



Student & Family Handbook 2025-2026

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Mrs. Stephanie Rakes, Principal
Mr. Brenden Kee, Assistant Principal

2025-2026 Theme: Back to the Basics

Guilford County Schools Mission & Vision Statement

Mission

Guilford County students will graduate as responsible citizens prepared to succeed in higher education, or in the careers of their choice.

Vision

Transforming learning and life outcomes for all students

Rankin's Mission & Vision Statement

MISSION

Our mission is to commit daily to nurturing the needs of the whole child in order to ensure that every child is academically successful.

VISION

Our vision is to be a school in which our students reach their full potential and continue on the path of excellence.

General School Information

Arrival time is 7:00 am
Free breakfast & lunch for all

Tardy bell rings at 7:25am
Dismissal Begins at 2pm
Principal Supervisor is Dr. Johnita Readus

Front office is open 7am-4pm
School Board Rep is Bettye Jenkins

Procedures & Expectations

ARRIVAL: begins at 7:00 am Monday through Friday.

Because we cannot offer supervision for students who are brought to school earlier than 7am, please wait with your child until the doors are unlocked.

We welcome any student who arrives after 7:25am and they must be signed in by an adult in the front office. You are welcome to provide a note for the absence at that time (dentist, doctor, court, etc notes to excuse the absence). We know that teaching our students to be on time is an important life skill and it shows them that we value the work that's happening in their classrooms.

To build independence and confidence, when arriving at school, all students will walk independently to their classrooms unless prior permission has been obtained by the Administration. We provide several staff along the hallways to support students in getting to their classrooms safely.

Daily Dismissal and Early Dismissals: dismissal begins at 2:00 pm.

Car riders in grades K & 1 will be picked up in the front circle drive on Spry Street. Car riders in grades 2-5 (and their K or 1 siblings) will be picked up in the gym parking lot close to Summit Ave. ***Stay in your car and we will bring your child to you.***

Walkers in grades K-5 will be picked up at the Spry Street door near the track. Adults must walk up to the door and present a photo ID to pick up children.

Students in PreK and following the Adaptive Curriculum will have separate dismissal processes that will be communicated by their staff.

If your K-5th grade child has an early dismissal, please follow these procedures to ensure safety and to protect instructional time:

- **Ring the doorbell and tell us your name;** if you are listed on the authorized pick-up list, you will be buzzed into the school. Please be prepared to present your photo ID when you enter the office. For safety, please do not expect to enter the building if you are not authorized to pick up a child.
- Once inside the office, **present your photo ID and use it to scan or sign your child out.** Because your schedules are sometimes delayed, front office staff will call for your child when you arrive, so they are not waiting on you and missing instruction.
- You will remain in the office until your child arrives.
- **Only in cases of extreme emergency will early dismissals after 1:40pm be approved.**

Transportation Changes: must be in writing and done before 7:30am.

Sometimes you may need to change your child's afternoon transportation. To help keep your child safe and limit confusion at the end of the day, please send the information in writing (text, email, Dojo message or handwritten note) to the teacher or the office. **Without a note, your child will be sent home in the usual way.**

Please recognize that staff may not check their emails, Dojo or texts after their planning time, so to avoid confusion and misunderstood messages, please notify the teacher before 7:30am.

If a child is going home with a child(ren) from another family, written permission from the student's parent/guardian must be submitted to the teacher in advance.

Student Absences: sending in notes is the key!

Your child may occasionally need to miss school and a note with the reason is needed for it to be considered excused. You can write a note on paper, email the teacher, or send it in dojo and we will get it to the office. If you don't send a note, the absence will be coded as unexcused.

To help us get the information correct, please include: the student's name, date(s) when they were absent, the reason for the absence, and your signature. It can be as simple as, *"Please excuse Addison Roberts from school on October 20 & 21st. She was home sick with a cough and fever. Please call me with any questions. Mrs. Roberts."* or a dojo message or email that says, *"Ms. Rakes, Addison is home today with a cough and fever."*

If for some reason you don't send a note, your child will be marked "unexcused." If your child misses 10 or more days, we will have a family meeting with the counselor to see how we can support you.

Celebrations: must be pre-arranged and include only store-bought items.

