



Parent's Guide to Student Achievement (PGSA)

Based on Parents' Bill of Rights - SB 49; Session Law 2023-106

Gaston County Schools aims to offer parents and guardians access to information regarding student achievement via the district's Parent's Guide to Student Achievement (PGSA). Should you wish to obtain paper copies of this document and its contents, you can make a request through your child's respective school.

<p>How can a student be promoted to the next grade level?</p>	<p>The following are the relevant State and local requirements for a child to be promoted to the next grade level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relevant part of this link is found in Part 1A of State Statute 115C(pp. 15-28) regarding retention, promotion, alternatives to show reading proficiency, etc.: Grade Level Promotion <p>Information about Gaston County Schools Board of Education's promotion and retention policy is available here. Information about the Board's graduation requirements is available here.</p> <p>Additional student grading information can be obtained from the GCS Grading Practices/Guidelines, where grading practices are outlined.</p>
<p>What are students learning at school?</p> <p>How can a parent review</p>	<p>In North Carolina, all schools use the same Standard Course of Study determined by the State Board of Education. These standards are the knowledge and skills students should understand by the end of each grade/course.</p>



these materials?

The standards can be found on the NCDPI Office of Academic Standards [website](#).

There are standards for:

- Arts Education,
- Career Technical Education,
- Computer Science,
- English Language Arts,
- English Language Development,
- Student Success Standards,
- Healthful Living,
- Information and Technology,
- Mathematics,
- Science,
- Social Studies, and
- World Language.

Local districts, schools, and teachers determine how to teach these standards, including curriculum, supplementary materials, books, etc.

Curriculum

The following links provide information related to the curriculum in Gaston County Schools:

- [Curriculum and Instruction Information](#)
- [K-12 Blended Learning Resources](#)

Instructional Materials

Contact your school principal to review curriculum resources.

In certain instances, principals might be able to furnish parents with physical or digital



versions of specific district-provided core and supplementary instructional materials for examination at home. However, for most copyrighted materials, access for inspection may be limited to in-person viewing. Typically, requests to inspect school library materials will be accommodated by notifying parents of designated hours for browsing the library collection. You can find each school's library catalog online at [Destiny Discover](#).

Additional information about the inspection of instructional materials can be located below:

- [Policy Code: 3210 Parental Inspection of and Objection to Instructional Materials](#)
Parents may review all instructional materials, as defined in [policy 3200](#), Selection of Instructional Materials. Instructional materials do not include academic tests or assessments. Parents who would like to inspect and review instructional materials should make a request in writing to the principal. The principal shall schedule a mutually agreeable date and time for the parent to come into the school to review the materials.

Literacy Intervention Plan

Parents and guardians can view Gaston County Schools Literacy Intervention Plan at the following link:

- [GCS Literacy Intervention Plan - LIP](#)

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

Gaston County Schools provide Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses, enabling students to explore careers and obtain credentials. Information on CTE Career Clusters, Pathways, Course Details, Credentials, and Course Standards can be accessed through this link: [Course Management System](#)



	<p>Please visit the Gaston County Schools Career & Technical Education webpage for additional details on the GCS CTE Program.</p>
<p>How will a parent learn about their child's progress in school or with a class?</p>	<p>Gaston County Schools shares students' progress through various ways, including quarterly report cards, progress reports, and assignment/test feedback. Feedback on conduct is also included.</p> <p>Information regarding assessments and the evaluation of student progress in Gaston County Schools is available through the following links:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Code: 3410 Testing and Assessment Program • Policy Code: 3420 Student Promotion and Accountability <p>Local Assessments: Quarterly report cards detailing grades and attendance are distributed, with specific quarter-end dates outlined in the school calendar. Parents can access attendance, grades, and testing information using their login credentials through the PowerSchool/Homebase parent portal. For assistance with PowerSchool access, parents can contact the school data manager.</p> <p>State Assessments: Individual Student Reports for end-of-grade/course tests and other state assessments (English language proficiency assessment) are accessible in the parent portal of PowerSchool.</p> <p>In NC, all students take end-of-grade assessments for reading and math in grades 3-8. Students take end-of-grade science assessments in grades 5 and 8. In high school, students take end-of-course assessments in English II, Biology, NC Math 1, and NC Math 3.</p>



