

# **New Hope Family Handbook 2025 - 2026**



**4810 Castleberry Road  
Cumming, GA 30040  
678-965-5101**

## **Attendance**

To make sure your child benefits as much as possible from education, your child needs to attend school on time, every day. It is important for your child to be in attendance unless an absence is absolutely necessary.

### **Reporting an absence:**

When reporting an absence please send 1 email to [NHEattendance@forsyth.k12.ga.us](mailto:NHEattendance@forsyth.k12.ga.us) and include the classroom teacher as well. Please include your student's first and last name (or student ID number), reason for the absence, date(s) of the absence. All notes must be submitted within 5 school days for an absence to be considered excused.

### **Attendance Policy:**

The policy can be located on our school website under Our School>Policies and Regulations> Student Absences.

Attendance may be marked in the following manner:

AE- Absence Excused

AU- Absence Unexcused

CE- Clinic Excused

TE-Tardy Excused

TU-Tardy Unexcused

ER-Early Release Excused

EU-Early Release Unexcused

## **After School Program**

There is an on-site after school program for childcare at New Hope, called SOARIN'. Registration information can be found at Open House or on the New Hope Elementary website under the Families and Partners tab, or by emailing the directors of SOARIN' (Laura Chapman [f38528@forsyth.k12.ga.us](mailto:f38528@forsyth.k12.ga.us) or Catia Salehabadi [csalehabadi@forsyth.k12.ga.us](mailto:csalehabadi@forsyth.k12.ga.us) ).

## **Birthday Celebrations**

- To support the Forsyth County School's Food and Wellness Policy, no outside food can be brought into the school, including outside treats, goodie bags, or party invitations (unless the invitations are for the entire class) to celebrate birthdays. If you would like to do something special for your child on their birthday, you may purchase ice cream from our school cafeteria for the entire class. Birthday Ice Cream can be purchased through School Pay. Please place orders at least 48 hours in advance of your child's birthday. Student lunch accounts cannot be used to purchase ice cream for the entire class. Another great way to celebrate your child at school is to purchase a birthday book in our Media Center in their honor. This option is also available on [schoolpay.com](http://schoolpay.com)

## Car Riders

### Morning Drop-Off:

Staff will be on-duty to receive students at the sidewalk beginning at 7:05 a.m. If a student is dropped off before 7:05 a.m., a call will be placed to the parent to return to pick up their child. Students should be ready to quickly exit the car on the right side. Backpacks and other materials should be on hand for the child to pick up as they exit the car, not in the trunk. Parents are asked not to get out of the car while in the car line for the safety of themselves and others. The morning car rider drop-off line is one lane. Please do not go around cars in the car line. **For safety purposes, only walk your child to the door if you have a scheduled appointment.** Cars that have not reached the crosswalk in the front parking row by 7:38 a.m. will be instructed by school staff or the SRO to park and check their child in. Please only park if instructed to do so. This is because it takes several minutes for students to walk from the front door to most classrooms. Students who arrive after 7:38 will not make it to class on time and will be marked tardy. **Parents/guardians must sign in students who arrive after 7:38 a.m.**

### Afternoon Pick-Up:

Car rider line begins at 2:20pm. Students will be placed in SOARIN' if they are not picked up by 2:45 p.m. It will be the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to pay for this after school care. Students are to remain after school only for supervised extracurricular activities which have been approved by the administration.

Each family will receive a car rider tag in their youngest sibling's Open House packet. These tags are designed to hang from the car's rear view mirror. Please stay in your car and move forward as the lines move. Students will come out of the building and be walked to your car. Once your child enters your vehicle, please remove your car rider tag from the mirror to let our staff know your child is safely in your car. If you lose or misplace your car tag, you will be required to park and come into the office to show your ID. Replacement tags may be purchased on School Pay for \$1. You may pick up the tag in the front office or it will be sent home with your child after a week. \*\*Please refer to the Transportation Changes section for information regarding changes to your child's afternoon pick up.

