



**2024-2025**  
**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
**Student Handbook**



## School Calendar Important Dates for 2024-2025

### For E.M. Rollins Elementary School

August 1-6, 20:	Required workdays
August 7:	First day of classes for students
August 12-13:	Staggered Entry for Pre-K/Kindergarten
August 14:	Pre-K/Kindergarten first day <u>all</u>
September 2:	Labor Day holiday
September 20:	Optional Workday
October 14-18::	Track-out Students
October 31:	Student Report Cards
November 4:	Required Workday
November 5:	Optional Workday
November 11:	Veteran's Day holiday
November 25:	Optional Workdays
November 26-27:	Track Out
November 28-29:	Thanksgiving Holiday
December 20:	Early Release All
December 23-24:	Annual leave days for employees
December 25-27:	Christmas break for students
December 30-31:	Annual Leave for employees
January 1:	New Year's Day holiday
January 2:	Annual Leave
January 3:	Required workday
January 6:	Students Return from Break
January 20:	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday Report
February 4:	Student Report Cards
February 14:	Early Release
February 17:	Required Workday
March 21:	Optional Workday
April 1:	Report Cards
April 7-11:	Track Out
April 14-17:	Annual leave days for employees
April 18:	Good Friday
May 23:	Optional Workday
May 26:	Memorial Day Holiday
June 5:	Early Release
June 5:	Last day of classes for students
June 5:	Report Cards
June 9-12:	Required workdays
June 13:	Optional Workdays



## **Important Dates for 2024-2025 For All Other Elementary Schools**

August 19-22:	Required workdays
August 23:	Optional workdays
August 26:	First day of school
August 29-30:	Staggered Entry for Pre-K/Kindergarten
September 2:	Labor Day holiday
September 3:	PreK/Kindergarten first day <u>all</u>
September 20:	Optional workday
October 14:	Optional workday
October 15:	Required workday
October 30:	End of 1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter
November 5:	Required workday
November 11:	Veteran's Day holiday
November 13:	Report Cards
November 26:	Early Release All
November 27:	Optional workday
November 28-29:	Thanksgiving holiday
December 20:	Early Release All
December 23-31:	Christmas break for students
December 23-24:	Annual leave days for employees
January 1:	New Year's Day holiday
January 2:	Annual Leave
February 4:	Report Cards
February 14:	Early Release
February 17:	Required workday
March 21:	Optional workday
April 3:	Report Cards
April 14-17:	Spring Break for students
April 18:	Good Friday Holiday
April 14-17, 21:	Annual leave days for employees
May 23:	Optional workday
May 26:	Memorial Day holiday
June 5:	Early Release for students
June 5:	Last day of classes for students
June 9-12:	Required workday
June 13:	Optional workday



## School Day

### School Hours

*All school office hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. during school days.*

**Students** 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Staff** 7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

**E.M. Rollins Elementary** 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Staff** 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

## Breakfast and Lunch

For the 2024-2025 school year, all students will be allowed to eat breakfast and lunch each school day free of charge.

The Vance County Board of Education in May of 2014 approved the school system's participation in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program for this school year. The program provides free meals at breakfast and lunch each school day for all students at all grade levels who choose to participate. The free meal program is available as a result of the federal Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 that amended the National School Lunch Act to provide schools and local education agencies that predominantly serve low-income children with a new option for meal certification. CEP allows high poverty schools to offer both breakfast and lunch at no charge to all students while eliminating the traditional school meal application process for schools. **Participation in CEP means that the school system does not need to have parents of students complete the free and reduced price meal applications. All students qualify to eat breakfast and lunch for free at school each day.**





Extra food items students want for meals must be paid for at the time of sale or may be paid for in advance. Parents may send money to their child each day, either by cash or check, for extra food items.

All student breakfasts must have one fruit or juice and a choice of two other food items. All student lunches must have one fruit or vegetable and students must choose two other different food groups including a meat or meat alternative, grains or breads, milk and vegetable or fruit.

## Student Dress Code

The Vance County Board of Education (the "board") believes that the dress and personal appearance of students greatly affect their academic performance and their interaction with other students. The board requests that parents outfit their children in clothing that is conducive to learning. Generally, dress and grooming standards as determined by the student and his or her parents will be deemed acceptable. However, the board prohibits any appearance or clothing that does the following:

1. violates a reasonable dress code adopted and publicized by the school;
2. is substantially disruptive;
3. is provocative or obscene; or
4. endangers the health or safety of the student or others.

Using good judgment in dress and grooming is a Parent/Student responsibility. A student's appearance should contribute to a safe and healthful environment, without causing any disruption to the educational process. If a student's dress or appearance is inappropriate, lacking in cleanliness or is not in good taste, and is substantially disruptive to a class or learning activity, the student will be required to change his or her dress or appearance. In defining a reasonable standard of dress, good manners, and safety in the schools, the following code applies:



1. Shoes shall be worn at all times;
2. No "slacking" or "sagging" of pants or shorts is allowed; all pants and shorts must be worn at the waistline and no underwear may be revealed.
3. Students should not wear hats, or other head covering or sunglasses during the school day inside and during school sponsored activities that are held inside of school buildings. School administrators can make adjustments to this rule based on religious beliefs, customs and/or for medical reasons.
4. Mesh-styled shirts and blouses, clothes or jewelry imprinted with suggestive or vulgar language,
5. shirts and blouses exposing the midriff, short shorts, short dresses, short skirts, short skorts, and any clothing over-exposing the body, including thin-strapped tank tops and thin strapped blouses are not allowed.
6. No gang-related clothing, accessories or symbols as identified by the Local Law Enforcement Agencies (Chief of Police, City of Henderson, and Sheriff of Vance County) will be allowed on any school site or at any school sponsored activity.

Students at some schools may be required to wear school uniforms. If uniforms are required, parents and students seeking specific information on uniforms should contact the individual school.

Students who are improperly dressed will be referred to school administrators who will assist the student in complying with dress code standards.

**Pinkston Street Elementary School and L.B. Yancey Elementary School requires students to wear school uniforms.**



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For Pinkston Street Elementary School, it is mandatory that students follow these uniform requirements:

**GIRLS** – White or Navy Blue polo shirts and Navy Blue or Khaki uniform pants, shorts, skirts, skorts or jumpers. Khaki and Navy Blue jeans and sweatpants are not allowed.

**BOYS** – White or Navy Blue polo shirts and White or Navy Blue dress shirts, as well as Navy Blue or Khaki pants or walking shorts. Khaki or Navy Blue jeans, basketball shorts or sweatpants are not allowed.

Shirts must be tucked in at all times. Pants and shorts must be worn at the waist.

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For L.B. Yancey Elementary School, it is mandatory that students follow these uniform requirements:

- **PANTS** – Navy Blue or Khaki must be worn with a belt at the waist and belts must be through the loops. Pants can have elastic waist. Absolutely NO jeans, sweat suit pants or pajamas.
- **SKIRTS, JUMPERS OR SKORTS** – Navy Blue or Khaki must be knee level or longer and can have an elastic waist. Blouse with collar or polo must be worn under the jumper. Leggings can be worn under skirts and dresses, navy blue, white or khaki color. No designs or holes.
- **SHORTS** - Navy Blue or Khaki knee length. Shorts must be worn with a belt at the waist and belts must be through loops. Absolutely NO jean shorts, sweat shorts or pajama shorts.
- **SHIRTS** – White, Navy Blue or Black with collar. Polo shirts, dress shirts, long or short sleeve. All male students’ shirts must be tucked in pants. Absolutely NO insignias, pictures or messages.
- **TIGHTS/SOCKS** - White, Navy Blue or Khaki colors can be worn under skirts, jumpers or skorts.
- **SWEATERS/JACKETS**- Solid White, Navy Blue or Black ONLY



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All male students are required to have their shirts tucked in at ALL times. No head bands, colored wrist bands, neck beads, doo rags are allowed. The principal has a right to stop any patterns, for example groups wearing chains, beads, bracelets, etc., or anything that may be mistaken for group affiliation. No caps, hats, hoods or gloves are to be worn during the school day. Exceptions will be made for uniform jackets and sweaters.

