

W. C. Friday Middle



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2024-2025

We Are Gaston County Schools

The **vision** of Gaston County Schools is to inspire success and a lifetime of learning. The **mission**, through outstanding employees and community partners, is to provide innovative educational opportunities for all students in a safe, nurturing learning environment.

W.C .Friday- Home of the Cavaliers!

The **vision** of W.C. Friday is committed to educating and empowering a community of leaders to be stewards of a diverse and ever-changing world.

Our **mission** **Together we**

Learn

Empower

Accomplish

Dare to Step Up

Principal's Welcome Statement

It really does take a whole village to raise a child. When school, home and community work together, we do our best job of preparing students to be lifelong learners and to have productive and fulfilling lives. We know that children perform better in school and improve their achievement, when there is a positive partnership and strong lines of communication between parents/guardians and school staff.

This school handbook contains important information pertaining to the school as well as various policies and procedures. Included in this handbook is our school code of behavior. Please read it over carefully with your child/children and sign the verification form to indicate that you and your child have reviewed the behavior code.

Our School is a Leader in Me Choice School. Leader in Me is a core program that educates the whole mind. Leader in Me Schools are empowered to provide education and support to students in the five paradigms.

The paradigms include:

- ☒ Everyone can be a leader.
- ☒ Everyone has genius.
- ☒ Change starts with me.
- ☒ Educators empower students to lead their own learning.
- ☒ Develop the whole learner.

There are many ways that you as a parent can be involved in the community work of W. C. Friday. Try to take an opportunity to volunteer at an event this year. We look forward to working with you; students, parents and our community supporters throughout the school year in our pursuits of excellence and success for all students.

Adair McKay, Principal

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Report cards are sent home with students at the end of each nine-week grading period. Interim reports are sent home with students at the midpoint of each nine-week grading period (4 ½ weeks). Interim reports are a good indicator of a student's progress during a grading period.

GCS grading scale:	GCS Middle School Grading Policy:	Grading Period 23-24 School Year:
A = 90–100		October 12: End of 1st 9 Weeks
B = 80–89	Tests(major projects, papers, and performances) = 40% of grade	December 20: End of 2nd 9 Weeks
C = 70–79	Independent work = 30% of grade	March 7: End of 3rd 9 weeks
D = 60–69	Class work = 20% of grade	May 22: End of 4th 9 weeks
F = 59-below	Homework = 10% of grade	*Interim reports go home mid-way through each 9 weeks.

One-to-One

W.C. Friday is a one to one school where each student is assigned a Chromebook to enhance their learning experience during the school day. Student's engage in 21st Century learning skills daily, which enables learning to be creative and collaborative. Teachers deliver daily lessons that are differentiated to meet the needs of their students and promote academic success.

Honor Roll

W.C. Friday Middle School encourages all students to do their very best work, complete all assignments on time, study for tests and quizzes, and be responsible for their own learning. Engaging in these types of studious behaviors will result in students receiving good grades on their report cards.

At the end of each grading period, students who received all A's or all A's and B's will be recognized on the W.C. Friday's Honor Roll Wall. Students on the Honor Roll will be eligible for special prize drawings. Additionally, their names will be submitted for publication in local newspapers. Individual teachers or teams may offer additional incentives. In the spring, students who are on the Honor Roll all year will receive an additional reward to be announced at a later date.

Being a LEAD School

WCFMS is the only "Leader in Me" middle school in GCS. The "Leader in Me" program is based on Sean Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens. Our staff have received training on the 7 Habits and LEAD implementation so we can introduce these concepts to students. Teachers will be using Lead Journal lessons with students weekly. WCFMS is privileged to be chosen as a Leadership Academy, where we will cultivate a culture of learning, growth mindset, and a community based on practicing the 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens.

Lead Weekly Focus

Monday: Big Rocks Planning-Students will begin with the end in mind by focusing on weekly WIGs and updating strategies, planning for weekly assignments in agenda, etc...

Tuesday: Habit/Lead Lesson

Wednesday: Student work session-students will use this time to work on upcoming assignments, projects, or to get caught up on missing work and be proactive.

Thursday: Habit/Lead Lesson

Friday: Cavalier Crusaders → Service-based, student engaging activities that focus on school and community enhancement and improvements.

BE PROACTIVE
BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND
PUT FIRST THINGS FIRST
think win-win
seek first to understand
then to be understood
synergize

K-8th Grade Student Attendance Gaston County Schools

The following summary provides key information on ten significant statements from the Gaston County Schools' Board of Education policy on student attendance. To view the full policy, please visit our GCS website at www.gaston.k12.nc.us

School Day Attendance

The school year is 180 days. Students must be in attendance at least 168 days. Only 12 absences, including excused and unexcused absences, are permitted each school year.

