

Gray's Creek Elementary
"Making Connections with a Global Perspective"

910-483-3352; Fax 910-483-7945
www.gces.ccs.k12.nc.us

Katrina McKinnon, Principal
Stacey Morgan, Assistant Principal
Rebecca Garris, Data Manager
Peggy Pierce, Bookkeeper
Laura Snow, Parent Facilitator/Med Clerk

**WELCOME TO THE
2016-2017 SCHOOL YEAR!**

Gray's Creek Elementary Parents and Students,

On behalf of the faculty and staff, I would like to welcome you to our school. While Gray's Creek Elementary School is grounded in the North Carolina Common Core and Essential Standards, we are proud to be a Passport Model School, exposing our students to a global perspective, as we implement an internationally themed curriculum, supported by our state and local standards. I am excited to begin my 4th year in the Gray's Creek area, and to be associated with a wonderfully professional staff, that is focused on student achievement and customer service. Together, we will seek to offer a safe and caring environment where students are actively engaged in the teaching and learning process. We will provide meaningful and relevant learning opportunities with the expectation that all students will learn and achieve at a high rate of success.

The information contained within this handbook has been compiled to serve as a reference for you and your child throughout the school year. It will assist you in understanding the day-to-day operations of Gray's Creek Elementary, and Cumberland County Schools. At GCES, we believe that our parents and community are key components in shaping our school into the best school in the county. We invite you to visit our school regularly, attend school functions, and stay involved with your child's education.

Again, we look forward to an outstanding year of teaching and learning, with you as a critical member of our team. Please contact your

child's teacher or the school if you need assistance or information. Updated information will be provided through this planner, weekly school reminders, Parent-Link Phone Messaging, monthly PTA calendars, teacher newsletters, the school marquee, and our website: www.gces.ccs.k12.nc.us

Katrina McKinnon
Principal

ARRIVAL ON CAMPUS/DISMISSAL

The school day for Gray's Creek Elementary School students begins at 8:30 a.m., and ends at 3:00 p.m. For safety and supervision purposes, students **SHOULD NOT** arrive on campus prior to 8:00 a.m. *Please note that the office staff may not answer the phone prior to 8:00, and during dismissal time from 2:50-3:05 p.m.*

Students may not remain unsupervised in the office lobby, near back doors, in the gymnasium, or in classrooms prior to 8:00 a.m. The student drop off is located near the K-2 wing, and will occur between 8:00-8:30 a.m. No adult presence at the drop-off location indicates that the tardy bell has rung, and you will need to come into the office to check-in your child. Breakfast is served from 8:00-8:30 a.m. in our school's cafeteria. Students will eat breakfast in the cafeteria prior to going to class. It is imperative that students arrive by 8:15 a.m., in order to eat breakfast and be ready to start the school day at 8:30.

At the beginning of the school year, please indicate your child's mode of transportation each day, to the classroom teacher. If there is a change in your standard routine, please send a note to your child's teacher. If the teacher does not receive a note, your child will be sent home via the regular mode of transportation. **ALL TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS MUST BE MADE AHEAD OF TIME. STUDENTS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO CALL HOME TO DETERMINE PLANS FOR TRANSPORTATION. TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF ALL STUDENTS, WE WILL NOT ACCEPT PHONE CALLS FROM PARENTS/GUARDIANS ASKING FOR A CHANGE IN TRANSPORTATION. PLEASE**

MAKE THESE ARRANGEMENTS PRIOR TO YOUR CHILD LEAVING FOR SCHOOL EACH MORNING.

Cumberland County Schools operates a Prime Time Before/After-School Program at GCES for students who need before or after-school care. A minimum of 10 students must participate in the program. The Prime Time Office can be reached at 678-2451.

ATTENDANCE/TARDY POLICIES

Students are required to attend school 180 days a year. By law, parents are required to provide a written explanation for each absence within 3 school days of each absence. Notes not received within 3 days will cause an absence to be coded as unexcused/unlawful. Notes from parents are to contain: 1) date written, 2) date of absence, 3) reason for absence, 4) home or work phone number, and 5) parent signature. The only legally excused absences are for health reasons (illness or doctor appointments), and death of relatives. Certain other extreme emergencies may be excusable at the principal's discretion. Phone calls to notify the school of your child's absence are appreciated, however, they do not supplant the requirement of a written excuse upon returning to school. All absences require make-up work to be completed within 5 calendar days. ***Special projects, reports, tests, and assignments will be due upon the child's return to school.*** Students are expected to be on time for school daily. Students arriving after the tardy bell rings at 8:30 a.m. must report to the front office for a late pass. **Parents must accompany late arriving students into the office.** Students are sent to class with an excused tardy slip (with a legal or legitimate reason) or an unexcused tardy slip (unlawful). Our instructional day begins at 8:30 a.m. In an effort to avoid instructional disruptions, parents will not accompany students to class. Instead, a staff member will escort the student to class. Students must be checked-in no later than 11:44 a.m. and continue through the end of the day in order to be counted present for the day. Students must not be checked-out prior to 11:46 a.m., in order to be counted present for the entire day. Students must be present for 3 hours and 45 minutes of school to be counted present. All Pre-

Kindergarten students must be escorted to the classroom each day.

