

“Be where you are supposed to be, when you are supposed to be there, and be doing what you are supposed to be doing.”

Welcome to Canton Middle School for the 2017 -2018 school year! We look forward to working with our students, parents and community for an excellent year of learning. This handbook explains our school’s expectations and policies. Please make sure that you thoroughly read and understand this handbook. If you have any questions, please contact your teacher or administrator.

### **Attendance (Haywood County School Board Policy 4400)**

Poor attendance has been shown to have a direct correlation with poor performance and a lack of academic success. It is extremely important for students to attend school on a regular basis, be on time, and prepared for the day’s work. Students exceeding 15 absences in one school year shall not be promoted to the next grade level except by a determination of the principal, and have completed the appropriate number of makeup days.

#### **3 Types of Absences:**

**1. -Excused (lawful):** personal illness, death in the immediate family, medical or dental appointments, religious holidays, civil responsibilities, late bus, participation in approved school-sponsored activities, administrative proceedings, or activities in which the educational instructional value gained outweighs the value of missed instructional time (these must be approved in advance by the school principal).

**2. -Unexcused absence (unlawful):** any absence not included above will constitute an unexcused absence.

**3. -Out of school suspension:** any out of school suspension absence for a period of 10 days or less will not count against course credit. The suspended student shall be provided an opportunity to take any quarterly, semester, or grading period exams missed during the suspension period, and **may request** to make up daily classroom work.

Students are required to have a written note from the parent/ guardian or a doctor’s statement upon their return to school after an absence. Students are to turn these notes into their homeroom teacher.

State law states that it is the parents’ responsibility for proper school attendance and requires that Principals notify the parent or guardian in writing of a student’s 3<sup>rd</sup> unlawful absence and again after 6. When a student accumulates 10 unlawful absences, the Principal shall notify the prosecutor. All cases of unlawful absences will be reported to the school social worker, who will work with the student and family to analyze the causes of the absences and determine steps to eliminate the problem.

Five (5) tardies to school or early check outs equal one (1) unexcused absence. Students must be present for a minimum of ½ day (11:30 a.m.) in order to be counted present for the day. When students are constantly tardy or check out early, they miss an incredible amount of instructional time, which will affect their learning. Students who arrive at school after 7:55 a.m. should report to the office and check in as tardy.

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Check outs: A student who must leave school during the school day, except for school sponsored activities, must be checked out by the parent/guardian through the school office. Only a parent /guardian or pre-approved student contact will be permitted to check out students. Written permission from parent/guardian is required for checkouts to people who are not pre-approved.

Make-Up Work: Students shall have two (2) school days to make up assignments missed for the first absence, four (4) school days to make up assignments missed for two (2) consecutive absences, and one calendar week to complete assignments missed during a 3 – 5 consecutive days of class periods. Students are responsible for asking for make-up work. Students who receive OSS may request to make up daily work as well.

### **Where do I go when I get to school?**

When students arrive on campus each day, they are to report directly to the **gym, media center, or cafeteria**. Students are not allowed to travel to any other parts of the building unless given prior permission by a faculty member. Students should not bring off campus breakfast food onto campus. Students should not be dropped off prior to 7:30 a.m. Doors to school will open and Adult Supervision starts at 7:30 a.m.

### **Transportation**

Student drop off: Students are to be dropped off at CMS in front of the gym. Parents please pull to the side of the road and out of traffic to allow your student safe access to the sidewalk. Do not drop off students prior to 7:30 a.m.

Bus Transportation: Riding the bus is a privilege that may be withdrawn for inappropriate and unacceptable behavior. Students are to be at their designated bus stop when the bus arrives in the morning. The driver cannot wait for the student to walk from the house to their stop. The bus driver is in complete control of the bus and occupants at all times. Students riding the bus must comply with the requests of the driver as stated in Public School Law 115C-245. Any student reported to the principal or designee for unacceptable behavior may receive sanctions, including suspension from riding the bus.

Transportation changes: Please refrain from changing your child’s transportation. Students work best on a routine, therefore, transportation should be one of those routines. However, we understand that from time to time, emergencies arise. Notification of a change in transportation cannot be done over the phone, and a written note must be given to the office by 9:00 a.m. on the day of the change.

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### **Student Expectations**

At CMS, if you follow our guiding principle listed above, you cannot go wrong. Students not living up to our expectations of appropriate behavior will be referred to the administration. It is our hope and expectation that students leave CMS, not only with an exceptional education and prepared for high school courses, but with the personal skills to self-monitor their behavior and hold themselves accountable for their actions.

