



Hawks Nest STEAM Academy



Parent & Student Handbook 2023-2024

“STEAM is an educational approach to learning that uses Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics as access points for guiding student inquiry, dialogue and critical thinking.”

- Susan Riley, Institute for Arts Integration and STEAM



Welcome to Hawks Nest STEAM Academy – a North Carolina STEM School of Distinction! We are excited about the new school year and excited that you and your child are a part of our school family. At Hawks Nest, we are committed to building the foundation for your child and promoting an atmosphere where all students can thrive. We define “thrive” as children loving school, excited about learning, growing in all areas and taking the knowledge they gain here and applying it in real life.

Our vision is to create a learning environment that inspires success and a lifetime of learning. Our mission is to partner with parents, teachers, students and community to provide innovative opportunities for all students to become problem solvers in a safe, nurturing and creative learning environment which will prepare them for careers in the fields of scientists, engineers, mathematicians and many other areas of expertise. Through critical thinking and exploration, students will participate in inquiry based learning where they will experience and apply the Engineering Design Process to solve problems.

To realize our vision and mission, Hawks Nest STEAM Academy will

- Help students to build character and good citizenship;
- Set high academic and behavioral expectations;
- Provide a learning environment that promotes innovation, creativity, exploration, problem solving, risk taking and collaboration;
- Provide a safe, secure, and nurturing environment;
- Provide quality teaching and learning by highly qualified staff;
- Engage parents and community as partners;
- Put our resources towards results; and,
- Use data to meet the needs of individual learners.

I trust you will find the contents of this handbook informative and useful. It is designed to answer questions about the daily operation of our school. If you cannot find the answer you need here, contact me or a member of our office staff. Thank you for entrusting your child into our care. It is our pleasure to serve you and make this school year the best ever!

Tammy Mims
Principal

ENROLLMENT

Students enrolled at Hawks Nest STEAM Academy are selected through the lottery process and must meet the transfer policy requirements established by Gaston County Schools which is to remain in good standing academically, behaviorally and in the area of attendance. In addition, students must be residents of Gaston County. Any student not meeting these requirements will require a parent conference with administration to discuss a plan of action, may be placed on watch status, or may be transferred back to their home feeder school.

TRANSFER REQUIREMENT GUIDELINES

Attendance:

Six (6) unexcused absences will result in watch status. Twelve (12) unexcused absences may result in students being transitioned back to their home feeder school. Students with excessive tardies will be notified about watch status after eight (8) unexcused tardies and may be transitioned back to their home feeder school after twelve (12) unexcused tardies.

Behavior:

Students reaching the behavior tier equivalent to an office referral will get a verbal warning about the type of behavior and replacement strategies to be used as well as a parent phone call. The second office referral will result in a one day behavior lab and watch status notification letter sent to parents as well as a phone call. The third office referral will result in OSS and an administrative conference with parents to discuss possible transition back to their home feeder school.

Academic:

Students must participate in the academic program of our school. Parents of students who refuse to collaborate, complete assignments or are not making academic growth will be contacted by the homeroom teacher. Repeated violations will result in an administrative conference with parents, a plan of action will be created and the student will be placed on watch status. Transition back to the student's home feeder school will result if no improvement is made or the student does not maintain academic progress needed to be promoted to the next grade level. Student retention is an automatic transition back to the student's home feeder school.

THE SCHOOL DAY

8:00 AM	Earliest time for students to arrive - DROP OFF OCCURS AT BACK ENTRANCE.
8:20 AM	Preparation Bell - Students get ready for learning.
8:30 AM	Daily Tardy Bell - Students should be unpacked and ready to learn. Instruction begins at 8:30 AM.
3:30 AM	Students Dismissed - PICK UP OCCURS AT BACK ENTRANCE. Kindergarten students without siblings will be dismissed from the front entrance.

Students are expected to be in attendance at school from 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM. The Preparation Bell rings at 8:20 AM to give students time to get ready for learning. The Tardy Bell rings at 8:30 AM. Students arriving after 8:30 AM are tardy and must be brought into the office by their parents/guardians to be signed in. Car rider line will end at 8:30 AM and the back gate will be closed at 8:30 AM. Parents will need to drive to the main parking lot, park and escort their child into the office to sign them in for the day. Students should NOT be dropped off at the front entrance.