## Changes in Student Information

You may update any changes to your address, phone number, or email address through your parent portal account. This information is found under the Demographics tab. For address changes, the county will respond with a request to provide proof of the change (ie. mortgage settlement/lease agreement, utility bill, etc). Please follow the directions in the email you receive. In case of emergency, it is imperative that we be able to reach an adult caretaker immediately.

## Class Placement

Each year, the administration works collaboratively with teachers, test/assessment data, and other relevant information to develop a balanced class placement for all students. This is a multiple-criterion decision that is based on a variety of research-based best practices as well as differentiated instructional considerations.

Should a parent have a concern regarding a student placement, the following procedure will begin after the first 15 days of school, allowing the student time to settle into the new environment. This class placement process generally lasts about 6 weeks to allow a success plan to be developed and implemented as agreed upon by the school and parents.

- A minimum of 2 teacher-parent conferences directly focused on the area of concern with administrative support and presence.
- At that initial and follow up conference, a written success plan to address concerns from that point forward will be drafted and agreed upon by all parties to protect the child from unnecessary transition.
- There will be a follow up by administration with both parents and teacher to ensure the sustained efforts and success of the plan are moving forward.
- The final assessment of progress during this period regarding the area of concern will be made by the principal.

Adjustments to any student's assigned classroom will be by extreme exception and only considered by the principal after it has been clearly determined that joint efforts were made by both parties to resolve any concern. Furthermore, there must be clear evidence that a move to another classroom will directly address the lingering concern after the above attempts have been made to resolve the issue.

## Clinic and Student Health

New Hope's clinic is staffed during school hours by Nurse Dylan Oster. In case of illness or injury, a student will be cared for temporarily by the nurse or a designated member of the school staff. School personnel will render first aid treatment only. If emergency medical treatment is necessary, the parents will be contacted. If parents are not available, an ambulance may be called at the parents' expense. Remember, an emergency telephone number where parents can be reached must be in Parent Portal (the student's online information database).

### Medications:

All medication and forms must be delivered by the parent to the clinic and administered in the clinic by the school nurse or a designated member of the staff. All medication must be in its original packaging. No medication will be given without written instructions from the parent and/or doctor. Medications include but are not limited to: Tylenol, Advil, Flonase, cough drops, sunscreen, throat lozenges, etc. Required forms are found on the New Hope website under the Student Services tab (scroll to School Nurse page).

### Illness:

All students must visit the school nurse if they are not feeling well and think they should go home. The nurse will assess the student and contact the parents when warranted. The decision will be reached based on the medical situation.

### **Chronic Health Conditions:**

Parents/guardians should notify the school nurse of any chronic health conditions. Students with chronic health issues need to have the necessary medication and physician noted instructions available at school. Parents/guardians are responsible for managing the condition by working with the nurse. Medication forms are available on the New Hope website and Forsyth County Schools website. A conference with the school nurse about the medical condition is encouraged. Please contact the nurse to set up a meeting. We want to keep our students well and attending school.

**In an effort to reduce communicable illnesses, students should be free from vomiting, diarrhea, fever, and fever-reducing medication for 24 hours before returning to school.**

## **Counseling**

New Hope has three full-time counselors available to provide individual or small group counseling to students and to conduct classroom guidance lessons on a regular schedule. The counselors work with school personnel to foster a positive learning environment. The counselors may also assist parents in obtaining special school and/or community services. Their contact information can be found on our school website under the Student Services tab (then click Counseling).

## **Curriculum**

Providing quality work for students every day in every classroom is the primary focus of all instructional programs in Forsyth County. Our system's standards and benchmarks provide a rigorous and challenging instructional program for all students at every level. To learn more about the variety of curriculum services available, please visit the county website at [www.forsyth.k12.ga.us](http://www.forsyth.k12.ga.us).