#### **The following are considered major offenses and will not be tolerated;**

- |  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| -Weapons (real or simulated)                 | -Disrespectful toward CMS faculty  |
| -Theft or vandalism of property              | -Communicating threats of harm     |
| -Drugs, alcohol, and tobacco                 | -Sexual behaviors                  |
| -Assault on any student (verbal or physical) | -Fighting                          |
| -Sexual harassment                           | -False fire alarms or bomb threats |

These actions will be immediately referred to the office. Suspension and/or legal action as deemed necessary and based upon School Board Policy and state statutes.

The following is a non-inclusive list of behaviors that are deemed not appropriate on campus and will be referred to the office. Consequences, depending upon infraction, and the number of discipline issues for the individual student can include ISS/OSS/detention.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| -horseplay, pushing, and/or running   | -vulgarity, cursing, obscene gestures         |
| -shouting, screaming or disruption  | -tardy  |
| -throwing, spitting or shooting objects   | -chewing gum (teacher may allow in room)      |
| -cutting class  | -wearing hats inside the building             |
| -refusal of reasonable request  | -Using cell phone or other electronic devices |
| -public display of affection (no hand-holding, kissing or arms around body, hugging, etc) |   |

- CMS follows a school-wide discipline policy, meaning that all disciplinary infractions will be on one tracking system for your student. All of your child’s teachers will utilize this system. One of the steps on the grid will be afterschool detention. When that step is reached, you will be notified in writing, and you will need to pick your child up at school at 3:30. This system will start over every 9 weeks.

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- Teachers may assign students detention in their classroom, in the lunchroom, and /or afterschool. Refusal or failure to attend assigned detention will be handled by the administration and will lead to further action.

**In School Suspension (ISS):** CMS offers ISS as an alternative to Out of School Suspension for students who have committed a suspension offense. ISS takes place during regular school hours. Students assigned to ISS will NOT be allowed to participate in or attend any extracurricular activities on that day.

**Out of School Suspension (OSS):** Students may be suspended from school for violation of school discipline policies under the professional discretion of the administration. Participation in extracurricular activities is prohibited during the time of suspension. Any student serving OSS will not be permitted on any school campus.

Field trips are scheduled several times throughout the year by individual grade levels. Students are to follow the same rules that apply when they are on campus. Any infractions will be dealt with in the same manner as at school.

#### Dance Guidelines

Haywood County Schools may sponsor dances which take place after regular school hours. Dances not only serve as a time for students to develop social skills, but they also serve as a reward for good behavior, good attendance, and taking responsibility for financial obligations.

The following criteria have been established in order for middle school students to be eligible to attend after school dances or activities sponsored by their school:

-Student may **have no more than one day of ISS** during the 45 days preceding the dance or since the last dance.

-Students **must not have had any OSS** during the 45 days preceding the dance or since the last dance.

-Students **may not have more than an allowable percentage of absences** nor may they have 15 or more total absences (including excused).

-Students **may not have any debt** to the school (for example, lunch debt, library, locker, books, etc.)

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### **Home & School Communication**

Parents who have signed up with the Haywood County School phone system to receive phone messages will receive important phone messages from time to time. We try to keep these to a minimum in respect of your time; however, these messages are extremely important. Please listen to the entire message. If your contact information changes throughout the school year, please contact the front office to let us know your new information, or you may change your info through the parent portal.

Teachers will communicate through your child’s agenda, by phone and/or e-mail. Parents are urged to contact the school whenever the need arises.

### **Personal Property**

Personal property is subject to be searched by school officials when there is reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated either the law or school rules. Periodically, the substance detective unit (K-9 unit) may visit school in order to maintain a safe drug free environment. CMS faculty and staff are not responsible for the care of nor will be held responsible for any damage, loss, or other ill use that may occur to students personal items. Students are expected to take responsible care of their own possessions and if possible, not bring these items to school at all.

### **Personal Electronics Policy & Distracting Devices**

Cell phones, tablets, iPods/MP 3 players, etc., should not be a disruption to the learning environment. Personal electronics and cell phones should be placed in students lockers upon arrival to their hallways each morning. Students should not use their cell phones during the school day, as they are to remain in their lockers. If a student is found not in compliance with this policy then the cell phone will be taken until the end of the school day, and the student will receive a step on the discipline grid. Please know that if your child needs to call home, they do have access to our school phone in the front office.

Students should not have any devices in class that are a distraction to the learning environment. Students should place all distracting devices in their lockers each morning; these include but are not limited to: Fidget spinners, fidget cubes, and any other devices that may make noise.