	<p>Students in Grade 10 take the Pre-ACT. Students in grade 11 take the ACT. Students who are CTE Concentrators in Grade 12 take ACT WorkKeys. Those results are shared by ACT.</p> <p>For kindergarten through third-grade students experiencing reading difficulties, an Individual Reading Plan (IRP) is developed, featuring specific home-use strategies. The plans are shared through North Carolina's Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI)-selected mCLASS DIBELS® 8th Edition, a literacy assessment aligned with the Science of Reading. mCLASS results are sent home after the beginning of year and middle of year testing windows.</p> <p>North Carolina's Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) selected mCLASS DIBELS® 8th Edition as the state's K-3 Literacy Assessment. mCLASS is an integrated literacy system based on the Science of Reading. mCLASS has been revised and upgraded from the assessment NC districts have used in the past, based on the latest research and the Science of Reading. It is a valid and reliable assessment, supporting universal literacy screening, screening for risk of dyslexia, and progress monitoring.</p>
What are the qualifications of a student's teacher?	<p>NCDPI Licensure Verification: Parents may look up your child's teacher licensure status at this website: Link to the licensure website.</p> <p>Please contact the office of Human Resources at 704-866-6129 with any questions you may have regarding an educator's licensure status.</p>
What are the requirements for school enrollment?	<p>Enrollment and eligibility requirements for Gaston County Schools can be located at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility for school enrollment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ State admission requirements



What are the immunizations needed or recommended for children?

- [GS_115C-364.pdf \(ncleg.gov\)](#)
- GCS policies
 - [Policy Code: 4140 Discretionary Admission](#)
 - [Policy Code: 4170 School Assignment](#)
 - [Policy Code: 4171 Siblings](#)
 - [Policy Code: 4175 Homeless Students](#)
 - [McKinney-Vento](#)

Parents and Guardians can enroll students at the following link:

- [GCS registration](#)

The following are statutory school entry requirements, which includes required immunizations:

- Immunization records: [GS_130A-155.pdf \(ncleg.gov\)](#)
- Immunization requirements: [GS_130A-152.pdf \(ncleg.gov\)](#) (*this law was amended but is not reflected on the current GA page; see [SL2023-134.pdf \(ncleg.gov\)](#), Section 5.8(e) on page 64")

Information on required health assessments and immunizations for students are available through the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS).

NCDHHS [Immunizations](#) Resources

- Recommended Immunization Schedules
 - [Kindergarten Entry Vaccine Requirements](#)
 - [Seventh-Grade Entry Vaccine Requirements](#)
 - [Twelfth-Grade Entry Vaccine Requirements](#)
- [GCS Immunization Website](#)



How can a parent help their child learn and make progress?

Engaging with your child about school and what they are learning is pivotal to their learning process.

- Ask questions daily about your child's school day.
- Inquire about topics and assignments they are learning.
- Connect with teachers to understand your child's progress.
- Ask the teachers how you can help your child learn.
- Attend different events at your child's school to stay connected and learn how to support them.

Local Resources:

[Parent Academy](#)

Parent Guides for Academic Standards:

The following grade-level guides contain information to support parents and caregivers with understanding the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. The purpose of these guides is to inform parents about the standards, as well as provide useful strategies to incorporate at home.

[ELA](#) English Language Arts Parent Guides

[ELD](#) English Language Development Parent Guide

Math Parent Guides: [K-5](#), [6-8](#)

Social Studies Parent Guides (coming soon)

Science Parent Guide (coming soon)

Reading and Literacy Support:

This following site provides resources for families to practice and reinforce important literacy skills with their children who are being assessed with mCLASS reading assessments: [Amplify Parent Resources](#)



	<p>Home activities, printables, and games to support reading and literacy are also available at North Carolina's Digital Children's Reading Initiative (DCRI). These activities include the following topics, Pre-K-Grade 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Phonemic awareness (2) Phonics (3) Vocabulary (4) Fluency (5) Comprehension (6) Oral language <p>Printable literacy activities will be made available for students who do not have digital access at home and may be provided to all students as a supplement to digital resources. For paper copies, please contact your child's teacher. DCRI Printables for Families</p>
How can a parent help their child develop citizenship, social skills, and respect for others?	<p>Gaston County Schools embeds Portrait of a Graduate skills in the classroom and school setting. These durable skills were developed by NCDPI and will support a child's understanding of citizenship, social skills and respect for others.</p> <p>Grade level specific resources, including developmentally appropriate milestones can be found in the following resource repository. NC Portrait of a Graduate - Durable Skills. Gaston County Schools Portrait of a Graduate</p>
How can a parent help strengthen their child's realization of high expectations and setting	<p>Gaston County Schools integrates the Portrait of a Graduate skills into classroom and school environments. These skills, crafted by NCDPI, empower students to meet high expectations and establish lifelong learning goals.</p>