In order for students to benefit from the instructional day, it is important for students to arrive on time and remain at school for the entire school day. If students must leave early or check in late, they must stay until or arrive before 12:01 pm per county policy to be given credit for attending that day.

For students who exceed **twelve** absences, each school shall have a promotion/retention committee that must review information on these students and make a recommendation to the principal regarding the student's promotion or retention status.

In order to be recorded present, a student must be present at least one-half of the school day.

Documentation

Following any absence(s), a student is required to present a written document from the parent or guardian stating the reason for the absence.

All absences will be coded unexcused in the computer until a written note is received from the parent or guardian.

Written documentation must be presented within two school days after the student returns to school; otherwise, the absence(s) will be recorded as unexcused.

Communication

After each absence, excused or unexcused, the principal/ principal's designee shall inform the parent/ guardian/custodian by the way of a personal or computer-generated telephone message.

Prior to six (6) cumulative absences of any type the principal shall notify the parent/guardian by mail for the purpose of sharing information regarding the Gaston County School attendance policy.

Make-Up Work

Upon the student's return to school, arrangements for make-up for excused or unexcused absences shall be made within two (2) school days. Due dates for make-up work will be at the discretion of the teacher.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Visitors:

For the safety of our staff and students, all visitors **must check in at the front office*** upon arriving at the school. A valid ID is required to sign in. Visitors are not allowed anywhere in our building without permission from the office, and **a visitor's badge** must be worn while on the school campus. Students not enrolled at W.C. Friday are not permitted to visit during instructional time.

*At the start of the 24-25 school year, visitors will check in at the temporary reception area downstairs

Arriving at School:

The building will open at 7:45 a.m. All students are to enter through the front door on the lower level*. **Students should not arrive before this time.** Upon arrival **ALL** students will go through the metal detector and are subject to random searching. Students will then report directly to homeroom classes.

*At the start of the 24-25 school year, car riders will enter through the right side of the building and bus riders will enter through the left side of the building.

Dismissal:

Students will be dismissed in the following order each day: car riders, bus riders. Both sets of students will exit their classroom and leave through the front of the building* in a quiet and orderly fashion.

*At the start of the 24-25 school year, car riders will exit through the right side of the building and bus riders will exit through the left side of the building.

Student Drop-Off and Pick-Up Areas:

Car riders must be **dropped off and picked up** at either the front entrance of the school* or in the lower parking lot by the baseball field. There are **no left turns** from the main entrance onto Ratchford Drive at any time; left turns may be made **only** from the baseball field entrance further down Ratchford Drive.

*At the start of the 24-25 school year, car riders will enter through the right side of the building at the lower parking lot by the baseball field.

Bus students are dropped off and picked up at the bus driveway located at the front of the school. **This driveway is for bus traffic ONLY.** No parking is allowed in the bus lot.

No visitors are allowed to use the entrance marked **“Construction Entrance Only”**. This is for your safety and the care of your vehicle.

Leaving School:

If it is necessary for you to leave school before the end of the day, you must sign out in the office. Your parent/guardian must come to the office or grant permission by phone before you may leave the school. Parents are asked not to pick up students after 3:00 p.m. for early dismissal, this will help with traffic and maintain a smooth dismissal.

Failure to sign out in the office before leaving is considered skipping and may result in disciplinary action.

Tardy Policy:

Any student arriving at school **after 8:30 a.m. is considered tardy**. The reason for the tardy will determine if it is excused or unexcused. Valid excuses are limited to: medical/dental appointments, court appointments, late buses, or being detained by a school official. If you arrive **after 8:30 a.m.**, you must sign in at the office. We understand that occasionally families run late in the morning; however, students who are chronically tardy to school will be referred to the school social worker. In addition, students who are tardy to class may receive consequences from the teacher.

Student Recognition

W.C. Friday Middle School periodically recognizes students for achievement in academics, attendance, and other special areas of our school. Rewards include honor roll celebrations, academic awards assemblies, team awards, and athletic awards ceremonies. Other incentives and rewards may be added during the school year.

Homework

Student Responsibilities

- Understand assignments before leaving school and record them accurately in your planner.
- Take home all necessary materials to complete assignments.
- Schedule and organize time for homework assignments.
- Talk with teachers about homework concerns.
- Be prepared for class each day; bring necessary materials (including your charged chromebook) and arrive on time.