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### **Student Appearance**

Students are expected to adhere to standards of dress and appearance that are compatible with a safe and effective learning environment. Clothing should cover all undergarments. Clothing cannot have logos or symbols which refer to or promote (directly or indirectly), tobacco, drugs, alcohol, violence, gangs, lewd conduct, or anything of an offensive nature. Below are a few, but not all inclusive bulleted points regarding dress code.

- Shirts should cover all undergarments
- Cleavage and midriffs should not be showing
- No muscle shirts are allowed
- No spaghetti strap, strapless, or open back shirts
- Sheer or see through shirts are not allowed
- Shorts and skirts must extend to at least your fingertips in length
- Shirts should cover to mid-thigh when wearing leggings or jeggings.
- “Sagging” of shorts is not allowed
- No holes in pants above the knee
- Shoes must be worn at all times
- No hats or toboggans inside of buildings
- No hoodies on heads inside of buildings
- Bandanas are not permitted in anyway
- No pajamas, blankets or slippers

Presenting a bodily appearance or wearing clothing which is disruptive, provocative, revealing, profane, vulgar, offensive or obscene or which endangers the health and safety of the school community is prohibited. Students who violate dress code will be asked to change into appropriate clothing, or be asked to contact home to receive new attire. Continual violations of the dress code can result in disciplinary action. The school administration will make the final decision on questionable attire.

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### **Cafeteria**

All students go to the cafeteria daily based upon their class schedule. A variety of well-planned meals are served daily in the cafeteria. Students are urged to take advantage of both breakfast and lunch served daily. Students choosing not to purchase food in the cafeteria are urged to bring their own food from home. Food from outside, other than home, is not allowed to be consumed in the cafeteria.

Applications for free or reduced meals will be provided to all students at the beginning of the year and can also be requested during the year if the household income changes. We realize that occasionally students may lose or forget their lunch money. Students will be allowed to charge one meal on that day with the understanding that they are to pay their account in full the following day. Students will be allowed a maximum of \$5.00 charged. Until their account is brought current, they will receive an alternative meal consisting of a cheese sandwich and low fat milk. No extra items can be charged or purchased as long as the negative balance remains. After three (3) alternative lunches, the principal or designee will contact the parent to follow up on the reason for their child not being provided lunch money daily.

Our cafeteria can accept meal payments over the internet. On-line services are available at <http://www.lunchprepay.com>

Breakfast	\$1.25 student
	\$1.50 adult
Lunch	\$2.80 student
	.40 reduced
	\$3.75 adult

Extra food items as priced. \*\*These prices are subject to change by state and federal guidelines.

### **Agenda Books and Lockers**

Agendas and locks cost a total of \$10.00 at the beginning of the year. Locks are required for all students.

Replacement cost for an agenda and lock is \$5.00 each.

Lockers, with school locks will be issued to the student at the beginning of the school year by the homeroom teacher. Each student is responsible for keeping their locker clean. Students are cautioned to keep their locker locked at all times as this is the safest place to keep valuables.

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### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

Attention to academic standards is important; however, we recognize the benefits of student involvement in extra-curricular activities. CMS is part of the Blue Ridge Athletic Conference and participates in the following sports: Boys and Girls Track, Boys and Girls Basketball, Wrestling, Volleyball, Softball, Football, Boys and Girls Soccer, Golf, Baseball, Cross Country, and Cheerleading. Students must be in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade to participate in football in accordance with state regulation.

Several clubs and organizations are available to qualified CMS students. In the past, we have offered Student Ambassadors, Beta Club, Sportsman’s Club, Envirothon, Math Counts, and Battle of the Books. Students need to pay special attention to announcements to learn what clubs are available and joining criteria.

Students who attend extra-curricular activities, whether they are ball games, special programs, dances, etc., are expected to behave in accordance with all school rules. Improper conduct could result in loss of privilege to such activities. Dates and hours for the activities will be given in advance. For safety reasons, students should be picked up immediately following the event. Students must be in attendance for a minimum of half the school day (3 ½ hours) in order to be eligible to participate in an extra-curricular activity.

### **Visitors**

Parents are always welcome at CMS, however all visitors must check in at the front office, sign in and receive a visitor’s pass.

### **Student Messages**

Students will be called to the office for messages only in the event of an emergency, deemed by school personnel. Messages from anyone other than a parent/guardian will not be delivered. The school phone may be used by students in case of illness or injury. Pertinent messages taken during the school day will be delivered by the end of the day. Transportation changes should happen only in the case of an emergency and must be done by 9 a.m. Please have a regular plan on how your child will get home each day and stick with the plan.