

## WELCOME TO CMS, 2014-2015!

*Welcome to Canton Middle School, home of the Black Bears! We look forward to a great 2014-2015 school year and hope that each student has a positive learning experience.*

This handbook explains our school's expectations and policies. Please make sure you thoroughly read and understand your Handbook. If you have questions, be sure to ask a teacher.

Students should have this agenda with them every day while attending CMS!

**MISSION STATEMENT:** *Canton Middle School is committed to providing a transition from elementary to high school that will recognize the differences in students while offering appropriate academics and life lessons for all.*

**BELIEF STATEMENT:** *Faculty, staff, parents and students share the responsibility for creating an effective school in our community.*

### AGENDA BOOKS AND LOCKERS:

Agendas and locks together cost \$10.00 at the beginning of the year. ***Agendas and locks are required for all students.***

Replacement cost for an agenda is \$5.00.

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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 not to keep money or other valuables in their lockers.

**ATTENDANCE (BOARD POLICY A-5):** 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 be prepared for the day's work. A student must be in attendance for a minimum of one-half day in order to be counted present. Students exceeding 15 absences in one school year shall not be promoted to the next grade level except by a determination of the principal or

designee upon review of the student's record. For additional information about attendance see HCS School Board Policy A-5.

There are three types of absence:

- **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). Five (5) tardies/early checkouts at middle schools - five (5) tardies and/or early checkouts will equal one (1) lawful absence regardless of the reason. For the tardy or early checkout to count toward the absence scheduled, instructional time must be missed.
- **Unexcused absence (unlawful):** Any absence not included above will constitute an unexcused absence.
- **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 makeup daily classroom work.

Any absence not included in the above list will constitute an unexcused absence. 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 must be present for a minimum of one-half day (3 ½ hours) in order to participate in extra-curricular activities. (Or ½ of the instructional day if early dismissal or late start) **State law requires** that Principals notify the parent or guardian in writing of a **student's 3rd unlawful absence, and again after 6.** When a student accumulates 10 unlawful absences, the Principal shall notify the prosecutor unless he/she

has done so sooner. Evidence of prior notification to parents or guardians plus 10 unexcused absences shall constitute a "prima facie case" in which the student's parent, guardian, or custodian is held responsible for the absences. **All cases of unlawful absence 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.**

All students must be in the classroom by the designated school starting time. **DOORS WILL OPEN AND ADULT SUPERVISION WILL BEGIN AT 7:30 AM.** Upon arrival between 7:30 and 7:50 AM, students will report to the gym in the 6th grade building, the media center, or the cafeteria and sit in the designated areas. **NO STUDENT SHOULD ARRIVE ON CAMPUS BEFORE 7:30 AM.**

**TARDIES:** Students more than 5 minutes late to school after the designated starting time should report the main office to be signed in.

**PROCEDURE FOR CAMPUS ARRIVAL:** When students arrive on campus each day, they are to report directly to the gym, media center, or cafeteria, where they are to remain until the bell of dismissal to homeroom. Students are not allowed to travel through any other areas of the school buildings unless given prior permission by a faculty member. Students should not bring off-campus breakfast food onto campus.

**CHECK OUTS:** A student who must leave school during the day, except for school-sponsored activities, must be signed out by the parent/guardian through the school office. **ONLY A PARENT/GUARDIAN OR PRE-APPROVED STUDENT CONTACT WILL BE PERMITTED TO CHECK STUDENTS OUT. WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM PARENT/GUARDIAN IS REQUIRED FOR CHECKOUTS TO PERSONS WHO ARE NOT PRE-APPROVED.**

**BUS TRANSPORTATION:** School bus transportation is a **PRIVILEGE** that may be withdrawn for inappropriate and unacceptable behavior. Students and parents will be notified of these behaviors before suspension/expulsion from

the bus. 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 the stop.

**THE BUS DRIVER IS IN COMPLETE CHARGE OF THE BUS AND ITS 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 who is reported to the principal for unacceptable behavior may receive sanctions, including suspension from riding the bus.

