

Bethel Middle School

STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK



2023-2024
630 Sonoma Road
Waynesville, NC 28786
Telephone: 646-3442
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<http://bms.haywood.k12.nc.us>

WELCOME

Welcome to Bethel Middle School. We are looking forward to another wonderful school year. Bethel has always maintained a strong sense of community pride. It is our responsibility to assure that future generations have a great place to live and go to school. If we work together, wonderful things will happen. This handbook has been published to clarify questions for students and parents.

Our administration, faculty and staff provide extraordinary opportunities to students in a rural community through high expectations and student engagement.

Core Values:

- 1) Serve as advocates to identify and strengthen gifts that lead to student success.
- 2) Showcase global academic excellence and define individual excellence.
- 3) Serve all students with compassion and dedication.
- 4) Form and strengthen partnerships within our community to advance student achievement.

Join us in our focus on creating an environment for our students where all can work together for the benefit of your child and the entire school population. If you have concerns or issues at any point, please contact the school.

You can expect for Bethel Middle School staff members to return your calls/or emails within 48 business hours. However, every effort will be made to respond within 24 business hours. If you do not receive a teacher response to a call or email within 48 hours, please contact the assistant principal/principal.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE OF STUDENTS

- School will open each morning at 7:25 a.m. for students arriving on the buses. Doors will be locked until that time. Parents are asked not to drop students off prior to 7:25 a.m., as there is no one on duty to supervise.
- Car riders are to be dropped off and picked up in front of the gym, entering near the church, circling through the blue lines, and exiting by the cafeteria. Remember to use both lanes and keep your eyes open for students crossing in front of your car. Please do not drop your child off on the sidewalk on Sonoma Road.
- Students are asked to report promptly to the cafeteria if arriving before 7:50 in the morning. We encourage students to get breakfast in the cafeteria at that time if desired, free of charge.
- Classes begin at 8:00 a.m. Students who arrive after 8:00 a.m. will be counted tardy and must be signed in by a parent or guardian.
- Parents must report to the main office to check out their child. Parent or guardian **MUST** provide consent to allow other individuals to check out his/her child.
- Students must have parental written permission to travel home in any way other than the assigned one. Parent notes should be shown to office and bus drivers.
- Buses and car riders will depart at 2:55 p.m.
- Buses on icy roads - Roads that are not run in the A.M. because of icy conditions will not be run in the P.M.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION - BUSES ESTABLISHED RULES

Riding the school bus is a privilege not a right.

In order to retain the privilege of riding a bus, students must:

1. Always speak quietly on the bus so the driver will not be distracted. The driver needs to be able to hear approaching emergency vehicles.
2. Never throw things on the bus or out the windows. Keep arms, hands or head out of the window. Keep the aisles clear at all times. Feet should be directly in front of you on the floor and book bags should be kept on your lap.
3. Never play with the emergency exits. Large instruments or sports equipment should not block the aisle or emergency exits. If there is an emergency, listen to the driver and follow instructions.
4. Hands should be kept to yourself at all times while riding on the bus. Fighting and picking on others creates a dangerous bus ride.
5. Be on time for the bus and wait for the bus at the designated stop. (Be at the stop 10 minutes before your pick up time.)
6. Remain seated at all times. Do not get up until the bus has arrived / stopped at your stop.
If your bus has seat belts, students are required to wear them at all times.
7. Students are not allowed to consume food or drinks on the bus.
8. Possession or use of tobacco products/vapes, alcohol and drugs are forbidden.
9. The use of profanity or obscene gestures will not be tolerated.
10. Never bring dangerous or prohibited items such as guns, knives, gasoline, car batteries, animals, drink bottles, glass containers and projects too large to be held on the lap.
11. Never damage or deface the bus.
12. Video Cameras have been installed on buses.
13. No glass vases or balloons are allowed on buses.
14. Earbuds/headphones are required if listening to music.

School Bus Discipline Plan

Riding the bus is a privilege afforded students to assist their ability to attend school in the least restrictive way, transportation wise. This privilege comes with certain responsibilities, which include but are not limited to: appropriate behavior, respect for the driver and other students, and general safety.

If a student misbehaves or endangers the safety of themselves or others, they will lose the privilege to ride the bus. While this loss of privilege may be an inconvenience for the student and parent(s), it is a necessary disciplinary measure. The bus is an extension of the school and riders are subject to the same rules and expectations that are followed on school grounds.