We recognize that birthday parties can be a big deal to students, but we also want to be sensitive to those who do not celebrate birthdays, can't provide snacks at school, and protect instructional time.

If you would like to celebrate your child at school, please remember this isn't Sky Zone, so let's keep it simple.

- Celebrations will occur during lunch so we don't interrupt teaching & learning.
- Only store-bought items are allowed; we encourage you to consider an individually wrapped healthy snack (fruit snacks, granola bars, boxed raisins, etc) or non-food items (fidget spinners, temporary tattoos, coloring books, bubbles, etc).
- Guests must sign in at the front office and should be limited to 1-2 people.
- Save costumes or props for another party; some kids are scared of costumes so don't bring a clown or princess to lunch.
- Left-over food (cupcakes, ice cream) will not be sent home on the bus with the student, so take left-overs with you or throw them away.

Cafeteria: all students receive free breakfast and lunch every day.

For your child's safety, if you pack their lunch, make sure food does not need to be refrigerated and we cannot warm it. Visitors are welcome to eat with their students and must check in the office.

Cell phones: you may want your child to have one, but they don't need it at school (or on the bus!)

Each family has the right to decide what online activity they want their child to see, and cell phones can unlock a whole new world to your child that they (or you!) may not be ready for!

So for all Rankin students, cell phones must be turned off and put away from the moment they arrive at the bus stop (or get to school), until they get home. They are not allowed at the bus stop, on the bus, on field trips, during the school day, or during after-school activities.

Please remember that GCS & Rankin are not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones. And breaking this school rule comes with consequences: 1st time a cell phone is seen, the student will receive a verbal warning. The 2nd time it will be taken and returned to the student at the end of the day. The 3rd time you will have to pick it up in the office.

Communicating with teachers: will mostly occur outside of teaching hours.

We deeply value communication and partnership, and you can expect returned phone calls/emails/texts/Dojo messages within 48 hrs. Please do not expect to speak to teachers or administrators during the school day since we will be working with students. In case of emergency, please let the front office know and someone will be happy to assist you. Please make an appointment to meet with teachers and staff so we can be prepared for the meeting. Visitors who come to the office without an appointment may not be able to speak with someone immediately.

Emergencies: will be handled swiftly, and we need your correct contact information.

In case of individual student emergencies, guardians will be contacted; if the primary guardians cannot be reached, we will call 911. We're educators, not medical staff and are not trained to provide treatment beyond reasonable first aid.

For less severe sickness or injuries, guardians will be contacted to pick your child up. Cone TeleHeath is a great option to allow your child to have access to doctors & nurses free of charge. Permission is required for this service.

Unfortunately, school emergencies could occur and the first communication you may get is from Principal Rakes via the automated phone call service or class dojo. It is super-important that you provide your phone number to the school and update it any time it changes. Be sure you have notifications set up for Class Dojo so you don't miss a message.

Emergency Drills: help students know how to handle an emergency and will be practiced throughout the year.

Fire drills will be completed monthly; tornado drills will be completed each semester, and lockdown drills will be practiced at various times during the school year. Practicing our drills will help everyone know what to do in an emergency.

Lost and Found: will be kept on the rack near the gym for 30 days, then donated to charity.

Medications: are given to those with a health care plan created with the school nurse.

Individual procedures are established for those with health care plans; any medications without a prescription will not be given (allergy medication, eye drops, Tylenol, etc) by office staff or teachers and should not be brought to school. Please contact the front office if your child takes a daily medication, has an inhaler, or other medications prescribed by a doctor that must be administered at school so we can walk you through the required paperwork.

Personal belongings: should be left at home.

Students are encouraged to leave personal items (Pokémon cards, footballs, dolls, etc) at home. Kids love to share, but some friends may play too rough with toys, and they could get damaged. Some toys may be a distraction, so the teacher will hold them until the end of the day. Please explain to your child that if they bring footballs, soccer balls, or other things to play with at recess, they need to plan to share with everyone.

Visiting Classrooms: is encouraged and should be scheduled.

Dropping by your child's classroom without notifying us may seem like a good idea, but the class could be taking a test, doing presentations, or have a schedule change that impacts your visit.