**BUS NOTES:** ANY STUDENT WHO WISHES TO RIDE A DIFFERENT BUS OR GET OFF AT A DIFFERENT STOP, MUST HAVE A WRITTEN NOTE, SIGNED BY THE PARENT AND PRINCIPAL. NOTES MUST BE BROUGHT TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE BEFORE 1:00 PM IN ORDER TO ALLOW THE SCHOOL TIME TO CONFIRM THE NOTE PRIOR TO THE END OF THE SCHOOL DAY.

**OTHER TRANSPORTATION CHANGES:** Notification for all other changes in students' afternoon transportation must be given to the CMS office by 2:00 PM on the day of the change.

**CAFETERIA:** A variety of well-planned meals is served in the cafeteria daily. We have a breakfast as well as lunch program. A computer system allows each student to have his/her own account. Monies may be deposited into these accounts daily, weekly, or monthly to be used for both breakfast and/or lunch. Students are not permitted to charge individual items. Students not purchasing food in the cafeteria are encouraged to bring their own. All students go to the cafeteria according to a class schedule.

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. If a child receives free or reduced price breakfast or lunch and the income level changes, federal law mandates completion of a new application. Also, when a zero (0) amount of income on an application is listed, federal law mandates completion of another application at the end of 45 calendar days.

We realize that occasionally students may lose or forget their lunch money. Students who may have lost or forgotten their lunch money on a particular day 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, \$4.50 for the previously charged lunch and the present day's lunch, to bring their account current.**

Students will be allowed a **maximum of \$5.00 (two lunches) charged.** Until their account is brought current, they will receive an alternative meal consisting of a **cheese sandwich and low fat milk**. Students are to notify the cafeteria's staff when entering the line that they wish to have a sandwich and milk meal.

No extra items can be charged or purchased as long as the negative balance remains.

After **three** alternative lunches, the principal or principal's designee will contact the parent to follow up on the reason for their child not being provided lunch money.

**No Charges will be allowed for breakfast.**

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

Cafeteria prices are as follows:

Breakfast	1.00 student
	.30 reduced
	1.50 adult
Lunch	2.35 student
	.40 reduced
	3.50 adult
Extra milk	.50
Extra food items	-as priced

\*These prices are subject to change.

**DANCE GUIDELINES:** Haywood County Schools may sponsor dances/socials which take place after the regular school hours. Dances/socials 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 an after-school dance or social sponsored by their assigned school:

- Students may have **no more than one** day of in-school suspension (ISS) or **Saturday School** during the 45 days preceding the dance or since the last dance.
- Students **must not have had any** out-of-school suspensions (OSS) during the 45 days preceding the dance or since the last dance.
- Students **may not have more than an allowable percentage of unexcused absences nor may they have 15 or more total absences (including excused absences).**
- Students may **not have any debt** to the school (for example – lunch debt, library debt, school books, locker debt, etc.).

**DISCIPLINE:** The following major offenses are examples that will require immediate referral to the Principal or Assistant Principal and will likely result in an ISS/OSS assignment for the student involved (this is not a complete list):

- A. Fighting/aggressive behavior (hitting, pushing, pinching, etc. will be treated as fighting) is not tolerated at CMS. It will be dealt with appropriately with ISS/OSS.
- B. Assault, profanity, threats, or blatant disrespect towards a staff member.
- C. Skipping school or cutting class (truancy).
- D. Possession of a weapon (real or simulated). Fireworks are treated the same as weapons in accordance with Board Policy SA-1.
- E. Possession of tobacco products, lighters, matches, drugs or alcohol.
- F. Failure to obey a reasonable request of a staff member including disturbing class repeatedly, disorderly conduct, disrespectful and/or rude toward a staff member.
- G. Stealing or vandalism of school or personal property.
- H. Setting off false fire alarms, bomb threats, discharging fire extinguishers, etc.

I. Sexual harassment (See School Board Policy A-12).

J. Gambling

**MINOR INFRACTIONS:** For minor infractions teachers can assign students detention in their classroom, in the lunchroom and/or after school. Refusal or failure to attend assigned detention will be handled by the administration and will lead to further action. Each grade level will communicate its discipline plan for minor infractions in writing to student homes at the beginning of the school year.