## Report Cards

The assessment of student growth and development is communicated to students and parents using a variety of methods including report cards. Report cards are distributed every nine weeks at the elementary schools.

### **Procedures for Rolling Book Bags**

Rolling book bags are not allowed for students in pre-kindergarten through second grade at any Vance County elementary school. It will be left up to the discretion of each school's administration on whether they will allow rolling book bags for students in grades 3-5. If rolling book bags are allowed for students in grades 3-5, the book bags must be no larger than 12-inches-by-14-inches in size. Rolling book bags with retractable handles and that can be worn on the student's back are preferred. These guidelines are in place for the safety of the students, teachers and staff members at each school. The larger rolling book bags can be safety hazards on school buses and in classrooms.

## Inclement Weather

In case of severe weather, snow, ice, etc., the official announcement for the closing or delay of school will be announced through the school





system's **Mass Notification System**. Through the **Mass Notification System**, the home of every student and employee in the school system will be called. If an announcement must be made during the school day, the **Mass Notification System** will call all telephone numbers listed for a student's (home, parent's work, cellular phone, etc.). Announcements also may be heard over radio and television stations serving this area or by calling the **Vance County Schools' Newsline at 252-492-2227 (492-ABCS)**. The school system's telephone newsline in Spanish can be reached by calling **252-431-9156**. Closings also will be posted on the school system's **Internet website at [www.vcs.k12.nc.us](http://www.vcs.k12.nc.us)**. **You may also follow us on Twitter @VanceCoSchools and Facebook at Vance-County-Schools.**

## Collections and Solicitations

The Vance County Board of Education (the "board") is committed to minimizing disruptions to instructional time and the educational environment. Collections and solicitations are discouraged and must not disrupt instructional time. Employees and students will not be required to contribute or respond to any collection or solicitation.

The superintendent shall develop regulations governing collections and solicitations. The regulations will specify the type and number of collections and solicitations permitted and an approval process for collections and solicitations subject to the following guidelines.

1. Outside organizations and/or sales representatives may not solicit individual employees or students during working hours or the school day unless prior written approval is granted by the principal or the superintendent.
2. As a general rule, students, school organizations, teachers, and/or other school employees may not sell commercial products during the instructional school day.



3. Individuals and organizations must secure approval from the principal prior to conducting collections or solicitations on school grounds.
4. Fliers and other materials that are to be distributed or displayed in conjunction with an approved collection or solicitation must be approved by the principal based upon the criteria in Section C of policy 5210, Distribution and Display of Non-School Material, and/or policy 5240, Advertising in the Schools.

## Student Records

All student records must be current and maintained with appropriate measures of security and confidentiality. The principal is responsible for complying with all legal requirements pertaining to the maintenance, review, and release of records retained at the school.

### **A. Annual Notification of Rights**

The superintendent or designee shall provide eligible students and parents with annual notification of their rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The notice must contain all information required by federal law and regulations, including the following:

1. the right to inspect and review the student's educational records and the procedure for exercising this right;
2. the right to request amendment of the student's educational records that the parent or eligible student believes to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's privacy rights; and the procedure for exercising this right;
3. the right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent;



4. the type of information designated as directory information and the right to opt out of release of directory information;
5. that the school system releases records to other institutions that have requested the information and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll;
6. the right to opt out of releasing the student's name, address, and phone number to military recruiters or institutions of higher education that request such information;
7. a specification of the criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest if a school official discloses or intends to disclose personally identifiable information to school officials without consent;
8. notification if the school system uses contractors, consultants, volunteers, or similar persons as school officials to perform certain school system services and functions that it would otherwise perform itself; and
9. the right to file complaints with the Family Policy Compliance Office in the U.S. Department of Education.

School officials are not required to individually notify parents or eligible students of their rights but must provide the notice in a manner reasonably likely to inform the parents and eligible students of their rights. Effective notice must be provided to parents or eligible students with disabilities or those whose primary or home language is not English.

## **B. Definition of Parent and Eligible Student**

### **1. Parent**

For purposes of this policy, the term "parent" includes a natural parent, a guardian, or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian. If the parents of a student are separated or divorced, both parents have the right to access the student's records as provided in this policy, unless the school system has been provided with evidence that



there is a court order, state statute, or other legally binding document that specifically revokes these rights.

## 2. Eligible Student

For purposes of this policy, an eligible student is a student who has reached 18 years of age or is attending an institution of postsecondary education. The rights afforded to parents under this policy transfer to an eligible student. However, parents may still have access to the records as long as the student is claimed as a dependent by the parent for federal income tax purposes. An eligible student who desires to prevent access to records by his or her parents must furnish to the principal information verifying that the student is not a dependent of his or her parents. If a parent of a student who is at least 18 and no longer attending a school within the system wishes to inspect and review the student's records, he or she must provide information verifying that the student is a dependent for federal income tax purposes.

A student under age 18 may have access to student records only upon the consent of his or her parents.

## STUDENT HEALTH

The Vance County Board of Education (the "board") requires all students to meet the eligibility requirements for school admission established by the State and the board, including immunization and health assessments. The principal or designee shall maintain on file immunization and health assessment records for all students, and these records may be inspected by officials of the county or state health departments in accordance with state and federal law. Each school principal shall file required reports with the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Public Instruction.





## **Immunization**

### **1. Requirements for Initial Entry**

Within 30 calendar days of his or her first day of attendance in the school system, each student must show evidence of age-appropriate vaccination in accordance with state law and regulation, including the following vaccines as applicable:

- a. DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis);
- b. poliomyelitis (polio);
- c. measles (rubeola);
- d. rubella (German measles);
- e. mumps;
- f. Haemophilus influenzae, type b (Hib);
- g. hepatitis B;
- h. varicella (chickenpox); and
- i. any other vaccine as may be required by law or regulation.

The current required vaccination schedule is available from the N.C. Immunization Branch online at <http://www.immunize.nc.gov> .

### **2. Additional Requirements**

All students entering seventh grade or who have reached age 12, whichever comes first, are required to receive the following:

- a. a booster dose of Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis vaccine), if they have not previously received it; and A booster dose of the meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV) is required for individuals entering the 12th grade or by 17 years of age, whichever comes first.
- b. the meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV).

### **3. Certificate of Immunization**

- a. Evidence of immunizations must be shown in the form of a certificate furnished by a licensed physician or by the health department. A student who received



immunizations in a state other than North Carolina must present an official certificate that meets the immunizations requirements of G.S. 130A-154(b).

- b. Principals are required to refuse admittance to any child whose parent or guardian does not present a medical certification of proper immunizations within the allotted time. If, following approved medical practice, the administration of a vaccine requires more than 30 calendar days to complete, upon certification of this fact by a physician, additional days may be allowed in order to obtain the required immunizations.
- c. Exceptions to the immunization requirements will be made only for religious reasons or for medical reasons approved by a physician pursuant to state law and regulation.

### **Health Assessment/Vision Screening**

Within 30 calendar days of the first day of school entry, all kindergarten students and, beginning with the 2016-2017 school year, all students entering public schools for the first time, regardless of grade level, must furnish to the principal a form that meets the requirements of state law indicating that the student has received a health assessment pursuant to G.S. 130A-440. A student who fails to meet this requirement will not be permitted to attend school until the required health assessment form has been presented. Such absences will not be considered suspensions, and the student will be given an opportunity to make up work missed during the absence as described below. The principal or designee shall, at the time of enrollment, notify the parent, guardian, or person standing in loco parentis that the completed health assessment form is needed on or before the child's first day of attendance. The date the student's health assessment form is received will be recorded in the student's official record, and the form will be maintained on file in the school.



The assessment must include a medical history and physical examination with screening for vision and hearing and, if appropriate, testing for anemia and tuberculosis. The health assessment must be conducted no more than 12 months prior to the date of school entry. Exceptions to the health assessment requirement will be made only for religious reasons.