We welcome visitors who are on the child's emergency contact list or birth certificate. All you have to do is contact the teacher and let them check to see if the time you'd like to visit is acceptable. Then you must check in the front office and receive a visitor's sticker. Since the teacher is teaching, this isn't the time for a teacher conference; those must be

scheduled. For the safety of all children, you may not video or take pictures of anyone, other than the child you have custody of, while visiting the classroom. Visits should be short and not interrupt teaching and learning. Cell phones should be on silent while in classrooms so you don't distract the class.

Academic Achievement

Academic Reporting: is provided 8 times per school year and should be signed and return to teachers.

Report Cards are sent to guardians every nine weeks. Interim Reports will be sent home in the middle of each nine weeks to all students. This is to let you know your child's progress at the mid-point of the grading period; this is also known as a "progress report."

Report Card & Interim Report Schedule for 2025-26

- September 25, 2025 (interim report)
- November 13, 2025 (official report card)
- December 9, 2025 (interim report)
- February 4, 2026 (official report card)
- February 25, 2026 (interim report)
- April 15, 2026 (official report card)
- May 7, 2026 (interim report)
- June 18, (official report card mailed home with end-of-year test scores)

Student-led conferences will occur each grading period and you are encouraged to come so your child can show you what they've learned! Please feel free to request a conference at any time. Staff are not available on Tuesday afternoons.

Assessments: are given multiple times per school year to identify your child's academic strengths and areas for growth. Some classroom assessments are graded, while district-level and national assessments are NOT graded, but students should absolutely do their best since it will guide teachers in providing help in areas of academic weakness.

- GCS Interim Assessments are created by the GCS Testing & Accountability Office and are given three times per year to students in grades 3-5 in reading and math and fifth grade science. These assessments are not graded.
- DIBELS 8 assessments are national reading assessments that are given three times per year to students in grades K-3. These assessments are not graded.
- CogAT assessments are national assessments given to second graders in the spring to help identify who may qualify for services through the Academically & Intellectually Gifted program. These assessments are not graded.
- ACCESS & WIDA assessments are national assessments given to multi-lingual students in grades K-5 to determine levels of service in English instruction. These assessments are not graded.
- End-of-Grade assessments (EOGs) are North Carolina created assessments given in June to students in grades 3-5 in reading and math and science (5th grade only). These assessments are not graded.

Field trips: are provided to enhance students' learning.

Students are expected to follow all school rules and any additional rules that may be required to ensure safety. Chaperones are encouraged and may be allowed depending on the location of the field trip. Chaperones must complete a background check through the GCS website and will be assigned by the teacher. Chaperones must provide their own transportation and because they will be assigned a group of students, they may not bring siblings or children not assigned to the class.

Grades are assigned to students and are reflected on their quarterly report card.

GCS K-2 grading scale (PE, art & music)	GCS 3-5 grading scale (PE, art & music)
1= Below grade expectations even with support 2= Needs support to meet grade level expectations 3= Consistently meets grade level expectations independently 4= Consistently exceeds grade level expectations O= Outstanding M= Most of the time S = Sometimes N= Not yet displayed	A = 90-100 B = 80-89 C = 70-79 D = 60-69 F = 59 and below I= Incomplete

Who to Call

Your child’s teacher is usually the first point of contact; if you need further assistance, reach out to one of these staff members:

Mr. Jay Alexander.....	Football, basketball
Ms. Danielle Alexander.....	Student Council
Ms. Taylor Ashley.....	Academically Gifted Students
Mr. Brad Bennett, Treasurer.....	School finance, paying for field trips, etc
Ms. Dominique Corbitt, Data Manager	Student information, registration, address & phone number changes, records, and transfers
Mr. Davis Estefen.....	ESL teacher for kinder & 5 th graders, soccer
Ms. Kate Goodpasture, SLP.....	Speech services for PreK-2 nd graders
Ms. Kim Harris.....	ESL services for 1 st & 4 th graders
Ms. Sheena Jeffries, School Nurse.....	Immunizations, health plans, chronic illness
Ms. Gillian Klien, Social Worker.....	Homeless services, food or utility service support, clothing, family support
Ms. Jana Lee, School Counselor.....	Academic help, mental health support, crisis support for kinders, 1 st and 5 th graders, 504
Ms. Shauna Swann, School Counselor.....	Academic help, mental health support for 2-4 th graders
Ms. Charlotte Mathena, Office Support.....	General assistance
Ms. Melanie Myers, Cafeteria Manager.....	Adding funds to school lunch accounts, food allergies & dietary restrictions
Ms. Barb Oliver.....	Special Education teacher, 2 nd and 3 rd graders
Ms. Helena Rushby.....	ESL teacher for 2 nd and 3 rd graders
Ms. Charita Smith.....	Special Education teacher, kinder & 1 st graders
Ms. Krystle Thompson.....	Special Education teacher, 4 th & 5 th graders
Mr. William Thomas, Behavior Support Interventionist.....	Behavior support, RISE
Ms. Aida Vaca-Guzmán, Community Liaison.....	Spanish interpreter, community support
Ms. Ann Virost, Media Specialist	Battle of the Books, STEM Battle of the Books, media services
Ms. Winnie Yang.....	GoFar & volleyball
Ms. Fendi Teart.....	Cheer
Ms. Crystal Black, Youth Development Coordinator.....	After-school enrichment, volunteers

Helpful Acronyms

Term	Full Name & Definition	Additional Information
504	<p>Federally recognized plan that supports students with medical conditions that may require accommodations</p> <p>Recognized in all US public schools (including charter schools); may not be honored in private schools.</p>	<p>A student may have a 504 because they have a broken arm and needs help with notetaking, or have diabetes and need help from a nurse during the day.</p> <p>This plan provides accommodations, but not direct teaching or services like Speech, Occupational Therapy or Physical Therapy.</p> <p>Learn more here: https://www.ed.gov/laws-and-policy/individuals-disabilities/section-504</p>
AP	<p>Assistant Principal</p> <p>Acts as the designee when the principal is off campus.</p> <p>Shares responsibility with the principal in all areas of the school.</p>	<p>Rankin’s AP is Mr. Brenden Kee.</p> <p>He can be reached at 336.894.7131 or keeb@gcsnc.com.</p> <p>Mr. Kee handles discipline and community engagement.</p>
BOG	<p>Beginning of Grade reading assessment</p> <p>Given to 3rd graders in mid-September to determine 3rd grade reading strengths and areas for growth</p>	<p>This North Carolina assessment covers all 3rd grade reading standards, which students have not been taught yet, so few students are proficient on this assessment.</p> <p>It is the “starting point” for their growth and is compared to their EOG score to determine if they grew in their reading skills while in 3rd grade.</p> <p>Learn more here: https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/testing-and-school-accountability/state-tests/beginning-grade-3-reading-test</p>
CKLA	<p>Core Knowledge Language Arts</p> <p>English Language Arts curriculum used by GCS for K-5 to teach reading, writing and speaking and listening.</p> <p>Units last between 2-6 weeks to complete.</p>	<p>Curriculum units that include up to 40 mins of typical reading instruction (ex. reading or listening to a story and answering questions), as well as daily lessons that include speaking and listening, and writing.</p> <p>Small groups are formed based on reading skills and meet daily for up to 30 mins, focusing on reading or writing skills.</p> <p>Learn more here: https://www.coreknowledge.org/language-arts/</p>
DIBELS	<p>Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills,</p> <p>A reading assessment done 3x/year to identify reading strengths and areas for improvement for students in K-5</p>	<p>This reading test is a series of 1-minute assessments that are done one-on-one with students to determine what reading skills they have mastered and what they still need more help with.</p> <p>Families receive a “Home Connect” letter after each test with information about how to help your child at home.</p> <p>Score reports are also placed in the student’s cumulative folder.</p>

