressed on the Internet or other technological resources as representing the view of the school system or part of the school system only with prior approval by the superintendent or designee.

20. Users who are issued school system-owned and -maintained devices for home use (such as laptops, Chromebooks, etc.) must adhere to any other reasonable rules or guidelines issued by the superintendent or technology director for the use of such devices.

Exceptions to these rules may be made for employees whose activities are necessary to carry out their job responsibilities and are authorized by law.

C. Restricted Material on the Internet

The Internet and electronic communications offer fluid environments in which students may access or be exposed to materials and information from diverse and rapidly changing sources, including some that may be harmful to students. The board recognizes that it is impossible to predict with certainty what information on the Internet students may access or obtain. Nevertheless, school system personnel shall take reasonable precautions to prevent students from accessing material and information that is obscene, pornographic or otherwise harmful to minors, including violence, nudity or graphic language that does not serve a legitimate pedagogical purpose. The superintendent shall ensure that technology protection measures are used as provided in policy 3226/4205, Internet Safety, and are disabled or minimized only when permitted by law and board policy. The board is not responsible for the content accessed by using a cellular network to connect a personal device to the Internet.

D. Privacy

Students, employees, visitors and other users have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send, delete, receive or display when using the school system's network, devices, Internet access, email system or other technological resources owned or issued by the school system, whether the resources are used at school or elsewhere and even if the use is for personal purposes. Users should not assume that files or communications created, transmitted, or displayed using school system technological resources or stored on servers, the storage mediums of individual devices, or on school managed cloud services will be private. Under certain circumstances, school officials may be required to disclose such electronic information to law enforcement or other third parties, for example, as a response to a document production request in a lawsuit against the board, in response to a public records request, or as evidence of illegal activity in a criminal investigation.

The school system may, without notice, (1) monitor, track and/or log network access, communications and use; (2) monitor and allocate fileserver space; and (3) access, review, copy, store, delete or disclose the content of all user files, regardless of medium, the content of electronic mailboxes issued by the school system, and system outputs, such as printouts, at any time for any lawful purpose. Such purposes may include, but are not limited to maintaining system integrity, security, or functionality, ensuring compliance with board policy and applicable laws and regulations, protecting the school system from liability and complying with public records requests. School system personnel shall monitor online activities of individuals who access the Internet via a school-owned device.

By using the school system's network, Internet access, electronic devices, email system, devices or other technological resources, individuals consent to have that use monitored by authorized school system personnel as described in this policy.

E. Use of Personal Technology on School System Property

Users may not use private WiFi hotspots or other personal technology on campus to access the Internet outside the school system's wireless network. Each principal may establish rules for his or her school site as to whether and how other personal technology devices (including, but not limited to smart phones, tablets, laptops, etc.) may be used on campus. Students' devices are governed also by policy 4318, Use of Wireless Communication Devices. Use of personal technology devices is also subject to any rules established by the superintendent under a bring your own device plan authorized by Section C of policy 3220, Technology in the Educational Program, and for employees, policy 3228/7323, Use of Personal Technology to Conduct School Business. The school system assumes no responsibility for personal technology devices brought to school.

F. Personal Websites

The superintendent may use any means available to request the removal of personal websites that substantially disrupt the school environment or that utilize school system or individual school names, logos or trademarks without permission.

1. Students

Though school personnel generally do not monitor students' Internet activity conducted on non-school system devices during non-school hours, when the student's online behavior has a direct and immediate effect on school safety or maintaining order and discipline in the schools, the student may be disciplined in accordance with board policy to the extent consistent with law (see the student behavior policies in the 4300 series).

2. Employees

Employees' personal websites are subject to policy 7335, Employee Use of Social Media. Employees may not use their personal websites to communicate with students, as prohibited by policy 7335 and policy 4040/7310, Staff-Student Relations.

3. Volunteers

Volunteers are to maintain appropriate relationships with students at all times. Volunteers are encouraged to block students from viewing personal information on volunteer personal websites or online networking profiles in order to prevent the possibility that students could view materials that are not age appropriate. An individual volunteer's relationship with the school system may be terminated if the volunteer engages in inappropriate online interaction with students.