If students must be checked out early, they should be signed out before 3:00 PM. Students should NOT be checked out after 3:00 PM as we are preparing students for dismissal. Photo ID is required to sign out students, regardless of relationship.

Students must be in school until 12:00 PM to get credit for being present at school.

Arrival Procedures

- All students arriving by car should be dropped off at the back entrance between 8:00 AM and 8:30 AM.
- Students should NOT be dropped off at the front entrance.
- The Preparation Bell rings at 8:20 AM to give students time to get ready for learning.
- The Tardy Bell rings at 8:30 AM.
- Students arriving after 8:30 AM are tardy and must be brought into the office by their parent / guardian to be signed in.
- At no time should you pass the car in front of you in the car line.
- Students may eat breakfast in the cafeteria and will report directly to class.

Dismissal Procedures

- Students must be picked up at their assigned pick up location between 3:30 PM and 3:45 PM each afternoon.
- Individuals picking up in the car rider line must have a school issued pickup card displayed on the dash of the vehicle.
- Parents / vehicles without pickup cards must be verified and may be asked to pull around to the front of the school until dismissal is over.
- Parents must contact the office if there is an emergency and a different person or individual without a card is picking up. Be prepared to show your ID, give your name and date of birth.
- Students should NOT be checked out after 3:00 PM as we are preparing students for dismissal.
- Students cannot be picked up from the office during dismissal. If parents come to the front office during dismissal time, their child will be called to the office after Kindergarten dismissal is complete.
- Walkers must live within walking distance (.5 mile or less from the school) and parent / guardian must be waiting at the side entrance by 3:25 PM. Walkers will NOT be permitted to walk without a parent / guardian.
- Students must be picked up by 3:50 PM each day.
- Safety Patrol, then must be picked up no later than 3:55 PM.
- Students picked up after 3:55 PM, will need to be picked up in the front office and parents will be required to sign students out with identification.
- Parents with multiple late pick ups will be contacted to create a plan of action and may be placed on Watch Status.

- Kindergarten students without siblings will be dismissed from the front entrance starting at 3:30 PM. Kindergarten students with siblings and 1st-5th grade students will be dismissed from the back entrance starting at 3:30 PM.
- Day Care and Fast pass parents must be in the fast pass lane by 3:15 PM or must go through the traditional car rider pick up line.
- DayCare students will be dismissed from the side entrance. Fast Pass students will be dismissed from the back entrance.
- Car Riders will be dismissed from the side and back entrance.
 - Stations 1-5 will dismiss from the side entrance.
 - Stations 6-10 will dismiss from the back entrance.
- Dismissal times:
 - 3:20 PM - Day Care - from side entrance
 - 3:25 PM - Fast Pass - from back entrance
 - 3:30 PM - Car Riders - from side and back entrance, students should go to assigned location

Student Transportation

- Parents must inform the classroom teacher how students will get home each day.
- All vehicles should display official car tags provided by the school at the beginning of the school year. Vehicles without official car tags may be asked to leave the car line, park in the front parking lot, and enter the front office to show official identification to pick up the student.
- If there is a change in how a child is to go home, the parent must submit in writing to the teacher as soon as possible. Messages sent to the teacher after 2:30 may not be seen.
- In case of emergency, please call the front office.

Safety Patrol

- Students in 4th grade and 5th grade will have the opportunity each semester to submit an application to serve on Safety Patrol.
- Safety Patrol students are expected to remain in good standing in academics, behavior, and attendance (including tardies and early checkout).
- Safety Patrol will assist on the sidewalk or in other areas of the school during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal.

PARKING

- Pull into parking spaces in the front parking lot of the building.
- Do not park in the driveway.
- Handicap stickers are required for handicapped spaces.