North Carolina law gives the principal the authority to suspend students from riding the bus should they not follow bus rules. The use of video cameras may provide supportive information concerning bus misconduct.

Behavior Guidelines and Consequences; will follow BMS discipline grid

ATTENDANCE, MEMBERSHIP AND COURSE CREDIT

Reference: Board Policy 4400 & 4400-R

It is the expectation of Haywood County Schools that a student be present and on time each school day. A student who is absent more than 8 percent of the days enrolled in a school year is subject to retention. In order to be counted present for the school day, a student must be in attendance for at least one-half of the day (11:30). Students are responsible for obtaining make-up work from teachers the day they return to school. Five (5) tardies or early checkouts will equal one (1) absence regardless of the reason. A copy of this policy is available online at www.haywood.k12.nc.us under Board of Education Policies- Policy #4400 and 4400-R.

Students must provide either a note from the doctor or from home on the first day back after being absent. We ask that you provide a doctor's excuse after each visit to the doctor or dentist. Students shall have two (2) school days to complete assignments missed from the first absence, four (4) school days to complete assignments missed from two consecutive absences, and one (1) calendar week to complete assignments missed during three (3) to five (5) consecutive days.

To communicate effectively, all transportation changes and messages for the day must be received by the front office prior to 2:30. To ensure the safety of our students upon dismissal there will be NO checkouts after 2:45.

Teaching time is valuable and important to both teachers and students. We respectfully ask you to not ask us to call students out of class to talk to you in person or on the phone, but rather give us the message or the item and we will get it to the student at the appropriate time. When we take students out of the classroom, they miss valuable instructional time that requires the teacher to stop instruction and reteach what your student missed.

Attendance for athletic eligibility is a separate policy.

INSURANCE

Reference: Board Policy 4220

School insurance is available for school-day coverage and/or 24-hour coverage. We urge you to consider these plans. Students who choose to participate in programs that may have a higher risk of physical injury than most school activities, including football, and other interscholastic sports, are required to have accident insurance through the county group plan.

Cafeteria

Reference: Board Policy 6220/6225

Meal Charges: cafeteria cashiers will clearly communicate to middle school students the need for sufficient funds to pay for meals and will inform a student when he or she needs additional funds. School cafeteria cashiers will provide a student with written notice of a low or negative balance to take home to the student's parent or guardian when the student owes \$7.50 or more in unpaid meal charges. In addition, the principal or designee will contact the student's parent or guardian, as appropriate, to remind the student's parent or guardian about unpaid meal charges for which payment is due and to provide information about free and reduced price meals, if applicable

Meal Cost For Students - Breakfast and lunch are free of charge for the 2023-2024 school year. To allow students to buy extras they must have the correct amount of money in hand or on their account.

TECHNOLOGY RESPONSIBLE USE

Reference: Board Policy 4312/3225/3226/7320/4318/4205

This policy requires students and parents to sign the computer "Acceptable Use Policy" before students will be allowed to participate in an activity that uses the Internet for assignments

Students are permitted to possess personal, electronic devices on school property however they should be **powered off and placed in their locker** between 8:00-2:55. These devices may only be used under the following conditions: 1) Before 8:00 AM 2) After the bell rings for the end of the school day. If a student needs to contact a parent/guardian they can come to the office or use the classroom phone.

Cellphones, smart watches and electronic devices **are not** to be used in hallways, bathrooms, in the cafeteria during lunch, during class change times, in classrooms, or at any other place or time unless the previously mentioned conditions are met. Smart watches should be on airplane mode between 8:00-2:55.

Students may use cellphones and electronics devices in the gym/cafeteria during morning arrival. However, they should turn their cell phones and electronic devices off by 8:00 AM. Students may also use their cellphones and electronic devices following the afternoon dismissal bell. **Pictures and videos are not to be taken before, during, and/or after school (this includes on the school bus).**

Inappropriate use of electronic devices will not be tolerated. If a student fails to adhere to the policy, the device will be taken and turned in to the office. The teacher will then notify the parent and the device will be available for parent pick up in the office. Students will also receive a red card for not following school expectations/guidelines. Each occurrence will be the next step on the PBIS discipline plan.

Students who use a teacher's classroom technology must follow the classroom rules regarding appropriate use and return of electronic devices, which also includes all accessories attached to these devices, such as power cords, headphones, etc.