		<p>Learn more here: https://dibels.amplify.com/assessment/dibels-eighth-edition</p>
DLG	Differentiated Literacy Groups	<p>DLG time is provided daily (usually 30-45 mins) when students are working in small groups or with the teacher on reading or writing skills.</p> <p>Students who receive EC , AG or EL services may go to their EC or EL teacher’s classroom during this time for extra help.</p>
ECS	<p>Exceptional Children Services</p> <p>Department that supports students with disabilities.</p> <p>ECS teachers provide direct teaching in reading and math based on a child’s Individual Education Plan (IEP).</p> <p>The amount of time a student works with the ECS teacher depends on their needs and could be 30 mins daily or all day, depending on their needs.</p> <p>Students work in small groups or individually, based on needs.</p>	<p>Rankin has 5 ECS teachers and 4 ECS teacher assistants who support students in various ways.</p> <p>Mr. Alexander & Ms. Hayes Mr. Hines & Ms. Bell Ms. Coble Ms. Oliver Ms. Thomas Ms. Thompson Ms. Smith</p> <p>Learn more here: https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/classroom-resources/exceptional-children/policies-procedures</p>
EL, ELL, ESL or ML	<p>English Learners or English Language Learners, English as a Second Language, or Multilingual Learners</p> <p>Program that provides small group instruction to students who are learning to read, write or speak English. Some students may meet daily, while others meet 2-3 times per week.</p> <p>Some students may have testing accommodations like read aloud for math or science assessments based on WIDA-ACCESS scores, which are assessments given to EL students every year.</p>	<p>Rankin has 3 EL teachers who provide instruction to almost 200 students during the school day.</p> <p>Mr. Estefen teaches kids in kinder & 5th grades Ms Harris teaches kids in 1st and 4th grades Mrs. Rushby teaches kids in 2nd & 3rd grades</p> <p>Most students receive EL instruction during their DLG time.</p> <p>Learn more here: https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/classroom-resources/academic-standards/standard-course-study/english-language-development</p>
ELA	<p>English Language Arts</p> <p>Often referred to as “reading” in elementary school, but it also includes speaking & listening and writing.</p> <p>ELA standards are provided by NCDPI.</p> <p>This is an important time each day that students are learning new skills and practicing previously taught skills.</p>	<p>Students at Rankin have close to 120 mins (or more) of ELA every day. This time includes whole class teaching & learning, as well as small group times.</p> <p>Students who receive EC and EL services are usually getting help in ELA.</p> <p>Currently, many schools in Guilford County Schools (GCS) use the following materials to teach ELA:</p> <p>PreK: Frog Street K-5: CKLA, units used for grade-level instruction (ex: Kings & Queens, Space Exploration, Westward Expansion, etc) K-2: Sound Walls, used to provide basic phonics instruction K-2: UFLI, used to provide phonics instruction</p>

		<p>3-5: Morpheme Magic, used to teach advanced phonics</p> <p>Learn more here: https://www.dpi.nc.gov/documents/files/ela-standard-course-study/open</p>
EOG	<p>End of Grade assessments</p> <p>Tests created by NCDPI and given to all students in grades 3-5 in late May through early June.</p> <p>They are based on the North Carolina Standard Course of Study standards for each grade and subject</p> <p>They are one of the key components of the NC School Report Card.</p> <p>Students can score either NP (not proficient) or proficient (level 3, 4 or 5).</p>	<p>These tests are multiple choice and given on the computer. They are approximately 50 questions long and can take up to 3 hours to complete.</p> <p>3rd graders take a math and a reading EOG 4th graders take a math and a reading EOG 5th graders take a math, a reading and a science EOG</p> <p>ISRs are mailed home with report cards and give families more specific information about how their child performed.</p> <p>3rd grade math, 4th grade math & reading, and 5th grade math & reading EOGs can be retaken if the student passed the class and their score was close to proficient. The higher score will count.</p> <p>Learn more here: https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/accountability-and-testing/state-tests/end-grade-eog</p>
GCS	<p>Guilford County Schools</p> <p>The 3rd largest school district in North Carolina, serving almost 80,000 students and 10,000 employees.</p>	<p>GCS central offices are located at 714 Green Valley Road Greensboro, NC 27408</p> <p>Dr. Whitney Oakley is the current Superintendent</p> <p>Dr. Johnita Readus is Rankin's Principal Supervisor</p> <p>"Let's Talk" is the platform where students, families, staff & the community can communicate with GCS staff. The link can be found on the GCS webpage.</p> <p>Learn more here: https://www.gcsnc.com/</p>
IEP	<p>Individualized Education Plan</p> <p>Federal support plan for students with disabilities; recognized in all US public schools (including charter schools); may not be honored at private schools.</p>	<p>Students are tested and a team determines if they qualify under one of NC's qualifying categories. The plan usually includes how the child will receive specially designed services and may include accommodations. Usually referred to as "special ed."</p> <p>Documents are placed in the student's cumulative folder</p> <p>Meetings are held at least once a year.</p> <p>Learn more here:</p>
IRP	<p>Individual Reading Plan</p> <p>This plan is created after the fall DIBELS test and the winter DIBELS test for students who are not reading on grade level. It notifies families what plans are in place to help the student.</p>	<p>Letters with this information is sent home with students' report cards. It tells families which specific skills the student is working on and the exact teaching strategies used.</p> <p>It is placed in the students cumulative folder.</p>