Vision screening must comply with the vision screening standards adopted by the former Governor's Commission on Early Childhood Vision Care. Within 180 days of the start of the school year, the parent of the child must present to the principal or designee certification that within the past 12 months, the child has obtained a comprehensive eye examination performed by an ophthalmologist or optometrist or has obtained a vision screening conducted by a licensed physician, an optometrist, a physician assistant, a nurse practitioner, a registered nurse, an orthopedist or a vision screener certified by Prevent Blindness North Carolina.

Children who receive and fail to pass the required vision screening must obtain a comprehensive eye exam conducted by a duly licensed optometrist or ophthalmologist. The provider of the exam must present to the parent a signed transmittal form, which the parent must submit to the school. If a member of the school staff has reason to believe that a child enrolled in kindergarten through third grade is having problems with vision, the staff member may recommend to the child's parent that the child have a comprehensive eye examination.

No child will be excluded from attending school solely for a parent's failure to obtain a comprehensive eye exam. If a parent fails or refuses to obtain a comprehensive eye exam or to provide the certification of a comprehensive eye exam, school officials shall send a written reminder to the parent of required eye exams.

Upon request, the teacher(s) of a student subject to an absence from school for failure to provide the health assessment form required by this section shall provide to the student all missed assignments, and to the



extent practicable, the materials distributed to students in connection with the assignments. The principal or designee shall arrange for the student to take home textbooks and school-furnished digital devices for the duration of the absence and shall permit the student to take any quarterly, semester, or grading period examinations missed during the absence period.

### **Homeless Students**

Notwithstanding the provisions of this policy, admissions for homeless students will not be prohibited or delayed due to the student's inability to provide documentation of immunizations or health assessments. The homeless liaison shall work with the student, parent/guardian, school personnel or other agencies to obtain documentation of immunization and/or the health assessment or to arrange for such immunizations and/or assessments in a timely manner.

### **Foster Children**

Notwithstanding the provisions of this policy, admissions for students in foster care will not be prohibited or delayed due to the student's inability to provide documentation of immunizations or health assessments. The enrolling school will immediately contact the school last attended by the foster child to obtain any relevant documentation.

### **Children of Military Families**

The board acknowledges that immunization requirements for newly enrolling military children are governed by the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. Children of military families, as defined in policy 4050, Children of Military Families, will have 30 days from the date of enrollment or within such time as reasonably determined by the rules of the Interstate Commission to obtain any required immunization. For a series of immunizations, initial vaccinations must be obtained within 30 days or within such time as is reasonably determined under the Interstate Commission.





## **Notification of Non-Exempt Pesticide Use**

Parents or guardians of a student who want notification of non-exempt pesticide use or a pre-notice list of chemicals used on school grounds may notify the school's principal in writing within the first 15 days of the school year.

## **Asbestos Notification**

In compliance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), in 1988 the school system performed inspections of each school building for asbestos containing building materials. The inspection findings and asbestos management plans have been on file in each school's administrative office since that time. The EPA requires the school system perform inspections of the asbestos materials every three years. In addition, inspections are done by local, trained maintenance department staff members every six months to determine if any action is needed to safely maintain asbestos materials in buildings. No significant changes in the asbestos materials conditions were noted during the 2016 surveillance of our schools. Another asbestos inspection of all schools is scheduled in two years. In the most recent local inspection, asbestos materials in all schools were found to be safely contained. The school system will continue to manage these materials in place in the safest possible manner as recommended by accredited management planners.

With the exception of Aycock Elementary, Clarke Elementary, Dabney Elementary, Zeb Vance Elementary and Vance County High School, all of our schools have asbestos containing building materials. Based on inspections, there is no danger to staff and students in these schools.

The results of asbestos inspections are on file in the management plan in each school's administrative office. Everyone is welcome to view these anytime during normal school hours (Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.). The maintenance director is available to answer any



questions you may have about asbestos in our buildings by calling 252-438-4085.

## STUDENT SERVICES

### Attendance

Attendance in school and participation in class are integral parts of academic achievement and the teaching- learning process. Through regular attendance, students develop patterns of behavior essential to professional and personal success in life. Regular attendance by every student is mandatory. The State of North Carolina requires that every child in the State between the ages of 7 (or younger if enrolled) and 16 attend school. Parents and legal guardians are responsible for ensuring that students attend and remain at school daily.

#### A. Attendance Records

School officials shall keep accurate records of attendance, including accurate attendance records in each class.

Attendance records will be used to enforce the Compulsory Attendance Law of North Carolina.

#### B. Excused Absences

When a student must miss school, a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian must be presented to the student's teacher on the day the student returns after an absence.

Absences due to extended illnesses may also require a statement from a physician. An absence may be excused for any of the following reasons:

1. personal illness or injury that makes the student physically unable to attend school;
2. isolation ordered by the State Board of Health;
3. death in the immediate family;
4. medical or dental appointment;
5. participation under subpoena as a witness in a court proceeding;



6. a minimum of two days each academic year for observance of an event required or suggested by the religion of the student or the student's parent(s);
7. participation in a valid educational opportunity, such as travel or service as a legislative or Governor's page, with prior approval from the principal;
8. pregnancy and related conditions or parenting, when medically necessary; or
9. visitation with the student's parent or legal guardian, at the discretion of the superintendent or designee, if the parent or legal guardian (a) is an active duty member of the uniformed services as defined by policy 4050, Children of Military Families, and (b) has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting.

In the case of excused absences, short-term out-of-school suspensions, and absences under G.S. 130A440 (for failure to submit a school health assessment form within 30 days of entering school) the student will be permitted to make up his or her work. (See also policies 4110, Immunization and Health Requirements for School Admission, and 4351, Short-Term Suspension.) The teacher will determine when work is to be made up. The student is responsible for finding out what assignments are due and completing them within the specified time period.



### C. School Related Activities

All classroom activities are important and difficult to replace if missed. Principals shall ensure that classes missed by students due to school-related activities are kept to an absolute minimum. The following school-related activities will not be counted as absences from either class or school:

1. field trips sponsored by the school;
2. job shadows and other work-based learning opportunities, as described in G.S. 115C-47(34a);
3. school-initiated and -scheduled activities;
4. athletic events that require early dismissal from school;
5. Career and Technical Education student organization activities approved in advance by the principal; and
6. in-school suspensions.

Assignments missed for these reasons are eligible for makeup by the student. The teacher will determine when work is to be made up. The student is responsible for finding out what assignments are due and completing them within the specified time period.

### D. Excessive Absences

Class attendance and participation are critical elements of the educational process and may be taken into account in assessing academic achievement. Students are expected to be at school on time and to be present at the scheduled starting time for each class. Students who are excessively tardy to school or class may be suspended for up to two days for such offenses.





The principal shall notify parents and take all other steps required by G.S. 115C-378 for excessive absences. Students may be suspended for up to two days for truancy.

If a student is absent from school for five or more days in a semester, the principal or a committee established by the principal shall consider whether the student's grades should be reduced because of the absences. The principal or committee shall review other measures of academic achievement, the circumstances of the absences, the number of absences, and the extent to which the student completed missed work. A committee may recommend to the principal and the principal may make any of the following determinations:

1. the student will not receive a passing grade for the semester;
2. the student's grade will be reduced;
3. the student will receive the grade otherwise earned; or
4. the student will be given additional time to complete the missed work before a determination of the appropriate grade is made.

Students with excused absences due to documented chronic health problems are exempt from this policy. Excessive absences may impact eligibility for participation in interscholastic athletics.

## **School Assignment**

### **Assignment Areas**

The superintendent shall recommend to the Vance County Board of Education (the "board") school assignment areas for the schools in the system. The assignment areas will be developed in accordance with state requirements and court rulings; the need to serve all school-age children who live in the school system; and the effective use of each school facility. Assignments must be made in a non-discriminatory manner. The superintendent shall review periodically the attendance areas and submit recommendations for revisions to the board when necessary.



**Assignment of Students**

The superintendent shall assign students to particular schools based upon the established assignment areas. Notwithstanding the provisions of this policy, the superintendent shall assign homeless students in a manner consistent with state and federal law and policy 4125, Homeless Students. Students who are participating in or whose parent is participating in the North Carolina Address Confidentiality Program established by G.S. Chapter 15C will be assigned on the basis of their actual address, but such address will remain confidential in accordance with law and policy 4250/5075/7316, North Carolina Address Confidentiality Program.