## **Discipline**

New Hope Elementary believes that self-discipline is an important part of a child's development. Developing self-discipline occurs when students learn to follow common rules and make wise decisions. Proper behavior by each student allows all students the maximum opportunity to play, learn, and grow in a school environment. Students who disregard school rules are made aware of the consequences to their actions. The Forsyth County *Code of Conduct* is located on the county website and contains details of school and system discipline procedures. Parents are expected to read the Code of Conduct and inform their child(ren) of the pertinent information.

Additionally, New Hope Elementary uses Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). Staff members teach students these expectations through the acronym SOAR:

S - Safe

O - Own Your Actions

A - Accept Others

R - Respectful

## **Dismissal**

At dismissal, bus riders are loaded onto their assigned buses by teachers, and car riders wait in the cafeteria to be picked up in the carpool line. Dismissal begins at 2:20 p.m.; therefore, **no students may be checked out after 1:45p.m.** If your child must be checked out of school early for an appointment, please be sure that he/she is checked out prior to **1:45 p.m.**

Parents picking up children in the car rider line must remain in their cars and wait for their child to be escorted to their car by a staff member. Please have your car tag hanging on the rear view mirror of your car. If you do not have your car tag displayed, you will need to park and enter the office to show your ID or purchase another tag on School Pay (\$1) and return to the car line to pick up your student. Parents are not to walk to the car dismissal area and take their children back across the crowded parking lot. Once your child is loaded in the car, please remove the car tag. This lets staff know that your child is safely loaded and you are ready to exit the lot.

Students are not allowed to board a bus other than their assigned bus or request to get off the bus other than at their assigned stop. Students will be placed in SOARIN' if they are not picked up by 2:45pm or if they are returned back from the bus driver. It will be the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to pay for this after school care.

## **Dress Code**

The school dress code is outlined in the Forsyth County *Code of Conduct*. Appropriate dress reduces distractions. Dress codes apply to students, teachers, and parents in the building. Please note that parents will be called to bring a change of clothes if a student is not appropriately dressed by definitions in the Forsyth County *Code of Conduct*. We expect that all adult visitors will be models for our students in abiding by our dress code.

## **Dropping Off Classroom Donations**

If your child is unable to bring in donations for the classroom there will be a cart inside the front office for you to drop off the classroom donations. All items must be labeled with the name of the teacher the item is for. If the item is perishable and requires immediate refrigeration, please inform the receptionist. Please email the classroom teacher once the classroom donation(s) are dropped off. We will not interrupt the learning environment to take classroom donations to classrooms or call the classroom to send your child to the office to retrieve any items.

## Dropping Off Forgotten Items for Students

Please make every effort to establish a routine for bringing necessary items to school each morning. We will not interrupt the learning environment to take personal items to classrooms or call the classroom to send your child to the office to retrieve any items. The front office will accept forgotten lunches, water bottles, eyeglasses, and medicine. All other items such as folders/binders, books, homework, projects, etc. are not accepted due to classroom disruption and storage space. There will be a small cart for lunches/water bottles in the security entrance. **Please email the classroom teacher once the lunch/water bottle is dropped off. Forgotten lunches/water bottles must be dropped off by 10A.M.** This cart will be moved inside the building at 10 a.m. Please email your child's teacher if you have dropped off a lunch or water bottle on this cart, so your child will know to check the cart prior to entering the cafeteria at lunch time.

## Early Checkouts

If you must pick up your child early for an appointment, **checkouts must occur before 1:45 p.m. or 10:45 pm on early release days.** Please plan after school activities accordingly. Anyone checking a child out of school must show a valid photo identification and must be listed on the child's Parent Portal account. It takes 24-48 hours for changes in Parent Portal to go into effect. Please do not wait until the day a change is needed to update the list.

## Field Trips

Various field trips are scheduled throughout the year. Parents will be notified by the teacher of scheduled field trips. If a student is absent on the day of a field trip, reimbursement for cost of the field trip (if any) will not be possible.