ABSENCES / TARDIES

- Parents must inform the teacher in writing or email nfulbright@gaston.k12.nc.us giving the date, student name, teachers name and reason for the absence.
- Written notification must be within three (3) days of the absence.
- Dojo messages or Text messages to the classroom teacher do not qualify as an absence note.
- Gaston County Board of Education policy allows only twelve (12) days of absence.
- Six (6) unexcused absences will result in watch status. Twelve (12) unexcused absences may result in students being transitioned back to their home feeder school.
- Students with excessive tardies will be notified about watch status after eight (8) unexcused tardies and may be transitioned back to their home feeder school after twelve (12) unexcused tardies.
- If a child is going to be out of town, parents can apply for educational opportunity excuse approval but must request a form from the office. Vacations will not be approved.

WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENTS

- Parents should notify the school at least two (2) days in advance of a student's withdrawal.

- All textbooks, library books and school devices must be returned before withdrawing the student.
- Lunch payments and other debts must be paid before withdrawing the student.
- A withdrawal form must be completed and signed by the parent / guardian before withdrawal is processed.

VOLUNTEERS, MENTORS & TUTORS

- Gaston County Schools requires anyone who desires to serve as a mentor, volunteer, or field trip chaperone to complete a Volunteer Application process that includes a criminal background check and be approved by the principal.
- We have a tremendous need for parent volunteers and encourage you to complete this process and give your time to help our teachers and students. We want all parents to have the opportunity to be involved however they can with their personal schedule and / or talents.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

- Parents may become mentors to students.
- Parents may volunteer in classrooms as a reading buddy, helper to the teacher or organizer of materials. (Teachers will communicate with parents regarding areas to volunteer in the classroom.)
- Parents may donate items.
- Parents may become a club sponsor, may contribute financially to a club, or volunteer during club time to supervise and assist club activities.
- Parents may become a member of our Parent Teacher Organization - HNSA PTO.
- Parents may attend most field trips.
- Parents may eat lunch with students.
- Parents may sign up to help with classroom parties / treats.
- Parents may sign up to help with fundraisers.
- Parents may sign up to help with Hawks Nest Beautification.
- Parents may sign up to help PTO with student or staff recognitions or celebrations.
- Parents may not be able to come in and volunteer, but please know your reading with your child every night is the most important involvement that you can give!
- There are many ways parents can be involved, don't hesitate to ask if there is something you are interested in doing.

PTO

- All parents are encouraged to join the Hawks Nest PTO.
- The Hawks Nest PTO provides support for our school staff and community by providing helpful resources, gifts and meals for school staff, and rewards and incentives for students.
- You may contact the Hawks Nest PTO at this email address: hnsapto@gmail.com

COMMUNICATION

Our school seeks to keep communication between the home and school open in the following ways:

Channel 21 / GCS APP	Conferences	Data Notebooks
Website (GCS / HNSA)	PTO	Phone Calls
Newsletters	Email	Text / Dojo Messages
Weekly Phone Reminders	Personal Notes	Surveys
HNSA Facebook	Schoology	Principal Messages / Parent Link

As a STEAM school, we strongly emphasize the importance of technology. Much of our school communication will be sent home digitally via Schoology, DOJO, Facebook, GCS App, Parent Link and Email. We encourage you to check regularly to avoid missing out on important school news, updates, and events. Data Notebooks will be maintained for each student. Teachers will share specific details about their class process.

Always contact the school with a question or concern. Reach out to your child's teacher or the front office. Principal's contact information 704-866-8467 (school office) or email tnmims@gaston.k12.nc.us.

Special Day Procedures

- There are days during the school year that might require a different schedule such as testing days, school wide events, or grade level field trips.
- There are days that might require a different arrival time or dismissal time, such as parent conference day, grade level field trips, or a weather delay.
- Information will be shared with parents through Parent Link which includes email, telephone, GCS App, Facebook and SMS. Please notify the front office if you are not receiving these messages.

