

Gap Creek Elementary



Parent Handbook **2019-2020**

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<http://gapcreekes.knoxschools.org>

Tiffany Watkins, Principal

Welcome

Welcome to the Gap Creek Family! We are ready for another great year. We hope you will keep this handbook handy and refer to it throughout the school year. This will help ensure a successful and smooth school year for you and your child. We have tried to include as many details as possible.

Most of this information is to ensure that our students have a safe and productive environment in which to learn. If you have any questions that this handbook does not answer, please do not hesitate to ask. Working together will help to ensure the best educational experience for your child.

We are proud to be a part of the few, the proud, the Gap Creek Eagles!

2019-2020 Motto

"Gap Creek Soars Towards Success."

Work Hard. Be Respectful. Be Responsible.



Behavioral Expectations

Gap Creek will be implementing the PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) process school-wide during the 2019-2020 school year. This will allow us to explicitly teach very specific expectations to our students and to regularly celebrate with those who consistently meet those expectations. All expectations are based on the desired behaviors identified in our "Gap Creek Promise" which we recite daily in our morning assembly.

As a member of the Gap Creek family, I promise to work hard, respect others and be responsible for my actions in order to make my community proud.

We will continue to use the Class Dojo system to document student progress towards meeting the desired expectations. Most often, violations are dealt with effectively by the classroom teacher. However, when it becomes necessary for principal involvement, considerations will be given as to 1) type of behavior; 2) total number of previous discipline referrals; 3) circumstances that may impact the behavior or the consequences of the behavior; and 4) nature of the student. Behavior grades will be given on interim reports and report cards according to the school established grading scale.

No-Bullying School

Gap Creek is a violence-free zone, thus, bullying is not accepted in our school. We will work to see that our school is safe and secure from bullying behaviors, which will help to ensure a positive learning and teaching environment. "Bullying means any act that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance..." It is different from the normal conflicts of childhood. A copy of the Knox County Board of Education Policy J-211 has been provided in your child's back to school packet. This policy addresses harassment, intimidation, and bullying or cyber-bullying. Gap Creek has adopted four responsibilities to ensure that our school is a No-Bullying School.

- Rule One: We will not bully other students.
- Rule Two: We will try to help students who are bullied.
- Rule Three: We will make a point to include all students who are easily left out.
- Rule Four: When we know someone is being bullied, we will tell an adult.



Unsafe School Choice

- Under the Tennessee State Board of Education's Unsafe School Choice Policy, any public school student who is the victim of a violent crime as defined under Tennessee Code Annotated 40-38-11(g), or the attempt to commit one of the offenses as defined under Tennessee Code Annotated 39-12-101, shall be provided an opportunity to transfer to another grade-level appropriate school within the district. Additional information regarding this option may be obtained by contacting Brian Hartsell at 594-1502.

Dress Code Standards

- The expectations for elementary school dress reflect "common sense" and a concern for comfort, safety, cleanliness, and sense of modesty. There is a strong relationship between neat, appropriate attire and a positive learning environment. To help create the best learning environment for elementary students, the following standards have been established.
 1. Pants must not sag below the waist and must be a safe length.
 2. Head apparel, except for religious or medical reasons, must not be worn inside the school building.
 3. Footwear is required and must be safe and appropriate for indoor or outdoor physical activity.
 4. Clothing or accessories may not display offensive, vulgar language or images and must not advertise products that students may not legally purchase.
 5. For students in grades 3-5, "short shorts", mini-skirts, and skin-tight outer materials, such as spandex, is inappropriate attire.
 6. For students in grades 3-5, shirts, blouses, and dresses must completely cover the abdomen, back, and shoulders, and shirts or tops must cover the waistband of pants, shorts, or skirts, with no midriff visible.
- The school administration reserves the right to determine whether a student's attire is within acceptable limits or whether it is a disruption to the instructional program.
- The teachers and the principal administer appropriate consequences for policy infractions.