Parent Responsibilities

- Provide encouragement and support and show interest in your child's work.
- Assist students in developing good study habits by providing a comfortable area free from distractions.
- Encourage students to complete homework independently, unless otherwise instructed.
- Contact your child's teachers if you ever have questions or concerns!

*Teacher email addresses can be found on our W.C. Friday school website.

Cheating/Academic Dishonesty

Any attempt to obtain credit for work done by another person is unacceptable. Cheating includes copying someone's homework, giving someone your homework to copy, getting or giving help on a test, or copying word-for-word from a book. If a student cheats, a grade of zero will be assigned, and the teacher will notify parents. A parent conference may be requested if the problem persists.

Responsible Use Policy

Each student will be required to complete an *Responsible Use Policy* form and return it signed by a parent or guardian giving the student permission to use the computers as well as accessing the internet at school.

Withdrawal Procedures

If you need to withdraw from school, your parent or guardian should contact the guidance department. You will need to get a withdrawal form from guidance, which will require you to return all textbooks, library books, assigned lock, and any other items that belong to the school and pay **ANY** fees or charges you still owe.

Conference Requests

Every staff member who works at W.C. Friday is committed to working with parents and guardians to ensure the success of each student.

Regular communication and meetings between parents and teachers, counselors and administrators are an integral part of this effort.

We welcome the opportunity to meet with parents and guardians to discuss any concerns or issues that may arise. We do request that parents and guardians call or email teachers to schedule these conferences and appointments in advance. This will ensure that your concerns are addressed in a timely manner.

Classroom Tardy Policy

Teachers will exercise their classroom tardy policy when students are late to class. Any student with **chronic** tardy issues will be subject to in-school disciplinary action; including but not limited to the range of consequences as outlined in the GCS Student Code of Conduct.

Be on time and prepared for class EVERYDAY!!

OTHER SCHOOL INFORMATION

School Telephones

Students may use school telephones **only** in emergency situations. Emergencies include, but are not limited to, sickness, needing lunch money, or getting information for transportation home. You must have permission from both your teacher and the secretary to use the office phone. **We safeguard our students' instructional time; therefore, students will not be called out of class to receive phone calls.** Phone messages for students will be delivered at the end of the day.

Lost and Found

Articles found should be hung on the hooks inside the downstairs entrance. Owners may claim their property from the lost and found hooks. Students are encouraged to mark clothing, pocketbooks, book bags, books, etc. with their name so that lost items may be returned to them. Unclaimed lost and found items will only be kept for two weeks. **W. C. Friday does not assume responsibility for lost items.**

Cafeteria

Breakfast is offered to all students beginning at 7:45 a.m. Students will be provided time to eat breakfast and then join their grade level until the beginning of first period. They will not be allowed to go to the cafeteria once they are in class. Students may bring lunch or go through the cafeteria line. All food and drinks must be consumed in the cafeteria unless directed by the staff or administration. Students are not allowed to charge meals. Check, cash, or money order can be accepted in the school cafeterias. Parents/Guardians may utilize Family Portal Link <https://linqconnect.com> to pay with their credit or debit card.

Students who require modifications to their school meals for a diagnosed medical condition (allergy, diabetes, celiac disease, etc.) must have a completed and physician signed *Diet Order* form on file at the School Nutrition office. *Diet Order* forms may be obtained from the School Nutrition office, cafeteria manager, or school nurse. The parent or guardian of the student requiring a special diet will be notified by School Nutrition regarding the effective date of the diet order.

To ensure safety and sanitation, all foods served to students in the school must be obtained from a commercial food service entity which is subject to local rules, regulations, and inspections.

Student and Adult Meal Prices:

Breakfast & Lunch will be provided free this school year for basic meals for all students. Students can choose to purchase extra items as needed.

School Counselors

The school counselors are available to see students in small groups or individually. Sessions can focus on such areas as peer conflicts, substance abuse, depression, career planning, etc. Students who want to see a counselor must secure a pass from his or her teacher. Parents are welcome to contact the counselor by telephone; however, we ask that you make an appointment if you wish to see a counselor in person. The counselors also provide assistance in the following areas:

- Scheduling
- Withdrawing from school
- Community agency referrals
- Enrichment programs
- Registration/Academic Records
- Academic requirements

Medication

W.C. Friday Middle School strictly enforces the Gaston County Board of Education's policy concerning medication. Accordingly, W.C. Friday Middle School will not give medication to students without written permission of the student's parent or guardian. Long-term medications (those given at regular intervals throughout the year) must be in the properly labeled original container.