**CHEWING GUM:** Chewing gum is not permitted at CMS unless a teacher has given specific permission for it *in the classroom*.

**FEES:** Cafeteria fees and other school charges are the responsibility of students and their parents. Any student who owes money to the cafeteria, the office, the media center, etc., will not be allowed to participate in any non-educational activity for which a fee is charged. This includes, but is not limited to, school dances, reward activities and events, and non-instructional field trips.

**IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (ISS):** The In-School Suspension Program is set up to provide an alternative to Out-of-School suspension for students who have committed a suspension offense. This isolation discourages students from committing infractions of school rules and procedures without penalizing their school attendance and/or grades. ISS takes place during regular school hours. Students assigned to ISS will NOT be allowed participate in or attend any extra-curricular 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 Principal and/or Assistant Principal. It is likely because of daily class work missed, that a suspension will adversely affect the student's grades. Participation in extra-curricular activities is prohibited during the time of suspension. Any student serving out of school suspension or expulsion WILL NOT BE PERMITTED ON

ANY SCHOOL CAMPUS (see School Board Policy SA-1).

**EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:**

Attention to academic standards is important, but equally important are the benefits of student involvement in co-curricular activities. The purposeful atmosphere that exists in a well-organized club or activity allows students to develop social and leadership roles that prepares them in a way that cannot be duplicated in a classroom setting.

CMS is a 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.

Several clubs and organizations are conditionally available to qualified CMS students. In past years CMS has offered Student Council, Beta Club, Sportsman's Club, Envirothon, and Battle of the Books. Students are advised to pay careful attention to announcements to learn what clubs and organizations are available and the relevant criteria for joining.

Students who attend extra-curricular activities, whether they are ball games, special programs, socials, etc., are expected to conduct themselves as ladies and gentlemen and to behave in accordance with all the rules and policies stated herein. Improper conduct could result in loss of privilege to such activities. During extra-curricular activities, students are not to be outside of the designated area until the activity has concluded. The school phone cannot be used to make arrangements or gain permission to attend extra-curricular activities. This should be taken care of at home prior to the event. Dates and hours for the activities will be given in advance. FOR SAFETY REASONS, STUDENTS SHOULD BE PICKED UP IMMEDIATELY AFTER AN EVENT CONCLUDES. 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.

Field trips are scheduled by teachers and/or grade levels several times each year. Students are to follow the same discipline rules that apply when on campus. Any infractions are dealt with in the same manner as at school.

During school-wide or grade level assembly programs, students are expected to be respectful of any guests. Disruptive behaviors will not be tolerated.

**Dance attendance is a privilege and is subject to the dance guidelines described earlier in this handbook.**

**HEALTH EDUCATION:** In May of 1996, North Carolina adopted a revised version of the Health curriculum for grades K-9, entitled **FRAMEWORK FOR HEALTHFUL LIVING EDUCATION**. It combines the past health curriculum, the alcohol and drug curriculum and adds House Bill 834 (the abstinence bill). Students in grades 6-8 are required to have a permission letter signed before they can attend the portion of the classes pertaining to puberty, abstinence, avoiding out-of-wedlock pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases. This letter will be sent home a couple of weeks before the actual instruction begins. As per State Law, the new curriculum is available for your review at each school and at the Board of Education Office.

**HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION:** Teachers will communicate through your child's agenda, by phone and/or email. Parents are urged to contact the school whenever the need arises. Teachers may be contacted by note, through student agendas, email, or by telephone (including voicemail). If you call during the school day, the office can leave the teacher a note to return your call or send you to teacher voicemail. If you wish to have a conference with your child's teacher(s), please call ahead to make an appointment.