Arrival and Dismissal

The school day begins promptly at 7:45 am and ends at 2:45 pm. The building opens at 7:10 am. At this time, students may enter either through the west door of the building and report directly to the gym or enter through the east door into the cafeteria if they are eating breakfast. Students will remain in these areas, and only in these areas, until a 7:30 am bell rings. We will begin each day with all students and staff in the gym at 7:35 am for a morning message and daily announcements. Please do your best to have your child at school and finished with breakfast by 7:30 am so that they can participate in this morning activity. Parents must enter the building with students arriving after 7:45 am to sign students in at the office.

Kindergarten students will be dismissed at the west doors during the first 2 weeks of school to prepare them for regular dismissal once their full-day schedule begins.

The 2:45 p.m. and half day dismissal will be as follows; 1st bell dismisses bus riders, 2nd bell dismisses car riders. Adults will load the children in their cars. Any students not picked up will be seated in the office. A parent or guardian must come into the office to sign and complete the "Late Pick-up Log."

Early Pickup

Request for dismissal before 2:45pm must be made in writing or in person by the parent or guardian. The student will not be released to another adult at any time unless written permission from the parent or guardian is provided. If the person picking up the child is not on the emergency card, we must have a note or phone call from the parent giving permission. We will ask for a photo ID to make a copy for our records. All students must be signed out in the office for early dismissal. Students will be called to the office while the adult signs the Early Dismissal Form. Please do not ask for the student to be waiting for you in the office. Please try to schedule all doctor appointments for 3:00 pm or after. Our staff follows this request as much as possible in order to teach your child, so please try to do the same for us. Important lessons can be missed any time your child is away from school.



Absences

We understand that there will be times that your child will have to miss school for a variety of reasons. When your child is sick and will not be at school, please call the office between 7:30 am and 8:30 am at 577-4860 to let us know. We will give the message to his/her teacher. Doctor notes and parent notes must be turned into the school within five days of the student's return or the absence may be unexcused. After 10 parent notes, absences are unexcused unless your child brings a note from a doctor. After 5 unexcused absences, a red flag goes up from Central Office to the attendance/social worker as well as to the court system.

The Tennessee Department of Education now requires us to intervene with any family whose child is "chronically absent." Chronically absent is defined as a student missing 10 percent or more of the days the student is enrolled-for any reason, including excused absences and out-of-school suspensions. Excessive absences from school represent lost instructional time for a student. The department of education encourages districts and schools to carefully review attendance data throughout the school year to ensure supports are in place to maximize learning time for all students.

Students will be responsible for missed work after any absence. The work that your child needs to complete will be made available upon their return to school and not while they are absent. Our instruction is driven by data and teachers adjust their instruction accordingly. They cannot always accurately assess or predict the exact instruction your child will miss on a given day. Your child's completed work will be due two days after he/she returns to school. Failure to meet this requirement will result in your child getting zeroes for the missed assignments. In the event of a longer absence, the two-day deadline may be extended. We do appreciate communication when an absence cannot be avoided, but getting student work in advance will not be possible.



Tardiness

All students arriving to school after 7:45 am are considered tardy and must receive a tardy slip before being admitted to the classroom. **Parents must sign** in students arriving after 7:45 am. Please note that if your child arrives at school later than 7:45 am the student will miss the morning assembly in the gym. Students who habitually arrive late are to be considered excessively tardy and are to be referred to the social services worker. Students on transfers who habitually arrive late are susceptible to having their transfer revoked.

A student will be considered ineligible for a perfect attendance award (nine-week grading period) or perfect attendance certificate (end of semester and/or end of school year) if he/she has accumulated:

- three tardies per 9 week grading period, or
- twelve tardies during the year

If a student must be picked up from school before the end of the school day, he/she must be signed out in the office by the parent or guardian. If a student is checked out early and was not at school at least 3 hours and 15 minutes, it will be counted as an absence. Leaving school early is discouraged because valuable learning time is lost any time a student misses even part of a school day.