**Transfer of Students During the School Year**

Students whose legal residence changes from one school assignment area to another within the school system during the same school year may choose to finish out that school year in the same school or attend school in the area to which they have moved. If they elect to remain in the first school in order to complete that year, they will be assigned to the school according to the area in which they live at the beginning of the next school year. Students whose legal residence has changed but who choose to complete the school year at their first school will be responsible for their own transportation to school.

**Other Transfers**

The superintendent shall consider student requests as may be required by law or board policy for transfer to another school during the school year based upon space availability, the needs of the child, the effect on the school to which transfer is requested, principal recommendations, and other criteria established by the superintendent.



## PARENT INFORMATION

### **School Access Control Procedures**

Vance County Schools has an Access Control System for entry into all of our school facilities. Our school system is committed to providing a safe school environment for all students, school staff members and visitors to our schools.

For the 2024-2025 school year, the following school entry protocols will be in place at all schools:

- All visitors at all schools will be directed to the front, main entrance of the school. This will be the only entrance available to visitors. Video systems will be operational at all schools, so that front office staff members can see all visitors as they approach the building.
- Front office staff members will use access control to permit entry into our schools. School doors will be locked at a certain time during the day, which will require that all visitors use the access control system to be “buzzed-in” at the main entrance by office personnel.
- At the front, main entrance to the school, all visitors must press a button on the access control box. Once school office personnel have responded, visitors must state their reason for entering the school prior to being admitted to the building.
- Visitors will then be required to show a state issued photo identification. This identification will be run through a national database. This identification will confirm the visitor’s entrance into the building. Once inside the school, all visitors must go to the school’s main office to sign in for a visitor’s badge. All visitors are



required to wear their visitor badges during the entire time they are in the school.

- All Vance County Schools' employees are required to wear their photo identification badges at all times, so that students and other staff members can easily identify them while they are on school grounds.

Additional information about these school entry protocols can be found on our school system's website at [www.vcs.k12.nc.us](http://www.vcs.k12.nc.us).

### **Distribution of Gifts and Flowers at School**

The delivery of flowers and other gift items for students will not be accepted or distributed at the schools prior to 1 p.m. on school days. No glass or hard plastic vases and no balloons will be accepted for delivery at any time to students at school.

### **Attending Board of Education Meetings**

The Vance County Board of Education meets the second Monday of each month at 6 p.m. usually in the Board Meeting Room at the Administrative Services Center at 1724 Graham Avenue in Henderson. Meetings can also be streamed virtually through Vance County School's YouTube Channel. Individuals wanting to address the board, must complete a form and return it to the superintendent's office on or before noon on the last Friday before the scheduled meeting to be placed on the meeting's agenda.

### **Parent Involvement**

The Vance County Board of Education (the "board") recognizes the critical role of parents in the education of their children and in the schools. The board directs school administrators to develop programs that will promote and support parental involvement in student learning and achievement at school and at home and encourage successful progress toward graduation.





The board directs each principal or designee to develop a parental involvement plan as a part of the school improvement plan. This plan must include, at a minimum, efforts that meet the requirements established in this policy. In addition, the plan must include ways to enhance parental involvement in the following areas:

1. meaningful two-way communication between home and school;
2. promotion of responsible parenting;
3. involvement of parents and guardians in student learning;
4. promotion of volunteering;
5. involvement of parents and guardians in school decisions that affect children and families;
6. parental training;
7. community collaboration; and
8. promotion of student health awareness.

The board also encourages development and participation of parent organizations that support the goals of the board and the school system. The board recognizes that parent organizations are an effective means of involving parents in their child's school. The superintendent and school administrators shall inform parent organizations of specific goals for each school and shall help these organizations identify opportunities to assist the school in achieving these goals.

### **Conditions for Establishing Parent Organizations**

Parent organizations, including PTAs, PTOs, and booster clubs, are not considered a part of the school system. However, because these organizations and their activities reflect upon the school system, all parent organizations must comply with the following conditions in order to operate in conjunction with the schools.

1. All parent organizations must provide the superintendent with a document describing the purpose of the organization and the general rules and procedures by which it will operate. Any later



modifications to the organization's purpose or general rules and procedures also must be provided in writing to the superintendent.

2. Parent organizations must obtain prior approval from the principal for (a) any fund-raising event; (b) any purchase for the school; (c) any function involving the participation of students; or (d) any event that is likely to reflect upon the school or the school system.
3. Fliers and other literature displayed or distributed by parent organizations must comply with policy 5210, Distribution and Display of Non-School Material.
4. Parent organizations are responsible for maintaining their own financial records. Employees of the school system are not permitted to manage the affairs of parent organizations during the workday.
5. Parent organizations are expected to consider the cultural diversity and economic differences of students and parents in planning school-related functions.

The superintendent shall grant or deny parent organizations approval to operate at each school. Parent organizations that do not comply with board policies may have approval to operate within the school revoked by the superintendent.

### **School Volunteers**

The school system recognizes the valuable contributions that school volunteers make to the learning process and the educational goals of the school system. Instructional programs are enhanced through the contributions of students' parents, community members, and local business and industry. These volunteers contribute time, resources, and expertise that assist the school system to reach the goal of providing a sound basic education to all children.



The superintendent shall provide for parents to be notified of their right to take four hours of unpaid leave from their jobs every year in order to volunteer in their child's school as stated in G.S. 95-28.3. The board encourages school administrators to develop and implement plans and procedures for utilizing school volunteers. The superintendent and designees are responsible for implementing and supervising school volunteer programs. School volunteer programs must provide the following:

1. adequate screening of volunteers based upon the amount of contact they will have with students;
2. the requirement that volunteers comply with policy 5020, Visitors to the Schools;
3. reasonable supervision of volunteers based at least in part upon the amount of contact they will have with students; and
4. adequate training of volunteers, including familiarizing volunteers with applicable laws, board policies, administrative procedures, and school rules.

All school volunteers are expected to be professional and dependable in their volunteer activities.

**Background checks are required for all individuals wishing to volunteer in our schools and work directly with students.**

Each individual wishing to volunteer will be asked by school personnel to complete a "School/Volunteer Agreement Form." This form is included in the Vance County Schools' Volunteer Handbook which will be given by school personnel to each person interested in volunteering.

A copy of the completed form will be sent to the school system's Human Resource Office for the background check. The checks should be completed in two working days and school administrators will be notified of basic results. Detailed results of the background checks must



be kept in locked files in the school system's Human Resource Office. Only authorized personnel will have access to these results.

The purpose of the background checks is to ensure the safety of everyone in our schools, including volunteers. We hope all potential volunteers, including parents, understand our concern for the safety of everyone. We value our school volunteers and want to continue to work with our parents and community residents to enrich the educational experiences of all of our students.

**\*\*Due to health and safety regulations, there may be times that visitors and volunteers are not permitted into the school building.\*\***

## TECHNOLOGY

### **Photographs, Videotapes and Websites**

We want parents and guardians to be aware that their children may be featured in photographs, live streaming, recordings, websites, and news articles. Parents will be given a chance to opt-in, giving permission to the district to photograph your child. A parental permission form will also be available in each school and on occasions school personnel may ask parents/guardians to complete the form.

### **Internet Safety**

It is the policy of the Vance County Board of Education (the "board") to:

- (a) prevent user access via its technological resources to, or transmission of, inappropriate material on the Internet or through electronic mail or other forms of direct electronic communications;
- (b) prevent unauthorized access to the Internet and devices or programs connected to or accessible through the Internet;
- (c) prevent other unlawful online activity;
- (d) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or





dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (e) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act.

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

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

Procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures are the responsibility of the technology director or designated representatives. The technology director or designated representatives shall provide age-appropriate training for students who use the school system's Internet services. The training provided will be



designed to promote the school system's commitment to educating students in digital literacy and citizenship.