**INCLEMENT WEATHER:** On days that bad weather is threatening, parents are encouraged to listen to their local radio or TV station beginning at 6:30 AM for any announcement regarding school closing or delays. Haywood County Schools will also update its web site regarding the change and will send out a phone message about

weather-related closings or delays to the number registered with the student. If school is dismissed early due to weather, an announcement will be made on all local radio and TV stations prior to dismissal, and HCS will send out a phone message. Again, parents are encouraged to listen if inclement weather is forecast and make plans prior to chances of early dismissal so that students know what to do. Students will be sent home by their normal means of transportation.

**MAKE-UP WORK:** Students shall have two school days to make-up assignments missed for the first absence, four school days to make up assignments missed for two consecutive absences, and one calendar week to complete assignments missed during three-five consecutive days or class periods. A student absent from six-ten consecutive days shall have two calendar weeks to complete assignments. A maximum of ten school days will be allowed for students to complete all missed work. Long-term assignments are exempt from the make-up consideration and due as assigned.

*Students are responsible for asking for make-up work.* Students who receive out of school suspension may request to make up daily classroom work missed beyond the third day of a given suspension.

**MEDICATION:** Any student who is taking medication prescribed by a physician or over-the-counter medication is required to leave the medication and the appropriate completed forms with the secretary in the main office. **ALL MEDICATIONS MUST BE IN THEIR ORIGINAL CONTAINER.** The student will come to the secretary at the appropriate time to take the required dosage.

**PERSONAL PROPERTY:** Personal property is subject to be searched by school officials when there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or rules of the school.

Periodically, the substance detective unit (K-9 unit) may visit the school in order to maintain a safe drug free environment.

With the exception of taking up devices during test settings or other special events as mandated by school administration, CMS faculty and staff are not responsible for the care of nor will be held accountable for any damage, loss, or other ill use that may occur to students' personal items, including cell phones, tablets, iPods, MP3 players, etc. Students are expected to take responsible care of their own possessions and, if possible, not bring such valuables to school at all. Girls are discouraged from bringing purses to school.

**PERSONAL ELECTRONICS POLICY:** CELL/SMART PHONES, TABLETS, AND IPODS/MP3 PLAYERS ARE NOT TO BE POWERED ON OR IN USE ON THE SCHOOL CAMPUS FROM 7:30 AM UNTIL 3:10 PM. The only exception is if a student has been given specific permission by a teacher or administrator for an activity directly related to learning. **If a student fails to adhere to the policy his or her electronic device will be confiscated for five schools days.** At the end of the fifth day the student may pick up the device at the office. Should a parent choose to pick up the device before the end of the fifth school day, the student will receive one day of ISS.

Improper or unauthorized use of a cell phone, or any other electronic device can result in disciplinary actions ranging from a warning, confiscation, ISS, to being banned from having a cell phone or any other electronic device on campus for the remainder of the school year.

**STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY (SCHOOL BOARD POLICY SA-13):** Students must assume responsibility for their learning by meeting minimum promotion standards (Policy SA-11), minimum attendance requirements (Policy A-5) and test standards to be eligible for promotion. Copies of these policies will be sent home with the students at the beginning of the school year and are available for review in the school office or at the Board of Education Office throughout the year.

**STUDENT APPEARANCE:** Students are expected to adhere to standards of dress and appearance that are compatible with a safe and effective learning environment. Canton Middle

School students must wear clothing that is safe and appropriate for the activities of the class. Clothing has to pass the "card" test in order to be appropriate for school. An ID card, driver's license, or debit cards are examples of cards that can be used for this self-check. Specific directions are provided for each type of clothing.

**1. SHIRTS:** The card must cover any exposed skin between the shirt and the collarbone. The strap(s) of tops must be as wide as the length of card; when layering tops, there still must be at least one top that meets the card requirement. Tank tops are not allowed. Muscle shirts must cover underarm and side of chest. Shirts may not be strapless, or have any open back (partial or whole) or cut out sides. Sheer (or "see through") tops are not allowed.

**2. SHORTS:** Place a card, using longest length, from bottom of shorts or skirt. The end of the card must reach to the top of the knee. No skin above the knee should be showing when using the card. Shorts must be worn at the waist and cannot show undergarments. No holes are allowed above the knee. *Wearing leggings or other layers under shorts to meet the requirement is not acceptable.* Bermuda shorts or Capri Pants are recommended.