## Local School Council

The Local School Council (LSC) was established by Georgia law to "bring communities and schools closer together in the spirit of cooperation to solve difficult education problems, improve academic achievement, provide support for teachers and administrators, and bring parents into the school-based decision-making process...to provide advice, recommendations, and assistance and represent the community of parents and businesses." Elections will be held in the spring to select members of this council. Parents have a forum for their questions and for learning about school programs through parent representatives on LSC. A parent will lead and moderate the group.

## Lost and Found

Found items of clothing, lunch boxes, water bottles, etc. are placed in the lost and found which is located outside the clinic. Valuable items such as jewelry, eyeglasses, technology, etc. are given to the front office for safe keeping. Unclaimed items are donated to charity on a quarterly basis. Everything brought to school should be **labeled** so that lost articles can easily be returned to the owner.

## Lunch Visitors

Parents and visitors may eat lunch with students during their class's allotted lunch time at the **visitor's tables** in the cafeteria after Labor Day. After checking in at the office and receiving a badge, please go directly to the cafeteria. **Please do not go to the classroom.** It interrupts the instruction and supervision of the entire class. New Hope supports the Forsyth County Food and Wellness Policy, and therefore **no outside food from restaurants** is allowed in the building for either the student or lunch visitor. If outside food is brought in, you will be asked to leave it at the office. Visitors are allowed to bring lunches made at home for both the student and themselves or purchase lunch from the cafeteria. While visiting, we ask that families follow the NHE lunchroom procedures. Please note, lunch visitors are not permitted prior to Labor Day, during Milestones testing, during the last week of school, or during other school events. Please make sure all visitors come with a government issued photo ID to check in. We reserve the right to turn away lunch visitors when our cafeteria is near capacity.

## Make-Up Work

It is the student's responsibility to turn in make-up work when he/she is absent from school. Parents and students are encouraged to use Canvas to retrieve make-up work daily. The student has five (5) school calendar days to make up work for every day missed. The teacher has the discretion to grant a longer period to make up work, if there are extenuating circumstances. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with the teacher within two days of returning to school to make-up test(s).

If your child is going to miss school because of a trip or other unexcused absence, the teacher is not required to have work available prior to the time of the absence. Your child may be allowed to make up the work upon their return to school. ***However, the teacher is not required to provide make-up work for an unexcused absence or for students who have been withdrawn.*** Most work cannot be made up with a book or paper-and-pencil assignment, and absences of any type impact student learning and/or grades.

Students suspended out-of-school are responsible for securing assignments and completing assignments by the time they return to school.

## Media Center

Students may check out two print and digital resources for two weeks at a time. Students will be charged for damaged or lost materials. The student must pay for all charges before checking out any further items.

## Parent Portal

Forsyth County Schools requires all parents to have a Parent Portal account. Here you will find access to information about your children(s) school attendance, grades, class assignments and more. Changes to parent and student contact information such as, home phone, cell phone, or work phone numbers must be updated by the parent in Parent Portal under the Demographics tab. Additionally, this is where other emergency contacts designated by the parent or guardian must also be entered and updated. **No student check outs will be allowed by any person not listed on your Parent Portal account.** It takes 24-48 hours for changes in Parent Portal to go into effect. Please do not wait until the day a change is needed to update the list.

First time users will receive an Activation Code in their email each Monday until an account is established. Please check your spam folder if you think you have not received it. Once you receive the email, please follow the steps outlined in the email to create your account.

If you forget your user ID or password, please come to the front office during school hours (7 a.m. - 3 p.m.) with your government issued photo ID. The office staff will assist you with a password reset. Please note: SOARIN' staff cannot assist with password resets.

## Parent Teacher Conferences

The school system calendar schedules time in October for parent conferences. Parents will be notified of conference times in advance. Additionally, teachers will communicate with parents/guardians throughout the year as needed for additional updates and concerns.