### **Use of Wireless Communication Devices**

The Vance County Board of Education (the "board") recognizes that cellular phones and other wireless communication devices have become an important tool through which parents communicate with their children. Therefore, students are permitted to possess such devices on school property but must comply with rules of usage by school staff. Wireless communication devices include, but are not limited to, cellular phones, electronic devices with internet capability, paging devices, two-way radios, and similar devices.

Administrators may authorize individual students to use wireless communication devices for personal purposes when there is a reasonable need for such communication. Teachers and administrators may authorize individual students to use the devices for instructional purposes, provided that they supervise the students during such use. Although use may be permitted, before, during and after school, use of cellular phones and other wireless communication devices may be prohibited on school buses when noise from such devices interferes with the safe operation of the buses. In addition, elementary and middle school students who participate in after-school programs are prohibited from using wireless communication devices during such programs.

School employees may immediately confiscate any wireless communication devices that are in violation of this policy. Absent compelling and unusual circumstances, confiscated wireless communication devices will be returned only to the student's parent.



## DISCIPLINE

### **Short-Term and Long-Term Suspension**

A short-term suspension is the disciplinary exclusion of a student from attending his or her assigned school for up to 10 school days. A short-term suspension does not include (1) the removal of a student from class by the classroom teacher, the principal, or other authorized school personnel for the remainder of the subject period or for less than one-half of the school day, (2) the changing of a student's location to another room or place on the school premises, or (3) a student's absence under G.S. 130A-440 (for failure to submit a school health assessment form within 30 days of entering school). A student who is placed on a short-term suspension will not be permitted to be on school property or to take part in any school function during the period of suspension without prior approval from the principal.

The principal or designee has the authority to determine when a short-term suspension is an appropriate consequence and to impose the suspension, so long as all relevant Vance County Board of Education (the "board") policies are followed.

A long-term suspension is the disciplinary exclusion of a student from attending his or her assigned school for more than 10 school days. Disciplinary reassignment of a student to a full-time educational program that meets the academic requirements of the standard course of study established by the State Board of Education and that provides the student with the opportunity to make timely progress toward graduation and grade promotion is not a long-term suspension requiring the due process procedures set out in this policy, nor is an absence under G.S. 130A-440 (for failure to submit a school health assessment form within 30 days of entering school).

Upon the recommendation of the principal, the superintendent may impose a long-term suspension on a student who willfully engages in a serious violation of the Code of Student Conduct and the violation either



(1) threatens the safety of students, staff, or school visitors, or (2) threatens to substantially disrupt the educational environment. The principal may recommend long-term suspension for a minor violation if aggravating circumstances justify treating the student's behavior as a serious violation.

If the offense leading to the long-term suspension occurred before the final quarter of the school year, the exclusion must be no longer than the remainder of the school year in which the offense was committed. If the offense leading to the long-term suspension occurred during the final quarter of the school year, the exclusion may include a period up to the remainder of the school year in which the offense was committed and the first semester of the following school year.

### **365-Day Suspension**

A 365-day suspension is the disciplinary exclusion of a student from attending his or her assigned school for 365 calendar days. The superintendent may impose a 365-day suspension only for certain firearms and destructive device violations, as identified in policy 4333, Weapons, Bomb Threats, Terrorist Threats, and Clear Threats to Safety.

### **Expulsion**

An expulsion is the indefinite exclusion of a student from school enrollment for disciplinary purposes. Upon the recommendation of the superintendent, the Vance County Board of Education (the "board") may expel a student who is 14 years of age or older for certain types of misbehavior as provided in policy 4325, Drugs and Alcohol, policy 4330, Theft, Trespass, and Damage to Property, policy 4331, Assaults, Threats, and Harassment, and policy 4333, Weapons, Bomb Threats, Terrorist Threats, and Clear Threats to Safety, if the student's continued presence in school constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or employees.





## **Weapons and Bomb Threats**

The Vance County Board of Education (the "board") will not tolerate the presence of weapons or destructive devices, bomb or terrorist threats, or actions that constitute a clear threat to the safety of students or employees. Any student who violates this policy will be removed from the classroom or school environment for as long as is necessary to provide a safe and orderly environment for learning.

### **Weapons and Weapon-Like Items**

Students are prohibited from possessing, handling, using or transmitting, whether concealed or open, any weapon or any instrument that reasonably looks like a weapon or could be used as a weapon. Weapons include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. loaded and unloaded firearms, including guns, pistols, and rifles;
- b. destructive devices, as described in subsection B.2 of this policy, including explosives, such as dynamite cartridges, bombs, grenades, and mines;
- c. knives, including pocket knives, bowie knives, switchblades, dirks, and daggers;
- d. slingshots and slungshots;
- e. leaded canes;
- f. blackjacks;
- g. metal knuckles;
- h. BB guns;
- i. air rifles and air pistols;
- j. stun guns and other electric shock weapons, such as tasers;
- k. icepicks;
- l. razors and razor blades (except those designed and used solely for personal shaving);
- m. fireworks;
- n. gun powder, ammunition, or bullets;
- o. any sharp pointed or edged instruments except unaltered nail files and clips and tools used solely for preparation of food, instruction, and maintenance; and



- p. mace, pepper spray, and other personal defense sprays
- q. nuclear warfare/weapons.

Examples of other objects that may be considered weapons are box cutters and other types of utility blades and blowguns.

No student may knowingly or willfully cause, encourage, or aid another student to possess, handle, or use any of the weapons or weapon-like items listed above. A student who finds a weapon or weapon-like item, who witnesses another student or other person with such an item, or who becomes aware that another student or other person intends to possess, handle, or use such an item must notify a teacher or the principal immediately.

This section does not apply to board-approved and -authorized activities for which the board has adopted appropriate safeguards to protect student safety.

### **Bomb Threats**

Students are prohibited from making, aiding, and/or abetting in making a bomb threat or perpetrating a bomb hoax against school system property by making a false report that a device designed to cause damage or destruction by explosion, blasting, or burning is located on school property.

No student may knowingly or willfully cause, encourage, or aid another student to make a bomb threat or perpetrate a bomb hoax. Any student who becomes aware that another student or other person intends to use a bomb, make a bomb threat, or perpetrate a bomb hoax must notify a teacher or the principal immediately.

### **Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying**

The Vance County Board of Education (the "board") acknowledges the dignity and worth of all students and employees and strives to create a safe, orderly, caring, and inviting school environment to facilitate student learning and achievement. The board prohibits discrimination



on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age and will provide equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups as required by law. The board will not tolerate any form of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or bullying in any of its educational or employment activities or programs (see Policy 4329/7311, Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited).

Students, school system employees, volunteers, and visitors are expected to behave in a civil and respectful manner. The board expressly prohibits unlawful discrimination, harassment, and bullying. Students are expected to comply with the behavior standards established by board policy and the Code of Student Conduct. Employees are expected to comply with board policy and school system regulations. Volunteers and visitors on school property also are expected to comply with board policy and established school rules and procedures.

Any violation of this policy is serious and school officials shall promptly take appropriate action. Students will be disciplined in accordance with the school's student behavior management plan (see policy 4302, School Plan for Management of Student Behavior). Based on the nature and severity of the offense and the circumstances surrounding the incident, the student will be subject to appropriate consequences and remedial actions ranging from positive behavioral interventions up to, and including, expulsion.

Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to, and including, dismissal. Volunteers and visitors who violate this policy will be directed to leave school property and/or reported to law enforcement, as appropriate, in accordance with policy 5020, Visitors to the Schools.

When considering if a response beyond the individual level is appropriate, school administrators should consider the nature and



severity of the misconduct to determine whether a classroom, school-wide, or school system wide response is necessary. Such classroom, school-wide, or school system-wide responses may include staff training, harassment and bullying prevention programs, and other measures deemed appropriate by the superintendent to address the behavior.

**Emergency phone line to call to report instances of bullying in our schools is 252-431-3662.**

**SEE SOMETHING-SAY SOMETHING 888-624-7222.**

### **Student Behavior**

All decisions related to student behavior are guided by the Vance County Board of Education's (the board") educational objective to teach responsibility and respect for cultural and ideological differences and by the board's commitment to creating safe, orderly, and inviting schools. Student behavior policies are provided in order to establish (1) expected standards of student behavior; (2) principles to be followed in managing student behavior; (3) consequences for prohibited behavior or drug/alcohol policy violations; and (4) required procedures for addressing misbehavior.