**3. SKIRTS/DRESSES:** Must pass the same test as shorts. Exposed skin above the knee may only be one card length. Leggings or shorts may be worn underneath skirts or dresses as a personal preference. Wearing leggings or shorts or other layers under short skirts/dress DOES NOT exempt the skirt/dress from the card test. Sheer (or "see through") skirts/dresses are not allowed.

**4. PANTS:** Pants may only have holes that are at or below the knees. Wearing leggings or other layers underneath to cover holes above the knee is not permitted. Pants are to be worn at the waist and cannot show undergarments. Tight-fitting pants such as spandex, leggings, or other form-hugging materials are not permitted to be worn alone.

**5. SHOES** must be worn at all times.

**6. HATS/HOODIES:** Students will only be permitted to wear headgear (hats, toboggans, scarves) when outside of school buildings.

**BANDANAS** are NOT permitted at any time. Hoodies are acceptable **ONLY AS A JACKET**. The hood should never be worn inside or outside of school buildings or on the school bus.

**7. SUNGLASSES:** Sunglasses are NOT permitted at any time during the school day, inside or outside the school buildings.

**8. NO PAJAMAS (TOPS OR BOTTOMS), BLANKETS, OR SLIPPERS**

Clothing should completely cover all undergarments. Clothing cannot have logos or symbols which refer to, or promote, tobacco, drugs, alcohol, violence, gangs, lewd conduct, or anything of an offensive nature.

*Presenting a bodily appearance or wearing clothing which is disruptive, provocative revealing, profane, vulgar, offensive or obscene, or which endangers the health or safety of the student or others, is prohibited.*

**THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION WILL MAKE THE FINAL DECISION ON QUESTIONABLE ATTIRE.**

Dress code violations will follow this process:

1. Student will be asked to change into appropriate clothing and will be allowed to call home for a change of clothes, if necessary.
2. Student will wait in the office area until a new change of clothes arrives. If no change of clothes can be provided, student will go to ISS for the remainder of the day.
3. Continual repeated offenses could result in ISS.

More information about the CMS dress code, including a visual guide, can be found on the CMS web site.

**STUDENT MESSAGES:** Students will be called to the office for a phone call or message only in case of an emergency. Messages from anyone other than a parent or legal guardian will not be delivered.

**STUDENT USE OF SCHOOL PHONE:** The school phone is for business purposes. Students

will be allowed to use the school phone for emergencies only (illness, injury). Students and parents should make all transportation arrangements prior to arriving at school. Transportation arrangements may be changed by phone for emergencies only. Students will not be called to the office for a phone call unless it is from a parent and then only in case of emergency. Messages will be taken and delivered at the end of the day.

**TEXTBOOKS:** The school furnishes all textbooks. Students will be expected to pay for damage to or loss of the issued textbook before another book is issued. Final report cards and pass/fail information will be held until all books/fees are cleared.

**MEDIA CENTER:** Students will not be allowed to check out books or other library materials if he/she has any books or library materials overdue, lost, or if library fines are owed.

**VISITORS:** Parents are always welcome at CMS! However, *all visitors MUST enter and exit the school by way of the main office. Visitors will need to sign in at the front office and check out through the front office. ALL VISITORS WITHOUT A VISITOR'S PASS WILL BE STOPPED, QUESTIONED AND ASKED TO REPORT TO THE OFFICE.*

Parents arriving for a pre-arranged teacher conference must stop by the office to get the visitor pass and allow for the teacher to be notified that they have arrived.

Students are not allowed to have out-of school friends or relatives with them at school.

**IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Haywood County Schools	456-2400
Canton Middle School	646-3467
CMS Fax Number	646-3478

Haywood Co. Schools: [www.haywood.k12.nc.us](http://www.haywood.k12.nc.us)  
Canton Middle School: [www.cms.haywood.k12.nc.us](http://www.cms.haywood.k12.nc.us)

For all athletic and special events, please see the Canton Middle School website listed above.