GCS Calendar

- The Gaston County Schools calendar can be located at the following URL:
<https://www.gaston.k12.nc.us/gastoncountyschools>

IMMUNIZATIONS & BIRTH CERTIFICATE

All children are required by law to be fully immunized before they enter the public schools. Although this is a requirement, each year we find children at all grade levels that have not been fully immunized. When this is the case, the child is sent home until the parent satisfies the law requirements:

1. The following immunizations are required for every student:
 - a. 5 DTP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis) The fourth is a booster shot which must be given on or after the fourth birthday. The fifth shot is not required unless it was given before the child's fourth birthday.
 - b. 4 OPV (oral polio vaccine) the third dose must be given on or after the fourth birthday. If dose is given before the fourth birthday, a fourth dose is required.
 - c. 2 MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) vaccines on or after the first birthday and the second dose before entering kindergarten.
 - d. 1 HIB (Hemophilus Influenza B Vaccine) on or after 15 months of age and before age 5. Not required after age 5.
2. The required immunizations may be obtained from a family doctor or from the Gaston County Health Dept.
3. Within thirty (30) days of his/her enrollment, every student must show a certificate of immunizations to the principal, verifying that all required immunizations have been received or that he/she is presently enrolled in an immunization program to be completed on a specific date.
4. At the end of thirty (30) calendar days from enrollment or extended period (for those in immunization programs), the principal SHALL NOT PERMIT any student to attend without the immunization required by law.
5. 5th graders are required to have a TDAP before entering 6th grade.

A legal copy of the birth certificate must be on file in your child's cumulative record and in Scribbles. No student will be permitted to stay in school longer than 30 days if this record is not on file.

CAFETERIA

- Breakfast is served until 8:30 AM each morning. Students must arrive by 8:30 AM in order to go to the cafeteria and eat.
- Student breakfast and lunch should be limited to the cafeteria food or lunch packed at home. Students should not bring lunch from a fast food restaurant. Parents should NOT bring, send, or deliver outside food or fast food.

Meal Prices

Breakfast - \$1.40

Lunch - \$2.90

Adult Breakfast - \$2.00

Adult Lunch - \$4.00

Charged Meals

- Students who do not have money may charge a meal if their account has not exceeded the limit of \$10.00 for Elementary (K – 5).
- Elementary and middle school students who do not have money and who have exceeded the charge limit may receive a complimentary alternate meal upon request.

Student Accounts

- Check, Cash, or Money Order can be accepted in the school cafeteria.
- Parents/Guardians may utilize LINQ to pay for their child's breakfast or lunch with their credit or debit card.
- Contact the School Nutrition Business Manager at 704-836-9110 ext. 3 to request refunds.
- Positive balances remaining at the end of the school year will remain on students' accounts for the following school year unless a refund is requested.
- NSF checks are referred to NEXCHECK, a check guarantee and collection service.
- Parents/Guardians desiring to restrict or prohibit the purchase of meals in the cafeteria may do so by submitting a "Purchase Account Limits" form. This form is available on the Gaston County Schools web page in the School Nutrition section, and must be renewed annually.
- Parents/Guardians desiring to restrict or prohibit the purchase of a la carte items in the cafeteria may do so by contacting the school Cafeteria Manager.
- The principal may limit the purchase of a la carte items based on product availability.
- All cafeteria charges or lunch questions can be asked of our cafeteria manager, Erica Collmar at 704-866-8467 ext. 630.

Parents at School for Lunch

- Parents may eat with their child for lunch.
- Classes follow a daily designated lunch schedule and arrive and depart on time.
- Parents must sign in at the front office and meet your child's class in the cafeteria at the assigned lunch time. If parents arrive early, they will be asked to wait in the lobby until your child's class goes to the cafeteria for lunch.
- Parents will be expected to leave the cafeteria when your child's class leaves the cafeteria. Parents will sign out at the front office, and will not be permitted to visit the classroom.
- Designated tables will be reserved for parents and students having lunch together.
- If parents are eating with their child at school, they may bring outside food. Parents will not be permitted to bring, send or deliver outside food or fast food if they are not eating with their child.
- Parents should only eat with their child.
- Parents will not be permitted to eat with their child on testing days.

Holiday Meals

- Gaston County Schools offers a few Holiday Meals during the school year. Hawks Nest invites the following grade level parents for the following meals. Meal times may be adjusted.
 - Thanksgiving (Date TBA) - with Kindergarten, 2nd Grade and 4th Grade
 - Christmas (Date TBA) - with 1st Grade, 3rd Grade and 5th Grade
- Special holiday themed menus are offered on these days in place of the regular menu cycle.