The reasons for managing student behavior are to (1) create an orderly environment in which students can learn; (2) teach expected standards of behavior; (3) help students learn to accept the consequences of their behavior; and (4) provide students with the opportunity to develop self-control. The following principles apply in managing student behavior:

1. Student behavior management strategies will complement other efforts to create a safe, orderly, and inviting environment.
2. Positive behavioral interventions will be employed as appropriate to improve student behavior.





3. Responsibility, integrity, civility, and other standards of behavior will be integrated into the curriculum.
4. Disruptive behavior in the classroom will not be tolerated.
5. Consequences for unacceptable behavior will be designed to help a student learn to comply with rules, to be respectful, to accept responsibility for his or her behavior, and to develop self-control.
6. Strategies and consequences will be age and developmentally appropriate.

### **Communication of Policies**

Board policies related to student behavior are codified mainly in the 4300 series. The superintendent shall incorporate information from such policies into a Code of Student Conduct that notifies students of the behavior expected of them, conduct that may subject them to discipline, and the range of disciplinary measures that may be used by school officials. At the discretion of the superintendent, the Code of Student Conduct may include additional rules needed to implement the board's student behavior policies. Each school shall create a student behavior management plan that will elaborate further on processes for addressing student misbehavior and the use of intervention strategies and consequences (see policy 4302, School Plan for Management of Student Behavior). The Code of Student Conduct must incorporate by reference any additional student behavior standards, prohibited conduct, or disciplinary measures identified in individual school behavior plans developed in accordance with policy 4302, provided such measures are consistent with law and board policy. The Code of Student Conduct must not impose mandatory long-term suspension or expulsion for specific violations unless otherwise provided in state or federal law. At the beginning of each school year, principals shall make available to each student and parent all of the following: (1) the Code of Student Conduct; (2) any board policies related to behavior that are not part of the Code of Conduct; (3) any related administrative procedures; (4) any additional discipline-related information from the school's student



behavior management plan, including behavior standards, prohibited conduct, or disciplinary measures; and (5) any other school rules. This information must be available at other times upon request and must be made available to students enrolling during the school year and their parents.

For the purpose of board policies related to student behavior, all references to "parent" include a parent, a legal guardian, a legal custodian, or another adult caregiver authorized to enroll a student under policy 4120, Domicile or Residence Requirements.

### **Applicability**

Students must comply with the Code of Student Conduct in the following circumstances:

1. while in any school building or on any school premises before, during, or after school hours;
2. while on any bus or other vehicle as part of any school activity;
3. while waiting at any school bus stop;
4. during any school-sponsored activity or extracurricular activity;
5. when subject to the authority of school employees; and
6. at any place or time when the student's behavior has or is reasonably expected to have a direct and immediate impact on the orderly and efficient operation of the schools or the safety of individuals in the school environment.

### **Consequences for Violations**

Violations of the Code of Student Conduct must be dealt with in accordance with the guidelines established in the school's behavior management plan (see policy 4302, School Plan for Management of Student Behavior).



## **Minor Violations**

Minor violations of the Code of Student Conduct are those less severe infractions involving a lower degree of dangerousness and harm. Examples of minor violations include the use of inappropriate or disrespectful language, noncompliance with a staff directive, dress code violations, and minor physical altercations that do not involve a weapon or an injury. Aggravating circumstances, however, may justify treating an otherwise minor violation as a serious violation.

Minor violations of the Code of Student Conduct may result in disciplinary measures or responses up to and including short-term suspension. Further information regarding the procedures for short-term suspensions is provided in policy 4351, Short-Term Suspension. Other disciplinary measures or responses may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. parental involvement, such as conferences;
- b. isolation or time-out for short periods of time;
- c. behavior improvement agreements;
- d. instruction in conflict resolution and anger management;
- e. peer mediation;
- f. individual or small group sessions with the school counselor;
- g. academic intervention;
- h. in-school suspension;
- i. detention before and/or after school or on Saturday;
- j. community service;
- k. exclusion from graduation ceremonies;
- l. exclusion from extracurricular activities;
- m. suspension from bus privileges; and
- n. Teen Court.



The parent or guardian is responsible for transportation that may be required to carry out a consequence. With the exception of suspension from bus privileges, if a parent or guardian is unable to provide transportation, another consequence will be substituted.

### Serious Violations

Serious violations of the Code of Student Conduct may result in any of the consequences that may be imposed for minor violations. In addition, serious violations that threaten to substantially disrupt the educational environment may result in long-term suspension or alternative placement, and serious violations that threaten the safety of students, school employees, or school visitors may result in long-term suspension, alternative placement, or expulsion. Certain violations involving firearms or explosive devices may result in a 365-day suspension. Further information regarding the standards and procedures for long-term suspensions, 365-day suspensions and expulsions is provided in policies 4351, Short-Term Suspension, and 4353, Long-Term Suspension, 365-Day Suspension, Expulsion. (See also policy 4333, Weapons, Bomb Threats, Terrorist Threats, and Clear Threats to Safety, for information regarding 365-day suspensions for certain violations involving firearms or explosive devices.)

### **Plan for Management of Student Behavior**

Each school must have a plan for managing student behavior that incorporates effective strategies consistent with the purposes and principles established in policy 4300 Vance County Schools code of conduct, Student Behavior Policies. School officials are encouraged to implement a system of positive behavior support and to seek other positive, innovative, and constructive methods of correcting and managing student behavior in an effort to avoid repeated misbehavior and suspension.

The plan should address: (1) the process by which student behavior will be addressed, including any use of MTSS and the means by which students at risk of repeated disruptive or disorderly conduct are identified, assessed, and assisted; (2) positive behavioral interventions





and possible consequences that will be used; and (3) parental involvement strategies that address when parents or guardians will be notified or involved in issues related to their child's behavior (see policy 4341, Parental Involvement in Student Behavior Issues).

No school plan for managing student behavior may authorize the use of corporal punishment. Corporal punishment is the intentional infliction of physical pain upon the body of a student as a disciplinary measure. It includes, but is not limited to, spanking, paddling, and slapping. The Vance County Board of Education (the "board") prohibits corporal punishment, believing that other consequences are more appropriate and effective for teaching self-control. No teacher, substitute teacher, student teacher, bus driver, or other employee, contractor, or volunteer may use corporal punishment to discipline any student. Reasonable force that is necessary to protect oneself or others is not considered corporal punishment. (See also policy 4301, Authority of School Personnel.)

Principals shall avoid removing students from the classroom for a long period of time, including in-school or out of school suspensions, unless necessary to provide a safe, orderly environment that is conducive to learning. The principal is authorized to remove students in accordance with board policies for prohibited or criminal conduct or for other behavior that interferes with a safe, orderly environment.

Principals are encouraged to use a team approach in developing and evaluating the school's plan to manage student behavior. On at least an annual basis, the plan should be evaluated based upon data on disciplinary actions taken and the impact on student academic performance. Principals shall report on at least an annual basis to the superintendent and the board on the effectiveness of the plan in minimizing classroom disruptions, referrals to the principal's office, and the use of out-of-school suspension.



## **Disruptive Behavior**

An orderly school environment is necessary for teachers to be able to teach and for students to be able to learn. Students are encouraged to participate in efforts to create a safe, orderly, and inviting school environment. Students also are entitled to exercise their constitutional right to free speech as part of a stimulating, inviting educational environment. A student's right to free speech will not be infringed upon; however, school officials may place reasonable, constitutional restrictions on time, place, and manner in order to preserve a safe, orderly environment.

Principals and teachers have full authority as provided by law to establish and enforce standards and rules as necessary to create orderly schools and classrooms.