BMS is NOT responsible for the care of these devices, nor will be held accountable for any damages, loss, or other ill use that may occur to students' personal items, including, but not limited to, cell phones, iPods, iPads, tablets, smart watches etc.

MANAGEMENT OF STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Reference: Board Policy 4300's/4310/4315/4300-R

Bethel Middle School's Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) will lead to a population of young adults who are better prepared to meet a future society that is more demanding, more diverse and perhaps more difficult than any our world has known. Classroom management is designed to teach students socially acceptable standards and guidelines for their behavior. It allows administrators and teachers to monitor and guide students in healthy, nurturing and accountable ways. It requires that students are responsible for their actions and held accountable for the decisions that they make. In doing so, they are actively and appropriately engaged in preparing for all of life. It is essential that we have the support of parents and the community. We must work together to meet the needs of our children.

BMS School Standard: I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL MY ACTIONS.

- I am responsible for treating myself, others and school property with respect.
- I am responsible for coming to class on time with necessary materials, prepared to learn.
- I am responsible for conducting myself in a manner as to promote learning for others and myself.
- I am responsible for following directions.
- I am responsible for not bringing items that cause distractions or could cause injury such as fidget spinners, beyblades, skateboards, etc.

MAJOR OFFENSES: The following items are considered major offenses and will not be tolerated. These include but are not limited to:

- weapons Board Policy #4333
- fighting Board Policy #4331
- theft of property Board Policy #4330
- drugs, alcohol, vapes and tobacco (illegal substances) Board Policy #4320, #4325
- assault on any adult or student either verbal or physical Board Policy #4331
- sexual/racial harassment Board Policy #1710,#4020, #4035, #7235
- disrespect to authority Board Policy #4301
- additional acts as defined by School Board and state statutes.
- communicating threats to harm (fighting, use of weapon, etc.) Board Policy #4331, #4333
- sexual behaviors
- cutting class

Consequence: Reported to office ASAP. Suspension and/or legal action as deemed necessary and based upon School Board Policy and state statutes. A parent conference is required prior to reinstatement.

Board Policy#4341/4351/4353

CAMPUS OFFENSES: (including classroom, hall, restrooms, commons and cafeteria, buses, plus all school sponsored events such as athletic activities, dances/social and field trips)

- running, pushing and/or horseplay
- vulgarity, cursing, obscene gestures
- shouting, screaming or disruptive noises
- tardy
- throwing, spitting or shooting objects
- possession of aerosol containers
- public display of affection (no hand holding, kissing, arms around body, hugging, etc.)
- climbing in bathroom
- refusal of reasonable request
- banging on walls or awning

PBIS: Each teacher will review rules and consequences for behavior called Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports, developed by the Department of Public Instruction. Students will receive a copy of this Discipline Plan, which will be signed by the students and the parents acknowledging that they have seen the document.

Consequence: When the classroom guidelines are not adhered to, the Discipline Plan provided by (PBIS) will be followed. After all attempts by the teacher have been exhausted in correcting the student's behavior, including parent contact, the student will be given an Administrative Referral. Students who are assigned In-School Suspension (ISS) will be expected to do regular classroom assignments while there. If a student refuses or chooses not to complete his/her work, additional ISS or lunch detention will be assigned. A behavior contract may be implemented as needed.

- In assigning appropriate disciplinary consequences for management of student behavior, eligible students will be given all rights as provided by the IDEA, Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act.

INCENTIVES

Students will be excluded from extracurricular and incentive activities for failing to meet behavioral and academic standards established by the school district administration. This includes: school dances, socials, PBIS nine week grading period events, and other opportunities that may arise. Listed below are criteria to attend:

- Not more than two days of In School Suspension in the last 45 school days.
- No Out of School Suspensions in the preceding 45 school days.
- Can not have a total number of absences equal to or greater than 8 percent of the total number of days enrolled at school during current school year.
- No more than \$10 debt to the school (for example - encore fees, lunch debt, library debt, school books, sports uniforms or picture fees, etc.)

DANCE POLICY

- Not more than two days of In School Suspension in the preceding 45 school days.
- No Out of School Suspensions in the preceding 45 school days.
- Can not have a total number of absences equal to or greater than 8 percent of the total number of days enrolled at school during current school year.
- Students must be in attendance at least half of the day of the dance.
- No more than \$10 debt to the school (for example - encore fees, lunch debt, library debt, school books or picture fees, athletic uniforms not returned etc.)
- Bethel Middle School will not be responsible for the cost of dresses, tuxedos, hair appointments etc. for students who become ineligible to attend the formal dance.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Attention to academic standards is important, but equally important are the benefits of student involvement in extra-curricular activities. The purposeful atmosphere that exists in a well-organized club or activity allows students to develop social and leadership skills that prepares them in a way that cannot be duplicated in a classroom setting.