Daily Schedule

- Building opens 7:10 a.m.
- Breakfast 7:10 a.m.
- Morning Assembly begins 7:35 a.m.
- School day begins 7:45 a.m.
- School day ends 2:45 p.m.
- There is no one to supervise the children before 7:10 a.m. Please keep children safe and do not drop them off before this time.



Lunch

Gap Creek Elementary is no longer eligible to take part in the Community Eligibility Program which allowed us to offer breakfast and lunch to our students at no charge. You may, however, continue to receive breakfast and lunch at a reduced charge or free if your family qualifies. You may apply for this benefit at lunchapplication.com. The cost of meals for the 2019-2020 school year are as follows.

Students:		Faculty:	
Breakfast, Reduced	\$0.30	Breakfast	\$2.00
Breakfast, Paid	\$1.75	Lunch	\$3.25
Lunch, Reduced	\$0.40	Visitor:	
Lunch, Paid ES	\$2.50	Breakfast	\$2.25
Lunch, Paid MS/HS	\$2.75	Lunch	\$3.75

Note: All students are required to pay for any extra items such as milk or ice cream.



Homework Policy

Homework should:

- provide extra practice
- promote responsibility and strengthen work habits
- extend classroom assignment and reinforce classroom learning
- individualize instruction and extend personal interest
- provide an opportunity for creativity
- make use of out-of-school resources
- be a source of communication between school and home

Special assignments, projects, or studying for tests may be assigned in addition to regular homework. More time may be needed for daily work that is not completed at school or missing assignments due to student absences. It is necessary for your child to complete the assignments so that there are no gaps in their learning. Homework is a three-way communication, and it requires three-way participation. Teachers, students, and parents or guardians share the responsibility for making the homework experience a beneficial one. Parents are not expected to assist the student in the homework, but to watch for the frustration level. Parents should contact the teacher when the homework is at a frustration level for the student (too difficult).



Grade Reporting

- Grade cards are issued every nine weeks and are to be signed by the parent and returned to the school immediately. Interim reports will be sent every 4½ weeks. Individual teachers will also utilize other types of progress reports. Parents may request a conference at any time.

Explanation of Grading Scales

Kindergarten

Students will receive a standards-based report card that will communicate to you when your child has mastered specific kindergarten skills and concepts.

Grades 1-2

Students will receive a grade of A, B, C, D, or U in behavior. They will receive a grade of E, S, or N in academic areas, special area classes and work habits.

Grades 3-5

Students will receive a grade of A, B, C, D, or U in behavior. They will receive a grade of E, S, or N in academic areas, special area classes and work habits.

Standards for Grading Scales

E = Excellent (93-100)

S = Satisfactory (75-92)

N = Needs Improvement (74 and below)

A = Exceptional (93-100)

B = Above Average (85-92)

C = Average (75-84)

D = Below Average (70-74)

U = Unsatisfactory (Below 70)



Parent/Teacher Conferences

- We want our children to be successful. Working together helps students achieve more at school. We have two formal Parent Conference Nights planned for this year. The first one will occur on September 12, 2019, and the second one will be held on February 13, 2020. Both will take place from 3:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. Please contact your child's teacher to set up a conference any other time you feel it is needed. Teachers have their day planned from the second they arrive in the mornings until they leave in the afternoons. Please do not drop in for a "quick" conference in the morning. The teachers are setting up their classroom for a day of learning at this time. Other parents would appreciate it if you did not hold up the car line in the afternoons with a "mini" conference. You are welcome to pull out of the line to ask the teacher when she would be available to meet with you. The best way to set up a conference is to send a message to the teacher or call the school and we can give her the message to return your call to set up a conference. We prefer to hold our conferences in person rather than over the phone.

Accidents/Illness

If your child is injured or ill at school, we will make him/her comfortable and then call you immediately. If you cannot be reached, we will attempt to contact the emergency numbers that are listed on the Emergency Data Card. Please always keep the emergency cards updated with correct information for any emergency. It is very scary for a child when the office is trying to contact a parent and none of the numbers work.

Medication

If your child requires daily medication, a current Knox County Medication Form must be completed by your physician and filed in the school office. We are only allowed to dispense long-term, daily medication and this medicine must be in the original prescription bottle. Medications should be brought to and picked up at the office by the parent or guardian.