ISR	<p>Individual Score Report</p> <p>A score report that details how students performed on the EOGs.</p>	<p>A copy of this report is sent home as well as placed in the student's cumulative folder.</p>
NCDPI	<p>North Carolina Department of Public Instruction</p> <p>The North Carolina governing body for public education; they make the standards that we teach and EOGs.</p> <p>They generate the NC Public School Report Cards</p>	<p>DPI provides information about EOGs and the standards at their website:</p> <p>www.dpi.nc.gov</p>
RIME	<p>Remediation, Intervention, Maintenance, or Enrichment</p>	<p>RIME time is provided daily (usually 30-45 mins) when students are working in small groups or with the teacher on math skills.</p> <p>Students who receive EC or AG services may go to their EC teacher's classroom during this time for extra help.</p>
RISE	<p>Rams Inspiring Success Everyday</p>	<p>A unique male mentoring group that empowers young men to build relationships, provide service to our school, collaborate and support each other.</p> <p>Mr. Thomas is the sponsor; applications go out to young men in grades 3-5 in the fall. It meets weekly after school and students must provide their own transportation.</p>
RtA	<p>Read to Achieve</p> <p>NC legislation that requires that all students are reading on grade level by the end of 3rd grade.</p> <p>3rd graders meet this requirement by scoring proficient on the BOG, by scoring a lexile level of 725 on DIBELS or scoring proficient on the EOG</p>	<p>Students take the BOG in September, take the DIBELS in September, January and May; then they take EOG in late May-early June.</p> <p>Some students are exempted from this requirement because they receive EC services for a reading disability, or have repeated a grade more than once, or are in US schools for the first time in 3rd grade.</p> <p>If students are not exempt, and do not meet the requirement by the end of 3rd grade, they are invited to summer school where they will take the test again. If they are not proficient in summer school, they will take the test again in October.</p>
SLP	<p>Speech Language Pathologist</p> <p>Highly skilled professionals who assess, diagnose, and treat students with language and communication disorders.</p> <p>Services are provided through an IEP, and interventions are provided when students are in IPS.</p>	<p>Rankin has 2 SLPs who support students with speech and language development.</p> <p>Ms. Katherine Goodpasture works with students in PreK –2nd grade.</p> <p>Ms. Laura Ferguson works with students in grades 3-5 and on the extended content standards.</p> <p>Both SLPs assist with interventions through IPS</p>
SPS & IPS	<p>Supplemental Problem Solving is when students are getting help from a teacher in small groups, typically with 2-3 students, working on below-grade level skills they haven't mastered yet.</p> <p>Intense Problem Solving provides individualized support in reading or math for students who are</p>	<p>When students are working with their teacher in a small group or a tutor but are still not growing, they may be referred to SPS where a team of Rankin staff will use the data to create a support plan</p> <p>If students don't make progress within the small groups, they may be referred to IPS, which involves one-on-one tutoring</p>

	<p>below grade level, or behavior support for students whose behavior is significantly impacting their own learning or the learning of others.</p>	<p>and usually one-on-one work with a teacher. The team meets every 6-8 weeks to review the data to see if the plan is working.</p> <p>Parents and guardians are notified when a child is referred to SPS; they are invited to attend IPS meetings, but are not required since schools do not need consent for participation.</p> <p>Notification letters are placed in student's cumulative folders.</p>
TA	<p>Teacher Assistant</p> <p>Support staff who assist in kinder classrooms</p>	<p>Rankin has 5 TAs:</p> <p>Ms. Flippen works with Ms. Turner Ms. Massoud works with Ms. Edwards Ms. Royster works with Mr. Roberts Ms. Stone works with Ms. McFadden Ms. McCollum works with Ms. Hardy</p>