Special Diet & Nutritional Needs

- Students who require modifications to their school meals for a diagnosed medical condition (ex. Allergies, Diabetes, etc.) must have a completed Diet Order form on file at the School Nutrition office, with the School Nurse, and with the classroom teacher.
- All requests for special diets must be submitted annually and whenever there is a change to an existing special diet.
- These requests must be completed on the Diet Order form, signed by a physician, and sent to the School Nutrition Office.

- Diet Order forms may be obtained from the School Nutrition office, Cafeteria Manager, or the School Nurse.
- Upon receipt of each completed Diet Order form, the nutritionist will modify menus and instruct cafeteria managers with regard to each individual Diet Order.
- The parent/guardian of the student requiring a special diet will be notified by School Nutrition regarding the effective date of the Diet Order.

Free and Reduced Meal Applications

- Applications are available at the school office, the school cafeteria, and at the School Nutrition Center in Lowell, NC. Applications should be returned to the school Cafeteria Manager or the School Nutrition Center – 500 Reid Street, Lowell, NC 28098.
- Only one application is required per household.
- An application for a foster child must be submitted separately for that child only; foster children are categorically eligible for free meal benefits.
- Students designated as homeless by Gaston County Schools' homeless liaison are categorically eligible for free meals. No application is required, but documentation must be received from the homeless liaison before benefits begin.
- Students who receive Food Stamp or TANF benefits are categorically eligible for free meals. The appropriate Food Stamp or TANF case ID# must be entered beside each student's name on the application.
- If a student receives Food Stamp or TANF benefits and is notified that they have been approved for free meal benefits by way of Direct Certification, an application is not required for that student.
- To apply, a parent or guardian must complete and sign a Free and Reduced Price Meal application form (<https://www.lunchapplication.com/>). The form must be submitted each year.

Special Celebrations

- The classroom teacher will coordinate with the room parent and with other parents for special celebrations.
- The classroom is NOT an appropriate venue to distribute personal birthday invitations. Teachers will protect instructional time and schedule a time each month to recognize student birthdays.
- Celebrations should be limited to small individually wrapped snacks for each student.
- NO balloons, flowers, or gifts.

PAYMENTS

- All payments (for field trips / t-shirts / yearbook / ect.) must be to the office by 9:30 AM each morning or submitted online at www.k12paymentcenter.com. Payments will not be taken after 9:30 AM in the school office. We are not allowed to hold money in the office overnight.
- Anyone needing to pay in a different format than k12paymentcenter will need to bring their money to the office themselves.

Writing checks

- Checks should be written on a commercially printed check that includes your name, address and contact telephone number.
- Writing a check to Hawks Nest Steam Academy / Gaston County Schools enters you into an agreement that for any reason the check is returned, your account may be represented electronically and a service fee established by law may be debited from the account.
- If checks and fees are not collected electronically, Nexcheck will contact you by mail or telephone to make payment arrangements.

NORTH CAROLINA CURRICULUM STANDARDS

- Information can be found at www.ncpublicschools.org.
- Ask your teacher or principal if you have questions or concerns about the academic curriculum.
- Curriculum seeks to prepare students for college or workforce in the 21st century

- Please attend curriculum nights to receive helpful hints as to what our curriculum is and how to best help your child at home with school work.

Reporting Children's Academic Progress

- Teachers will share important data to update on your child's progress. Please review, sign appropriate paperwork if needed, and contact the teacher if you have any questions.
- At the midpoint of each grading period an interim report will be sent home.
- Report cards will be sent home at the end of each nine (9) week grading period (see school calendar for dates).
- Instructional levels for math and reading are coded at the learner's ability level. Carefully study all communications from the teacher.
- Gaston County Schools emphasizes Standards Based Learning and Standards Based Grading. Grades, Interims, and Report Cards will look different and will utilize both Schoology and PowerSchool. Teachers will communicate with parents frequently about student progress through data notebooks and other venues. If you have questions about Standards Based Learning and Standards Based Grading, please share your concerns with the classroom teacher.
- PowerSchool and Schoology access instructions for parents are available in the office.