Students must be in attendance for a minimum of half the school day (3 ½ hours) in order to be eligible to participate in an extra-curricular activity. Board Policy #3620
Students can not fail more than 1 class.

BMS is part of the Blue Ridge Athletic Conference and participates in the following sports: Basketball, Wrestling, Volleyball, Softball, Baseball, Golf, Soccer, Football, Cheerleading, Cross Country, and Track.

Several clubs and organizations are conditionally available to qualified BMS students. In past years, BMS has offered Student Council, Beta Club, Sportsman's Club, Battle of the Books, Robotics, Envirothon, and FFA. Students are advised to pay careful attention to announcements to learn what clubs and organizations are available and the relevant criteria for joining.

Students who attend extra-curricular activities, whether they are socials, special programs, or sporting events are expected to be at school the day of the event for a minimum of half the school day (3 ½ hours), conduct themselves as ladies and gentlemen and to behave in accordance with all the rules and policies stated herein. Improper conduct could result in loss of privilege to attend such activities.

During extra-curricular activities, students are not to be outside of the designated area until the activity has concluded. The school phone should not be used to make arrangements or gain permission to attend extra-curricular activities. Students need to be aware of who will be picking them up from these events because this will not be supervised by school personnel. All of the previous mentioned arrangements should be taken care of at home prior to the event. Dates and hours of activities will be given in advance. **FOR SAFETY REASONS, STUDENTS SHOULD BE PICKED UP IMMEDIATELY AFTER AN EVENT CONCLUDES.** *If the parent is late, the child may have to forfeit future after-school activities.*

DRESS CODE FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

Reference: Board Policy 4316/4316-R

The main purpose for any type of dress code is to prevent interference with the learning process and provide a safe and secure classroom.

Clothing and accessories must not be obscene, suggestive, unsanitary, unsafe, send negative messages or contribute to a school disruption. Clothing/accessories cannot have logos or symbols which refer to or promote tobacco, drugs, alcohol, violence, gangs, lewd conduct, or anything of an offensive nature. No clothing that exposes the midriff; no plunging necklines; straps on tops must be at least 1 inch wide; undergarment straps should not be exposed; pants/shorts/skirts must cover private parts and undergarments while sitting and/or moving throughout daily school activities. Muscle shirts must cover underarm and side of chest. No pajama bottoms or tops. No bandannas. No sunglasses are to be worn in the school building unless you have a doctor's note. Each classroom teacher will determine if headgear/hats/hoodies/headcoverings will be allowed in their classroom.

CUSTODY OF A CHILD

Reference: Board Policy 4210/4210-R

If a parent is separated, divorced or is legal guardian of a child, you must have a copy of your child's custody papers on file in that child's records in the office.

STUDENT MEDICATION

Reference: Board Policy 6125

The following procedures must be followed for students to take medication at school:

1. Parents must furnish the school with a signed physician's note for administering any and all medication (forms are available in the office and on the Haywood County Schools website).
2. All medication must be in the original container with the original label.
3. All medication will be kept in a locked place in the office.
4. The school will not be held responsible when students refuse to take medication.

COUNSELING/STUDENT SERVICES

Reference: Board Policy 3610

Our counselor is available to help you and your child have a successful school year. Anytime you are concerned about your child, i.e. drastic changes in behavior, grades, etc. please call to discuss your concerns. Parents and students are encouraged to visit the counseling center for information, resources and/or referrals. There is also a part-time school nurse and a part-time social worker on staff to assist students when a need arises.

LOCKERS AND LOCKS

Locks will be assigned by homeroom teachers. Lockers are the property of Bethel Middle School and as such, may be searched by school officials at any time with good reason.

ATHLETIC POLICY

Every middle school student who participates in a sport will have a yearly athletic fee of \$45.00. This fee will cover insurance (\$15) and travel (\$30). Additional equipment/clothing cost may occur depending on the sport. Every student must have a current sports physical on file in the office to participate. Students must be present $\frac{1}{2}$ of the school day in order to participate in practice and/or games. Students assigned In School Suspension for 1 day will be allowed to practice or compete with their team that afternoon. Students assigned In School Suspension for multiple days will not be allowed to practice or compete until the afternoon the suspension is completed. More information/regulations may be referenced in the Middle/Junior High School Manual on NCDPI website. Board Policy #3620

CONCUSSION and HEAD INJURY

Reference: Board Policy 4270/6145

The board recognizes that concussions and other head injuries may be serious and potentially life threatening and such injuries may result in serious consequences later in life if managed improperly. The board is committed to practices that reduce the potential for short-term or long-term effects from such injuries.