<p>lifelong learning goals?</p>	<p>Grade level specific resources, including developmentally appropriate milestones can be found in the following resource repository.</p> <p>NC Portrait of a Graduate - Durable Skills.</p> <p>Gaston County Schools Portrait of a Graduate Learner Profile Tool - Naviance</p>
<p>How can a parent strengthen communication with the school/teacher?</p>	<p>Gaston County Schools and the district utilize Parentlink/Finalsite notification service to disseminate crucial information to families through phone calls, emails, and text messages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Code: 4020 Parental Involvement • GCS Inclement Weather Policy <p>Gaston County Schools individual sites/teachers may also use the following platforms for communication between home/school in addition to the district utilized platforms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Remind, Class Dojo, and Team Reach • Parents can view students' grades in the Schoology, Canvas and/or PowerSchool parent portal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Information for how parents can access to Schoology, Canvas and/or PowerSchool <p>Guidelines for the appropriate use of technology platforms can be found in the Student Internet Use and Network Access policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Code: 3226 Internet Safety • GCS Technology Information Page <p>The following are NCDPI developed parent guides that provide suggestions for building strong relationships with your child's teacher and supporting communication between home and school.</p>



	<p>Building Strong Relationships with Your Child's Teacher (NC Rethink Education Program)</p> <p>How You Can Use Questions to Support Your Child's Learning (NC Rethink Education Program)</p> <p>Additional general parent guides and parent resource webinar recordings can be found at the following website (NC Rethink Education Program).</p>
<p>What services are available for parents and their children?</p>	<p>Family Literacy Services: Literacy at Home: The Digital Children's Reading Initiative, developed by NCDPI, presents literacy activities tailored to each grade level, spanning from pre-kindergarten through fifth grade.</p> <p>Mentoring: Mentoring services are accessible at specific schools. Parents can contact their child's school to learn more about these services.</p> <p>College Planning: Counselors are accessible in all Gaston County high schools to assist students in planning their path to post secondary education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learner Profile - Naviance College and Career Planning System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Every GCS high school student has a Naviance account; students and parents can use it to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explore career interests ■ Explore college options ■ Locate scholarships and internship opportunities ■ Upload transcripts for the college application process



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High School Curriculum and Planning Guide
<p>What are opportunities for parents to participate with school?</p>	<p>Gaston County Schools offers avenues for parents to actively participate in their child's education. This involvement is outlined in the Parental Involvement Policy, and Title I Parent and Family Engagement at Title I Schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Code: 4020 Parental Involvement • Policy Code: 4021 Title I Parent and Family Engagement • Title I Website <p>For information on existing parent and family engagement opportunities under Title I, please reach out to your child's school.</p>
<p>What are the rigorous academic programs available to my child? How can I learn more about them?</p>	<p>Gaston County Schools offers a variety of options for students to pursue their interests, skills at their academic level.</p> <p>Career and Technical Education (CTE): NC has made a significant investment in developing students and programs to meet the needs of the future workforce. Through Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, public schools offer opportunities for students to develop career awareness in 5th grade, explore careers in grades 6-8, and experience leadership, career development, work based-learning, and career-aligned curriculum content in grades 9-12.</p> <p>In Gaston County Schools, students are able to explore these career pathways from grades 6-12: GCS CTE.</p>



For more information on CTE in NC, and to learn about Career Clusters, Pathways, and Course Information, Standards, and applicable Credentials please visit: [Course Management System](#).

In our district, there are the following programs available that are more rigorous and challenging than the standard content for students:

Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted (AIG):

In NC, school districts must identify and serve academically or intellectually gifted (AIG) K-12 students. These are students who are performing, or have the potential of performing, at high levels of accomplishment in intellectual and/or specific academic areas, such as reading and/or math when compared with other students of their age, or in their grade level, experience, or environment.