Additionally, your doctor and parent/guardian must complete an *Authorization of Medication for Students in School* form. This form is available in the school office. Over-the-counter medications will only be given during school hours by school personnel if they are labeled by a pharmacist complete with instructions, like a prescription drug. Parents are responsible for picking up medication within one week after the last requested administration. No students may carry any medication on them personally during school or on a school bus.

Fundraising

No items may be sold on the W.C. Friday Middle School campus unless they are part of an authorized school sale or club/athletic project and approved by the principal.

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers enhance the educational program - they help our children gain self-esteem, improve reading and math skills and become successful in school and life. Volunteers may donate their time to serve as a mentor, tutor, reading buddy, lunch buddy, test proctor, field trip monitor, do clerical work, assist in the library or help in some other way. Volunteers should complete the volunteer process through the Gaston County School website.

ATHLETIC INFORMATION

Athletics

W.C. Friday Middle School offers softball, football, volleyball, golf, basketball (girls and boys), soccer (girls and boys), wrestling, track (girls and boys) and baseball. To be eligible for athletic participation, a student must:

- Be a resident of the school administrative unit in which you are assigned or have a valid transfer granted through the superintendent's office
- Meet your grade level promotion standards
- Have a current physical exam on file
- Not be 15 years old on or before August 31 of the school year

6th grade students are eligible for ALL SPORTS except football.

Students are eligible to participate for a total of six semesters at the middle school level beginning the first semester of the 6th grade year.

Athletes who are absent from school, or have OSS or ISS, are not allowed to practice or play in a game or match on that day. In addition, each coach will set forth team rules in accordance with school and school system rules, and each student-athlete is expected to follow those rules.

***Athletes are expected to represent our school, families, staff, and community with pride. Good sportsmanship and citizenship are expected at all times in all competition venues.**

EXTRACURRICULAR INFORMATION

Clubs

Possible volunteer opportunities will be given to students, on Fridays of each month within their lead classes. If clubs take place this year, they will take place once a month. Students will be given the opportunity to choose their clubs at the beginning of the school year. Clubs will be dependent on what students and staff choose. Clubs can vary each semester. They will be based on service learning projects.

W.C. Friday Middle School has a variety of clubs for student participation. Membership in these organizations is subject to the requirements determined by each teacher-sponsor. Students who wish to propose a club must meet with the principal and secure a staff sponsor for their club. Some existing clubs include:

Jr. Beta Club

The purpose of establishing a Jr. Beta Club is to encourage high academic achievement, reward merit, and to promote high moral character. This club is open to all 7th and 8th graders who qualify. The qualifications for membership are:

- For initial placement into the Beta Club, no yearly average below **90 and no grades below 80**.
- For continuation in the Beta Club, no grade below 85. A grade below 85 will constitute probation.
- No more than one probationary period per year.
- Induction ceremonies are to be held at the end of the 3rd nine weeks grading period.

Failure to maintain the required grades will result in a 9-week probationary period. If grades fail to comply with these standards at the end of the probationary period, the student shall be removed from the Junior Beta Club. Probation will be granted for one 9-week grading period in any given academic year. Eligible students are inducted into the club in the spring of the school year. There is a fee for national dues that will be collected when students are inducted into the club.

Yearbook

Information coming soon!

Robotics

Robotics is a club made up of only 10 students. There is an application, recommendation, essay, and interview process. The team meets once a week after school to prepare for a competition in March. The three areas of competition are Core Values, Innovative Project, and Robot Design and Game. Coaches are Mrs. Travis and Ms. Siemion.

SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY

Safety Drills

Periodically the school will have various safety drills, including but not limited to; fire drills, tornado drills, and lock-down drills. It is an expectation that students follow all directions from teachers and staff to ensure their safety and the safety of others.

School Security

All persons entering the school campus and buildings are subject to search by metal detecting devices. In addition, the school campus is monitored by surveillance cameras at all times. These measures are in place to ensure the safety and security of all students, staff and visitors.

Students should only use designated entrances and exits. Students must not be in any unauthorized area of the building or campus at any time. This applies during school hours and at after-school events.

Finally, in accordance with school board policy, school officials may conduct random classroom searches at any time, including the use of metal detectors. School officials may also conduct other searches based on reasonable suspicion. Please see the GCS Student Code of Conduct to review the policy in detail.

Lockers

Lockers will be provided to students. There is a \$5.00 rental fee to keep the same lock from year to year. Only W. C. Friday locks are allowed and any others will be removed.