## PTO - Parent Teacher Organization

PTO is a group of parents/guardians and staff members who join together to support the school. The PTO plays an integral role in the success of the school. They sponsor programs for students such as Movie Night, Holiday Shop, Bingo, and Around the World. In addition, the PTO supports teachers and staff by making grants available and by providing volunteer assistance. Major projects such as playground equipment and technology resources have been funded through the efforts of the PTO.

We hope that every parent/guardian will join PTO and become an involved member by volunteering at any of the many events throughout the year. PTO meetings are held both in person and virtually. Meetings and special activities are announced through the school newsletter, social media, and website.

## Parties

Elementary classes may schedule two parties a year (Holiday Celebration- Dec. & End of the Year- May). Please cooperate with the teacher by not expecting more than two parties. Some themes or units of study may have a culminating activity to celebrate achievements. Siblings, of any age, are not permitted to attend during class parties.

## Pictures

Individual student pictures will be taken two times each year (fall and spring). Fall pictures will appear in the yearbook. A class group picture will be taken in the spring. All questions regarding pictures should be directed to BPI Photography at 866-363-6936.

If you wish to make any changes related to the Forsyth County parent permission publicity release & yearbook release please email the school principal, Mr. Vorick, to indicate this change. His email address is f39414@forsyth.k12.ga.us  
Please include your student's first & last name along with the name of the consent and how you wish to change it.

### **Below are the details for each consent:**

#### Publicity Release:

With your choice of "No" your student(s) will not be pictured in classroom newsletters, social media posts or the end of the year class photo that our photographer from BPI takes and offers for sale to the class.

#### Yearbook Release:

With your choice of "No" your student(s) will not be pictured in the yearbook for the 2025-2026 school year.

## Placement and Promotion

Grade placement is determined by the overall academic and social progress of the student, with emphasis placed on the mastery of reading and math skills. In third, fourth, and, fifth grades, the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment also impacts grade placement. Students entering Forsyth County Schools from private or home schools may be evaluated to determine appropriate placement. Initial placement is temporary until such assessment is completed. Placement of kindergarten students will be done according to state and county guidelines. Please note: A child must be 5 years old before September 1 of the academic year to begin kindergarten.

Conferences are held in late spring to discuss placement of students who are not meeting minimum promotion requirements. Local and state requirements for promotion are followed in deciding appropriate grade placement.

## Recess

Weather permitting, each class will have 30 minutes of outdoor recess daily. If your child has a health condition that would prevent them from participating in their usual class routine, a physician's note will be needed. When a medical note is received, please be mindful that it includes specific information regarding outdoor class activity limitations.

## School Hours

Office Hours: 7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
School Hours: 7:40 a.m. – 2:20 p.m.

## School Tours

School tours are given on an as needed basis to students/families who have completed registration. All tours are given after school hours so as not to interfere with the learning environment. Tours do not include meetings with administration or teachers.

## Standardized Testing

Students participate in the following state assessments:

- GKIDS – All Kindergarten students (fall and spring)
- ACCESS – All ESOL students including parent denials (January and February)
- EOG (End of Grade/Georgia Milestones) – Students in grades 3, 4, and 5 (April/May)
- GAA – Eligible specialized instruction students (April)

**Parents are asked to make every effort possible to have their children present on these days.**

## Student Events

Activities to enhance extended learning opportunities are offered to New Hope Elementary students at all grade levels. Examples are Spelling Bee, Oratorical Competition, Math Club, Science Olympiad, Art Shows, Technology Fair, drama/music productions, Instructional Extension, after school clubs, etc. In addition to these events, the physical education teacher will coordinate a field day for all students in the spring on the campus of New Hope. These activities are subject to available volunteers and funding that may vary from school year to school year. **Please note: If a student is absent (including checking in after 11am) on the day of an after school activity or event, the student may not participate/attend.**

## Textbooks/ Curriculum Materials

Each student is responsible for the consumable workbooks issued to him or her. Replacement workbooks will not be issued until reimbursement fees have been paid in the office.