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## **Prohibited Behavior**

Students are prohibited from disrupting teaching, the orderly conduct of school activities, or any other lawful function of the school or school system. The following conduct is illustrative of disruptive behavior and is prohibited:

1. intentional verbal or physical acts that result or have the potential to result in blocking access to school functions or facilities or preventing the convening or continuation of school-related functions;
2. appearance or clothing that (1) violates a reasonable dress code adopted and publicized by the school; (2) is substantially disruptive; (3) is provocative or obscene; or (4) endangers the health or safety of the student or others (see policy 4316, Student Dress Code);
3. possessing or distributing literature, photographs, or illustrations or accessing websites that significantly disrupt the educational process or that are obscene or unlawful;



4. engaging in behavior that is immoral, indecent, lewd, disreputable, or of an overly sexual nature in the school setting;
5. failing to observe established safety rules, standards, and regulations, including on buses and in hallways; and
6. interfering with the operation of school buses, including delaying the bus schedule, getting off at an unauthorized stop, and willfully trespassing upon a school bus.

### **Consequences**

The disciplinary consequences for violations of this policy will be consistent with Section D of policy 4300, Student Behavior Policies. The superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for violations of this policy.

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### **Assaults, Threats and Harassment**

The Vance County Board of Education (the "board") will not tolerate assaults, threats, or harassment from any student. Any student engaging in such behavior will be removed from the classroom or school environment for as long as is necessary to provide a safe and orderly environment for learning. Prohibited Behavior

#### **1. Assault**

Students are prohibited from assaulting, physically injuring, attempting to injure, or intentionally behaving in such a way as could reasonably cause injury to any other person. Assault includes engaging in a fight.



## 2. Threatening Acts

Students are prohibited from directing toward any other person any language that threatens force, violence, or disruption, or any sign or act that constitutes a threat of force, violence, or disruption.

Bomb and terrorist threats are also addressed in policy 4333, Weapons, Bomb Threats, Terrorist Threats, and Clear Threats to Safety.

## 3. Harassment

Students are prohibited from engaging in or encouraging any form of harassment, including bullying and cyberbullying of students, employees, or other individuals on school grounds, at school-related functions, and at any time or place when the behavior has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline in the schools. Harassment is unwanted, unwelcome, and uninvited behavior that demeans, threatens, or offends the victim and results in a hostile environment for the victim. The hostile environment may be created through pervasive or persistent misbehavior or a single incident if sufficiently severe.

Harassment and bullying are further defined in policy 1710/4021/7230, Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying.

Complaints of harassment will be investigated pursuant to policy 1720/4015/7225, Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Complaint Procedure. For incidents of misbehavior that do not rise to the level of harassment, see policy 4310, Integrity and Civility, which establishes the expectation that students will demonstrate civility and integrity in their interactions with others.

## Consequences

The disciplinary consequences for violations of this policy shall be consistent with Section D of policy 4300, Student Behavior Policies. The superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for violations of this policy.





A student who is long-term suspended or reassigned to alternative education services as a result of assaulting or injuring a teacher shall not return to that teacher's classroom without the teacher's consent. A student who is convicted under G.S. 14-458.2 of cyberbullying a school employee will be transferred to another school. If there is no other appropriate school within the school system, the student will be transferred to a different class or assigned to a teacher who was not involved as a victim of the cyberbullying. The superintendent may modify the required transfer of an individual student on a case-by-case basis and shall provide a written statement of this modification in the student's record.

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### **Gang Related Activity**

The Vance County Board of Education (the "board") strives to create a safe, orderly, caring, and inviting school environment. Gangs and gang-related activities have proven contrary to that mission and are prohibited within the schools. A gang is any ongoing organization, association, or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its primary activities the commission of criminal acts and having a common name or common identifying sign, colors, or symbols. The violence and crime that accompany gangs pose a serious threat to the safety of students and employees of the school system. Even absent acts of violence or crime, the existence of gang-related activity within the schools creates an atmosphere of fear and hostility that obstructs student learning and achievement. Thus, the board condemns the existence of gangs and will not tolerate gang-related activity in the school system.

Gang-related activity is strictly prohibited within the schools. For the purposes of this policy, "gang-related activity" means: (1) any conduct that is prohibited by another board policy and is engaged in by a student on behalf of an identified gang or as a result of the student's gang membership; or (2) any conduct engaged in by a student to perpetuate, proliferate, or display the existence of any identified gang.

Conduct prohibited by this policy includes:



1. wearing, possessing, using, distributing, displaying, or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, signs, or other items with the intent to convey membership or affiliation in a gang;
2. communicating either verbally or non-verbally (gestures, handshakes, slogans, drawings, etc.) with the intent to convey membership or affiliation in a gang;
3. tagging, or otherwise defacing school or personal property with symbols or slogans intended to convey membership or affiliation in a gang (see policy 4330, Theft, Trespass, and Damage to Property);
4. requiring payment of protection, insurance, or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person related to gang activity (see policy 4331, Assaults, Threats, and Harassment);
5. inciting others to intimidate or to act with physical violence upon any other person related to gang activity (see policy 4331);
6. soliciting others for gang membership; and
7. committing any other illegal act or other violation of school system policies in connection with gang-related activity.

The superintendent or designee shall regularly consult with law enforcement officials to maintain current examples of gang-related activities, including but not limited to gang names and particularized examples of potential gang indicators including symbols, hand signals, graffiti, clothing, accessories, and behaviors. Each principal shall maintain a list of current examples of gang-related activities to assist students, parents, and teachers in identifying gang symbols and practices. The list shall be available in an easily accessible location in the main office of the school. Parents, students, and school employees may, upon request, access the list, which shall include a warning that wearing or displaying clothing, hand signs, or symbols identified in the list with



the intent to convey membership or affiliation in any gang may subject a student to discipline under this policy.

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### **Tobacco Products**

The Vance County Board of Education (the "board") is committed to creating safe, orderly, clean, and inviting schools for all students and staff. To this end, the board supports state laws that prohibit the sale or distribution of tobacco products to minors and that prohibit the use of tobacco products by minors. The board also supports state and federal laws that prohibit the use of tobacco products in school buildings, on school campuses, and in or on any other school property owned or operated by the school board. For the purposes of this policy, the term "tobacco product" means any product that contains or that is made or derived from tobacco and is intended for human consumption (this includes cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, snus, and snuff), including all lighted and smokeless tobacco products, as well as electronic cigarettes, vaporizers, vape, and other electronic smoking devices even if they do not contain tobacco or nicotine.

Nothing in this policy prohibits the use or possession of tobacco products for an instructional or research activity conducted in a school building, provided that the activity is conducted or supervised by a faculty member and that the activity does not include smoking, chewing, or otherwise ingesting tobacco.

### **Drugs and Alcohol**

Unauthorized or illegal drugs and alcohol are a threat to safe and orderly schools and will not be tolerated. The superintendent is responsible for ensuring that this policy is consistently applied throughout the school system.

### **Prohibited Behavior**

Students are prohibited from possessing, using, transmitting, selling, or being under the influence of any of the following substances:



1. narcotic drugs;
2. hallucinogenic drugs;
3. amphetamines;
4. barbiturates;
5. marijuana or any other controlled substance;
6. synthetic stimulants, such as MDPV and mephedrone (e.g., "bath salts"), and synthetic cannabinoids (e.g., "Spice," "K2");
7. any alcoholic beverage, malt beverage, fortified or unfortified wine, or other intoxicating liquor; or
8. any chemicals, substances, or products procured or used with the intention of bringing about a state of exhilaration or euphoria or of otherwise altering the student's mood or behavior.
9. any substance containing cannabidiol (CBD) or tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), regardless of whether it constitutes a controlled substance under state or federal law.

Students also are prohibited from possessing, using, transmitting, or selling drug paraphernalia or counterfeit (fake) drugs. Students may not participate in any way in the selling or transmitting of prohibited substances, regardless of whether the sale or transmission ultimately occurs on school property.

Possession or use of prescription and over-the-counter drugs is not in violation of this policy if such drugs are possessed and used in accordance with policy 6125, Administering Medicines to Students. The principal may authorize other lawful uses of substances that are otherwise prohibited by this policy, such as for approved school projects.





## **Consequences**

As required by policy 4335, Criminal Behavior, the principal must report to the appropriate law enforcement agency any student who has used or possessed prohibited substances in violation of this policy.