The Gaston County Schools Local AIG Plan outlines specific opportunities for differentiated, rigorous instruction and accelerated programs. You can find the plan at [this link](#).

Gaston County Schools has developed an AIG program website to help parents better understand the AIG program. This describes how students will be identified and served across grades K-12. Visit the [AIG program website](#) for parent information.

In Gaston County Schools, AIG students are often provided the following services:

- Differentiated curriculum and instruction with flexible student groups;
- Accelerated opportunities (subject and/or grade acceleration, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM), Advanced Placement (AP)/ Career & College Promise (CCP) courses, dual enrollment courses;



- Enrichment experiences, which may be during the school day or beyond, and may be within the regular calendar year or may include summer opportunities; and
- Other opportunities for extension of content standards.

Services for AIG students may be provided by AIG personnel or within the regular classroom by teachers trained to meet the needs of gifted students.

Contact the school AIG teacher with questions.

Honors Level Courses:

In Gaston County Schools, students have access to a variety of honors level courses in high school. These courses are available in the [course catalog](#).

Honors level courses typically have an accelerated pace as compared to standard level courses. They offer more depth and complexity, opportunities to collaborate, and independent investigation than standard level courses.

Career and College Promise (CCP):

Gaston County Schools partners with Gaston College to offer dual enrollment opportunities through the CCP program. If your high school student qualifies, students may earn high school credit by completing community college coursework.

CCP courses may be taken in the College Transfer or Career and Technical Education pathway. These courses count for both high school and college credit. Tuition is free for families.

To learn more about this program, talk to your school counselor or [Gaston College](#).



Additional information is available on the [NCDPI CCP website](#).

Cooperative Innovative High School (CIHS)/Early College:

Gaston County Schools also partners with Gaston College to offer Gaston Early College and Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences.

Gaston Early College and Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences are both choice schools for students and families. Both schools provide students an opportunity to earn both a high school diploma and an associate's degree. At Gaston Early College, students stay for an additional fifth year to complete their associate's degree.

Visit [Gaston Early College](#) and [Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences](#) for more information.

Additional information is available on the [NCDPI CIHS Website](#)

Advanced Placement (AP) Courses:

Advanced Placement (AP) is a program developed by the College Board to offer college-level curricula and examinations to high school students.

In NC, 40 Advanced Placement courses are offered in public high schools. Gaston County Schools offers a wide variety of AP courses in our high schools. Which AP courses are offered depends on student interest. Several AP courses are offered through our Gaston Online program and are available when a face-to-face option is not a possibility.

Several AP courses satisfy graduation requirements for NC students as outlined in [State Board policy](#).



AP exams are free for NC public high school students enrolled in these courses, however, if a student registers for an exam late, there will be a fee. For students who score a level 3 or higher on their AP exam(s), colleges and universities may offer college credit for these AP courses.

More information is available on the [NCDPI AP website](#).

Additional Educational Opportunities

Gaston Online (GO!):

Gaston Online is an offering of online courses developed and taught by Gaston County School's teachers. This option offers students the advantage of support and assistance from teachers in their local school system. In addition to this, GCS maintains local control over course offerings, registration, and the online management system. Please visit www.tinyurl.com/gastonvirtual for more information

NCVPS:

[North Carolina Virtual Public School \(NCVPS\)](#) is NC's state supplemental program and leader in online education, providing inclusive learning opportunities for students across the state. Founded in 2007, with a strong commitment to ensuring quality education for all students, regardless of location, NCVPS has over 16 years of experience serving diverse learners.

GCS students may enroll in NCVPS courses when a face-to-face and/or local option is not available. Work with your school counselor if you are interested in taking NCVPS courses and to see if you qualify.