Prohibited Items

Students are advised that W.C. Friday Middle School assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen electronic equipment or other items of value. We recommend that cell phones, all electronic devices, and any other valuables be left at home or stored in a safe place. However, when such items are brought to school, the following rules will apply:

Cell phones must be turned off when you report to your homeroom class. They must remain off until you exit the building in the afternoon. Cell phones must be stored in students' locker and should not be visible in the classroom setting from 8:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.

All other electronic devices must be turned off and stored in a book bag from 8:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. This includes, but is not limited to, electronic games, radios, cameras, watches, iPads, iPods, headphones, etc.

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.

Students are also prohibited from bringing energy drinks to school or school events. They are also not allowed to bring any opened candy or snacks with them. Items such as these must be sealed and unopened to be allowed into the school.

Failure to obey the above rules will result in the item(s) in question being confiscated.

The item(s) will remain in the office and may only be picked up by a parent or other designated adult. Beginning with the third offense, students may be assigned ISS or OSS for repeated violation of school rules.

Dress Code

Our W. C. Friday Dress Code will follow that which is outlined in the Gaston County School Code of Conduct. It is listed as follows:

“RULE 16: Dress Code

The appearance of any young person is primarily the responsibility of that individual and his/her parents. Each student is expected to maintain an appearance that is neither distracting to other students nor disruptive to the educational environment or the safe and healthy climate of school.

Students shall not wear: Headwear - Hats, bandanas, hair picks, combs or other types of headgear or sunglasses may not be worn in the building. Clothing - Clothing that displays sexually 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 expectations noted above represent the minimum standards established throughout the school system. In addition, items not specifically mentioned may still be deemed inappropriate in a school setting in the judgment of the school administration." At our school, students may not wear pajamas or any other sleep attire including bedroom shoes.

Consequences:

Contact parents for a change of clothes.

Repeat offenses could result in other disciplinary action such as in-school suspension or OSS.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

One of the most important lessons education teaches is discipline. Good discipline is the key to developing self-control, and good character. Students are expected to exhibit good citizenship, and self-control at all times and to follow instructions from **any** W.C. Friday staff member.

You are responsible for your behavior!

The Gaston County Board of Education has adopted a Student Code of Conduct that has been provided to each student. Please take the time to review the rules and the consequences of violating each rule. The student behavior guidelines are strictly enforced at each Gaston County middle school.

In addition to the school district behavior guidelines, W.C. Friday Middle School has 3 fundamental behavior expectations:

- 1. Be respectful.**
- 2. Be responsible.**
- 3. Be safe.**

Procedures for Handling Student Discipline*

Students who misbehave will be dealt with firmly and fairly in order to protect the rights of all students and staff members. All disciplinary matters will be handled according to the GCS Student Code of Conduct.

Procedural Expectations

Teams will clearly define procedures and expectations for student transitions from class to class, entering and exiting the classroom, traveling throughout the building, etc. Students are expected to follow set procedures and expectations throughout the school day.

Bus Transportation Guidelines

Bus transportation is a privilege, not a right. Therefore, all students are expected to follow school rules from the time they begin waiting for the bus in the morning until they leave the bus stop area in the afternoon. Bus riders must follow bus rules and the Gaston County Schools Student Code of Conduct; otherwise they may face suspension from the bus and/or suspension from school. Food and drink are not permitted on the bus.

General Behavior Guidelines

The PBIS team has established a matrix of behavior expectations. The matrix will be displayed throughout the building. If you are unsure about how to behave, consult the matrix. We expect that you will be **respectful**, **responsible**, and **safe** in all areas of the building. Appropriate behaviors are the only ones allowed here at WC Friday. When we all do the right thing, we can achieve GREAT things!

Final Notes

- It is extremely important that W.C. Friday Middle School be made aware of any changes to your demographic information. We must have reliable contact information in case of an emergency. If you have a change of address, home phone number, physician, parent/guardian work phone number, emergency contact information, e-mail address, etc., please inform your teachers and/or the office staff immediately.
- Please remember that all W.C. Friday staff members are at school to help you achieve success. It is absolutely necessary for you to comply with the directions of ALL staff members at ALL times in order to achieve this success.
- Gaston County Schools will be closed when the Superintendent considers the weather conditions unfit for the safe operation of school buses. School closings or delays will normally be announced by 6:00 a.m. on TV channels 3, 9, 21 and 36, and on most local radio stations. In most cases, Gaston County Schools will also notify families at home with a Connect-Ed phone call.



Together We LEAD!