Drills

From time to time, all Knox County School participates in safety drills such as fire, tornado, and emergency drills. By law, we will conduct at least one armed intruder drill during the school year. We practice these drills so that in the event of a real emergency, everyone will know what to do and can do it calmly.



Personal Property

Toys, cameras, trading cards, electronic devices, large sums of money, or any other expensive item should not be brought to school. Such items brought to school are subject to be taken up and held until the end of the school year. Neither the school nor the staff is responsible for these items. We also encourage you to put your child's name on all lunch boxes, notebooks, jackets, etc., in order to promptly return items to the owner. Any items found without names will be placed in the school's lost and found. All items remaining in lost and found at the end of the school year will be donated to a local charity.

Cell Phones

Students that must carry a cell phone to school will keep cell phones in their backpacks and will keep them turned off. Any cell phones that are found turned on or found out of the backpack will be taken and kept in the office until a parent or guardian comes to get them from the office. The second offense may result in the cell phone not being returned until the last day of school in May. Neither the school nor the staff is responsible for your child's cell phone

School Bus Regulations

Riding the bus to and from school is a privilege. It is our goal to provide safe transportation for all students. All school rules apply when your child is riding the bus. When a student chooses to break the rules, he/she will be dealt with according to Knox County Schools' Transportation Department's regulations.

Students will not be allowed to ride a bus other than the one that they ride to and from their designated stop. If the occasion arises that a student needs to ride another bus, the parent must send a note to school and the classroom teacher, as well as the principal, must grant permission.

Field Trips

Students will have opportunities to participate in field trips during the school year. Students must demonstrate self-discipline and good character while on the trip and must act in a safe manner while away from the school. A child may become ineligible for field trips due to in-school behavior. Parents are encouraged to join us on field trips, but may have to drive in private vehicles if the bus is full. A parental chaperone will not be allowed to bring other children who do not attend Gap Creek. Parents will be allowed to check out their child with their classroom teacher at the end of the field trip. No parent will be allowed to check out any student other than his or her own child. All students and parents field trip fees must be paid prior to leaving the school for the field trip.

Telephone Calls

Students should ask to use the telephone only in the case of emergency and permission must be granted by the classroom teacher. Student lunches and rides home should be taken care of, with complete understanding by the student, before the student arrives at school. Teachers cannot be called to the telephone to talk with parents while their classes are in session. Please contact the school office and the teacher will return your call when he/she is not responsible for the supervision and instruction of students.

Textbooks/Library Books

All students are fully responsible for the care of all textbooks and library books that they use. Loss and destruction of these books will result in payment to the school for the replacement of lost and/or damaged books. Students owing such fines will not receive their report cards at the end of the school year until full restitution has been made.

Visitors/Volunteers

In order to provide a safe learning environment for all students, and in compliance with Knox County School Board Policy, all visitors must enter through the front door and immediately report to the office. Visitors must sign in even before visiting the playground during school hours. Visitors must wear a visitor's badge while in the building. Volunteers are to sign-in the volunteer log book located in the office. We love having volunteers and this helps us to keep track of the number of hours donated and dedicated to our children. If you like to volunteer as a chaperone for school field trips, you must complete a background check. Please give the school your name and email address and we will send you a link to complete the necessary information for a background check. You must complete the information on a computer and not on a hand-held device. Please contact the office if you have any questions.

Communication

School and classroom newsletters and flyers will be sent home and will include important dates. Please read these carefully. If you have access to a computer, important information is also included on our school website. Whenever possible, all phone calls and responses to notes will be returned within 24 hours.



We work hard to keep you informed. Please read and discuss this handbook with your child as soon as possible.

Please complete, sign, and return this form to your child's teacher tomorrow.

Thank you,

Gap Creek Staff

Reviewing of Handbook

I have read and discussed the Gap Creek Elementary Parent Handbook 2019-2020 with my child.

Child's Name

Parent Signature and Date

