

Costner Elementary



Growing the Leader in Me!

Student Handbook 2024-2025

353 Old NC 277 Loop Rd.

Dallas, NC 28034

704-922-3522

Jada Owenby
Principal

Carlene Falter
Assistant Principal

Our Vision...

is to value the individual strengths and talents of our students and empower them to be leaders who practice accountability and ownership

Our Mission...

We pledge to develop the whole person, provide leadership opportunities for all, set and celebrate goals, and live the 8 habits.

Costner Elementary School is a Leadership School. Everyone is recognizing their own and each other's genius and leadership potential. We are learning and practicing the 8 Habits of leaders.

Habit 1: BE PROACTIVE: *We take responsibility for our words, actions, and choices. We have the power to impact our lives for the better.*

Habit 2: BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND: *We take time to define our vision and purpose clearly. We define outcomes before we act. We set goals.*

Habit 3: PUT FIRST THINGS FIRST: *We spend time on what's most important. We focus on our highest priorities.*

Habit 4: THINK WIN-WIN: *We choose to believe that there is plenty for everyone and that other people's success doesn't come at a cost to us.*

Habit 5: SEEK FIRST TO UNDERSTAND, THEN TO BE UNDERSTOOD: *We listen before we speak. We listen with the intent to understand another person.*

Habit 6: SYNERGIZE: *We value differences and explore alternatives. Working with others creates an idea or result that is better than our initial idea.*

Habit 7: SHARPEN THE SAW: *We take time for ourselves everyday because we recognize that it gives us the ability to do everything else.*

Habit 8: FIND YOUR VOICE: *We use what we do well to help others.*

The School Day

Student Drop Off / Breakfast	7:00-7:25am
Tardy bell/ Instruction Begins	7:30am
K-2 Bus Dismissal	2:05pm
3-5 Bus Dismissal	2:10pm
Car Rider Dismissal	2:20pm
Car Rider Line Pick-up	2:30pm

Arrival

Student drop off is from 7:00-7:30 am in the car rider line. No parents will be allowed to pull into the bus lot for morning drop off or walk their students to the car rider door entrance due to safety concerns. All students are expected to be in their classroom by 7:30am. Students arriving after 7:30 am MUST be brought into the office by an adult to sign in. Car riders arriving after 7:25 am will not be able to eat breakfast.

Dismissal

Students must be picked up by 2:55 PM each afternoon. Students picked up after 2:55PM, will need to be picked up in the front office and parents will be required to sign students out with their ID using the school's identification system. Individuals picking up in the car rider line must have a school issued pickup tag displayed in the vehicle. Vehicles without pickup tags must be verified and may be asked to pull into the parking lot. **If your child needs help buckling up, please pull over to the bus parking lot to avoid backing up the car line.** Parents must contact the office if there is an emergency and a different person without a card is picking up. Be prepared to show your ID. Students will NOT be checked out after 2:00 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 dismissal is complete.

Buses

Students who live more than 1.5 miles from Costner are eligible to ride the school bus. Parents must sign a bus permission slip at the beginning of the year that outlines expectations and procedures for riding the bus.

Riding a school bus is a privilege, and once a student boards the school bus, their school day begins. Students should adhere to all rules and procedures outlined in the Bus Regulations Handout while being transported to and from school. All expectations for student behavior that apply at school also apply on the school bus, the school bus stop, on

any school grounds, and at any school associated function. Students who choose to ignore the bus driver's directions are endangering the safety of themselves and others. Consequences for not following school bus expectations may result in bus suspensions and/or permanent removal from the bus.

Transportation Changes

If you need to change for child's you must send written documentation to your child's teacher.

Attendance

Preparedness and punctuality are two of the most important qualities of a leader. When children don't show up regularly for school, they miss out on fundamental reading and math skills and the chance to build a habit of good attendance that will carry them into college and careers. Instruction starts at 7:30 am. The following are approved excuses for an absence:

- Illness or injury, which prevents the student from being physically able to attend school.
- Student's medical, dental or other appointment with a health care provider.
- Death of a member of the immediate family of the student. Immediate family of a student includes, but is not necessarily limited to, grandparents, parents, and siblings.
- Principal's prior approval for participation in a valid educational opportunity (vacations are not approved for educational opportunities).

All absences are unexcused without a parent written/ or doctor note. Notes must be sent within *3 days* of the absence. Students with multiple unexcused absences and/or tardies will be referred to the school social worker.

Early Checkouts

Instruction continues to the end of the day. Please make every effort for students to stay the whole day. A student must remain in school until 11:00 AM to be counted present for the day. Students can only be checked out by their parents or assigned emergency contacts in Powerschool. Parents must come to the office and sign students out using the school's computer identification system, which requires a government issued ID. You **MUST** have your photo ID in order to sign students out. Early checkouts will be considered unexcused without documentation. No checkouts after 2:00 pm due to dismissal processes.

Academic Progress

Communication between home and school is important to help students do their best. Please review, sign appropriate paperwork if needed, and contact the teacher if you have any questions.

Please call to schedule a conference with a teacher at any time during the year. Interim reports will be sent home during the 1st 9 weeks. Interim reports will be sent home on an as needed basis during the last two grading periods.

Report cards will be sent home at the end of each 9 weeks grading period. Parents can access their student's grades anytime using Schoology/Powerschool.