## Transportation Changes

If you need to make a change to the way your child normally goes home, you **MUST** complete the Transportation Change Form found under the Quick Links section of our school website- <https://newhope.forsyth.k12.ga.us> **before 1:00 p.m.** Email or phone transportation changes are not permitted. Only permanent transportation changes should be emailed to your child's teacher.

## Visitors/Volunteers

Parents, relatives, and friends of New Hope Elementary students are encouraged to volunteer in the school and at school sponsored events. Please coordinate volunteer opportunities with your child's teacher. Volunteers must sign in and out in the office using the Raptor badge security system. Raptor requires all guests to present a physical and valid driver's license (or another form of government issued photo identification). There are **NO EXCEPTIONS** to this. For returning visits, guests will be allowed to use the Raptor Kiosk to check themselves in. A badge will then be printed, showing the visitor's photo, name, destination, and date. Please visit only the destination you have selected. Visitor badges must be worn at all times when in the building or on school property. Visitors will check out when they leave by scanning the barcode on their badge using the Raptor Kiosk.

Classroom volunteers and visitors who will be alone with students must also view and sign-off on the district mandated reporter video prior to visiting New Hope. This information may be found on the school website.

Please be mindful that while you are volunteering in the school that you may not take personal photographs as not all families have given their consent for their children to be photographed.

Volunteers and lunch visitors are not permitted in the building during Georgia Milestones testing.

Additionally, please do not bring younger siblings or small babies/toddlers into the classrooms as this can be disruptive to the instructional environment. If you have small children and would like to volunteer, please speak with your child's teacher about opportunities to prepare instructional materials at home. This is also a great service for our school. You may also contact PTO for volunteer information and opportunities.

**To visit New Hope or any other Forsyth County School you will need: a valid driver's license or other form of government issued photo ID.** For more information regarding the

Safety Check System, please visit the Forsyth County Website, [www.forsyth.k12.ga.us](http://www.forsyth.k12.ga.us) - >Select Menu>District Services>Safety & Student Support>Safety & Operations link.

## **Withdrawal**

Parents withdrawing students from New Hope Elementary should contact the school data clerk, Sandy Sandquist, and their child's teacher at least a week in advance, if possible. The student's teacher, media specialist, and the cafeteria manager must complete and sign the form before it is returned to the office for withdrawal. Financial obligations, such as lost or damaged books and lunch charges, must be satisfied when the student withdraws. Records will be mailed to the new school upon receipt of a signed records request. Under no circumstances are textbooks or other school owned materials to be taken from the building during any withdrawal time period from New Hope.

### **Extended Vacations / Travel Withdrawals**

Students who miss school for more than 10 consecutive school days (or absent for 10 consecutive school days) must be withdrawn in Infinite Campus after the 10<sup>th</sup> day absent. This is per local and state policy (JBC 160-5-1-.28(2)(e)3) and the district is held accountable for violations.

If families are taking extended vacations during the school year, then students need to be enrolled in a program which can accommodate their needs. Parents should be encouraged to enroll their child in an online program of study (see below for options) or home school. A student out for 15 or 20 days will not receive the same quality instruction by trying to stay connected to Canvas. They should be made aware that there is no guarantee of the exact schedule or class placement upon return. When they arrive back in town, they must upload a current utility bill to be re-enrolled.

If a student misses more than 30 consecutive school days, they will need to make an appointment to register as a new student at the county office: Information Systems/Registration Home ([forsyth.k12.ga.us](http://forsyth.k12.ga.us))

Possible online alternatives:

iAchieve Academy (6 - 12), GA Virtual School (6 - 12), GA Cyber Academy (K - 12), GA Connections Academy (K - 12)