Homework Policy

- Your child will have homework during the school week.
- Please make sure homework is completed.
- Students may be given a homework folder.
- Homework may be distributed to students through the Schoology platform. Classroom teachers will share helpful hints for parents to help students with Schoology.
- Classroom teachers may utilize the Dojo app to communicate with parents about classwork, homework and behavior.
- All students are expected to complete homework in iReady each week, consisting of two (2) math and two (2) reading lessons with 85% proficiency.

Promotion Policy

- Promotion policies of students attending Gaston County Schools are set by the Gaston County Board of Education and North Carolina Law. Students must perform at grade level to pass.
- Teachers will notify parents of academic problems as soon as detected and will work with parents and the Whole Child team to develop a plan of action. Students will have multiple opportunities to demonstrate academic skills through interventions, progress monitoring, continuous assessments, portfolios and formal testing.
- Decisions involving promotion or retention are based upon what is best for the individual student and will be made by the parent, teacher and Whole Child intervention team. By law the principal reserves final judgment in promotion and retention decisions.
- Transition back to the student's home school will result if the student does not maintain academic progress needed to be promoted to the next grade level. Student retention is an automatic transition back to the student's home school.

Assessments

- Students will test at the end of each grading period to track their mastery of learning objectives required by the North Carolina Standards.
- Teachers will report progress and work closely with children who do not meet their learning goals.
- Students not performing on grade level will have a tier plan developed by the teacher, parent and Whole Child team to address individual academic deficiencies.
- Students in grades K-3 will be assessed in mClass reading throughout the school year.
- Students in grades K-5 will be assessed in iReady for reading and math throughout the school year.
- Students in grade 2 will take the CoGat assessment at the end of the year.
- Students in grade 3 will take the BOG at the beginning of the year.

- Students in grades 3-5 will be assessed in reading and math, and science for 5th grade through the NC End-of-Grade (EOG) assessment at the end of the year.

NC End of Grade Testing Program (Grades 3-5) and Beginning of Grade test (3rd Grade)

- The state testing program requires that students in grades 3 - 5 score at grade level on the reading and math EOG tests before they can be promoted to the next grade level.
- 3rd Grade students must take the BOG at the beginning of their 3rd grade year and are subject to the NC Read to Achieve legislation which has special requirements in order to be promoted to 4th Grade. Requirements include special documentation of the student's growth and participation in a summer reading camp for students who do not pass the 3rd grade reading EOG.
- Parents will be contacted and a plan of action will be developed for students not meeting these requirements.

TECHNOLOGY

- Each child should have their own personal headphones (earbuds) to use.
- Each child will be assigned a school device to use.
- Students are responsible for proper care and usage of their assigned devices and chargers.
- Parents will be given a technology agreement at the beginning of the school year that indicates potential charges if the device and/or charger is damaged or lost.

CITIZENSHIP / CHARACTER EDUCATION

- It is each student's responsibility to display qualities of good citizenship.
- Best conduct is expected when you are moving about the building, during lunch time, on the playground, in the classroom, on the school bus, or when leaving the school grounds.
- Courtesy and good manners should be the key to a student's conduct at school. A good attitude toward teachers and fellow students will make school enjoyable.
- Students are expected to have respect for school property and to take good care of books, desks, school devices and other furniture and equipment.
- Character education is a part of our daily curriculum. Gaston County Schools acknowledges that its role is to reinforce and complement the efforts of parents, families, religious and civic organizations in developing citizenship traits which ensure the continuity of a free and democratic society. Each month we will emphasize a particular trait. The traits are as follows: respect, responsibility, courage, kindness, good judgment, honesty, perseverance, and self discipline.
- All students will be able to demonstrate citizenship and character traits through participation on the HNSA Color Squad and other activities throughout the school year.

HAWKS NEST STEAM ACADEMY DISCIPLINE PLAN

- Discipline at Hawks Nest STEAM Academy is patterned from the Gaston County Schools Code of Student Conduct which is furnished on the first day of school. Please make sure you and your child are familiar with these policies, especially those that deal with drugs, weapons possession and serious injury caused by fighting.
- Any incident that causes bleeding is considered serious and law enforcement officers may be contacted.
- Parents will be contacted by the teacher and/or administration for repeated behaviors or disruptive behaviors.