G. Use Agreements

All students, parents and employees will be informed annually of the information in this policy and in any applicable generative artificial intelligence (AI) guidelines developed in accordance with policy 3220, Technology in the Educational Program. Prior to using school system technological resources, students and employees must agree to comply with the requirements of this policy and the generative AI guidelines and consent to the school system's use of monitoring systems to monitor and detect inappropriate use of technological resources. In addition, the student's parent must consent to the student accessing the Internet and to the school system monitoring the student's Internet activity and electronic mailbox issued by the school system and must sign a copy of the generative AI guidelines.

H. Consequences

Based on the nature and severity of the offense and the circumstances surrounding the incident, violations of this policy will result in appropriate remedial actions or discipline up to and including long-term suspension for students and dismissal for employees and may result in revocation of user privileges. Willful misuse may also result in criminal prosecution under applicable state and federal law.

Legal References: [U.S. Const. amend. I](#); Children's Internet Protection Act, [47 U.S.C. 254](#)(h)(5); Electronic Communications Privacy Act, [18 U.S.C. 2510-2522](#); Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, [20 U.S.C. 1232g](#); [17 U.S.C. 101](#) *et seq.*; [20 U.S.C. 7131](#); [G.S. 115C-325](#)(e) (applicable to career status teachers), [-325.4](#) (applicable to non-career status teachers); [143-805](#)

Cross References: Curriculum and Instructional Guides (policy 3115), Technology in the Educational Program (policy 3220), Internet Safety (policy 3226/4205), Web Page Development (3227/7322), Use of Personal Technology to Conduct School Business (policy 3228/7323), Copyright Compliance (policy 3230/7330), Student Behavior Policies (all policies in the 4300 series), Student Records (policy 4700), Confidentiality of Personal Identifying Information (policy 4705/7825), Public Records – Retention, Release and Disposition (policy 5070/7350), Use of Equipment, Materials and Supplies (policy 6520), Network Security (policy 6524), Staff Responsibilities (policy 7300), Employee Use of Social Media (policy 7335)

Other Resources: North Carolina Generative AI Implementation Recommendations and Considerations for PK-13 Public Schools, available at https://go.ncdpi.gov/AI_Guidelines

Adopted: September 10, 2012

Revised: June 3, 2015; February 6, 2017; December 3, 2019; December 13, 2021; May 13, 2024; November 12, 2024

Gates County Schools

Policy Code: 3226/4205 Internet Safety

A. Introduction

It is the policy of the board to: (a) prevent user access via its technological resources to, or transmission of, inappropriate material on the Internet or through electronic mail or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access to the Internet and devices or programs connected to or accessible through the Internet; (c) prevent other unlawful online activity; (d) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (e) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act.

B. Definitions

1. Technology Protection Measure

The term "technology protection measure" means a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography or harmful to minors.

2. Harmful to Minors The term "harmful to minors" means any picture, image, graphic image file or other visual depiction that:

- a. taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex or excretion;
- b. depicts, describes or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
- c. taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value as to minors.

3. Child Pornography

The term "child pornography" means any visual depiction, including any photograph, film, video picture or computer or computer-generated image or picture, whether made or produced by electronic, mechanical or other means, of sexually explicit conduct, where:

- a. the production of such visual depiction involves the use of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct;
- b. such visual depiction is a digital image, computer image or computer-generated image that is, or is indistinguishable from, that of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct; or
- c. such visual depiction has been created, adapted or modified to appear that an identifiable minor is engaging in sexually explicit conduct.

4. Sexual Act; Sexual Contact

The terms "sexual act" and "sexual contact" have the meanings given such terms in [section 2246 of title 18, United States Code](#).

5. Minor

For purposes of this policy, the term "minor" means any individual who has not attained the age of 17 years.

C. Access to Inappropriate Material

To the extent practical, technology protection measures (or "Internet filters") will be used to block or filter access to inappropriate information on the Internet and World Wide Web. Specifically, blocking will be applied to audio and visual depictions deemed obscene or to be child pornography or harmful to minors. Student access to other materials that are inappropriate to minors will also be restricted. The board has determined that audio or visual materials that depict violence, nudity or graphic language that does not serve a legitimate pedagogical purpose is inappropriate for minors. The superintendent, in conjunction with a school technology and media advisory committee (see policy 3200, Selection of Instructional Materials), shall make a determination regarding what other matter or materials are inappropriate for minors. School system personnel may not restrict Internet access to ideas, perspectives or viewpoints if the restriction is motivated solely by disapproval of the viewpoints involved.

Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled during use by an adult for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

D. Inappropriate Network Usage

All users of school system technological resources are expected to comply with the requirements established in policy 3225/4312/7320, Technology Responsible Use. In particular, users are prohibited from: (a) attempting to gain unauthorized access, including "hacking," and engaging in other similar unlawful activities; and (b) engaging in the unauthorized disclosure, use or dissemination of personal identifying information regarding minors.

E. Education, Supervision and Monitoring

To the extent practical, steps will be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the school system's online computer network, especially when they are using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging and other forms of direct electronic communications. It is the responsibility of all school personnel to educate, supervise and monitor usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, the Children's Internet Protection Act, the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act and the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act.

Procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures are the responsibility of the technology director or designated representatives.

The technology director or designated representatives shall provide age-appropriate training for students who use the school system's Internet services. The training provided will be designed to promote the school system's commitment to educating student in digital literacy and citizenship, including:

1. the standards and acceptable use of Internet services as set forth in policy 3225/4312/7320, Technology Responsible Use;
2. student safety with regard to safety on the Internet, appropriate behavior while online, including behavior on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and cyberbullying awareness and response; and
3. compliance with the E-rate requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act.

Following receipt of this training, the student must acknowledge that he or she received the training, understood it and will follow the provisions of policy 3225/4312/7320, Technology Responsible Use.

The superintendent shall develop any regulations needed to implement this policy and shall submit any certifications necessary to demonstrate compliance with this policy.

Legal References: Children's Internet Protection Act, [47 U.S.C. 254](#)(h); Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act, [47 U.S.C. 254](#)(l); Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act, [47 U.S.C. 254](#)(h)

Cross References: Professional and Staff Development (policy 1610/7800), Technology in the Educational Program (policy 3220), Technology Responsible Use (policy 3225/4312/7320), School Improvement Plan (policy 3430), Use of Equipment, Materials and Supplies (policy 6520), Network Security (policy 6524)

Adopted: September 10, 2012, at a public meeting, following normal public notice

Replaces: Internet/Network Acceptable Use (policy IIBH)

Reviewed: July 24, 2023

Gates County Schools

Policy Code: 4318 Use of Wireless Communication Devices

The board recognizes that cellular phones and other wireless communication devices have become an important tool 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 or as otherwise directed by school rules or school personnel. Additionally, these devices should not be used during transition time or during non-instructional times, such as lunch breaks.

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

Administrators will establish guidelines regarding the proper storage of these devices during times when their use is not authorized.

A. Authorized Use

Administrators may authorize individual students to use wireless communication devices for personal purposes when there is a reasonable need for such communication. Teachers and administrators may authorize individual students to use the devices for instructional purposes, provided that they supervise the students during such use.

Although use generally is 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. In addition, elementary and middle school students who participate in after-school programs are prohibited from using wireless communication devices during such programs.

B. Consequences for Unauthorized Use

School employees may immediately confiscate any wireless communication devices that are on, used, displayed or visible in violation of this policy. Absent compelling and unusual circumstances, confiscated wireless communication devices will be returned only to the student's parent in accordance with the Schools Code of Conduct.

The disciplinary consequences for violations of this policy shall be consistent with Section F 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.

The following factors should be considered when determining appropriate consequences: 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 school 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.

The taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing of obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfer or otherwise (e.g. texting, emailing, "sexting," etc.) may constitute a crime under state and/or federal law. Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs will be reported to law enforcement and/or other appropriate state or federal agencies, which may result in arrest, criminal prosecution, and/or lifetime inclusion on

sex offender registries.

C. Search of Wireless Communication Devices

In accordance with policy 4342, Student Searches, a student's wireless communication device and its contents, including, but not limited to, text messages and digital photos, may be searched whenever 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 must be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the nature of the suspected infraction.

D. Liability

Students are personally and solely responsible for the security of their wireless communication devices. The school system is not responsible for the theft, loss or damage of a cellular phone or other personal wireless communication device.

Legal References: [G.S. 115C-36](#), [-390.2](#)

Cross References: Student Behavior Policies (policy 4300), Disruptive Behavior (policy 4315), Student Searches (policy 4342)

Adopted: June 28, 2011

Revised: July 15, 2024

Gates County Schools