BLACKBOARD CONNECT5 (Rapid Notification Service)

Haywood County Schools and Bethel Middle School will continue using a rapid notification service. This service will call your home, cell phone, text, or email with pertinent school information such as weather related announcements, school announcements and emergency information if needed. When you receive these calls expect a short delay before the announcement begins. For parents to receive these important messages it is vital that all phone numbers remain current and voicemail be set up.

FEES-Board Policy 4600/4600-R

There are additional fees for a few of the encore classes to cover supplies and materials used for the course. This is an annual fee. See below for a fee schedule. If your child is enrolled in a class that has an additional fee this will be communicated with you and your child the first few weeks of school.

REPORT CARDS AND GRADES

Report cards are issued at the end of each nine weeks of the semester. The official grade for the semester (fall or spring) will appear on the report card given at the end of the second 9-weeks. This is the grade recorded on the permanent record. Report cards are issued approximately five school days after the close of each nine weeks. Progress reports will be distributed midway through the 9-week grading period.

The following grades will be used to indicate progress:

A - SUPERIOR	100-90
B - ABOVE AVERAGE	89-80
C - AVERAGE	79-70
D - BELOW AVERAGE	69-60
F - UNSATISFACTORY	59-BELOW

Parents will be notified of these dates. However, parents may schedule conferences at other times by contacting the office and or teacher.

State Mandated End-of-Grade Tests, CTE Post Assessments, and North Carolina Final Exams for middle school courses will count as 20% of the course final grade. Additionally, End-of-Course Tests, Final Exams, and any other exams associated with high school course credit will count 25% of the course grade. Reference: Board Policy 3400

Exceptional Children's Program

The Exceptional Children's Program provides specially designed instruction to ensure that all children with disabilities, ages 3 through 21, have available to them a free appropriate public education. The program emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment and independent living. Services may include specialized educational instruction, speech/language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, hearing impaired services, visually impaired services, and transportation. The EC Program is looking for any children and youth ages 3-21 with special needs that are not identified or may not be receiving the help they need. You can assist us in finding these unidentified students by calling Brandi Stephenson, Director of Exceptional Children's Program, at [828-456-2400](tel:828-456-2400).

HEALTH EDUCATION

Reference: Board Policy 3540

In May of 1996, the State adopted a revised version of the Health curriculum for grades K-9, entitled Framework for Healthful Living Education. It combines the past Health curriculum, the Alcohol and Drug curriculum and adds House Bill 834 (the "abstinence" bill).

Students in grades 6-8 will be required to have a permission letter signed before they can attend the portion of the classes pertaining to puberty, sexual abstinence until marriage, STDs, the human reproductive system, preventable risks for preterm birth in subsequent pregnancies, effective contraceptive methods for preventing pregnancy, awareness of sexual assault and sexual abuse, and sex trafficking prevention and awareness. This letter will be sent home a couple of weeks before the actual instruction.

As per State law, this new curriculum is available for your review at each school and at the Board of Education. Please call the Central Office at 456-2400 if you have any questions.

Pest Control Notification

Reference: Board Policy 9205

As part of Haywood County Schools' long-term maintenance program, pest control will be administered monthly on all buildings and grounds. Normally scheduled pest control administration will occur the first full week of each month. Occasionally, unscheduled dispensation of pest control is needed. Notice of non-scheduled pesticide use will be made 72 hours in advance, to the extent possible. All pest control methods used in Haywood County are approved by state and federal agencies to insure safety.

Student-Parent Handbook Signature Page 2023-2024

- *Please sign and date the lines below and tear this page out and return to school*

By signing below, I state that I have read the Bethel Middle School Student-Parent Handbook.

- My student and I fully understand the expectations and procedures outlined in the handbook.
- My student and I fully understand that this contract serves as an initial parent contact of expected behaviors and we understand the consequences set forth in the Bethel Middle School Student-Parent Handbook.

Parent
Signature _____ Date _____

Student
Signature _____ Date _____