Classroom Rules

- Teachers develop a set of rules to set expectations for students' behavior.
- Teachers will provide a copy of rules and consequences.
- Teachers devote the first 4 weeks of school to instruct, model and practice behavior expectations.
- Students are recognized for their compliance and demonstration of good behavior through the Dojo system which also tracks and communicates behavior with parents.

- Parents should check the Dojo app regularly for behavior reports and send teachers messages if you have questions.

PBIS

- Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a proactive, multi-tiered approach to discipline that promotes appropriate student behavior and increased learning. PBIS is an evidence based, three tiered framework to improve and integrate data, systems, and practices affecting student outcomes every day. PBIS creates schools where ALL students succeed by utilizing the following frameworks.
 - PBIS is an approach schools use to promote school safety and good student behavior.
 - With PBIS, schools teach kids about behavior expectations and everyday protocols.
 - The focus of PBIS is prevention, not punishment.
- PBIS focuses on the facilitation of a positive school climate that includes:
 - A feeling of safety and security
 - Respect
 - Engagement in learning
 - Involvement in school life
 - Shared vision
 - Involvement of teachers, students and families.
- Hawks Nest utilizes the STEAM acronym to help students understand school expectations to facilitate a positive school climate.
- The Hawks Nest Pledge states
 - "At Hawks Nest, we will have a learning environment that inspires success and a lifetime of learning. In order to have that learning environment, we must have STEAM!
 - Be Safe.
 - Work as a Team.
 - Give 100% of Your Effort.
 - Have a Good Attitude.
 - Always Use Your Manners."
- Hawks Nest also utilizes the STEAM acronym to implement expectations and protocols for student behavior at various locations in the school building and during various activities throughout the school year.
- PBIS Protocols include classroom and schoolwide systems for incentives, rewards and redirect.
- Classroom teachers utilize Dojo as an interactive application at school that rewards students while also including parents and parent communication channels.
- The following strategies are used when redirecting student behavior.
 - REMINDER
 - Teacher will remind student of the expectation.
 - Dojo Redirect
 - RETEACH
 - Teacher will spend time with the student to review and reteach the expectation or protocol.
 - Dojo Redirect
 - REFLECT
 - Teacher will contact the parent, followed up by completion of a Think Sheet and RETEACH of expectation.
 - Dojo Redirect
 - REMOVE
 - Teacher will provide a consequence, put the behavior in Educators Handbook as a minor incident and remove the student to a new location for the student to have time to reset behavior (for example: another classroom, calm down corner, sensory room, bathroom break, etc.).
 - Dojo Redirect

- REZONE
 - Teacher will put behavior in Educators Handbook as an office referral. Teacher calls the office and informs them that the student is coming for an office referral.
 - Dojo Redirect
- Teachers should access the settings control in ClassDojo to ensure that a Dojo Redirect does not subtract points from a student but does notify parents that the student has been redirected.

Cell Phones

- Students will not be permitted to use cell phones while at school.
- Cell phones must be put away and turned off during the school day. This includes smart watches.
- Cell phones may not cause an interruption of the instructional day.
- Violation of the above guidelines may result in cell phones being taken for parents to pick up at the main office.
- Cell phones are the responsibility of the student. We will not be responsible for any personal devices.

School Bus Transportation and Conduct

- Buses will be used for field trips only.
- To assist the drivers, there are video cameras on each bus. Parents are provided information, rules, regulations, and policies in a letter from the Superintendent of Schools on the first day of classes.

Bus Rules

1. Students are to be respectful & obey the driver at all times.
2. Students are to stay seated with their backs against the seats at all times.
3. Students are to use quiet voices only talking to the person in the seat with them.
4. Students are not to touch other students or their belongings.
5. Students are to wait for the bus in a safe & orderly manner.
6. Students who must cross the road are to cross over in front of the bus after the driver has signaled the way is clear.

Care of School Property

- Textbooks, computers, chargers and other materials are furnished at no cost to students; however, students are expected to give them the best care possible.
- Students must follow procedures for the care and handling of all technology.
- Parents will be asked to pay for all books or devices lost or damaged, as well as any property that has been intentionally destroyed or damaged.
- If school property is damaged or lost, a fee invoice will be sent home and student use will be limited to the classroom until fees are paid.