Gaston County Schools is transitioning to focus on Standards Based Learning / Standards Based Grading for K-3rd grade. 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 SBL / SBG please share your concerns with the classroom teacher.

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 needs.

The state testing program requires students in grades 3 - 5 to 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 the 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.

Grade	Assessment(s)/Timeline
Kindergarten & 1st Grade	mClass reading - throughout the school year
2nd Grade	mClass reading - throughout the school year CoGat - end of the year
3rd Grade	Reading BOG - beginning of the year mClass reading - throughout the school year Reading & Math EOG - end of the year
4th Grade	Reading & Math EOG - end of the year
5th Grade	Reading & Math EOG - end of the year Science EOG - end of the year

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.

Cafeteria

For the 2024-2025 school year, Costner qualifies as a CEP school. All students will receive free breakfast and lunch. If your child has a diagnosed medical condition that requires modifications to their school meals, you may request a special diet through school nutrition. Diet order forms are available from the cafeteria manager. A la carte items will be available for an additional cost. Parents/Guardians may utilize Family Portal Link <https://linqconnect.com> to pay with their credit or debit card.

Holiday Meals

Gaston County Schools offers a few Holiday Meals during the school year. Costner invites the following grade level parents for the following meals. Meal times may be adjusted. More information will be provided closer to the event.

- Thanksgiving (Wednesday, November 20) - 1st grade, 3rd grade, & 5th grade
- Christmas (Wednesday, December 11)- kindergarten, 2nd grade, & 4th grade

Special Celebrations

The classroom teacher will coordinate with parents for special celebrations. The classroom is NOT an appropriate venue to distribute personal birthday invitations. Celebrations should be limited to small individually wrapped, store bought snacks for each student. NO balloons, flowers, or gifts.

Volunteers, Mentors, & Tutors

Gaston County Schools requires anyone who desires to serve as a mentor, volunteer, or tutor to complete a Volunteer Application process that includes a criminal background check and be approved by the principal. Please reach out to Ms. Owenby or Mrs. Falter for more information.

Immunizations & Birth Certificate

All children are required by law to be fully immunized before they enter the public schools. Children that have not been fully immunized will be sent home until the parent satisfies the law requirements. 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/ after 15 months of age and before age 5. Not required after age 5.

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

Medication, Illness, & Injury

All medicine given at school must be prescribed by a 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 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.

Head Lice

Parents are contacted if a case of head lice is found. Treatment is expected and proof by the returning box label to the school when returning the next morning. Periodic classroom checks are conducted.

Transfers

Students must attend the school in the district where they live. Our school social worker monitors attendance and residence requirements. Our social worker and administration will make home visits as deemed necessary. Students that attend Costner on a transfer are required to follow academic, attendance, and behavior guidelines. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a revoked transfer. Transfers are made & approved through the GCS Student Assignment office.

Technology

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.

Cell phones and other wireless communication devices may not be turned on, handled, or visible before, during, after school, or at other functions without prior approval from school administration. The school will not be responsible for lost or damaged cell phones.

Any objects that have no educational purpose and may distract from teaching and learning are considered contraband and will be taken from students. This includes but is not limited to: video games, audio and wireless communication devices (not approved), cameras, cell phones (handled or seen or heard in the open), toys of any kind, chewing gum (unless given by a teacher as a reward), and trading cards. Administration has full discretion to make decisions as to what may be considered contraband. On the first offense, confiscated items may be picked up in the office. Repeated offenses will result in school disciplinary action up to in-school or out-of-school suspension. The principal may approve the use of certain necessary items.

PBIS & Leader in Me

As part of our PBIS program, Costner has adopted “The Leader in Me & The 8 Habits of Happy Kids” framework. This initiative encourages student development of important leadership and life skills. When these skills are developed, school is a happier, safer place which supports increased student learning. Students will learn and practice each habit throughout the school year.

The 8 Habits are:

Habit #1: Be Proactive: I am in Charge

Habit #2: Begin with the End in Mind: Have a Plan

Habit #3: First Things First: Put Work First, then Play

Habit #4: Think Win-Win: Everyone can Win

Habit #5: Seek First to Understand, then to be Understood: Listen before you Talk

Habit #6: Synergize: Together is Better

Habit #7: Sharpen the Saw: Balance Feels Best

Habit #8: Find Your Voice

Discipline at Costner Elementary is patterned from the Gaston County Schools Code of Student Conduct. Please make sure you and your child are familiar with these policies. Parents will be contacted by the teacher and/or administration for repeated behaviors or disruptive behaviors.

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. Tennis shoes are suggested for safe play on playgrounds and during physical education classes.

Telephone

Students are permitted to use the school’s telephone if they have a good reason and 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.

School Safety Drill / Safety Plan

Maintaining a safe environment and being prepared to meet an emergency situation continues to be an important process. The school has developed written 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. Cameras are used to survey our grounds and the inside of our buildings. All persons who enter the school are subject to metal detection. Random metal detection with a wand will be practiced.

Smoke/Drug Free Environment

No tobacco products/vapes may be used by any student or adult while on the campus including while in your 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.

Visitors & ID Badges

Visitors must sign in at the front office with their ID. Parents must show their ID to pick up students. 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.

Asbestos Identification

Our school has areas containing asbestos. Semi-annually an inspection is made to provide adequate maintenance of those areas. At the present time, it has been determined that these areas are not friable and pose no immediate danger to any occupants of the building. The law requires that this information is reported.