Absences related to educational opportunities are permitted with at least 1 week of advance request, through the front office. Students and parents must complete the requirements for educational leave within 5 days after returning to school, or the absences will be coded as *unlawful*. Alternative assignments such as an oral report or written reports of the educational trip are also due within the 5 day time-frame.

Students who are tardy more than 3 times in a grading period will not be recognized for perfect attendance during award ceremonies. Tardies will be monitored by the administration. Late arrival into class disrupts the classroom routine and instruction. Excessive absences/tardies may have a tremendous impact on your child's educational experience. Our school social worker will work with the principal or assistant principal on individual cases.

BELL SCHEDULE

8:00-8:25	First Bell, Breakfast
8:25	Warning Bell
8:30	Tardy Bell
3:00	Dismissal

AWARDS

In an effort to keep everyone informed, these are the guidelines for some of the awards that GCES students can earn this year. Please keep in mind that additional awards may be given by specific grade levels and administration. Invitations will be sent home for students who will receive an award on the scheduled day. Parents are always invited to attend the celebrations, if you so choose. **Please respect our expectations for model audience behavior and etiquette by silencing cell phones/electronic devices, and escorting infants/siblings to the lobby if they become distracted. Our goal is to ensure that each student on the stage has the undivided attention of the audience.**

Quarterly Awards

- A Honor Roll: Students must have earned an A in all graded subjects, an S

in all Resource Classes, and an S in conduct.

- A/B Honor Roll: Students must have earned no grades lower than a B, an S in all Resource Classes, and an S in conduct.
- B.U.G.-(Brought Up Grades): Students must have brought up grades by at least one letter grade without dropping grades in any other subject. This award is not presented during the 1st Quarter Awards.
- Perfect Attendance: Students must have been counted present for every day that school was in session **and must not have been tardy more than 3 times during the grading period.**
- Accelerated Reader: Students must have met 100% of their AR Goal with an average of 80% accuracy on tests. All tests taken must fall within the student's ZPD Range.
- Book It: Students who are not yet reading independently (Kindergartners), have the opportunity to log the number of books being read at home with parents or supervising members of the family. Students reading 30 books per month for the grading period will be recognized.
- Academic Excellence: K-2 students scoring a III or IV in all academic areas, and an S in all Resource Classes and conduct
- Terrific Kid: Awarded each quarter in grades K-5
- Global Citizens: Awarded each quarter in grades K-5

End of Year Awards

- A Honor Roll (Grades 3-5): Student must have earned an A in all graded subjects, and an S in all resource classes and conduct
- A Honor Roll Career (5th Grade): Students must have earned an A in all graded subjects, an S in all resource classes, and conduct
- A/B Honor Roll (Grades 3-5): Students must have earned no

grades lower than a B in graded subjects, and nothing less than an S in resource classes and conduct for the entire year.

- Perfect Attendance Year: Students must have been marked present for every day that school was in session without having been tardy more than 3 times within a grading period.
- Perfect Attendance Career: Students must have been marked present for every day that school was in session **without having been tardy more than 3 times within a marking period during 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade.**
- Accelerated Reader: Students must have met 100% of their AR Goal with 80% accuracy and have read within their reading lexile range for the entire year.
- Principal's Global Citizen Award: Students who consistently demonstrate global knowledge throughout the school year.

Award Ceremony Schedule

1st Quarter

11/07 Kindergarten- 8:45

4th Grade- 10:00

11/09 2nd Grade- 8:45

5th Grade- 2:00

11/10 1st Grade- 10:00

3rd Grade- 2:00

2nd Quarter

02/07 2nd Grade- 8:45

5th Grade- 2:00

02/08 1st Grade- 10:00

3rd Grade- 2:00

02/09 Kindergarten- 8:45

4th Grade- 10:00

3rd Quarter

04/11 1st Grade- 10:00

3rd Grade- 2:00

04/12 Kindergarten- 8:45

4th Grade- 10:00

04/13 2nd Grade- 8:45

5th Grade- 2:00

4th Quarter

06/07 Kindergarten- 9:00

1st Grade- 1:00

06/08 2nd Grade- 9:00

3rd Grade- 1:00

06/09 4th Grade- 9:00

5th Grade- 10:30

BUS STUDENTS

Students are assigned to school buses by the principal according to the North Carolina General Statute #115C-244. Students who live 1.5 miles or further from the school, are eligible for free transportation. A copy of the rules for bus students is given to each bus rider and is also written in the Cumberland County Schools Code of Conduct. Our bus transportation serves as our initial opportunity to provide safety for your child. **This is a privilege that can/will be revoked for repeated disciplinary concerns.**