MEDICATION & ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

- All medicine given at school must be prescribed by the doctor. If the medicine is to be given at school, medicine must be brought by an adult to the school in the container with the current prescription label.
- Parents must complete and submit the Authorization of Medication form signed by the child's physician. All medication must be brought to school by the parent / guardian and given to the school nurse or front office staff with the proper paperwork.
- Students must NOT transport any medication or be in possession of any medication while at school.
- If a student is injured or becomes ill at school, he/she is to report to the teacher and ask for a permit to come to the office. If necessary, we will contact the parents.
- It is necessary and very helpful if the school can have on file a home telephone number or the number where someone can be reached at all times.
- All students must be properly checked out before leaving the school grounds.
- Parents are required to come in and sign the student out and must present a valid id.

- Please notify the school if you are sending someone else to pick up your child.

Insurance

- School accident insurance is provided for those who choose to purchase a policy. There are three types of plans with A/B options to cover the time of the school day or 24 hour coverage. Information is sent home on the first day of school. Parents send checks directly to the insurance company and not to the school.

Head Lice

- Parents are contacted should a case of head lice be found.
- Treatment is expected and proof by returning box label to school when returning the next morning at 8:30 AM to be checked prior to returning to class.
- Periodic classroom checks are conducted.

TELEPHONE

- Students are permitted to use the school's telephone if they have a good reason and written permission from the teacher. The school's telephone is a business phone, for school business.
- Any communication with a student should be handled through the office. Please limit messages to be given to students to EMERGENCY calls. After the third emergency, parents must speak directly with the principal.
- Please make prior arrangements with your child concerning transportation so that your child does not have to call to find out how he/she is getting home. If there is a change in transportation for your child, please write a note to the teacher. Without a note, students will be sent home his/her normal way.

SMOKE/DRUG FREE ENVIRONMENT

- No tobacco products may be used by any student or adult while on the campus including while in a personal vehicle.
- Make sure you do not have a lit cigar or cigarette while delivering or picking up students.
- No illegal drug use will be tolerated.

DRESS CODE

- No hats or other head coverings while in the building, this includes hoodies.
- No clothing that displays sexually or racially explicit words or drawings, profanity, alcohol, drugs, weapons or gang symbols.
- No style of clothing or the manner in which it is worn may expose undergarments or create a distraction or disturbance in the educational setting.
- The Board of Education recognizes that local law enforcement agencies may determine that wearing particular gang related attire may present a threat to student safety. The Superintendent will work collaboratively with these agencies to prohibit such dress.
- Tennis shoes are suggested for safe play on playgrounds and during physical education classes.

SCHOOL SAFETY DRILLS / SAFETY PLAN

- Maintaining a safe environment and being prepared to meet an emergency situation continues to be an important process.
- The school has developed extensive plans to address natural disasters (fire/tornado/bad weather), intruders or threatening individuals and crisis situations.
- In the event of a lock down, the Gaston County Police will be in charge of all actions and the school community is expected to follow their instructions.
- In the event our students must be removed from the campus, they will be transported to Robinson Elementary School or Forestview High School.
- Cameras are used to survey our grounds and the inside of our buildings.
- We welcome suggestions concerning the improvement of safety measures for our campus.

VISITORS AND ID BADGES

- Visitors must sign in at the front office with their ID.
- Parents must show their ID in the camera at the entrance to our building to pick up students.
- Anyone picking up a student must also be listed as a contact in PowerSchool.
- All guests within the school building must wear a visitors ID badge at all times and will be expected to follow all school safety guidelines should a safety issue arise.
- All staff within the school building must wear a Gaston County Schools ID badge at all times.

ASBESTOS STATEMENT

- Hawks Nest has no friable material within our building or its materials.

COVID RESTRICTIONS

Covid updates and restrictions will be shared in a separately as it pertains directly to guidelines from the CDC, NCDHHS, NCDPI and Gaston County Schools. Covid information will also be shared on the school website, Parent Link, email, and Facebook.

For any questions or concerns, you may contact Tammy Mims, the principal, at the school phone number 704-866-8467 or at tnmims@gaston.k12.nc.us.