The disciplinary consequences for violations of this policy shall be consistent with Section D of policy 4300, Student Behavior Policies. The superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for violations of this policy.

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## **Theft, Trespass and Damage to Property**

The Vance County Board of Education (the "board") will not tolerate theft, trespass, or damage to property by any student. Any student engaging in such behavior will be removed from the classroom or school environment for as long as is necessary to provide a safe and orderly environment for learning.

### **1. Theft**

Students are prohibited from stealing or attempting to steal school or private property and/or from knowingly being in possession of stolen property.

### **2. Damage to Property**

Students are prohibited from damaging or attempting to damage school or private property.

### **3. Trespass**

Students are prohibited from trespassing on school property. A student will be considered a trespasser and may be criminally prosecuted in any of the following circumstances:

- a. the student is on the campus of a school to which he or she is not assigned during the school day without the knowledge and consent of the officials of that school;
  - b. the student is loitering at any school after the close of the school day without any specific need or supervision;
- or



- c. the student has been suspended from school but is on the property of any school during the suspension period without the express permission of the principal.

### **Consequences**

The disciplinary consequences for violations of this policy shall be consistent with Section D of policy 4300, Student Behavior Policies. The superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for violations of this policy.

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### **Criminal Behavior**

Criminal or other illegal behavior is prohibited. Any student who the principal reasonably believes has engaged in criminal behavior on school premises or at school activities will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, as stated in applicable Vance County Board of Education ("board") policies, and also may be criminally prosecuted. School officials shall cooperate fully with any criminal investigation and prosecution. School officials shall independently investigate any criminal behavior that also violates school rules or board policy.

### **Students Charged with or Convicted of Criminal Behavior**

The superintendent and principal may take reasonable or legally required measures to preserve a safe, orderly environment when a student has been charged with or convicted of a serious crime, regardless of whether the alleged offense was committed on school grounds or was related to school activities. Depending upon the circumstances, including the nature of the crime or alleged crime, the child's age, and the publicity within the school community, reasonable or legally required efforts may include changing a student's classroom assignment or transferring the student to another school. Transfer to an alternative school may be made in accordance with the criteria established in policy 3470/4305, Alternative Learning Programs/Schools. The student will continue to be provided with educational opportunities unless and until the student is found to have violated board policy or



school rules and is suspended or expelled in accordance with procedures established in board policy.

### **Reporting Criminal Behavior**

A school employee is permitted to report to law enforcement an assault by a student on a school employee. Principals or other supervisors shall not, by threats or in any other manner, intimidate, or attempt to intimidate the school employee from doing so.

Principals must immediately report to law enforcement and the superintendent the following acts when they have personal knowledge or actual notice from school personnel that such acts have occurred on school property, regardless of the age or grade of the perpetrator or victim: (1) assault resulting in serious personal injury; (2) sexual assault; (3) sexual offense; (4) rape; (5) kidnapping; (6) indecent liberties with a minor; (7) assault involving the use of a weapon; (8) possession of a firearm in violation of the law; (9) possession of a weapon in violation of the law; and (10) possession of a controlled substance in violation of the law. A principal who willfully fails to make a required report to law enforcement will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

The principal or designee shall notify the superintendent or designee in writing or by e-mail of any report made by the principal to law enforcement. Such notice must occur by the end of the workday in which the incident occurred, when reasonably possible, but not later than the end of the following workday. The superintendent must inform the board of any such reports. In addition, the principal or designee must notify the parents of students who are alleged to be victims of any reported offenses.



## ***New for 2024-2025***

### **Clear Bag Policy**

Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, Vance County Schools will only allow clear bags at Vance County Schools ticketed events which include but are not limited to athletic activities and graduations. Exceptions will be made for diaper bags. All bags are subject to search at these events. For more information, please visit the Vance County Schools website or <https://www.vcs.k12.nc.us/>

### **Artificial Intelligence Policy**

Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, Vance County Schools will introduce the new artificial intelligence (AI) policy as it pertains to the use of generative AI tools and applications. Vance County Schools' AI policy adheres to guidance provided by the North Carolina Department of Instruction. For more information, please visit the Vance County Schools website or <https://www.vcs.k12.nc.us/>.

### **The Parent Bill of Rights**

The Parents Bill of Rights is a legislative measure designed to affirm and protect the rights of parents in the education and upbringing of their children. This law ensures that parents have the right to access their children's educational records, be informed about their children's performance in school, and participate in decisions related to their children's education. It also emphasizes the importance of parental involvement and seeks to increase transparency in schools by requiring educators to inform parents about significant changes in their children's educational experience or well-being. The bill aims to reinforce parental authority and engagement in fostering a collaborative environment between schools and families. For more information about the Parent's Bill of Rights and Vance County Schools, please visit <https://www.vcs.k12.nc.us/>





## **Nondiscrimination Policy & Notice of Nondiscrimination (§ 106.8(b)–(c))**

Vance County Public Schools does not discriminate based on sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX, including in admission and employment. For more information, please visit

<https://www.vcs.k12.nc.us/>.



## Vance County Schools

### **Aycock Elementary School**

305 Carey Chapel Road  
Henderson, N.C. 27537  
(252) 492-1516

Principal: Donald Johnson, III

### **E.O. Young Jr. Elementary School**

6655 Broad Street  
Middleburg, N.C. 27556  
(252) 438-6423

Principal: Kristen Boyd

### **Carver Elementary School**

987 Carver School Road  
Henderson, N.C. 27537  
(252) 438-6955

Principal: Regina Rainey

### **Zeb Vance Elementary School**

4800 Raleigh Road  
Kittrell, N.C. 27544  
(252) 438-8492

Principal: Joy Suther

### **Clarke Elementary School**

309 Mt. Carmel Church Road  
Henderson, N.C. 27537  
(252) 438-8415

Principal: Dr. C'Monee Wilkins

### **STEM Early High School**

219 Charles Street  
Henderson, N.C. 27537  
(252) 738-2260

Principal: Edward Ortega

### **Dabney Elementary School**

150 Lanning Road  
Henderson, N.C. 27537  
(252) 438-6918

Principal: Dr. Michael Putney

### **Vance County Middle School**

293 Warrenton Road  
Henderson, N.C. 27537  
(252) 492-6041

Principal: Dr. Stephanie Ayscue

### **New Hope Elementary School**

10199 NC Hwy 39 North  
Henderson, N.C. 27537  
(252) 438-6549

Principal: Letitia Fields

### **AdVance Academy**

219 Charles Street  
Henderson, N.C. 27536  
(252) 438-8407

Principal: Nowell Brooks

### **Pinkston Street Elementary School**

855 Adams Street  
Henderson, N.C. 27536  
(252) 438-3441

Principal: Canecca Mayes

### **Vance Co. Early College High School**

P.O. Box 917  
Henderson, N.C. 27536  
(252) 738-3580

Principal: Debbie Hite



**E.M. Rollins Elementary School**

1600 South Garnett Street

Henderson, N.C. 27536

(252) 438-2189

Principal: Dr. Carnetta Thomas

**L.B. Yancey Elementary School**

311 Hawkins Drive

Henderson, N.C. 27536

(252) 438-8336

Principal: Dr. Shannon Bullock

**Vance County High School**

925 Garrett Road

Henderson, N.C. 27537

(252) 430-6000

Principal: Dr. Nealie Whitt

**Vance Virtual Village Academy**

219 Charles Street

Henderson, N.C. 27536

(252) 506-7172

Principal: Dr. Jeffrey Batten



## **Vance County Schools**

### **Vision**

**Vance County Schools provides an adaptable educational setting where learning is a catalyst to the pursuit of dreams in an evolving society.**

### **Mission**

**Vance County Schools is committed to providing broad experiences and opportunities to students that enable them to compete globally.**

**This handbook should be used as a reference throughout the school year.**







**In compliance with federal law, including the provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Vance County Schools administers all state operated educational programs, employment activities and admission without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law.**

**Inquiries or complaints should be directed to:**

**Student Services  
Vance County Schools  
P.O. Box 7001 1724 Graham Avenue  
Henderson, N.C. 27536  
Telephone: 252-492-2127  
Fax: 252-438-6119**