We understand that many of our parents/guardians rely on our bus transportation, but inappropriate behavior that jeopardizes the safety of our staff and students, will not be tolerated. Please review the bus rules with your child, as they will be closely monitored and reinforced. The buses will load and unload at the back entrance of the school. Students who usually ride a school bus must bring a note from their parent to their teacher if the mode of transportation changes for any reason. **Again, we will not accept phone calls from parents in place of a handwritten note.**

Character Education

As a result of the collaborative planning efforts of parents, teachers, businesses, religious groups, and the community, the schools in Cumberland County will be promoting the eight traits of good character. The citizens of our community came to a consensus that good character must begin at home, must be modeled, must be a united community effort, and will lead to success. The 8 traits on which we place our focus are: Respect, Responsibility, Integrity, Caring, Self-Discipline, Trustworthiness, Fairness, and Citizenship. Each trait will be integrated throughout the learning process, and within daily interactions with others. We are very excited to include and emphasize all of the traits into our Global

Learning program. Your child will become familiar with the concepts and learn how to apply their meaning to everyday living, as well as school. We also try to support our students' character development with the use of our Positive Behavior Intervention Support. With PBIS, a consistent matrix of school-wide expectations are explained, modeled, and reinforced during the year to encourage our students and staff to make good decisions each day. Students are given bear paws for making good character choices that match up with our expectations to serve as reinforcement for their behavior.

complete an Electronic Volunteer Application Form online through the CCS Human Resources webpage:
www.hr.ccs.k12.nc.us/Volunteers.htm

There will be many opportunities for you to be involved in your child's education. We hope to establish a homeroom parent for each of our classrooms, the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meets quarterly, and several local businesses coordinate their efforts to support us in meaningful ways. Whatever the source, assistance from volunteers reinforces our goal of achieving success for all of our students.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

It is important for students to be aware that teachers and parents communicate at all times. Nothing has a greater impact on student achievement than teachers and parents working in unison. If your schedule does not permit regular conferences in person, please let us know. Required parent/teacher conferences will be scheduled throughout the school year. The first round of conferences will take place during the week of November 7th-November 10th. The conferences for the second semester will take place the week of February 6th- February 9th. Conference times will be scheduled from 3:00-6:00 p.m. Parents are encouraged to seek additional conferences with your child's teacher at any time during the school year. We must ask you to schedule these conferences before or after school hours, in order to prevent disrupting classroom instructional time.

PERSONAL DATA INFORMATION

Please notify the main office and your child's teacher immediately if you have changed your address, or phone numbers. When we use our automated phone messaging service, ParentLink, to deliver messages to homes, we must have a current phone number through which you may be contacted. A note or phone call will enable us to update our records.

REPORT CARDS

Report Cards will be issued to students each quarter, according to the following schedule:

Progress Reports/Report Cards

- **1st Quarter:**
09/28- Progress Reports Sent Home
10/31- End of 1st Grading Period
11/10- Report Cards Sent Home
- **2nd Quarter:**
12/09- Progress Reports Sent Home
01/27- End of 2nd Grading Period
02/03- Report Cards Sent Home
- **3rd Quarter:**
03/01- Progress Reports Sent Home
03/31- End of 3rd Grading Period
04/07- Report Cards Sent Home
- **4th Quarter:**
05/10- Progress Reports Sent Home
06/09- End of 4th Grading Period
Report Cards Sent Home

Grades K-2

Social Development, Reading, Language Skills, Math, Science, Social Studies, Computer Skills, Art, Music, Physical Education, & Conduct

- Level 4- Above Grade Level
- Level 3- On Grade Level
- Level 2- Below Grade Level
- Level 1- Well Below Grade Level
- \ = Not Assessed
- √ = See attached Progress Report

Grades 3-5

Reading, Language Arts, Writing, Spelling, Math, Science, Art, Music, Physical Education, Media, Computer Skills, & Social Studies

- A= 90-100
- B= 80-89
- C= 70-79
- D= 60-69
- F= 59 and below

Grades K-5

Resource Classes: Art, Music, P.E., Media, Health, Spanish, & Computer Skills

- S= Satisfactory
- N= Needs Improvement
- U= Unsatisfactory

Students with grades below S in resource classes, or conduct/work/study habits will not be eligible for Honor Roll. Progress Reports and report cards are to be signed and promptly returned to your child's teacher.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM

Katrina McKinnon, Principal
Stacey Morgan, Assistant Principal
Donna Gower, Instructional Coach
Lyndsay Underwood, SIT Chairperson
Heidi Jacobs, 1st Grade
Madeline Lumley, 2nd Grade
Gloria Quarmine, 3rd Grade
Naomi Dobson, 4th Grade
Dedra Haire, 5th Grade
Heather Marusiak, Resource
Instructional Assistant
Marie Feimster, Parent
Toni Witherow, Parent

PTA OFFICERS

Crystal Pate, President
Leigh Ann Kanagy, Vice President
Teresa Allen, Treasurer
Secretary