	<p>Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM): Gaston County Schools offers opportunities for students to earn credit for a high school course without enrolling in the course. All high school courses, with a few exceptions as noted by the state, are available for credit by demonstrated mastery (CDM). There are two phases of assessments that a student must go through to earn credit for the course.</p> <p>Contact your child's school counselor for more information.</p> <p>Governor's School: Each summer, NC Governor's School offers a unique opportunity for high-achieving rising juniors and seniors to learn with their peers from across the state in a 4-week residential program at two college campus sites.</p> <p>For more information on eligibility and the application process, contact the AIG Department or visit the Governor's School website, www.ncgovschool.org.</p>
<p>What school choices are available for my child?</p>	<p>Students in public school districts are assigned to certain schools based on a local assignment plan approved by Local Board of Education</p> <p>Gaston County Schools offers these additional school choice options for students/families: visit this link</p> <p>There are other options for families to choose for their education: Charter Schools If you are interested in NC charter schools, visit NC charter school for information, resources, and contacts.</p>



	<p>Nonpublic Education and Scholarship Grants Nonpublic education is overseen by the NC Department of Administration.</p> <p>For a list of private schools, visit this NC Private Schools.</p> <p>For information on how to start a homeschool visit: Homeschool Information</p> <p>Scholarship grant programs/voucher information is available via the NC State Education Assistance Authority.</p>
<p>What rights do students with disabilities have based on the law?</p>	<p>For students suspected of or identified with a disability by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the following links provide important information regarding the procedural safeguards available to ensure a free, appropriate, public education.</p> <p> Parent Rights Handbook Parent Rights Handbook (Spanish) IDEA Dispute Resolution Special Education Surrogate Parents Project Child Find </p> <p>Parents of children aged three or older who are not yet eligible to enter kindergarten should call the GCS Exceptional Children’s Office at 704-866-6107 or access more information or here.</p> <p>Parents of children in kindergarten through 12th grade should contact their child’s school.</p>



<p>What is the contact information for the schools and district office?</p>	<p>Parents and guardians can contact Gaston County Schools at (704) 866-6100. GCS Schools Lists GCS Website</p>
<p>What are some resources to support my child's health and well-being?</p> <p>What immunizations are required, and when should they be scheduled?</p>	<p>Gaston County Schools offers the following information and resources to support your child's health and well-being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Wellness • Student Health Requirements • Health and Wellness Supports for Students and Families <p>Information on required health assessments and immunizations for students are available through the NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immunizations • Health Assessment • CDC immunization schedule recommendations <p>Influenza is a virus spread from infected persons to the nose or throat of another. Influenza can cause fever, sore throat, chills, coughs, headache, and muscle aches. A yearly vaccination is available.</p> <p>Meningococcal disease is a serious illness caused by bacteria. It is an infection of the brain and spinal cord coverings and can cause blood infections. The vaccine for this is required for individuals entering 7th grade or by the age of 12.</p> <p>For more information on these and other vaccines go to 16 https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/vaccines-diseases.html</p>



Short-Term Counseling Services:

Every GCS student has access to small group or individual counseling services to address issues impacting students in the school environment. Contact your school's counselor, psychologist, or social worker to inquire about short-term services provided by one of these specialized instruction support staff members. While students may seek in-the-moment support for issues that arise during the school day, parents must give written consent for any singular need that will require more than three sessions.

School-Based Mental Health Services (SBMH):

To address student mental health and well-being, the School-Based Mental Health (SBMH) program offers evidence-based mental health services to students. The program is a collaboration between GCS and local mental health agencies. These services seek to improve students' emotional well-being and enhance their ability to access and benefit from instruction.

Referral:

Students can be referred for services as self-referral, parent referral, or school-based staff referral.

1. A GCS employee explains the SBMH program to the guardian; if the guardian agrees to the referral, they sign the GCS consent for Release of Information form between GCS and the assigned SBMH agency.
2. GCS employee forwards the referral to the assigned SBMH agency.
3. Assigned agency contacts the guardian to verify insurance information and schedule a comprehensive clinical assessment with a licensed mental health therapist.
4. Guardian and student participate in a clinical assessment and then outpatient therapy services begin if recommended by the therapist.



[GCS Mental Health Services Website](#)

Service Fees:

Provider agencies provide outpatient therapy and bill the student's insurance for all rendered services. Provider agencies will verify insurance benefits and review all projected fees with the guardian before any services occur. All agencies have agreed to provide a portion of their services pro bono. However, although pro bono services are available, it is important to note that the requests for pro bono services far outweigh their availability, resulting in lengthy wait times for pro bono service.

Information on required health assessments and immunizations for students are available through the NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) [Immunizations](#)

[Health Assessment](#)

[Annual Health Assessment and Immunization Compliance Reporting](#)